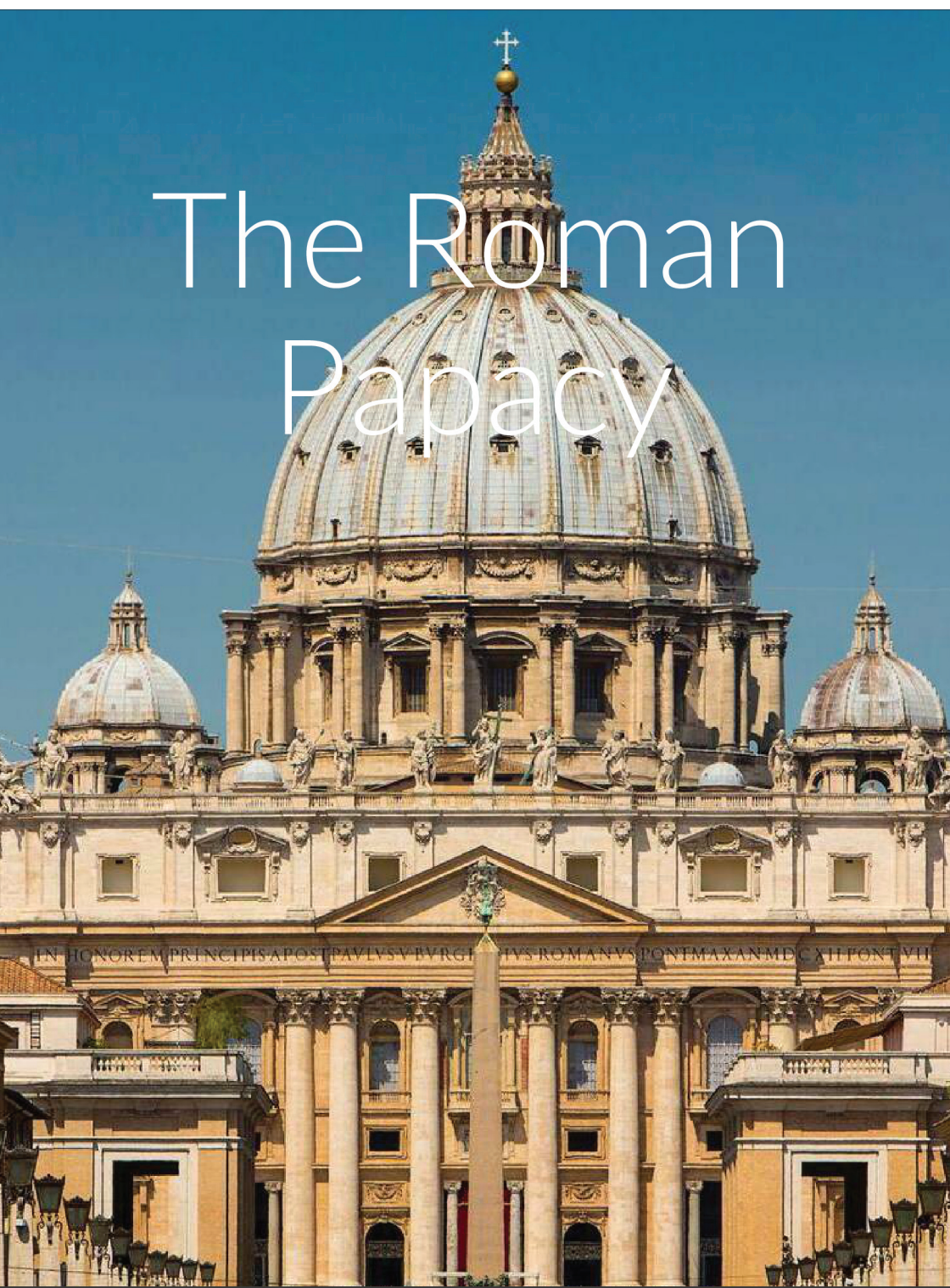


The Roman Papacy



“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”¹

“Moreover, in the Catholic Church itself, all possible care must be taken, that we hold that faith which has been believed everywhere, always, by all.”²

“There are those in the West who would present the Papacy as the legitimate development of the Christian idea, as Christianity arrived at its completion. The truth is, that it is the *negation* of the evangelical idea. Can, then, the negation of an idea be considered as its development?”³

¹ Galatians 1:8.

² St. Vincent of Lérins, *Commonitorium*, Chapter 2.

³ Abbé Guettée, *The Papacy: Its Historic Origin and Primitive Relations with the Eastern Churches* (1867), p. 28.

CHAPTER I:
THE PAPAL CLAIMS

1- The Pope is the Head of the Church and the Source of Its Unity

“The Papal office was instituted supernaturally and immediately by Christ as having the monarchical and royal primacy over the Church hierarchy; and it is by virtue of this one and supreme office that the Church Militant is said to be one under Christ.”⁴

“The Roman church...through the Lord’s disposition has a primacy of ordinary power over all other churches inasmuch as it is the mother and mistress of all Christ’s faithful.”⁵

“It is Church dogma that the Pope, the successor of St. Peter, possesses not only primacy of honour but also primacy of authority and jurisdiction over the whole Church.”⁶

“[Christ] set blessed Peter over the rest of the apostles and instituted in him the permanent principle of both unities and their visible foundation. Upon the strength of this foundation was to be built the eternal temple,

⁴ “Status papalis institutus est a Christo supernaliter, et immediate, tanquam primatum habens monarchicum, et regalem in ecclesiastica hierarchia, secundum quem statum unicum et supremum, Ecclesia Militans dicitur una sub Christo.” Jean Gerson, *Tractatus de Statibus Ecclesiasticis*, De Statu Summi Pontificis, Consideratio I, in: *Opera Omnia*, Vol. 2, ed. Du Pin (1728), p. 529.

⁵ Canon V, Fourth Lateran Council (1214-1215).

⁶ Pope Gregory XVI, *Commisum Divinitus*, 1835.

and the Church whose topmost part reaches heaven was to rise upon the firmness of this foundation.”⁷

“Bishops...constitute one single College, gathered around the Pope, who is the guardian and guarantor of this profound communion that was so close to Jesus’ heart and to his Apostles’ too...This Church, that is not united to the bishop, is a sick Church.”⁸

“That blessed Peter the Apostle had no more authority than the other Apostles had nor was he the head of the other Apostles. Likewise that God did not send forth any head of the Church, nor did He make anyone His vicar...We declare by sentence the above mentioned articles...to be contrary to Sacred Scripture and enemies of the Catholic faith, heretics, or heretical and erroneous...”⁹

“Simon Peter never even suspected that Christ entrusted the primacy in the Church to him; the Roman Church became the head of all the churches, not through the ordinance of Divine Providence, but merely through political conditions...His Holiness

⁷ *Pastor Aeternus*, 1870, Session 4.

⁸ Pope Francis, *General Audience*, St. Peter’s Square, 5 Nov. 2014.

⁹ “Quod beatus Petrus Apostolus non plus auctoritatis habuit quam alii Apostoli habuerunt, nec aliorum Apostolorum fuit caput. Item quod Christus nullum caput dimisit Ecclesiae, nec aliquem suum vicarium fecit...Articulos praedictos...velut sacrae Scripturae contrarios et fidei catholicae inimicos, haereticos, seu haereticales et erroneos...sententialiter declaramus.” Pope John XXII, *Licet juxta doctrinam*, October 23, 1327.

[Pope Pius X]...ordered that each and every one of the above-listed propositions be held by all as condemned and proscribed."¹⁰

2- The Pope is All-Powerful and All-Holy

"Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns and know that thou art Father of Princes and Kings, Master of the World, Vicar of Our Savior Jesus Christ on Earth, to Whom is honour and glory in the ages of ages."¹¹

"Notwithstanding the constitutions and ordinances of the Apostles, and anything contrary whatsoever."¹²

"The judgement of the Pope and the judgement of God is one and the same."¹³

¹⁰ Pope Pius X, *Lamentabili Sane*, 1907, propositions 56 and 57.

¹¹ "Accipe tiaram tribus coronis ornatam, et scias te esse Patrem Principum et Regnum, Rectorem Orbis, in terra Vicarium Salvatoris Nostri Jesu Christi, cui est honor et gloria in saecula saeculorum." Words spoken at the Papal coronation mass.

¹² "Non obstantibus constitutionibus et ordinationibus apostolicis, caeterisque contrariis quibuscumque." Phrase traditionally included at the end of Papal bulls.

¹³ "Sententia igitur Papae et sententia Dei una sententia est." Augustinus Triumphus, *Summa de potestate ecclesiastica* (1473), Quaestio VI, art. 1.

“The Pope is not simply a man but is like a god on Earth.”¹⁴

“Whatever [the Pope] wishes is considered sacrosanct by the entire Church, is worthy to be conserved by all, and is to be acknowledged as canonical.”¹⁵

“Decretals are to be numbered among the canonical scriptures.”¹⁶

“Whence it is not to be wondered at that the Roman Pontiff, as [Christ’s] Vicar, to whom is ‘the earth, and the fulness thereof, and the world, and all that dwelleth therein’ (Psalm 24), possesses not only the spiritual sword, but also the unsheathed material sword and, provided a just cause, the fullest authority and power to transfer empires, to break sceptres, and to remove crowns...So great is the authority and power of the Pope that he can also modify, declare, or interpret divine laws.”¹⁷

¹⁴ “Papa non homo simpliciter sed quasi deus in terris est.” Alvarus Pelagius, *De Planctu Ecclesiae* (1517), Lib. I, Cap. 58.

¹⁵ “Quid velit [est] in universa Ecclesia sacrosanctum, et ab omnibus custodiri legitimum, atque canonicum comprobari.” Cardinal Caesar Baronius, *Annales Ecclesiastici* (1596), Ad Annum 553, CCXXIV.

¹⁶ “Inter canonicas scripturas decretales epistolae connumerantur.” Gratianus, *Codex Juris Canonici*, Pars I, Distinctio XIX, Caput VI.

¹⁷ “Unde nil mirum, si Romano Pontifici, tanquam vicario eius, cuius est terra, et plenitudo eius, orbis terrarum, et universi qui habitant in eo etc. non solum spirituali, sed etiam gladio materiali evaginato, attributa sit, justa suadente causa, plenissima auctoritas, atque potestas transferendi imperia,

“We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty.”¹⁸

“The Pope is God on Earth...Jesus has placed the Pope above the prophets...above the Forerunner...above the Angels...Jesus has placed the Pope on the same level as God.”¹⁹

3- Belief in the Papacy is essential for Salvation

“We declare, we proclaim, we define that it is absolutely necessary for salvation that every human creature be subject to the Roman Pontiff.”²⁰

sceptra frangendi, coronas auferendi...Papae tantae est auctoritatis et potestatis, ut possit quoque leges divinas modificare, declarare, vel interpretari.” Lucius Ferraris, *Prompta Bibliotheca* (1854), Volume 5, at entry for “Pope”, Sections 29 and 30, p. 1830.

¹⁸ “Dei omnipotentis vices in terris geramus.” Pope Leo XIII, Apostolic letter *Praeclara gratulationis publicae*, June 20, 1894.

¹⁹ “Il Papa è Dio sulla terra...Gesù ha posto il Papa al di sopra dei profeti...al di sopra del Precursore...al di sopra degli angeli...Gesù ha collocato il Papa al livello stesso di Dio.” Giovanni Bosco, *Meditazioni per le novena, le commemorazione mensili e la formazione salesiana*, Volume 1 (1955), p. 90. Printed with imprimatur of the Vatican.

²⁰ “Porro subesse Romano Pontifici omni humanae creaturae declaramus, dicimus, definimus, et pronunciamus omnino esse de necessitate salutis.” Pope Boniface VIII, *Unam Sanctam*, 1302, Section 9.

“Without the Sovereign Pontiff there can be no real Christianity.”²¹

“Both clergy and faithful, of whatever rite and dignity, both singly and collectively, are bound to submit to this power by the duty of hierarchical subordination and true obedience, and this not only in matters concerning faith and morals, but also in those which regard the discipline and government of the Church throughout the world...So, then, if anyone says that the Roman Pontiff has merely an office of supervision and guidance, and not the full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the whole Church...let him be anathema.”²²

“Whosoever presumes to attack, diminish or reduce this primacy to the level of any other ecclesiastical office...is heretical, schismatic, impious and sacrilegious.”²³

“Granted that Jesus Christ is truly present in the Holy Eucharist, is he fully present therein?...Clearly not. Therefore, there is a whole half of you that is missing, O my Saviour! In vain do I turn to this mute tabernacle in which you do not speak...And if a whole half of Jesus Christ is not to be found in the Holy Eucharist,

²¹ Joseph Marie de Maistre, *Du Pape* (1819), Discours préliminaire I.

²² *Pastor Aeternus*, op. cit.

²³ “Quem primatum quisquis impugnare, vel diminuere, vel alicui ecclesiastico statui particulari coaquere praesumit...haereticus est, schismaticus, impius, atque sacrilegius.” Jean Gerson, op. cit.

then it must be elsewhere. And indeed, it is elsewhere: it is in the Vatican; it is in the Pope. The Pope is the second mode of the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Church."²⁴

4- The Pope can never Err, nor be Judged

"Since the Apostolic See is the mother of all the churches, we learn from the mouth of Truth itself that it is right to turn to her when one is taken with doubt in a matter of the spirit as to a teacher and fount of heavenly wisdom, seeing that the light of ecclesiastical order proceeds from this one head, which illuminates the whole body of the Church with the bright splendour of truth and scatters the darkness of uncertainty."²⁵

²⁴ "Si Jésus-Christ est réellement présent dans la sainte Eucharistie, y est-il complètement présent?...Évidemment non. C'est donc toute une moitié de vous même qui vous manque, ô mon Sauveur! et que je cherche en vain dans ce tabernacle muet où vous ne parlez pas...et si toute une moitié de Jésus-Christ ne se trouve pas dans la sainte Eucharistie, c'est qu'elle est ailleurs. Elle est ailleurs, en effet; elle est au Vatican; elle est dans le Pape. Le Pape est le second mode de la présence réelle de Jésus-Christ dans l'Église." Louis-Émile Bougaud, *Le christianisme et les temps présents* (1882), Volume 4, pp. 463, 465-466.

²⁵ "Quoniam apostolica sedes omnium Ecclesiarum mater esse ex ipso Veritatis ore cognoscitur, dignum est, ut si quid uspiam dubitationis emergerit, quo ad animarum videatur pertinere negotium, ad ipsam, velut ad magistram, et quodammodo

“We teach and define as a divinely revealed dogma that when the Roman Pontiff speaks *ex cathedra*...he possesses, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, that infallibility which the divine Redeemer willed his Church to enjoy in defining doctrine concerning faith or morals. Therefore, such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are of themselves, and not by the consent of the Church, irreformable.”²⁶

“The Church cannot stand against the Highest Pontiff...Therefore, in a council...if the majority dissents, their authority is worth nothing as they are estranged from the head, and being separated, they cannot speak for and represent the Church.”²⁷

“The Pope may not be judged...for he is the head and prince of the entire Church.”²⁸

fontem coelestis sapientiae recurratur, quatenus ex illo uno capite ecclesiasticae disciplinae lumen prodeat, quo discussis ambiguitatum tenebris, totum corpus Ecclesiae perspicuo veritatis nitore clarescat.” Peter Damian, *Liber Gomorrhianus* (c. 1051), Praefatio, *Patrologia Latina* 145, col. 161.

²⁶ *Pastor Aeternus*, op. cit.

²⁷ “Cum revera contra Summum Pontificem stare non possit Ecclesia...Itaque in concilio...sin vero dissentiant plerique, nihil horum valebit auctoritas, quoniam a capite divulsi, atque sejuncti Ecclesiam referre, ac repraesentare non possunt.” Giovanni Devoti, *Institutiones canonicae libri quatuor* (1829 ed.), Book I, Prolegomena, Cap. II, sec. XXIV.

²⁸ “Papa judicari non possit esse, quia...caput et [princeps est] Ecclesiae universae.” Cardinal Bellarmine, *Controversiarum de Summo Pontifice* (1569), Lib. II, Cap. XXVI.

“If one day the Pope fell into the error of imposing sins while prohibiting virtues...the Church would be obliged to believe that sins are indeed beneficial and virtues are bad; alternatively, she would be committing a sin against her conscience.”²⁹

²⁹ “Si autem Papa erraret praecipiendo vitia, vel prohibendo virtutes...teneretur Ecclesia credere vitia esse bona et virtutes malas, nisi vellet contra conscientiam peccare.” Bellarmine, op.cit. Lib. IV, Cap. V.

CHAPTER II:
THE WITNESS OF TRADITION

Saint Paul:

“For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?...**For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.**”³⁰

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon **the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.**”³¹

Saint John the Evangelist:

“And the wall of the city had **twelve foundations**, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”³²

Saint Irenaeus (+202):

“The Church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the Apostles and their disciples this faith...Nor will any one of the rulers in the Churches, however highly

³⁰ I Corinthians 3:4-5, 11.

