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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Under Pope Paul III, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, for a perpetual remembrance hereof

Bull Of The Convocation

Recognizing at the very beginning of our pontificate, which the divine providence of Almighty God, not for any merit of our own, but by reason of its own great goodness, has committed to us, to what troubled times and to how many distresses in almost all affairs our pastoral solicitude and vigilance were called, we desired indeed to remedy the evils that have long afflicted and well-night overwhelmed the Christian commonwealth; but we also, as men compassed with infirmity,[1] felt our strength unequal to take upon ourselves such a burden.

For while we realized that peace was necessary to free and preserve the commonwealth from the many dangers that threatened it, we found all filled with hatreds and dissensions, and particularly those princes, to whom God has entrusted almost the entire direction of affairs, at enmity with one another.

Whilst we deemed it necessary for the integrity of the Christian religion and for the confirmation within us of the hope of heavenly things, that there be one fold and one shepherd[2] for the Lord's flock, the unity of the Christian name was well-nigh rent and torn asunder by schisms, dissensions and heresies.

Whilst we desired the commonwealth to be safe and protected against the arms and insidious designs of the infidels, yet, because of our transgressions and the guilt of us all, indeed, because of the wrath of God hanging over us by reason of our sins, Rhodes had been lost, Hungary ravaged, war by land and sea intended and planned against Italy, and against Austria and Illyria, since the Turk, our godless and ruthless enemy, was never at rest and looked upon our mutual enmities and dissensions as his fitting opportunity to carry out his designs with success.

Wherefore, having been called, as we have said, in so great a tempest of heresies, discords and wars and in such restlessness of the waves to rule and pilot the bark of Peter, and not trusting sufficiently our own strength, we first of all cast our cares upon the Lord,[3] that He might sustain us and provide our soul with firmness and strength, our understanding with prudence and wisdom.

Then, considering that our predecessors, endowed with admirable wisdom and sanctity, had often in the greatest dangers of the Christian commonwealth had recourse to ecumenical councils and general assemblies of bishops as the best and most suitable remedy, we also decided to hold a general council.

When, on consulting the opinions of the princes whose consent in this matter we deemed particularly useful and expedient, we found them at that time not averse to so holy a work, we, as our letters and records attest, summoned an ecumenical council and a general assembly of those bishops and fathers, whose duty it is to attend, to be opened in the city of Mantua on the twenty-third of May in the year 1537 of our Lord's incarnation and the third of our pontificate; entertaining almost the assured hope that when we should be assembled there in the name of the Lord, He would, as He promised, be in our midst[4] and in His goodness and mercy dispel with ease by the breath of His mouth all the storms and dangers of the times.

But, as the enemy of mankind always plots against pious enterprises, at the very outset, contrary to all our hopes and expectations, the city of Mantua was refused us, unless we subscribed to certain conditions which were totally irreconcilable with the ordinances of our predecessors, with the condition of the times, with our own dignity and liberty, and with that of the Apostolic See and the ecclesiastical name, as we have made known in other letters.

Wherefore we were obliged to find another place and to choose another city, and since a convenient and suitable one did not immediately present itself, we were constrained to prorogue the celebration of the council to the following first day of November.

In the meantime, the Turk, our cruel and everlasting enemy, having attacked Italy with a powerful fleet, captured, sacked and ravaged several cities on the shores of Apulia and carried off as booty the inhabitants, while we, in the greatest fear and general danger, were occupied in fortifying our shores and in furnishing assistance to the nearest neighboring localities.

At the same time, however, we did not neglect to consult and exhort the Christian princes to inform us what in their opinion would be a suitable place to hold the council, and since their opinions were various and uncertain, and there seemed to be needless delay, we, with the best intention and, we think, with prudence, chose Vicenza, a populous city, which by reason of the valor, esteem and power of the Venetians, who conceded it to us, offered not only free access but also and especially a free and safe place of residence for all.

But since time had already far advanced and the choice of the new city had to be made known to all, the proximity of the first of November precluding any announcement of this change, and winter moreover was near, we were again obliged to prorogue the council to the following spring, that is, to the first of the next May.

This having been firmly settled and decreed, we considered, while preparing ourselves and everything else to hold and celebrate that council successfully with the help of God, that it was a matter of prime importance both for the celebration of the council and for Christendom, that the Christian princes be united in peace and concord, and so we did not fail to implore and beseech our most beloved sons in Christ, Charles, ever august Emperor of the Romans, and Francis, the most Christian King, the two chief props and supports of the Christian name, to come together in a conference with us.

Both of them we very often urged by letters, nuncios and legates a latere selected from the number of our venerable brethren, to lay aside their jealousies and animosities, to agree to an alliance and holy friendship, and to succor the tottering state of Christendom, for the preservation of which especially did God give him power; and in case of neglect to do this and of failure to direct all their counsels to the common welfare of Christendom, they would have to render to Him a strict and severe account.

Yielding at last to our petitions they repaired to Nice, whither we also, for the cause of God and of bringing about peace, undertook a long and, to our advanced age, very fatiguing journey.

Neither did we neglect in the meantime, as the time set for the council, namely, the first of May, approached, to send to Vicenza three legates a latere, men of the greatest worth and esteem, chosen from the number of our brethren, the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, to open the council, to receive the prelates coming from various parts, and to transact and attend to such matters as they should deem necessary, till we ourselves on our return from our journey and mission of peace should be able to direct everything with greater exactness.

In the meantime we applied ourselves with all the zeal, love and energy of our soul to that holy and most necessary work, the establishment of peace among the princes.

God is our witness, in whose goodness we trusted when we exposed ourselves to the dangers of the journey and of life.

Our conscience is witness, and in this matter certainly cannot reproach us with having either neglected or not sought an opportunity to effect a reconciliation.

Witnesses are the princes themselves, whom we so often and so urgently implored through our nuncios, letters, legates, admonitions, exhortations and entreaties of every kind to lay aside their jealousies and form an alliance, that with united zeal and action they might aid the Christian commonwealth, already reduced to the greatest immediate danger.

Witnesses, moreover, are those vigils and anxieties, those labors and strenuous exertions of our soul by day and night, which we have endured to such large measure in this matter and cause.

For all that, our counsels and labors have not yet produced the desired results; for so it pleased the Lord our God, who, however, we trust will yet look more favorably on our wishes.

We ourselves have not in this matter, so far as we could, omitted anything pertaining to the duty of our pastoral office.

If there be any who interpret our efforts for peace in any other sense, we are grieved indeed, but in our grief we nevertheless give thanks to Almighty God who, as an example and a lesson of patience to us, willed that His own Apostles should be accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus who is our peace.[5]

However, though by reason of our sins a true and lasting peace between the two princes could not be effected in our meeting and conference at Niece, nevertheless, a truce of ten years was agreed upon; and hoping that as a result of this the holy council might be celebrated more beneficially and thus by its authority peace be permanently established, we urged the princes to come to the council themselves and to bring with them the prelates who had accompanied them and to summon those absent.

On both these points, however, they excused themselves on the grounds that it was necessary for them to return to their kingdoms and that the prelates who had accompanied them, being wearied and exhausted by the journey and its expenses, must recover and recruit themselves, and they besought us to decree yet another prorogation of the time for the opening of the council.

While we were rather unwilling to yield in this, we received in the meantime letters from our legates at Vicenza, announcing that though the day for the opening of the council had arrived, indeed had long since passed, hardly more than one or two prelates had repaired to Vicenza from foreign nations.

Since we saw on receipt of this information that the council could under no circumstances be held at this time, we yielded to the princes and put off the time for the opening of the council till the following Easter, the feast of the resurrection of the Lord.

The decretal letters concerning this our ordinance and prorogation were given and published at Genoa on the twenty-eighth of June in the year of the incarnation of our Lord 1538.

This delay we granted the more readily because each of the princes promised to send ambassadors to us at Rome, that those things which remained for the perfect establishment of peace and which on account of the brevity of time could not be accomplished at Nice, might be considered and negotiated more conveniently in our presence at Rome.

And for this reason also both requested that the peace negotiations might precede the celebration of the council, for with peace established the council would be much more beneficial and salutary to the Christian commonwealth.

It was this hope for peace that moved us always to yield to the wishes of the princes, a hope that was greatly strengthened by the kind and friendly conference between those two princes after our departure from Nice, the news of which, giving us the greatest joy, confirmed us in the good hope, so that we believed God had at last listened to our prayers and received our earnest wishes for peace.

This conclusion of peace, therefore, we earnestly desired and urged, and since it was the opinion not only of the two aforesaid princes but also of our most dear son in Christ, Ferdinand, King of the Romans, that the work of the council ought not to be undertaken till peace had been established, and all urged us by letters and through their spokesmen to decide on a further prorogation of the time, particularly insistent being the most illustrious Emperor, who declared that he had promised those who dissent from Catholic unity that he would consider the matter with us on their behalf to the end that some plan of agreement might be arranged, which could not be done satisfactorily before his return to Germany, and guided throughout by the same hope of peace and the wishes of such powerful princes, and above all, seeing that even on the said feast of the resurrection no other prelates had assembled at Vicenza, we, now avoiding the word prorogation, which has been so often repeated in vain, preferred to suspend the celebration of the general council during our own good pleasure and that of the Apostolic See.

This we therefore did and dispatched letters concerning this suspension to each of the aforesaid princes on the tenth day of June, 1539, as may be clearly seen therein.

This suspension having been made by force of circumstances, we looked forward to that more favorable time and to some conclusion of peace that would later bring dignity and numbers to the council as well as a more immediate safety to the Christian commonwealth.

But the affairs of Christendom meanwhile became worse day by day. The Hungarians on the death of their king called in the Turks; King Ferdinand declared war against them; a portion of Belgium was incited to revolt against the Emperor, who, to crush that rebellion, traversed France into Belgium on the most friendly and peaceful terms with the most Christian King and with a great manifestation of mutual good will toward each other.

Thence he returned to Germany where he began to hold diets of the princes and cities of Germany with a view to discuss that agreement of which he had spoken to us.

But as the hope for peace was already on the wane and that method of providing and establishing unity by means of diets seemed rather adapted to produce greater discord, we were led to return to our former remedy of a general council, and through our legates, cardinals of the holy Roman Church, proposed this to the Emperor himself, which we also did later and especially in the Diet of Ratisbon, at which our beloved son, Gasparo Contarini, Cardinal of St. Praxedes, acted as our legate with great learning and integrity.

For since, as we had previously feared, we might be petitioned by a decision of the diet to declare that certain articles maintained by the dissenters from the Church be tolerated til they be examined and decided upon by an ecumenical council, and since neither Christian and Catholic truth, nor our own dignity nor that of the Apostolic See would permit us to yield in this, we chose rather to command that it be proposed openly that a council be held as soon as possible.

