



S S P X



# The Angelus

“Instaurare omnia in Christo”

## Religious Liberty

Toleration or Religious Liberty

A.D. 313 - The End of the  
Beginning

The Two Swords

# Religious Liberty

“Elias the prophet stood up as a fire, and his word burnt like a torch.”  
(Eccelus. 48:1)

In the middle of the ninth century before Christ, the worship of one God had weakened considerably among the tribes of Israel and was further debilitated when the worship of the god Baal was introduced by Jezabel, the wife of King Achab. Jezabel brought forth a procession of idolatrous priests and erected temples to Baal. The prophet Elias stormed against the evils of the priests of Baal, who were contaminating the pure worship of God.

After different clashes with Queen Jezabel, the final test to decide which god was the greater comprised a placing of sacrifices at two altars, one to Baal and the other to God. When all was in readiness each side would call for fire to be ignited, the winner being the one whose fire lit first.

The outcome, but especially the fiery and merciless procedure of the prophet, shocks our modern spirits. In religious matters we are so used to indifferentism and to the juxtaposition of different denominations and religions that we cannot understand the prophet's claim to sole rights for the one God.

In this issue of *The Angelus* we strive to give clear answers on the question of religious liberty and the concept of tolerance.

Statue of the prophet and two plaques at the memorial on Mount Carmel





# Letter from the Publisher

Following its founder, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, the Society of St. Pius X is known for its objections to religious liberty, especially as formulated by *Dignitatis Humanae* and post-conciliar documents. It is, in some ways, the most significant doctrinal problem we face today as traditional magisterial teaching is clear about the duty of the State to profess and protect the Catholic religion and the impossibility of the State to be agnostic. The whole question of the Kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ and of ecumenism depends on this first point: what is religious liberty? This question, however, presupposes a proper understanding of the relationship between Church and State.

In light of this, we provide here some considerations on Church and State. Of particular interest to Americans is the distinction between religious liberty and religious toleration. This is not an easy distinction to make in 2013, but it is essential to a proper understanding. Remember the fight between Cardinal Ottaviani and Cardinal Bea at the Second Vatican Council on this very question! They understood what was at stake, what the consequences would be of modifying the teaching of the Church on this point, which had been so clear in the past.

We also provide some historical studies to place religious liberty in a broader context. It is not possible to provide a thorough analysis of this question in one issue of the magazine. For those who wish to spend more time studying this, I would recommend Archbishop Lefebvre's study which he sent to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1985. Angelus Press publishes it under the title *Religious Liberty Questioned*. It is not an easy read, but neither is the topic simple!

In Christ the King,  
Fr. Arnaud Rostand, Publisher

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# The Angelus

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# Toleration or Religious Liberty?

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by Fr. François Laisney

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Among the points of doctrine taught by Vatican II that depart from Catholic Tradition, perhaps the one the most clearly in opposition with the antique Catholic Doctrine is the doctrine on religious liberty.

## The Duty to Be a Good Catholic

The Catholic Faith is simple: Our Lord Jesus Christ is the one Mediator, “the Way, the Truth and the Life,” and “no one goes to the Father except by Him” (Jn. 14:6), for “there was not given under heaven another name by which we must be saved but the name of Jesus. Neither is there salvation in any other” (Acts 4:12). Our Lord is the Saviour; He is powerful enough to save all men; He came for that purpose (I Tim. 2:4); hence all

men have the duty to receive Him, and “to them that received Him, He gave power to become sons of God” (Jn. 1:12).

To receive Our Lord implies embracing the truths He has taught and has entrusted to His Church, to whom He said: “Go, teach all nations” (Mt. 28:19). To become adoptive sons of God by grace can only be in the Son, as members of the Mystical Body of the Son of God, which mystical body is the Church, the Catholic Church, the one Church He has founded and is recognizable by its four notes of unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity.

Thus the Catholic Church is very intimately linked with the very purpose of life: the salvation of our souls. “For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?” (Mt. 16:26). To save men from



the greatest danger, everlasting punishment in hell; to deliver them from the greatest evil (sin), source of all human ills; to give to men the greatest of all goods, union with God Himself in eternal life and a beginning of it here below through “the bond of perfection, charity” (Col. 3:14)—this is the inestimable benefit which Our Lord Jesus Christ offers to men in His Church, the Catholic Church!

Yet, this goal of life is not optional: it is the duty of everyone to “work out [one’s] salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12). And that is done within the Catholic Church, and cannot be achieved outside of her: we can live of the life of Christ (Phil. 1:21) only in “the Body of Christ, which is the Church” (Col. 1:24). “Outside the Church there is no salvation” (St. Cyprian, Ep. 73, 21). Hence the Church is not optional, as salvation is not optional.

That this was the teaching of the Church from the beginning (St. Cyprian is of the third century, witness of the Faith of the early Church) all the way to 1962 is manifest by the fact that the very schema on the Church prepared under Pope John XXIII for the second Vatican Council says: “It is a dogma of the faith that no man can be saved outside the Church” (Section vii, in *The Church*, documents on the Church published by Solesmes, appendix, p. 814).

## True and False Freedom

Against this dogma, modern man rebels in the name of freedom.

God has created man free, but many people misunderstand this freedom. They want to be “free from God”; they repeat the cry of rebellion of Satan: “I shall not serve!” (Jer. 2:20). To this rebellion is opposed the Fiat of the Blessed Virgin, the obedience of Mary: “Be it done to me according to Thy Word” (Lk. 1:38). Hence mankind is divided in two camps, the “seed of the Woman” and the “seed of the Serpent” (Gen. 3:15).

To understand that true freedom is on the side of the Blessed Virgin Mary and false freedom on the side of Satan, it is useful to consider the

following. God created all things, visible and invisible; now all the material universe perfectly follows the laws that God has set to it, laws of gravitation, of electromagnetism, of chemistry, of life, etc.; from the smallest particles to the greatest galaxies everything obeys God perfectly. You might say, they have no merit, they obey out of necessity. True, and this is the reason why God created spiritual beings, angels and men, and endowed them with freedom: so that they may obey His Laws out of love and not out of necessity. Understand well, dear reader, the purpose of freedom is to obey God’s laws out of love, not to disobey His laws! And don’t fool yourself: you cannot escape God’s laws. Either you do what God commands, and you will be rewarded according to God’s laws; or you do not what God commands, and you will be punished, still according to God’s laws. What do you prefer? The choice is indeed yours. The ability to choose is not an ability to escape the Creator.

Thus it is clear that true freedom is the ability to choose that which is good, not a right to choose that which is evil. Hence the Church always taught, with Pope Pius XII: “That which does not conform to truth and moral law has objectively no right to being, to propagation, nor to action” (Discourse to the Italian jurists *Cirièse* on the Dec. 6, 1953). In one word, freedom is for good, not for evil. That principle has no restriction.

Note also this other principle: truth is the good of the intelligence; error and falsehood, the evil of the intelligence. Error is not always a sin, but it is always evil, and very damaging for souls. Hence it ought to be corrected, and has no right to be “immune” from correction.

## Patience and Tolerance

When some hear that there is no right for evil, they immediately fear persecutions and violence. Yet there is nothing more remote from the teaching, practice and spirit of the Church, founded by “the Son of man [who] came not to destroy souls, but to save” (Lk. 9:56). He taught: “Love your enemies, do good to them that hate >

you. Bless them that curse you, and pray for them that calumniate you” (Lk. 6:27-28). And He gave the supreme example of this when He prayed for His enemies on the Cross, thereby teaching us “not to render evil for evil...but to overcome evil by good” (Rom. 12:17, 21).

But to love those who hate us does not give them a right to hate us, not even a right to immunity for hating us; to bless those who curse us does not give them a right to curse us, not even a right to immunity for cursing us; to pray for those who calumniate us does not give them a right to calumniate us, not even a right to immunity for calumniating us. Because hate, cursing, calumnies are evil, and evil has no right, not even a right to immunity.

St. Augustine not only teaches such patience and tolerance, but he even pleads for clemency in favour...of heretics in his Letter 153 to Macedonius, the imperial vicar for Africa, who was applying the imperial laws against heresy. This Macedonius, the most powerful man in Africa, standing in the very place of the emperor, was a very good Catholic with a great esteem for St. Augustine. This one asked that penalty of death be not applied to the heretics, in the hope that this clemency would help them to convert, for this is the main desire of the Church. Here are some of his beautiful words: “*Malis parce, vir bone; quanto melior, tanto esto mitior; quanto fis celsior potestate, tanto humilior fiere pietate!*—Spare the wicked, thou good man; the better you are, the meeker you ought to be; the higher you are by your power, the more humble you ought to be by piety!” (Ep. 153, 4,11 – PL 33, 408 – BAC XIa Cartas, p. 414). And Macedonius granted the clemency asked by St. Augustine. Thus far from persecuting the wicked, the Church intercedes for them!

Yet St. Augustine does not acknowledge a right to immunity for them. Indeed, he writes a little further: “Now it is true, as morals go in our days, that men want both to be exempt from penalty for their crimes, and yet to possess that for which they admitted the crime [*i.e.* to continue in their sins]. This is the worst kind of men...” (Ep. 153, 6, 20 – PL 33, 419 – BAC, *ibid.* p. 423). In other words, those who want to continue in their sins

with impunity, those who want “immunity from coercion” in their sins, are the worst kind of men. Thus St. Augustine is far from acknowledging such a “right for immunity from coercion.”

## The Christian Service Proper to Kings

“And now, O ye kings, understand: receive instruction, you that judge the earth. Serve ye the Lord with fear: and rejoice unto him with trembling” (Ps. 2:10-11). And St. Augustine comments: “How shall the kings serve the Lord with fear except by forbidding with a religious severity that which is done against the commands of the Lord? Other is the manner of service as a man, other as a king: as a man, he serves [God] by living faithfully; yet because he is also a king, he serves by commanding that which is just and forbidding the opposite...In this therefore the kings serve the Lord, in as much as they are kings, by doing in the service of the Lord that which kings alone can do [*i.e.* just laws]” (Letter 185, V, 19, to Boniface, Count of Africa, in charge of implementing the imperial laws against the Donatists).

## Pius IX and the Syllabus

After such clear teaching, put in practice (more or less well) in the centuries of Christendom, it is no surprise that Pope Pius IX solemnly condemns those who say: “The best condition of society is that where one does not recognise to civil authority the duty to repress by legal penalties the violators of the Catholic religion, except where public peace requires it” (*Quanta Cura*, Denzinger, 1689).

Now, since every false religion by its refusal to honour Our Lord Jesus Christ and to enter the Church He has founded “violates” the commandments of God (at least the first, and often also the others, such as by their permission of divorce and remarriage) and therefore violates the Catholic Religion, if everyone would have “a right to immunity from coercion” (*Dignitatis*





*Humanae*, 2) in religious matters, then clearly to repress such “right” could not be the best condition of society. Therefore one cannot hold such “right to immunity” without falling under the condemnation of Pope Pius IX.

## A New Foundation

In an effort to get this novel right accepted, Vatican II changes the approach from an objective approach (*i.e.* looking at the object of the right: a right to something) to a subjective approach (*i.e.* looking at the subject of the right, the human person).

Now in good logic, one can prove the same proposition with different approaches (thus Our Lord could learn through His human intelligence by what He suffered what obedience is,<sup>1</sup> though He already knew it by His Divine Intelligence), yet one can never rightly prove two contrary propositions: since they cannot *be* true together, they cannot be both proved rightly. Two different paths can reach the same conclusion; they can never reach contrary conclusions: in such case, one of the reasoning is flawed. Since the age-old teaching of the Church is certain—“what the Catholic Church has always held”<sup>2</sup> is guaranteed by Christ—then we know that the novelty is flawed.

The idea behind *Dignitatis Humanae* is that the dignity of man—of which the Church would have taken a greater awareness recently!—requires that no coercion be exercised at all in religious matters by any authority on earth: that man, being free, may be able to exercise freely whatever his religious convictions are. The underlying error here is that any coercion is always against the dignity of man. If man were supreme, thus his own rule, then any coercion would indeed be opposed to his dignity. God is supreme: He is Goodness itself, thus God is His own rule, and any coercion on Him is simply impossible. But because man received his being from God, he also receives his goodness from God, and therefore the rule of his action is also from God. God gives this rule in two ways: exteriorly by His law and interiorly by His grace;

His law tells us what we ought to do to be good, and His grace moves us to do it. We need both! Far from rejecting the law of God, the grace of God moves us to do what the law commands, and thus to rejoice in His law: “Therefore have I loved thy commandments above gold and the topaz” (Ps. 118:166).

God did not create man as a loner, but as a social being that needs the help of his neighbor. One help, instituted by God in human society, is authority: “Let every soul be subject to higher powers: for there is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God” (Rom. 13:1). As intended by God, authority is a help to do good. The authority of parents over children is a good example: though parents do not always do that which is right, yet they rarely command their children to do wrong. And their authority is a great help for the children to learn right from wrong—and today’s lack of proper exercise of parental authority leads many children to ignore right from wrong. St. Paul says: “For he is God’s minister to thee, for good.” Now that ministry not only rewards that which is good, but also protects from evil by exercising a certain coercion: “But if thou do that which is evil, fear: for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is God’s minister: an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil” (Rom. 13:4). This protection and help is so much the more necessary after the fall of Adam, since our wounded nature is inclined to evil: it needs that support. Where the authority is good, it helps many to be good; where the authority is evil, many fall into evil ways. Thus there can be a good coercion (reasonable and moderate), far from opposed to human dignity, it protects it from falling into error and sin. Indeed as the possibility of having an accident is not part of the value of a car, neither is the possibility of falling part of the dignity of human freedom, neither is the ability of erring part of the dignity of human intelligence!

Thus the refusal of coercion under the guise of human dignity is in fact a refusal of divinely instituted authority, at least in religious matters. Contrary to Holy Scripture and the whole Tradition of the Church, it pretends that kings and heads of state have no duty as such, *i.e.*, as >

# Theme Religious Liberty

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heads of state, to support the practice of the law of God, including the first commandment.

They pretend it is beyond their competence. It is beyond their competence to be judges in religious matters (such competence belongs to the Church's authority), but it is not beyond their competence to receive the judgments of the Church and support them. This is what the imperial laws were doing at the time of St. Augustine, and he gives testimony to the benefits for the people who, thanks to these laws, were able to get out of the social pressures exercised by the violence of the circumcellions (Donatist gangsters), and were very grateful once converted to have discovered the true Church. This is what all the holy kings have done in the Middle Ages: think of St. Stephen of Hungary who converted his country. This is what good Catholic governments were doing even in the twentieth century, such as in Spain and Portugal.

And at a lower level, the exercise of parental authority to guide the children in the way of God is good, necessary and blessed by God.

## Conclusion

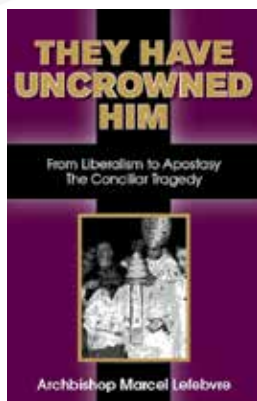
Let us keep the unchangeable Catholic Faith in the one true religion founded by the Son of God, which every man has a duty to embrace and practice. Let us be patient and tolerant with those who are still outside of it, praying that by the grace of God they may be converted. And let everyone endowed with authority use it the best way possible to help others fulfill their duties towards God and neighbor. May Our Lady, Mother of the Church, help the Church's authority to return to this Catholic teaching of all times!

<sup>1</sup> Heb. 5:8.

<sup>2</sup> St. Augustine, Ep. 186, ix, 33. There would be very many other quotes possible, especially in Magisterial documents. This is just the last one I encountered in my readings.

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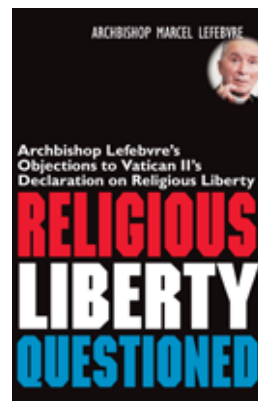
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## Religious Liberty Questioned

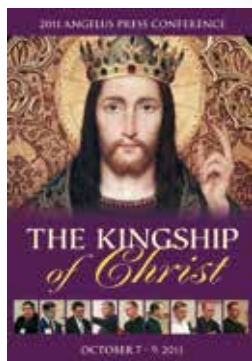
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A.D. 313

# The End of the Beginning

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by John Rao, Ph.D.

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Calling attention to specific dates, such as 1789 and 1914, is a necessary means of underlining major developments in the history of the world. Nevertheless, further study regularly indicates that men require much more time before they can properly digest the changes that such dates do indeed foretell. Rather than summing up the full import of the intellectual, spiritual, political, and social revolutions to follow, what they really point to is the end of the beginning of a new era long in preparation and still pregnant with many more questions for the future.

Such is the case with the so-called “Edict of Milan” of the Christian Constantine and the pagan Licinius in 313, issued hot on the heels of their joint victory over their rival, the persecutor Maxentius. The exact form this measure took is presented to us in somewhat different ways

by the early Christian historians Lactantius (c. 240-c. 320) and Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 263-339). Whatever its shape actually was, it confirmed that liberation for Christians that had begun two years earlier with Galerius’ resigned admission of the failure of the policy of harassment in the eastern part of the Empire. Freedom to worship and to possess property for Christian purposes was awarded the faithful, while goods that had been confiscated were ordered returned. But what this all really meant was going to take a long time to grasp. In fact, if the truth be told, it still is not fully appreciated in the Year of Grace 2013, and by believers and non-believers alike.

Still, as indicated above, the Edict of Milan did clearly mark the end of the beginning—the beginning of that radically new phenomenon called a “relationship” between Church and State.



This was so startling an innovation—and how could it not have been so, brought about as it was by the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity as Jesus Christ, the God-Man—that the Roman State had fumbled for almost three hundred years trying to figure out some coherent way to respond to it.

In many respects, the Empire did not tackle its task that badly. The imperial authorities recognized the dependency of the commonwealth upon the good will of religious-minded men and women, and wanted no troubles with the gods as such. Once they understood that Christians were distinct from Jewish zealots in full revolt against Roman rule, they recognized that believers were actually law-abiding individuals upon whom no ordinary criminal accusations could be pinned. Many of the state authorities' best instincts told them to leave these wretches to their "superstition" without interference.

But the new reality the Christians represented was just too much for the pagan community as a whole peacefully to bear. How could pagan magistrates easily comprehend the idea of a religious force organized in a supranational body of an army-like quality truly separate from the State and eager to evangelize not just a single city or ethnic group but the whole of the imperial population? How could they grasp the mentality of a Faith that would not accept and enjoy nature "as it really was," but wished to judge its "flaws" and supposedly correct them? And how could they consistently resist the pressure to crush these "haters of mankind" that came from defenders of "the ways of the ancestors," Roman and non-Roman, high born and low, the Empire over? Hence, the periodic outbursts of persecution that struck at believers whom magistrates knew to be the easiest of men to rule in every normal respect.

With the Edict of Milan all this centuries long fumbling came to an end. That end was a dramatic one not because it called a halt to the persecution of Christians, welcome though this cessation of hostilities obviously was to those who had suffered from its ravages. It was really dramatic because it gave official state recognition to the existence of the Church, the Mystical Body

#### **The Room of Constantine (1517-1529)**

The room, which was designed to be used for receptions and official ceremonies, was decorated by the school of Raphael on the basis of drawings by the artist, who died prematurely before completion of the work (1520). It takes its name from Constantine (306-337), the first Christian emperor to officially recognize the Christian faith, granting freedom of worship. On the walls are painted four episodes of his life which testify to the defeat of paganism and the triumph of the Christian religion: the Vision of the Cross, the Battle of Constantine against Maxentius, the Baptism of Constantine, and the Donation of Rome. The decoration of the room is completed by figures of great Popes flanked by allegorical figures of Virtue.



The original wooden roof which Leo X (pontiff from 1513 to 1521) had built was replaced under Gregory XIII (pontiff from 1572 to 1585) by the modern ceiling, the decoration of which was entrusted by order of the Pope to Tommaso Laureti, who portrayed the Triumph of the Christian religion in the central panel. The work was completed at the end of 1585 under Pope Sixtus V (pontiff from 1585 to 1590).



of Christ, as a legitimate and different kind of social entity. Something "other," claiming to have its roots in a world beyond and above nature, was given *droit de cité*. A greater theoretical blow to the entire earth-bound pagan mentality cannot be imagined.

Very swiftly, many of the longer-term consequences of this death knell began to be felt, apparently demonstrating the growing influence of the Christian "body" and mentality upon the State. Not only was the Church allowed to >

own property; the Emperor Constantine himself began to augment her holdings considerably, as, for example, through the grant of the properties around the Lateran. Not only did bishops now become respected imperial personages, with highborn men from the senatorial aristocracy gradually aspiring to enter the ranks of the episcopacy; diocesan courts and the validity of their judgments were soon given imperial approval as well. Even ordinary priests were awarded the privileges of local notables. Not only was the weekly Christian holy day made into an Empire-wide festival, but, belying the Edict of Milan's claim to offer a general "religious liberty," pagan religious practices began, bit by bit, to be circumscribed as "superstitions," and all this in Constantine's own lifetime.

Unfortunately, other things were happening during the reign of that same Emperor indicating that the full significance of the existence of a truly "separate," supernaturally grounded Christian body and mentality had by no means yet been digested by the State. Constantine's support for a revision of the Council of Nicaea's anti-Arian definition of the Son as being of the same substance as the Father is, of course, the chief case in point. It was one thing granting the clergy special benefits when they could be handed secular administrative responsibilities that laymen in the late Empire were fleeing as intolerable burdens along with them. It was quite another treating prelates with respect when they might use their supposedly favored and independent positions to oppose the imperial will. For as real as the recognition of the separate role of the Mystical Body of Christ in the Edict of Milan may have been on the theoretical level, that separate function was still looked upon as one that must be guided by the State and for the narrowly perceived political well-being of the State.

To give to Constantine and his successors down to 2013 their proper due, this attitude is understandable and, in effect, "comes along with the job." Weighing, measuring, and submitting to supernatural guidance always requires serious effort for all of us in each and every one of our natural daily activities. This can be especially

problematic when we realize that that guidance that we as believers must acknowledge comes at the hands of men who themselves have their own temptations to misuse their vocations and can therefore badly muddle their work as transmitters of Christ's message.

Quite frankly, as far as I am concerned, the biggest obstacle to digestion of the full meaning of the Edict of Milan and the consequences this should have for the transformation of all things in Christ—right down to the present—has always been the failure of the episcopacy to do its job properly. From the very outset, all too many prelates whose chief "job hazard" and flaw ought to have been that of exaggerating the power of the Church have dedicated themselves to weakening ecclesiastical authority.

Some of these "court bishops," such as that Eusebius of Nicomedia (d. 341) who stirred up the Arian revision movement in the first place, may have been fundamentally concerned with heretical principles. Nevertheless, they clearly understood how the State machinery could be mobilized against the free action of the Church as a whole. They provided a model for that horde of prelates who joined in the ecclesiastical destruction game for the sake of personal riches and glory and made the whole of the fourth century one long and unnecessary battle to return (admittedly in enriched form) to the original Nicaean formula.