³¹ Ephesians 2:19-20.

³² Revelation 21:14.

gifted he may be in point of eloquence, teach doctrines different from these, for **no one is greater than the Master.**"³³

Clement of Alexandria (+215):

"And on the disciples, striving for the pre-eminence, He enjoins **equality with simplicity**, saying that they must become as little children."³⁴

Origen (+253):

"But if you suppose that upon the one Peter only the whole church is built by God, what would you say about John the son of thunder or each one of the Apostles? Shall we otherwise dare to say, that against Peter in particular the gates of Hades shall not prevail, but that they shall prevail against the other Apostles and the perfect? Does not the saying previously made, 'The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it,' hold in regard to all and in the case of each of them? And also the saying, 'Upon this rock I will build My Church?' **Are the keys of the kingdom of heaven given by the Lord to Peter only, and will no other of the blessed receive them?**"³⁵

³³ *Against Heresies*, Book I, Chapter X, 1-2.

³⁴ *Stromata*, Book V, Chapter 5.

³⁵ *Commentary on Matthew*, Chapters 10-11, *Patrologia Graeca* 13, col. 1000-1001.

St. Cyprian of Carthage (+258):

“Assuredly the rest of the apostles were also the same as was Peter, **endowed with a like partnership both of honour and power.**”³⁶

Saint Ambrose of Milan (+397):

“They have not the succession of Peter, who hold not the faith of Peter.”³⁷

“[Peter], then, who before was silent, to teach us that we ought not to repeat the words of the impious, this one, I say, when he heard: ‘But who do you say I am,’ immediately, not unmindful of his station, exercised his primacy, that is, **the primacy of confession, not of honour; the primacy of belief, not of rank...**Faith, then, is the foundation of the Church, for it was not said of Peter’s flesh, but of his faith, that ‘the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ But his confession of faith conquered hell.”³⁸

³⁶ *On the Unity of the Church*, Section 4.

³⁷ “Non habent enim Petri hereditatem, qui Petri fidem non habent.” *De Poenitentia libri duo*, Book 1, Chapter 7, Section 33. Some editions have “sedem” (chair) instead of “fidem” (faith). However, the early printed editions of this work—Basel (1527) and Paris (1690)—and many manuscripts have “fidem.”

³⁸ *De Incarnatione Domenicæ Sacramento*, sec. 32, 34 (Chapters 4 and 5).

Saint Jerome (+420):

“But you say the Church was founded upon Peter: although elsewhere the same is attributed to all the Apostles, and they all receive the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the strength of the Church depends upon them all alike; yet one among the twelve is chosen so that when a head has been appointed, there may be no occasion for schism. But why was not John chosen, who was a virgin? Deference was paid to age, because Peter was the elder: one who was a youth, I may say almost a boy, could not be set over men of advanced age.”³⁹

Saint Augustine (+430):

“We believe not in Peter but in Him whom Peter believed.”⁴⁰

“He who loves to govern than do good is no bishop.”⁴¹

“For *petra* is not derived from Peter, but Peter from *petra*; just as Christ is not called so from the Christian, but the Christian from Christ. For on this very account the Lord said, ‘On this rock will I build my Church’ because Peter had said, ‘You are

³⁹ *Against Jovinian*, Book I, 26.

⁴⁰ “Non in Petrum credimus, sed in quem credidit Petrus.” *City of God*, Book XVIII, 54.

⁴¹ “Εργο ἐπισκοπεῖν, si velimus, Latine superintendere possumus dicere, ut intellegat non se esse episcopum, qui praeesse dilexerit, non prodesse.” *City of God*, Book XIX, 19.

the Christ, the Son of the living God.' On this rock, therefore, He said, which you have confessed, I will build my Church. **For the rock was Christ**; and on this foundation was Peter himself also built. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus."⁴²

Saint Cyril of Alexandria (+444):

"It is not equality of honour which unites natures; for verily Peter and John **were of equal honour with each other**, being both Apostles and holy disciples, yet the two were not one."⁴³

Pope Hormisdas (+523):

"Since Christ is the Head of the Church and **the Bishops are the Vicars of Christ**, evident care ought to be taken in their selection."⁴⁴

⁴² Tractate 124 on the Gospel of John.

⁴³ "Ὁὐ γὰρ ἐνοῖ τὰς φύσεις ἢ ἰσοτιμία, καὶ γοῦν Πέτρος τε καὶ Ἰωάννης, ἰσότιμοι μὲν ἀλλήλοις, καθὸ καὶ ἀπόστολοι καὶ ἅγιοι μαθηταί, πλὴν οὐχ εἰς οἱ δύο." Third Epistle to Nestorius, *The Three Epistles of Saint Cyril Archbishop of Alexandria*, ed. P.E. Pusey (1872), p. 22.

⁴⁴ "Sicut est caput Ecclesiae Christus, Christi autem vicarii sacerdotes, sic et in eligendis his curam oportet esse perspicuam." Epistle 25, To All the Bishops of Spain, *Patrologia Latina* 63, col. 423-424.

“The chief means of salvation is that we should keep the rule of right faith, and in no way deviate from the decrees of God and the Fathers.”⁴⁵

Pope St. Gregory the Great (+604):

“I confidently say that **whoever calls himself the universal bishop or desires this title, is, by his pride, the precursor of Antichrist** because he proudly puts himself above all others...Nor is it by dissimilar pride that he is led into error; for as that perverse one wished to be regarded above all men, so likewise whoever would be called sole bishop exalts himself above all other bishops.”⁴⁶

Venerable Bede (+735):

“‘And I will give to thee the Keys;’ this power without a doubt is given to all the Apostles, to whom by Him after the Resurrection is said generally, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’; **to the Bishops also and the Presbyters, and to the whole Church, the same office is committed.**”⁴⁷

⁴⁵ “Prima salus est regulam rectae fidei custodire et a constitutis patrum nullatenus deviare.” Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova amplissima collectio*, Volume VIII, 467.

⁴⁶ *Epistles*, Book VII, Letter 33.

⁴⁷ Commentary on Matthew 16, *Patrologia Latina* 92, col. 79.

Council of Douzi (A.D. 871):

“To the most holy and reverend father Hadrian, Pope of the first see of the Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Roman Church...We fervently beseech your authority to free us from the government [of Bishop Hincmar of Laon]—which we have for long been unable to bear—as from a great and incorrigible pest...And if, for the time being, it does not please you to put your seal on what we have already lawfully decided (in this Synod)...may he at least not be restored to his see until he first be re-tried in this province, as the rules and laws require. **For until today, no decree of the Fathers has ever denied this privilege to the Churches of France and Belgium;** considering especially that the decrees of Nicaea have most aptly committed the lesser clergy and even bishops (as the African Council writes) to the authority of their Metropolitans. And as Saint Boniface himself explains, writing to Bishop Hilary of Narbonne, ‘It is proper for us to be diligent guardians of the paternal rules. For no one is ignorant of the constitution of the Nicene Council which decreed that individual metropolitans ought to have jurisdiction over a single province, and that **no two provinces should be under the rule of one...**’

And if—far be it—by some suggestion or request, [Hincmar] wrest a decision from the Apostolic See to be restored to his rank as one scorning and treading upon the holy canons...we will hereafter not recognize any of his decisions, just as until now we have not communed with his deeds by resisting them. **For our own Holy Fathers, who still live with us through their canons, being distinguished in the way of the Holy Scriptures and the tradition of the Apostles and**

inspired by the grace of the Holy Spirit, give certain judgment about these things... May he live as he sees fit, for the Apostle both reassures and advise us: 'Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.'"⁴⁸

Bishop Arnulf of Orleans (+1003):

"Most reverend fathers, we know that the Church of Rome is always to be honoured on account of the memory of Saint Peter...But, O sorry Rome, what bright luminaries you brought forth in the time of our fathers and what monstrous darkness you have poured forth in our own days, infamous to future ages!...I ask you, reverend fathers, what do you think he is who sits upon the highest throne vested in purple and shining in gold? Truly, if he lacks charity and is inflated and exalted by wisdom only, he is the Antichrist sitting in the temple of God and exhibiting himself as God.

But if he is neither founded upon charity nor supports himself with wisdom, he is in the temple of God as a statue—like an idol—to whom asking a question is the same as consulting marble! To whom, then, shall we turn?...Assuredly, in Belgium and Germany, which are near to us, one can find consummate bishops of God who excel greatly in piety, as some members of this holy council can attest to...**It would seem to be far**

⁴⁸ *Epistola synodalis Concilii Duziacensis ad Hadrianum II Papam*, in: *Concilia Antiqua Galliae Supplementa*, ed. Pierre Delalande, Paris: 1666, pp. 259-261. The quote from Pope Boniface is from Epistle 12, *Patrologia Latina* 20, col. 773.

better to seek episcopal judgement there than in that city where all things can now be bought and justice is bartered for a quantity of coins...

The bishops of Africa deemed it impossible that one could not pass judgment on the decisions (of the Roman Church). **'No one can believe,' they say, 'that our Lord invested any one person with correct judicature and denied it to the innumerable bishops gathered together in council...'** Why, indeed, should he who occupies the higher place not calmly submit to the judgment of him who, though inferior, is his superior in wisdom? Yea, not even he, the prince of the Apostles, declined the rebuke of Paul, who resisted him to his face...And as Pope Gregory says, 'If a bishop be in fault, I know not anyone who is not subject to the Apostolic See; but if faultless, **all according to the principle of humility are equal.**'"⁴⁹

Pope Sylvester II (+1003):

"Shall they prove that the Roman bishop's judgment is greater than God's? But the first bishop of the Romans, indeed, the prince of the Apostles themselves, exclaims: 'We must obey God rather than men.' Paul, that master of the world, also exclaims: 'If any shall preach unto you anything other than that ye have received, even an angel from heaven, let him be

⁴⁹ Synod of Verzy, A.D. 991. *Patrologia Latina* 139, col. 312-315. The quote from the African bishops is from their letter to Pope Celestine "Optaremus" of A.D. 423; the quote from Pope Gregory is from his letter to John of Syracuse (Book IX, Letter 59).

anathema.’ Because Pope Marcellinus burned incense to Jove, did all bishops, therefore, have to burn incense?

I firmly maintain that if the Roman bishop himself shall have sinned against his brother and, though often advised, shall not have listened to the Church, that Roman bishop, I say, is to be considered a heathen and a publican according to the commandment of God. For the loftier the position, the greater the ruin. Even if he considers us unworthy of his communion because none of us will join him against the Gospel, **he will not be able to separate us from the communion of Christ...**

Let us not give occasion to the envious to think that **the episcopate, which is one as the Catholic Church is one, should seem to be subject to one man**; so that, if he be corrupted by money, favours, fear, or ignorance, there could be no bishop but he whom such virtues would commend. Let the common law of the Church be the Gospel, the Apostles, the Prophets, the Canons established by the spirit of God and consecrated by the reverence of the entire world, and the decrees of the Apostolic See that do not disagree with these; and may he who would depart from them contemptuously be condemned by them and be rejected. But may he who keeps and observes them as he is able have continual and eternal peace.”⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Letter to bishop Séguin (Segwinus) of Sens, A.D. 993. *Patrologia Latina* 139, col. 267-268.

Abbot Aelfric of Eynsham (+1010):

“The Lord said to Peter, ‘Thou art of stone.’ For the strength of his belief, and for the steadfastness of his profession he received that name, because he had attached himself with firm mind to Christ, who is called ‘stone’ by the apostle Paul. ‘And I will build my church upon this stone:’ that is, **on that faith which thou professest.** All God’s church is built on that stone, that is, upon Christ; for he is the foundation of all the fabrics of his own church.”⁵¹

⁵¹ *Passio Apostolorum Petri et Pauli*, Sermones Catholici, ed. Benjamin Thorpe, Vol. I (1844), p. 369.

CHAPTER III:
THE HOLY CANONS

APOSTOLIC CANONS

- **CANON 34:** Let not a bishop dare to ordain beyond his own limits, **in cities and places not subject to him**. But if he be convicted of doing so, without the consent of those persons who have authority over such cities and places, let him be deposed, and those also whom he has ordained.
- **CANON 35:** The bishops of every nation must acknowledge him who is first among them (the metropolitan) and account him as their head, and do nothing of consequence without his consent...But **neither let him who is the first do anything without the consent of all**; for so there will be unanimity, and God will be glorified through the Lord in the Holy Spirit.

COUNCIL OF NICAEA, A.D. 325

- **CANON 6:** The ancient customs of Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis shall be maintained, according to which the bishop of Alexandria has authority over all these places since a similar custom exists with reference to the bishop of Rome. Similarly in Antioch and the other provinces **the prerogatives of the churches are to be preserved**.

FIRST COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE, A.D. 381

- **CANON 2:** **The bishops are not to go beyond their dioceses to churches lying outside of their bounds**, nor bring confusion on the churches; but

let the Bishop of Alexandria, according to the canons, alone administer the affairs of Egypt; and let the bishops of the East manage the East alone, the privileges of the Church in Antioch, which are mentioned in the canons of Nicaea, being preserved; and let the bishops of the Asian Diocese administer the Asian affairs only; and the Pontic bishops only Pontic matters; and the Thracian bishops only Thracian affairs. And let not bishops go beyond their dioceses for ordination or any other ecclesiastical ministrations, unless they be invited.

- **CANON 3:** The Bishop of Constantinople, however, shall have the **prerogative of honour** after the Bishop of Rome; because Constantinople is New Rome.

COUNCIL OF CARTHAGE, A.D. 419

- **CANON 28:** It also seemed good that presbyters, deacons, and others of the inferior clergy...**shall not betake themselves to judgments from beyond seas**, but to the primates of their own provinces, or else to a universal council, as has also been decreed concerning bishops. But whoever shall think good to carry an appeal across the water shall be received to communion by no one within the boundaries of Africa.

COUNCIL OF EPHESUS, A.D. 431

- **CANON 8:** None of the God-beloved bishops shall assume control of any province which has not heretofore, from the very beginning, been under his own hand or that of his predecessors. But if anyone has violently taken and subjected [a province], he shall give it up; lest the canons of the Fathers be transgressed; or the vanities of worldly honour be brought in under pretext of sacred office; or we lose, without knowing it, little by little, the liberty which our Lord Jesus Christ, the deliverer of all men, hath given us by His own blood.

COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON, A.D. 451

- **CANON 28:** The Fathers rightly granted privileges to the throne of Old Rome because it was the royal city. And the one hundred and fifty most religious bishops [gathered in Constantinople], actuated by the same consideration, gave equal privileges to the most holy throne of New Rome, justly judging that the city which is honoured with the Sovereignty and the Senate, and enjoys equal privileges with the old imperial Rome, should in ecclesiastical matters also be magnified as she is, and rank next after her.

THIRD COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE, A.D. 680-681

- **SESSION XIII:** And with these we define that there shall be expelled from the holy Church of

God and anathematized **Honorius who was some time Pope of Old Rome**, because of what we found written by him to Sergius, that in all respects he followed his view and confirmed his impious doctrines.

Note: A Pope is explicitly condemned as a heretic.

COUNCIL IN TRULLO, A.D. 692

- **CANON 13:** Since we know it to be handed down as a rule of the Roman Church that those who are deemed worthy to be advanced to the diaconate or presbyterate should promise no longer to cohabit with their wives, we, preserving the ancient rule and apostolic perfection and order, will that the lawful marriages of men who are in holy orders be from this time forward firm.
- **CANON 55:** Since we understand that in the city of the Romans, in the holy fast of Lent they fast on the Saturdays, contrary to the ecclesiastical observance which is traditional, it seemed good to the holy synod that also in the Church of the Romans the canon shall immovably stand fast which says: "If any cleric shall be found to fast on a Sunday or Saturday (except on one occasion only) he is to be deposed; and if he is a layman he shall be cut off."

Note: The Council condemns Roman usages that went against the universal tradition of the Church.

FOURTH COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE, A.D. 879-880

- **CANON 1:** If any priest, layman, or bishop from Italy who is subject to penalty, deposition, or anathema by the most holy Pope John find himself in Asia, Europe, or Libya, he is to be esteemed in the same canonical state by the most holy Patriarch Photius of Constantinople...and those likewise whom Photius our most holy Patriarch...has excommunicated, deposed, or anathematized in whatever diocese, may the most holy Pope John and the Roman church under him esteem in the same canonical state.⁵²

Note: The authority of the Churches of Rome and Constantinople is defined reciprocally and equally.

⁵² Mansi, op. cit., Volume XVII, 498.

CHAPTER IV:
REFLECTIONS OF A FORMER ROMAN
CATHOLIC⁵³

⁵³ First published as “Christianity or the Papacy” by Fr. Alexey Young in the Journal *Nikodemos* in 1978 and republished in 1990 by Saint John Kronstadt Press.