Neither did we ever have any other intention and wish than that an ecumenical and general council should be convened at the earliest opportunity.

For we hoped that thereby peace might be restored to the Christian people and integrity to the will and favor of the Christian princes.

However, while looking forward to this will, while watching for the hidden time, the time of thy good pleasure, O Lord, we were at last forced to conclude that all time is pleasing to God when there is a question of deliberation on holy things and on such as pertain to Christian piety.

Wherefore, beholding with the bitterest grief of our soul that the affairs of Christendom were daily becoming worse, Hungary oppressed by the Turks, Germany endangered, and all other states overwhelmed with apprehension and grief, we resolved to wait no longer for the consent of any prince, but to look solely to the will of the Almighty God and to the good of the Christian commonwealth.

Wherefore, since the city of Vicenza was no longer at our disposal, and we desired in our choice of a new place for holding the council to have in mind both the common welfare of Christians and the conveniences of the German nation, and seeing that among the various places proposed these desired the city of Trent, we, though of opinion that everything could be transacted more conveniently in Cisalpine Italy, nevertheless yielded with paternal charity to their desires.

Accordingly, we have chosen the city of Trent as that in which the ecumenical council is to be held on the following first day of November, selecting that place as a convenient one in which the bishops and prelates from Germany and from the nations bordering on Germany can assemble very easily and those from France, Spain and other more remote provinces without difficulty.

In fixing the day for the council, we considered that there should be time both for the publication of this our decree throughout the Christian nations and to make it possible for all the prelates to arrive.

Our reason for not announcing the change of place of the council one year in advance, as has been prescribed by certain constitutions,[7] was this, that we were not willing that the hope of applying some remedy to the Christian commonwealth, afflicted as it is with so many disasters and calamities, should be delayed any longer, though we know the times and recognize the difficulties, and we understand that what may be looked for from our counsels is a matter of uncertainty.

But since it is written:
Commit thy way to the Lord, and trust in him, and he will do it,[8] we have resolved to trust in the clemency and mercy of God rather than distrust our own weakness, for in undertaking good works it often happens that where human counsels fail the divine power succeeds.

Wherefore, relying on the authority of Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and on that of His blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, which we also exercise on earth, and supported also by the advice and assent of our venerable brethren, the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, having removed and annulled the aforesaid suspension, which by the present we remove and annul, we announce, proclaim, convoke, ordain and decree a holy ecumenical and general council to be opened on the first day of November of the present year 1542 from the incarnation of the Lord in the city of Trent, for all nations a commodious, free and convenient place, to be there begun and prosecuted and with the help of God concluded and completed to His glory and praise and the welfare of the whole Christian people; and we summon, exhort and admonish, in whatever country they may be, all our venerable brethren, the patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, and our beloved sons, the abbots, as well as all others who by law or privilege have the right to sit in general councils and express their sentiments therein, enjoining and strictly commanding them by virtue of their oath to us and to this Holy See, and in virtue of holy obedience and under other penalties that by law or custom are usually imposed and proposed in the celebration of councils against absentees, that they attend and be present personally at this holy council, unless they should perchance be hindered by a just impediment, of which, however, they shall be obliged to give proof, in which case they must be represented by their lawful procurators and delegates.

Also the aforesaid Emperor and the most Christian King, as well as the other kings, dukes and princes, whose presence, if ever, would certainly at this time be very salutary to the most holy faith of Christ and of all Christians, we beg and beseech by the bowels of the mercy of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, the truth of whose faith and whose religion are now so violently assailed both from within and without, that if they wish the Christian commonwealth to be safe, if they feel themselves bound and under obligation to the Lord for His great favors toward them, they will not abandon His cause and interests but will come personally to the celebration of the holy council, where their piety and virtue would be greatly conducive to the common good, to their own and the welfare of others, temporal as well as spiritual.

But if, which we do not wish, they themselves cannot appear, let them at least send distinguished men entrusted with authority, each of whom may represent in the council with prudence and dignity the person of his prince.

But above all, and this is for them an easy matter, let them see to it that the bishops and prelates of their respective kingdoms and provinces proceed to the council without tergiversation and delay, a favor that God himself and we can in justice claim particularly from the prelates and princes of Germany; for since it is chiefly on their account and at their wishes that the council has been summoned, and in the very city that they desired, let them not regard it burdensome to celebrate and adorn it with their presence, so that, God going before us in our deliberations and holding before our minds the light of His wisdom and truth, we may in the holy ecumenical council, in a better and easier manner consider, and with the charity of all concurring to one end, ponder, discuss, execute and bring speedily and happily to the desired result whatever things pertain to the purity and truth of the Christian religion, to the restoration of what is good and the correction of bad morals, to the peace, unity and harmony of Christians among themselves, of the princes as well as of the people, and whatever is necessary to repulse those attacks of barbarians and infidels whereby they seek the overthrow of all Christendom.

And that this our letter and its contents may come to the knowledge of all whom it concerns, and that no one may plead ignorance as an excuse, particularly since there may not perchance be free access to all to whom it ought to be especially communicated, we wish and command that it be read publicly and in a loud voice by the messengers of our court or by some public notaries in the Vatican Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles and in the Lateran Church, at a time when the people are accustomed to assemble there to hear divine services; and after having been read, let it be affixed to the doors of the said churches, also to the gates of the Apostolic Chancery and to the usual place in the Campo di Fiore, where it shall hang openly for some time for the perusal and cognizance of all; and when removed thence, copies of it shall still remain affixed in the same places.

For by being thus read, published and affixed, we wish that each and all whom our aforesaid letter concerns be, after the interval of two months from the day of being published and afixed, so bound and obligated as if it had been read and published in their presence.

We command and decree also that an unshaken and firm faith be given to transcripts thereof, written or subscribed by the hand of a notary public and authenticated by the seal of some person constituted in ecclesiastical dignity.

Therefore, let no one infringe this our letter of summons, announcement, convocation, statute, decree, command, precept and supplication, or with foolhardy boldness oppose it.

But if anyone shall presume to attempt this, let him know that he will incur the indignation of Almighty God and of His blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

Given at Rome at Saint Peter's in the year 1542 of the Lord's incarnation on the twenty-second of May, in the eighty year of our pontificate.

Blosius.

Hier. Dand.

Notes

1. Heb 5:2.

2. Jn 10:16.

3. Ps. 54:23.

4. Matt. 18.

5. Acts 5:41; Eph 2:14.

6. Ps 68:14.

7. Council of Constance, Sess. XXXIX, const. Frequens. Cf. my work, Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils (St. Louis, 1937), pp. 447f.

8. Ps. 36:5.

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THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Session I – 381

Contents

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Introduction

In the year 380 the emperors Gratian and Theodosius I decided to convoke this council to counter the Arians, and also to judge the case of Maximus the Cynic, bishop of Constantinople. The council met in May of the following year. One hundred and fifty bishops took part, all of them eastern Orthodox, since the Pneumatomachi party had left at the start.

After Maximus had been condemned, Meletius, bishop of Antioch, appointed Gregory of Nazianzus as the lawful bishop of Constantinople and at first presided over the council. Then on Meletius' sudden death, Gregory took charge of the council up to the arrival of Acholius, who was to table Pope Damasus' demands: namely, that Maximus should be expelled as an interloper, and that the translation of bishops should be avoided. But when Timothy, bishop of Alexandria, arrived he declared Gregory's appointment invalid. Gregory resigned the episcopacy and Nectarius, after baptism and consecration, was installed as bishop and presided over the council until its closure.

No copy of the council's doctrinal decisions, entitled tomos kai anathematismos engraphos (record of the tome and anathemas), has survived. So what is presented here is the synodical letter of the synod of Constantinople held in 382, which expounded these doctrinal decisions, as the fathers witness, in summary form: namely, along the lines defined by the council of Nicaea, the consubstantiality and co-eternity of the three divine persons against the Sabellians, Anomoeans, Arians and Pneumatomachi, who thought that the divinity was divided into several natures; and the enanthropesis (taking of humanity) of the Word, against those who supposed that the Word had in no way taken a human soul. All these matters were in close agreement with the tome that Pope Damasus and a Roman council, held probably in 378, had sent to the East.

Scholars find difficulties with the creed attributed to the council of Constantinople. Some say that the council composed a new creed. But no mention is made of this creed by ancient witnesses until the council of Chalcedon; and the council of Constantinople was said simply to have endorsed the faith of Nicaea, with a few additions on the holy Spirit to refute the Pneumatomachian heresy. Moreover, if the latter tradition is accepted, an explanation must be given of why the first two articles of the so-called Constantinopolitan creed differ considerably from the Nicene creed.

It was J. Lebon, followed by J. N. D. Kelly and A. M. Ritter, who worked at the solution of this problem. Lebon said that the Nicene creed, especially since it was adapted to use at baptism, had taken on a number of forms. It was one of these which was endorsed at the council of Constantinople and developed by additions concerning the holy Spirit. All the forms, altered to some extent or other, were described by a common title as "the Nicene faith". Then the council of Chalcedon mentioned the council of Constantinople as the immediate source of one of them, marked it out by a special name "the faith of the 150 fathers", which from that time onwards became its widely known title, and quoted it alongside the original simple form of the Nicene creed. The Greek text of the Constantinopolitan creed, which is printed below, is taken from the acts of the council of Chalcedon.

The council of Constantinople enacted four disciplinary canons: against the Arian heresy and its sects (can. 1), on limiting the power of bishops within fixed boundaries (can. 2), on ranking the see of Constantinople second to Rome in honour and dignity (can. 3), on the condemnation of Maximus and his followers (can. 4). Canons 2-4 were intended to put a stop to aggrandisement on the part of the see of Alexandria. The two following canons, 5 and 6, were framed at the synod which met in Constantinople in 382. The 7th canon is an extract from a letter which the church of Constantinople sent to Martyrius of Antioch.

The council ended on 9 July 381, and on 30 July of the same year, at the request of the council fathers, the emperor Theodosius ratified its decrees by edict .

Already from 382 onwards, in the synodical letter of the synod which met at Constantinople, the council of Constantinople was given the title of "ecumenical". The word denotes a general and plenary council. But the council of Constantinople was criticised and censured by Gregory of Nazianzus. In subsequent years it was hardly ever mentioned. In the end it achieved its special status when the council of Chalcedon, at its second session and in its definition of the faith, linked the form of the creed read out at Constantinople with the Nicene form, as being a completely reliable witness of the authentic faith. The fathers of Chalcedon acknowledged the authority of the canons — at least as far as the eastern church was concerned — at their sixteenth session. The council's dogmatic authority in the western church was made clear by words of Pope Gregory I: "I confess that I accept and venerate the four councils (Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon) in the same way as I do the four books of the holy Gospel...."