Particularly disturbing is the damage done by more well-meaning court bishops. Eusebius, the Bishop of Caesarea (c. 263-339) and the first great Church historian, stands at the head of the list of offenders in this regard. He, whatever his personal Arian convictions, seems to have been motivated much more by awe before the fact that a Roman Emperor with the age-old majesty of the Imperial State behind him, now called himself a Christian. This awe led him to create an aura surrounding the "Christian Emperor" that was crucial to the transformation of his responsibility from one of simple protection of the *Pax Christi*—a difficult enough task—to that of playing an unacceptable "apostolic" role in shaping it. Eusebius expressly rejected discussing anything in his Vita of Constantine



that could be unedifying from a Christian standpoint, even though the full story might have sent the orthodox believer hunting for a much more certain shield and buckler. Having assured us of Constantine's beneficence by suppressing any evidence that might contradict its validity, he then moved on, in the *Laudes*, delivered on the thirtieth anniversary of the Emperor's reign in 335, to set a tone in praise of the faith-friendly ruler destined for a long history of imitation down to the present day. One passage from Johannes Quasten's *Patrology* reveals the attendant problems neatly:

"Eusebius begins with the assurance that he intends to avoid any display of rhetoric. He believes that the Emperor is a human being set apart from other human beings in that he is 'perfect in wisdom, in goodness, in justice, in courage, in piety, in devotion to God: the Emperor truly and he alone is a philosopher, for he knows himself, and he is fully aware that an abundance of every blessing is showered on him from a source quite external to himself, even from heaven itself.' Eusebius compares him to the sun: 'Thus our Emperor, like the radiant sun, illuminates the most distant subjects of his empire through the presence of his Caesars, as with the far piercing rays of his own brightness.' His Empire is 'the imitation of the monarchical power in heaven,' because he has consciously modeled his government after that in heaven" (Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*, III, 326-327).

To paraphrase a line from the old film *Cool Hand Luke*, "what we have here is a failure to communicate"—in this case, a failure to communicate the true path to that corrective and transformative impact of the Church on the State that the Edict of Milan ought to have made possible in practice as well as in theory. Eusebius of Caesarea was a "court bishop" of the most dangerous sort—most dangerous because he actually believed in the error that he was communicating. He told the imperial State that called itself Christian that its mere "words" ensured the victory of the Word Incarnate. Unfortunately, he was but the first of many such prelates. Future court bishops would serve the interests of national monarchies on the one hand

and democratic "Catholic" political parties on the other, granting the same twisted "apostolic powers" to their "Most Christian Systems" that Eusebius awarded to his. In our own time and place similar prelates promote the cause of supposedly God-fearing Founding Fathers who were really servants of the anti-Catholic Whig Enlightenment.

The Edict of Milan was indeed only "the end of the beginning" in terms of the history of the complex relationship of Church and State. Still, let us not allow a recognition of the problems that continued to trouble the interaction of these two institutions after A.D. 313 to tempt us to the conclusion that the collaboration of the earthly political authority with that of the Mystical Body of Christ necessarily weakened and corrupted the Church's liberating spiritual mission. One might just as well use recognition of the inevitable difficulties of harmonizing the exercise of parental and ecclesiastical authority as an excuse for calling for the separation of Church and Family.

No, the Edict of Milan was "the end of the beginning" of something more than a simple revelation of the pains involved with struggling towards eternal life in a sin-stained valley of tears. It was also "the end of the beginning" of the construction of that magnificent society that we call Christendom. Construction of that new social order had begun the moment that the Apostles, Apostolic Fathers, and their successors understood that our earthly environment was meant to be corrected and transformed through the message and grace of the Incarnation, thereby providing us a training ground for Heaven as opposed to Hell. Plans were laid intellectually and even carried through practically, to a certain narrow degree, within the precarious Catholic enclaves of the pre-Constantinian world. But the Edict proved to be the crucial step by means of which "Christendom" left its parochial clubhouse to conquer the public spaces of the world at large. And the rest is history.



# “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” (Matt. 16:13)

The Lord asked His disciples who men said that He was, and their answers were human as long as they were the answers of human reason, unilluminated by Divine light. At last, when the glimmerings of earthly conjecture were spoken, he whose apostleship is the first in dignity, was the first to confess his Lord. And Simon Peter answered and said: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered and said unto him, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven.” That is to say, for this cause art thou blessed, because My Father Himself hath taught thee; the opinions of men have not beguiled thee, the voices of angels have not taught thee, not flesh and blood, but He, whose only begotten Son I am, hath revealed Me unto thee.

Thus says the Lord unto Simon Peter: “And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter.” That is to say, even as My Father has revealed unto thee concerning Me that I am God, even so now will I also reveal unto thee that thou art Peter; I am the sure Rock of defence, the Corner Stone, who make both one (Eph. 2:20); I am the foundation, beside which other can no man lay (I Cor. 3:11), and thou also art a rock, in My strength made hard, and those things whereof I by right am Lord, into thy hand do I give them, that thou mayst bear rule over them, for Me and with Me. And upon this rock I will build My Church.

(Pope Leo the Great, Homily on the Third Anniversary of His Own Election)





# John Locke on Religious Liberty

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by Fr. Jonathan Loop, SSPX

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<sup>1</sup> By referring to religious liberty as the “cornerstone” of American government, Cardinal Dolan is arguing that it is as important to the political system of the United States as is Our Lord Jesus Christ in the economy of salvation. If he is correct, this would necessarily mean that if one rejects religious liberty, one rejects the entire American project. It may be further observed that the full quote is: “the stone which the builders have rejected has become the cornerstone.” In this light, Cardinal Dolan is saying that religious liberty was something previously rejected by the “builders”; amongst whom are all pre-Vatican II popes.

In an editorial for the *Wall Street Journal* written on January 25, 2012, then Archbishop Timothy Dolan stated, “When the Founding Fathers determined that the innate rights of men and women should be enshrined in our Constitution, they so esteemed religious liberty that they made it the first freedom in the Bill of Rights.” He goes so far as to identify religious freedom as the “cornerstone”<sup>1</sup> of American government. Although the archbishop’s immediate purpose in writing this article was to oppose the presidential administration’s contraceptive mandate, his underlying goal is to outline the proper relations between church and state, especially in America. He considers ideal the situation wherein the government permits members of different religions both to worship publicly and to live in accord with their consciences. Inasmuch as the eminent Cardinal is expressing the accepted opinion of the majority of the Catholic hierarchy in our day, it is necessary for us to examine briefly its origins and character.

These ideas in great measure may be traced to the writings of John Locke, a philosopher who exerted much influence on the men of America’s founding generation. He articulates most clearly his understanding of



<sup>2</sup> Here it may be of note to observe the criticism directed by President George Washington to the Quakers of his day, who refused to fight in defense of the country: “Your principles and conduct are well known to me; and it is doing the people called Quakers no more than justice to say, that (*except their declining to share with others the burden of the common defense*) there is no denomination among us, who are more exemplary and useful citizens.”

<sup>3</sup> In this light, it is interesting to note that the feast of Christ the King in the *Novus Ordo* has been moved to the end of the liturgical year.

<sup>4</sup> In his *First Treatise*, Locke says: “reason is our *only* star and compass” [emphasis added].

the proper relations between church and state in a small work titled *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, written in 1689. In order to grasp better the understanding of religious liberty which dominated American political culture until at least the 1960s and which still has some influence in our nation, it is necessary to examine this short essay. What follows is not an attempt to justify or to attack, but merely to describe.

To begin, Locke’s argument may be simplified as follows: religious societies or churches have different ends than political societies. Therefore, they have no business interfering in one another’s internal affairs. Indeed, he begins his essay with the claim that the motives which lead people to mix the two are rather based on a desire for power than a zeal for souls. At best, he claims that there is confusion as to the extent and nature of the power of civil magistrates to promote this or that creed.

Therefore, Locke endeavors to distinguish the nature, goal, and proper means of the two powers. To begin, he claims that a commonwealth is “a society of human beings constituted solely for the preservation and advancing of civil goods, [amongst which are] life, liberty, bodily health and freedom from pain, and possessions of external things, such as landed estates, money, furniture, *etc.*” In other words, the jurisdiction of politics is essentially limited to the goods of this world. We must understand that Locke did not wish to exclude from these goods proper moral habits. Later on in the essay he will specifically say that the government cannot tolerate religious opinions which undermine the moral qualities—*e.g.*, justice, courage,<sup>2</sup> fidelity, *etc.*—necessary to preserve civil society. As a necessary consequence of the this-worldly goal of civil society, Locke maintains that the authority of a government is limited to providing for these goods: “It is the duty of the civil magistrate, through laws established impartially for all, to secure to all the people in general, and to the individual subjects in particular, the just possession of the things pertaining to this life.” To legislate on questions of theology with no bearing on morals would be to arrogate to itself an authority which it cannot possess.

What is the foundation of such a claim? It is clear that Locke wishes to highlight the role of human choice in the establishment of political societies while downplaying the intervention of God. He explicitly argues that God has in no way imparted to any civil ruler the right to force men to embrace the true religion or, by extension, to prohibit the peaceful practice of religions other than his own. While not denying that God is the author of man’s nature—indeed, in other works he specifically argues that man is a creature of God—and therefore is the author of political society, he circumscribes the role of the positive will of God in politics to a very narrow sphere. Later on in the work, Locke will argue that should there be a dispute between the supreme human legislator in a society and his subjects about some point of religion, there is no one but God who can decide the dispute and that God will do this at the end of time.<sup>3</sup> In the meantime, it is impossible to know who truly speaks for God. In short, Locke is asserting that there is no way to know how God wishes political society to be organized other than by consulting reason,<sup>4</sup> which can ascertain the rules of civil society rendered necessary in light of the nature of man. >

<sup>5</sup> Thus, Locke would not simply agree with what was said by John F. Kennedy in his famous speech to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association in 1960: "I believe in a president whose religious views are his own private affair, neither imposed by him upon the nation, or imposed by the nation upon him as a condition to holding that office." Locke would agree that the president should not impose his views on his people, but would not be of the mind that the president's views need only be his "private affair."

<sup>6</sup> "As the happiness of a people, and the good order and preservation of civil government, essentially depend upon piety, religion and morality; and as these cannot be generally diffused through a community, but by the institution of the public worship of GOD, and of public instructions in piety, religion, and morality: Therefore, ...the several towns...[shall] make suitable provision, at their own expense, for the institution of the public worship of GOD, and for the support and maintenance of public protestant teachers of piety, religion and morality." Taken from: <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders>.

We may further note that Locke is silent in his letter on the duties which any civil society as such owes to God. Pope Leo XIII, in his encyclical *Immortale Dei*, teaches that the "State, constituted as it is [by nature], is clearly bound to act up to the manifold and weighty duties linking it to God, by the public profession of religion." There is nothing equivalent in Locke's treatment of the subject. Nevertheless, he does grant that the government is free to promote its own understanding of religion:

"But you will say, the magistrate is able to use arguments, and thereby draw the heterodox into truth and effect their salvation. So be it; but this is common to him with other human beings: if he teaches, if he instructs, if he corrects the erroneous by arguments, he certainly does what is becoming for a good man. It is not necessary for the magistrate to lay aside either the human being or the Christian."

What he says of the "magistrate" may be said to be true of government in general. Thus, it may promote a certain religious view if it should so please.<sup>5</sup> However, Locke does not here speak of any duty to do so, nor any positive obligation to seek out the one true religion and to promote it at the expense of others, as Leo XIII expressly states. The American founders, for their part, agreed that government was free to support and promote certain religious views. For example, the Massachusetts Constitution of 1780 expressly commanded towns to set aside public funds to pay for Protestants preachers who were to direct the public worship of God.<sup>6</sup>

George Washington went further and declared in his *Thanksgiving Proclamation*: "It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor." In other words, our first president believed the government should teach that God provides laws for men and exercises providence in their regard. Washington nevertheless wholeheartedly agreed with Locke that while the government was free to encourage certain religious beliefs, it had no right to compel members of the political community to join this or that religious denomination. In other words, those Americans who refused to take part in Thanksgiving—or who did so in manners opposed to the sensibilities of the members of government—were not to be punished by the civil magistrate.

This brings us to another aspect of Locke's teaching; namely, that no one ought to be deprived of their legitimate rights on account of their religious beliefs. Again, Locke's presupposition is that the laws of society are derived from man's natural needs, which are not connected to any religious opinions. He says explicitly: "If a Papist believes that to be truly the body of Christ which someone else calls bread, he does no injury to his neighbor. If a Jew does not believe the New Testament to be the word of God, he alters no civil rights. If a heathen doubts of both Testaments, he is not therefore to be punished as if a wicked citizen." This attitude evidently lies at the foundation of the Virginia Statute of Religious Liberty, passed in 1785, wherein one reads: "that our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, any more than our opinions in physics or geometry." Locke and Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Virginia statute, are claiming that such doctrines about God's nature affect men's moral conduct to the same extent as do



<sup>7</sup> Here, it is important to note that “civil rights” are not identical to “natural rights.” The latter are derived immediately from man’s nature while the former are rights discovered by reason to be necessary for good life in civil society. An example of civil rights would be voting or holding elective office. The distinction is analogous to what St. Thomas Aquinas refers to as the “primary” and “secondary” precepts of the natural law. The former are principles of conduct derived immediately from man’s natural desires while the latter are practical conclusions arising from them.

<sup>8</sup> Thus, the English crown would have been justified to persecute Catholics in the wake of St. Pius V’s excommunication of Queen Elizabeth I and his subsequent claim that she was deprived of any rightful claim to rule.

<sup>9</sup> Perhaps ironically, Locke’s statement here more directly affects Anglicans, who have as the head of their church the reigning monarch of Great Britain. Given this principle, all countries not subject to England should rightfully forbid any Anglican churches within their territories.

<sup>10</sup> Locke does not admit what is taught by Leo XIII and other popes; namely, that the “teaching Church” (*i.e.*, the Pope and the bishops) have been given a special grace of state by God to judge accurately what is and is not commanded or prohibited by the natural law.

questions of mathematics and are thus irrelevant to political life, with this added caveat: such religious opinions are not as open to demonstration as are the laws of the physical sciences. Therefore, they are not fit subject matter for the laws of the realm and it is unjust to punish people—whether by depriving them of life or property or by withholding from them the equal advantages of civil society—for holding them.

However, Locke is not of the mind that any and all opinions about God ought to be countenanced by government. Indeed, he lists four beliefs—partly theoretical, partly practical<sup>7</sup>—which must be suppressed. Why? Locke, not being a fool, would admit that not all opinions about God have the same relation to moral behavior as do geometric theorems. In the first place, a religion which teaches corrupt moral doctrines ought not to be tolerated. Thus, Locke would have approved of the actions of the United States Congress when in the 1890s it threatened to dis-incorporate (*i.e.*, seize) all property held by the Church of Latter-Day Saints should it insist on its practice of polygamy. Secondly, Locke claims that a religion which claims for its members prerogatives contrary to the civil rights of non-members should not be tolerated. In this class, Locke includes the ability to depose kings for heresy.<sup>8</sup> In effect, he is claiming that this is an unjustifiable attempt by some to rule other people without their consent. Thirdly, he states that government cannot permit anyone to adopt a creed which puts them under the jurisdiction of a foreign prince, for it undermines their loyalty to their own sovereign. This argument was long used against Catholics in the United States.<sup>9</sup> Finally, he teaches that no atheists can be countenanced, for such deny the foundation of all morals. Thus, Locke would approve of the censorship of movements such as American Atheists, who this past Christmas posted billboards in Times Square of New York City with pictures of Santa Claus and Our Lord with the phrase: “Keep the Merry, dump the Myth.”<sup>10</sup> He would neither praise the ambivalence of state and local governments in the face of such campaigns nor of the teaching of radical secularism in public schools and universities. Indeed, he might well have viewed a government which allowed such doctrines to be taught in its institutions of higher learning as suicidal. Locke thus did judge that the government ought to limit and determine to an extent the parameters of right belief for its subjects, but he believed the criteria for such interference to be the effects—reason and not revelation—of religious teachings on moral behavior.

Now, a notable effect of Locke’s position is to deprive those who claim—whether rightly or wrongly—to be God’s representatives of any special right to direct political matters either directly or indirectly. For the correct method of organizing society to obtain and preserve temporal goods does not depend on any special supernatural revelation. As a result, leaders of different churches are no better situated to determine what is most conducive to the common good of civil society than the other members of their religious communities or even non-members thereof. In light of this, he would almost certainly have approved in part of John Kennedy’s statement: “I believe in an America where...no Catholic prelate would tell the president (should he be Catholic) how to act.” The fact that he denies ecclesiastics >

<sup>11</sup> I say “in part” because Locke would probably note that these students do not have a *civil right* to go to the university at all. Students choose freely to come to the university and therefore they implicitly promise to abide by the standards of the university. Thus, the university has a right—in principle—to establish conditions whereby students may associate on campus. Of course, Locke would view the decision of the university as bad inasmuch as it tends to exclude men of decent moral character.

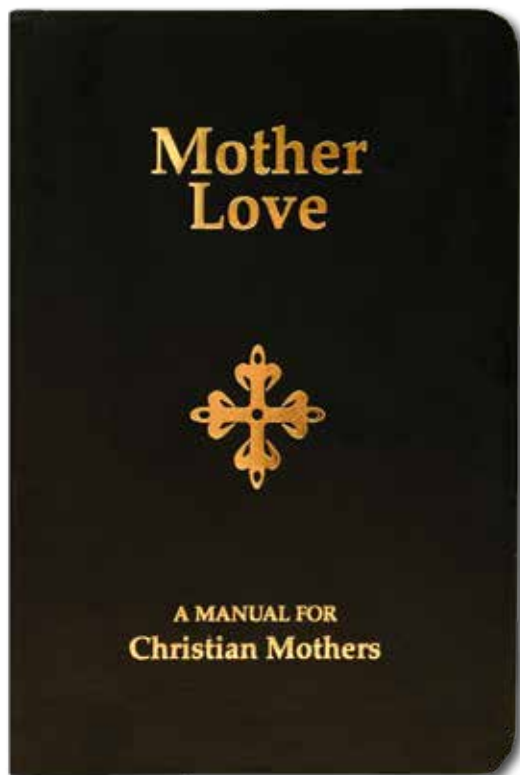
such prerogatives is implicit in his definition of a church. He defines it as “a free society of human beings, joining themselves together spontaneously, to worship God publicly in such mode as they believe will be acceptable to the deity for the salvation of souls.” Locke admits that such voluntary societies must have some form of hierarchy, but implicitly insists that the members of this hierarchy have jurisdiction only over those who have voluntarily submitted to them in those spiritual matters pertaining to the salvation of their souls (as a result, he denies that they have any power to compel their subjects with temporal punishments aside from excommunication). This does not, he suggests, give these leaders any greater insight into the natural law than other men and therefore does not confer on them a special prerogative to judge the actions of political superiors.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, Locke argues that this hierarchy is supreme in its internal affairs. He observes that “the right of establishing laws can belong to none but the society itself; or at least (which comes down to the same thing) to those whom the society itself has approved by its own consent.” Therefore, he argues that it is not the place of the civil government to dictate to these communities how they are to conduct themselves. The first consequence of this is that such societies are wholly free to admit or to exclude those whom they will. Thus, Locke would agree with Cardinal Dolan’s delight at the decision of the Supreme Court in the recent Tabor case, where all nine members of the court agreed that a Lutheran school could most certainly terminate the contract of a teacher who did not subscribe to Lutheran views.

After having given this sketch of Locke’s view in his *Letter Concerning Toleration*, we are in a position to observe that his teaching regarding the proper relations between church and state is relatively simple in itself, though its practical application can be somewhat complex. In short, men voluntarily join two kinds of societies—one political, the other religious—for essentially different purposes. In the first case, they seek to provide for the good things of this life by submitting to a ruler with the power to use force to protect them. In the latter, they attempt to worship God in the manner which they believe pleasing to Him by observing certain rules and rituals. Those who refuse are kicked out. While the government may promote this or that church, it may neither compel men to join it nor prevent them from joining private associations to worship as they see fit. It may only prohibit those religious opinions which reason perceives to be harmful to good morals and the common temporal good of society. It is this vision of the relations between church and state which Cardinal Dolan calls the “cornerstone” of the American system. The good Cardinal and much of the Catholic hierarchy thus embrace a vision of politics which is certainly faithful to much of the American tradition. However, we must confess that it is foreign to the tradition of the Church—as expressed in *Quas Primas* by Pope Pius XI—for it renders impossible the social reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Fr. Jonathan Loop** was born and raised an Episcopalian. He attended college at the University of Dallas, where he received the grace to convert through the intermediary of several of his fellow students, some of whom later went on to become religious with the Dominicans of Fanjeaux. After graduating with a bachelor’s degree in political philosophy, he enrolled in St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary, where he was ordained in June 2011.

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## PART I

### MORNING PRAYERS

*On awaking, raise your first thoughts to God, and making the sign of the holy cross, say:*

In the name ☩ of the Father who has created me, ☩ of the Son who has redeemed me, ☩ of the Holy Ghost who has sanctified me, do I begin this day.

May the Most Holy Trinity bless, govern, and protect me and mine, and lead us on to eternal life. Amen.

*On arising and dressing, say the following prayer, either mentally or orally:*

Glory be to the Father! Glory be to the Son! Glory be to the Holy Ghost! Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ in expiation of my own sins and for the wants of all my family!

Divine Savior, clothe us with Thy virtues, with humility, meekness, patience, charity, and purity. Make our hearts like unto Thine!

O God, the Holy Ghost, adorn us with Thy seven gifts! Preserve us from vanity, pride, and worldliness!

*Sprinkling yourself and your children with holy water, say:*

May the peace and blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ, the power of His bitter Passion, the sign ☩ of the holy Cross, the assistance of Mary, the Immaculate Virgin and Mother of God, the protection of the holy angels, and merits and prayers of all the saints shield us from all dangers of soul and body, guard us from all enemies,



## PRAYERS AT MASS

### Preparatory Prayers

Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I a poor sinner, come before Thee, to assist at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the only one worthy of Thy Divine Majesty, the only one that can render Thee the honor Thou deservest. I make the intention, therefore, by it to adore and thank Thee, not only for myself and those dear to me, but for the whole world. I desire to satisfy for all our sins and negligences, and to beg of Thee all that will be beneficial to us for soul and body. I pray especially in this holy Sacrifice for my children, beseeching Thee to grant me the grace of training them in a Christian manner, and to cast around them the shield of Thy paternal care through life, and especially at the hour of their death.

Saints of God, help me by your merits and intercession that I assist at this holy Sacrifice with true devotion, being lovingly and gratefully mindful of my Redeemer, who instituted it in memory of His bitter Passion and painful death on the cross. Amen.

### The Priest goes up to the Altar.

*Jesus ascends the Mount of Olives with His disciples.*

O my Jesus, Thou dost ascend the Mount of Olives, to begin Thy sufferings for us! Ah, cleanse my heart and sanctify my will, that I may have no other desire than that God's will may in all things be accomplished! Amen.

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# The Two Swords

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by Fr. Dominique Bourmaud, SSPX

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“We are informed by the texts of the gospels that in this Church and in its power are two swords; namely, the spiritual and the temporal... Both, therefore, are in the power of the Church, that is to say, the spiritual and the material sword, but the latter is to be administered for the Church but the former by the Church; the former in the hands of the priest; the latter by the hands of kings and soldiers, but at the will and sufferance of the priest. However, one sword ought to be subordinated to the other and temporal authority, subjected to spiritual power.”

This text of the bull *Unam Sanctam* (A.D. 1302) gives the classic thesis on Church and State. Boniface VIII wrote it in a dramatic moment of Church history which saw the beginning of the end of the Christian era, which signed the end of the Middle Ages. A pawn of





King Philip the Fair of France, Nogaret gave a slap to the Pope which marked indeed the breach of the Church's supremacy over the temporal powers.

To better assess this matter, a briefing into some of the historical, philosophical and theological documents will elucidate the fundamental ecclesiastic tenets of the political question.