Introduction

Someone has said that the Orthodox Church is like a mansion with countless different gates—no two people seem to enter by the same one. I entered Orthodoxy from Roman Catholicism in 1970. As a “cradle Catholic,” I passed through a period of skepticism concerning religion when, as a young man, I forsook the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and lived a deeply sinful and irresponsible life for a period of years.

This was not because of any lack on the part of my Catholic parents who, by precept and example, had certainly given me more than they can ever know, or because the nuns in school had “failed” me. My agnosticism and reproachable style of life were purely self-willed.

There came a point when the emptiness of my life compelled me to start looking for God. Having been raised in a Catholic environment, I naturally turned back to that Church for guidance and strength. I returned to the Catholic sacraments, read spiritual books, went on retreats, and visited monastics, particularly contemplatives in enclosed orders. From the outside, it must have seemed like a routine adult conversion or “re-conversion.”

In fact, I was not “reconverted” at all. At bottom there was a deep sense of dissatisfaction. I had returned to Catholicism in order to learn about spiritual life. By now, I was also a husband and a father, and was concerned about teaching my children true values. But this was shortly after the second Vatican Council, a time of great upheaval and strife within the Roman Church, when

anything and everything were being emphasized *but* the things I needed in my life.

In 1966, I heard through the news media of the death of Blessed John Maximovitch, the Orthodox Archbishop of Western America and San Francisco. The stories I heard about his heroic ascetic struggles and wonder-working moved me, and I decided to attend his funeral. I had been in Orthodox churches before, but only out of idle curiosity. Now, I was present at the funeral of a saintly hierarch because he had somehow “spoken” to me through the news reports about his holy life and death.

I was not converted to Orthodoxy on the spot, but I had a strong desire to know more about this archbishop’s angel-like life. I read whatever I could find concerning him in English and was hungry for more. So I began reading lives of other Orthodox saints (and immediately was aware of how different they are from Roman Catholic “saints,” though I did not then know why). I felt the strongest attraction towards these saints and couldn’t forget them. It didn’t take long to realize that I could better understand them if I knew more about their faith. I read several books about Orthodoxy—some by writers who were Orthodox, others by Roman Catholics, and others who were just “objective scholars.” It was here that I first came across the Orthodox belief that the Western or Latin church had separated itself from the Orthodox Church, and not the other way around—as I had always been told. This was an amazing idea, hardly possible, and certainly not believable—or was it? I decided to probe further.

I was born and raised during the triumphal years of the reign of Pius XII as pope. Deeply engraved on my mind

from my first years in parochial school was an image of this white-clad and austere pontiff who was, according to our catechism book, the "Successor of St. Peter" and "Vicar of Christ on earth." I decided to see what I could find out about the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome in the writings of the pre-schism Church Fathers (both Eastern and Western), and in the decrees of the Ecumenical Councils which had been accepted by the Universal Church before the Schism of 1054 A.D.

What I discovered was nothing short of shocking to my Catholic mind. Far from finding a clear and established teaching about the supremacy of the Roman See, I found on the contrary considerable evidence that the Fathers knew no such teaching and that the bishops of Rome were, for the first 800 years, either *silent* on the subject (strange, if they believed themselves to have universal authority over the Church!), or decisively *rejected* the idea of a supremacy for themselves. Subsequently, I learned about the origin of other Latin doctrines such as the filioque, purgatory, indulgences, the Immaculate Conception, etc.

Long after I was intellectually convinced that Rome had been guilty of errors and innovations (I didn't think of them as heresies at that point), I still thought that the idea of the papacy was quite "reasonable," even if it wasn't of Apostolic origin. (This business of "reasonableness," by the way, is characteristic of the Catholic mentality. The same "reasonableness" or "logic" had led to erroneous teachings about the Holy Trinity, life after death, and the Mother of God.) I was only being pragmatic. I reasoned thus: the Church of Christ must preserve and teach the Truth to each generation she must know her own mind on all of these things and speak authoritatively. How

better to do this than to have a locus for this teaching in the person of one bishop? However, it was one thing to conclude that the papacy was somehow right, and quite another to see it as a good thing. This was rationalistic double-think, but I didn't know it then.

What brought me through all of this to a knowledge of the truth was not book-learning and research, but the incomparable example of Orthodox saints. The burning attraction I had felt for them was love, not scholarly fascination. I wanted to understand them better; in fact, I wanted to be like them. I realized that I loved them because they are Christ-like. Their Orthodox way of life is a constant revelation of Christ to the world of men. How could I imitate them if I didn't try to live their Faith?

When later I discovered these words by a modern Orthodox writer, I wished that I had found them during this time of searching:

“In order for one to understand the saints and fathers of the Church, it is not sufficient merely to read them. The saints spoke and wrote after having lived the mysteries of God. They personally experienced the mysteries. In order for one to understand them, he too must have progressed to a certain degree of initiation into the mysteries of God by personally tasting, smelling, and seeing. You can read the books of the saints and become very well versed in them with a ‘cerebral’ knowledge, without even minutely tasting that which the saints who wrote these books tasted through their personal experience. In order to understand the saints essentially, not intellectually, you must have the

proper experiences for all that they say. You must have tasted, at least in part, the same things as they. You must have lived in the fervent environment of Orthodoxy. You must have grown in it...*a whole new world must be born in a Westerner's heart in order for him to understand something of Orthodoxy.*"⁵⁴

It was blessed Archbishop John—the first Orthodox saint I had known—who brought about my conversion as I knelt before his tomb on Great Saturday of 1970. Some weeks later, I stood with my family before a priest in order to be received into Orthodoxy. I was called upon to “renounce, now, with all thy heart, thine errors and false doctrines.” This I did willingly. But the hardest words to utter were “I do” after this question: “Dost thou renounce the erroneous belief that a man, to wit, the bishop of Rome, can be the head of Christ’s body, that is to say, of the whole Church?”

Someone not raised in the Church of Rome might well wonder why I, who had, after all, been truly and spiritually (not merely intellectually) converted to Orthodoxy, should at the last moment tremble at renouncing the Pope. Few Orthodox clergy realize in the least what a Roman Catholic has to go through before he becomes Orthodox. There is an internal conflict that comes from years of training he feels that he has left a familiar room and is stepping into a huge wilderness. He needs time and much patient understanding in order to make the necessary break with his past.

⁵⁴ Dr. Alexander Kalomiros.

Pre-Vatican II Roman Catholics will have no difficulty at all in understanding my hesitation. Central to the faith of the Roman Catholic is his conviction that the true Church must rest upon the “barque of Peter,” for no one not in obedience to the Pope can be saved, and especially not someone who knowingly rejects the papacy. But since a Roman Catholic’s faith is by definition built upon the idea of the papacy, it was essential that I renounce it once and for all, if I were going to be a true and honest Orthodox Christian. Thanks be to God, the moment I spoke the words of renunciation, all emotional ties with Rome were immediately severed. Not once during the succeeding years did I, or my wife, look back upon our years as Roman Catholics with an instant of regret or nostalgia.

I have gone to some length to describe the path I took from Rome to Orthodoxy, not because there was anything particularly special about it, but because it may be of help to some well-meaning people in the Roman Catholic Church who are today experiencing the same profound dissatisfaction through which I went, who are dismayed and shaken by the all but unbelievable changes in the church since Vatican II, and who are sick of being in that constant state of agitation and tension which distracts them from following Christ—but who still hold on emotionally to the idea of the papacy. So deep-seated are the ties which bind traditional Roman Catholics to the pope that, in the face of intelligent evidence to the contrary, they continue to insist that they can save their souls if only they remain loyal and obedient at least to the “idea” of the papacy, if not to the actual person of the reigning pope.

The following essay will be disturbing to Roman Catholic readers. It contains some things that they already know, and much that will be new to them. Its purpose is three-fold: first, to witness to the faith which God gave to one unworthy former Roman Catholic; second, to give an Orthodox view of developments in the Church of Rome, developments to which no honest Catholic can turn a blind eye or deaf ear; and third, to show sincere Roman Catholics that (as another has written) "in order to be truly Catholic they must become Orthodox."

The 19th century Russian saint, John of Kronstadt, observed that Roman Catholicism had become a dead shell of Christianity, held together only by its outward discipline. When this discipline begins to crack, he said, the institution itself will collapse.

This was exactly prophetic of the events we are now witnessing. The spectacle of the Roman Catholic Church in disarray around the world and throughout her ranks is the sure result of this slow collapse in outward discipline. The sorry plight of today's Catholics is amazing to non-Catholics who remember the Roman triumphalism of previous years.

How did this slow collapse come about, and what does it mean for Roman Catholics—indeed, for all of us?

What happened to the Old-Time Religion?

The Latin or Western Church was once part of the Universal Church of Christ. At the time of the Great Schism of 1054 A.D. she left the True Church. For a long time before this, Western Christians showed signs of an

unhealthy emphasis on rationalism and logic which was alien to the spirit of Christianity. Such, for example, was the “logical” deduction that caused the Latins to introduce into the Nicene Creed the *filioque* (“from the Son”) clause, even though there was no justification for this in either Scripture or Tradition. Such, also was the steadily growing temporal power of the papacy, directly contradicting the canons of the various Councils which had hitherto been accepted by the Roman Patriarchate.

Before the Schism, the authority of the bishop of Rome consisted of rightful jurisdiction over all bishops in his see. The First Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325) accorded a primacy of “honor” to the bishop of Old Rome, not because Rome had been the seat of St. Peter, but “on account of her being the imperial capital.”

As Patriarch of Western Europe, this bishop had no more authority than that granted to any of the patriarchs in the Eastern section of the empire. It is little known, but as late as the 19th century many Roman Catholic bishops still understood the jurisdiction of the pope in the same way as the early Church. When Pius IX sought the official mantle of supremacy in all matters of faith and morals at the First Vatican Council (1870), Bishop Strossmayer rose and spoke these words:

“I do not find one single chapter, or one little verse in which Jesus Christ gives to St. Peter the mastery over the apostles, his fellow-workers... The Apostle Paul makes no mention of the primacy of Peter in any of his letters directed to the various churches...What has surprised me most, and what moreover is capable of

demonstration, is the silence of St. Peter himself!"⁵⁵

Bishop Strossmayer's view exactly agrees with the universal understanding of the early Church. He continued:

"The Councils of the first four centuries, while they recognized the high position which the bishop of Rome occupied in the Church on account of Rome, only accorded him a pre-eminence of honor, never of power or of jurisdiction. In the passage, 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build My Church,' the Fathers never understood that the Church was built on Peter (*super Petrum*), but on the rock (*super petram*) of the Apostle's confession of faith in the Divinity of Christ."

I stress that Strossmayer's words truly reflect the pre-Schism teaching of the Church of Christ, both East and West. Any Roman Catholic can check this out for himself, both Strossmayer's comments and the teachings of the early Fathers. Considerable information is available to those who sincerely wish to learn. It is *not* an esoteric subject that only theologians and historians can understand. To Roman Catholic readers I say: you owe it to yourselves, for the sake of your souls, to *find out*. If for some reason you cannot locate the information on your own, then write to one of the sources mentioned in this article.

⁵⁵ This speech is reproduced in its entirety in Chapter V below.

One of the books which you should obtain and read in its entirety, and which is available in most larger libraries, is the *Commonitory* of the Western Church Father St. Vincent of Lerins (+450). It is most readily found in Vol. XI of *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, or in the *Fathers of the Church* series of the Catholic University of America.

St. Vincent is writing against the innovations of his time. His object is to provide a general rule for distinguishing truth from heresy. He answers the question, "How are we to understand Scripture when so many [heretics] interpret it differently?" He replies that true Catholics are those who "hold the Faith which has been believed everywhere, always, and by all," and who "in no wise depart from those interpretations which it is manifest were held by our holy ancestors and fathers."

Under the heading "The Notes of a True Catholic" he says that "the true and genuine Catholic believes that, and that only, which he is sure the Catholic Church has held universally and from ancient times, but that whatsoever new and unheard-of doctrine he shall find to have been furtively introduced by someone or other" he will reject.

(I should emphasize that many Church fathers use the term "Catholic" in their writings, but they do not mean *Roman Catholic*. They use the word in its original sense—universal, all-inclusive and whole—when speaking of the true Church of Christ. Thus, one of the earliest fathers, St. Ignatius of Antioch, says nothing of the pope, but does say: "Where Christ is, there is the Catholic Church; where the bishop is, there must the people be also.")

Most telling is that nowhere does St. Vincent say that the bishop of Rome is a guide in matters of faith, although he mentions the Roman see and quotes Pope Stephen as saying, "Let there be no innovation, nothing but what has been handed down." When we see the post-Schism teaching about the infallibility of the bishop of Rome in matters of faith and morals, we cannot but wonder why St. Vincent did not deem it important to say that one of the "notes" of a true Catholic is his submission to Rome.

Moreover, Roman Catholic scholars commonly admit that the doctrine of papal authority is of recent origin. To quote from the *Catholic Dictionary* (printed under imprimatur in 1917) concerning the age of the early fathers: "We cannot expect many instances of the exercise of papal power at this time. Time was needed to develop [these] principles." "It would, of course, be a monstrous anachronism were we to attribute a belief in papal infallibility to ante-Nicene fathers. Our contention is simply that the modern doctrine of papal power is the logical outcome of patristic principles." Finally: "Papal infallibility follows by logical consequence..."

This illustrates another point, that in Roman Christianity one comes to a knowledge of the truth primarily by just "thinking", by bringing all the rational powers of one's mind to a point of concentration on a given question or concept. There is no other prerequisite than that a person be reasonably intelligent and informed and prepared to do the job of thinking. A Thomas Aquinas or John Calvin might add to this thinking process a prayerful request for inspiration, but the foundation is essentially the same: it is human logic which guides the thinker. This has been for so many centuries the norm that no one in Western Christendom supposes there is anything wrong with it,

in spite of the fact that individuals starting with the same set of “facts” come to quite different conclusions. Therefore, it seems quite logical to some that there should be an infallible papacy, while to others it seems complete nonsense.

Contrast this with the Orthodox way to knowledge. The holy fathers and saints do not just “sit down and think.” They first struggle with their sins and are purified. As a present-day Orthodox theologian, Fr. Nicholas Deputatov, has written: “The mysteries of our Faith are unknown and not understandable to those who are not repenting.” After this, God enlightens them about the Truth. While the Orthodox fathers do not despise human reason (in fact, they have great respect for it), they also know that God’s ways seem foolish to the wise of this world.

The point is that for Orthodox Christians the basis of true knowledge is not man, but God. It is no longer this way in the West, where Christendom has become too imbued with humanistic principles of the Renaissance that it makes man the measure of all things, adding God as an afterthought (if indeed He is “added” at all).

But I must say also that although Rome accepted and began to teach various novelties and heresies, she also preserved many basic Orthodox doctrines and outward forms (at least by comparison with later Protestants), albeit in a distorted way—that is, until the Second Vatican Council.

However, among pre-Vatican II innovations is the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception promulgated by Pope Pius IX in 1858. Roman Catholics justified this new

teaching by saying that it has “always” been believed by the Church, although not officially “defined” as an article of faith. This is a curious claim in light of the fact that numerous post-Schism Roman Catholic teachers quite decisively rejected the notion that the Mother of God was conceived without sin. One such who will be well known to traditional-minded Roman Catholics is Bernard of Clairvaux, one of the medieval champions of the Mother of God, considered a saint by the Roman Catholics. Bernard wrote at length on the matter, but the following brief quotation may be of special interest:

“I am frightened now, seeing that certain of you have desired to change the condition of important matters, introducing a new festival unknown to the Church, unapproved by reason, unjustified by ancient tradition. Are we really more learned and more pious than our fathers? You will say, ‘One must glorify the Mother of God as much as possible.’ This is true, but the glorification given to the Queen of Heaven demands discernment. This royal Virgin does not have need of false glorifications, a novelty which is the mother of imprudence, the sister of unbelief, and the daughter of light-mindedness”⁵⁶

In spite of such innovations, prior to Vatican II the outward discipline of the Church of Rome was awesome. But once the revolutionary spirit began to shatter that iron-clad discipline, Rome started to reveal her inner self as never before, all in the name of legalistic obedience to the pope.

⁵⁶ Epistle 174, *Patrologia Latina* 182, col. 333, 336.

In the Wake of Vatican II

In 1967 the official Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*, announced that "liturgical reform has taken a notable step forward on the path of ecumenism. It has come closer to the liturgical forms of the Lutheran Church." Many applauded this development. A few were shocked.

Ten years later, the Roman Catholic Church was threatened with schism on both the right and the left: on the right, symbolized by the French traditionalist Archbishop Lefebvre, who did not want to be protestantized and on the left, by a host of modernist theologians who teach humanism and relativism, and wish to build a "new world order."

It is because of the reformers on the left that institutional Catholicism is collapsing. They are far more numerous than the traditionalists, more outspoken, and clearly more influential in all areas of Catholic society. The tremendous tensions between the left and the right prompted the noted Roman Catholic writer and ex-Jesuit, Malachi Martin, to predict: "Well before the year 2000, there will no longer be a religious institution recognizable as the Roman Catholic Church of today."

