Christ and in the Church which teaches in His name. Forever blessed is that inquirer who consults a priest who, like the Apostle Philip, has found the Lord and Light of the world and delights in proclaiming to others, "Come and see."

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CARDINAL NEWMAN ON THE IMITATION OF MARY

If the Mother of Emmanuel ought to be the first of creatures in sanctity and in beauty; if it became her to be free from all sin from the very first, and from the moment she received her first grace to begin to merit more; and if such as was her beginning, such was her end, her conception immaculate and her death an assumption . . . what is befitting in the children of such a Mother, but an imitation, in their measure, of her devotion, her meekness, her simplicity, her modesty, and her sweetness? Her glories are not only for the sake of her Son, they are for our sakes also. Let us copy her faith, who received God's messages by the angel without a doubt; her patience, who endured St. Joseph's surprise without a word; her obedience, who went up to Bethlehem in the winter and bore our Lord in a stable; her meditative spirit, who pondered in her heart what she saw and heard about Him; her fortitude, whose heart the sword went through; her self-surrender, who gave Him up during His ministry and consented to His death.

Above all, let us imitate her purity, who, rather than relinquish her virginity, was willing to lose Him for a Son. O my dear children, young men and young women, what need have you of the intercession of the Virgin-mother, of her help, of her pattern, in this respect! What shall bring you forward in the narrow way, if you live in the world, but the thought and patronage of Mary? What shall seal your senses, what shall tranquillise your heart, when sights and sounds of danger are around you, but Mary? What shall give you patience and endurance, when you are wearied out with the length of the conflict with evil, with the unceasing necessity of precautions, with the irksomeness of observing them, with the tediousness of their repetition, with the strain upon your mind, with your forlorn and cheerless condition, but a loving communion with her! She will comfort you in your discouragements, solace you in your fatigues, raise you after your falls, reward you for your successes. She will show you her Son, your God and your all.

John Henry Cardinal Newman, *Discourses Addressed to Mixed Congregations* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1906), pp. 374 f.

THE LESSON OF THE *HUMANI GENERIS*

Speaking about the purpose of the Catholic Church, the Vatican Council, in its constitution *Dei Filius*, declared that God had brought this society into being "so that we might fulfill the obligation of accepting the true faith and of persevering in it constantly." Thus the duty of guarding the purity and the integrity of the divinely revealed message must be reckoned as one of the highest prerogatives of the men whom God has commissioned to rule over His Church. The work of defending and clarifying the deposit of divine revelation for the entire Church of God is, therefore, an outstanding privilege and duty of Christ's Vicar on earth, the Roman Pontiff.

A glance through the table of contents of Denzinger's *Enchiridion symbolorum* or through the index of Cavallera's *Thesaurus doctrinae catholicae* is sufficient to show that a great number among the successors of St. Peter have discharged their high obligation in this respect by condemning errors contradictory to or incompatible with divine public revelation and by presenting their teachings on these points in pronouncements which have become classical sources of Catholic theology. Three Pontiffs of the past century, however, have been privileged to draw up, or, to put it in another way, have been faced with the duty of drawing up, a rather formidable list of errors which have seriously affected the faithful of their own generations.

In his encyclical *Quanta cura*, and in the *Errorum syllabus* attached to it, the great Pius IX stigmatized the doctrinal aberrations that threatened the faith of the people of his own time.[1] Forty-three years later the saintly Pius X issued his encyclical *Pascendi dominici gregis*, indicating and condemning the complexus of heresies and errors which we know by the name of *Modernism*.[2] Some of these same misstatements and misconceptions of Christian doctrine had been listed and reproved only a few weeks previously in the decree *Lamentabili sane exitu*, issued by the Holy Office.[3] Three years after the appearance of the *Pascendi dominici gregis*,

[1] This encyclical was dated Dec. 8, 1864.

[2] Sept. 8, 1907.

[3] July 3, 1907.

Pius X sent out his *Motu proprio*, the *Sacrorum antistitum* mandatum, in which he warned against the continuing efforts against the Church and made the oath against the errors of Modernism incumbent upon seven different groups of churchmen.[4]

Our own beloved Pius XII, just three months ago, found it necessary to make another collection of errors and to reprove these errors in the encyclical *Humani generis*.[5] By a remarkable coincidence, the *Humani generis* was issued forty-three years after the *Pascendi*, just as this latter document appeared forty-three years after the *Quanta cura* and the *Syllabus*. Actually it would not be too much to say that these three pronouncements, spanning a period of eighty-six years, deal with three distinct manifestations of the same tendency, or the same type of disloyalty to the Catholic Church and the Catholic faith. In each case the Sovereign Pontiffs have had to deal with errors professed by Catholics who have had more confidence in the spirit and the intellectual tendencies of the world, especially the world of intellectual fashion, than they have had in the truth of Jesus Christ. In the case of the *Humani generis*, the Holy Father has likewise been called upon to condemn the errors of men who have been led astray by an imprudent and unenlightened desire for religious concord and unity.