The bishop of Rome's approval was not extended to the canons, because they were never brought "to the knowledge of the apostolic see". Dionysius Exiguus knew only of the first four — the ones to be found in the western collections. Pope Nicholas I wrote of the sixth canon to Emperor Michael III: "It is not found among us, but is said to be in force among you".

The English translation is from the Greek text, which is the more authoritative version.

The Exposition Of The 150 Fathers

We believe in one God the Father all-powerful, maker of heaven and of earth, and of all things both seen and unseen. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten from the Father before all the ages, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father, through whom all things came to be; for us humans and for our salvation he came down from the heavens and became incarnate from the holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, became human and was crucified on our behalf under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried and rose up on the third day in accordance with the scriptures; and he went up into the heavens and is seated at the Father's right hand; he is coming again with glory to judge the living and the dead; his kingdom will have no end. And in the Spirit, the holy, the lordly and life-giving one, proceeding forth from the Father, co-worshipped and co-glorified with Father and Son, the one who spoke through the prophets; in one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. We confess one baptism for the forgiving of sins. We look forward to a resurrection of the dead and life in the age to come. Amen.

A Letter Of The Bishops Gathered In Constantinople [1]

To the most honoured lords and most reverend brethren and fellow-ministers, Damasus, Ambrose, Britton, Valerian, Acholius, Anemius, Basil, and the rest of the holy bishops who met in the great city of Rome: the sacred synod of orthodox bishops who met in the great city of Constantinople sends greetings in the Lord.

It may well be unnecessary to instruct your reverence by describing the many sufferings that have been brought upon us under Arian domination, as if you did not know already. Nor do we imagine that your piety considers our affairs so trivial that you need to learn what you must be suffering along with us. Nor were the storms which beset us such as to escape your notice on grounds of insignificance. The period of persecution is still recent and ensures that the memory remains fresh not only among those who have suffered but also among those who have through love made the lot of those who suffered their own. It was barely yesterday or the day before that some were freed from the bonds of exile and returned to their own churches through a thousand tribulations. The remains of others who died in exile were brought back. Even after their return from exile some experienced a ferment of hatred from the heretics and underwent a more cruel fate in their own land than they did abroad, by being stoned to death by them in the manner of the blessed Stephen. Others were torn to shreds by various tortures and still carry around on their bodies the marks of Christ's wounds and bruises. Who could number the financial penalties, the fines imposed on cities, the confiscations of individual property, the plots, the outrages, the imprisonments? Indeed all our afflictions increased beyond number: perhaps because we were paying the just penalty for our sins; perhaps also because a loving God was disciplining us by means of the great number of our sufferings.

So thanks be to God for this. He has instructed his own servants through the weight of their afflictions, and in accordance with his numerous mercies he has brought us back again to a place of refreshment The restoration of the churches demanded prolonged attention, much time and hard work from us if the body of the church which had been weak for so long was to be cured completely by gradual treatment and brought back to its original soundness in religion. We may seem on the whole to be free from violent persecutions and to be at the moment recovering the churches which have long been in the grip of the heretics. But in fact we are oppressed by wolves who even after expulsion from the fold go on ravaging the flocks up and down dale, making so bold as to hold rival assemblies, activating popular uprisings and stopping at nothing which might harm the churches. As we have said, this made us take a longer time over our affairs.

But now you have shown your brotherly love for us by convoking a synod in Rome, in accordance with God's will, and inviting us to it, by means of a letter from your most God-beloved emperor, as if we were limbs of your very own, so that whereas in the past we were condemned to suffer alone, you should not now reign in isolation from us, given the complete agreement of the emperors in matters of religion. Rather, according to the word of the apostle, we should reign along with you'. So it was our intention that if it were possible we should all leave our churches together and indulge our desires rather than attend to their needs. But who will give us wings as of a dove, so we shall fly and come to rest with you? This course would leave the churches entirely exposed, just as they are beginning their renewal; and it is completely out of the question for the majority. As a consequence of last year's letter sent by your reverence after the synod of Aquileia to our most God-beloved emperor Theodosius, we came together in Constantinople. We were equipped only for this stay in Constantinople and the bishops who remained in the provinces gave their agreement to this synod alone. We foresaw no need for a longer absence, nor did we hear of it in advance at all, before we gathered in Constantinople. On top of this the tightness of the schedule proposed allowed no opportunity to prepare for a longer absence, nor to brief all the bishops in the provinces who are in communion with us and to get their agreement. Since these considerations, and many more besides, prevented most of us from coming, we have done the next best thing both to set matters straight and to make your love for us appreciated: we have managed to convince our most venerable and reverend brethren and fellow-ministers, Bishops Cyriacus, Eusebius and Priscian to be willing to undertake the wearisome journey to you. Through them we wish to show that our intentions are peaceful and have unity as their goal. We also want to make clear that what we are zealously seeking is sound faith.

What we have undergone — persecutions, afflictions, imperial threats, cruelty from officials, and whatever other trial at the hands of heretics — we have put up with for the sake of the gospel faith established by the 318 fathers at Nicaea in Bithynia. You, we and all who are not bent on subverting the word of the true faith should give this creed our approval. It is the most ancient and is consistent with our baptism. It tells us how to believe in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit: believing also, of course, that the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit have a single Godhead and power and substance, a dignity deserving the same honour and a co-eternal sovereignty, in three most perfect hypostases, or three perfect persons. So there is no place for Sabellius's diseased theory in which the hypostases are confused and thus their proper characteristics destroyed. Nor may the blasphemy of Eunomians and Arians and Pneumatomachi prevail, with its division of substance or of nature or of Godhead, and its introduction of some nature which was produced subsequently, or was created, or was of a different substance, into the uncreated and consubstantial and co-eternal Trinity. And we preserve undistorted the accounts of the Lord's taking of humanity, accepting as we do that the economy of his flesh was not soulless nor mindless nor imperfect. To sum up, we know that he was before the ages fully God the Word, and that in the last days he became fully man for the sake of our salvation.

So much, in summary, for the faith which is openly preached by us. You can take even more heart concerning these matters if you think fit to consult the tome that was issued in Antioch by the synod which met there as well as the one issued last year in Constantinople by the ecumenical synod. In these documents we confessed the faith in broader terms and we have issued a written condemnation of the heresies which have recently erupted.

With regard to particular forms of administration in the churches, ancient custom, as you know, has been in force, along with the regulation of the saintly fathers at Nicaea, that in each province those of the province, and with them-should the former so desire — their neighbours, should conduct ordinations as need might arise. Accordingly, as you are aware, the rest of the churches are administered, and the priests [= bishops] of the most prominent churches have been appointed, by us. Hence at the ecumenical council by common agreement and in the presence of the most God-beloved emperor Theodosius and all the clergy, and with the approval of the whole city, we have ordained the most venerable and God-beloved Nectarius as bishop of the church newly set up, as one might say, in Constantinople — a church which by God's mercy we just recently snatched from the blasphemy of the heretics as from the lion's jaws. Over the most ancient and truly apostolic church at Antioch in Syria, where first the precious name of "Christians" came into use, the provincial bishops and those of the diocese of the East came together and canonically ordained the most venerable and God-beloved Flavian as bishop with the consent of the whole church, as though it would give the man due honour with a single voice. The synod as a whole also accepted that this ordination was legal. We wish to inform you that the most venerable and God-beloved Cyril is bishop of the church in Jerusalem, the mother of all the churches. He was canonically ordained some time ago by those of the province and at various times he has valiantly combated the Arians.

We exhort your reverence to join us in rejoicing at what we have legally and canonically enacted. Let spiritual love link us together, and let the fear of the Lord suppress all human prejudice and put the building up of the churches before individual attachment or favour. In this way, with the account of the faith agreed between us and with Christian love established among us, we shall cease to declare what was condemned by the apostles, "I belong to Paul, I to Apollo, I to Cephas"; but we shall all be seen to belong to Christ, who has not been divided up among us; and with God's good favour, we shall keep the body of the church undivided, and shall come before the judgment-seat of the Lord with confidence.

Canons

1

The profession of faith of the holy fathers who gathered in Nicaea in Bithynia is not to be abrogated, but it is to remain in force. Every heresy is to be anathematised and in particular that of the Eunomians or Anomoeans, that of the Arians or Eudoxians, that of the Semi-Arians or Pneumatomachi, that of the Sabellians that of the Marcellians, that of the Photinians and that of the Apollinarians.

2

Diocesan bishops are not to intrude in churches beyond their own boundaries nor are they to confuse the churches: but in accordance with the canons, the bishop of Alexandria is to administer affairs in Egypt only; the bishops of the East are to manage the East alone (whilst safeguarding the privileges granted to the church of the Antiochenes in the Nicene canons); and the bishops of the Asian diocese are to manage only Asian affairs; and those in Pontus only the affairs of Pontus; and those in Thrace only Thracian affairs. Unless invited bishops are not to go outside their diocese to perform an ordination or any other ecclesiastical business. If the letter of the canon about dioceses is kept, it is clear that the provincial synod will manage affairs in each province, as was decreed at Nicaea. But the churches of God among barbarian peoples must be administered in accordance with the custom in force at the time of the fathers.

3

Because it is new Rome, the bishop of Constantinople is to enjoy the privileges of honour after the bishop of Rome.

4

Regarding Maximus the Cynic and the disorder which surrounded him in Constantinople: he never became, nor is he, a bishop; nor are those ordained by him clerics of any rank whatsoever. Everything that was done both to him and by him is to be held invalid.

5

Regarding the Tome [2] of the Westerns: we have also recognised those in Antioch who confess a single Godhead of Father and Son and holy Spirit.

6

There are many who are bent on confusing and overturning the good order of the church and so fabricate, out of hatred and a wish to slander, certain accusations against orthodox bishops in charge of churches. Their intention is none other than to blacken priests' reputations and to stir up trouble among peace-loving laity. For this reason the sacred synod of bishops assembled at Constantinople has decided not to admit accusers without prior examination, and not to allow everyone to bring accusations against church administrators — but without excluding everyone. So if someone brings a private (that is a personal) complaint against the bishop on the grounds that he has been defrauded or in some other way unjustly dealt with by him, in the case of this kind of accusation neither the character nor the religion of the accuser will be subject to examination. It is wholly essential both that the bishop should have a clear conscience and that the one who alleges that he has been wronged, whatever his religion may be, should get justice.