Major changes in liturgy, theology and worldview have caused a committee of Roman theologians to declare that their church is now in "a period of spiritual crisis that is without precedent."

This is because of what Malachi Martin calls the “de-churching of Christians”:

“For almost twenty years now, the churches have been dedicating themselves predominantly, in some cases exclusively, to issues of sociology and politics. They have been led into deeper and deeper commitment to public action of a kind indistinguishable from the local political club. This commitment has changed the way they pray and worship and preach the Gospel revelation...No one knows what will be left intact, or how long Christians of a later generation will have to struggle in order to regain that essential link with the Jesus of history, without whom Christianity becomes one huge, dead joke.”

Let us now examine some of these important changes and their meaning.

Changes in Liturgy and Theology

The primary liturgical act of Roman Catholicism is the Mass. Except in certain conservative religious orders, the concept of the Lord’s Supper as part of a whole liturgical cycle (including Vespers and Matins) is now completely lost. A thirty-minute Sunday mass brings Roman Catholics together and teaches them of their faith.

For centuries, this Mass had been heard only in Latin, a language in which most lay Catholics were not fluent. Consequently, when Vatican II authorized vernacular Masses, changes in the prayers went unnoticed except by a few who pointed out that doctrine had been changed.

For instance, the offering of praise to the Trinity was suppressed and, in addition, references to God became vague and deistic, calling to mind the "Delta" or Grand Architect of Freemasonry, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The dogmatic title "Mother of God" (in Greek Theotokos), so dear to Orthodox Christians, and also to Roman Catholics until recently, was suppressed. Other omissions appear to suppress the doctrine of the communion of saints, whose intercession is now rarely asked, such things being left to the "discretion" of the individual priest. Even the words of Our Lord, spoken at the Last Supper, were altered in the canon of this New Mass! Perhaps this is not surprising, when one remembers that a millennium ago the Roman Catholic Church considered it perfectly reasonable to insert the *filioque* clause into the Creed, thus altering the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and incurring the anathema of the Nicene Fathers who had forbidden any tampering with the Creed.

A true believer must be concerned about the *truth* of his beliefs. Catholic traditionalists realize this. A true Christian is bound to know and confess the dogma of the Trinity. But if his beliefs about the Trinity are in error, how can he know God? Perhaps it is beyond hope that liberal Catholics could care one way or the other. But what about those who wish, with every fiber of their being, to be *in the truth*?

Other changes in the prayers of the Mass are too numerous to mention here. But in general, the whole emphasis was shifted. As one horrified Catholic priest, James Wathen, observed: "Of its very nature, the New

Mass 'liberates' the children of God that they might make a game out of worship...intrinsic to the very idea of the New Mass is that the *people* are more important than Christ the Savior...Is it not they who must be entertained, accommodated, and emoted over? In the incessantly repeated phrase, 'The People of God,' it is the *people* who, in Marxist fashion are being acclaimed, not God...they have been given the place of God."

More and more priests are using the New Mass as a setting for incredible events. To cite one recent example, the Socialist-Feminist (and pro-abortionist) leader Gloria Steinem accepted an invitation to speak in a Catholic Church in Minneapolis. (She reportedly boasted of the "momentary delight" she had "at the thought of defiling the altar.") One of the guests was a Methodist layman. He was so scandalized by Miss Steinem's remarks that he left in disgust, saying "They might as well invite Satan himself to preach at this church."

The old axiom *lex orandi, lex credendi* (as we worship, so we believe) is certainly true. The de-sacralized New Mass lends itself to un-Christian ideas and behavior.

Roman Catholics have now almost completely lost the ascetic spirit. Whereas Orthodoxy still proclaims that the essence of Christianity is asceticism, and to this end gives Orthodox Christians strict fasting rules as a *standard* for Christian life, Catholicism has almost completely abandoned any such idea. To take fasting before Communion as an example: when I was a child in the Catholic Church, the faithful were required to fast from all food and drink from the midnight before. Later, this was changed to three hours, and finally, in the wake of Vatican II, to one hour.

One Orthodox theologian says this about the Roman Catholic spirit of reform: "The papal idea, based on the corrupt modern principle of spiritual self-satisfaction, is either to give a special dispensation from the standard...or else to change the standard itself so that the believer can fulfill it easily, and thereby obtain a sense of satisfaction from 'obeying the law.' This is precisely the difference between the Publican and the Pharisee: the Orthodox man feels himself constantly a sinner because he falls short the Church's exalted standard (in spirit if not in letter), whereas modern man wishes to feel himself justified, without any twinge of conscience over falling short of the Church's standard."⁵⁷

In an "Open Appeal" to Paul VI, Archbishop Arrigo Pintonello of Italy stated: "The seminaries and the pontifical universities, as is well known, have become schools of immanentism, naturalism, and even Marxism and atheism and they are now infecting more than ninety percent of the clergy." Liturgical reform has spawned open attacks upon the very divinity of Jesus Christ. A *Time* cover story, "New Debate over Jesus' Divinity," summarized the new thinking:

The German theologian, Hans Kung, the most famous of the liberal theologians, now teaches that the dogmatic definitions of Christ's divine and human natures are *obsolete*: they must be "transferred to the mental climate of our own time." Apparently, the "mental climate of our own time" is Arian, for the Jesuit Piet Schoonenberg wishes to completely drop all reference to the two natures of Christ, and the Dominican Edward Schillebeeckx says that Jesus was only a human being

⁵⁷ Fr. Seraphim Rose.

who gradually grew “closer” to God. Others now speak of the Savior as “a man elected and sent by God.”

Changes in Worldview

Pope Paul had asserted that “the thoughts of Chairman Mao Tse-Tung reflect Christian values.” Archbishop Pintonello, in his appeal to the pope wrote: “The falsely ecumenical embrace gives credibility to the absurd ‘discovery’ of affinity and even identity between Christ and Marx.” But, as the Rev. Vincent Miceli says, this is not surprising, for “once the liturgy is humanized, Christ becomes the humanist par excellence, the liberator, the revolutionary, the Marxist ushering in the millennium; He ceases to be the Divine Redeemer.”

Catholic traditionalists wonder why Paul VI received with all due honor Communist leaders from all over the world, yet would not give audiences to traditionalists. The answer is probably close to what Malachi Martin wrote in his recent book, *The Final Conclave*, in which he boldly predicted that the election of Paul’s successor would be strongly influenced by Communists. Martin, who was for years a Vatican insider, explains that Pope Paul and many of his Cardinals had abandoned hope that Western democracies can survive the coming onslaught of Communism (how wrong they were). Since they want to be on the winning side, they were seeking a rapprochement with both existing Communist governments and left-wing movements in the West.

Reviewing Martin’s book, a prominent American Catholic traditionalist, Walter Matt, speaks of this Marxist infiltration into his church and says that it is not at all illusory: “the actual presence of some agents of

Soviet Russia exists among the hierarchy of the Church.” He believes that institutional Catholicism is being “pushed nearer to an abyss” by current Vatican policies. Elsewhere, Dr. Matt writes: “And meanwhile our spiritual shepherds either sleep or play the game of compromise and detente with heresy and sin.”

Since Paul VI

Shortly after *The Final Conclave* was published, Paul VI died and was succeeded by Cardinal Luciana as Pope John Paul I. In spite of reports that Luciana was a reactionary, there were indications that this “quietly genial man” was not all he seemed. He was ready to continue with the program of reforms launched by the Vatican Council.

In this country, frank Orthodox reaction to John Paul may be summarized by this brief item from a Serbian Orthodox newspaper: “John Paul I will be remembered in the Orthodox world because during a visit to this pope and while in his study, Archbishop Nikodim of Leningrad died, the biggest spy in cassock of the Soviet Union, and an officer of the Soviet Secret Police (KGB). Nikodim had been identified by KGB defectors to the West as a Major-General in the First Chief Directorate of the KGB. For reasons perhaps best known to Nikodim and John Paul, this Soviet agent was reportedly ‘moved to tears’ during the pope’s inaugural Mass.”

John Paul’s successor, Cardinal Wojtyla of Poland, the youngest pope in centuries and the first non-Italian since 1523, has proved to be another crowd-pleaser. Like his predecessor, John Paul II is said to want to continue the changes of Vatican II.

The Church or the World

It is shocking for Roman Catholic lay people to learn how pervasively worldly is the spirit of their church, to see the utter lack of Gospel simplicity in the speeches of their leaders. An English Catholic writing to a newspaper said it well: "We are all sick to death of socialists and progressives alike with their reforming ideas...Indeed, a stranger looking into a Roman Catholic church today would imagine he was in a Protestant Reformed church... It is indeed something to thank God that the Eastern Orthodox Churches have refused to change anything and have stuck to the old liturgies."

Michael Davies, an English traditionalist, says that "during a time of general apostasy, Christians who remain faithful to their traditional Faith may have to worship outside the official churches...in order not to compromise their traditional Faith."

In order to achieve its ungodly ends, the revolutionary spirit in the Vatican makes full use of the Church of Rome's legalism and obsession for what is fashionable and "relevant." Michael Davies makes this very clear:

"Those who had initiated the revolution were only too well aware of the fact that, provided their innovations could be imposed as orders from above, they could expect to encounter very little effective opposition from priests and religious, and this meant virtually no opposition at all. The prevailing attitude was that the role of the laity was to follow whatever lead the clergy gave them, and only too often in the history of the Church the lead given by the clergy (the

higher clergy in particular) has been to heresy and apostasy...Upholding the faith does not consist simply in behaving as an automaton programmed to carry out any and every clerical command...[Progressives] think of ordinary believers as a herd which is straying apathetically behind and is difficult to love. The ordinary believer is 'a superstitious religious caterpillar.'"

The Rev. Mr. Wathen is appalled at the servility with which Catholics have accepted the changes in liturgy, theology and policy. He exclaims: "This truly is what our enemies may well describe as *poper* in the authentic sense of the word! As if our religion were nothing more than the dumb and servile fulfillment of the pope's mere wishes, totally unrelated to morality...or even plain common sense."

But what can such otherwise astute observers as Davies and Wathen expect, when pope after pope emphasizes the "power" he holds as "Vicar of Christ"? Even John Paul II lost no time in stressing the discipline of the clergy and the obedience of the laity. The Vatican Council may have wrought havoc by opening the door to countless new heresies, but it did not fail to restate papal supremacy when it said: "All this teaching about the sacred primacy of the Roman Pontiff and of his infallible teaching authority, this sacred Synod again proposes to be firmly believed by all the faithful."⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Article 18 of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium).

Wathen says that those Catholics who have accepted compromise and heresy “have done so under the mistaken notion that its introduction was ‘legal’, or at least apparently so, and therefore its acceptance was both permissible and necessary.” This legalism *is* of course what the Western Christians have inherited from the Schism of 1054, when the Latins broke away from the Orthodox Church.

Quite a number of traditionalists have begun to see the trap into which they have been led by legalism. The question of obedience torments them day and night. They anguish endlessly over the fact that, as Matt puts it, “liberal Catholics, neo-modernists, Marxists, etc. have *not* been disciplined. They have *not* been removed from their positions of power and influence” by those in “legitimate authority”.

To Rescue a Sinking Ship

So vast is the panic in the Roman Church that bishops and pastors are now appealing to their faithful on purely emotional grounds. I’ve heard a first-hand account of a sermon delivered in St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York. Talking about the present confusion, the priest told his people that they must “stick with the pope no matter what” for if they do this they will be saved. This priest urged his flock to shut their ears to those who criticize the pope and others in authority, because the pope’s power is “derived from St. Peter, who presided over the first Church Council of Jerusalem.”

Of course, the average Catholic, accustomed to believe everything he hears from the pulpit, does not know that the pope could not derive his position from St. Peter

because St. Peter did not possess or claim universal jurisdiction, primacy, infallibility, or any of the things popes claim for themselves. As I said at the outset, Catholics don't know this because they have, from youth, been told otherwise. But if they have read the Book of Acts, they would at least know that the Council of Jerusalem was presided over not by St. Peter, but by St. James, the first Bishop of Jerusalem!

In any case, this priest stood before his people and told them to keep silent about the heresies in their church and "be obedient," and this he justified with an untruth about the authority of the pope. One wonders what his congregation would think of the words of Pope St. Gregory the Great, speaking about the title "Ecumenical" or "Universal":

"What will you say to Christ, Who is the Head of the Universal Church, in the scrutiny of the Last Judgement, having attempted to put all His members under yourself by the appellation of Universal...Certainly, Peter, the first of the apostles, himself a member of the Universal Church, Paul, Andrew, John—what were they but heads of particular communities...And of all the saints, not one has asked himself to be called Universal...The prelates of the Apostolic See, which by the providence of God I serve, had the honor offered them of being called Universal...But yet not one of them has ever wished to be called by such a title, or seized upon this ill-advised name."⁵⁹

⁵⁹ *Epistles*, Book V, Letter 18, To John of Constantinople.

Here we have an Orthodox bishop of Rome and true pope, Gregory the Great, called the “Dialogist” by Orthodox Christians, a saint accepted by both Orthodox and Roman Catholics, one who possessed luminous intellectual, spiritual, administrative and theological talents. He opens his mouth to speak on the subject of authority in the Church, and what does he say? Does he proclaim, “All those in submission to me may be saved”? Does he say, “Only I, as Bishop of Rome, may hold the title Universal, because my infallible teaching authority is to be firmly believed by all the faithful”? He does not. Quite the contrary, he speaks of Peter and the other apostles as being but heads of *particular* communities. He further says that *not one* of his predecessors in the See of Rome had ever presumed to be called Universal.

We should compare this with Latin canon law: “If, finally, anyone denies that he is subject to the Supreme Pontiff, or if he refuses communion with those members of the Church who are subject to him, he is schismatic.”⁶⁰ Would not St. Gregory the Great ask, “Why?” No mention is made in this canon law of fidelity to the dogmas of the Faith, to Sacred Tradition, or Church Councils, only that one be “subject to the supreme pontiff.” How many holy Fathers would rise up to ask, “What if the pope teaches heresy?” Roman Catholics reply that the pope is infallible; he cannot teach error. Yet it is a fact that popes have taught error.

Our great Orthodox pastoral saint, John of Kronstadt, said: “The cause of all the errors of the Roman Catholic Church is pride, and belief that the pope is the real head

⁶⁰ *Code of Canon Law*, Book III, Canon 751.

of the church and, what is more, that he is infallible." Clearly, the Roman pontiffs are prepared and even willing to accept modernist deviations of all sorts; anything and everything, in fact, will they compromise or relinquish *except* the very papacy itself. Theologians are allowed to blaspheme and clergy are permitted to espouse Marxism, but the *papacy* rides on, unchanged, powerful, and still claiming universality! As Archimandrite Constantine of Jordanville has written:

"The Catholic sees before him not only a picture of the crumbling of that Whole by which he was accustomed to exhaust his understanding of truth. He sees a notorious, obvious, boundless transformation of the very concept of truth, which finally turns out to be nothing more than the papacy itself: *the papacy is ready to cover over everything that bears the name of Christianity.*"

Because she has until recently existed outside the mainstream of Western history, culture and ideas, Eastern Orthodoxy has a unique perspective and can give Roman Catholics an objective understanding of their present situation. When Catholics ask why this anti-Christian, revolutionary spirit has invaded their church, we Orthodox Christians reply: Is there perhaps an inner affinity between revolution and Roman Catholicism, an affinity which Catholics cannot see because they are so close to it?

The 19th century Russian Orthodox layman and writer Dostoyevsky, understood this inner affinity quite well and wrote about it in his *Diary of a Writer*. As a youth he had shared the socialist dream and was even sent to Siberia for his political beliefs; during this exile he began

his conversion to Orthodoxy. He has provided a succinct analysis of the "affinity" between revolution and Roman Catholicism. He saw the French socialism of his day as an attempt to live "without Catholicism and without its gods, a protest which actually began at the end of the last century [at the time of the French Revolution]." But this protest against Catholicism was actually "nothing but the truest and most direct continuation of the Catholic idea, its fullest, most final realization...French socialism is nothing else but a *compulsory* communion of mankind, an idea which dates back to ancient Rome and which was fully conserved in Catholicism."

In other words, the old pagan concept of universal unity, of "Pax Romana", has survived and is given new strength by the Roman Catholic Church because the Latin Church "strives for universal sovereignty." "Roman Catholicism, which long ago sold out Christ for earthly rule, has compelled mankind to turn away from itself; thus she is the prime cause of Europe's materialism and atheism...Socialism has for its aim the solution of the destinies of mankind not in accord with Christ, but without God and Christ." Socialism, says Dostoyevsky, was inevitably and naturally generated by the Catholic Church itself, because it lost the Christian principle of *God-centeredness*.

He further predicted that "the Pope will go to all...on foot and barefooted, and he will teach them that everything the socialists teach and strive for is contained in the Gospel; that up till now the time had not been ripe for them to learn this but that now the time has come and he, the pope, will surrender Christ to them, saying: 'What you need is a united front against the enemy. Unite, then, under my power, since I alone among all the powers and

potentates of the world am *universal*, and let us go together!”