## Three Options Historically

We are looking at the connection between two powers ruling the same subjects both as Christians and as citizens. And since this connection is not unlike the relation between husband and wife, historically, its options were necessarily one of three: either proper marital union, or de facto separation, or again total divorce.

The Catholic option is that which exists in wedlock between husband and wife, each holding a specific jurisdiction and yet properly ordered. It consists in the harmony between the two Powers, the Temporal and the Spiritual—the State working under the ‘vigilance’ of the Church—and this is called the doctrine of the Two Swords, “The State not above but in the Church,” to quote St. Ambrose, echoed by St. Pius in *Notre Charge Apostolique*: “Society cannot be set up unless the Church lays the foundations and supervises the work.” Hence, there is neither unity in confusion nor separation, but union in the distinction. For about a millennium, from the baptism of Clovis till the Protestant uprising, under leaders like Charlemagne and St. Louis, the statesmen knew their faith and applied, with more or less fervor, the testament of St. Remigius: “For the honor of Holy Mother the Church of God and the defense of the poor.”

Historically, religious liberalism was the first erroneous version of the relation of Church and State. The State must ignore the Church, although this admits of a couple of variations. “The Church free in a free State” was the credo of the Italian revolutionary Cavour aiming at destroying the Pontifical Estates, separating

what had always existed together. This credo was promoted later by the conservative liberal Montalembert in France during the Second Empire: “We’ll leave the Church free to transact its spiritual things with souls and schools, as long as we take full control of civil affairs, free from religious arbitration.” What is proposed in the first case is total separation, as when the spouses part company altogether. The second case offers a separation under the same roof, so that the State—the wife—would obey only when it suits it. In any case, the liberal system—for, so it is named—promotes liberty of conscience, which implies the liberty of thinking, of the press and of cult.

The utter disconnection or divorce between Church and State has been advocated lately by many revolutionary States. As an undiluted product of naturalism, State atheism denies Revelation and Religion altogether. Likewise, an indifferentist State worships a self-centered humanism and promotes human instincts. Therefore, religion or Church must receive its rights exclusively from the State according to the axiom: “The Church by the State and in the State.” This is the way communism and tyrannies have wiped out any parallel spiritual force so as to reign supreme, above and beyond any divine law.

## The Recipe for Good Government

It was in the Age of Faith that St. Thomas Aquinas gave a reply to Hugh, newly appointed king of Cyprus, on how to govern. The *De Regno* encapsulates the best of Christian philosophy regarding the confessional State. Here are the logical steps of the argument.

The term governor etymologically designates the pilot who is said to govern a ship when he brings it unharmed and by a direct route to harbor. Likewise, the governor's endeavors will merely tend to preserve the State undamaged in its proper perfection. Yet man's perfection consists not only in the pursuit of earthly things, but really in final beatitude in the enjoyment >

of God. So, the Christian man, for whom that beatitude has been purchased by the blood of Christ, needs also spiritual care to direct him to the harbor of eternal salvation, and this care is provided by the ministers of the church of Christ.

This may be fine and good for the individual, but what about the community? It also must have a purpose, which cannot be a common type of living, as that of animals or slaves. Indeed only such men form a multitude who submit to the same laws and the same government for the purpose of living well, *i.e.* virtuously. And since society must have the same end as the individual man, its ultimate goal cannot be only to live virtuously, but through virtuous living to attain to the possession of God, according to the words of Our Lord: “What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?”

Now the possession of God is a lofty goal obtained not by human, but by divine power. Consequently, government of this kind pertains to that king who is not only a man, but also God, namely, our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, in order that spiritual things might be distinguished from earthly things, the ministry of this kingdom has been entrusted not to earthly kings, but to priests, and most of all to the chief priest, the Vicar of Christ, the Roman Pontiff.

On the other hand, those who have the care of intermediate ends should be directed by the rule of him who has care of the ultimate end. And in practice, the king’s office should promote the good life of the multitude for reaching heaven, that is, he should command those things which lead to the happiness of heaven and, as far as possible, forbid the contrary. St. Augustine, writing to the African governor Boniface, explains this: “One thing is for the prince to serve God as an individual, it is quite another thing to do so as a prince. As a man, he serves it by living faithfully; as a king, by producing religious laws and sanctioning them with the fitting vigor. The kings serve the Lord as kings when they do for His cause that which only kings can do.” But if the king were only worried to provide for these material goods without caring whether his subjects used them to go to hell, he would be acting like the captain of the Titanic, worried

only about giving fun to his passengers but careless as to whether the boat would reach port or nail an iceberg.

Thus, in the mind of St. Thomas, both Powers are autonomous in their respective domain. The State deals with the temporal and the Church with the spiritual, with their proper immediate ends, living well or eternal beatitude. But as the ends are ordered and subordinate, so must the respective societies. This is called the indirect power, usually spoken of negatively although it has also a more positive side to it.

Negatively, the Church has power of veto over the State *ratione peccati*—whenever it is at fault. Its duty is to correct the natural leaders who stray because of sin and to condemn them if need be, as was the case of St. Ambrose with Emperor Theodosius, or St. Gregory VII with Emperor Henry IV at Canossa. This is because the temporal power suffers from a double weakness. As such it not only ignores the flaw of original sin, but it has no way to remedy it. Thus, the temporal society needs to be infused with the Church teaching of the natural law, which is like the State catechism for living well. The Church will also impart the healing grace without which man will all too soon return to his beastly cave or, as Chesterton puts it: “Take away the supernatural, and what remains is the unnatural.”

Positively, the Church has received from Christ the mission to “teach all nations.” She alone has the supreme wisdom of the ultimate purpose of man and knows the how and why of all authority on earth. Hence, she is the mistress of life and of statesmen. Her function is to provide the overseeing governor with the good eye. For governing must conjugate two things, the authority which is the eye apt to see the end and its proper means, and the power which is the arm to put in motion all means necessary to reach the end. In this sense, the Church’s wisdom and knowledge influence directly the statesman pretty much as the shipman tells the shipbuilder what kind of ship he must construct to be suitable for navigation.

It would be false to consider the Church locked in an ivory tower, imperturbable to the evolutions and revolutions in the city laid out at her feet.



The City needs the Church as well as the Church needs the City. The Church needs to permeate and fashion the City in the same way that the City is to find its place in the Church. This complementarity is what Leo XIII refers to when he compares the two Powers to the union of body and soul. Continuing in this analogy, Cardinal Pie says: “But, however happily it be endowed with articulations, springs and muscles, a body without a soul is a cadaver, and the proper of the cadaver is to fall soon into dissolution. The soul of any human society is the faith, it is doctrine, it is religion, it is God.”

If the City is vitalized through the Church, the other side of the coin is no less true: the Church badly needs a confessional State. Although she will survive because she is divine, the Church will be impaired from reaching her spiritual ends without the help of civil powers. We need only open our eyes to see that the vast majority of people are sheep: they follow the behavior of society and custom. If it is fashionable to go to church, the people will go to church in droves; but if the law allows divorce, many will divorce. Hence, when the Church is in the City like its soul, the majority of people are saved; but in time of separation, eternal salvation is the privilege of heroes.

## The Theological Documents

In 1950, Cardinal Ottaviani wrote an interesting piece of political jurisprudence, occasioned by a controversy in the United States opposing Monsignor Joseph C. Fenton (*American Ecclesiastical Review*, May 1954) and John C. Murray, the father of *Dignitatis Humanae*. The latter’s view was that the Church can live peacefully and in the full possession of all the rights to which she is entitled in a lay-state, even when the State is composed of Catholics. Murray defended virtually the American dream as the messianic Promised Land. For him, the State as such cannot accomplish an act of religion; moreover no obligation to worship God can ever enter the constitutional sphere; finally, even for a State composed of Catholics, there is no

obligation to profess the Catholic religion.

Ottaviani, grounding his theses on the perennial Church magisterium, affirms as an indisputable truth that in a predominantly Catholic State, it is incumbent on the rulers to mold the legislation of the State in a Catholic sense. From this duty, three consequences follow immediately:

First, the State has the duty of professing its religion, even socially. “States cannot without serious moral offense conduct themselves as if God were non-existent or cast off the care of religion as something foreign to themselves or of little moment” (Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*).

Secondly, legislation must be inspired by the full concept of membership of Christ. “Reflecting seriously on the deleterious consequences which a Constitution, that abandons the ‘corner stone’ of the Christian concept of life and attempts to base social life on moral and religious agnosticism, would introduce into the bosom of society and into its ephemeral history, every Catholic will readily understand that the question which, before every other, ought at present to attract his attention and to spur him to action, is that of securing for this and future generations the benefit of a fundamental law of the State, which is not opposed to sound religious and moral principles, but which rather draws vigorous inspiration from them and proclaims and pursues their lofty aims” (Pius XII, October 19, 1945). Thus, when Cardinal Pie was told that certain countries (like Belgium and the United States of America) had proclaimed the separation of Church and State and allegedly enjoyed more complete liberty, he answered boldly: “The American and Belgian system, this system of philosophico-political indifference, is eternally a defective system...The perfect agreement of the priesthood and of the empire is the common law and the normal state of Christian societies.”

Thirdly, the State must ward off everything that would tend to divide or weaken the religious unity of a people that has the unanimous conviction of being in the secure possession of religious truth.

Leo XIII, in *Immortale Dei*, makes it manifest that rulers cannot “out of the many forms of >

## Theme Religious Liberty

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religion adopt that one which pleases them,” because, as he explains, in the worship of God they are obliged to observe the laws and the forms of worship in accordance with which God Himself has commanded that He should be honored, “for we are bound absolutely to worship God in that way which He has shown to be His will.” And in *Libertas*, he insists strongly on the same point: “Justice forbids, and reason itself forbids, the State to be godless; or to adopt a line of action which would end in godlessness, namely to treat the various religions (as they call them) alike, and to bestow upon them promiscuously equal rights and privileges.”

The Church magisterium on the confessional State was given liturgical expression with the feast of Christ the King which Pius XI instituted in 1925: “To the States, the yearly celebration of the feast (of Christ the King) will recall that magistrates and governors are held, as much as the citizens, to render Christ a public worship and to obey Him...because His royalty demands that the entire State be ruled by the commandments of God and the Christian principles.”

Such is the ideal State for the Catholic Church, which occurs in a largely Catholic country. Ottaviani explained the need for toleration in other cases. *Time* magazine, in the thick of the Murray-Fenton controversy, argued that Catholicism supported the first amendment only in practice, but denied it in principle. Fenton answered the attack by quoting *Immortale Dei* of Leo XIII which gives room for toleration of the freedom of worship “for the sake of securing some great good or of hindering some great evil.” Hence, no American needs to enter the anarchist club in order to remain a Roman Catholic.



# The Liturgy

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by Fr. Adam Purdy, SSPX

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<sup>1</sup> St. Augustine's definition of sin: *aversio a Deo* (turning away from God), *conversio ad creaturam* (turning toward the creature).

In our spiritual lives we are often urged to assess the esteem we give to creatures. Men become inordinate in their pursuit of wealth, reputation, and various creature comforts. In all cases, it is not a question of what the thing is in itself, but rather what it means to us. Herein lies the true depth to the expression *conversio ad creaturam*<sup>1</sup> involved with every sin. We are therefore moved to check these attachments in order to obtain spiritual progress.

On the other hand, the role of creatures in our sanctification is a most important one. Psychologically speaking, there is nothing in the soul that does not first come through the senses, that is, from the material world. As this is true intellectually, so it is true spiritually. Let us make note of the humanity of Jesus Christ as well as the sacraments, both material creatures instrumental in our sanctification.

Men are body and soul; as such, all of our actions engage our bodies and souls in some way. While grace resides in the higher faculties, we are not to think of the body as simply excess baggage. A well-disciplined body is a most effective tool for the sanctification of the soul.

Looking at the grand scheme of things, the Word goes forth in the Incarnation to bring sinful men back to God who is Spirit. "I came from >

<sup>2</sup> John 16:28.

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 10:5.

<sup>4</sup> I Cor. 4:1.

<sup>5</sup> Marmion, *Christ the Life of the Soul*.

the Father and am come into the world; again I leave the world, and I go to the Father.”<sup>2</sup> In taking flesh, He commits to use the material world in order to restore the spiritual to men. This use of the material order on the part of the Word is the liturgy of the Church.

The liturgy is the public prayer of the Church—the Mass, the sacraments, the prayers of the missal, the blessings of the ritual, the breviary, *etc.* All these are material, sensible expressions organized in times and seasons, feasts and ceremonies. While the established signs instruct us in our duties to God, our interior dispositions also find expression in these signs. Ritual is the exterior expression of the interior dispositions of worship.

This description of the liturgy is the one closest to our senses; the one that appears immediately. It is, however, incomplete without further development. The deeper the development goes, the more we understand that the liturgy and all prayer life are summed up in one word—Christ.

To come to a higher understanding of the liturgy, we must focus on the work of Christ and the work of His institutions. For easiness in meditation these are listed as follows:

- The ‘work’ of the Son of God in His Divinity; the ‘prayer’ of Christ within the bosom of the Trinity; the end to which we are called, namely, future glory.
- The work of Christ in His humanity: “but a body thou hast fitted to me.”<sup>3</sup>
- Christ is the ‘Conjoined Instrument.’
- The work of Christ in instituting His instruments, the ministers and the sacraments, to carry His Passion to souls.
- The work of the ministers in dispensing the sacraments (instruments): “dispensers of the mysteries of God.”<sup>4</sup>
- The organization of the ritual, the public prayers and actions of the Mystical Body of Christ.

Let us begin with the end and purpose of the liturgy—the ‘work’ of the Son of God, in His Divinity, the ‘prayer’ of Christ within the Bosom of the Trinity.

God is Father. Eternally long before the created light rose upon the world, God begets a Son to whom He communicated His Nature, His perfections, His beatitude, His life, for to beget is to communicate being and life. “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee.” Both, although distinct from one another, are united in a powerful, substantial embrace of love, whence proceeds that Third Person, whom Revelation calls by the mysterious name: the Holy Ghost.

But the Son, who by nature is the only Son of the Eternal Father, appears here below only to become the First-born of all who shall receive Him, after having been redeemed by Him: “The first-born among many brethren.” Alone born of the Father in eternal splendor, alone Son by right, He is constituted the head of a multitude of brethren, on whom, by His redeeming work, He will bestow the grace of Divine life.

That same Divine life which proceeds from the Father into the Son and from the Son into the humanity of Jesus, will circulate through Christ in all who will accept it: it will draw them even into the Bosom of the Father, where Christ has gone before us, after having paid, with His Blood, the price of this divine gift.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>6</sup> John 12:21.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 17:21.

<sup>8</sup> I Cor. 15:28.

<sup>9</sup> Ant. *O Sacrum Convivium*,  
Feast of Corpus Christi.

<sup>10</sup> John 10:10.

To be drawn even into the Bosom of the Father! Jesus says the same at his discourse at the Last Supper: “As Thou Father, in Me, and I in Thee: that they also may be one in us”<sup>6</sup>; and “I in them, and I in Thee; that they may be made perfect in one.”<sup>7</sup> This refers to that repose, where union with God will be eternally consummated: “And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then the Son also himself shall be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God will be all in all.”<sup>8</sup> The purpose of our life is union with Christ in His ‘work’ within the Bosom of the Trinity; to do what Christ does within the Trinity; to participate in the eternal knowing and loving of God in His intimate life.

Our usual understanding of the liturgy never goes this far; properly speaking, this is not called liturgy. For our purpose we do not disconnect the idea, for St. Thomas joins these ideas in one: “O sacred banquet at which Christ is consumed, the memory of His Passion is recalled, our souls are filled with grace, and the pledge of future glory is given to us.”<sup>9</sup> The end, future glory, is contained and signified in the sacraments, and therefore the ‘prayer’ of Christ remains united to the liturgy.

Life in Christ, within the Trinity, is the very end of the liturgy, the end of our spiritual life. Exterior expressions made in the liturgy are to draw us to this end; these expressions point to the inward meaning and purpose, to the very life of the liturgy itself—“that you may have life and have it more abundantly.”<sup>10</sup> >



<sup>11</sup> *Summa Theologica*, III, Q. 64, Art. 4.

<sup>12</sup> "And He was made flesh," Nicene Creed.

<sup>13</sup> Isaiah 53:5.

<sup>14</sup> I Peter 2:24.

<sup>15</sup> Col. 1:12-14.

In explaining the other points, let us turn to St. Thomas Aquinas. In his treatise on the Sacraments, he explains the instrumental causality of the humanity of Christ in the sacraments. To say this in lay terms: what role does the humanity of Jesus play in distributing divine life? What is the value of His body and soul? What does He accomplish as man in the sacraments?

Christ produces the inward sacramental effect, both as God and as man, but not in the same way. For, as God, He works in the sacraments by authority, but as man, His operation conduces the inward sacramental effect meritoriously and efficiently, but instrumentally. For it has been stated above (48, 1, 6; 49, 1) that Christ's passion, which belongs to Him in respect of His human nature, is the cause and justification, both meritoriously and efficiently, not as the principal cause thereof, or by His own authority, but as an instrument in so far as His humanity is the instrument of His Godhead, as stated above (13:2, 3; 19:1).<sup>11</sup>

Christ as God has power of authority over the sacraments. This means that God alone is the author of grace; He is the principal agent of grace as He alone creates grace, and He alone touches the soul. However, God chose an instrument, a tool, in order to carry this grace to souls. This tool is the humanity of Jesus Christ. The Eternal Word of God takes flesh: *Et incarnatus est*.<sup>12</sup> In this work of the Holy Trinity, the Divine Nature and the human nature are united in the one person of the Word. Human nature is assumed to act as an instrument to reconcile men to God.

Reconciliation is accomplished through the redemptive work of Christ, namely His Passion. "He hath borne our infirmities...and by his bruises we are healed."<sup>13</sup> "Who his own self bore our sins in his body upon the tree; that we, being dead to sins, should live to justice: by whose stripes you were healed."<sup>14</sup> "Giving thanks to God the Father, who has made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us in to the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins."<sup>15</sup>

What then is the need of further instruments? What would bring His work to men centuries after He lived? What would preserve in souls the graces merited by the Passion? How would souls be nourished in the physical absence of Jesus?

Jesus Christ instituted the sacraments as signs and causes of grace. These are the material/sensible means to dispense the spiritual graces of His Passion to souls. The material element is important; it is the execution of the material element that gives the confidence and assurance that the spiritual effect is delivered to the soul.

St. Thomas continues: "Consequently, just as Christ as God has power of authority over the Sacraments, so, as man, He has power of ministry in chief, or power of excellence. And this consists in four things. First in this; that the merit and power of His Passion operates in the sacraments as stated in Q. 62, Art. 5. And because the power of the Passion is communicated to us by faith, according to Rom. 3:25, 'Whom God hath proposed to be a propitiation through faith in His blood,' which we proclaim by calling on the name of Christ: therefore, secondly, Christ's power over the sacraments consists in this, that they are sanctified by the invocation of His name. And because





<sup>16</sup> *Summa Theologica*, III, Q. 64, Art. 4.

<sup>17</sup> The law of praying is the law of believing.

<sup>18</sup> Rom. 5:9-10.

<sup>19</sup> Hebrews 2:14-15.

the Sacraments derive their power from their institution, hence, thirdly, the excellence of Christ's power consists in this, that He, who gave them their power, could institute the sacraments. And since cause does not depend on effect but rather conversely, it belongs to the excellence of Christ's power that He could bestow the sacramental effect without conferring the exterior sacrament.<sup>16</sup>

Thus is clear the role and power of the humanity of Christ in the sacraments:

- the merits and power of Christ's Passion work in the sacraments;
- the sacrament itself is an established instrument by which Christ applies those merits;
- these merits are able to touch our soul through the necessary disposition of faith.

In His choice of instruments, Christ does not settle for inanimate elements only, but He institutes the priesthood, incorporating men, not as inanimate, but knowing and willing instruments. These instruments are given the power to wield the sacraments, in effect, to wield the Passion of Christ.

All of this seems quite logical when we consider the state of man—the sacraments are on account of man. The sacraments are not some mystical creations that hover above us, dropping graces like rain; they are an exact fit, molding around us, adapted to our very nature. It is not need that warrants existence, but rather Christ's perception of our needs who supplies in every part and measure of our nature.

The Church, also perceptive of the nature of man, fashioned the ritual of the Church. For the first centuries this development was restricted for reasons of persecution. With the peace of Constantine, the liturgical rites developed.

This ritual, externally a series of material elements—words, gestures, actions—serves to accomplish many ends. As the external is a sign of the internal, these material elements demonstrate the Faith. *Lex orandi, lex credendi*.<sup>17</sup> The authors of these signs designed them to indicate certain things to the mind. The words used are a catechism of Catholic teaching, exposing the mysteries of our Faith; the gestures, with their sense of the sacred and the spirit of adoration, indicate what hides within the signs; the entire structure and ambiance strengthen our dispositions of faith, hope and charity, inspiring true worship of God.

Let us conclude with a passage from St. Paul, which shows that for the sake of mankind, even God would bind Himself to a material element (flesh and blood) to bring about the redemption of mankind. "Christ died for us; much more therefore, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life."<sup>18</sup> And again St. Paul writes: "Therefore because the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner hath been partaker of the same: that, through death, he might destroy him who had the empire of death, that is to say, the devil: and might deliver them, who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to servitude."<sup>19</sup>

When Jesus was crucified the trumped-up charge was first of blasphemy because, as the Pharisees and priests said, “He claimed to be God.” However, this would not be a capital punishment issue according to the Romans because blasphemy, in their eyes, did not deserve capital punishment. To cope with this the priests and Pharisees then used the tack that Jesus claimed to have authority in the “Kingdom of God”—in other words, he declared himself a king. To declare oneself a king was an issue with the Romans as this was seen as treason against the Roman emperor. “If you free this man,” said the Pharisees, “you are no friend of Caesar.” Therefore the weak Pilate had no option but to authorize his execution. The guards wove a ‘crown’ for the new ‘king’—out of thorns which dug into his scalp. This crown was simply a device for mocking Jesus, and for inflicting even more pain on him.

“The Crowning with Thorns” from Santa Prassede’s Church, Rome





The Contraceptive Mandate and  
“Religious  
Liberty”

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by Christopher Ferrara

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.hrsa.gov/womensguidelines/>

Now that the United States Supreme Court has upheld the Obama administration’s “Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act” by the bare majority of 5-to-4, what is popularly known as its “contraceptive mandate” has gone into effect. The mandate requires that employers provide “health” insurance coverage for “all Food and Drug Administration approved contraceptive methods, sterilization procedures, and patient education and counseling for all women with reproductive capacity.”<sup>1</sup>

To their credit, the American bishops affirm in the USCCB’s statement “Our Most Cherished Liberty” (OMCL) that “an unjust law cannot be obeyed” and that “Catholics in America, in solidarity with our fellow citizens, must have the courage not to obey them.” This episcopal call to civil disobedience in our “culture of death” has been a long time coming and is most welcome. The organized civil disobedience of the Church has nothing less than the potential to renew the face of this nation, and for that reason the powers that be of political modernity have always had an abiding fear of the Church thus aroused. It is a fear as old as Locke’s *Essay* and *Letter* concerning toleration, which counsel eternal vigilance in the task of keeping the Catholics down.

But the very need for civil disobedience reveals a far deeper problem



<sup>2</sup> All emphasis mine unless otherwise indicated.

than resistance to this or that unjust and immoral law. The problem is systemic: “structures of sin” made possible by the political incapacitation of the Church under America’s regime of “religious liberty.” It is here that the bishops’ opposition to the mandate comes up short. This is not to detract from the good faith effort by certain of the bishops to speak out courageously in defense of the Church in this affair. It is, rather, to observe the *quid* that must be accepted in return for the *quo* of “religious liberty” in the modern sense: the Church is granted a certain exempt “space” for her activity, but must accept that the realm of politics is to be governed solely by civil authority and the will of relevant electoral majorities, without restraint by the dictates of revealed truth and the natural law as expounded and defended by the infallible Magisterium.