But if the charge brought against the bishop is of an ecclesiastical kind, then the characters of those making it should be examined, in the first place to stop heretics bringing charges against orthodox bishops in matters of an ecclesiastical kind. (We define "heretics" as those who have been previously banned from the church and also those later anathematised by ourselves: and in addition those who claim to confess a faith that is sound, but who have seceded and hold assemblies in rivalry with the bishops who are in communion with us.) In the second place, persons previously condemned and expelled from the church for whatever reason, or those excommunicated either from the clerical or lay rank, are not to be permitted to accuse a bishop until they have first purged their own crime. Similarly, those who are already accused are not permitted to accuse a bishop or other clerics until they have proved their own innocence of the crimes with which they are charged. But if persons who are neither heretics nor excommunicates, nor such as have been previously condemned or accused of some transgression or other, claim that they have some ecclesiastical charge to make against the bishop, the sacred synod commands that such persons should first lay the accusations before all the bishops of the province and prove before them the crimes committed by the bishop in the case. If it emerges that the bishops of the province are not able to correct the crimes laid at the bishop's door, then a higher synod of the bishops of that diocese, convoked to hear this case, must be approached, and the accusers are not to lay their accusations before it until they have given a written promise to submit to equal penalties should they be found guilty of making false accusations against the accused bishop, when the matter is investigated.

If anyone shows contempt of the prescriptions regarding the above matters and presumes to bother either the ears of the emperor or the courts of the secular authorities, or to dishonour all the diocesan bishops and trouble an ecumenical synod, there is to be no question whatever of allowing such a person to bring accusations forward, because he has made a mockery of the canons and violated the good order of the church.

7

Those who embrace orthodoxy and join the number of those who are being saved from the heretics, we receive in the following regular and customary manner: Arians, Macedonians, Sabbatians, Novatians, those who call themselves Cathars and Aristae, Quartodeciman or Tetradites, Apollinarians—these we receive when they hand in statements and anathematise every heresy which is not of the same mind as the holy, catholic and apostolic church of God. They are first sealed or anointed with holy chrism on the forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth and ears. As we seal them we say: "Seal of the gift of the holy Spirit". But Eunomians, who are baptised in a single immersion, Montanists (called Phrygians here), Sabellians, who teach the identity of Father and Son and make certain other difficulties, and all other sects — since there are many here, not least those who originate in the country of the Galatians — we receive all who wish to leave them and embrace orthodoxy as we do Greeks. On the first day we make Christians of them, on the second catechumens, on the third we exorcise them by breathing three times into their faces and their ears, and thus we catechise them and make them spend time in the church and listen to the scriptures; and then we baptise them.

Notes

1. Namely the synod of Constantinople in 382

2. This tome has not survived; it probably defended Paul of Antioch

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Translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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The Council Of Ephesus — 431 A.D.

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Introduction

Nestorius, who had been condemned in a council at Rome on 11 August 430, asked the emperor Theodosius II to summon this council. The emperor therefore decided to summon it together with his co-emperor Valentinian III and with the agreement of Pope Celestine I. Theodosius' letter of 19 November 430 requested all those who had been summoned to be present at Ephesus on 7 June 431, the feast of Pentecost.

On 22 June, however,

—before the arrival either of the Roman legates or the eastern bishops led by John of Antioch,

—Cyril of Alexandria began the council.

—Nestorius was summoned three times but did not come.

—His teaching was examined and judgment passed upon it, which 197 bishops subscribed at once and others later accepted.

Shortly afterwards John of Antioch and the easterners arrived: they refused communion with Cyril and set up another council. The Roman legates (the bishops Arcadius and Projectus and the priest Philip), on arriving, joined Cyril and confirmed the sentence against Nestorius. Then the council in its fifth session on 17 July excommunicated John and his party.

The documents of the Cyrilline council, the only one which is ecumenical, are included below and are as follows.

1. The central dogmatic act of the council is its judgment about whether the second letter of Cyril to Nestorius, or Nestorius' second letter to Cyril, was in conformity with the Nicene creed which was recited at the opening of the council's proceedings.

—Cyril's letter was declared by the fathers to be in agreement with Nicaea,

—Nestorius' was condemned Both are here printed. Mention is made of Cyril's letter in the definition of Chalcedon.

2. The 12 anathemas and the preceding explanatory letter, which had been produced by Cyril and the synod of Alexandria in 430 and sent to Nestorius, were read at Ephesus and included in the proceedings.

3. The decision about Nestorius.

4. The letter of the council advising all the bishops, clergy and people about the condemnation of John of Antioch; and some paragraphs dealing with the discipline of the Nestorian party.

5. A decree on the faith, approved in the sixth session on 22 July, which confirmed the Nicene creed, ordered adherence to that alone and forbade the production of new creeds.

6. A definition against the Messalians.

7. A decree about the autonomy of the church of Cyprus.

Both councils sent legates to the emperor Theodosius, who approved neither and sent the bishops away. Nestorius had already been given permission to revisit his monastery at Antioch, and on 25 October 431 Maximianus was ordained patriarch at Constantinople. The decrees of the council were approved by Pope Sixtus III shortly after his own ordination on 31 July 432.

The reconciliation between the Cyrilline party and the eastern bishops was not easy. In the end, on 23 April 433, Cyril and John of Antioch made peace. John's profession of faith was accepted by Cyril and became the doctrinal formula of union. It is included here, together with Cyril's letter in which he at some length praises John's profession and accepts it, adding to it some explanation about his own expressions; this letter is mentioned in the definition of Chalcedon. Shortly afterwards, probably in 436, Nestorius was definitely sent into exile by the emperor .

The English translation is from the Greek text, which is the more authoritative version.

Second letter of Cyril to Nestorius

[Declared by the council of Ephesus to be in agreement with Nicaea]

Cyril sends greeting in the Lord to the most religious and reverend fellow-minister Nestorius

I understand that there are some who are talking rashly of the reputation in which I hold your reverence, and that this is frequently the case when meetings of people in authority give them an opportunity. I think they hope in this way to delight your ears and so they spread abroad uncontrolled expressions. They are people who have suffered no wrong, but have been exposed by me for their own profit, one because he oppressed the blind and the poor, a second because he drew a sword on his mother, a third because he stole someone else's money in collusion with a maidservant and since then has lived with such a reputation as one would hardly wish for one's worst enemy. For the rest I do not intend to spend more words on this subject in order not to vaunt my own mediocrity above my teacher and master or above the fathers. For however one may try to live, it is impossible to escape the malice of evil people, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness and who will have to defend themselves before the judge of all.

But I turn to a subject more fitting to myself and remind you as a brother in Christ always to be very careful about what you say to the people in matters of teaching and of your thought on the faith. You should bear in mind that to scandalise even one of these little ones that believe in Christ lays you open to unendurable wrath. If the number of those who are distressed is very large, then surely we should use every skill and care to remove scandals and to expound the healthy word of faith to those who seek the truth. The most effective way to achieve this end will be zealously to occupy ourselves with the words of the holy fathers, to esteem their words, to examine our words to see if we are holding to their faith as it is written, to conform our thoughts to their correct and irreproachable teaching.

The holy and great synod, therefore, stated that

—1. the only begotten Son, begotten of God the Father according to nature, true God from true God, the light from the light, the one through whom the Father made all things, came down, became incarnate, became man,

—2. suffered, rose on the third day and ascended to heaven.

1. We too ought to follow these words and these teachings and consider what is meant by saying that the Word from God took flesh and became man. For we do not say that the nature of the Word was changed and became flesh, nor that he was turned into a whole man made of body and soul. Rather do we claim that the Word in an unspeakable, inconceivable manner united to himself hypostatically flesh enlivened by a rational soul, and so became man and was called son of man, not by God's will alone or good pleasure, nor by the assumption of a person alone. Rather did two different natures come together to form a unity, and from both arose one Christ, one Son. It was not as though the distinctness of the natures was destroyed by the union, but divinity and humanity together made perfect for us one Lord and one Christ, together marvellously and mysteriously combining to form a unity. So he who existed and was begotten of the Father before all ages is also said to have been begotten according to the flesh of a woman, without the divine nature either beginning to exist in the holy virgin, or needing of itself a second begetting after that from his Father. (For it is absurd and stupid to speak of the one who existed before every age and is coeternal with the Father, needing a second beginning so as to exist.) The Word is said to have been begotten according to the flesh, because for us and for our salvation he united what was human to himself hypostatically and came forth from a woman. For he was not first begotten of the holy virgin, a man like us, and then the Word descended upon him; but from the very womb of his mother he was so united and then underwent begetting according to the flesh, making his own the begetting of his own flesh.

2. In a similar way we say that he suffered and rose again, not that the Word of God suffered blows or piercing with nails or any other wounds in his own nature (for the divine, being without a body, is incapable of suffering), but because the body which became his own suffered these things, he is said to have suffered them for us. For he was without suffering, while his body suffered. Something similar is true of his dying. For by nature the Word of God is of itself immortal and incorruptible and life and life-giving, but since on the other hand his own body by God's grace, as the apostle says, tasted death for all, the Word is said to have suffered death for us, not as if he himself had experienced death as far as his own nature was concerned (it would be sheer lunacy to say or to think that), but because, as I have just said, his flesh tasted death. So too, when his flesh was raised to life, we refer to this again as his resurrection, not as though he had fallen into corruption—God forbid—but because his body had been raised again.

So we shall confess one Christ and one Lord. We do not adore the man along with the Word, so as to avoid any appearance of division by using the word "with". But we adore him as one and the same, because the body is not other than the Word, and takes its seat with him beside the Father, again not as though there were two sons seated together but only one, united with his own flesh. If, however, we reject the hypostatic union as being either impossible or too unlovely for the Word, we fall into the fallacy of speaking of two sons. We shall have to distinguish and speak both of the man as honoured with the title of son, and of the Word of God as by nature possessing the name and reality of sonship, each in his own way. We ought not, therefore, to split into two sons the one Lord Jesus Christ. Such a way of presenting a correct account of the faith will be quite unhelpful, even though some do speak of a union of persons. For scripture does not say that the Word united the person of a man to himself, but that he became flesh. The Word's becoming flesh means nothing else than that he partook of flesh and blood like us; he made our body his own, and came forth a man from woman without casting aside his deity, or his generation from God the Father, but rather in his assumption of flesh remaining what he was.

This is the account of the true faith everywhere professed. So shall we find that the holy fathers believed. So have they dared to call the holy virgin, mother of God, not as though the nature of the Word or his godhead received the origin of their being from the holy virgin, but because there was born from her his holy body rationally ensouled, with which the Word was hypostatically united and is said to have been begotten in the flesh. These things I write out of love in Christ exhorting you as a brother and calling upon you before Christ and the elect angels, to hold and teach these things with us, in order to preserve the peace of the churches and that the priests of God may remain in an unbroken bond of concord and love.