Dostoyevsky wrote these amazing words in 1877. Pius IX was then pope; the Syllabus of Errors had recently been issued, Catholicism was at its most “reactionary,” and socialism had been roundly condemned from the papal throne. Dostoyevsky was not an oracle; he was simply a devout Orthodox layman who was very concerned about world events and their spiritual meaning. Thus, he was able to penetrate to the very essence of Catholicism, the papacy. We can see that his prophecies about the pope are already coming true in our day.

Lest anyone think I am exaggerating the role of the papacy, let me quote from three contemporary non-Catholic papal sympathizers—the first a Jewish theologian, the second an Anglican bishop, and lastly an English ecumenical news-weekly:

1. Following the death of Pope Paul, Jacob Neusner commented: “Paul made the papacy a truly international force, in a way which, before his day, the world could not have imagined...He shaped a vision *worthy of the world’s attention.*”

2. Michael Marshall, the Anglican Bishop of Woolwich, went a step further when he issued this appeal to non-Catholics in the summer of 1978 (before the death of Paul VI): “For the day must surely come when all the Christians are prepared to consider again...a Pope for all Christians...This is *the most important question facing all Christians* of all persuasions today. I cannot believe that history has permitted the papacy to survive, unless it

retains in some sense the potentiality of being a visible head of the Church on earth.”

3. The non-denominational English publication *Christian World* announced the death of Pope John Paul I with this large headline: “A Pope for all Christians.” The text spoke of how John Paul’s “sudden death hurt the whole family of man.” It concluded with these words: “His death challenges the cardinals to continue the search for a pope who will be accepted as *the spiritual leader of all Christians, no matter what church they belong to*. This development of ecumenism is preparing the way for a leader who can be a center of unity which is fully Catholic.”

Who would have thought twenty, fifteen, or even ten years ago, that non-Catholics would be sincerely wishing to be led by the pope of Rome? Is it possible that, after all these centuries, the papacy is close to its moment of greatest triumph?

And is it only a coincidence that numerous heresies, both old and new, are together with evil political ideas converging on the person and position of the bishop of Rome? Is it a coincidence that the news media (especially television) has given unparalleled coverage to the deaths and elections of two recent popes, with a world-wide audience estimated at one billion? Is it by chance that for the first time, Soviet television has broadcast a religious service (the papal Mass from the Sistine Chapel on the day after John Paul II’s election)? Is it a coincidence that among those attending the inaugural Mass of John Paul II were Donald Coggan, the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury (the first time this has happened since

before the English Reformation), and numerous representatives or heads of other non-Catholic churches?

The bishop of Woolwich also wrote in his appeal that “it all depends on what you mean by the papacy...A Pope for all Christians does not necessarily mean all the trappings of the medieval papacy.” Was it then just coincidental that the two successors of Paul VI disdained a coronation, laid aside the papal tiara, the ostrich-feather fans, and other “trappings of a medieval papacy” in favor of a “simple installation”—no longer Supreme Pontiff, but now “only” the “Universal Shepherd”?

Political commentators like Leopold Tyrmand have for long observed that Catholicism has become “a modish fabric around the left-liberal principle”—but now it has gone beyond that, for the papacy appears to have the “organizational task,” according to Archimandrite Constantine of Jordanville, “*of preparing the throne of the Antichrist.*”

This last will be most repugnant to sensitive Roman Catholics. But it is an honest and perceptive observation made by an Orthodox priest-monk whose purpose is not at all to turn Catholics away in disgust, but to awaken them to the reality of what is going on before their very eyes.

Orthodox Christianity, which has been living for two thousand years on the very edge of eternity, faced over and over again with virtual extinction by different conquerors and heretical movements, nourished even in our own times by the blood of martyrs, the myriad martyrs of the Bolshevik oppression in Russia and the other countries of the East, has survived intact and

gloriously pure, her eyes focused steadily on the end of the ages and the Second Coming of Christ. As a result, Orthodoxy is keenly aware of the meaning of contemporary events.

She has preserved the ancient Scriptural prophecies, and also the prophecies of many holy fathers and saints through the ages concerning the Last Days. She knows that Antichrist will come when the world is at last united and ready for him. That time is not yet here, but it is rapidly approaching, and the papacy is the one institution in today's world which can and does (as we have seen) command the attention of the entire world, Christian *and* non-Christian.

As Gary MacEoin observed: "The Vatican is going to be in the world limelight in a new way." To what purpose? In order to show forth the true Christ who alone can forgive, heal and save? Or will the world soon hear a voice saying, "Unite under *my* power, since I alone am universal: and let us go together!"

Hope for the Drowning

I have written at length about the doctrinal corruption, left-wing ideology, and even scandal in the church of Rome. This is, obviously, a significant part of what is going on. But there is another side, one scarcely spoken of today: what is the effect of all this on human souls?

Who can calculate the toll being taken among so many Roman Catholics who no longer feel that they belong to their old church? Daily life is so hard and its demands so great that deep distress occurs when a man no longer feels sure of where the truth is. In a letter to the editor of

a national publication, one Catholic wrote: "It seems to me that most laymen are somewhat lost...that there is a great emphasis on community life, at the expense of a deeply felt personal spiritual life."

At some point, every man demands a satisfying insight into the profound questions of life. Increasingly, Catholics are recognizing that they can no longer turn to their church for these answers; their sense of foreboding, frustration and insecurity is extreme. Where, they ask, is the Truth? Is it here, or there with this bishop or that pope? Above all, *where can I find Christ?*

Dostoyevsky wrote, "the lost image of Christ, in all the light of its purity, is preserved in Orthodoxy." This is my message to Roman Catholic readers: **Orthodoxy is the Church you thought you belonged to when you were faithful to pre-Vatican II Catholicism.** But even then it was not what it seemed: your church is collapsing now because it started its path of apostasy a good nine centuries or more ago.

For that reason, we Orthodox Christians are not surprised at what we see going on in today's Catholicism. Like a branch which has been cut from the living tree, Rome had the outward appearance of life for many centuries after the Schism, even though life-giving sap had ceased to flow in her. But now even the outward appearance testifies that this branch is truly dead. A righteous one of recent times, Archbishop John of San Francisco (+1966), described it this way:

"While the Orthodox Church humbly confesses what it has received from Christ and the apostles, the Roman Church dares to add to it, sometimes

from zeal not according to knowledge. That the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church is promised only to the True, Universal Church; but upon those who have fallen away from it are fulfilled the words, 'As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye, except ye abide in Me.'"

Speaking about this, Fr. Nicholas Deputatov writes: "Falling away from the Orthodox Church leads to the cessation of spiritual life, the cessation of development, of the growth of moral personality, and leads to spiritual death. Only in the Church is it possible to have happiness and blessedness as the consequence of inward perfection."

More than one Catholic has found comfort in these words of the great Orthodox Father, St. Basil the Great: "Those of the laity who are sound in faith avoid the places of worship as schools of impiety...The people have left their houses of prayer and assemble in the deserts... because they will have no part in the wicked Arian leaven." Increasing numbers of Roman Catholics are applying these words to their own situation, starting underground chapters all over the world.

But I must say to you, avoid your "places of impiety" as you value your souls. But seek also to be joined to the *Orthodox faith* to which St. Basil, whom you value, gave undying witness by his life and writings! The Orthodox Church *is* the Catholic Church, in the full and true meaning of the word. She has never departed from the revealed Faith, and never compromised the Truth. Fr. Nicholas says that "she has not bartered Orthodoxy in order to become fashionable among men, to be

recognized by the powerful of this world. No; in poverty and in the humility of her earthly banishment she went out over the whole face of the earth, singing of the heavenly calling of all peoples to the Kingdom of Christ, not of this world. And now, being filled up with new tribes and generations (in the diaspora), she bears the triumphant banner of the greatest value given to man on earth: true, undistorted Orthodoxy."

It is in this Church that you will at last find Christ, in all of His radiant and pure Divinity, for, even more than correct doctrine, Orthodoxy teaches the very way to salvation. In the words of the late Archbishop Andrew of Novo-Diveyevo (+1978): "The most important thing is to create a pure heart and keep it that way. Here there can be no talk of reforms. The Lord Himself has already given us everything needful in His Church."

Archbishop Andrew remembered what his own teacher, the clairvoyant Elder Nectarius of Optina Monastery, had told him at the height of the Russian Revolution when everything was collapsing around them: "It is the Divine that must be our concern; it must enter into all sides of our life." Thus, in utter simplicity, the Orthodox fathers, saints, ascetics and martyrs of all ages can show you how to believe, how to acquire the Holy Spirit of God, and how to save your soul.

Many of you will think that my confession of Orthodoxy is just my own opinion (in which case it would be worth nothing). It is not my opinion; it is the experience of the Apostles and Saints from the earliest times until our own: the Orthodox Church is not nourished by opinion or by what is fashionable, but by the living experience of the saints. The Saints and Fathers actually *lived* the

experience of God; this enabled them fully to express the spiritual beauty of Christ's Church and witness to it. As St. John of Kronstadt writes: "The holy men of God would not betray the Faith by even so much as a word."

If you wonder about what has been written here, but are not convinced, then turn to God and His all-pure Mother in prayer, fasting and tears. Ask God about Orthodoxy, and He will reveal the truth to you just as He has revealed it to countless others. As pious Roman Catholics, you sought true life and spiritual food. You grieve and weep now because for nourishment you are being given stones instead of bread. But St. John of Kronstadt also says: "The food of the mind is truth; the food of the heart is blessedness." Therefore, come to the Orthodox Church and "she will give you all this in plenty, for she possesses it superabundantly. She is the pillar and ground of the Truth because...she teaches the way which leads to eternal life."

Orthodoxy is calling to you: *Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

CHAPTER V:
REFUTATION OF THE PAPACY⁶¹

⁶¹ Transcript of the speech given by Bishop Josip Strossmayer (1815-1905) at the First Vatican Council in 1870.

Venerable Fathers and Brethren,

It is not without trembling, yet with a conscience free and tranquil before God who lives and sees me, that I open my mouth in the midst of you in this august assembly. From the time that I have been sitting here with you I have followed with attention the speeches that have been made in the hall, hoping with great desire that a ray of light descending from on high might enlighten the eyes of my understanding, and permit me to vote the canons of this Holy Ecumenical Council with perfect knowledge of the case.

Penetrated with the feeling of responsibility, of which God will demand of me an account, I have set myself to study with the most serious attention the Old and New Testaments, and I have asked these venerable monuments of truth to make known to me if the holy pontiff, who presides here, is truly the successor of St. Peter, vicar of Jesus Christ, and the infallible doctor of the church. To resolve this grave question I have been obliged to ignore the present state of things, and to transport myself in mind, with the evangelical torch in my hand, to the days when there was neither Ultramontanism nor Gallicanism, and in which the church had for doctors St. Paul, St. Peter, St. James, and St. John, doctors to whom no one can deny the divine authority without putting in doubt that which the Holy Bible, which is here before me, teaches us, and which the Council of Trent has proclaimed as the rule of faith and of morals. I have then opened these sacred pages.

Well (shall I dare to say it?), I have found nothing either near nor far which sanctions the opinion of the Ultramontanes. And still more, to my very great

surprise, I find in the apostolic days no question of a pope, successor to St. Peter, and vicar of Jesus Christ, any more than of Mahomet who did not then exist.

You, Monsignor Manning, will say that I blaspheme; you, Monsignor Fie, that I am mad. No, Monsignori, I do not blaspheme, and I am not mad. Now having read the whole New Testament, I declare before God, with my hand raised to that great crucifix, that I have found no trace of the papacy as it exists at this moment. Do not refuse me your attention, my venerable brethren, and with your murmuring and interruptions do not justify those who say, like Father Hyacinthe, that this Council is nothing, but that our votes have been from the beginning dictated by authority. If such were the case, this august assembly, on which the eyes of the whole world are turned, would fall into the most shameful discredit. If we wish to make it great, we must be free. I thank his Excellency, Monsignor Dupanloup, for the sign of approbation which he makes with his head: this gives me courage, and I go on.

Reading then the sacred books with that attention with which the Lord has made me capable, I do not find one single chapter, or one little verse, in which Jesus Christ gives to St. Peter the mastery over the apostles, his fellow-workers. If Simon, son of Jonas, had been what we believe his holiness Pius IX, to be today, it is wonderful that He had not said to him, "When I have ascended to my Father, you should all obey Simon Peter as you obey Me. I establish him my vicar upon earth."

Not only is Christ silent on this point, but so little does He think of giving a head to the church, that when He promises to His apostles to judge the twelve tribes of

Israel,⁶² He promises them twelve thrones, one for each, without saying that among those thrones one shall be higher than the others—which shall belong to Peter. Certainly, if He had wished that it should be so, He would have said it.

What do we conclude from this sentence? Logic tells us that Christ did not wish to make St. Peter the head of the apostolic college. When Christ sent the apostles to conquer the world, to all He gave the promise of the Holy Spirit. Permit me to repeat it: if He had wished to constitute Peter His vicar, He would have given him the chief command over His spiritual army. Christ—so says the Holy Scripture—forbade Peter and his colleagues to reign or to exercise lordship, or to have authority over the faithful like the kings of the Gentiles.⁶³ If St. Peter had been elected pope, Jesus would not have spoken thus; but according to our tradition, the papacy holds in its hands two swords, symbols of spiritual and temporal power.

One thing has surprised me very much. Turning it over in my mind, I said to myself, If Peter had been elected Pope, would his colleagues have been permitted to send him with St. John to Samaria to announce the gospel of the Son of God? What do you think, venerable brethren, if at this moment we permitted ourselves to send his holiness Pius IX and his Excellency Mons. Plantier to go to the Patriarch of Constantinople, to pledge him to put an end to the Eastern schism?

⁶² Matthew 19:28.

⁶³ Luke 22:25.

But here is another still more important fact. An Ecumenical Council is assembled at Jerusalem to decide on the questions which divide the faithful. Who would have called together this Council if St. Peter had been pope? St. Peter. Well, nothing of this occurred. The apostle assisted at the Council as all the others did, yet it was not he who summed up, but St. James; and when the decrees were promulgated, it was in the name of the apostles, the elders, and the brethren.⁶⁴ Is it thus what we do in our church? The more I examine, O venerable brethren, the more I am convinced that in the scriptures the son of Jonas does not appear to be first.

Now, while we teach that the church is built upon St. Peter, St. Paul (whose authority cannot be doubted) says, in his epistle to the Ephesians, it is built "on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone."⁶⁵ And the same apostle believes so little in the supremacy of St. Peter, that he openly blames those who would say, "We are of Paul, We are of Apollos", as those who say, "We are of Peter."⁶⁶ If therefore this last apostle had been the vicar of Christ, St. Paul would have taken great care not to censure so violently those who belonged to his own colleagues. The same apostle, counting up the offices of the church, mentions apostles, prophets, evangelists, doctors, and pastors. Is it to be believed, my venerable brethren, that St. Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, would have forgotten the first of these offices, the papacy, if the papacy had been of divine institution? The

⁶⁴ Acts 15.

⁶⁵ Ephesians 2:20.

⁶⁶ I Corinthians 1:12.

forgetfulness appeared to me to be as impossible as if an historian of this Council were not to mention one word of his holiness Pius IX. [Several voices—"Silence, heretic, silence!"] Calm yourselves, my brethren, I have not yet finished. Forbidding me to go on, you show yourselves to the world to do wrong in shutting the mouth of the smallest member of this assembly.

I continue. The apostle Paul makes no mention, in any of his letters directed to the various churches, of the primacy of Peter. If this primacy had existed, if, in one word, the church had in its body a supreme head infallible in teaching, would the great apostle of the Gentiles have forgotten to mention it? What do I say? He would have written a long letter on this all-important subject. Then, as he has actually done, when the edifice of the Christian doctrine is erected, would the foundation, the key of the arch, be forgotten? Now, unless you hold that the church of the apostles was heretical (which none of us would either desire or dare to say), we are obliged to confess that the church has never been more beautiful, more pure, or more holy, than in the days when there was no pope. [Cries of, "It is not true; it is not true."] Let not Monsignor di Laval say, "No," since if any of you, my venerable brethren, should dare to think that the church which has today a pope for its head is more in the faith, more pure in its morals than the Apostolic church, let him say it openly in the face of the universe, for this enclosure is the center from which our words fly from pole to pole.

I go on. Neither in the writings of St. Paul, St. John, nor St. James have I found a trace or germ of the papal power. St. Luke, the historian of the missionary labors of the apostles, is silent on this all-important point. The silence

of these holy men, whose writings make part of the canon of the divinely-inspired Scriptures, has appeared to me burdensome and impossible, if Peter had been pope, and as unjustifiable as if Thiers, writing the history of Napoleon Bonaparte, had omitted the title of emperor.