Consider another statement of protest issued by the USCCB via its Administrative Committee, led by New York’s Archbishop Timothy Dolan, whose chummy relations with Mr. Obama have scandalized traditional Catholics around the world (as the Cardinal himself admits). The statement is tellingly entitled “United for Religious Freedom” (UFRF)—not united for the defense of the divine and natural law against violation by civil authority. UFRF contains an implicit capitulation to the unchallengeable power of the secular state: “[W]e wish to clarify what this debate is—and is not—about. This is not about access to contraception, which is ubiquitous and inexpensive, even when it is not provided by the Church’s hand and with the Church’s funds...”<sup>2</sup>

Notice, first of all, the reference to a “debate.” In America, as in all Western democratic republics, all questions are debatable, including questions of fundamental morality, such as contraception or whether human life in the womb shall be taken or spared. The “debate” over the mandate, says UFRF, has nothing to do with transgressions of the objective moral order, but only with how “the mandate includes an extremely narrow definition of what HHS deems a ‘religious employer’ deserving exemption—employers who, among other things, must hire and serve primarily those of their own faith.”

In other words, the statement concedes the power of the federal government to mandate payment for abortion and sterilization generally. It objects only that “religious liberty” requires a broader definition of the exempt space to which those who might decline to pay for the mandate on grounds of conscience may retreat. The morality of what is mandated is not challenged in itself. Indeed, the statement hastens to add that the “debate” is “not about the Bishops’ somehow ‘banning contraception,’ when the U.S. Supreme Court took that issue off the table two generations ago.” In other words, *supremum iudicium locutus est, causa finita est*. What the Magisterium teaches regarding the objective moral order, binding on all nations, is implicitly assumed to be inoperative on American soil, once the High Court or John Locke’s “supreme legislature” has spoken to the contrary.

As if to confirm this abdication of moral authority in the face of what John Courtney Murray called the modern state’s “monism of power,” in OMCL we read: “This is not a matter of whether contraception may be prohibited by the government. This is not even a matter of whether contraception may be supported by the government. Instead, it is a matter of whether religious >

<sup>3</sup> Louis Veuillot, *L'Illusion Libérale* (Palmé, 1866), 96 (English edition).

<sup>4</sup> Proceedings (1872), vii.

people and institutions may be forced by the government to provide coverage for contraception or sterilization, even if that violates their religious beliefs.”

In other words, the government and “the people” may do whatever they please respecting contraception without opposition from the Church, so long as Catholics and others of similar “beliefs” are not forced to participate. This “most cherished liberty” is not the freedom of the Church to constitute social order by informing and directing the body politic in matters that touch on morality and the welfare of souls so as to lead men, in partnership with the State, toward their final end in eternal beatitude—*i.e.*, the Social Kingship of Christ. Rather, what is most cherished is “the gift of liberty which is ours as American citizens.” And what is this “gift”? It is the “gift” bequeathed to us by the sainted Founders and Framers, who generously provided that the citizens of the Republic may profess any creed they please, so long as they understand that their creed is of no public import whatsoever to a politics now definitively separated from religion. For Catholics, this “gift” means an agreement (as Louis Veuillot put it) to be, in public life, “sufficiently nothing to live in peace with the rest of the world.”<sup>3</sup>

Catholic hierarchs are expected to be assiduous about keeping their end of the bargain. The modern nation-state views as heresy the teaching of Pope Leo XIII in *Libertas*, wherein the Roman Pontiff reprobated the thinking of those “who affirm that the morality of individuals is to be guided by the divine law, but not the morality of the State, [and] that in public affairs the commands of God may be passed over, and may be entirely disregarded in the framing of laws.” From this way of thinking, Leo warned, “follows the fatal theory of the need of separation between Church and State.” But, he continued, “the absurdity of such a position is manifest. Nature herself proclaims the necessity of the State providing means and opportunities whereby the community may be enabled to live properly, that is to say, according to the laws of God. For, since God is the source of all goodness and justice, it is absolutely ridiculous that the State should pay no attention to these laws or render them abortive by contrary enactment.”

But the very regime of “religious liberty” depends precisely on this absolutely ridiculous proposition, according to which the laws of God do not bind the federal government of the United States, but rather constitute only private opinion within the exempt space of conscience; the divine and natural laws are not permitted to be *publicly* true. Thus the Catholic Church in America is left only with an appeal to the “gift of liberty which is ours as American citizens.”

As I show in my book *Liberty, the God that Failed*, even a group of conservative evangelical Protestants known as the National Reform Association (NRA) petitioned the federal government in the mid-19th century for the following amendment to the Preamble of the Constitution:

“We the People of the United States, [humbly acknowledging Almighty God as the source of all authority and power in civil government, the Lord Jesus Christ as the Ruler among the nations, his revealed will as the supreme law of the land, in order to constitute a Christian government,] and in order to form a more perfect union...”<sup>4</sup>

The NRA’s extraordinary proceedings, which I explore in the book,



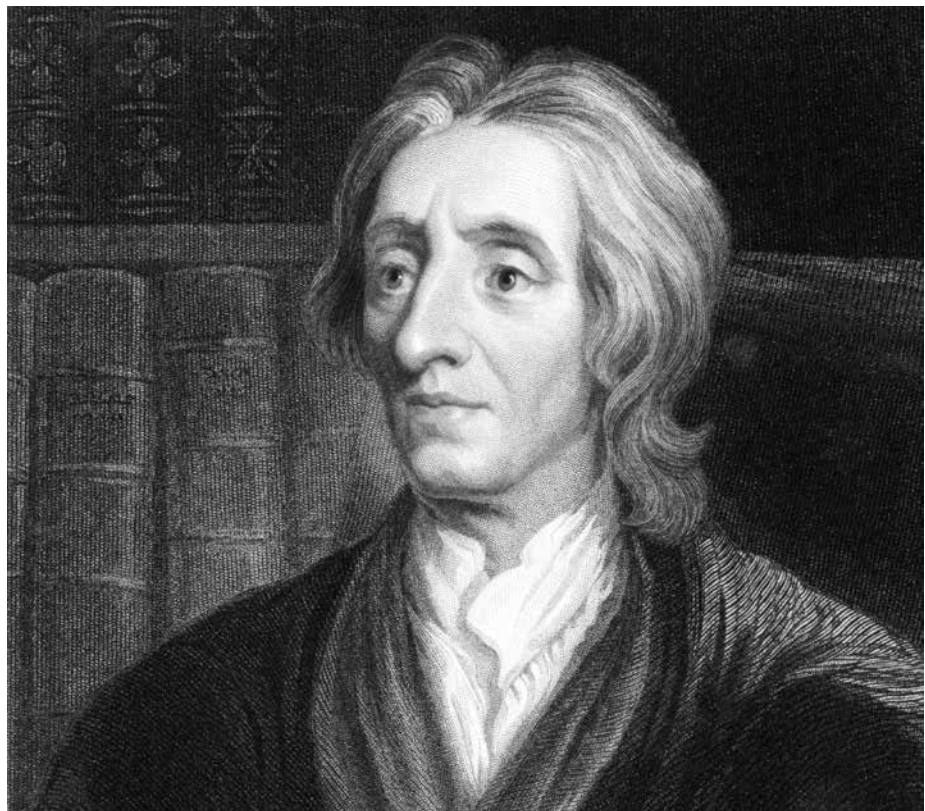
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defended the Social Kingship in a manner consistent with the same theme in papal encyclicals, warning that America faced certain moral and spiritual collapse unless it acknowledged and submitted to the reign of Christ in its organic law. (The fatal flaw in the NRA's approach was its Protestant rejection of an authoritative teaching Church allied to the State.)

Today, the vast majority of Catholics, now helpless captives of the *Zeitgeist*, would consider that proposal madness—a stunning indication of how quickly our once-Christian civilization has degraded into the “silent apostasy” John Paul II lamented, but without identifying the root cause of it all in Western man's rebellion against the specific influence of the Catholic Church over the *res publica*. Hence, instead of invoking the Law of the Gospel as the supreme law of the land, as even these conservative Protestants did in the 1800s, OMCL hews to the programmatic abandonment of the Social Kingship since Vatican II: “The Christian church does not ask for special treatment, simply the rights of religious freedom for all citizens.” In other words, leave us alone and we will rest content with the “gift of liberty.”

And then the groveling apology that has become *de rigueur* for the self-neutered Church Militant of the post-conciliar era: “As Catholics, we >

John Locke (1632-1704), widely known as the Father of Classical Liberalism, was an English philosopher and physician regarded as one of the most influential of Enlightenment thinkers. His writings influenced Voltaire and Rousseau, many Scottish Enlightenment thinkers, as well as the American revolutionaries. His contributions to classical republicanism and liberal theory are reflected in the United States Declaration of Independence.



<sup>5</sup> From the historic declaration of Pope Gelasius I in his letter to the Emperor Anastasius (494) on the supremacy of the spiritual over the temporal power in cases of conflict: “There are two powers, august Emperor, by which this world is chiefly ruled, namely, the sacred authority of the priests and the royal power. Of these *that of the priests is the more weighty.*”

<sup>6</sup> Murray, *We Hold These Truths* (1960), 206.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 210.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 213, 214, 215.

know that our history has shadows too in terms of religious liberty, when we did not extend to others the proper respect for this first freedom.” But, says OMCL, the Church has overcome her shameful past—when the State was Catholic and State-subsidized abortion, contraception and sterilization were inconceivable even in nightmares. This happy development is thanks to Vatican II and *Dignitatis Humanae*: “the teaching of the Church is absolutely clear about religious liberty: “The human person has a right to religious freedom.” In the words of Archbishop Lefebvre: they have uncrowned Him. And they are happy to do so, because “religious liberty” itself requires that very uncrowning.

Murray, whose work supposedly inspired the Council’s embrace of the “American model” in *Dignitatis Humanae*, lived long enough to be chastened by the outcome of “religious liberty” in practice. He saw that the modern nation-state had destroyed the “Gelasian dyarchy” of two powers, religious and civil, the latter subject to the former where the concerns of the two overlap.<sup>5</sup> Political modernity, rather, is founded on “a rejection of the Gelasian thesis...which had been the dynamic of the Christian revolution.”<sup>6</sup> The result is that “One there is whereby the world is ruled’—the power of the people, expressing itself in the preference of a majority; and beyond or beside or above this power there is no other.” The secular state, with its regime of “religious liberty,” has “declared the Gelasian doctrine to be heretical and has outlawed it in the name of modern orthodoxy, which is a naturalist rationalism.”<sup>7</sup>

Undermining his own attempt at a Catholic defense of American-style “religious freedom” in the same book, Murray concluded rather bitterly that, despite its boast of religious freedom for all, the modern nation-state has “rejected the freedom of the Church...as the armature of man’s spiritual freedom and as a structural principle of a free society.” The secular State has “denied...the Christian revelation that man is sacredness, and that his primatial *res sacra*, his freedom, is sought and found ultimately within the Church.”<sup>8</sup> Today Murray, the author of immense mischief for the Church and the world, sounds like Archbishop Lefebvre in comparison to the generality of Catholic hierarchs—noble exceptions aside.

It is precisely the freedom of the Church we are expected to surrender in return for “our most cherished liberty,” by which is meant nothing more than immunity from overt legal punishment by a State that has constituted itself an enemy of Christ and the Church He established. The vaunted “opening to the world” at Vatican II has become, with supreme irony, a retreat into a virtual ghetto while society at large descends into an abyss of depravity, with no Church to guide it aright. The post-conciliar Church no longer officially recognizes what Pope Leo remarked in *Libertas*: “that it is absurd the citizen should respect the Church, while the State may hold her in contempt.” By accepting this absurdity, Catholic hierarchs unwittingly confirm their own prison as they rattle the bars of a gilded cage that is closing ever more tightly around them, and us.





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# On the Christian Constitution of States

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Selections from *Immortale Dei*, Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on the Christian Constitution of States

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1. The Catholic Church, that imperishable handiwork of our all-merciful God, has for her immediate and natural purpose the saving of souls and securing our happiness in heaven. Yet, in regard to things temporal, she is the source of benefits as manifold and great as if the chief end of her existence were to ensure the prospering of our earthly life. And, indeed, wherever the Church has set her foot she has straightway changed the face of things, and has attempered the moral tone of the people with a new civilization and with virtues before unknown. All nations which have yielded to her sway have become eminent by their gentleness, their sense of justice, and the glory of their high deeds.

2. And yet a hackneyed reproach of old date is levelled against her, that the Church is opposed to the rightful aims of the civil government, and

is wholly unable to afford help in spreading that welfare and progress which justly and naturally are sought after by every well-regulated State. From the very beginning Christians were harassed by slanderous accusations of this nature, and on that account were held up to hatred and execration, for being (so they were called) enemies of the Empire. The Christian religion was moreover commonly charged with being the cause of the calamities that so frequently befell the State, whereas, in very truth, just punishment was being awarded to guilty nations by an avenging God. This odious calumny, with most valid reason, nerved the genius and sharpened the pen of St. Augustine, who, notably in his treatise, *The City of God*, set forth in so bright a light the worth of Christian wisdom in its relation to the public wealth

## Faith and Morals

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that he seems not merely to have pleaded the cause of the Christians of his day, but to have refuted for all future times impeachments so grossly contrary to truth. The wicked proneness, however, to levy like charges and accusations has not been lulled to rest. Many, indeed, are they who have tried to work out a plan of civil society based on doctrines other than those approved by

the Catholic Church. Nay, in these latter days a novel conception of law has begun here and there to gain increase and influence, the outcome, as it is maintained, of an age arrived at full stature, and the result of progressive liberty. But, though endeavours of various kinds have been ventured on, it is clear that no better mode has been devised for the building up and ruling the State





than that which is the necessary growth of the teachings of the Gospel. We deem it, therefore, of the highest moment, and a strict duty of Our apostolic office, to contrast with the lessons taught by Christ the novel theories now advanced touching the State. By this means We cherish hope that the bright shining of the truth may scatter the mists of error and doubt, so that one



During the twenty-five years of his pontificate (1878-1903) Pope Leo XIII exercised his teaching authority in a series of encyclicals which offer the definitive Catholic answer to the errors of modernity.

and all may see clearly the imperious law of life which they are bound to follow and obey.

3. It is not difficult to determine what would be the form and character of the State were it governed according to the principles of Christian philosophy. Man's natural instinct moves him to live in civil society, for he cannot, if dwelling apart, provide himself with the necessary requirements of life, nor procure the means of developing his mental and moral faculties. Hence, it is divinely ordained that he should lead his life—be it family, social, or civil—with his fellow men, amongst whom alone his several wants can be adequately supplied. But, as no society can hold together unless someone be over all, directing all to strive earnestly for the common good, every body politic must have a ruling authority, and this authority, no less than society itself, has its source in nature, and has, consequently, God for its Author. Hence, it follows that all public power must proceed from God. For God alone is the true and supreme Lord of the world. Everything, without exception, must be subject to Him, and must serve him, so that whosoever holds the right to govern holds it from one sole and single source, namely, God, the sovereign Ruler of all. “There is no power but from God” (Rom. 13:1).

4. The right to rule is not necessarily, however, bound up with any special mode of government. It may take this or that form, provided only that it be of a nature to insure the general welfare. But whatever be the nature of the government, rulers must ever bear in mind that God is the paramount ruler of the world, and must set Him before themselves as their exemplar and law in the administration of the State. For, in things visible, God has fashioned secondary causes, in which His divine action can in some wise be discerned, leading up to the end to which the course of the world is ever tending. In like manner in civil society, God has always willed that there should be a ruling authority, and that they who are invested with it should reflect the divine power and providence in some measure over the human race.

5. They, therefore, who rule should rule with even-handed justice, not as masters, but rather as

# Faith and Morals

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fathers, for the rule of God over man is most just, and is tempered always with a father's kindness. Government should, moreover, be administered for the well-being of the citizens because they who govern others possess authority solely for the welfare of the State. Furthermore, the civil power must not be subservient to the advantage of any one individual or of some few persons, inasmuch as it was established for the common good of all. But if those who are in authority rule unjustly, if they govern overbearingly or arrogantly, and if their measures prove hurtful to the people, they must remember that the Almighty will one day bring them to account, the more strictly in proportion to the sacredness of their office and pre-eminence of their dignity. "The mighty shall be mightily tormented" (Wisd. 6:7). Then truly will the majesty of the law meet with the dutiful and willing homage of the people, when they are convinced that their rulers hold authority from God, and feel that it is a matter of justice and duty to obey them, and to show them reverence and fealty, united to a love not unlike that which children show their parents. "Let every soul be subject to higher powers" (Rom. 13:1). To despise legitimate authority, in whomsoever vested, is unlawful, as a rebellion against the divine will, and whoever resists that, rushes willfully to destruction. "He that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation" (Rom. 13:2). To cast aside obedience, and by popular violence to incite to revolt, is therefore treason, not against man only, but against God.

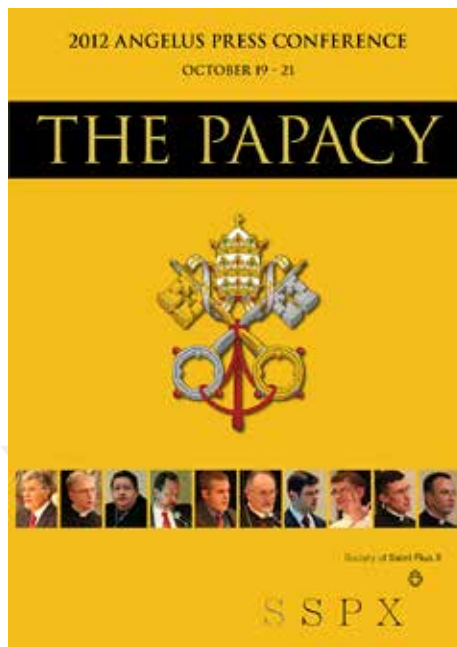
6. As a consequence, the State, constituted as it is, is clearly bound to act up to the manifold and weighty duties linking it to God, by the public profession of religion. Nature and reason, which command every individual devoutly to worship God in holiness, because we belong to Him and must return to Him, since from Him we came, bind also the civil community by a like law. For men living together in society are under the power of God no less than individuals are, and society, no less than individuals, owes gratitude to God who gave it being and maintains it and whose ever-bounteous goodness enriches it with

countless blessings. Since, then, no one is allowed to be remiss in the service due to God, and since the chief duty of all men is to cling to religion in both its teaching and practice—not such religion as they may have a preference for, but the religion which God enjoins, and which certain and most clear marks show to be the only one true religion—it is a public crime to act as though there were no God. So, too, is it a sin for the State not to have care for religion, as a something beyond its scope, or as of no practical benefit; or out of many forms of religion to adopt that one which chimes in with the fancy; for we are bound absolutely to worship God in that way which He has shown to be His will. All who rule, therefore, should hold in honour the holy name of God, and one of their chief duties must be to favor religion, to protect it, to shield it under the credit and sanction of the laws, and neither to organize nor enact any measure that may compromise its safety. This is the bounden duty of rulers to the people over whom they rule. For one and all are we destined by our birth and adoption to enjoy, when this frail and fleeting life is ended, a supreme and final good in heaven, and to the attainment of this every endeavor should be directed. Since, then, upon this depends the full and perfect happiness of mankind, the securing of this end should be of all imaginable interests the most urgent. Hence civil society, established for the common welfare, should not only safeguard the well-being of the community, but have also at heart the interests of its individual members, in such mode as not in any way to hinder, but in every manner to render as easy as may be, the possession of that highest and unchangeable good for which all should seek. Wherefore, for this purpose, care must especially be taken to preserve unharmed and unimpeded the religion whereof the practice is the link connecting man with God.

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The Venerable

# Francis Libermann

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by Fr. Paul Robinson, SSPX

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It is the delight of God's sovereign Providence to use the weak ones of this world to confound the strong (I Cor. 1:27). When He comes upon a servant who is at once feeble and completely docile to His will, then He picks up the instrument in His own hands and wields it to work wonders for souls. Such was His work in using His Mother to destroy the empire of Satan. Such is His work to a lesser degree in the lives of His saints, of whom one was a diminutive, penniless, epileptic son of a rabbi, Francis Libermann.

## His Cherished Malady

One day in the first half of 1830, Francis

Libermann was in his spiritual director's office, conversing on spiritual matters. He had received Baptism two and a half years previously, had entered the Seminary of Saint Sulpice, received Tonsure and the four Minor Orders, and now was on the eve of his ordination to the subdiaconate. But, suddenly, "as he stood before the fireplace, an instantaneous convulsion shook him from head to foot; his face was contorted, his eyes distended and lusterless, his pale lips frothed, and he fell gasping and breathless at the feet of his director, who bravely seized him in his arms and carried him to his bed."<sup>1</sup>

It was his first major epileptic seizure, after a few years of minor crises of nerves. And it does not seem that it could have come at a worse time. What greater disappointment can be conceived



for a convert aspiring to the Catholic priesthood? To stretch out one's foot to cross over the line of eternal consecration to God's service, and then to be struck down, indeed by God Himself. "What an affliction, what a misery, what an unbearable misfortune!" he writes in a letter to his brother's family (also convert Catholics) ...in order to portray the wrong attitude:

"Such, surely, would be the language of a child of the world, of one who seeks happiness only in earthly goods, and who acts as if there were no God for him. But quite other is the way of the children of God, of true Christians. They are pleased with all that their Heavenly Father sends, because they know that whatever He sends them is good and advantageous, and that if things could turn otherwise it would be to their very real hurt.

"The ills with which God seems to afflict us are really benefits, and woe to the Christian who has all according to his own desire: he is not filled with the blessings of his God. So, my friends, *I can assure you that my dear malady is for me a great treasure, a treasure preferable to all the advantages which the world offers its friends*" (pp. 57-58).

This cherished sickness both made and proved Francis apt for the great designs of God, as nothing else could. For God had not made a mistake; He never makes mistakes.

It was not long before Francis's superiors had to draw their canonical principles to a conclusion and lead the seminarian to the door with his epileptic impediment. The messenger, Father Carbon, tried to soften the blow: they would help him find a position in the world, so as to support himself. Libermann merely asked the date of his departure and said, "As to the world, I cannot return to it: God, I trust, will provide for me" (p. 61). St. Sulpice's rector, Father Garnier, was extremely restless that night and, on the following day, the directors judged fit to rescind their decision. The young convert had already shown signs of sanctity and supernatural favors; his acceptance of God's will was certainly heroic. He would stay, more as a worker than a seminarian, and be provided for out of the seminary's pocket.



## A Novitiate in Limbo

Francis spent the next ten years in clerical limbo. He never retracted his unalloyed commitment to God's service, yet his future always remained uncertain...in a sense. For God knew what He wanted and how He was to accomplish it. In this feeble epileptic He had a rare docile instrument in whom Providence could fully demonstrate Its sway.

The Sulpician superiors sent Francis to reside at Issy, the country house of the Paris seminary, where philosophy was taught. He would remain there from 1832-37, doing many practical services for all and sundry, but also exercising a spiritual apostolate. It would not be exaggeration to say that he rejuvenated the piety of a seminary life that had become too occupied with natural sciences and too imbued with a worldly spirit. At the same time, Libermann maintained an extensive correspondence with people of all walks of life. His letters were spiritual gold.