Second letter of Nestorius to Cyril

[condemned by the council of Ephesus]

Nestorius sends greeting in the Lord to the most religious and reverend fellow-minister Cyril. I pass over the insults against us contained in your extraordinary letter. They will, I think, be cured by my patience and by the answer which events will offer in the course of time. On one matter, however, I cannot be silent, as silence would in that case be very dangerous. On that point, therefore avoiding long-windedness as far as I can, I shall attempt a brief discussion and try to be as free as possible from repelling obscurity and undigestible prolixity. I shall begin from the wise utterances of your reverence, setting them down word for word. What then are the words in which your remarkable teaching finds expression ?

"The holy and great synod states that the only begotten Son, begotten of God the Father according to nature, true God from true God, the light from the light, the one through whom the Father made all things, came down, became incarnate, became man, suffered, rose."

These are the words of your reverence and you may recognise them. Now listen to what we say, which takes the form of a brotherly exhortation to piety of the type of which the great apostle Paul gave an example in addressing his beloved Timothy: "Attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching. For by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers". Tell me, what does "attend" mean? By reading in a superficial way the tradition of those holy men (you were guilty of a pardonable ignorance), you concluded that they said that the Word who is coeternal with the Father was passible. Please look more closely at their language and you will find out that that divine choir of fathers never said that the consubstantial godhead was capable of suffering, or that the whole being that was coeternal with the Father was recently born, or that it rose again, seeing that it had itself been the cause of resurrection of the destroyed temple. If you apply my words as fraternal medicine, I shall set the words of the holy fathers before you and shall free them from the slander against them and through them against the holy scriptures.

"I believe", they say, "also in our Lord Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son". See how they first lay as foundations "Lord" and "Jesus" and "Christ" and "only begotten" and "Son", the names which belong jointly to the divinity and humanity. Then they build on that foundation the tradition of the incarnation and resurrection and passion. In this way, by prefixing the names which are common to each nature, they intend to avoid separating expressions applicable to sonship and lordship and at the same time escape the danger of destroying the distinctive character of the natures by absorbing them into the one title of "Son". In this Paul was their teacher who, when he remembers the divine becoming man and then wishes to introduce the suffering, first mentions "Christ", which, as I have just said, is the common name of both natures and then adds an expression which is appropriate to both of the natures. For what does he say ? "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped", and so on until, "he became obedient unto death, even death on a cross". For when he was about to mention the death, to prevent anyone supposing that God the Word suffered, he says "Christ", which is a title that expresses in one person both the impassible and the passible natures, in order that Christ might be called without impropriety both impassible and passible impassible in godhead, passible in the nature of his body.

I could say much on this subject and first of all that those holy fathers, when they discuss the economy, speak not of the generation but of the Son becoming man. But I recall the promise of brevity that I made at the beginning and that both restrains my discourse and moves me on to the second subject of your reverence. In that I applaud your division of natures into manhood and godhead and their conjunction in one person. I also applaud your statement that God the Word needed no second generation from a woman, and your confession that the godhead is incapable of suffering. Such statements are truly orthodox and equally opposed to the evil opinions of all heretics about the Lord's natures. If the remainder was an attempt to introduce some hidden and incomprehensible wisdom to the ears of the readers, it is for your sharpness to decide. In my view these subsequent views seemed to subvert what came first. They suggested that he who had at the beginning been proclaimed as impassible and incapable of a second generation had somehow become capable of suffering and freshly created, as though what belonged to God the Word by nature had been destroyed by his conjunction with his temple or as though people considered it not enough that the sinless temple, which is inseparable from the divine nature, should have endured birth and death for sinners, or finally as though the Lord's voice was not deserving of credence when it cried out to the Jews: "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." He did not say, "Destroy my godhead and in three days it will be raised up."

Again I should like to expand on this but am restrained by the memory of my promise. I must speak therefore but with brevity. Holy scripture, wherever it recalls the Lord's economy, speaks of the birth and suffering not of the godhead but of the humanity of Christ, so that the holy virgin is more accurately termed mother of Christ than mother of God. Hear these words that the gospels proclaim: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham." It is clear that God the Word was not the son of David. Listen to another witness if you will: "Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called the Christ. " Consider a further piece of evidence: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, she was found to be with child of the holy Spirit." But who would ever consider that the godhead of the only begotten was a creature of the Spirit? Why do we need to mention: "the mother of Jesus was there"? And again what of: "with Mary the mother of Jesus"; or "that which is conceived in her is of the holy Spirit"; and "Take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt"; and "concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh"? Again, scripture says when speaking of his passion: "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh"; and again "Christ died for our sins" and "Christ having suffered in the flesh"; and "This is", not "my godhead", but "my body, broken for you".

Ten thousand other expressions witness to the human race that they should not think that it was the godhead of the Son that was recently killed but the flesh which was joined to the nature of the godhead. (Hence also Christ calls himself the lord and son of David: " 'What do you think of the Christ ? Whose son is he ?' They said to him, 'The son of David.' Jesus answered and said to them, 'How is it then that David inspired by the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying, "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand"?'". He said this as being indeed son of David according to the flesh, but his Lord according to his godhead.) The body therefore is the temple of the deity of the Son, a temple which is united to it in a high and divine conjunction, so that the divine nature accepts what belongs to the body as its own. Such a confession is noble and worthy of the gospel traditions. But to use the expression "accept as its own" as a way of diminishing the properties of the conjoined flesh, birth, suffering and entombment, is a mark of those whose minds are led astray, my brother, by Greek thinking or are sick with the lunacy of Apollinarius and Arius or the other heresies or rather something more serious than these.

For it is necessary for such as are attracted by the name "propriety" to make God the Word share, because of this same propriety, in being fed on milk, in gradual growth, in terror at the time of his passion and in need of angelical assistance. I make no mention of circumcision and sacrifice and sweat and hunger, which all belong to the flesh and are adorable as having taken place for our sake. But it would be false to apply such ideas to the deity and would involve us in just accusation because of our calumny.

These are the traditions of the holy fathers. These are the precepts of the holy scriptures. In this way does someone write in a godly way about the divine mercy and power, "Practise these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress". This is what Paul says to all. The care you take in labouring for those who have been scandalised is well taken and we are grateful to you both for the thought you devote to things divine and for the concern you have even for those who live here. But you should realise that you have been misled either by some here who have been deposed by the holy synod for Manichaeism or by clergy of your own persuasion. In fact the church daily progresses here and through the grace of Christ there is such an increase among the people that those who behold it cry out with the words of the prophet, "The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the water covers the sea". As for our sovereigns, they are in great joy as the light of doctrine is spread abroad and, to be brief, because of the state of all the heresies that fight against God and of the orthodoxy of the church, one might find that verse fulfilled "The house of Saul grew weaker and weaker and the house of David grew stronger and stronger".

This is our advice from a brother to a brother. "If anyone is disposed to be contentious", Paul will cry out through us to such a one, "we recognize no other practice, neither do the churches of God". I and those with me greet all the brotherhood with you in Christ. May you remain strong and continue praying for us, most honoured and reverent lord.

Third letter of Cyril to Nestorius

[Read at the council of Ephesus and included in the proceedings . We omit the preface of the letter]

We believe in one God . . .[Nicene Creed]

Following in all points the confessions of the holy fathers, which they made with the holy Spirit speaking in them, and following the direction of their opinions and going as it were in the royal way, we say that the only-begotten Word of God, who was begotten from the very essence of the Father, true God from true God, the light from the light and the one through whom all things in heaven and earth were made, for our salvation came down and emptying himself he became incarnate and was made man. This means that

—he took flesh from the holy virgin and made it his own, undergoing a birth like ours from her womb and coming forth a man from a woman.

—He did not cast aside what he was, but although he assumed flesh and blood, he remained what he was, God in nature and truth.

—We do not say that his flesh was turned into the nature of the godhead or that the unspeakable Word of God was changed into the nature of the flesh. For he (the Word) is unalterable and absolutely unchangeable and remains always the same as the scriptures say. For although visible as a child and in swaddling cloths, even while he was in the bosom of the virgin that bore him, as God he filled the whole of creation and was fellow ruler with him who begot him. For the divine is without quantity and dimension and cannot be subject to circumscription.

We confess the Word to have been made one with the flesh hypostatically, and we adore one Son and Lord, Jesus Christ. We do not divide him into parts and separate man and God in him, as though the two natures were mutually united only through a unity of dignity and authority; that would be an empty expression and nothing more. Nor do we give the name Christ in one sense to the Word of God and in another to him who was born of woman, but we know only one Christ, the Word from God the Father with his own flesh. As man he was anointed with us, even though he himself gives the Spirit to those who are worthy to receive it and not in measure, as the blessed evangelist John says.

But we do not say that the Word of God dwelt as in an ordinary man born of the holy virgin, in order that Christ may not be thought of as a God-bearing man. For even though "the Word dwelt among us", and it is also said that in Christ dwelt "all the fullness of the godhead bodily", we understand that, having become flesh, the manner of his indwelling is not defined in the same way as he is said to dwell among the saints, he was united by nature and not turned into flesh and he made his indwelling in such a way as we may say that the soul of man does in his own body.

There is therefore one Christ and Son and Lord, but not with the sort of conjunction that a man might have with God as unity of dignity or authority. Equality of honour by itself is unable to unite natures. For Peter and John were equal in honour to each other, being both of them apostles and holy disciples, but they were two, not one. Neither do we understand the manner of conjunction to be one of juxtaposition for this is not enough for natural union. Nor yet is it a question of relative participation, as we ourselves, being united to the Lord, are as it is written in the words of scripture "one spirit with him". Rather do we deprecate the term "conjunction" as being inadequate to express the idea of union.

Nor do we call the Word from God the Father, the God or Lord of Christ. To speak in that way would appear to split into two the one Christ and Son and Lord and we might in this way fall under the charge of blasphemy, making him the God and Lord of himself. For, as we have already said, the Word of God was united hypostatically with the flesh and is God of all and Lord of the universe, but is neither his own slave or master. For it is foolish or rather impious to think or to speak in this way. It is true that he called the Father "God" even though he was himself God by nature and of his being, we are not ignorant of the fact that at the same time as he was God he also became man, and so was subject to God according to the law that is suitable to the nature of manhood. But how should he become God or Lord of himself? Consequently as man and as far as it was fitting for him within the limits of his self-emptying it is said that he was subject to God like ourselves. So he came to be under the law while at the same time himself speaking the law and being a lawgiver like God.