In the very heading of the present encyclical, the Holy Father announces that he is going to treat of "certain false opinions that threaten to undermine the foundations of Catholic doctrine." The issue of the *Osservatore Romano* which carries the document in its original Latin text and in its Italian translation states in its headline that "the Supreme Pontiff reproves certain false opinions and tendencies that threaten to lessen the integrity of Catholic doctrine." The Holy Father himself, in the brief pastoral section which comes towards the end of the encyclical, speaks of errors which he has reproved and of norms which he has enjoined in the *Humani generis*. And, when we examine the encyclical itself, we find that it deals primarily with doctrinal errors current in our own day, but we learn also that it explains the various tendencies with which these errors are connected, and gives the standards for accurate and loyal Catholic teaching on the portions of Catholic

[4] Sept. 1, 1910.

[5] This encyclical was dated Aug. 12, 1950. It first appeared in the *Osservatore Romano* in the Aug. 24 number.

truth which have been misrepresented by the contemporary writers whose aberrations have called forth the denunciation of Christ's vicar on earth.

The *Humani generis* is one of those documents which must be analyzed very carefully if their full meaning is to be appreciated. The document is magnificently ordered and arranged, and yet its schematic form, the very thing which must be grasped if the message itself is to be completely understood, is somewhat obscured under the literary perfection of the *stylus curiae* so characteristic of all papal encyclicals. For those who study the document in an unannotated translation, the work of analysis will probably be somewhat difficult.

The body of the encyclical is divided into two main parts, a long doctrinal section (nn. 1-39), and a brief pastoral section (nn. 40-43). The doctrinal part consists of five main divisions. The first of these (nn. 1-8), after insisting upon the evil of religious error and discord and error in general, goes on to deal with the occasions and the classifications of errors current among non-Catholics in our own time. The remaining four treat of false opinions that have gained adherents within the Catholic Church itself.

The second section (nn. 9-13), speaks about the fact, the motivation, and the basic errors to be found among the statements of some Catholic writers of our day, and of the various degrees or levels of opposition to Catholic truth to be encountered among the pronouncements issued by this group. The third section (nn. 14-28), is concerned with individual errors in the field of sacred theology. The fourth (nn. 29-34), is devoted to false teachings within the domain of philosophy. The fifth (nn. 34-39), describes and corrects certain aberrations connected with the matter of the positive sciences.

ERRONEOUS RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

The first paragraph contains the introduction to and the guiding theme of the entire encyclical, the statement that discord and error among men on moral and religious matters have ever been the cause of most profound sorrow to all good people, but especially to the faithful and loyal children of the Church, particularly today, when we see the principles of Christian culture being attacked on all sides. It thus disposes, of course, of the opinion occasionally

voiced in some ill-enlightened sources not too long ago, an opinion to the effect that at least in a democracy, diversity of religion was something desirable.

The remainder of this section, dealing with errors about religion prevalent in non-Catholic circles, is subdivided into two parts. The first of these deals with factors that contribute towards false teachings about religion among those who are not members of the Church. Some of these factors, those described in the second paragraph, tend to hold a man back from the acquisition of naturally ascertainable information about God and about the natural law. The force of the senses and of the imagination and evil passions arising from original sin combine to render the gaining of this knowledge difficult. The third paragraph reminds the reader of the encyclical that these factors are what render divine supernatural revelation morally necessary that, in the present condition of the human race, religious and moral truths of the natural order can be known by all, readily, with firm certitude, and with no admixture of error. The Holy Father has employed a formula previously used in the Vatican Council's constitution *Dei Filius*. But where the Council had spoken of God's supernatural revelation as thus requisite that a natural knowledge about God might be obtained, the *Humani generis* describes it as necessary for the acquisition of natural truth in the fields of religion and of morals.

Another part of this first section, the fourth paragraph, lists certain influences that tend to hinder a man from recognizing the powerful objective evidence in favor of the Catholic faith's credibility, and which move him to reject and resist the graces God offers him to bring him to the faith. Prejudiced opinions, the passions, and ill will are listed as factors operating in this direction.

The second portion of the section dealing with errors prevalent outside the true Church classifies these false teachings under four headings. First it lists the opinion that the system of evolution, which, incidentally, the encyclical describes as not completely proven even in the domain of the natural sciences, can explain the origin of all things. The Holy Father adds that the people who adopt this opinion show favor to the monistic and pantheistic notion that the whole world is in a process of continual evolution. He notes also that the Communists gladly make use of this opinion to propound and to exalt their dialectical materialism in the minds

of those who have been deprived of all idea of a personal God by reason of their acceptance of this "evolutionism."

Next, the *Humani generis* mentions the new and erroneous philosophy of existentialism, which ignores the immutable essences of things and is concerned only with the existence of individuals. In the third place it speaks of a certain "historicism," which, being concerned solely with the events of human life, completely ruins the foundations of any absolute truth and law, in either the natural or the supernatural order.