In short, the spiritual crucible that Francis was passing through gave him an immense >

supernatural influence. As a hot iron heats all that it touches, so too Libermann, on fire with God, enkindled that fire in all he encountered. Seminarians flocked around him at recreation to hear him speak of things divine. He organized pious groups that would go on walks to discuss pre-arranged spiritual topics. Such was the esteem in which he was held that both seminarians and superiors addressed the mere acolyte as “Father” Libermann.

Thus, it is not surprising that when the superior of the Eudist novitiate in Rennes wrote the rector of the Issy seminary in 1837, asking for a director of novices, he received the reply, “Take Father Libermann. He is only in Minor Orders, it is true, but he’s as good as a priest” (p. 103). As a result, Francis found himself leaving Issy to take up a most uncomfortable role, that of an epileptic, acolyte, convert Jew directing a crowd of clerics in major orders. This humiliating experience coupled with an extreme desolation of soul seemed to complete his spiritual preparation for his great work. At the same time, it gave him an intimate familiarity with the Eudist spirituality that would later be such a useful reference point for him.

During his three years at Rennes, several Sulpician seminarians attached to “Father” Libermann became increasingly insistent that he lead them in a grandiose project: the founding of a missionary order for the conversion of the black races. At first, Francis encouraged their zeal without considering himself as being called to that apostolate. Over time, however, he felt obliged to consult those whom he called God’s “most wisest servants, those most zealous for His glory” (p. 145), and all unanimously declared that God wanted him to devote himself to the black mission.

## Priest, Founder, and Re-Founder

As 1840 dawned on the world, the road to Rome witnessed this preposterous sight: an epileptic acolyte and a young French priest headed to the Holy See to propose the beginning

of a mission society to evangelize the black races. They obtained an audience with Pope Gregory XVI on February 17, and submitted a memoir to the Propaganda on March 11 stating their purpose.

However, things quickly took their necessary Providential downturn: Libermann’s companion abandoned him, several priests that he consulted ridiculed him, and an Archbishop of the Propaganda told him that he needed to be a priest before thinking about starting a mission society. “As if to make the work very evidently of Heaven, human aid was almost entirely withdrawn” (p. 165).

What was acolyte Libermann’s response to this situation of human hopelessness? It was for him to take up residence in a miserable Roman garret costing one dollar a month, where he “drew up the Rule, formed members, counseled aspirants, and made provision for the Institute’s life and work far into the future” (p. 173). These were not the actions of an insane man, but rather one whose calculations are wholly supernatural—he was convinced that the work was the will of God.

His confidence was rewarded when, after a three months’ wait, he received a letter from the prefect of the Propaganda encouraging his project and also expressing the wish that he be provided sufficient health to receive Holy Orders. In fact, his epilepsy had been consistently waning and over two years had passed without a seizure. Francis would now enter a period of reaping rich fruits from his long patience with God’s hand, as he went from success to success in the decade remaining of his short life.

Father Libermann without quotation marks emerged from a chapel in Amiens on September 18, 1841, and that same month he established the novitiate of the Congregation of the Holy Heart of Mary in a suburb of the same city. Newly-formed priests of the newly-formed Congregation soon were pouring out into Haiti, Mauritius, Bourbon, Australia, Guinea, Gabon, and Senegambia.

As the new order grew and a wave of missionary fever spread through France, Rome turned to Father Libermann to solve a difficult problem. The Holy Ghost Fathers, founded in 1703 for the same sort of missionary work, had





suffered terribly from the French Revolution, and were now fading out of existence. Would it be possible for the new order to save the old by becoming one with it? The practical difficulties were great, but in the end Father Libermann accomplished the merger while holding on to two indispensable conditions: regular community life for his missionaries and their exclusion from diocesan parish work.

Three years after this triumph of Providence, on February 2, 1852, Father Libermann, Superior General of the Holy Ghost Fathers, made the final submission of his will to God by breathing forth his soul. He was almost 50 years old.

## Conclusion

Clearly, the defining aspect of the Venerable Libermann's life was his habitual deference to the will of God. It was by following but not preceding that Will that he was able to accomplish sanctity and the great fruits that flowed from it. May we not see in his founding of a priestly missionary society at the insistence of seminarians a great work of faith, and also a great testimony for his sons? Should we be surprised that his seventh successor as Superior General, 120 years later, should himself found a priestly missionary order, in very unlikely circumstances, by faithfully following Providence? No, in retrospect, we simply see the consistency of God's ways. He alone Who pleases to confound the strong by the weak could have been directing these two great men of faith, Francis Libermann and Marcel Lefebvre.

<sup>1</sup> Cited in G. Lee, *The Life of the Venerable Francis Libermann* (Fort Collins, Colorado: Roger McCaffrey Publishing, 1911 edition), p. 53. All page numbers are taken from this book.



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## Father Libermann on Practical Union with God

If the Spirit of God fills the soul in every instant of life, every phase of our conduct is marked by the supernatural. In conforming to the will of God the smallest detail is carried out with the same perfection as are important things—the most insignificant and indifferent acts are sanctified without any special reflection or preoccupation, by the holy dispositions which rule all our conduct.

A soul united to God in this way abandons little by little the errors that spring from an obstinate attachment to one's own views. Its judgments are freed from the control of purely natural influences, and therefore from prejudice and impulsiveness. The soul acquires lights that are strong and practical, that is, a certain discernment in the things of God both for its own guidance for the direction of souls and also for the works of God which it will have to perform.

Such a soul forms correct judgments of persons, things and circumstances in accordance with the mind of God: "The spiritual man judges all things." It is not a light as clear as that found in fervent meditation but rather a practical sense of things divine. It discerns their value and their diverse nuances by a kind of instinct, a calm insight which proceeds from divine grace.

Entire abandonment to the action of grace renders the soul docile and flexible before the holy will of God, which the soul's faith and love discern in all that happens. The soul, filled with strength, is discouraged or disheartened by nothing. Nothing can agitate it to excess since it is indifferent to the things of this world. Misfortunes, contradictions, sufferings and humiliations, even death itself, cannot disquiet it.

What is most remarkable is that in the midst of sufferings and afflictions the soul so disposed experiences in its contact with creatures a greater serenity and cheerfulness of heart. It is a quiet and restrained gladness and still, one that is very real and sweeter than that which springs from the gratification of nature. The soul may indeed be afflicted in its natural sensibilities, but at the same time it is humbly and lovingly submissive and fully abandoned to the holy will of God. Its gladness resides in the profoundest depths of the soul, at the very source and root of its life.

# Church and State

in the Spanish Empire

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by Michael Jones

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These events in the fourth century were only the beginnings of a long history of Church-State relations. They have also received very bad press in post-Enlightenment times, the new orthodoxy being that the state should be indifferent in matters concerning religion and that anything else is a theocratic Dark Age worthy of the Ayatollahs.

It is quite a distortion of the truth. The Christian state from Theodosius onwards was one that believed in the Christian religion, not just in terms of the individuals that made up the state, but corporately; it was a confessional state that declared itself to be Catholic even though half the population may well have been pagan or members of sects. It was not a theocracy because the Church and State were distinct entities with different immediate ends

(unlike the Islamic Caliphate). It was a case of unity not identity. Because the Catholic state was a believing state, it undertook to assist the Church. As there was an overlapping of the subjects of these two institutions which also agreed on the ultimate questions of life, working together seemed natural. Just as the head of a non-ecclesiastical society like the family was held to have obligations concerning its religious well-being, the state felt the same responsibility for its subjects.

Emperors like Constantine and Theodosius were strongly encouraged by leaders of the Church to intervene heavily and forcefully also in support of doctrinal orthodoxy.

For the early Church, the Sermon on the Mount and every aspect of dogma were one and the same thing.



It has occurred to people in more recent times (but not to fourth-century Catholics) that the actions of Constantine and Theodosius were those of pagan-minded, worldly men of power, and forced real Catholicism away from its pure beginnings. Speaking of the early Church under persecution, G. K. Chesterton, in his work *The Everlasting Man*, was nearer to the truth:

“It was important solely because it was intolerable; and in that sense it is true to say that it was intolerable because it was intolerant. It was resented, because, in its own still and almost secret way, it had declared war. It had risen out of the ground to wreck the heaven and earth of heathenism. It did not try to destroy all that creation of gold and marble; but it contemplated a world without it...”

Those who charged the Christians with burning down Rome with firebrands were slanderers; but they were at least far nearer to the nature of Christianity than those among the moderns who tell us that the Christians were a sort of ethical society, being martyred in languid fashion for telling men they had a duty to their neighbours, and only mildly disliked because they were meek and mild.”

The early Church was militant and dogmatic, and Theodosius in the uncomplicated fashion typical of Spain, of which he was a native, saw no reason not to unite the whole empire in this new enlarged family. It is a mentality which can be seen in the empire which grew out of the Spanish kingdom of Castile from the late fifteenth century onwards. In fact, the universal monarchy of Castile, which was global in its reality and aspirations, never employed the title empire, or used imperial eagles as emblems, or claimed to be the successor to ancient Rome. Nevertheless it was the first time a civilization could claim to be global, or that the Catholic Church could actually fulfil its aspiration to universality in the geographic sense.

When the Columbus expedition sent by Isabel of Castile discovered the Americas, it immediately raised questions about how to deal with the new reality. Pope Alexander VI in his 1493 Bull *Inter Caetera* granted to the monarchs of Castile all new lands lying west of a pole to

pole line established west of the Azores. But he also charged these monarchs: “...that in our times especially the Catholic faith and the Christian religion be exalted and be everywhere increased and spread, that the health of souls be cared for and that barbarous nations be overthrown and brought to the faith itself....We [the Papacy] command you [the Catholic Monarchs and their heirs of the Crown of Castile]...to instruct the aforesaid inhabitants and residents and dwellers therein in the Catholic faith, and train them in good morals.”

This Bull, including the responsibility for the religious well-being of their new subjects demanded by the Pope, was interpreted in the widest and most literal sense by the Spanish, who were nothing if not consistent. The reform of the Church conducted during the Counter Reformation after the Council of Trent was already in full swing in Castile well before Protestantism. Under the inspiration of the Bishop of Toledo, Francisco Ximenes, and Queen Isabel, monasteries were encouraged to observe their rule and the moral and intellectual standards of the Spanish clergy improved. The result in the early sixteenth century would be that while northern-European Christianity was tearing itself apart in degeneracy and civil war, a new kind of clergy with a zeal not seen since the crusades would enthusiastically set about reordering the life of entire nations across four continents.

The Iberian conquests established the first global civilization, which was the beginning of our modern age. It is usually asserted that modernity means secularism and liberalism, but for more than a century, globalism and modernity were par excellence Catholic, Baroque and Hispanic. The division of the world's newly discovered regions in 1494 between Castile and Portugal (both culturally Hispanic, and between 1580 and 1640 politically united by personal dynastic union) under papal arbitration may have been detested by some European states, but these simply weren't in the running. The first surviving non-Hispanic settlement or colony outside Europe had to wait until the seventeenth century. >



## **Bartolomé de las Casas, O.P. (1484 – July 18, 1566)**

was a 16th-century Spanish historian, social reformer and Dominican friar. He became the first resident Bishop of Chiapas, and the first officially appointed “Protector of the Indians.”

Arriving as one of the first settlers in the New World he participated in, and was eventually compelled to oppose the atrocities committed against the Native Americans by the Spanish colonists. In 1515, he reformed his views, gave up his Indian slaves and *encomienda*, and advocated, before King Charles V, on behalf of rights for the natives. In his early writings, he advocated the use of African slaves instead of Natives in the West-Indian colonies; consequently, criticisms have been leveled at him as being partly responsible for the beginning of the Transatlantic slave trade. Later in life, he retracted those early views as he came to see all forms of slavery as equally wrong. In 1522, he attempted to launch a new kind of peaceful colonialism on the coast of Venezuela, but this venture failed causing Las Casas to enter the Dominican Order and become a friar, leaving the public scene for a decade. He then traveled to Central America, undertaking peaceful evangelization among the Maya of Guatemala and participated in debates among the Mexican churchmen about how best to bring the natives to the Christian faith.

The conquest of America by the conquistadores was an epic and sometimes ugly business. These were private expeditions given approval by the monarch, in particular Charles I, who needed the money for his European ventures. The forays then diminished and in 1573 the *Ordinances Concerning Discoveries* forbade any further unapproved expeditions of conquistadores, Spanish rule then continuing on the American continent until 1830. However, politically correct history has represented the Baroque civilization of the Americas as a 300-year massacre.

This fairy tale ignores what has been termed “the second conquest of America” by friars and bureaucrats. Arriving with the conquistadores, they immediately set about putting into practice the aims of Church and State and were united in what would become a 300-year social experiment, a giant mission which they were able

comparatively undisturbed to develop. This real conquest created the Baroque civilization that is the cultural base for all the peoples of Iberian America today, a vast space comprising over 650 million people (and another 100 million in the Philippines).

What kind of society did the priests and administrators of the Crown create? The Laws of Burgos in 1512 show the Crown already determined to prevent abuses in dealings with Amerindians. There were several versions of the Laws of the Indies, the most famous of which was that of the 1680 Laws of the Kingdoms of the Indies (from the Crown’s point of view the Americas were not colonies, but Christianized versions of preceding states and peoples).

The Amerindians, who until the end of Spanish rule in the Americas constituted more than 50 percent of the population (today less than ten percent), lived in towns that were self-governing



and economically corporate entities on lands that were inalienably theirs. Amerindians and Castilian settlers were geographically divided by the Crown into two sets of areas called “The Two Republics,” a division insisted upon by the clergy to protect the Indian populations. Amerindians could reside in the towns set aside for Europeans (resulting in a numerous mestizo population), but Europeans, apart from the clergy, could not move to Indian areas. It was thought that if these peoples were insulated from the influences that colonists might bring from an already decadent Europe, the Church might be able to radically transform them. The same policy existed in the Philippines, where Spanish settlement was discouraged. The Castilian Crown supported and applied these demands of the Church.

The result was an overwhelming success that has not been repeated since. The great missionary work of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, for example, did not result in the establishment of a single Catholic country because the colonial empires where this work was done simply no longer had the confessional attitude of Castile, and such activity was directed towards individuals, not societies as a whole. Gabon today, for example, may have a statistical majority of baptized Catholics, but it is not culturally a Catholic country.

The Church also insisted on educating Amerindians in their own languages, leading to their standardization and preservation. Quechua, for example, is more widespread today than it was under the Incas because it was promoted by the Church as means of communication. In the sixteenth century almost the entire Amerindian population under Castilian rule was transferred to *reducciones*, or model towns, designed to create a new sacred urban geography, a new human landscape that would unashamedly and successfully integrate a whole continent into the Christian civilization in its globalized, Baroque and Hispanic form. This new living cultural reality is still with us today.

If the Castilian world was a mission, it was also a crusade and it would be hard to find a more successful and modern example of Catholic geopolitics. The Columbus expedition sent off by

Queen Isabel in 1492 “accidentally” found America, but why did Castile send it in the first place? Europe had been contained by the Islamic world for almost a thousand years and the Iberian kingdoms had been fighting to free themselves from it for almost 800 years. The Castilian expeditions to the west and the simultaneous Portuguese expansion east were deliberately designed to surround and contain Islam on a global basis. They succeeded in spectacular fashion. From around the year 1500, Islam, which had been expanding continuously, was checked globally at every possible point of expansion. After expelling Islam from Granada, opposing it in West Africa, in Ethiopia, the Indian Ocean and South East Asia and sensationally in the Philippines which were already ruled by Muslims, the Castilians and the Portuguese put a stop to Islamic encroachment for 300 years.

The modern world was born in the struggle between a Catholic, Baroque and Hispanic civilization on one hand, and Islam and the emerging bourgeois powers of northern Europe on the other. An important subject for consideration is the Thirty Years War and the kind of society that began to triumph after 1648. Still with us today, it is a world dominated by the self-interest of states which are the expression of what historian Christopher Dawson has called a bourgeois type concerned with material well-being and determined to relativize everything else. Nobody really doubts that the days of its dominance are now numbered. More to the point: what does the current rapid return of contemporary society and politics worldwide to the situation preceding 1648 mean for us?

# History and the School

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by Dr. John Senior

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Political liberals who dominate the media (including universities) today, denounce the other modes as enemies of democratic dogma. Among the fantasies such reduction spawns is “one worldism” of the Wilsonian sort—fantasy because the U.S. Constitution is not a blueprint for the world or even for America: Men are not created equal. Humans, like most animal species, are divided by gender; and America, like most societies, was (and despite the utopian emancipations still is) divided into rich, middle and working classes with a slave or quasi-slave body of captives and recent immigrants (black, white, yellow, mestizo—whatever) who do the menial work. Since the civil rights rebellion, the servile class has suffered left wing delusions of upward social mobility and their masters suicidal guilt.

Because we have descended to the non-rule of unruly “democratic” man, the art of government, divorced from its end (the common good), is a headless means, a multi-media machine whose message is programmed by unaccountable, irresponsible agents.

Since the state, as Plato says, is the soul writ large, the “democratic” state, led by the mob, is like a man ungoverned by his lusts. Since no one follows, leaders run to stay ahead of whatever the mob demands, but since mobs are mindless, and cannot even know their wants, some other “mind” (the tyrant’s or the demon’s) invents and whets their appetites.

Politics falls from persuasion, determined by the give and take of rational rhetoric, to the psychological order, where irrational appetites are manipulated.



Traditional schools are not immune because, on the highest intellectual level, many “Thomists” (not St. Thomas) turn out to be fideists. To protect the Church against the dialectic criticisms coinciding with the oligarchic ascendancy in the nineteenth century, the Hierarchy imposed a know-nothing childishness on Catholics. The doctrine of infallibility was raised to a papalotry by which whatever the magisterium said—not just infallible decrees—was taken as the word of God. When St. Thomas was declared the Common Doctor of the Church, professors in seminaries and universities took the *Summa* as a “Book of Knowledge” where all answers can be found, if not directly, then inferred, by ingenious accommodation. The extreme reaction of democratic revolt against the authority of the magisterium (since Vatican II by the magisterium itself) blew in a house of straw. Bad to worse to be sure: Before there was false order, but order nonetheless. Blind obedience to true propositions kept a hundred years of Catholics from modernist error and sin: They did not read Marx and Nietzsche; couples married, stayed married and had many children; priests were trained in disputation and knew the arguments—like high school children learning Euclid, they memorized axioms and worked proofs never having seen their truth but got the answers right! Alas, when the “democratic” revolution came, not just the ignorant, but priests and nuns with doctorates were easily switched from axioms to false assumptions on the authority of new theologians (and many broke vows they had taken in what had really been playing a memorized part).

The *Summa Theologica* is exactly what it says it is, a book for beginners in the graduate school of theology, not a blueprint for kindergarten through college. First of all, it presupposes something requisite to education itself, and lacking in industrial society, a normal human life nurtured by the direct experience of what poets (not philosophers) call “nature”—earth, sea, sky, forests, fields, wild and domestic animals, stars. The capital joke of “The Nun’s Priest’s Tale” is a rooster who struts about declaiming Thomist philosophy. I found out teaching Chaucer years

ago that the difficulty was not with philosophy but that, even in a class of small town and rural students, none had ever raised chickens! And this is the crux of the crisis in the political order: Poetry not grounded in reality is fantasy, and image illusion; a people with the habit of such pseudo-poetry can be easily led, through the manipulation of empty images, to illusory ideas. In reforming education, before “back to basics,” “back to nature”!

In the second place, the *Summa* presupposes twenty-five years of propaedeutic, that is, the whole classical curriculum from elementary and high school through college. The order of learning follows the order of human growth. Now St. Thomas and the Fathers agree that theological knowledge is (in St. Anselm’s famous phrase) “*Fides quaerens intellectum*”—Faith seeking understanding. In the theological order, you begin with Faith and using reason try to understand it. But, for example, teaching third grade arithmetic you cannot invoke such logic because Faith presupposes nature. Let children know what chickens are by seeing, hearing, chasing, being chased and pecked before they count their eggs! The education expert says, “It makes no difference if it’s eggs, peanuts or stars! Two and two of anything is four”—a mode of discourse college youth can handle, but abuse to six- to twelve-year-olds who think by sight, sound, touch, smell and taste, in a word in things. You can pry them loose by teaching methods but in doing so deprive them of the natural strength in childhood learning. Tom Sawyer on his island spending hours watching insects or alert for shooting stars at night is far from wasting time. It is the work of schools to discipline such learning, not subvert it. Confusing theology with politics reduces teaching to propaganda where truth is whatever message authority wants. The docile child, in filial fear, starting with faith in what he is told, will say that two and two is four and worse believe it, never having seen the fact—an ungrounded act of faith that will shift with shifts in power. Take the children out to see insects and stars and let them wonder for themselves. Insects and stars are really wonderful and wonder is the way Christ teaches at the center of the soul. >

Schools reflect (and further shape) their ages. For aristocrats the school is the frontier. Timocrats establish private academies for the children of the privileged classes. Oligarchs train little money-makers for success in business. “Democratic” schools are street gangs.

“But not our school!” you say. Well, I have seen computers on the sixth-grade desks and your children at Right to Life demonstrations organized precisely on the rules of New Left manuals—the placards, chants, jeers, locking arms, the fanatic women making speeches about “family values” while pathetic fathers nurse babies in the crying room! When St. Paul says women should be silent in the Church, he means in the whole mystical body, not just the chapel. Let Rachel weep for her children and Jacob fight and teach. Lady, go home. Your house is on fire and your children will burn! Get out of public life back to the bedroom, kitchen, nursery and salon—oh, do the talking there! Restore the truth and beauty of your sex in house and garden where they fructify and flower. But how, when we have grown so poor our women have to work? Fathers, make your living at some manful thing—oh, how? How can we teach what we have failed to do? Except for heroes and some lucky few, I see no way.

Every age has its heroes. The natural aristocrat, as Jefferson called him, the genteel timocrat like Lee imitating Washington, the oligarchic millionaire, the democratic savage. In schools the hero is the teacher. Frontier aristocrats like Natty Bumppo learn from nature. Timocrats have legendary masters—Chamberlain at Bowdoin, Lee at the college that now bears his name along with Washington’s; *Tom Brown’s School Days*, celebrating Arnold at Rugby, was an American bestseller. Oligarchs adore the Scientist. “Democratic” teachers are “Rap” stars, rapists of the heart and mind if not the body—though it sometimes come to that.

Which is why traditional schools have run in terror to the opposite extreme. Child abuse is a common mark of “democratic” practice—and so is its reverse, the freezing up of love. We need good, normal Catholic men, called to

teaching by the love of Christ, of his students and subject for whom wisdom is fear of the Lord and understanding keeping His commandments.

Traditionalists, God knows, have heroically kept the Faith, but from economic pressure and a well-earned distrust of experts, have often ignored the heroic mode: Unqualified, talentless, unloving teachers have been employed as if teachers were employees! A school is first and principally a faculty, a college of “colleagues” themselves perennially learning together what they teach. Good schools need tenured masters. Home schooling or schools without gifted, educated, independent (that is, “heroic”) faculties are not schools at all.

In a society that pays teachers less than truck drivers, prudence counsels family men to seek safe slavery in other jobs until by luck or grace they find refuge.

Things appear to be so bad, some think it is the End. However, it is a habit of history, as of the spiritual life which history reflects, that when things get worse, the worst winds up the spring of a return to give us one more chance—if not a second Spring, perhaps an Indian Summer. As emulsified mobs in universities and schools churn into mostly slavish clabber, a few golden kernels precipitate out into free, intellectual butter.