When speaking of Christ we avoid the expression: "I worship him who is carried because of the one who carries him; because of him who is unseen, I worship the one who is seen." It is shocking to say in this connection: "The assumed shares the name of God with him who assumes." To speak in this way once again divides into two Christs and puts the man separately by himself and God likewise by himself. This saying denies openly the union, according to which one is not worshipped alongside the other, nor do both share in the title "God", but Jesus Christ is considered as one, the only begotten Son, honoured with one worship, together with his own flesh.

We also confess that the only begotten Son born of God the Father, although according to his own nature he was not subject to suffering, suffered in the flesh for us according to the scriptures, and was in his crucified body, and without himself suffering made his own the sufferings of his own flesh, for "by the grace of God he tasted death for all". For that purpose he gave his own body to death though he was by nature life and the resurrection, in order that, having trodden down death by his own unspeakable power, he might first in his own flesh become the firstborn from the dead and "the first fruits of them that sleep". And that he might make a way for human nature to return to incorruption by the grace of God, as we have just said, "he tasted death for all" and on the third day he returned to life, having robbed the underworld. Accordingly, even though it is said that "through man came the resurrection of the dead", yet we understand that man to have been the Word which came from God, through whom the power of death was overcome. At the right time he will come as one Son and Lord in the glory of the Father, to judge the world in justice, as it is written.

We will necessarily add this also. Proclaiming the death according to the flesh of the only begotten Son of God, that is Jesus Christ, and professing his return to life from the dead and his ascension into heaven, we offer the unbloody worship [sacrificii servitutem] in the churches and so proceed to the mystical thanksgivings and are sanctified having partaken of the holy flesh [corpus] and precious blood of Christ, the saviour of us all. This we receive not as ordinary flesh, heaven forbid, nor as that of a man who has been made holy and joined to the Word by union of honour, or who had a divine indwelling, but as truly the life-giving and real flesh of the Word [ut vere vivificatricem et ipsius Verbi propriam factam.]. For being life by nature as God, when he became one with his own flesh, he made it also to be life-giving, as also he said to us: "Amen I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood" . For we must not think that it is the flesh of a man like us (for how can the flesh of man be life-giving by its own nature?), but as being made the true flesh [vere proprium eius factam] of the one who for our sake became the son of man and was called so.

For we do not divide up the words of our Saviour in the gospels among two hypostases or persons. For the one and only Christ is not dual, even though he be considered to be from two distinct realities, brought together into an unbreakable union. In the same sort of way a human being, though he be composed of soul and body, is considered to be not dual, but rather one out of two. Therefore, in thinking rightly, we refer both the human and divine expressions to the same person. For when he speaks about himself in a divine manner as "he that sees me sees the Father", and "I and the Father are one", we think of his divine and unspeakable nature, according to which he is one with his own Father through identity of nature and is the "image and impress and brightness of his glory". But when, not dishonouring the measure of his humanity, he says to the Jews: "But now you seek to kill me, a man who has spoken the truth to you", again no less than before, we recognise that he who, because of his equality and likeness to God the Father is God the Word, is also within the limits of his humanity. For if it is necessary to believe that being God by nature he became flesh, that is man ensouled with a rational soul, whatever reason should anyone have for being ashamed at the expressions uttered by him should they happen to be suitable to him as man ? For if he should reject words suitable to him as man, who was it that forced him to become a man like us? Why should he who submitted himself to voluntary self-emptying for our sake, reject expressions that are suitable for such self-emptying? All the expressions, therefore, that occur in the gospels are to be referred to one person, the one enfleshed hypostasis of the Word. For there is one Lord Jesus Christ, according to the scriptures.

Even though he is called "the apostle and high priest of our confession", as offering to the God and Father the confession of faith we make to him and through him to the God and Father and also to the holy Spirit, again we say that he is the natural and only-begotten Son of God and we shall not assign to another man apart from him the name and reality of priesthood. For he became the "mediator between God and humanity" and the establisher of peace between them, offering himself for an odour of sweetness to the God and Father. Therefore also he said: "Sacrifice and offering you would not, but a body you have prepared for me; [in burnt offerings and sacrifice for sin you have no pleasure]. Then I said, 'Behold I come to do your will, O God', as it is written of me in the volume of the book". For our sake and not for his own he brought forward his own body in the odour of sweetness. Indeed, of what offering or sacrifice for himself would he have been in need, being as God superior to all manner of sin? For though "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God", and so we are prone to disorder and human nature has fallen into the weakness of sin, he is not so and consequently we are behind him in glory. How then can there be any further doubt that the true lamb was sacrificed for us and on our behalf? The suggestion that he offered himself for himself as well as for us is impossible to separate from the charge of impiety. For he never committed a fault at all, nor did he sin in any way. What sort of offering would he need then since there was no sin for which offering might rightly be made?

When he says of the Spirit, "he will glorify me", the correct understanding of this is not to say that the one Christ and Son was in need of glory from another and that he took glory from the holy Spirit, for his Spirit is not better than he nor above him. But because he used his own Spirit to display his godhead through his mighty works, he says that he has been glorified by him, just as if any one of us should perhaps say for example of his inherent strength or his knowledge of anything that they glorify him. For even though the Spirit exists in his own hypostasis and is thought of on his own, as being Spirit and not as Son, even so he is not alien to the Son. He has been called "the Spirit of truth", and Christ is the truth, and the Spirit was poured forth by the Son, as indeed the Son was poured forth from the God and Father. Accordingly the Spirit worked many strange things through the hand of the holy apostles and so glorified him after the ascension of our lord Jesus Christ into heaven. For it was believed that he is God by nature and works through his own Spirit. For this reason also he said: "He (the Spirit) will take what is mine and declare it to you". But we do not say that the Spirit is wise and powerful through some sharing with another, for he is all perfect and in need of no good thing. Since he is the Spirit of the power and wisdom of the Father, that is the Son, he is himself, evidently, wisdom and power.

Therefore, because the holy virgin bore in the flesh God who was united hypostatically with the flesh, for that reason we call her mother of God, not as though the nature of the Word had the beginning of its existence from the flesh (for "the Word was in the beginning and the Word was God and the Word was with God", and he made the ages and is coeternal with the Father and craftsman of all things), but because, as we have said, he united to himself hypostatically the human and underwent a birth according to the flesh from her womb. This was not as though he needed necessarily or for his own nature a birth in time and in the last times of this age, but in order that he might bless the beginning of our existence, in order that seeing that it was a woman that had given birth to him united to the flesh, the curse against the whole race should thereafter cease which was consigning all our earthy bodies to death, and in order that the removal through him of the curse, "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children", should demonstrate the truth of the words of the prophet: "Strong death swallowed them Up", and again, "God has wiped every tear away from all face". It is for this cause that we say that in his economy he blessed marriage and, when invited, went down to Cana in Galilee with his holy apostles.

We have been taught to hold these things by

—the holy apostles and evangelists and by

—all the divinely inspired scriptures and by the true confession of

—the blessed fathers.

To all these your reverence ought to agree and subscribe without any deceit. What is required for your reverence to anathematise we subjoin to this epistle.

Twelve Anathemas Proposed by Cyril and accepted by the Council of Ephesus

1. If anyone does not confess that Emmanuel is God in truth, and therefore that the holy virgin is the mother of God (for she bore in a fleshly way the Word of God become flesh, let him be anathema.

2. If anyone does not confess that the Word from God the Father has been united by hypostasis with the flesh and is one Christ with his own flesh, and is therefore God and man together, let him be anathema.

3. If anyone divides in the one Christ the hypostases after the union, joining them only by a conjunction of dignity or authority or power, and not rather by a coming together in a union by nature, let him be anathema.

4. If anyone distributes between the two persons or hypostases the expressions used either in the gospels or in the apostolic writings, whether they are used by the holy writers of Christ or by him about himself, and ascribes some to him as to a man, thought of separately from the Word from God, and others, as befitting God, to him as to the Word from God the Father, let him be anathema.

5. If anyone dares to say that Christ was a God-bearing man and not rather God in truth, being by nature one Son, even as "the Word became flesh", and is made partaker of blood and flesh precisely like us, let him be anathema.

6. If anyone says that the Word from God the Father was the God or master of Christ, and does not rather confess the same both God and man, the Word having become flesh, according to the scriptures, let him be anathema.

7. If anyone says that as man Jesus was activated by the Word of God and was clothed with the glory of the Only-begotten, as a being separate from him, let him be anathema.

8. If anyone dares to say that the man who was assumed ought to be worshipped and glorified together with the divine Word and be called God along with him, while being separate from him, (for the addition of "with" must always compel us to think in this way), and will not rather worship Emmanuel with one veneration and send up to him one doxology, even as "the Word became flesh", let him be anathema.

9. If anyone says that the one Lord Jesus Christ was glorified by the Spirit, as making use of an alien power that worked through him and as having received from him the power to master unclean spirits and to work divine wonders among people, and does not rather say that it was his own proper Spirit through whom he worked the divine wonders, let him be anathema.

10. The divine scripture says Christ became "the high priest and apostle of our confession"; he offered himself to God the Father in an odour of sweetness for our sake. If anyone, therefore, says that it was not the very Word from God who became our high priest and apostle, when he became flesh and a man like us, but as it were another who was separate from him, in particular a man from a woman, or if anyone says that he offered the sacrifice also for himself and not rather for us alone (for he who knew no sin needed no offering), let him be anathema.

11. If anyone does not confess that the flesh of the Lord is life-giving and belongs to the Word from God the Father, but maintains that it belongs to another besides him, united with him in dignity or as enjoying a mere divine indwelling, and is not rather life-giving, as we said, since it became the flesh belonging to the Word who has power to bring all things to life, let him be anathema.

12. If anyone does not confess that the Word of God suffered in the flesh and was crucified in the flesh and tasted death in the flesh and became the first born of the dead, although as God he is life and life-giving, let him be anathema.

The judgment against Nestorius

The holy synod said: As, in addition to all else, the excellent Nestorius has declined to obey our summons and has not received the holy and God-fearing bishops we sent to him, we have of necessity started upon an investigation of his impieties. We have found him out thinking and speaking in an impious fashion, from his letters, from his writings that have been read out, and from the things that he has recently said in this metropolis which have been witnessed to by others; and as a result we have been compelled of necessity both by

—the canons and by

—the letter of our most holy father and fellow servant Celestine, bishop of the church of the Romans, to issue this sad condemnation against him, though we do so with many tears.

Our lord Jesus Christ, who has been blasphemed by him, has determined through this most holy synod that the same Nestorius should be stripped of his episcopal dignity and removed from the college of priests.

Synodical letter about the expulsion of the eastern bishops (et al.)

The holy and ecumenical synod, gathered together in Ephesus at the behest of the most pious princes, [sends greeting] to the bishops, priests, deacons and the whole people in every province and city.