The fourth and final way of error mentioned in this section of the encyclical is that of non-Catholics who are simultaneously enthusiastic for the Bible and hostile to human reason and who are contemptuous of the Church's teaching power while they delightedly praise the authority of God as the Author of revelation.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ON CONTEMPORARY RELIGIOUS ERRORS PROPOUNDED BY SOME CATHOLIC TEACHERS

This part of the encyclical deals with the correct attitude on the part of Catholic writers towards the errors mentioned in the previous section, with the twofold motivation underlying the false opinions propounded by some Catholic teachers, and with the various ways in which these opinions are put forward. The Holy Father teaches that it is the duty of Catholic theologians and philosophers to study the false opinions on religion and morality current in the present-day world. They are bound to this study since they cannot fulfill their obligation to work for truth among men unless they understand the intellectual evils by which their fellows are affected. The encyclical also reminds them that quite often there is a certain amount of truth hidden in these contemporary errors, and insists upon the fact that the proper study of these errors will bring about a more careful consideration of known theological and philosophical truths.

Dealing with the motives that underlie recent aberrations among Catholic teachers, the *Humani generis* insists that some of these men have been led astray by an over-eagerness for new things and also by a fear that they might be considered ignorant of recent scientific advances. These individuals, the Holy Father tells us, are trying to withdraw themselves from the control of the sacred teaching authority. There is a danger that they may gradually depart from revealed truth and draw others along with them into error.

Other proponents of false opinions, the encyclical tells us, have been motivated by a desire to break down the barriers that divide good and honest men so as to bring about more readily the incorporation of men of every culture and religious opinion within Christ's kingdom. Unfortunately these individuals seek to reconcile dogmatic differences, and they desire that the theology and the theological methods which have been taught in our schools with the approval of the ecclesiastical authority itself should not only be perfected, but completely reshaped. The Holy Father likens their attitude towards theology and the theological methods to that of certain Modernists with respect to the Church's traditional apologetics.

The Church, according to the encyclical, definitely does not object to any efforts directed towards advancing or perfecting the theological sciences. What it does reprove in these proponents of a false "irenicism" is their contention that things founded on laws and principles given by Our Lord, or on institutions brought into being by Him—things that actually constitute the defense and the support of the integrity of the faith, should be regarded as obstacles standing in the way of work for Christian unity. The Holy Father reminds us that any unity brought about by the repudiation of these factors would involve the ruin of those unfortunate enough to enter into it.

The encyclical then goes on to assert, in the final paragraph of this section, that these errors, whether motivated by desire of novelty or by a false zeal for souls, are not always brought forward to the same degree of insistence or with the same degree of clarity, nor presented in the same terms, nor advocated unanimously by all the writers of the movement. The language of the *Humani generis* here shows clearly that the Holy Father has a definite and fairly coherent group in mind.

He tells us that some of these men advance their opinions cautiously and employ distinctions in such a way as to cover up their real meanings, while others come along afterwards and propose these same views openly and without moderation. We are told that the unabashed presentation of these erroneous views has brought harm to the younger clergy and that it has been detrimental to the Church's teaching authority. The encyclical goes on to insist that opinions which have been taught in covert fashion in printed works have been put forth with less restraint in writings

destined for private circulation and in conferences and lectures. Such opinions have been circulated, not only in seminaries and in religious houses, but also among the laity, especially those engaged in the work of education.

This thirteenth paragraph of the encyclical is extremely interesting from the point of view of recent theological history. The Holy Father makes it clear that the same general group, although not necessarily the same individuals, have taught basically the same opinions, more circumspectly in published writings and more openly in documents intended for private circulation. Both Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange and Fr. Labourdette, the former in his well known article, "La nouvelle theologie, ou va-t-elle?" and the latter in his *Dialogue théologique* have mentioned such writings. A great deal of the shameful vituperation heaped on Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange by writers who should have been above this procedure was due to his discussion of such unpublished material in connection with his critique of published writings.

ERRORS AND NORMS IN THE FIELD OF SACRED THEOLOGY

The division of the encyclical dealing with false opinions in the field of theology is divided into four sub-sections. The first of these deals with errors concerning the terminology and the concepts employed in Catholic dogma and in sacred theology, and with the standards by which Catholic teaching on these subjects is to governed. The second treats of errors with respect to the Church's teaching office and lists the pertinent standards for teaching. The third lists errors about the authority of the Scriptures, while the fourth contains a list of individual errors that result from the basic misconceptions mentioned in the first three subsections.

Those who have gone astray in this first field are men who advise minimizing the meaning of dogma as much as possible and who wish to free dogma from the mode of expression long established in the Church and from philosophical concepts held in esteem by Catholic teachers. They intend to replace the terminology now in use with that employed by the Scriptures and the Fathers of the Church in the explanation of Catholic doctrine. These people, according to the encyclical, regard the terminology and the concepts to which they object as extrinsic to divine revelation. The Holy Father goes on to tie up this erroneous tendency with the twofold motivation of which he spoke in the previous portion of

the *Humani generis*. Those who seek the replacement of the Church's traditional terminology and of the various philosophical concepts now in use in expounding God's message hope by this means to bring about ultimately a mutual assimilation of Catholic dogma and the tenets of the dissidents. At the same time they expect thus to be able to satisfy what they consider modern needs by expressing Catholic dogma in the terms and the concepts of such contemporary philosophies as those of "immanentism," "idealism," or "existentialism."