The class nature of society is a fact but in the vicissitudes of history, long-lasting, stable orders shift, elites collapse, déracinés from everywhere loot and squat in culture’s mansions. Yet unbelief and classlessness are vacuums intellectual and social nature abhor. Willy-nilly truth and class recur. It is a curious fact that the worst “democracy” in smashing all distinctions, opens up the world to that benign and only true democracy where there is neither Gentile nor Jew, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free...neither male nor female.

**John Senior** was the founder of the famous Integrated Humanities Program at the University of Kansas, through which hundreds of his students entered the Catholic Church. He is the author of several books including *The Death of Christian Culture* and *The Restoration of Christian Culture*. He is buried in St. Marys, Kansas.





# Memorare to St. Joseph

Remember, O most chaste spouse of the Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who implored your help and sought your intercession was left unassisted. Full of confidence in your power, I fly unto you and beg your protection. Despise not, O Guardian of the Redeemer, my humble supplication, but in your bounty, hear and answer me. Amen.

Gabriel García Moreno

# The Thomas More of America

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by J. Orella, translated by Fr. Paul Kimball, SSPX

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## Martyr of Liberalism in the Defense of His Country and Christendom

Gabriel García Moreno was born on December 21, 1821, in the port city of Guayaquil, Ecuador, in the midst of a comfortable family, Creole on his mother's side and Spanish from Leon on his father's side. In the process of American independence, the Garcías always maintained a position of faithfulness to Spain and of love for their Mother Country, which little Gabriel, the youngest of eight children, inherited.

Unlike his brothers, Gabriel's poor health obliged him to receive his schooling at home.

At the time of Gabriel's youth, his country was still in line with his upbringing. He was born a Spaniard, spent his childhood as a citizen of the

Greater Bolivian Columbia, in the little republic of Guayaquil, which afterwards belonged to Peru and finally to Ecuador. Gabriel would become the father of this small Spanish-American nation.

In September of 1836, Gabriel had to leave for Quito to pursue his university studies at the University of San Fulgencio. There this young man from Guayaquil soon stood out for his ability in studying philosophy and law. At first he was inclined to become a priest, but the difficulties in his country made him decide to take the road of politics in order to defend the Church from liberal, anticlerical legislation. In 1845 he took part in an armed revolt against the liberal Flores, thus beginning his public life centered on the battle against Ecuadorian liberalism.

The following year he married Rosa Ascásubi, of a venerable family, whose two brothers were



Gabriel's most constant collaborators. The marriage would be blessed with three daughters, but they died soon after birth. Meanwhile, Gabriel gained fame from the pages of his periodical, *The Avenger*, since it denounced the intentions of Flores' liberals to regain power. Nevertheless, the political problems of his country obliged him to make a trip to Europe for two years, where he remained dedicated to the Catholic intellectual reaction against the radical liberalism of 1848.

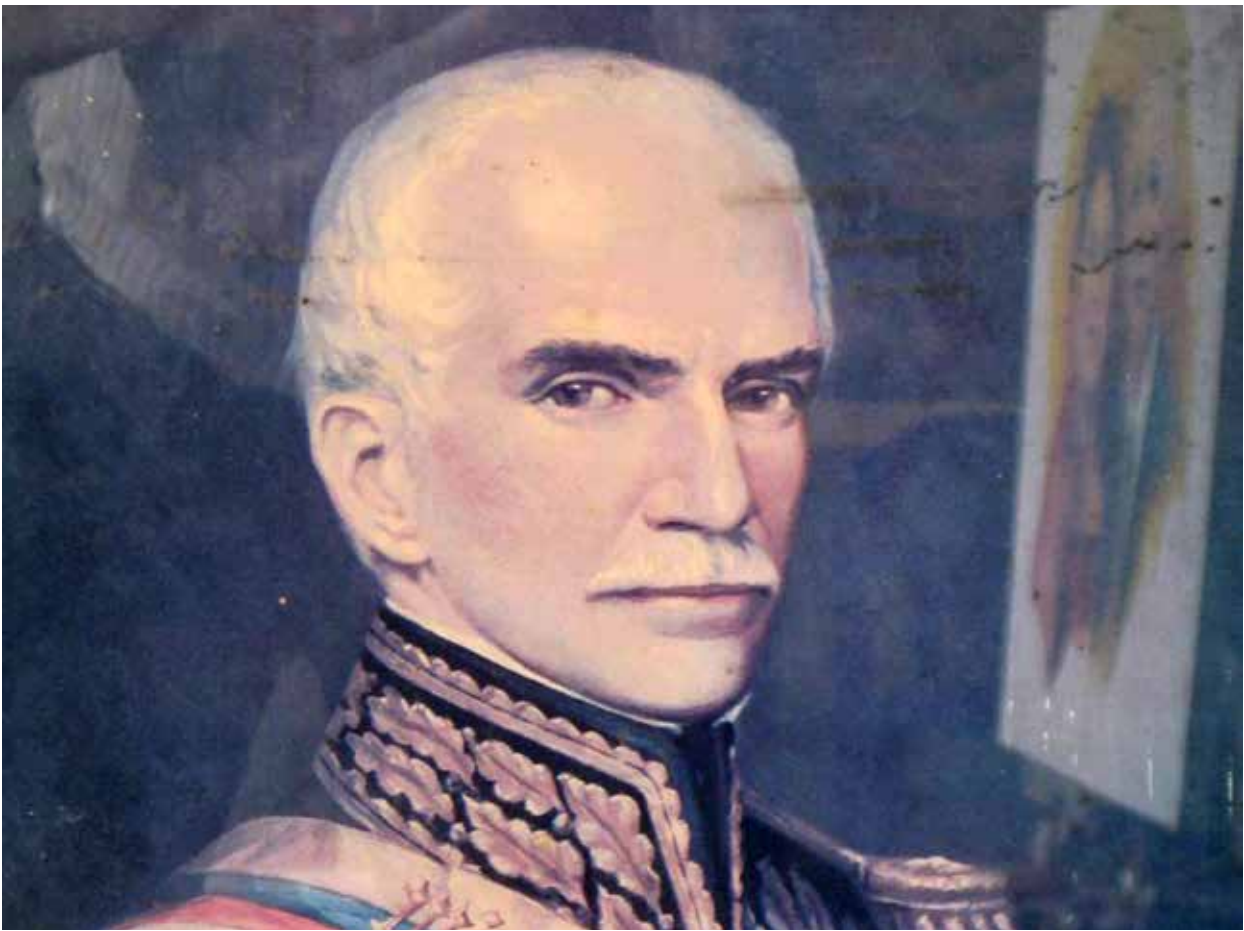
On his return to Ecuador, Gabriel put himself in danger by defending the Jesuits, recently expelled from Columbia. In 1850 he wrote his small work, *The Defense of the Jesuits*. Consequently, the Ecuadorian government withdrew its plan to expel the sons of St. Ignatius. The following year he returned to public activity through the pages of the periodical, *The Nation*, by his attack on General José María Urbina, the epitome of Ecuadorian anticlerical liberalism and president of the Republic. His attacks earned his arrest and he was handed over to the Columbian authorities, but he escaped into exile. He remained so for two years in Peru and France. In the Gallican country, Gabriel studied Geology, Botany, Vulcanology and Church History; frequented the sacraments; and from that time his life as a defender of the Church guarded coherence with his spiritual life. Under the reign of Napoleon III, Gabriel noticed the developments attained by the initiative of an executive force dedicated to favorably transforming society.

In 1856 the new president Robles decreed an amnesty and Gabriel was able to return to his country. The popularity attained by Gabriel as leader of the opposition made him mayor of Quito and rector of the dilapidated University. From his sojourn in France, Gabriel understood and tried to improve the physiognomy of the Ecuadorian capital and bolstered scientific research; he himself taught the chemistry classes. His work was increased by *The National Union*, a new periodical which served as a vehicle against radical liberalism. The following year, despite the established tyranny, Garcia Moreno was elected senator. Nevertheless, the excuse of a war against Peru permitted President Robles to

establish a dictatorship and to exile Gabriel to the Andean country to the South.

It was the worst moment for Ecuador. Civil war broke out and four governments tried to obtain power, while Columbia and Peru began negotiations for dividing the country. President Robles was overthrown when, in hope of remaining in power, he offered the Galapagos to the United States. Garcia Moreno formed part of a provisional government, was defeated by the Columbians and sought the military support of Flores, who was exiled. Together they defeated the liberals of Ecuador and of the neighboring countries. In 1860, Gabriel obtained the highest office in the country. To give a good example, he gave half of his salary to the public treasury and the rest to works of charity. As president, he had the duty of making civil power prevail over military power, even by commanding a general to be flogged. In 1862 he established a concordat with the Holy See and summoned different religious orders to begin educating the whole population. During this period, he faced various conspiracies by the liberals who had taken refuge in Columbia and Peru, and part of an armed confrontation with the Columbian Republic which resulted in disaster for the Ecuadorians.

In 1865 he left the presidency and was named ambassador to Chile. Being recently widowed, he married his niece, Mariana Alcázar. On a journey to Santiago, while delayed in Lima, he was victim of an attack. He was not harmed, but the Peruvian authorities accused him of intent to murder for having tried to defend himself with a weapon that could have killed the terrorist who had assaulted him. Two years later he was named governor of Imbabura, a region which had suffered a terrible earthquake with fifteen thousand dead. The ability of this ex-president was clearly shown in securing public order and reconstruction of the region. In 1869, to ward off the blow of a liberal state, Gabriel García Moreno acted swiftly and took the presidency of the Republic upon himself by means of a coup de force. As president he had to face liberal military uprisings which were forcefully repressed. Nevertheless, under his government, Ecuador experienced great economic progress, >



doubling financial earnings and tripling funding for education. It was the first time that children and native Indians had the obligation to learn and to read. Partly, the introduction of religious orders, such as the Jesuits from Germany, put the country in contact with the most modern methods of research.

In 1873, his unblemished religiosity led Gabriel to consecrate the country to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Ecuador was the first country to do this. His devotion brought him to join the Marian congregation of men established for laborers, so that those of his social standing, though his political rivals, were not troubled about praying with the president. Nevertheless, his candidacy for a third term brought the liberals into complete opposition to his government. From Masonic circles, ideological principles inspired by radical

liberalism were defended through the pen of Juan Montalvo, calling for “tyrannicide” of the Catholic president. In this way, by means of a Columbian mercenary, Gabriel García Moreno was assassinated on August 6, 1875, receiving fourteen blows of a machete and six bullet wounds. Dying in the Cathedral, he became a martyr par excellence for Catholic politicians and a St. Thomas More brought back to life in modern times.

J. Orella, “Gabriel García Moreno, el Tomás Moro de América,” *Arbil*, No. 38 (online at [www.arbil.org](http://www.arbil.org)), trans. by Fr. Paul Kimball.



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# Tridentine Duties of the Husband

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by Michael J. Rayes

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What does it mean to be a man today? What did it mean to be a man in 1566? If you have a *sensus Catholicus*, your answer would be practically the same.

The Catechism of the Council of Trent offers a thorough treatment of Catholic doctrine. It was ordered by the council Fathers, edited under St. Charles Borromeo, and finally published by St. Pius V in 1566. The Catechism has a chapter on marriage and includes a section on the duties of a husband.

The man should be “constantly occupied in some honest pursuit” both to provide for the family and to avoid idleness. This means that even if you do not work because you are retired, unemployed, or perhaps working part-time, there should be some hobby or leisure activity which you pursue to occupy your time. The Catechism

calls idleness “the root of almost every vice.” Do something! Your kids will notice your busy hobby and they will want to take part. This is exactly what you want. Your wife will certainly notice your work with the kids in your wood shop, your garage, or when playing sports with them.

Men are to cherish their wives. This is the full meaning of St. Paul’s exhortation on marriage (Eph. 5:22-33). Following up on the wisdom of St. Paul, the Catechism exhorts men to treat their wives “generously and honorably.” Men are then reminded that woman was taken from man’s side so as to be his companion. Not from his feet, so he could trample her, but not from his head either, because she is not to command her husband, but obey him. The man, in turn, has certain duties to his family. The Catechism lists three: Keep his family in order, correct their >

morals, and see that they faithfully discharge their duties.

## Keep the Family in Order

It falls upon you, the husband, to ensure that your house is in good order. This means fixing the doorknob, but also means not leaving when things get too dramatic. The family must stay together.

One way to help keep your family life organized is with a family schedule. You might be the one who either writes the family schedule or adjusts it as needs dictate. If you don't have a family schedule, you and your wife might consider creating one. It would most likely be flexible to accommodate reality. If you write "4:35 – clean family room and set table for supper" you will be disappointed. Instead, it may need to look like, "after school – clean family room and set table."

You will usually be the one to call everyone together for the Rosary and other prayers. You ought to be the one who ensures that the children are well-shod, clothed, and have appropriate hygiene. Your wife may perform the actual tasks, but you are the one who makes sure it can happen. Your wife also should not have to call and call and call the kids to the dinner table or any other time they are needed. You may have to administer consequences for failing to assemble when called, or your family will be in chaos and your wife will be exhausted.

The family schedule will need a great amount of input and advice from your wife because it will be her schedule too. You may even want to have her write it. The husband, however, is responsible for ensuring that the family has some orderly way of functioning, whether that entails following a written schedule or some other method.

## Correct Their Morals

It is your job as the father to discipline the children when they stray. Sometimes you may need to tell them it's a good thing they were

caught and now punished by you, because purgatory is a lot worse. Remind them that the effects of their sins can be expiated now, on earth.

It's a lot easier to correct a son's morals when you are the same guy who just spent an hour throwing a Frisbee with him. It's also a lot easier when the child just spent half an hour telling you all about his little problems and yearnings, while you simply listened. If instead, all you ever did was show up and punish, your authority would soon enough be practically non-existent.

Remember Don Bosco's preventative method.

Your goal is to get your children to want to be good, not simply to behave because their parents want it. Sometimes I'll just ask my miscreant eight-year-old daughter, "Don't you want to be good?" She just looks at me without saying anything. I know she's thinking about it.

You may wish to tell your children that your job is to correct them and get them to heaven. You can also differentiate things for them. ("This is how little kids act when they're naughty, but here is how older people behave.") The point is to tie selfish, immature behavior with childishness; but mature, loving, morally correct behavior with being grown up. This makes a strong impact on kids.

This is a sensitive topic, but men are also responsible for correcting the errors of their wives. One example is when the woman is out by herself or with kids, a Mary-like standard should rule her attire. This and other concerns are best discussed privately and when both spouses are in an agreeable mood. Timing is everything.

The virtue of prudence is necessary as well. Husbands and wives should not complain about each other to other adults. You correct your family's morals but if others don't need to know about it, do not reveal it to them. Your job is to protect your family.

## Faithfully Discharge Their Duties

The obvious comes to mind when discharging duties: The father makes sure that his children



do their daily duties, such as homework. But there is more to it than that. If your wife takes the initiative every Sunday morning to get the kids ready for Mass, while you rely heavily on her to wake you and then barely lift a finger to help with the kids, you may want to reassess your own adherence to your duties.

How are your kids doing in school? If you don't know, find out. What are your wife's needs so she can perform her domestic duties? You may need to buy a new kitchen appliance instead of a new cordless drill. Without paying attention to her needs, you may never notice them, especially if a docile wife doesn't mention it.

On the other hand, some wives are the exact opposite of the docile type. You'll want to help her sort out and prioritize what she really needs, since everything for which she asks may have the same tone of urgency.

Sometimes we fathers can get uptight about money. I resisted buying a replacement math book for one of my sons, who lost his. It was an expensive hardback. I eventually bought a duplicate book anyway, even though I'm still convinced the original book is around here somewhere! But I had to make sure my son could faithfully discharge his own duties.

## Grace and Feelings

The important thing is that when men faithfully discharge their duties of state, however mundane they may feel, God notices. You may or may not "feel" close to God every day or feel that you're even receiving actual graces. Does this matter? Sometimes, yes. We men need those feelings to help us persevere. But we probably won't be experiencing consolation every day.

Regardless of your peaceful state, your male mind may spin with a lot of distractions and logical reasons to do something else. Your wife needs you to work with the kids, to direct them, to break up fights before they start, to discipline them, to be there so the kids can come to you with questions or to sort out conflicts. When you thus help with child-raising, it lifts a tremendous burden from your wife and she will have plenty of

loving feelings toward you.

Your family needs you right here, right now. They need your predictability. Your even-handedness. Even when you feel discouraged or frustrated, they still need your fun spirit, your decisive action, and your leadership.

The Catechism of the Council of Trent presents a nice mixture of doctrine, spirituality, and practical living for men of any generation. It is mostly a presentation of doctrine, but its clarity gives parents clear direction today on living a virtuous Catholic life.

Living the Catholic Faith, after all, entails applying the doctrines of the Church to our daily lives. This is as true today as it was 500 or even 2,000 years ago. Today, the torch of faith is passed to you. It is now our turn to be strong Catholic husbands and fathers and to raise our children in the loving arms of Holy Mother Church.



**Michael J. Rayes** is a lifelong Catholic, a husband, and father of seven. He has been published by Rafka Press, *Latin Mass Magazine*, and others.

# Q & A

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by Fr. Dominique Bourmaud, SSPX

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Is it safe to say that I get some graces from listening to or watching Mass on TV?

“Because of where I live, I am unable to get to Mass on Sundays, but I always listen to a live airing of the Mass from Our Lady of Fatima in Pittsburgh, and had a few questions: Is it safe to say that I get some graces from listening to or watching Mass on TV?”

“If I am unable to get to Mass otherwise, does this fulfill my Sunday obligation?”

By itself, watching and piously associating with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, even when done only through television or radio, can be meritorious, but not in the same way that attending Mass is. Christ instituted the sacraments as outward signs to give grace, which effect what they signify. Because of this necessarily external component of the sacraments, the Church has always insisted that to directly participate in them, we must be





physically and morally present. Thus, though we may receive graces because of our pious acts, we are not directly receiving graces as if we were attending a Mass. Put another way, when we watch or listen to Mass on TV or radio, we are not actually attending that Mass or directly participating in its merits. Any grace we receive in this way would amount to the devotional prayer of someone reciting his missal at home.

For the question of obligation, it is very simple. If you are able to attend Mass, and the distance is not seriously inconvenient, then you must attend the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation. If, however, you are unable to do so, listening to Mass on the radio doesn't fulfill your obligation, for the simple reason that the Church does not oblige you in these cases. The obligations imposed by the Church exist for the sake of our salvation, and the Church does not seek to oblige in cases that are impossible or gravely inconvenient (such as extended travel required to attend, or family illness).

them for the simple reason that he does not believe in unchanging truth (vs. antimodernist oath which he himself swore several times for sure!). It is difficult to believe in the infallibility of Church canonizations in the postconciliar era, which has sabotaged the canonization process. In the course of the 25 years of John Paul II's pontificate alone, there have been more saints canonized than in 2,000 years. In fact, often today, the canonizations are conveniently organized according to the trips of the Pope: does that sound like Catholic practice? So, the real sanctity of Padre Pio is not increased by the official canonization, no more than the non-sanctity of Escriba is magically turned into sanctity by an all too hurried process of canonization. With more reason can we affirm the same about forcing the beatification of John Paul II, which seemed to have been a media coup.

## Q&A

### Does the Pope have the power to bind error in Heaven?

“For example, the Pope has canonized a couple of questionable souls, such as the founder of Opus Dei and beatified many more such a John XXIII and John Paul II. I am heavily criticized for not addressing them with their given title of Blessed or Saint or as ‘Great’ because I do not believe they really are any of those things. So how can I simultaneously accept the canonization of Padre Pio and that of Escriva de Balaguer without seeming inconsistent when they were elevated by the same, Modernist, authority?”

You are getting at the core of the mysterium iniquitatis in the Church, with a Pope who hardly believes in his Papal powers and refuses to use

## French Catholics Protest in Favor of the Family

In Paris, on January 13, 2013, the evening of the day of protests against proposed legislation to redefine marriage, Alain Escada, president of the Civitas Institute, published a news release with an account of the event. "Never has Civitas gathered such a multitude. Nearly 50,000 people joined us on Place Pinel to pray for France and to denounce the appalling legislation concocted by a government of sorcerer's apprentices. We thank the many friendly associations that came to support us. Nearly a million protesters were here in the capital this Sunday, from every region and every walk of life." Mr. Escada encouraged his readers to continue the struggle. "The conclusion is self-evident. If the President of the Republic hopes to avoid a disastrous end to his term of presidency, he must start listening to the people of France, who clearly did not elect him for Bill 31."

The protest organized by the Civitas Institute was supported by several other movements, including but not limited to such groups as the local family councilors' group, the Catholic doctors and nurses' association, the Tourteraux, the association of Catholics of Val d'Oise, the Marnaise association for Christianity and society, the 'Laissez-les-Vivre' group, the Movement of Catholic Families, Catholic Renaissance, SOS Tout Petits, the association of Our Lady of Light, SOS Mamans, the Anjou students' group against same-sex marriage, the Catholic students' group of

Toulouse, Vendée's Clean Earth group, the Catholic Honour group, Riaumont, Scouts of Doran, Scouts of Godfrey de Bouillon, Perigord Friendships for France, the association for descendants of the papal Swiss Guard, the national veterans' group, the React group, the Versailles Family Solidarity group, the Center for studies on the recognition of the human person, the 'Oui à la Famille, non à l'homofolie' group, and the association Papa, Maman et Nous. Among the protes-



tors were Fr. Régis de Cacqueray and many other priests of the SSPX, as well as Fr. Jean-Nöel, superior of the Society of the Transfiguration, and priests from the Institute of the Holy Cross at Riaumont, the Institute of Christ the King, and the Good Shepherd Institute.

(Source: DICl)

## Anti-Clericals Seek to Remove Crucifix from Polish Parliament

On January 14, 2013, the District Court of Warsaw rejected the renewed request, led by the anticlerical movement Palikot, to remove the crucifix present in the hall of the National Parliament. According to the Polish Catholic news agency KAI, the "anti-crucifix" deputies argued that "crosses placed in public places violate the Constitution and the freedom of conscience and of religion." According to them, the cross influences the decisions made in Parliament.

The court esteemed that the religious symbol was "not an attack on private property" and could not be a "source of prejudice." The anticlerical members of Parliament are able to appeal this decision at a higher juridical level. The Palikot movement is the third faction in the lower house of the Polish Parliament; it received ten percent of the votes in 2011. (DICl.org)





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## U.S. Bishops Stand Against Anti-Catholic Legislation

While certainly not a unanimous front, it is important to note that many of the United States' bishops have publicly taken a stand against the anti-Catholic legislation proposed by the Obama administration's HHS Mandate.

LifeSite News spoke with some of the bishops at this year's March for Life, and some of the more hopeful responses to questions about the bishops' reactions are as follows:

Bishop Alexander Sample, Marquette: "We will not simply roll over and accept the mandate."

Bishop David Zubik, Pittsburgh: "We can't compromise on the principles; all we have to do is look at our history. Take a look at the saints who defended our faith and that's what it's about."

Bishop Samuel Aquila, Denver: "Many of us

have already stated that we will not and cannot cooperate with the mandate. There will be implications on it, whether it means narrowing some of what we do, or continue what we do and not cooperate with the mandate."

In the end, every prelate who spoke with LifeSite News admitted that he would be willing to go to jail rather than comply with the anti-Catholic HHS Mandate. But perhaps the most encouraging and direct statement comes from the newly appointed bishop to Lincoln, Nebraska, Bishop James Conley. In a recent statement on the Mandate, he stated, "The Catholic Church is not going to back down. We are never going to compromise our principles. We will defy it and face the consequences." Let us hope and pray that these statements represent a strengthening of the entire U.S. Episcopacy in the face of an increasingly anti-Catholic government.