When we had gathered together in accordance with the pious decree in the metropolis of Ephesus, some separated themselves from us, a little more than thirty in number. The leader of this apostasy was John, bishop of Antioch, and their names are as follows: First the same John, bishop of Antioch in Syria, [the names of 33 other eastern bishops follow]

These men, despite the fact that they were members of the ecclesiastical community, had no licence either to do harm through their priestly dignity or to do good, because some among their number had already been deposed. Their support of the views of Nestorius and Celestius was clearly shown by their refusal to condemn Nestorius together with us. By a common decree the sacred synod has expelled them from ecclesiastical communion and deprived them of the exercise of their priestly office, through which they have been able to harm some and help others.

Since it is necessary that those who were absent from the synod and remained in the country or the city, on account of their own church affairs or because of their health, should not be ignorant of the decisions formulated concerning these matters, we make it known to your holinesses that if any metropolitan of a province dissents from the holy and ecumenical synod and attaches himself to the assembly of the revolters, or should do so later, or should he have adopted the opinions of Celestius, or do so in the future, such a one is deprived of all power to take steps against the bishops of his province. He is thereby cast out by the synod from all ecclesiastical communion and is deprived of all ecclesiastical authority. Instead he is to be subjected to the bishops of his own province and the surrounding metropolitans, provided they be orthodox, even to the extent of being completely deposed from the rank of bishop.

If any provincial bishops have absented themselves from the holy synod and have either attached themselves or attempted to attach themselves to the apostasy, or after subscribing the deposition of Nestorius have returned to the assembly of apostates, these, according to the decision of the holy synod, are to be deprived of the priesthood and deposed from their rank.

If any clerics either in city or country have been suspended by Nestorius and those with him from their priesthood because of their orthodoxy, we have thought it right that these should regain their proper rank; and in general we decree that those clerics who are in agreement with the orthodox and ecumenical synod should in no way be subject to those bishops who have revolted or may revolt from it. If any clerics should apostatise and in private or in public dare to hold the views of Nestorius or Celestius, it is thought right that such should stand deposed by the holy synod.

Whoever have been condemned of improper practices by the holy synod or by their own bishops, and have been uncanonically restored to communion and rank by Nestorius or his sympathisers, with their habitual lack of discrimination, such persons we have decreed gain nothing by this and are to remain deposed as before.

Similarly if anyone should wish in any way to upset the decisions in each point taken in the holy synod of Ephesus, the holy synod decides that if they are bishops or clerics they should be completely deprived of their own rank and if they are laity they should be excommunicated.

Definition of the faith at Nicaea [6th session 22 July 431]

The synod of Nicaea produced this creed: We believe ... [the Nicene Creed follows]

It seems fitting that all should assent to this holy creed. It is pious and sufficiently helpful for the whole world. But since some pretend to confess and accept it, while at the same time distorting the force of its expressions to their own opinion and so evading the truth, being sons of error and children of destruction, it has proved necessary to add testimonies from the holy and orthodox fathers that can fill out the meaning they have given to the words and their courage in proclaiming it. All those who have a clear and blameless faith will understand, interpret and proclaim it in this way.

When these documents had been read out, the holy synod decreed the following.

1. It is not permitted to produce or write or compose any other creed except the one which was defined by the holy fathers who were gathered together in the holy Spirit at Nicaea.

2. Any who dare to compose or bring forth or produce another creed for the benefit of those who wish to turn from Hellenism or Judaism or some other heresy to the knowledge of the truth, if they are bishops or clerics they should be deprived of their respective charges and if they are laymen they are to be anathematised.

3. In the same way if any should be discovered, whether bishops, clergy or laity, thinking or teaching the views expressed in his statement by the priest Charisius about the incarnation of the only-begotten Son of God or the disgusting, perverted views of Nestorius, which underlie them, these should be subject to the condemnation of this holy and ecumenical synod. A bishop clearly is to be stripped of his bishopric and deposed, a cleric to be deposed from the clergy, and a lay person is to be anathematised, as was said before.

Definition against the impious Messalians or Euchites

The most pious and religious bishops Valerian and Amphilochius came together to us and made a joint enquiry about the so called Messalians or Euchites or Enthusiasts, or whatever name this appalling heresy goes under, who dwell in the region of Pamphylia. We made investigation and the god-fearing and reverent Valerian produced a synodical document concerning these people, which had been drawn up in great Constantinople in the time of Sisinnius of blessed memory. When this had been read out in the presence of all, it was agreed that it had been well made and was correct. We all agreed, as did the most religious bishops Valerian and Amphilochius and all the pious bishops of the provinces of Pamphylia and Lycaonia, that what had been inscribed in the synodical document should be confirmed and in no way disobeyed, clearly without prejudice to the acts of Alexandria. Consequently those anywhere in that province who subscribed to the heresy of the Messalians or Enthusiasts, or who were suspected of the disease, whether clerical or lay, are to come together; if they sign the anathemas according to what was promulgated in the aforementioned synod, should they be clergy they should remain such and if laity they are to remain in communion. But if they decline and do not anathematise, if they are presbyters or deacons or hold any other rank in the church, they are to forfeit their clerical status and grade and communion, and if they are laity let them be anathematised.

In addition, those who have been condemned are not to be permitted to govern monasteries, lest tares be sown and increase. The vigorous and zealous execution of all these decrees is enjoined upon the reverent bishops Valerian and Amphilochius and the other reverent bishops throughout the whole province. Furthermore it seemed good that the filthy book of this heresy, which has been published and is called by them Asceticon, should be anathematised, as being composed by heretics, a copy of which the most pious and religious Valerian brought with him. Any other production savouring of the like impiety which is found anywhere is to be treated similarly.

In addition, when they come together, they should commit clearly to writing whatever conduces to the creation of concord, communion and order. But if any discussion should arise in connection with the present business among the most godly bishops Valerian, Amphilochius and the other reverent bishops in the province, and if something difficult or ambiguous crops up, then in such a case it seems good that the godly bishops of Lycia and Lycaonia should be brought in, and the metropolitan of whatever province these choose should not be left out. In this way the disputed questions should through their means be brought to an appropriate solution.

Resolution : that the bishops of Cyprus may themselves conduct ordinations.

The holy synod declared:

The most reverent bishop Rheginus and with him Zenon and Evagrius, revered bishops of the province of Cyprus, have brought forward what is both an innovation against the ecclesiastical customs and the canons of the holy fathers and concerns the freedom of all. Therefore, since common diseases need more healing as they bring greater harm with them, if it has not been a continuous ancient custom for the bishop of Antioch to hold ordinations in Cyprus—as it is asserted in memorials and orally by the religious men who have come before the synod — the prelates of the holy churches of Cyprus shall, free from molestation and violence, use their right to perform by themselves the ordination of reverent bishops for their island, according to the canons of the holy fathers and the ancient custom.

The same principle will be observed for other dioceses and provinces everywhere. None of the reverent bishops is to take possession of another province which has not been under his authority from the first or under that of his predecessors. Any one who has thus seized upon and subjected a province is to restore it, lest the canons of the fathers be transgressed and the arrogance of secular power effect an entry through the cover of priestly office. We must avoid bit by bit destroying the freedom which our lord Jesus Christ the liberator of all people, gave us through his own blood. It is therefore the pleasure of the holy and ecumenical synod to secure intact and inviolate the rights belonging to each province from the first, according to the custom which has been in force from of old. Each metropolitan has the right to take a copy of the proceedings for his own security. If any one produces a version which is at variance with what is here decided, the holy and ecumenical synod unanimously decrees it to be of no avail.

Formula of union between Cyrill and John of Antioch

We will state briefly what we are convinced of and profess about

—the God-bearing virgin and

—the manner of the incarnation of the only begotten Son of God

—not by way of addition but in the manner of a full statement, even as we have received and possess it from of old from

—the holy scriptures and from

—the tradition of the holy fathers,

—adding nothing at all to the creed put forward by the holy fathers at Nicaea.

For, as we have just said, that creed is sufficient both for the knowledge of godliness and for the repudiation of all heretical false teaching. We shall speak not presuming to approach the unapproachable; but we confess our own weakness and so shut out those who would reproach us for investigating things beyond the human mind.

We confess, then, our lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God perfect God and perfect man of a rational soul and a body, begotten before all ages from the Father in his godhead, the same in the last days, for us and for our salvation, born of Mary the virgin, according to his humanity, one and the same consubstantial with the Father in godhead and consubstantial with us in humanity, for a union of two natures took place. Therefore we confess one Christ, one Son, one Lord. According to this understanding of the unconfused union, we confess the holy virgin to be the mother of God because God the Word took flesh and became man and from his very conception united to himself the temple he took from her. As to the evangelical and apostolic expressions about the Lord, we know that theologians treat some in common as of one person and distinguish others as of two natures, and interpret the god-befitting ones in connection with the godhead of Christ and the lowly ones with his humanity.

Letter of Cyril to John of Antioch about peace

Having read these holy phrases and finding ourselves in agreement (for "there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism"), we have given glory to God who is the saviour of all and rejoice together that our churches and yours are at one in professing the same faith as the inspired scriptures and the tradition of our holy fathers. But since I discovered that there are some always eager to find fault, who buzz around like angry wasps and spit forth evil words against me, to the effect that I say that the holy body of Christ came down from heaven and not from the holy virgin, I thought it necessary in answer to them to say a little about this matter to you.

O fools, whose only competence is in slander! How did you become so perverted in thought and fall into such a sickness of idiocy? For you must surely know that almost all our fight for the faith arose in connection with our insistence that the holy virgin is the mother of God. But if we claim that the holy body of our common saviour Christ is born from heaven and was not of her, why should she still be considered God-bearer? For whom indeed did she bear, if it is untrue that she bore Emmanuel according to the flesh? It is rather they who speak such nonsense against me who deserve to be ridiculed. For the holy prophet Isaiah does not lie when he says, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which is interpreted God with us". Again the holy Gabriel speaks total truth when he says to the blessed virgin: "Do not fear, Mary. You have found favour with God, and behold you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you will call his name Jesus . For he will save his people from their sins".

But when we say that our lord Jesus Christ came from heaven and above, we do not apply such expressions as "from above" and "from heaven" to his holy flesh. Rather do we follow the divine Paul who clearly proclaimed: "The first man was of the earth, earthly, the second man is the Lord from heaven".

We also recall our Saviour who said: "No one has gone up into heaven except him who came down from heaven, the son of man". Yet he was born, as I have just said, from the holy virgin according to the flesh.