The encyclical then indicates a second and a worse basic error in this field. There are some bolder spirits, it informs us, who hold that dogma can and ought to be presented clothed with the terminology and the concepts of these false philosophies because, they contend, the mysteries of the faith can never be expressed by adequately true concepts, but only by notions which they call "approximative," notions which serve to a certain extent to disclose the truth, but which, at the same time, necessarily distort it. Hence they believe that theology, utilizing various forms through the course of the ages, can and must substitute new notions for old ones, so that it may make the same divine truths available to men in different ways, and even in ways that are to some extent opposed to one another, but which remain, as they put it, equivalent. Such individuals maintain that the history of dogma is the record of these various successive forms, differing according to the various philosophies and opinions that have come into being during the course of the centuries, forms in which revealed truth has been clothed.

The next two paragraphs deal with norms pertinent to these errors. The *Humani generis* declares that this second error actually embodies what is known as dogmatic "relativism," and that the contempt for traditional teaching and for traditional terminology in which the Church's doctrine is expressed tends effectively in that same direction. The encyclical insists that the terminology employed in the schools and in the Church's own teaching office can be perfected. Furthermore, we are told that it is common knowledge that the Church itself has not always used the same words in exactly the same way.

The *Humani generis* speaks out very clearly on the subject of the Church's relation to various philosophies which have flourished during its own history. It insists that the Church is in no way

bound up with the various and ephemeral systems of thought which have attracted attention for a little while. At the same time it teaches that words and concepts composed and elaborated through common effort by Catholic teachers during the course of many centuries to bring about some understanding of dogma are by no means based upon any such faulty foundation as that of an evanescent philosophy. It teaches that the works of these men are based upon principles and concepts deduced from an accurate knowledge of created reality, and confirmed by the revealed truth proposed by the Church. Hence, the Holy Father assures us, some of these notions have been used and even sanctioned by ecumenical councils, in such a way that it is wrong (*nefas*) to depart from them.

To neglect such notions and concepts, or to attempt to reject them or to deprive them of their value, the *Humani generis* censures as supremely imprudent and as a tentative to represent Catholic dogma itself as something subject to change. The current contempt for notions and terms regularly employed by scholastic theologians is designated as something which tends to weaken speculative theology, a discipline which the erring Catholic teachers consider incapable of generating genuine certitude because it employs the *ratio theologica*.

The second sub-section of that portion of the encyclical devoted to contemporary false opinions in the field of sacred theology deals with the teaching office of the Church itself. The Holy Father complains that the men who are avid for novelties pass easily from a contempt for scholastic theology to a neglect or even a contempt for the teaching authority of the Church, which supports scholastic theology. In general these errant teachers are said to look upon the Church's *magisterium* as a hindrance to progress and as an obstacle standing in the way of science. Here the *Humani generis* takes cognizance of an opinion current among some non-Catholics, a belief that the Church's teaching authority is an unjust restraining factor, preventing some qualified theologians from reforming their own subject. This juxtaposition of opinions is calculated to show that these unfortunate Catholic teachers have, in effect, adopted a characteristically non-Catholic attitude towards the *ecclesia docens*.

The Holy Father states that these teachers sometimes treat the obligation of complete adherence to the Church's *magisterium* as if it were non-existent, despite the fact that this teaching agency has

been constituted as the proximate and universal norm of truth for all theologians. The Holy Father reminds his readers that Our Lord has entrusted the entire deposit of faith, including both Scripture and tradition, to the Church, so that the Church may guard, preserve, and explain it. The faithful are strictly obligated to avoid errors that more or less approach the gravity of heresy, and to obey the various constitutions and decrees in which such evil opinions are proscribed and forbidden by the Holy See.

Specifically the Holy Father reproves the conduct of some men who deliberately and habitually neglect what the Popes have taught in their encyclicals about the nature and the constitution of the Church in order that a kind of vague notion which they say they have drawn from the Fathers, especially from the Greek Fathers, may prevail. These individuals claim that the Pontiffs do not wish to pass judgment on matters disputed among theologians. Consequently, they believe, we should go back to the earliest sources, and from these writings of the ancients explain what the *magisterium* of the Church has taught in more recent times.

The *Humani generis* then proceeds to give the norms which should govern Catholic teaching on the matters mentioned in this series of errors, errors which it describes as cleverly stated, but still fallacious. First of all, it insists that, despite the fact that generally speaking the Pontiffs allow freedom of discussion on points disputed among better-known theologians, history teaches us that several issues which were once subject to discussion are now no longer open to question.

Then, passing on to the teaching about the doctrinal import of the papal encyclicals, the Holy Father tells us that it is a mistake to withhold assent from doctrines proposed in these documents on the pretense that the Pope does not exercise his supreme teaching power in the encyclicals. These letters demand assent of themselves. Things taught in them are proposed in the ordinary *magisterium*, in which, just as truly as in the solemn judgments of the Church, Our Lord's promise set forth in the Gospel according to St. Luke, the promise that the man who accepts the Church's teaching actually accepts His doctrine,[6] is verified. The *Humani generis* presents as a general norm to cover teaching on this point the statement that, when the Holy Father gives his decision on

[6] Cf. *Luke* 10:16.

any subject which has hitherto been subject to controversy, his judgment is no longer open to question among theologians.