(Source: LifeSiteNews, LifeNews)

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## The Black Madonna of Czestochowa Vandalized

On December 9, 2012, a 58-year-old man threw light bulbs filled with black paint at the icon of the



Black Madonna in Czestochowa, in southern Poland. A police spokeswoman, Joanna Lazar, told the Polish

news website Wirtualna Polska that security at the monastery had restrained the man and handed him over to police.

The vandal was a resident of Swidnica in Lower Silesia (south-west Poland), and he is expected to undergo psychiatric evaluation.

Tradition says the icon of the Black Madonna, enshrined in the monastery of Jasna Gora, was painted by St. Luke on wood from a table belonging to the Holy Family. It is the best-known symbol of Polish Catholicism. Every year the shrine draws millions of pilgrims. St. Ladislaus of Opala left the painting at Jasna Gora in 1382; the image is easily recognized by its distinctive slashes, left on the Madonna's cheek by Tartar looters on April 14, 1430, Easter Sunday.

After World War II, Jasna Gora became the spiritual capital of Poland. In September 1948, the primate of Poland, Cardinal August Hlond, consecrated Poland to the Immaculate Heart at the shrine.

(Sources: kipa/apic-DICI No. 267)

### Press Release of the General House of the Society of Saint Pius X

The Society of Saint Pius X has learned of the sudden announcement about the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI, which will be effective on the evening of February 28, 2013. Despite the doctrinal differences



that were still evident on the occasion of the theological talks held between 2009 and 2011, the Society of Saint Pius X does not forget that the Holy Father had the courage to recall the fact that the Traditional

Mass had never been abrogated, and to do away with the canonical sanctions that had been imposed on its bishops following their consecration in 1988. It is not unaware of the opposition that these decisions have stirred up, obliging the pope to justify himself to the bishops of the whole world. The Society expresses its gratitude to him for the strength and the constancy that he has shown toward it in such difficult circumstances, and assures him of its prayers for the time that he wishes to devote from now on to recollection.

Following its founder, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, the Society of Saint Pius X reaffirms its attachment to eternal Rome, Mother and Instructress [Mater et Magistra] of Truth, and to the See of Peter. It reiterates its desire to make its contribution, according to its abilities, to resolving the grave crisis that is shaking the Church. It prays that, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the cardinals of the next conclave may elect the pope who, according to the will of God, will work for the restoration of all things in Christ (Eph. 1:10).

Menzingen, February 11, 2013,  
on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes

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### The Society of St. Pius X to Be Consecrated to St. Joseph

The theme of this year's Pentecost pilgrimage from Chartres to Paris will be: "Go to Joseph." In Paris on January 6, during the conference he gave for *Courrier de Rome's* eleventh congress, Bishop Bernard Fellay officially announced that he would consecrate the Society of St. Pius X to St. Joseph, protector of the Church, on March 19, 2013, in Ecône.

In the Pentecost pilgrimage's preparatory doctrinal and spiritual booklet, this quote taken from *The Mystery of St. Joseph's Paternity* by Canon Daniel-Joseph Lallement shows how appropriate this consecration is: "We are living in a time when man wishes to seek satisfaction by feverishly filling himself with earthly things. St. Joseph, a man of God, the man of the Virgin

Mary, is the antithesis of materialism. He will be given as a sure remedy for humanism and materialism. But let us understand things from yet another point of view: in the secret designs of Providence, humanism and materialism will be an opportunity to manifest the glory of St. Joseph... Dare I add that among the forgotten goods that God prepares beyond the disasters of humanism and materialism, is the glorification of St. Joseph: disgusted with themselves and tired of earthly food, men will turn to the poor man of God."

As the prayer of the Litany of St. Joseph says: "May we deserve to have as our intercessor in heaven him whom we venerate as our protector on earth!"



## French Senate Authorizes Human Embryo Research

In the night of December 4-5, 2012, senators passed an amendment to the law of July 7, 2011, on bioethics. Under certain conditions, embryo and embryonic stem cell research is now legal. The Senate’s website quotes the amendment: “Embryonic stem cell research gives hope; researchers have long been interested in stem cells because of their considerable therapeutic potential.” The amendment calls for the current legal ban on embryonic stem cell research to be lifted; it even allowed for multiple exemptions, and for permission for “supervised” research.

On behalf of the French bishops’ conference, Archbishop Pierre d’Ornellas of Rennes strongly criticized the amendment. In a press release dated December 5, the Archbishop asked, “Does the life of the human embryo deserve protection? Yes or no? The Senate has answered in the negative. The Senate is aware that such research

constitutes an ‘anthropological transgression,’ but it has nonetheless voted to authorize human embryo research, in principle and no longer only in exceptional cases.” The Archbishop states that “the motive cited, that France might lag behind other nations in scientific research, is dubious. Does the progress of French research really depend on this authorization? The human embryo has a right to protection.”

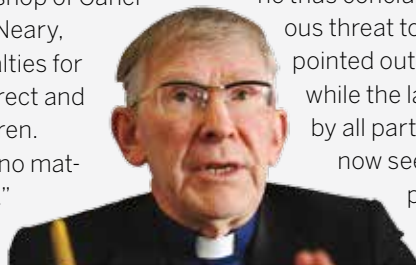
The bishops of France consider the Senate’s decision “shocking”—all the more so since the amendment was proposed and voted on without any real debate, while Article 46 of the 2011 law on bioethics stated that “any proposed reform related to ethical problems and social issues raised by the progress of knowledge in the fields of biology, medicine and health must be preceded by a public debate involving people from every stratum.”

The amendment, which has not yet been submitted to the National Assembly, was passed thanks in part to votes from right-wing senators. (Sources: kipa/apic.ch/senat.fr–DICI, No. 267)

## Irish Church Opposes Pro-Abortion Legislation

On December 18, 2012, the Irish government proposed a bill authorizing abortion in cases where the mother’s life is endangered. The Irish Catholic Church immediately expressed its opposition, claiming that this would go against the “pro-life” intention clearly expressed by the Irish people and inscribed in Article 40.3.3 of the Irish Constitution. According to Cardinal Sean Brady, archbishop of Armagh, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, archbishop of Dublin, Archbishop Dermot Clifford, archbishop of Cahel and Emly, and Archbishop Michael Neary, archbishop of Tuam, lifting the penalties for abortion “would open the path to direct and intentional murders of unborn children. That can never be justified morally, no matter what the circumstances may be.”

On December 18, in a public declaration, the prelates called all



to pray that the bill proposed by the Irish government may not be adopted by Parliament, who should vote on it before this summer. The next day, during a press conference, Bishop John Buckley (on the picture), bishop of Cork and Ross, in southern Ireland, added that according to studies, the practice of abortion because of a risk of suicide by the mother opens the door to abortion for all who ask. He quoted England, where one in four pregnancies ends in abortion. And

he thus concluded that “abortion is the most serious threat to human rights.” The prelate also pointed out that it is “ironic” to observe that while the latest referendum in Ireland, approved by all parties, referred to children’s rights, “it now seems that the unborn child can be deprived of the most fundamental right of all, the right to life.”

(Sources: apic–DICI, No. 268)

## Catholic Church in Dakar Profaned

The Church of Mary Immaculate of Parcelles-Assainies in Dakar was profaned during the night of December 2-3, 2012. A statue of the Virgin Mary as well as the arms of the Infant Jesus were struck with rocks and broken. The two statues were set up at the entrance to the church beneath a hut with a triangular roof that served as a place of prayer and recollection for the faithful of the parish.

According to the Senegalese Press Agency (APS), the Senegalese President Macky Sall said that he was “upset” and urged the public security forces to deal severely with the perpetrators. “Concerned about safeguarding the balance [*équilibres*] and the peaceful coexistence of the various beliefs in a secular Republic, the Head of State, Mr. Macky Sall, expressed his emotions to all persons of faith who were affected by these acts,” his spokesman Abou

Abel Thiam declared the day after the incident.

For his part, the Archbishop of Dakar, Cardinal Théodore Adrien Sarr, called on the Catholic faithful to exercise restraint. He asked that there be no response to the provocations, which he described as Satanic acts. Quoted by the Internet news website *senenews.com* on December 4, he urged the Christian community not to give in to “panic” and “anger,” but to wait for “the results of the investigations.”

These misdeeds in the church in Parcelles-Assainies occurred after a series of 160 desecrations of graves in two cemeteries in Dakar last October.

Senegal is a secular country with 13 million inhabitants, the majority of them Muslim (around 95%).

(Sources: *apic/aps/senenews.com*—DICI, No. 267)

## France: Facing the Crisis of Vocations

Ageing priests and increasingly fewer young Catholics ready to take the path of the religious life, such was the report given February 1, 2013, to the French Bishops’ Conference (CEF). France faces a serious crisis of vocations. Between 2000 and 2012, the number of candidates for the priesthood has fallen by a third, from 976 candidates in 2000 to 691 in 2012. In light of this fact, French bishops have begun a campaign to promote vocations among youth aged 15 to 20, called “Jeunes cathos 2.0” [Young Catholics 2.0].

Moreover, the Conference of French Religious (Corref) has published the results of a survey taken in 2009 that studied all types of community life in France—retirement homes, university campuses, boarding facilities, workers’ homes, prisons, religious communities. “Religious communities, convents and other monasteries (most ancient form of community life along with barracks) include 37,000 people. The population is elderly with an average of 66 years. Women are in the majority (74%). A high proportion of religious

hold diplomas (61% hold a degree equivalent or superior to the French baccalaureate, and 42% hold an undergraduate or postgraduate degree).” To be exact, in 2000 48,412 apostolic religious were counted and 28,678 in 2010, while the number of cloistered religious went from 5,237 to 3,864 in 2010.

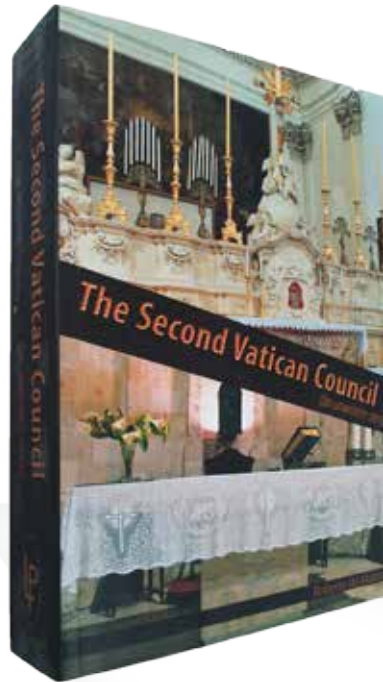
Two years ago, in an interview with the Vatican Radio on February 16, 2011, Cardinal Franc Rodé, former prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, stated, “It must be recognized that religious life is in crisis today,” adding, “Secularization has taken over many communities and consciences”; this “secularization is expressed by prayer that is not recollected, often formal; secularization attacks the concept of obedience by introducing a ‘democratic’ mentality that excludes the role of the legitimate authority.” See DICI, No. 231, March 5, 2011.

(Sources: Vatican Radio—DICI, 270)

# The Second Vatican Council: An Unwritten Story

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Learn the Truth About Vatican II



In the past, any critical review or discussion of the actual events which took place at the Council was brushed aside as a discussion untenable for a Catholic to hold. Now, from the discussions of the Society of St. Pius X to the books of Msgr. Gherardini, or the renewed interest in the work of Romano Amerio, this discussion is happening in a never-before seen way. In that vein, the renowned Italian historian Roberto de Mattei takes up his pen to answer a question that has still not fully been answered: "What happened at the Council?"

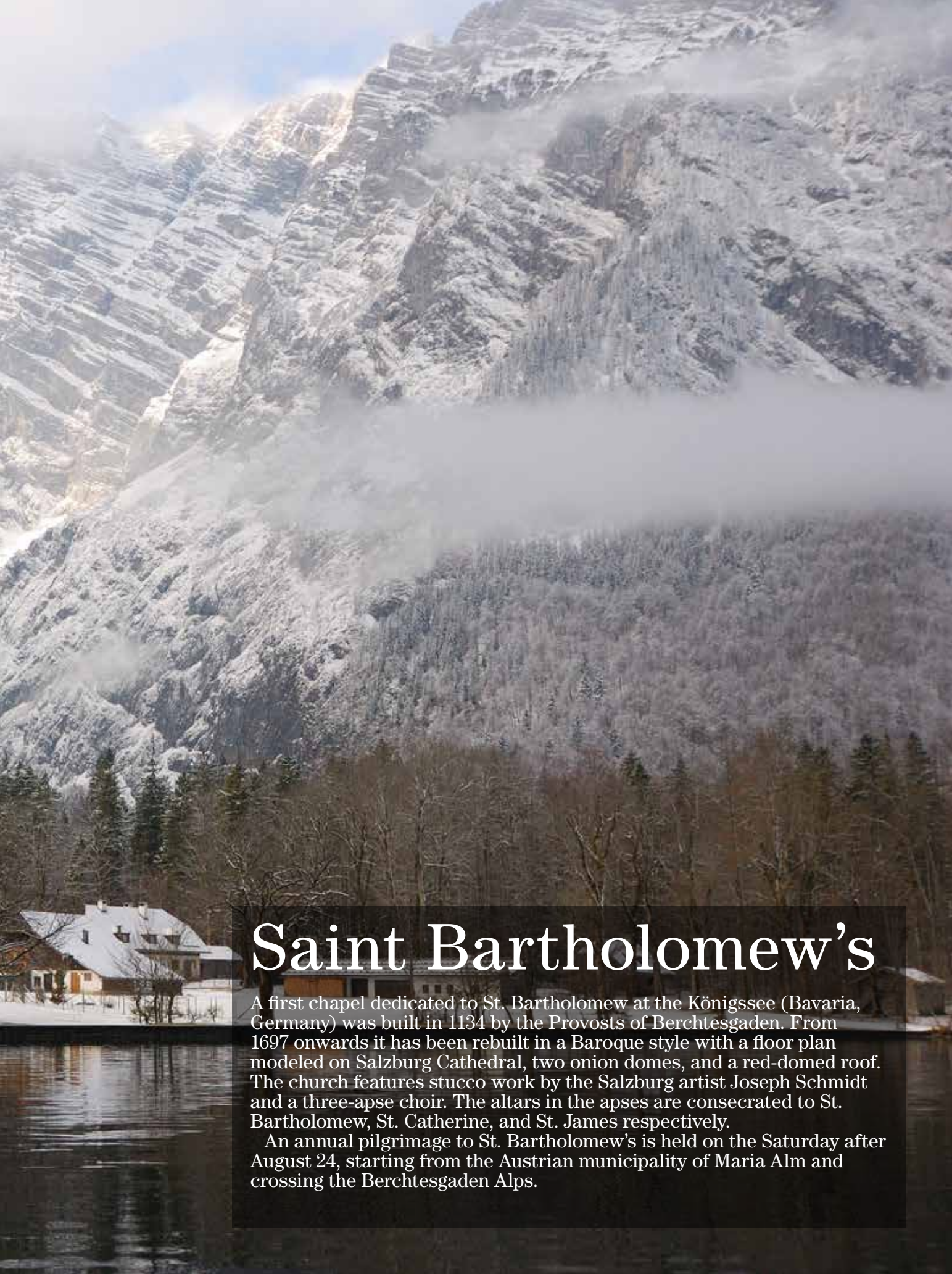
Sample chapters contain:

- The Pontificate of Pius XII: Triumph or the Start of a Crisis?
- The Reactions to Neo-Modernism during the Pontificate of Pius XII
- Angelo Roncalli: Conservative or Revolutionary
- Italy "Opens" to the Left
- The Break with Council Procedures
- "Some Fresh Air in the Church"
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# Saint Bartholomew's

A first chapel dedicated to St. Bartholomew at the Königssee (Bavaria, Germany) was built in 1134 by the Provosts of Berchtesgaden. From 1697 onwards it has been rebuilt in a Baroque style with a floor plan modeled on Salzburg Cathedral, two onion domes, and a red-domed roof. The church features stucco work by the Salzburg artist Joseph Schmidt and a three-apse choir. The altars in the apses are consecrated to St. Bartholomew, St. Catherine, and St. James respectively.

An annual pilgrimage to St. Bartholomew's is held on the Saturday after August 24, starting from the Austrian municipality of Maria Alm and crossing the Berchtesgaden Alps.

# Cardinal Koch and the SSPX

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By Dr. John Lamont

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Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, recently made the following statements about the theological positions of the SSPX:

"It is only the group of Lefebvrists that doesn't accept...ecumenical dialogue, relations with the Jews and religious liberty....One must ask how it can present itself as Catholic..."

"These are central points of the teaching of the Holy Father, and if [there is] a group that does not accept a council and does not accept a teaching, one must ask how they see each other as Catholic....This is the fundamental problem." (*The Tablet* and the *Jewish Daily Forward*).

Cardinal Koch has also made a broader criticism of traditionalists as a whole: "The progressives profess a hermeneutics of discontinuity and break. The traditionalists profess a hermeneutics of pure continuity: only that which is already noticeable in the Tradition can be Catholic doctrine, therefore, practically, there cannot be a renewal."

These criticisms of traditionalists are often made. Cardinal Koch's high curial post, and the fact that he was one of the members of the Vatican committee that ruled that the Society's proposed doctrinal preamble was unacceptable, makes it desirable to offer a response to them. As a traditionalist and a theologian myself, although not one affiliated with the SSPX, I will attempt to do so.

We can distinguish three main criticisms in his remarks:

- a. the criticism that the SSPX is not Catholic because it does not accept the Second Vatican Council and the teachings of the current pope,
- b. the criticism that traditionalists accept a false 'hermeneutics of pure continuity', and
- c. the criticism that it is only the SSPX that does not accept ecumenical dialogue, relations with the Jews, and religious liberty.

The expressions 'ecumenical dialogue', 'relations with the Jews', and 'religious liberty' are rather vague in themselves, but in the context it is clear that Cardinal



Koch is using these expressions in the sense in which the SSPX denies that they are true.

Cardinal Koch's first criticism sounds plausible only because of its unclarity. Some allowance should be made for the fact that he was giving an interview to the media in which a precise definition of terms would have been out of place, but even when all possible allowances have been made, his assertion cannot be understood in a theologically defensible way. What is necessary to be Catholic is to believe and confess all the teachings of the Catholic faith. The SSPX does this, and therefore can rightly call itself Catholic. Cardinal Koch raises questions about the Catholicity of the SSPX on the basis of the claims that the Society rejects 'central points of the teaching of the Holy Father', "does not accept a council and does not accept a teaching". The expression "central points of the teaching of the Holy Father" is too vague. A teaching's being 'central' does not suffice to make it an infallible definition or a repetition of previous infallible teachings. The 'central points' that the SSPX does not accept have never been claimed or established to be doctrines of the faith, and their rejection of them thus does not mean that they are not Catholics.

The assertion that the SSPX "does not accept a council and does not accept a teaching" suffers from a similar vagueness. It is not a doctrine of the faith that the Second Vatican Council was a genuine ecumenical council, but it is a dogmatic fact. Rejection of the validity of the Council thus might be argued to be incompatible with being a Catholic. However, the SSPX acknowledges that the Second Vatican Council was a genuine ecumenical council. As for the teaching of the council, the SSPX accepts all the teachings of the council that prior to the council were taught as doctrines of the faith. No new doctrines were defined by the council, as is evident both from the content of the conciliar documents themselves – which do not contain anything in the form of a solemn definition – and from Paul VI's assertion in his discourse closing the council on December 7, 1965. In rejecting certain teachings of the Council, the SSPX thus does not reject any teachings of the faith. Its rejection of these teachings therefore cannot be said to be grounds for doubting that it is Catholic.

It is worth reviewing theological debates on the level of authority of the teachings of the council. Fr. Umberto Betti claimed that the teachings of the dogmatic constitution *Lumen Gentium* virtually reached the level

of infallible teaching.<sup>1</sup> This claim was contested by the then Fr. Joseph Ratzinger,<sup>2</sup> who argued against Betti's maximising interpretation. Even if Betti is correct, however, and we ignore the difficulties in the notion of a teaching being 'virtually infallible', his claim applies only to those conciliar teachings contained in dogmatic constitutions; he bases his argument above all on the application of the prefix 'dogmatic' to those constitutions.<sup>3</sup> The teachings that Koch mentions as being rejected by the SSPX are not found in the dogmatic constitutions of Vatican II, but in decrees or declarations of the council. We may invert Fr. Betti's argument and infer that since these teachings were not included in the dogmatic constitutions of the council, they cannot be considered to be pronouncements on the dogma of the Church.

In view of Cardinal Koch's involvement in the decision on whether or not to grant a canonically regular status to the SSPX, we should consider not only the question of whether or not the SSPX is Catholic, but also the question of whether the SSPX, while Catholic, nonetheless should be denied a canonical status within the Church on the grounds that it rejects teachings that are not dogmas of the faith, but are authoritative magisterial teachings to which religious submission of mind and will is due. This is the real issue that arises with respect to the status of the SSPX; questions about the Society's being Catholic are not serious ones.

A first question that arises is how a denial of canonical status to the SSPX on these grounds can fit into the current disciplinary practice of the Church. For example, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has judged that Sister Elizabeth Johnson upheld errors in her book *Quest for the Living God*. This judgement clearly states that these errors are denials of fundamental dogmas of the Catholic faith. Such denials, which Sr. Johnson refused to retract, are punishable by automatic excommunication in canon law (Canon 1364 §1). But Sr. Johnson in fact remains un-excommunicated, and is still a member in good standing of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Brentwood. Cases like hers are not uncommon; Fr. Hans Kung remains a Catholic priest in good standing in the eyes of ecclesiastical authority, despite having rejected the defined dogma of papal infallibility as long ago as 1970. It is not defensible to treat denials of the faith as undeserving of punishment, while refusing canonical regularisation to the SSPX on the grounds of its allegedly rejecting magisterial teachings that are not dogmas of the faith and are not infallibly taught.

There is a basis in Canon 1371 §1 for punishing those who deny authentic magisterial teachings that are not infallibly defined. The crucial question, therefore, is whether or not the positions of the SSPX can be judged to be punishable according to that canon. A clear and accurate evaluation of the Society's positions shows that this is not the case. To see why, we need to distinguish between (1) the position of the SSPX on religious truth, specifically on the truth about religious liberty, ecumenism, and the other matters concerning which it is at odds with some current office-holders in the Holy See, and (2) the SSPX's claim that the Second Vatican Council taught errors on these matters.

With respect to (1), the SSPX rightly understands that fidelity to the papal magisterium does not consist only in fidelity to the teachings of the current pope. This fidelity is due to the office of the papacy itself, not to the individual that holds it, and the basis of this fidelity is the authority of the apostle Peter, which exists in all holders of the papal office. In the same way, fidelity to the entire college of bishops united under the Pope is based on fidelity to the authority of all the apostles, which is perpetuated in all the bishops throughout the history of the Church acting in unison under the Pope. This authority of Peter and the other apostles is thus present in all the magisterial teachings of the Church, not just in those of the current pope and bishops. Fidelity to the magisterium of the Pope and the bishops thus requires acceptance of all the teachings of all the popes and bishops since the death of the last apostle. On the issues under (1), the SSPX bases its positions on the authoritative and sometimes infallible teachings of papal and conciliar documents such as *Quanta Cura*, *Dei Filius*, *Mortalium Animos* and others. Its positions are not peculiar and dubious interpretations of these documents, but the standard interpretations of these teachings, interpretations that were universally accepted at the time that the teachings were promulgated, and that can be seen to be correct from an examination of the discussions and preparations that led to the production of these documents.<sup>4</sup>

The Society can thus assert that it is following the magisterium of the Church in upholding these positions, and hence that its positions under (1) are not open to any theological objection. If they are not open to theological objection, far less can they form the grounds for any canonical sanction. In order for a theological position to be made the grounds for canonical punishment, it is not enough for it to simply

be false. Holding a false theological view is not as such an offence of any kind, as is evident from the disagreements between schools of Catholic theology; at least one side in these disagreements must be in the wrong and hence hold a false view, but such disagreements are a legitimate part of the life of the Church. Even being hard to reconcile with magisterial teaching does not suffice to make a theological position a basis for canonical sanctions. A theological view can only be grounds for canonical punishment if it is a clear and manifest rejection of a magisterial teaching. It is absurd to say that upholding a plausible understanding of magisterial teaching can be such a rejection.