I see here before me a member of the assembly, who says, pointing at me with his finger, "There is a schismatic bishop who has got among us under false colors." No, no, my venerable brethren, I have not entered this august assembly as a thief, by the window, but by the door like yourselves. My title of bishop gave me a right to it, as my Christian conscience forces me to speak and to say that which I believe to be true.

What has surprised me most, and what moreover is capable of demonstration, is the silence of St. Peter. If the apostle had been what we proclaim him to be—that is, the vicar of Jesus Christ on earth—he surely would have known it; if he had known it, how is it that not once did he act as pope? He might have done it on the day of Pentecost, when he pronounced his first sermon, but did not do it; neither in the two letters directed to the church. Can you imagine such a pope, my venerable brethren, if St. Peter had been pope? Now, if you wish to maintain that he was the pope, the natural consequence arises that you must maintain that he was ignorant of the fact. Now I ask whoever has a head to think and a mind to reflect, are these two suppositions possible?

To return, I say, while the apostle lived, the church never thought that there could be a pope; to maintain the contrary, all the sacred writings must be entirely ignored. But it is said on all sides, Was not St. Peter at Rome? Was he not crucified with his head down? Are not

the pulpits in which he taught, the altars at which he said the mass, in this eternal city?

St. Peter having been at Rome, my venerable brethren, rests only on tradition; but, if he had been Bishop of Rome, how can you from that episcopate prove his supremacy? Scaliger, one of the most learned of men, has not hesitated to say that St. Peter's episcopate and residence at Rome ought to be classed with ridiculous legends. [Repeated cries, "Shut his mouth, shut his mouth; make him come down from the pulpit."]

Venerable brethren, I am ready to be silent; but is it not better, in an assembly like ours, to prove all things, as the apostle commands, and to hold fast what is good? We have a dictator, before whom we—even his holiness Pius IX himself—must prostrate ourselves, and be silent and bow our heads. That dictator is history. This is not like a legend, which can be made as the potter makes his clay, but is like a diamond which cuts on the glass what cannot be canceled. Till now I have only leant on her; and if I have found no trace of the papacy in the apostolic days, the fault is hers, not mine. Do you wish to put me into the position of one accused of falsehood? You may do it, if you can. I hear from the right some one expressing these words: "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church." I will answer this objection presently, my venerable brethren; but, before doing so, I wish to present you with the results of my historical researches.

Finding no trace of the papacy in the days of the apostles, I said to myself, I shall find what I am in search of in the annals of the church. Well, I say it frankly: I have sought for a pope in the first four centuries, and I have not found

him. None of you, I hope, will doubt the great authority of the holy Bishop of Hippo, the great and blessed St. Augustine. This pious doctor, the honor and glory of the Catholic church, was secretary in the Council of Melvie (Milevis). In the decrees of this venerable assembly are to be found these significant words: "Whoever wills to appeal to those beyond the sea shall not be received by any one in Africa to the communion." The bishops of Africa acknowledged the bishop of Rome so little that they smote with excommunication those who would have recourse to an appeal! These same bishops, in the sixth Council of Carthage, held under Aurelius, Bishop of that city, wrote Celestinus, Bishop of Rome, to warn him not to receive appeals from the bishops, priests, or clerics of Africa; and that he should send no more legates or commissaries; and that he should not introduce human pride into the church.

That the Patriarch of Rome had from the earliest times tried to draw to himself all the authority is an evident fact; but it is an equally evident fact that he had not the supremacy which the Ultramontanes attribute to him. Had he possessed it, would the bishops of Africa—St. Augustine first among them—have dared to prohibit the appeals of their decrees to his supreme tribunal?

I confess without difficulty that the Patriarch of Rome held the first place. One of Justinian's laws says, "Let us order, after the definition of the four Councils, that the holy pope of ancient Rome shall be the first of the bishops, and that the most high Archbishop of Constantinople, which is the new Rome, shall be the second." "Bow down then to the supremacy of the pope," you will say to me. Do not run so fast to this

conclusion, my venerable brethren, inasmuch as the law of Justinian has written on the face of it, "Of the order of the patriarchal sees." Precedence is one thing, the power of jurisdiction is another. For example, supposing that in Florence there was an assembly of all the bishops of the kingdom, the precedence would be given to the Primate of Florence, as among the Easterns it would be accorded to the Patriarch of Constantinople, as in England to the Archbishop of Canterbury. But neither the first, nor the second, nor the third, could deduce from the position assigned to him a jurisdiction over his colleagues.

The importance of the bishops of Rome proceeded not from a divine power, but from the importance of the city in which they had their seat. Monsignor Darboy (in Paris) is not superior in dignity to the Archbishop of Avignon; but, in spite of that, Paris gives him a consideration which he would not have, if, instead of having his palace on the bank of the Seine, he had it on that of the Rhone. That which is true in the religious order is the same in civil and political matters: the Prefect of Rome is not more a prefect than one at Pisa; but civilly and politically he has a greater importance.

I have said that from the very first centuries the Patriarch of Rome aspired to the universal government of the church. Unfortunately he very nearly reached it; but he had not succeeded assuredly in his pretensions, for the Emperor Theodosius II made a law by which he established that the Patriarch of Constantinople should have the same authority as he of Rome. The fathers of the Council of Chalcedon put the bishops of the new and the old Rome in the same order on all things, even ecclesiastical. The sixth Council of Carthage forbade all the bishops to take the title of prince of the bishops, or

sovereign bishop. As for this title of universal bishop, which the popes took later, St. Gregory I, believing that his successors would never think of adorning themselves with it, wrote these remarkable words, "None of my predecessors has consented to take this profane name; for when a patriarch gives himself the name of Universal, the title of patriarch suffers discredit. Far be it then from Christians to desire to give themselves a title which brings discredit upon their brethren!"

The words of St. Gregory are directed to his colleagues of Constantinople, who pretended to the primacy of the church. Pope Pelagius II calls John, Bishop of Constantinople, who aspired to the high priesthood, "impious and profane." "Do not care," he said, "for the title of universal, which John has usurped illegally. Let none of the patriarchs take this profane name; for what misfortunes may we not expect, if among the priests such elements arise? They would get what has been foretold for them: 'He is the king of the sons of pride.'"⁶⁷

Do not these authorities prove (and I might add a hundred more of equal value), with a clearness as the sun at midday, that the first bishops of Rome were not till much later recognized as universal bishops and heads of the church? And on the other hand, who does not know that from the year 325, in which the first Council of Nice was held, down to 680, the year of the third Ecumenical Council of Constantinople, among more than 1,109 bishops who assisted at the first six general Councils, there were not more than nineteen Western bishops? Who does not know that the Councils were convoked by the Emperors without informing, and sometimes against

⁶⁷ Pelagius II, Epistle 6, *Patrologia Latina* 72, col. 740.

the wish of, the bishop of Rome? That Hosius, Bishop of Cordova, presided at the first Council of Nice, and edited the canons of it? The same Hosius presided afterwards at the Council of Sardica, excluding the legates of Julius, Bishop of Rome.

I say no more, my venerable brethren; and I come now to speak of the great argument, which you mentioned before, to establish the primacy of the bishop of Rome by the rock (petra). If this were true, the dispute would be at an end; but our forefathers—and they certainly knew something—did not think of it as we do.

St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, in his second book on the Trinity, says, “The rock is the blessed and only rock of the faith confessed by the mouth of St. Peter;” and in the sixth book of the Trinity, he says, “It is on this rock of the confession of faith that the church is built.”

“God,” says St. Jerome in the first book on St. Matthew, “has founded His church on this rock, and it is from this rock that the apostle Peter has been named.”

After him St. Chrysostom says in his fifty-fourth homily on St. Matthew, “On this rock I will build my church, that is, on the faith of the confession.” Now, what was the confession of the apostle? Here it is: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Ambrose, the holy Archbishop of Milan, St. Basil of Seleucia, and the fathers of the Council of Chalcedon, teach exactly the same thing.

Of all the doctors of Christian antiquity St. Augustine occupies one of the first places for knowledge and

holiness. Listen then to what he writes in his second treatise on the first epistle of St. John: "What do the words mean, 'I will build my church on the rock?' On this faith, on that which said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'" In his treatise on St. John we find this most significant phrase: "On this rock which thou hast confessed I will build my church, since Christ was the rock."⁶⁸ The great bishop believed so little that the church was built on St. Peter that he said to the people in his twenty-sixth sermon: "Thou art Peter, and on this rock which thou hast confessed, on this rock which thou hast acknowledged by saying, 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God,' I will build my church; that is, upon Myself, who am the Son of the living God. I will build it on Me, and not Me on thee."⁶⁹ That which St. Augustine thought upon this celebrated passage was the opinion of all Christendom in his time.

Therefore, to resume, I establish: (1) That Jesus has given to His apostles the same power that He gave to St. Peter. (2) That the apostles never recognized in St. Peter the vicar of Jesus Christ and the infallible doctor of the church. (3) That St. Peter never thought of being pope, and never acted as if he were pope. (4) That the Councils of the first four centuries, while they recognized the high position which the Bishop of Rome occupied in the church on account of Rome, only accorded to him a pre-eminence of honor, never of power or of jurisdiction. (5) That the holy fathers in the famous passage, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church," never understood that the church was built on Peter (super

⁶⁸ Tractate 124 on John.

⁶⁹ Sermon 26 on the New Testament.

Petrum) but on the rock (super petram), that is, on the confession of the faith of the apostle. I conclude victoriously, with history, with reason, with logic, with good sense, and with a Christian conscience, that Jesus Christ did not confer any supremacy on St. Peter and that the bishops of Rome did not become sovereigns of the church, but only by confiscating one by one all the rights of the episcopate. [Voices—"Silence, impudent Protestant! Silence!"]

No, I am not an impudent Protestant. History is neither Catholic, nor Anglican, nor Calvinistic, nor Lutheran, nor Arminian, nor schismatic Greek nor Ultramontane. She is what she is—that is, something stronger than all confessions of faith of the Canons of the Ecumenical Councils. Write against it, if you dare! but you cannot destroy it, any more than taking a brick out of the Colosseum would make it fall. If I have said anything which history proves to be false, show it to me by history, and without a moment's hesitation I will make an honorable apology; but be patient, and you will see that I have not said all that I would or could; and even were the funeral pile waiting for me in the place of St. Peter's, I should not be silent, and I am obliged to go on.

Monsignor Dupanloup, in his celebrated *Observations* on this Council of the Vatican, has said, and with reason, that if we declared Pius IX infallible, we must necessarily, and from natural logic, be obliged to hold that all his predecessors were also infallible. Well, venerable brethren, here history raises its voice to assure us that some popes have erred. You may protest against it or deny it, as you please, but I will prove it:

Pope Victor (192) first approved of Montanism, and then condemned it.

Marcellinus (296-303) was an idolater. He entered into the temple of Vesta, and offered incense to the goddess. You will say that it was an act of weakness; but I answer, a vicar of Jesus Christ dies rather than become an apostate.

Liberius (358) consented to the condemnation of Athanasius, and made a profession of Arianism, that he might be recalled from his exile and reinstated in his see.

Honorius (625) adhered to Monothelitism: Father Gratry has proved it to demonstration.

Gregory I (590-604) calls any one Antichrist who takes the name of Universal Bishop, and contrariwise Boniface III, (607,8) made the parricide Emperor Phocas confer that title upon him.

Paschal II (1099-1118) and Eugenius III (1145-53) authorized dueling; Julius II (1509) and Pius IV (1560) forbade it.

Eugenius IV (1431-39) approved of the Council of Basle and the restitution of the chalice to the church of Bohemia; Pius II (1458) revoked the concession.

Hadrian II (867-872) declared civil marriages to be valid; Pius VII (1800-23) condemned them.

Sixtus V (1585-90) published an edition of the Bible, and by a bull recommended it to be read; Pius VII condemned the reading of it.

Clement XIV (1769-74) abolished the order of the Jesuits, permitted by Paul III, and Pius VII re-established it.

But why look for such remote proofs? Has not our holy Father here present, in his bull which gave the rules for this Council, in the event of his dying while it was sitting, revoked all that in past times may be contrary to it, even when that proceeds from the decisions of his predecessors? And certainly, if Pius IX has spoken *ex cathedra*, it is not when, from the depths of his sepulcher, he imposes his will on the sovereigns of the church. I should never finish, my venerable brethren, if I were to put before your eyes the contradictions of the popes in their teaching. If then you proclaim the infallibility of the actual pope, you must either prove, that which is impossible—that the popes never contradicted each other—or else you must declare that the Holy Spirit has revealed to you that the infallibility of the papacy only dates from 1870. Are you bold enough to do this?

Perhaps the people may be indifferent, and pass by theological questions which they do not understand, and of which they do not see the importance; but though they are indifferent to principles, they are not so to facts. Do not then deceive yourselves. If you decree the dogma of papal infallibility, the Protestants, our adversaries, will mount in the breach, the more bold that they have history on their side, whilst we have only our own denial against them. What can we say to them when they show up all the bishops of Rome from the days of Luke to his holiness Pius IX? Ah! if they had all been like Pius IX, we should triumph on the whole line; but alas! it is not so. [Cries of "Silence, silence; enough, enough!"]

Do not cry out, Monsignori! To fear history is to own yourselves conquered; and, moreover, if you made the whole waters of the Tiber pass over it, you would not cancel a single page. Let me speak, and I will be as short as it is possible on this most important subject.

Pope Vigilius (538) purchased the papacy from Belisarius, lieutenant of the Emperor Justinian. It is true that he broke his promise and never paid for it. Is this a canonical mode of binding on the tiara? The second Council of Chalcedon had formally condemned it. In one of its canons you read that "the bishop who obtains his episcopate by money shall lose it and be degraded." Pope Eugenius III (1145) imitated Vigilius. St. Bernard, the bright star of his age, reproves the pope, saying to him, "Can you show me in this great city of Rome any one who would receive you as pope if they had not received gold or silver for it?"

My venerable brethren, will a pope who establishes a bank at the gates of the temple be inspired by the Holy Spirit? Will he have any right to teach the church infallibly? You know the history of Formosus too well for me to add to it. Stephen XI caused his body to be exhumed, dressed in his pontifical robes; he made the fingers which he used for giving the benediction to be cut off, and then had him thrown into the Tiber, declaring him to be a perjurer and illegitimate. He was then imprisoned by the people, poisoned, and strangled. Look how matters were re-adjusted; Romanus, successor of Stephen, and, after him, John X, rehabilitated the memory of Formosus.

But you will tell me these are fables, not history. Fables! Go, Monsignori, to the Vatican Library and read Platina,

the historian of the papacy, and the annals of Baronius.⁷⁰ These are facts which, for the honor of the Holy See, we should wish to ignore; but when it is to define a dogma which may provoke a great schism in our midst, the love which we bear to our venerable mother church, Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman, ought it to impose silence on us?

I go on. The learned Cardinal Baronius, speaking of the papal court, says (give attention, my venerable brethren, to these words), "What did the Roman church appear in those days? How infamous! Only all-powerful courtesans governing in Rome! It was they who gave, exchanged, and took bishoprics; and horrible to relate, they got their lovers, the false popes, put on the throne of St. Peter."⁷¹ You will answer, These were false popes, not true ones: let it be so; but in that case, if for fifty years the see of Rome was occupied by anti-popes, how will you pick up again the thread of pontifical succession? Has the church been able, at least for a century and a half, to go on without a head, and find itself acephalous?

Look now: The greatest number of these anti-popes appear in a genealogical tree of the papacy; and it must have been this absurdity that Baronius described; because Genebrardo, the great flatterer of the popes, had dared to say in his *Chronicles*: "This century is unfortunate, as for nearly 150 years the popes have fallen from all the virtues of their predecessors, and have become apostates rather than apostles."⁷² I can understand how the illustrious Baronius must have

⁷⁰ A.D. 897.

⁷¹ Baronius, A.D. 912.

⁷² A.D. 901.

blushed when he narrated the acts of these Roman bishops. Speaking of John XI (931), natural son of Pope Sergius and of Marozia, he wrote these words in his annals: "The holy church, that is, the Roman, has been vilely trampled on by such a monster." John XII (956) elected pope at the age of eighteen, through the influence of courtesans, was not one whit better than his predecessor.

I grieve, my venerable brethren, to stir up so much filth. I am silent on Alexander VI, father and lover of Lucretia; I turn away from John XXII (1319), who denied the immortality of the soul, and was deposed by the holy Ecumenical Council of Constance. Some will maintain that this Council was only a private one; let it be so; but if you refuse any authority to it, as a logical sequence you must hold the nomination of Martin V (1417) to be illegal. What, then, will become of the papal succession? Can you find the thread of it?

I do not speak of the schisms which have dishonored the church. In those unfortunate days the See of Rome was occupied by two competitors, and sometimes even by three. Which of these was the true pope? Resuming once more, again I say, if you decree the infallibility of the present bishop of Rome, you must establish the infallibility of all the preceding ones, without excluding any. But can you do that, when history is there establishing with a clearness equal to that of the sun, that the popes have erred in their teaching? Could you do it and maintain that avaricious, incestuous, murdering, simoniacal popes have been vicars of Jesus Christ? Oh, venerable brethren! to maintain such an enormity would be to betray Christ worse than Judas. It would be

to throw dirt in His face. [Cries, "Down from the pulpit, quick; shut the mouth of the heretic!"]