Since the errors about the Church's teaching office involved mention of the sources of revelation, the encyclical sets forth certain norms which are to regulate their use. It informs us that it is definitely the business of the theologian to have recourse to Scripture and to tradition, since it is his duty to show how the truths set forth in the Church's living *magisterium* are actually to be found, either implicitly or explicitly, in these very sources. Then it goes on to show that an insistence upon this function in no way closes the door upon the possibility of definite progress in theology. Such progress is made possible by reason of the inexhaustible wealth of truth contained in the sources themselves.

The Holy Father assures us that positive theology is definitely not to be considered as something on the same plane with merely historical science, since God has given His Church both the sources of revelation and the sacred *magisterium* and has commissioned this latter to elucidate and explain what is contained only obscurely and as it were implicitly in the deposit of faith. The encyclical reiterates the truth that the power to expound the deposit of faith authentically was given by Our Lord, not to all the faithful nor to the theologians themselves, but only to the Church's *magisterium*. Since the Church has used this power time and time again throughout the centuries in both the ordinary and extraordinary exercise of its authority, we are told that the method of explaining these clear statements through an appeal to obscure sources must evidently be considered as entirely false. Exactly the opposite procedure should be adopted. This paragraph of the encyclical ends with a citation of the great Pius IX, to the effect the noblest task of the theologian is that of showing how the doctrines defined by the Church are actually contained in the sources of revelation in the very sense in which they have been defined by the Church.

The third sub-section of this portion of the encyclical deals with contemporary errors that are derogatory to the divine authority of Sacred Scripture. The first of these aberrations consists in a perversion of the doctrine that God is the Author of these books. The second is a renewal of the old false teaching that the infallibility of Sacred Scripture extends only to its statements about God, about morals, and about religion. Another is the teaching that there is a human sense of Scripture, under which a divine

sense, the only infallible sense or meaning according to these mistaken teachers, lies concealed.

A fourth error is to be found in the tendency of some writers to take no cognizance of the analogy of faith or of the Church's tradition in interpreting Scripture. Such individuals hold that a merely human or independent interpretation of the Scriptures constitutes the norm by which the teaching of the Church's *magisterium* and that of the Fathers is to be evaluated. Actually Sacred Scripture must be interpreted according to the mind of the Church.

The last mistake about the interpretation of the Bible stigmatized in this part of the encyclical is that of men who wish to replace the traditional literal sense of the sacred books by a sort of exegesis they call symbolical and spiritual. They hope, in this way, to make the Old Testament, which they consider a "closed fountain" in the Church at present, eventually available to all. They claim, moreover, that all the difficulties against the Bible, difficulties they believe to be connected with the literal sense of Scripture, will vanish once the literal sense has been discarded.

The encyclical does not give any series of norms governing the matter covered by these errors about Scripture and its interpretation. It simply points to the fact that all of them are in manifest opposition to the teachings contained in Pope Leo's *Providentissimus*, Pope Benedict's *Spiritus Paraclitus*, and the present Holy Father's *Divino afflante Spiritu*.

The fourth and final sub-section of this part of the encyclical lists some individual errors as "poisonous fruits" of the false teachings and tendencies already described. The Holy Father explicitly mentions and condemns the following.

a) Doubt that human reason, without the help of divine revelation and of divine grace, can demonstrate the existence of a personal God by means of arguments deduced from created things.

b) A denial that the world had a beginning.

c) The statement that the creation of the world was necessary.

d) The denial that God has an eternal and infallible foreknowledge of man's free actions.

e) A belief that the doctrine according to which angels are creatures endowed with personality is open to question.

f) Admission of the hypothesis that there is no essential difference between matter and spirit.

g) A perversion of the Catholic teaching on the gratuity of the supernatural order, based on the assumption that God cannot create a creature endowed with intelligence without ordering and calling that creature to the beatific vision.
h) A corruption of Catholic teaching about the concept and the definitions of original sin, of sin in general as an offense against God, and of the satisfaction Christ made for us. On all of these points the Tridentine definitions have been neglected by the men who are guilty of this faulty teaching.
i) A teaching that the doctrine of transubstantiation, as something based upon an outmoded philosophical concept of substance, ought to be revised in such a way that Our Lord's Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament would be reduced to a kind of symbolism, according to which the consecrated species would merely be efficacious signs of Our Lord's spiritual presence and of His intimate union with the faithful members in the Mystical Body.
j) An opinion that men are not bound by the teaching contained in the *Mystici Corporis* and based upon the sources of revelation, the teaching to the effect that Christ's Mystical Body and the Roman Catholic Church are one and the same thing. In the light of this decision of the *Humani generis*, incidentally, it would henceforth be erroneous to deny that the *Mystici Corporis* had taught that the Catholic Church is actually the Mystical Body.
k) A teaching which reduces the necessity of belonging to the true Church in order to attain eternal salvation to an empty formula.
l) A minimizing of the rational character of the credibility of the Christian faith.