It is thus not possible for Cardinal Koch or other Roman authorities to reject this defense on the basis that these positions have been denied by the Second Vatican Council, and hence that it is no longer permissible to hold them. Such a rejection is incompatible with Benedict XVI's rejection of a 'hermeneutic of rupture' for that council, which the Roman authorities are committed to upholding. It does not matter here that the SSPX agrees that the Second Vatican Council denies these earlier teachings; we are not considering the position that the SSPX holds, but the position that Cardinal Koch and other Roman authorities would have to advance in order to make a canonical case against the SSPX. If contradicting earlier magisterial teachings is not a rupture, then nothing is. So if the Second Vatican Council is not to be understood as a rupture with previous teachings, it cannot be said to have contradicted any such teachings, and it is permissible and even obligatory to accept all previous magisterial teachings.

Cardinal Koch could abandon Benedict XVI's rejection of a hermeneutic of rupture, and claim that the Second Vatican Council did indeed deny these previous teachings and hence that it is not permitted to uphold them. But this position is untenable for two reasons. One reason is that the magisterial documents upon which the SSPX bases its positions are both clearer and more authoritative than the conciliar texts that might be held to contradict them. Another reason is that it has never, in the more than 50 years since the council was opened, been officially stated that its teachings contradict earlier teachings and replace them; and there are many official denials that this is the case, beginning with the conciliar documents themselves. To state in so many words that the council abolished previous magisterial teachings is a radical rejection of the past 50 years of magisterial teaching, and as such cannot be



advanced by the Roman authorities.

Some theologians have claimed that the magisterial documents upon which the SSPX base their positions are really practical directives rather than statements of fact, or are statements about the particular historical circumstances that obtained at the time of the promulgation of the documents rather than statements of universal truths. On the basis of this claim, they argue that the SSPX actually falsifies the meaning of these documents, by wrongly holding them to teach universal truths rather than truths that apply only to a specific set of historical circumstances. Although the doctrinal conversations between the SSPX and the Holy See

have rather unfortunately been kept secret, one has the impression that this claim is the basis of the case made against the SSPX by the theologians of the Holy See.

There are two points to be made in reply to this claim. The first point is that it cannot serve as an objection to the positions of the SSPX, because the circumstances in which these documents were promulgated are substantially the same as those of today; attacks on the Church and the faith by an aggressive secular liberalism that arises from Enlightenment thought. It has been asserted that these documents did not condemn a more benign form of liberalism that was not at odds with the Church, but only a more hostile form

His Eminence Kurt Koch (born March 15, 1950) is a Swiss Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church currently serving as president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity since his appointment was announced on July 1, 2010. He is also the bishop emeritus of Basel, having served from 1995 until he resigned the see in 2010.



of liberalism. This assertion is not in fact true. This idea of a more benign form of Enlightenment liberalism that could be reconciled with the Church, as opposed to a radical secularism that could not, was the position of the Liberal Catholics of the 19th century. This position was rejected by the 19th-century popes, who explicitly targeted it in their encyclicals. But even if it was true, it is hard to see how it is relevant to the positions of the SSPX. The allegedly benign form of liberalism has no representatives in society or governments today, which are dominated by a hostile secularism. It thus follows from the very position of the critics of the SSPX that the doctrines which the Society upholds, at least on religion and society, are the ones that are suited to current circumstances. The Society's only error would be in holding that these doctrines, since they are universal truths, also apply to other possible circumstances, which do not in fact obtain and have little or no resemblance to the real circumstances. This is not a serious criticism, and is not a reasonable basis for denying canonical status to the Society.

The second point is that the claim is obviously false. The magisterial documents upon which the SSPX base their position proceed by first laying down and teaching fundamental principles that apply universally, and then applying these principles to the concrete situations which the documents address. They clearly enunciate an intention to teach truths that apply everywhere and always, and that are based on the essential attributes of God, man, and the Christian economy of salvation. This is seen, for example, in Leo XIII's teaching on the religion and the state, which teaches about the essential nature of the state in itself, and in Pius XI's teaching on ecumenism, which appeals in *Mortalium Animos* (§6) to these essential attributes of God, man, and the Christian economy. It cannot be claimed that the Second Vatican Council altered these teachings from universal truths into facts that applied only to a particular set of circumstances. That council did not claim and did not possess the power claimed by Big Brother in George Orwell's *1984*, the power to change the past. The earlier magisterial documents say what they say, and that cannot be changed.

The actual positions of the SSPX on the content of Catholic teaching, referred to by (1), are thus beyond criticism, and do not violate any canon. As for (2), the SSPX's claim that the Second Vatican Council taught error on some matters; this claim is not an assertion about faith and morals at all, and does not in itself

contradict any magisterial teaching whether infallible or non-infallible. It is simply an assertion that a small proportion of the Church's fallible teachings did, in fact, fail to be true. This assertion violates no canon or religious obligation at all, and variants of it are commonly held by theologians. Since neither the SSPX's religious positions nor its claims about the Second Vatican Council are objectionable or subject to canonical penalty, it is unjust to deny canonical regularisation to the Society on the basis of them.

Although the SSPX's claims about the Second Vatican Council do not justify any penal measures, I believe that there are some criticisms to be made of the Society's position towards the Council. The Society tends to focus as much on the claim that the council contains errors as on denouncing the errors that it believes the council to contain. This gets priorities wrong. After all, there is no profit in a Catholic's accepting that the council contains errors without learning what these errors were; whereas a Catholic who learns that the errors taught by the council are to be avoided, but who remains ignorant of the council's having taught them, greatly benefits thereby – and is not really any the worse for his ignorance of the council's assertions. The basis for objecting to the council's having taught errors, after all, is that such teaching leads Catholics to accept these errors. If the Society were to focus on upholding its positive positions on doctrine, it would be in a much stronger position with respect to the Holy See and the Church generally. Rather than being in the position of defending the claim that some conciliar and post-conciliar teachings are false, it would put its opponents on the defensive, by saying "here are these authoritative teachings; all Catholics must accept them". If its opponents are not to reject the authority of Church teaching altogether, they must either accept these teachings, or else claim that the Second Vatican Council had abolished them and hence accept that the council actually did reject previous teaching. Now that Benedict XVI has officially rejected the latter position, this approach by the Society would eventually force Catholics who intend to be loyal to the magisterium to accept the former.

In addition, the claim that the Second Vatican Council taught error is actually quite hard to maintain if we look closely at the words of these documents. These are often framed in such a vague way that if their meaning is examined strictly, they say very little. The claim that some passages of the conciliar documents logically contradict previous teachings misses the



subtlety of the problem they pose. It is almost never totally impossible to give the conciliar documents an orthodox meaning, which makes it possible to dismiss traditionalist criticisms of them as unfounded; but the fact that they naturally suggest heterodox interpretations makes it easy to use them to attack the faith when addressing audiences other than traditionalists. This makes them much more effective tools for subverting Catholic doctrine than would be the case if they plainly contradicted earlier teachings, and thus provoked suspicion and debate. Showing beyond a doubt that the council taught falsehood is thus very hard to do, and attempting to do it falls into the trap that the documents set. Attacking the falsehoods that the council seems to teach, on the other hand, enables the documents to be used in the way suggested above, by forcing one's opponents to either accept the orthodox doctrine or acknowledge that the conciliar documents reject previous teaching.

The subtlety of the problem is compounded by the fact that the vagueness and ambiguity of the documents are not simply the result of a deliberate strategy of deception on the part of their drafters. Certainly, some of the objectionable passages in the conciliar documents are due to the influence of modernists, who consciously held the heterodox views that the passages suggest and wished to produce an innocuous-sounding text that could later be used to undermine the faith. But sometimes the vagueness and ambiguity existed in the minds of the drafters themselves, and continue to exist in the minds of those who uphold the documents as beyond criticism. This lack of clarity is often due to an aversion to Catholic doctrines or a desire to avoid unpleasant choices between Catholic teaching and worldly beliefs, but it is also influenced by bad educational formation, lack of a natural capacity to think clearly, a love of cloudy high-sounding rhetoric, the wish to be positive and amiable, and other factors that are not in themselves sinful. The problem of getting over this lack of clarity is thus complex and difficult. Approaching it by insisting on the clear earlier teachings is better than trying to seize the jelly of the conciliar texts.

This answers Cardinal Koch's criticism of the SSPX for rejecting papal and conciliar teachings. His attack on the traditionalist 'hermeneutic of pure continuity' can be dealt with more briefly. This attack again trades on vagueness – in this case, the vagueness of the word 'noticeable' in the cardinal's rejection of the alleged traditionalist claim that "only that which is already

noticeable in the Tradition can be Catholic doctrine". Traditionalists take the Catholic position that Catholic doctrine must be present either implicitly or explicitly in Tradition. 'Noticeable' does not distinguish between what is implicit and explicit, since it is possible to notice what is implicit. If 'noticeable' were to be understood as meaning 'explicitly present', it would be false to claim that Catholic doctrine must be noticeable in tradition; but traditionalists do not hold that doctrine must be noticeable in tradition in that sense. If 'noticeable' includes 'implicit' as well as 'explicit', then traditionalists do hold that doctrine must be implicit in tradition; but in so doing, they simply hold the Catholic position. This alleged 'hermeneutic of pure continuity' is in any case irrelevant to the traditionalist position on tradition. This position argues that what is already explicit in tradition must continue to be upheld, and that nothing that contradicts what has been explicitly taught can be accepted. It is not concerned with claims that are not explicit in tradition but that do not openly contradict it.

Finally, there is Cardinal Koch's criticism that it is only the SSPX that does not accept ecumenical dialogue, relations with the Jews and religious liberty. Whether or not others accept the SSPX's views on these subjects is totally irrelevant to the strength of their arguments, so this criticism does not have much weight. It is somewhat disingenuous of Cardinal Koch to make it, since he knows well why people outside the SSPX are reluctant to publicly endorse the positions of the Society; they fear consequences of the sort that he himself was involved in imposing on the Society, when he recommended that they be denied canonical regularisation for holding them. These sorts of consequences, or worse ones, are the universal result of speaking in favor of the Society's positions. No seminarian will be ordained, no priest will be made bishop, and no academic will be appointed to a post teaching theology if they are known to agree with the Society on these issues. This policy goes back at least to Paul VI's removal of Fr. Antonio Piolante as rector of the Lateran University for holding traditionalist views, and has been applied with great thoroughness ever since. So it is natural enough that few Catholics are seen to agree with the Society on these questions.

Despite this policy, however, it is not the case that the SSPX is the only body to reject the positions that Cardinal Koch refers to, and the existence of agreement with their views is worth noting. Here we must distinguish between the SSPX's position on the content of

religious truth, and the SSPX's claim that the Second Vatican Council contradicted earlier magisterial teachings. There are an enormous number of Catholics, probably a majority of Catholics who consider the question, who think that the council rejected earlier teachings. For example, Fr. John O'Malley, S.J., university professor of theology at Georgetown University, recently claimed that it is absurd to hold that the documents of the council are entirely in continuity with Catholic tradition. Fr. O'Malley of course thinks that this is a good thing and the SSPX thinks that this is a bad thing, but they are in entire agreement on the existence of some rejection of previous tradition by the council.

When it comes to the positions on religious truth held by the SSPX, we must also distinguish between the Society's objections to doctrinal statements and its objections to practical policies. It is very hard to describe, for example, exactly what the position of the Second Vatican Council on ecumenism is. The practical policy that has been implemented since the council is however clear: it is no longer insisted that non-Catholic Christians must submit to the teaching and government of the Roman Catholic Church in order to do God's will.

On the questions of doctrine, we must distinguish between general statements about doctrinal problems with the Second Vatican Council and agreement with the SSPX's particular doctrinal positions. The claim that heretics played an important role at the council is not confined to traditionalists. It is made by Fr. Ralph Wiltgen in his *The Rhine Flows into the Tiber*, the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in his memoirs, and Fr. Henri de Lubac in his journals of the council; it is also admitted with commendable frankness by Fr. Hans Kung in his memoirs. The crucial – and sensitive – question concerns the nature of this role; did it lead to the council teaching the views condemned by the SSPX, and are these views in fact contrary to Catholic tradition?

There are voices outside the SSPX that answer yes to both these questions. The issue of the teachings of the council has been addressed above, and I will simply note that the SSPX is not alone in making this criticism of the council. Agreement with the positions of the SSPX on religious truth demands more consideration. The negative consequences of agreeing with the SSPX have gravely limited public expressions of agreement with their doctrinal positions; private agreement is hard to measure, but seems to be not uncommon. These consequences have meant that the case for the SSPX's

positions has been made to a great extent by laymen who worked outside of universities. The important figures here are well known to traditionalists: Jean Madiran in France, and Michael Davies in England. Their non-academic status is not a problem for the quality of their work – something that has been recognised in the case of Michael Davies by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who described Davies as a man of deep faith who has left important publications. (One should however mention Fr. Paul Crane, S.J., founder and editor of the English traditionalist journal *Christian Order*, as an exception to this generalisation about lay intellectual leadership in non-SSPX traditionalist circles.)

Despite all the obstacles, however, there are nonetheless significant academic contributions that agree in substance with some or all of the positions of the SSPX on religious truth. The most significant figure here is Msgr. Brunero Gherardini, former professor at the Lateran and editor of the theological journal *Divinitas*. Msgr. Gherardini has raised serious questions about the continuity of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council in a number of important works, including *The Ecumenical Council Vatican II: A Debate to Be Opened*. He has expressed his sympathy with the SSPX on a number of issues. Prof. Roberto de Mattei has done the same in his prize-winning book on the Second Vatican Council. The Swiss philosopher Romano Amerio produced a magisterial condemnation of conciliar and post-conciliar deviations in his *Iota Unum* and *Stat Veritas*, which largely agreed with the SSPX. The author of this article has argued for the traditional position on religion and the state in his *Catholic Teaching on Religion and the State* (and in 'Pour une interprétation pieuse de Vatican II au sujet de la liberté religieuse', which appeared in *Divinitas*). The English Dominican Fr. Thomas Crean has attacked the common practice of praying with non-Catholic Christians, recommended in the post-conciliar document *Ad Totam Ecclesiam*, as contrary to divine law, and has attacked the understanding of religious freedom rejected by the SSPX (see his articles 'Religious Liberty?' and 'Praying with Non-Christians: Is It Possible?' at <http://www.christendom-awake.org>). Dr. Christopher J. Malloy of the University of Dallas has criticised the Joint Declaration on Justification signed by Lutherans and Catholics in 1999, in his *Engrafted into Christ: A Critique of the Joint Declaration* (Peter Lang, 2005). Fr. Claude Barthe and the writers involved in the French review *Catholica* have also made very important con-





tributions along the lines of the SSPX positions, which attain a scholarly level in the depth of their research and analysis. To sum up, there are no significant positions on religious truth that are held by the SSPX but not held by other scholars of substance – who, one should note, have not suffered canonical penalties for holding them.

When it comes to the practical policies that the SSPX criticises, no specialist theological expertise is required, and the people who agree with some or all of the Society's criticisms are too numerous to even attempt to list them. Some of these critics are not even Catholics. To give some examples, the sociologists Roger Finke and Rodney Stark have offered devastating criticisms of the policies of the Church after the council in *The Churching of America 1776-2005*. Christopher Ferrara and Thomas E. Woods have attacked these policies in *The Great Facade: Vatican II and the Regime of Novelty in the Roman Catholic Church*, and Kenneth C. Jones has given extensive statistical backing to criticisms of conciliar and post-conciliar policies in his *Index of Leading Catholic Indicators: The Church Since Vatican II*.

Criticisms of the policy on ecumenism are of particular relevance to Cardinal Koch in view of his post as President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. Since the Second Vatican Council embraced a policy of 'ecumenism', there has been a greater departure of Catholics for other Christian groups than at any other time in history. In Brazil, for example, a country where 95 percent of the population was Catholic until the 1960s, Protestantism has grown to 22 percent of the population, and is projected to reach a majority by 2020. These losses, which run into the scores of millions, dwarf the losses to the Catholic Church in the original Reformation. No greater failure for the promotion of Christian unity can be imagined. These figures evidently do not lead Cardinal Koch to agree with the SSPX in its criticisms of ecumenism, but they should.

Since Cardinal Koch has a responsibility for promoting Christian unity, it is especially disappointing that he should have opposed the canonical regularisation of the SSPX on plainly inadequate grounds. It is to be hoped that he will withdraw this opposition and take positive steps to support this regularisation, which would heal a serious wound to the unity of the Church.

<sup>1</sup> Umberto Betti, "Qualification théologique de la Constitution," *L'Église de Vatican II*, Vol. 2, *Commentaires*, ed. Y. Congar (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967).

<sup>2</sup> J. Ratzinger, "Announcements and Prefatory Notes of Explanation," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, Vol. 1, ed. H. Vorgrimler (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967).

<sup>3</sup> "Avant tout, il s'agit d'une Constitution dogmatique. Ce qui importe, ce n'est pas la denomination de Constitution – qui aurait pu aussi bien être remplacée par d'autres, comme Décret, Bulle, etc., mais la qualification de 'dogmatique'. Celle-ci indique que le magistère universel a pour tâche comme tel de proposer la doctrine contenue dans la Constitution," Betti, "Qualification théologique," in Congar (1967), pp. 214-15.

<sup>4</sup> For the discussion and preparation of the teachings of Gregory XVI and Pius IX on religious freedom, for example, see M. J. Le Guillou and Louis Le Guillou, *La condamnation de Lamennais: dossier* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1982); G. Martina, 'Nuovi Documenti sulla genesi del Sillabo', in *Archivum Historiae Pontificae*, 6, 1968; Roger Aubert, *L'intervention de Montalembert au congrès de Malines en 1863*, *Collectanea Mechliniensia* 35 (1950); and E. Lecanuet, *Montalembert*, Vol. III: *L'Église et le Second Empire*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Vve. Ch. Poussielgue, 1905), pp. 374-374.

Dr. John Lamont holds a degree in philosophy from Oxford University and in theology from Ottawa University, Canada. He is an honorary fellow in the Faculty of Philosophy and Theology at the Australian Catholic University. Dr. Lamont has taught at the University of Notre Dame Australia and the Catholic Institute of Sydney, where he had the canonical mandate to teach theology from the Sydney Archdiocese.

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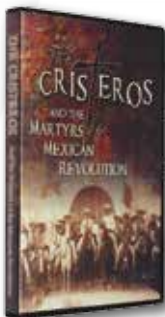
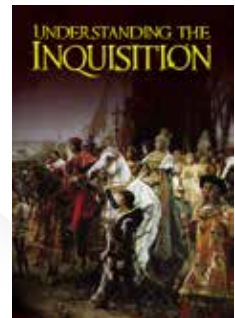
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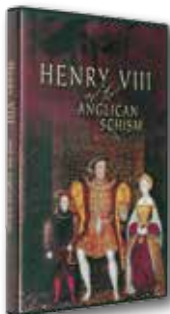
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Dear Chris,

Thank you for your letter, the encouraging words, and for your willingness to promote Tradition and the Catholic Faith to your friends and colleagues.

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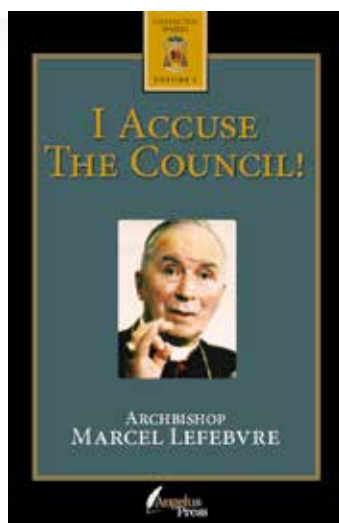
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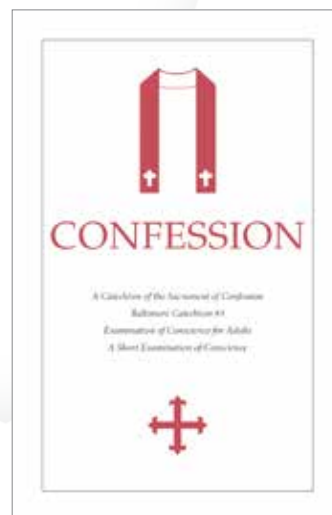
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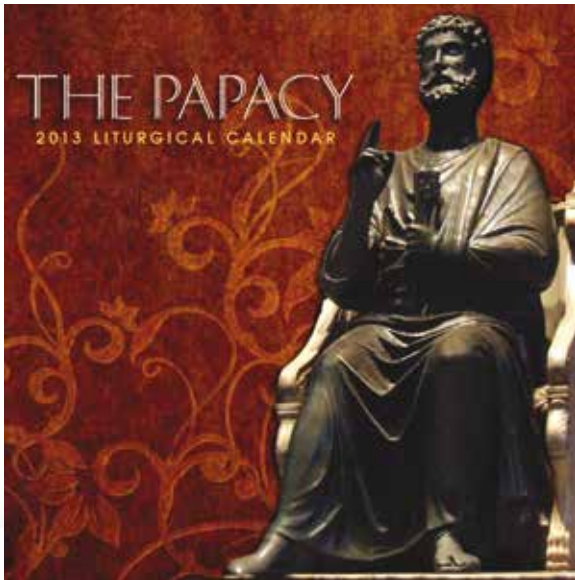
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# The Last Word

Dear Readers,

I hope you agree with the scholastic principle: *veritas est adaequatio intellectus et rei*, "truth is the joining of the mind with reality." The affirmation  $3 + 5 = 8$  is true. Tchaikovsky composed the *Nutcracker*—this statement corresponds with historical reality, it is true. It is also true to say that the Second Vatican Council formally opened under the pontificate of Pope John XXIII on 11 October 1962 and closed under Pope Paul VI on 8 December 1965. Perhaps you did not know the exact dates, but you can easily verify these facts. Should someone propose different dates, his statement would simply not be true, just as it would be untrue to insist that  $3 + 5 = 7$ . Error, then, is simply a deviation from reality, and those who are in error should correct their mistake, their misperception. If someone promotes and teaches error, we should encourage him to correct it!

In religious matters we uphold the same principles. We know that God exists! We also know his divine attributes: he is eternal, almighty, good and holy. Moreover, there is no room for error on these matters, and Saint Paul exclaims: "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all the ungodliness and injustice of those men who detain the truth of God in injustice, because that which is known of God is manifest in them. For God hath manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity, so that they are inexcusable" (Rom. 1:18-20).

God is real and people have many things to say about him. Sometimes their words shock, sometimes they edify, and sometimes they may frighten us. However, for a statement about God to be true it must be in accord with reality. It must be in accord with God's own revelation!

There is, then, only one God. He is Real. He is the only Unchanging Truth. Two contradictory statements cannot simultaneously apply to God! If one is true, then the other must be false; it must be an error, a misperception, and those who have been deceived by error should be charitably corrected.

Needless to say, the Truth Incarnate, Jesus Christ, does not tolerate our modern notions of religious liberty. Rather he proclaims: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Father Jürgen Wegner

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