My venerable brethren, you cry out; but would it not be more dignified to weigh my reasons and my proofs in the balance of the sanctuary? Believe me, history cannot be made over again; it is there, and will remain to all eternity, to protest energetically against the dogma of papal infallibility. You may proclaim it unanimously; but one vote will be wanting, and that is mine! Monsignori, the true and faithful have their eyes on us, expecting from us a remedy for the innumerable evils which dishonor the church: will you deceive them in their hopes? What will not our responsibility before God be, if we let this solemn occasion pass which God has given us to heal the true faith?

Let us seize it, my brethren; let us arm ourselves with a holy courage; let us make a violent and generous effort; let us turn to the teaching of the apostles, since without that we have only errors, darkness, and false traditions. Let us avail ourselves of our reason and of our intelligence to take the apostles and prophets as our only infallible masters with reference to the question of questions, "What must I do to be saved?" When we have decided that, we shall have laid the foundation of our dogmatic system firm and immovable on the rock, lasting and incorruptible, of the divinely inspired holy Scriptures. Full of confidence, we will go before the world, and, like the apostle Paul, in the presence of the free-thinkers, we will "know none other than Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." We will conquer through the preaching of "the folly of the Cross," as Paul conquered the learned men of Greece and Rome; and the Roman church will have its glorious '89 [Clamorous cries, "Get

down! Out with the Protestant, the Calvinist, the traitor of the church.”]

Your cries, Monsignori, do not frighten me. If my words are hot, my head is cool. I am neither of Luther, nor of Calvin, nor of Paul, nor of Apollos, but of Christ. [Renewed cries, “Anathema, anathema, to the apostate.”]

Anathema? Monsignori, anathema? You know well that you are not protesting against me, but against the holy apostles under whose protection I should wish this Council to place the church. Ah! if wrapped in their winding-sheets they came out of their tombs, would they speak a language different from mine? What would you say to them when by their writings they tell you that the papacy had deviated from the gospel of the Son of God, which they have preached and confirmed in so generous a manner by their blood? Would you dare say to them, “We prefer the teaching of our own popes, our Bellarmine, our Ignatius Loyola, to yours?”

No, no! a thousand times, no! unless you have shut your ears that you may not hear, closed your eyes that you may not see, blunted your mind that you may not understand. Ah! if He who reigns above wishes to punish us, making His hand fall heavy on us, as He did on Pharaoh, He has no need to permit Garibaldi’s soldiers to drive us away from the eternal city. He has only to let them make Pius IX a god, as we have made a goddess of the blessed Virgin. Stop, stop, venerable brethren, on the odious and ridiculous incline on which you have placed yourselves. Save the church from the shipwreck which threatens her, asking from the holy

Scriptures alone for the rule of faith which we ought to believe and to profess. I have spoken: may God help me!

CHAPTER VI:
ON THE REUNION OF THE CHURCHES⁷³

⁷³ Transcript of the Patriarchal Encyclical of 1895.

I. Every godly and orthodox soul, which has a sincere zeal for the glory of God, is deeply afflicted and weighed down with great pain upon seeing that he, who detests that which is good and is a murderer from the beginning, impelled by envy of man's salvation, never ceases continually to sow diverse tares in the field of the Lord, in order to sift the wheat. From this source indeed, even from the earliest times, there sprang up in the Church of God heretical tares, which have in many ways made havoc, and do still make havoc, of the salvation of mankind by Christ; which moreover, as bad seeds and corrupted members, are rightly cut off from the sound body of the orthodox catholic Church of Christ. But in these last times the evil one has rent from the orthodox Church of Christ even whole nations in the West, having inflated the bishops of Rome with thoughts of excessive arrogance, which has given birth to diverse lawless and anti-evangelical innovations. And not only so, but furthermore the Popes of Rome from time to time, pursuing absolutely and without examination modes of union according to their own fancy, strive by every means to reduce to their own errors the catholic Church of Christ, which throughout the world walks unshaken in the orthodoxy of faith transmitted to her by the Fathers.

II. Accordingly the Pope of Rome, Leo XIII, on the occasion of his episcopal jubilee, published in the month of June of the year of grace 1895 an encyclical letter, addressed to the leaders and peoples of the world, by which he also at the same time invites our orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ to unite with the papal throne, thinking that such union can only be obtained by acknowledging him as supreme pontiff and the highest spiritual and temporal ruler of the universal

Church, as the only representative of Christ upon earth and the dispenser of all grace.

III. No doubt every Christian heart ought to be filled with longing for union of the Churches, and especially the whole orthodox world, being inspired by a true spirit of piety, according to the divine purpose of the establishment of the church by the God-man our Savior Christ, ardently longs for the unity of the Churches in the one rule of faith, and on the foundation of the apostolic doctrine handed down to us through the Fathers, "Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone."⁷⁴ Wherefore she also every day, in her public prayers to the Lord, prays for the gathering together of the scattered and for the return of those who have gone astray to the right way of the truth, which alone leads to the Life of all, the only-begotten Son and Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ.⁷⁵

Agreeably, therefore, to this sacred longing, our orthodox Church of Christ is always ready to accept any proposal of union, if only the Bishop of Rome would shake off once for all the whole series of the many and diverse anti-evangelical novelties that have been "privily brought in" to his Church, and have provoked the sad division of the Churches of the East and West, and would return to the basis of the seven holy Ecumenical Councils, which, having been assembled in the Holy Spirit, of representatives of all the holy Churches of God, for the determination of the right teaching of the faith against heretics, have a universal and perpetual supremacy in the Church of Christ. And this, both by her

⁷⁴ Ephesians 2:20.

⁷⁵ John 14:6.

writings and encyclical letters, the Orthodox Church has never ceased to intimate to the Papal Church, having clearly and explicitly set forth that so long as the latter perseveres in her innovations, and the orthodox Church adheres to the divine and apostolic traditions of Christianity, during which the Western Churches were of the same mind and were united with the Churches of the East, so long is it a vain and empty thing to talk of union. For which cause we have remained silent until now, and have declined to take into consideration the papal encyclical in question, esteeming it unprofitable to speak to the ears of those who do not hear.

Since, however, from a certain period the Papal Church, having abandoned the method of persuasion and discussion, began, to our general astonishment and perplexity, to lay traps for the conscience of the more simple orthodox Christians by means of deceitful workers transformed into apostles of Christ,⁷⁶ sending into the East clerics with the dress and headcovering of orthodox priests, inventing also diverse and other artful means to obtain her proselytizing objects; for this reason, as in sacred duty bound, we issue this patriarchal and synodical encyclical, for a safeguard of the orthodox faith and piety, knowing “that the observance of the true canons is a duty for every good man, and much more for those who have been thought worthy by Providence to direct the affairs of others.”⁷⁷

IV. The union of the separated Churches with herself in one rule of faith is, as has been said before, a sacred and

⁷⁶ II Corinthians 11:13.

⁷⁷ Saint Photius, Epistle iii, section 10.

inward desire of the holy, catholic and orthodox apostolic Church of Christ; but without such unity in the faith, the desired union of the Churches becomes impossible. This being the case, we wonder in truth how Pope Leo XIII, though he himself also acknowledges this truth, falls into a plain self-contradiction, declaring, on the one hand, that true union lies in the unity of faith, and, on the other hand, that every Church, even after the union, can hold her own dogmatic and canonical definitions, even when they differ from those of the Papal Church, as the Pope declares in a previous encyclical, dated November 30, 1894.

For there is an evident contradiction when in one and the same Church one believes that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father, and another that He proceeds from the Father and the Son; when one sprinkles, and another baptizes (immerses) thrice in the water; one uses leavened bread in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, and another unleavened; one imparts to the people of the chalice as well as of the bread, and the other only of the holy bread; and other things like these. But what this contradiction signifies, whether respect for the evangelical truths of the holy Church of Christ and an indirect concession and acknowledgment of them, or something else, we cannot say.

V. But however that may be, for the practical realization of the pious longing for the union of the Churches, a common principle and basis must be settled first of all; and there can be no such safe common principle and basis other than the teaching of the Gospel and of the seven holy Ecumenical Councils. Reverting, then, to that teaching which was common to the Churches of the East and of the West until the separation, we ought, with a

sincere desire to know the truth, to search what the one holy, catholic and orthodox apostolic Church of Christ, being then of the same body, throughout the East and West believed, and to hold this fact, entire, and unaltered. But whatsoever has in later times been added or taken away, everyone has a sacred and indispensable duty, if he sincerely seeks for the glory of God more than for his own glory, that in a spirit of piety he should correct it, considering that by arrogantly continuing in the perversion of the truth he is liable to a heavy account before the impartial judgment-seat of Christ.

In saying this we do not at all refer to the differences regarding the ritual of the sacred services and the hymns, or the sacred vestments, and the like, which matters, even though they still vary, as they did of old, do not in the least injure the substance and unity of the faith; but we refer to those essential differences which have reference to the divinely transmitted doctrines of the faith, and the divinely instituted canonical constitution of the administration of the Churches. "In cases where the thing disregarded is not the faith," says also the holy Photius, "and is no falling away from any general and catholic decree, different rites and customs being observed among different people, a man who knows how to judge rightly would decide that neither do those who observe them act wrongly, nor do those who have not received them break the law."⁷⁸

VI. And indeed for the holy purpose of union, the Eastern orthodox and catholic Church of Christ is ready heartily to accept all that which both the Eastern and Western Churches unanimously professed before the

⁷⁸ Saint Photius, Epistle iii, section 6.

ninth century, if she has perchance perverted or does not hold it. And if the Westerns prove from the teaching of the holy Fathers and the divinely assembled Ecumenical Councils that the then orthodox Roman Church, which was throughout the West, even before the ninth century read the Creed with the addition, or used unleavened bread, or accepted the doctrine of a purgatorial fire, or sprinkling instead of baptism, or the immaculate conception of the ever-Virgin, or the temporal power, or the infallibility and absolutism of the Bishop of Rome, we have no more to say.

But if, on the contrary, it is plainly demonstrated, as those of the Latins themselves, who love the truth, also acknowledge, that the Eastern and orthodox catholic Church of Christ holds fast the anciently transmitted doctrines which were at that time professed in common both in the East and the West, and that the Western Church perverted them by diverse innovations, then it is clear, even to children, that the more natural way to union is the return of the Western Church to the ancient doctrinal and administrative condition of things; for the faith does not change in any way with time or circumstances, but remains the same always and everywhere, for "there is one body and one Spirit," it is said, "even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."⁷⁹

VII. So then the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church of the seven Ecumenical Councils believed and taught in accordance with the words of the Gospel that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father; but in the West, even

⁷⁹ Ephesians 4:5-6.

from the ninth century, the holy Creed, which was composed and sanctioned by Ecumenical Councils, began to be falsified, and the idea that the Holy Ghost proceeds “also from the Son” to be arbitrarily promulgated. And certainly Pope Leo XIII is not ignorant that his orthodox predecessor and namesake, the defender of orthodoxy, Leo III, in the year 809 denounced synodically this anti-evangelical and utterly lawless addition, “and from the Son” (filioque); and engraved on two silver plates, in Greek and Latin, the holy Creed of the first and second Ecumenical Councils, entire and without any addition; having written moreover, “These words I, Leo, have set down for love and as a safeguard of the orthodox faith” (Haec Leo posui amore et cautela fidei orthodoxa).⁸⁰

Likewise he is by no means ignorant that during the tenth century, or at the beginning of the eleventh, this anti-evangelical and lawless addition was with difficulty inserted officially into the holy Creed at Rome also, and that consequently the Roman Church, in insisting on her innovations, and not coming back to the dogma of the Ecumenical Councils, renders herself fully responsible before the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ, which holds fast that which has been received from the Fathers, and keeps the deposit of the faith which was delivered to it unadulterated in all things, in obedience to the Apostolic injunction: “That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us”; “avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

⁸⁰ See the life of Leo III by Athanasius, presbyter and librarian at Rome, in his *Lives of the Popes*.

which some professing have erred concerning the faith.”⁸¹

VIII. The one holy, catholic and apostolic Church of the first seven Ecumenical Councils baptized by three immersions in the water, and the Pope Pelagius speaks of the triple immersion as a command of the Lord, and in the thirteenth century baptism by immersions still prevailed in the West; and the sacred fonts themselves, preserved in the more ancient churches in Italy, are eloquent witnesses on this point; but in later times sprinkling or effusion, being privily brought in, came to be accepted by the Papal Church, which still holds fast the innovation, thus also widening the gulf which she has opened; but we Orthodox, remaining faithful to the apostolic tradition and the practice of the seven Ecumenical Councils, “stand fast, contending for the common profession, the paternal treasure of the sound faith.”⁸²

IX. The one holy, catholic and apostolic Church of the seven Ecumenical Councils, according to the example of our Savior, celebrated the divine Eucharist for more than a thousand years throughout the East and West with leavened bread, as the truth-loving papal theologians themselves also bear witness; but the Papal Church from the eleventh century made an innovation also in the sacrament of the divine Eucharist by introducing unleavened bread.

X. The one holy, catholic and apostolic Church of the seven Ecumenical Councils held that the precious gifts

⁸¹ II Timothy 1:14; I Timothy. 6:20-21.

⁸² St. Basil the Great, Epistle 243, *To the Bishops of Italy and Gaul*.

are consecrated after the prayer of the invocation of the Holy Ghost by the blessing of the priest, as the ancient rituals of Rome and Gaul testify; nevertheless afterwards the Papal Church made an innovation in this also, by arbitrarily accepting the consecration of the precious gifts as taking place along with the utterance of the Lord's words: "Take, eat; this is my body": and "Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood."

XI. The one holy, catholic and apostolic Church of the seven Ecumenical Councils, following the Lord's command, "Drink ye all of it," imparted also of the holy chalice to all; but the Papal Church from the ninth century downwards has made an innovation in this rite also, by depriving the laity of the holy chalice, contrary to the Lord's command and the universal practice of the ancient Church, as well as the express prohibition of many ancient orthodox bishops of Rome.⁸³

XII. The one holy, catholic and apostolic Church of the seven Ecumenical Councils, walking according to the divinely inspired teaching of the Holy Scripture and the old apostolic tradition, prays and invokes the mercy of God for the forgiveness and rest of those "which have fallen asleep in the Lord";⁸⁴ but the Papal Church from

⁸³ For example, Pope Gelasius I: "We have learned that some, compelled by I know not what superstition, after receiving only a portion of the sacred body, abstain from the chalice of the sacred blood; without a doubt, they ought either to receive the complete sacrament, or keep away from both, for the division of one and the same mystery cannot come about without great sacrilege." *Patrologia Latina* 59, col. 10.

⁸⁴ Matthew 26:31; Hebrews 11:39-40; II Timothy 4:8; II Maccabees 12:45.

the twelfth century downwards has invented and heaped together in the person of the Pope, as one singularly privileged, a multitude of innovations concerning purgatorial fire, a superabundance of the virtues of the saints, and the distribution of them to those who need them, and the like, setting forth also a full reward for the just before the universal resurrection and judgment.

XIII. The one holy, catholic and apostolic Church of the seven Ecumenical Councils teaches that the supernatural incarnation of the only-begotten Son and Word of God, of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, is alone pure and immaculate; but the Papal Church scarcely forty years ago again made an innovation by laying down a novel dogma concerning the immaculate conception of the Mother of God and ever-Virgin Mary, which was unknown to the ancient Church (and strongly opposed at different times even by the more distinguished among the papal theologians).

XIV. Passing over, then, these serious and substantial differences between the two churches respecting the faith, which differences, as has been said before, were created in the West, the Pope in his encyclical represents the question of the primacy of the Roman Pontiff as the principal and, so to speak, only cause of the dissension, and sends us to the sources, that we may make diligent search as to what our forefathers believed and what the first age of Christianity delivered to us. But having recourse to the fathers and the Ecumenical Councils of the Church of the first nine centuries, we are fully persuaded that the Bishop of Rome was never considered as the supreme authority and infallible head of the Church, and that every bishop is head and

president of his own particular Church, subject only to the synodical ordinances and decisions of the Church universal as being alone infallible, the Bishop of Rome being in no wise excepted from this rule, as Church history shows. Our Lord Jesus Christ alone is the eternal Prince and immortal Head of the Church, for “He is the Head of the body, the Church,”⁸⁵ who said also to His divine disciples and apostles at His ascension into heaven, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”⁸⁶ In the Holy Scripture the Apostle Peter, whom the Papists, relying on apocryphal books of the second century, the pseudo-Clementines, imagine with a purpose to be the founder of the Roman Church and their first bishop, discusses matters as an equal among equals in the apostolic synod of Jerusalem, and at another time is sharply rebuked by the Apostle Paul, as is evident from the Epistle to the Galatians.⁸⁷

Moreover, the Papists themselves know well that the very passage of the Gospel to which the Pontiff refers, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church,” is in the first centuries of the Church interpreted quite differently, in a spirit of orthodoxy, both by tradition and by all the divine and sacred Fathers without exception; the fundamental and unshaken rock upon which the Lord has built His own Church, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, being understood metaphorically of Peter’s true confession concerning the Lord, that “He is Christ, the Son of the

⁸⁵ Colossians 1:18.