The final paragraph in this part of the encyclical declares that manifestly these and other evils have crept in among some of the children of the Church who have been led astray by a false zeal for souls and by pseudo-science. The Holy Father states that he has been compelled to point out these errors and dangers of error, and that he has acted "not without anxiety."

ERRORS AND NORMS IN THE FIELD OF PHILOSOPHY

The fourth part of the doctrinal section of this encyclical opens with a series of general norms for Catholic teaching about this science. It then considers two sets of errors, appending after each list the pertinent individual standards for correct presentation of Catholic truth on this subject. Finally it speaks of the fruits of

these errors and of the ultimate sources of the intellectual evils reproved in this section of the papal letter.

The first paragraph of this part sets forth the Catholic teaching about the competence of the human mind, the need of a true philosophy for the proper operation of the human mind in matters of faith and morals, and the characteristics of this true philosophy. The Catholic Church teaches that human reason is capable of demonstrating with certainty the existence of the one personal God, that it can build up an incontrovertible proof of the foundations of the Christian faith itself from signs given by God, and that it can achieve some understanding and a most fruitful understanding of the mysteries. The *Humani generis* insists, however, that reason can accomplish these functions fittingly and safely only when it is properly trained, or in possession of the sane and traditional philosophy, a system of thought which has stood up under the test of divine revelation, proposed by the infallible *magisterium* of the Church. This philosophy is described as one which protects the true and sincere value of human knowledge, proclaims the basic metaphysical principles of sufficient reason, causality and of finality, and teaches that certain and immutable truth can be known.

The encyclical acknowledges that there are points in even this traditional philosophy which have no connection with truths of faith and morals, and which, as a result, the Church leaves free for discussion. It reminds its readers, however, that this sane freedom does not obtain throughout the entire extent of philosophy, and that this is true particularly where its basic teachings are concerned. Even with respect to such basic questions, it is definitely permissible to clothe this philosophy in a better form, to endow it with an improved terminology, cautiously to enrich it with elements gained during the advance of human knowledge, and to divest it of some imperfections. It is never allowable, however, to reject it, to contaminate it with false principles, or to pass it over as something obsolete.

The *Humani generis* reminds us that truth and the philosophical expression of truth do not change from day to day, and that this holds particularly in the case of philosophical principles and conclusions that have been confirmed by revelation. God guides the human mind, not so that it may replace one truth by another, but in such a way that it puts aside errors which it may have admitted, and builds upon its foundation of truth. Both philosophers and

theologians are urged not to accept blindly every new teaching excogitated in this world, but to subject new ideas to severe and objective criticism, lest they admit some notions that would pervert or destroy the truth they already possess, and damage or ruin their own faith.

The norms already given in this section serve to explain, the encyclical tells us, why the Church, in its Canon Law, insists upon the philosophical training of its candidates for the priesthood "*ad Angelici Doctoris rationem, doctrinam et principia.*" The Holy Father tells us that the method and the *ratio* of St. Thomas are outstandingly good for the training of beginners in philosophy and for the investigation of advanced questions, that his doctrine is consonant with divine revelation, most useful for the defense of the faith, and for the effective and secure assimilation of the fruits of genuine intellectual progress.

The Holy Father complains that certain teachers within the Church affect to despise this traditional and recognized philosophy on the pretense that it is outmoded in form and rationalistic in its process of thought. These men err in holding that our philosophy is imperfect because it teaches that an absolutely true metaphysic can exist. They hold, on the contrary, that reality, especially transcendent reality, can best be expressed by disparate doctrines, teachings which are supposed to complete one another, even while they are to a certain extent mutually opposed. These same individuals, in short, are charged with passing over the systematic philosophy of the Catholic schools as something fitted only to introduce men to the study of scholastic theology, or as something that appealed to the minds of mediaeval men and which has no message or meaning for the men of our own time.

They turn away from the perennial philosophy as something concerned only with unchanging essences, and claim that the contemporary mind necessarily looks towards the existences of individual things, and towards an ever-changing life process. And, while they despise this philosophy, they praise every other kind to the sky, in such a way as to suggest that any sort of philosophy or opinion, with some additions or perhaps corrections, can be reconciled with Catholic dogma. The encyclical offers us as a norm for correct teaching on this point the declaration that some philosophies, particularly those of immanentism, idealism, historical

or dialectical materialism, or atheistic or sceptical existentialism, are incompatible with Catholic dogma.

The encyclical then takes cognizance that these teachers sometimes oppose the Church's perennial philosophy on yet another ground, repudiating it as something that treats only of the intellect in explaining the process of cognition, neglecting the function of the will and of the affections. It denounces this attitude as false because the Christian philosophy has never denied the utility and the efficacy of good dispositions of the entire mind for the knowledge and the acceptance of religious and moral truths. As a matter of fact it has actually insisted that the lack of such dispositions explains how an intellect affected by ill will and by passions can be darkened so that it does not grasp truth properly. The Holy Father reminds us of St. Thomas' teaching to the effect that the intellect can be aided in its understanding of higher things belonging to either the natural or the supernatural order by a kind of affective connaturality for these realities, whether this connaturality be something on the level of nature or a gift pertaining to the order of divine grace.