⁸⁶ Matthew 28:20.

⁸⁷ Galatians 2:11.

living God.”⁸⁸ Upon this confession and faith the saving preaching of the Gospel by all the apostles and their successors rests unshaken. Whence also the Apostle Paul, who had been caught up into heaven, evidently interpreting this divine passage, declares the divine inspiration, saying: “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”⁸⁹ But it is in another sense that Paul calls all the apostles and prophets together the foundation of the building up in Christ of the faithful—that is to say, the members of the body of Christ, which is the Church—when he writes to the Ephesians: “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the house hold of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone.”⁹⁰

Such, then, being the divinely inspired teaching of the apostles respecting the foundation and Prince of the Church of God, of course the sacred Fathers, who held firmly to the apostolic traditions, could not have or conceive any idea of an absolute primacy of the Apostle Peter and the bishops of Rome; nor could they give any other interpretation, totally unknown to the Church, to that passage of the Gospel, but that which was true and right; nor could they arbitrarily and by themselves invent a novel doctrine respecting excessive privileges of

⁸⁸ Matthew 16:16.

⁸⁹ I Corinthians 3:10, 11.

⁹⁰ Ephesians 2:19, 20. Cf. I Peter 2:4; Revelation 21:14.

the Bishop of Rome as successor, purportedly, of Peter; especially whilst the Church of Rome was chiefly founded, not by Peter, whose apostolic action at Rome is totally unknown to history, but by the heaven-caught apostle of the Gentiles, Paul, through his disciples, whose apostolic ministry in Rome is well known to all.⁹¹

XV. The divine Fathers, honoring the Bishop of Rome only as the bishop of the capital city of the Empire, gave him the honorary prerogative of presidency, considering him simply as the bishop first in order, that is, first among equals; which prerogative they also assigned afterwards to the Bishop of Constantinople, when that city became the capital of the Roman Empire, as the twenty-eighth canon of the fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon bears witness, saying, among other things, as follows: "We do also determine and decree the same things respecting the prerogatives of the most holy Church of the said Constantinople, which is New Rome. For the Fathers have rightly given the prerogative to the throne of the elder Rome, because that was the imperial city. And the hundred and fifty most religious bishops, moved by the same consideration, assigned an equal prerogative to the most holy throne of New Rome." From this canon it is very evident that the Bishop of Rome is equal in honor to the Bishop of the Church of Constantinople and to those other Churches, and there is no hint given in any canon or by any of the Fathers that the Bishop of Rome alone has ever been prince of the universal Church and the infallible judge of the bishops of the other independent and self-governing Churches,

⁹¹ See Acts of the Apostles 28:15, Romans 15:15-16; Philippians 1:13.

or the successor of the Apostle Peter and vicar of Jesus Christ on earth.

XVI. Each particular self-governing Church, both in the East and West, was totally independent and self-administered in the time of the Seven Ecumenical Councils. And just as the bishops of the self-governing Churches of the East, so also those of Africa, Spain, Gaul, Germany and Britain managed the affairs of their own Churches, each by their local synods, the Bishop of Rome having no right to interfere, and he himself also was equally subject and obedient to the decrees of synods. But on important questions which needed the sanction of the universal Church an appeal was made to an Ecumenical Council, which alone was and is the supreme tribunal in the universal Church.

Such was the ancient constitution of the Church; but the bishops were independent of each other and each entirely free within his own bounds, obeying only the syndical decrees, and they sat as equal one to another in synods. Moreover, none of them ever laid claim to monarchical rights over the universal Church; and if sometimes certain ambitious bishops of Rome raised excessive claims to an absolutism unknown to the Church, such were duly reprov'd and rebuked. The assertion therefore of Leo XIII, when he says in his Encyclical that before the period of the great Photius the name of the Roman throne was holy among all the peoples of the Christian world, and that the East, like the West, with one accord and without opposition, was subject to the Roman pontiff as lawful successor, so to say, of the Apostle Peter, and consequently vicar of Jesus Christ on earth is prov'd to be inaccurate and a manifest error.

XVII. During the nine centuries of the Ecumenical Councils the Eastern Orthodox Church never recognized the excessive claims of primacy on the part of the bishops of Rome, nor consequently did she ever submit herself to them, as Church history plainly bears witness. The independent relation of the East to the West is clearly and manifestly shown also by those few and most significant words of Basil the Great, which he writes in a letter to the holy Eusebius, Bishop of Samosata: "For when haughty characters are courted, it is their nature to become still more disdainful. For if the Lord be merciful to us, what other assistance do we need? But if the wrath of God abide on us, what help is there for us from Western superciliousness? Men who neither know the truth nor can bear to learn it, but being prejudiced by false suspicions, they act now as they did before in the case of Marcellus."⁹²

The celebrated Photius, therefore, the sacred Prelate and luminary of Constantinople, defending this independence of the Church of Constantinople after the middle of the ninth century, and foreseeing the impending perversion of the ecclesiastical constitution in the West, and its defection from the orthodox East, at first endeavored in a peaceful manner to avert the danger; but the Bishop of Rome, Nicholas I, by his uncanonical interference with the East, beyond the bounds of his diocese, and by the attempt which he made to subdue the Church of Constantinople to himself, pushed matters to the verge of the grievous separation of the Churches. The first seeds of these claims of a papal absolutism were scattered abroad in the pseudo-Clementines, and were cultivated, exactly at the epoch of

⁹² Epistle 239.

this Nicholas, in the so-called pseudo-Isidorian decrees, which are a farrago of spurious and forged royal decrees and letters of ancient bishops of Rome, by which, contrary to the truth of history and the established constitution of the Church, it was purposely promulgated that, as they said, Christian antiquity assigned to the bishops of Rome an unbounded authority over the universal Church.

XVIII. These facts we recall with sorrow of heart, inasmuch as the Papal Church, though she now acknowledges the spuriousness and forged character of those decrees on which her excessive claims are grounded, not only stubbornly refuses to come back to the canons and decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, but even in the expiring years of the nineteenth century has widened the existing gulf by officially proclaiming, to the astonishment of the Christian world, that the Bishop of Rome is even infallible. The orthodox Eastern and catholic Church of Christ, with the exception of the Son and Word of God, who was ineffably made man, knows no one infallible upon earth. Even the Apostle Peter himself, whose successor the Pope thinks himself to be, thrice denied the Lord, and was twice rebuked by the Apostle Paul, as not walking uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel. Afterwards the Pope Liberius, in the fourth century, subscribed an Arian confession; and likewise Zosimus, in the fifth century, approved an heretical confession denying original sin. Vigilius, in the sixth century, was condemned for wrong opinions by the fifth Council; and Honorius, having fallen into the Monothelite heresy, was condemned in the seventh century by the sixth Ecumenical Council as a heretic, and the popes who succeeded him acknowledged and accepted his condemnation.

XIX. With these and such facts in view, the peoples of the West, becoming gradually civilized by the diffusion of letters, began to protest against innovations, and to demand (as was done in the fifteenth century at the Councils of Constance and Basle) the return to the ecclesiastical constitution of the first centuries, to which, by the grace of God, the orthodox Churches throughout the East and North, which alone now form the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ, the pillar and ground of the truth, remain, and will always remain, faithful. The same was done in the seventeenth century by the learned Gallican theologians, and in the eighteenth by the bishops of Germany;⁹³ and in this present century of science and criticism, the Christian conscience rose up in one body in the year 1870, in the persons of the celebrated clerics and theologians of Germany, on account of the novel dogma of the infallibility of the Popes, issued by the Vatican Council, a consequence of which rising is seen in the formation of the separate religious communities of the old Catholics, who, having disowned the papacy, are quite independent of it.

XX. In vain, therefore, does the Bishop of Rome send us to the sources that we may seek diligently for what our forefathers believed and what the first period of Christianity delivered to us. In these sources we, the orthodox, find the old and divinely-transmitted doctrines, to which we carefully hold fast to the present time, and nowhere do we find the innovations which later times of empty mindedness brought forth in the West, and which the Papal Church having adopted retains till this very day. The orthodox Eastern Church

⁹³ The movement known as Febronianism.

then justly glories in Christ as being the Church of the seven Ecumenical Councils and of the first nine centuries of Christianity, and therefore the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ, “the pillar and ground of the truth”;⁹⁴ but the present Roman Church is the Church of innovations, of the falsification of the writings of the Church Fathers, and of the misinterpretation of the Holy Scripture and of the decrees of the holy councils, for which she has reasonably and justly been disowned, and is still disowned, so far as she remains in her error. “For better is a praiseworthy war than a peace which separates from God,” as Gregory of Nazianzus also says.

XXI. Such are, briefly, the serious and arbitrary innovations concerning the faith and the administrative constitution of the Church, which the Papal Church has introduced and which, it is evident, the Papal Encyclical purposely passes over in silence. These innovations, which have reference to essential points of the faith and of the administrative system of the Church, and which are manifestly opposed to the ecclesiastical condition of the first nine centuries, make the longed-for union of the Churches impossible: and every pious and orthodox heart is filled with inexpressible sorrow on seeing the Papal Church disdainfully persisting in them, and not in the least contributing to the sacred purpose of union by rejecting those heretical innovations and coming back to the ancient condition of the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ, of which she also at that time formed a part.

XXII. But what are we to say of all that the Roman Pontiff writes when he addresses the glorious Slavonic nations?

⁹⁴ I Timothy 3:15.

No one, indeed, has ever denied that by the virtue and the apostolic toils of saints Cyril and Methodius the grace of salvation was vouchsafed to not a few of the Slavonic peoples: but history testifies that at the period of the great Photius those Greek apostles to the Slavs and intimate friends of that divine Father, setting out from Thessalonica, were sent to convert the Slavonic tribes not from Rome but from Constantinople, where moreover they had been trained, living as monks in the monastery of St. Polychronius. It is therefore utterly incoherent which is proclaimed in the Roman Pontiff's Encyclical, that, as he says, a kindly relation and mutual sympathy was brought about between the Slavonic tribes and the pontiffs of the Roman Church; for even if the Pope is ignorant of it, history nevertheless explicitly proclaims that these sacred apostles to the Slavs of whom we speak, encountered greater difficulties in their work from the bishops of Rome through their excommunications and opposition, and were more cruelly persecuted by the Frankish papal bishops than by the heathen inhabitants of those countries.

Certainly the Pope knows well that the blessed Methodius having departed to the Lord, two hundred of the most distinguished of his disciples' after many struggles against the opposition of the Roman Pontiffs, were driven out of Moravia and led away by military force beyond its boundaries, from whence afterwards they were dispersed into Bulgaria and elsewhere. And he knows also that with the expulsion of the more erudite Slavonic clergy, the ritual of the East, as well as the Slavonic language then in use, were also driven out, and in process of time all vestige of orthodoxy was effaced from those provinces, and all these things done with the official cooperation of the bishops of Rome in a

manner not the least honorable to the holiness of the episcopal dignity. But notwithstanding all this despiteful treatment, the orthodox Slavonic Churches, the beloved daughters of the orthodox East, and especially the great and glorious Church of divinely preserved Russia, having been preserved harmless by the grace of God, have kept, and will keep till the end of the ages, the orthodox faith, and stand forth conspicuous testimonies of the liberty that is in Christ. In vain, therefore, does the Papal Encyclical promise to the Slavonic Churches prosperity and greatness, because by the goodwill of the most gracious God they already possess these blessings, and such as these, standing firm in the orthodoxy of their fathers and glorifying in it in Christ.

XXIII. These things being so, and being indisputably proved by ecclesiastical history, we, anxious as it is our duty to be, address ourselves to the peoples of the West, who through ignorance of the true and impartial history of ecclesiastical matters, being credulously led away, follow the anti-evangelical and utterly lawless innovations of the papacy, having been separated and continuing far from the one holy, catholic and apostolic orthodox Church of Christ, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, in which also their gracious ancestors and forefathers shone by their piety and orthodoxy of faith, having been faithful and precious members of it during nine whole centuries, obediently following and walking according to the decrees of the divinely assembled Ecumenical Councils.

XXIV. Christ-loving peoples of the glorious countries of the West! We rejoice on the one hand seeing that you have a zeal for Christ, being led by this right persuasion, "that without faith in Christ it is impossible to please

God”;⁹⁵ but on the other hand it is self-evident to every right-thinking person that the salutary faith in Christ ought by all means to be right in everything, and in agreement with the Holy Scripture and the apostolic traditions, upon which the teaching of the divine Fathers and the seven holy, divinely assembled Ecumenical Councils is based. It is moreover manifest that the universal Church of God, which holds fast in its bosom unique unadulterated and entire this salutary faith as a divine deposit, just as it was of old delivered and unfolded by the God-bearing Fathers moved by the Spirit, and formulated by them during the first nine centuries, is one and the same for ever, and not manifold and varying with the process of time: because the gospel truths are never susceptible to alteration or progress in course of time, like the various philosophical systems; “for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.”⁹⁶

Wherefore also the holy Vincent, who was brought up on the milk of the piety received from the fathers in the monastery of Lérins in Gaul, and flourished about the middle of the fifth century, with great wisdom and orthodoxy characterizes the true catholicity of the faith and of the Church, saying: “In the catholic Church we must especially take heed to hold that which has been believed everywhere at all times, and by all. For this is truly and properly catholic, as the very force and meaning of the word signifies, which moreover comprehends almost everything universally. And that

⁹⁵ Hebrews 11:6.

⁹⁶ Hebrews 13:8.

we shall do, if we walk following universality, antiquity, and consent."⁹⁷

But, as has been said before, the Western Church, from the tenth century downwards, has privily brought into herself through the papacy various and strange and heretical doctrines and innovations, and so she has been torn away and removed far from the true and orthodox Church of Christ. How necessary, then, it is for you to come back and return to the ancient and unadulterated doctrines of the Church in order to attain the salvation in Christ after which you press, you can easily understand if you intelligently consider the command of the heaven-ascended Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians, saying: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle";⁹⁸ and also what the same divine apostle writes to the Galatians saying: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ."⁹⁹ But avoid such perverters of the evangelical truth, "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple";¹⁰⁰ and come back for the future into the bosom of the holy, catholic and apostolic Church of God, which consists of all the particular holy Churches of God, which being divinely planted, like luxuriant vines throughout

⁹⁷ St. Vincent of Lérins, *Commonitorium*, Chapter 3.

⁹⁸ I Thessalonians 2:15.

⁹⁹ Galatians 1:6-7.

¹⁰⁰ Romans 16:18.

the orthodox world, are inseparably united to each other in the unity of the one saving faith in Christ, and in the bond of peace and of the Spirit, that you may obtain the highly-to-be-praised and most glorious name of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, who suffered for the salvation of the world, may be glorified among you also.

XXV. But let us, who by the grace and goodwill of the most gracious God are precious members of the body of Christ, that is to say of His one holy, catholic and apostolic Church, hold fast to the piety of our fathers, handed down to us from the apostles. Let us all beware of false apostles, who, coming to us in sheep's clothing, attempt to entice the more simple among us by various deceptive promises, regarding all things as lawful and allowing them for the sake of union, provided only that the Pope of Rome be recognized as supreme and infallible ruler and absolute sovereign of the universal Church, and only representative of Christ on earth, and the source of all grace. And especially let us, who by the grace and mercy of God have been appointed bishops, pastors, and teachers of the holy Churches of God, "take heed unto ourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood,"¹⁰¹ as they that must give account. "Wherefore let us comfort ourselves together, and edify one another."¹⁰² "And the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus...make us perfect, stablish,

¹⁰¹ Acts 20:28.

¹⁰² I Thessalonians 5:11.

strengthen, settle us,"¹⁰³ and grant that all those who are without and far away from the one holy, catholic and orthodox fold of His reasonable sheep may be enlightened with the light of His grace and the acknowledging of the truth. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

Amen.

In the Patriarchal Palace of Constantinople, in the month of August of the year of grace MDCCCXCV.

+ ANTHIMOS of Constantinople, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.

+ NICODEMOS of Cyzicos, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.

+ PHILOTHEOS of Nicomedia, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.

+ JEROME of Nicea, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.

+ NATHANAEL of Prusa, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.

+ BASIL of Smyrna, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.

¹⁰³ I Peter 5:10.

- + STEPHEN of Philadelphia, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.
- + ATHANASIOS of Lemnos, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.
- + BESSARION of Dyrrachium, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.
- + DOROTHEOS of Belgrade, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.
- + NICODEMOS of Elasson, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.
- + SOPHRONIOS of Carpathos and Cassos, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.
- + DIONYSIOS of Eleutheropolis, beloved brother and intercessor in Christ our God.