The *Humani generis* reminds us, however, that it is one thing to acknowledge that the disposition of the affections of the will has the power to aid the reason to acquire a more certain and firm cognition of moral truth, and it is quite another thing to attribute, as these innovators do, a sort of intuitive power to the appetitive or affective faculties themselves, or to say that when the intellect has shown itself incapable of deciding what is true in any given case, it turns to the will which makes a free choice in such a manner that cognition and the act of the will are mixed up together in this operation.

The Holy Father states that the false opinions he has listed and discussed endanger two sciences which by their very nature are intimately connected with the doctrine of faith. The men who propound these opinions describe theodicy and ethics as intended, not to prove anything certain about God or about any transcendent reality, but only to show that what faith teaches about the personal God and about His commandments is in harmony with the necessities of life, and that this doctrine must be accepted if men are going to escape despair and attain eternal salvation.

The Holy Father condemns these opinions as obviously contradicting the statements of Leo XIII and Pius X and as incompatible with the teaching of the Vatican Council. He states that this condemnation would not have been necessary if men had paid proper attention to the Church's *magisterium*, which is commissioned and obligated to watch over philosophical teachings at the same time that it is empowered to guard the deposit of divine revelation.

ERRORS IN THE FIELD OF POSITIVE SCIENCE

This portion of the encyclical opens with a statement of general norms. Noting that many persons insist that the Church should take serious cognizance of the teachings of the positive sciences, where these doctrines come into contact with the truths of the faith, the Holy Father designates this insistence as something laudable where it has reference to facts actually demonstrated by these positive disciplines. He reminds us, however, that mere hypotheses set forth in these sciences must be handled with great caution when they touch upon doctrine contained in the sources of divine revelation. Hypotheses that are opposed directly or even indirectly to revealed truth must not be accepted in any way.

The *Humani generis* then deals with individual hypotheses set forth in the name of three positive sciences, biology, anthropology, and history. The first of these hypotheses, put forward in the name of biology and anthropology, is the evolutionistic explanation of the origin of the human body as something which was formed originally from existent and living matter. The Church's *magisterium* allows discussion and investigation about the truth of this theory in the present status of theology and of the positive disciplines by men competent in either field, but allows it under certain conditions. The first condition is that serious consideration should be given to reasons on both sides, those that militate against the hypothesis as well as those that favor it. The second is that men on both sides must be prepared to obey the Church's judgment when it is issued. The Holy Father complains that the freedom of discussion allowed by the Church on this point has been definitely abused by men who conduct themselves as if the origin of the human body from existent and living matter has been established and demonstrated as certain from evidence now at hand and from reasonings already made from that evidence. These individuals likewise abuse the freedom the Church has accorded them when they act as if there were nothing in the content of the sources

of revelation that makes great caution on the subject matter of this hypothesis imperative.

At the same time, the encyclical assures us that the origin of the human soul is definitely not open to question. The Catholic faith obligates us to hold that souls are immediately created by God.

Another hypothesis, that of polygenism, is put forward in the name of anthropology. The Holy Father tells us that this must be rejected outright. The faithful cannot accept the doctrine that here on earth after Adam there lived true men who did not derive their origin from him as the first parent of all men by the process of natural generation. They are likewise forbidden to hold that the name "Adam" stands for a group of first parents. There is absolutely no evidence that either of these hypotheses could be reconciled with what the sources of revelation contain and the Church's *magisterium* teaches about original sin. The encyclical reminds us that original sin is something that proceeds from an offense against God actually committed by Adam as an individual person, and that it affects each individual as something which has come to him through the process of generation.

The last two doctrinal paragraphs of the encyclical deal with an erroneous tendency that masks itself under the guise of history. The Holy Father asserts that some men have interpreted the historical books of the Old Testament in entirely too free a manner, and that they have wrongly appealed to a recent letter from the Pontifical Biblical Commission to the Archbishop of Paris in support of their position. This letter, signed by the late Fr. Vosté and addressed to Cardinal Suhard, spoke of the first eleven chapters of the Book of Genesis. The encyclical reminds us of its insistence that, despite the fact that these chapters do not manifest the qualities of historical composition to be found in the works of the outstanding Greek and Latin historians or those manifest in competent historical writings of our own time, they must be classified in some true sense as historical. The letter also reminded the exegetes of their duty to investigate and to determine in just what way these chapters can rightfully lay claim to this designation.

Explaining and employing the terms used in the letter to Cardinal Suhard, the Holy Father brings out the fact that these eleven chapters accomplish a twofold work, using simple and figurative language, adapted to the mentality of a comparatively uncultured people. They set forth the principal truths of the order of salvation

and they also give a popular description of the origin of both the human race and of the chosen people.

The *Humani generis* admits the possibility that inspired writers of the Old Testament drew some of their material from non-inspired popular narratives. At the same time it warns its readers not to forget that, in acting thus, these men were aided by the process of divine inspiration, which preserved them from error in their task of selecting and evaluating these documents.

Finally, the encyclical assures us that material taken from popular narratives and incorporated into the inspired writings is definitely not to be put on the same level as myths. The very character of the sacred books of the Old Testament makes it clear that the inspired writers utterly surpass the profane authors of ancient times.

THE SITUATION AND ITS EXIGENCIES

In the brief pastoral portion of the encyclical, the Holy Father describes the reaction of the Catholic academic world to the errors he has treated in the dogmatic part of this document. He then issues certain definite commands and admonitions, demanded by the actual situation, to Bishops, to superiors, and to teachers.

First we are assured that these errors were being taught either in an open or a covert manner when the encyclical was written. Then we are told that the great number of Catholic teachers in various institutions of higher learning have not fallen into these false opinions. The Holy Father realizes that these teachings have the power to attract people who are not cautious. He has preferred to put a stop to them at the outset, rather than to be compelled to administer medicine for a disease that had already become deep-seated.

So it is that to put a stop to these errors, the Holy Father has commanded Bishops and superiors of religious communities to take the most diligent care to prevent such opinions from being advanced in schools, in conferences, or in writings of any kind. They are likewise ordered to see to it that these errors are not taught in any way to the clergy or the faithful. This precept binds them most seriously in conscience.

Teachers in ecclesiastical institutions are warned that they cannot with safe conscience exercise the office of teaching entrusted to them unless they religiously accept and strictly observe the

norms the Holy Father has given. They are told that they are obligated to show due reverence and obedience to the Church's *magisterium* themselves and to instill these attitudes into their own pupils.

Catholic teachers are also urged to work towards the progress of the sciences they teach. At the same time, however, they are ordered to do this without violating the rules the Holy Father has laid down in this encyclical for the purpose of guarding the truth of the faith and of Catholic doctrine. They are to investigate the questions that have arisen as a result of the latest scientific advances, but they are to conduct their investigation prudently and cautiously. Finally, they are to avoid all false "irenicism" and remember that those outside the Church can be brought back into it properly and successfully only when the entire truth existing within the Church is delivered honestly to everyone, in all its purity and integrity.

Such are the teachings of the *Humani generis*. The Holy Father has warned us of existent errors, which have endangered the existence and the integrity of the Catholic faith among the men of our own time. These errors have been taught more forcefully in non-published material, but they have been propounded also in books and articles important and powerful enough to make them dangerous for the children of the Church. The encyclical that condemns these false opinions is addressed, not to the hierarchy of any one country, but to all the bishops of the world. It was so addressed only because the Holy Father realized that the errors and tendencies he was called upon to denounce threatened the faith everywhere.

Hence there can be no excuse whatsoever for the tactic of brushing aside the lesson of this encyclical with the statement that it refers to controversies that have aroused no interest and exercised no influence in this part of the world. Such an assertion about the *Humani generis*, made in our own country, would be manifestly false. It would, furthermore, only serve to influence the people for whom this encyclical was written to turn their attention from what is, and what must be considered as, a magnificent and a tremendously important instrument for the preservation and the integrity of the faith in our times.

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Answers to Questions

MAY A HIGH MASS BE CONSIDERED A PRIVATE MASS?

Question: On the Vigil of Pentecost, a priest who had been singing a High Mass every morning in a convent chapel said only a Low Mass as he had not time to read the prophecies and litanies. Could he not have sung, as usual, a High Mass, beginning with the Introit of the day and omitting the prophecies and litanies?

Answer: The solution of the difficulty proposed above is to be found in the definition of a private Mass since the rubric of the Missal on the Vigil of Pentecost provides that in private Masses on that day the priests begin at once with the Introit omitting the preliminary prophecies and litanies. A private Mass on this vigil would be one apart from the blessing of the font in a parish church or one which is not public in the sense of being a Mass which is not conventual or capitular. *In casu*, the Mass in the convent chapel, unless it were technically a conventual Mass in a community where there was *obligatio chori*, would be considered a private Mass even though it were celebrated *in cantu*. The external solemnity of a High or Solemn Mass would not remove it from the category of private Masses any more than a parochial or a conventual Mass ceases to be a public one if happens to be celebrated as a Low Mass.

Wuest-Mullaney (*Matters Liturgical*, 640) does indeed cite decree No. 2731 of the Congregation of Rites to support his statement that a High Mass may not be celebrated on the Vigil of Pentecost without the prophecies and litanies. The decree in question, however, is a decision, dated August 8, 1835, addressed to a cathedral church in Piedmont, and refers to an annual founded Mass to be celebrated with the attendance of the cathedral chapter and as a Solemn Mass, and decides that this Mass may not be sung without the preliminary prophecies etc. beginning with the Introit *Quum sanctificatus* as for private Masses. Such a Mass, we think, is quite different *quoad solemnitatem intrinsecam* from the private Mass in the convent concerning which the question was raised.