But since God the Word, who came down from above and from heaven, "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave", and was called son of man though all the while he remained what he was, that is God (for he is unchangeable and immutable by nature), he is said to have come down from heaven, since he is now understood to be one with his own flesh, and he has therefore been designated the man from heaven, being both perfect in godhead and perfect in humanity and thought of as in one person. For there is one lord Jesus Christ, even though we do not ignore the difference of natures, out of which we say that the ineffable union was effected. As for those who say that there was a mixture or confusion or blending of God the Word with the flesh, let your holiness see fit to stop their mouths. For it is quite likely that some should spread it abroad that I have thought or said such things. But I am so far from thinking anything of the kind that I think that those are quite mad who suppose that "a shadow of change" is conceivable in connection with the divine nature of the Word. For he remains what he is always and never changes, nor could he ever change or be susceptible of it. Furthermore we all confess that the Word of God is impassible though in his all-wise economy of the mystery he is seen to attribute to himself the sufferings undergone by his own flesh. So the all-wise Peter speaks of "Christ suffering for us in the flesh" and not in the nature of his unspeakable godhead. For in order that he might be believed to be the saviour of all, in accordance with our economic appropriation, as I said, he refers to himself the sufferings of his own flesh, in much the same way as is suggested through the voice of the prophet coming as it were from him in advance: "I gave my back to the smiters and my cheeks to blows; I hid not my face from shame and spitting".

Let your holiness be persuaded and let no one else cherish any doubt, that we everywhere follow the opinions of the holy fathers especially those of our blessed and glorious father Athanasius, with whose opinions we differ not in the slightest. I would have added many of their testimonies, proving my opinions from theirs, had I not feared that the length of the letter would be made tedious thereby. We do not permit anyone in any way to upset the defined faith or the creed drawn up by the holy fathers who assembled at Nicaea as the times demanded. We give neither ourselves nor them the licence to alter any expression there or to change a single syllable, remembering the words: "Remove not the ancient landmarks which your fathers have set".

For it was not they that spoke, but the Spirit of God the Father, who proceeds from him and who is not distinct from the Son in essence. We are further confirmed in our view by the words of our holy spiritual teachers. For in the Acts of the Apostles it is written: "When they came to Mysia, they tried to go to Bithynia and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them". And the divine Paul writes as follows: "Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh, you are in the spirit, if the Spirit of God really dwells in you. And anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him". When, therefore, any of those who love to upset sound doctrine pervert my words to their way of thinking, your holiness should not be surprised at this, but should remember that the followers of every heresy extract from inspired scripture the occasion of their error, and that all heretics corrupt the true expressions of the holy Spirit with their own evil minds and they draw down on their own heads an inextinguishable flame.

Since therefore we have learnt that even the letter of our glorious father Athanasius to the blessed Epictetus, which is completely orthodox, has been corrupted and circulated by some, with the result that many have been injured therefore, thinking it both useful and necessary for the brethren, we have despatched to your holiness accurate copies of the original, unadulterated writings which we have.

Excerpt from the Council of Chalcedon

The Council of Chalcedon "has accepted the synodical letters of the blessed Cyril, pastor of the church in Alexandria, to Nestorius and to the Orientals, as being well-suited to refuting Nestorius's mad folly and to providing an interpretation for those who in their religious zeal might desire understanding of the saving creed."

Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON—451 A.D.

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Introduction

It was the emperor Marcian who, after the "robber" council of Ephesus (449), commanded this council to meet. Pope Leo I was opposed to it. His view was that all the bishops should repent of their ways and individually sign his earlier dogmatic letter to Flavian, patriarch of Constantinople, and so avoid a new round of argument and debate. Moreover, the provinces of the West were being laid waste by Attila's invasions. But before the pope's view became known, the emperor Marcian had, by an edict of 17 May 451, convoked the council for 1 September 451. Although the pope was displeased, he sent legates: Paschasinus bishop of Lilybaeum, Bishop Lucentius, the priests Boniface and Basil, and Bishop Julian of Cos. No doubt Leo thought that the council would cause people to leave the church and go into schism. So he wanted it to be postponed for a time, and he implored the emperor that the faith handed down from ancient times should not become the subject of debate. The only business should be the restoration of the exiled bishops to their former positions.

The council was convoked at Nicaea but later transferred to Chalcedon, so as to be close to Constantinople and the emperor. It began on 8 October 451. The legates Paschasinus, Bishop Lucentius and the priest Boniface presided, while Julian of Cos sat among the bishops. By their side were the imperial commissars and those serving on the Senate, whose responsibility was simply to keep order in the council's deliberations.

The lists we have of those present are unsatisfactory. According to Leo there were 600 bishops at the council, whereas according to a letter to him there were 500.

The "Definition of the faith" was passed at the council's fifth session, and was solemnly promulgated at the sixth session in the presence of the emperor and the imperial authorities. The formula accepted in the decree is: Christ is one in two natures. This is in agreement with Leo's letter to Flavian of Constantinople, and Leo's letter is expressly mentioned in the Definition of the faith .

The council also issued 27 disciplinary canons (it is unclear at which session).

What is usually called canon 28 (on the honour to be accorded the see of Constantinople) is in fact a resolution passed by the council at the 16th session. It was rejected by the Roman legates.

In the ancient Greek collections, canons 29 and 30 are also attributed to the council:

—canon 29 is an extract from the minutes of the 19th session; and

—canon 30 is an extract from the minutes of the 4th session.

Because of canon 28, which the Roman legates had opposed, the emperor Marcian and Anatolius, patriarch of Constantinople, sought approval for the council from the pope. This is clear from a letter of Anatolius which tries to defend the canon, and especially from a letter of Marcian which explicitly requests confirmation. Because heretics were misinterpreting his withholding approval, the pope ratified the doctrinal decrees on 21 March 453, but rejected canon 28 since it ran counter to the canons of Nicaea and to the privileges of particular churches.

The imperial promulgation was made by Emperor Marcian in 4 edicts of February 452.

Apart from Pope Leo's letter to Flavian, which is in Latin, the English translation is from the Greek text, since this is the more authoritative version.

The letter of Pope Leo to Flavian, bishop of Constantinople, about Eutyches

Surprised as we were at the late arrival of your charity's letter, we read it and examined the account of what the bishops had done. We now see what scandal against the integrity of the faith had reared its head among you. What had previously been kept secret now became clearly revealed to us. Eutyches, who was considered a man of honour because he had the title of priest, is shown to be very rash and extremely ignorant. What the prophet said can be applied to him: He did not want to understand and do good: he plotted evil in his bed. What can be worse than to have an irreligious mind and to pay no heed to those who are wiser and more learned? The people who fall into this folly are those in whom knowledge of the truth is blocked by a kind of dimness. They do not refer to

—the sayings of the prophets, nor to

—the letters of the apostles, nor even to

—the authoritative words of the gospels,

but to themselves. By not being pupils of the truth, they turn out to be masters of error. A man who has not the most elementary understanding even of the creed itself can have learnt nothing from the sacred texts of the New and Old Testaments. This old man has not yet taken to heart what is pronounced by every baptismal candidate the world over!

He had no idea how he ought to think about the incarnation of the Word of God; and he had no desire to acquire the light of understanding by working through the length and breadth of the holy scriptures. So at least he should have listened carefully and accepted the common and undivided creed by which the whole body of the faithful confess that they believe in

1. God the Father almighty and in

2. Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord,

3. who was born of the holy Spirit and the virgin Mary.

These three statements wreck the tricks of nearly every heretic. When God is believed to be both almighty and Father, the Son is clearly proved to be co-eternal with him, in no way different from the Father, since he was born God from God, almighty from the Almighty, co-eternal from the Eternal, not later in time, not lower in power, not unlike in glory, not distinct in being. The same eternal, only-begotten of the eternal begetter was born of the holy Spirit and the virgin Mary. His birth in time in no way subtracts from or adds to that divine and eternal birth of his: but its whole purpose is to restore humanity, who had been deceived, so that it might defeat death and, by its power, destroy the devil who held the power of death. Overcoming the originator of sin and death would be beyond us, had not he whom sin could not defile, nor could death hold down, taken up our nature and made it his own. He was conceived from the holy Spirit inside the womb of the virgin mother. Her virginity was as untouched in giving him birth as it was in conceiving him.

But if it was beyond Eutyches to derive sound understanding from this, the purest source of the Christian faith, because the brightness of manifest truth had been darkened by his own peculiar blindness, then he should have subjected himself to the teaching of the gospels. When Matthew says, The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham, Eutyches should have looked up the further development in the apostolic preaching. When he read in the letter to the Romans, Paul, the servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for God's gospel, which he had formerly promised through his prophets in the holy writings which refer to his Son, who was made for him of David's seed according to the flesh, he should have paid deep and devout attention to the prophetic texts. And when he discovered God making the promise to Abraham that in your seed shall all nations be blessed, he should have followed the apostle, in order to eliminate any doubt about the identity of this seed, when he says, The promises were spoken to Abraham and his seed . He does not say "to his seeds"—as if referring to a multiplicity—but to a single one, "and to thy seed " which is Christ. His inward ear should also have heard Isaiah preaching Behold, a virgin will receive in the womb and will bear a son, and they will call his name Emmanuel, which is translated "God is with us". With faith he should have read the same prophet's words, A child is born to us, a son is given to us. His power is on his shoulders. They will call his name "Angel of great counsel, mighty God, prince of peace, father of the world to come". Then he would not deceive people by saying that the Word was made flesh in the sense that he emerged from the virgin's womb having a human form but not having the reality of his mother's body.

Or was it perhaps that he thought that our lord Jesus Christ did not have our nature because the angel who was sent to the blessed Mary said, The holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the most High will overshadow you, and so that which will be born holy out of you will be called Son of God, as if it was because the conception by the virgin was worked by God that the flesh of the one conceived did not share the nature of her who conceived it? But uniquely wondrous and wondrously unique as that act of generation was, it is not to be understood as though the proper character of its kind was taken away by the sheer novelty of its creation. It was the holy Spirit that made the virgin pregnant, but the reality of the body derived from body. As Wisdom built a house for herself, the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us: that is, in that flesh which he derived from human kind and which he animated with the spirit of a rational life.

So the proper character of both natures was maintained and came together in a single person. Lowliness was taken up by majesty, weakness by strength, mortality by eternity. To pay off the debt of our state, invulnerable nature was united to a nature that could suffer; so that in a way that corresponded to the remedies we needed, one and the same mediator between God and humanity the man Christ Jesus, could both on the one hand die and on the other be incapable of death. Thus was true God born in the undiminished and perfect nature of a true man, complete in what is his and complete in what is ours. By "ours" we mean what the Creator established in us from the beginning and what he took upon himself to restore. There was in the Saviour no trace of the things which the Deceiver brought upon us, and to which deceived humanity gave admittance. His subjection to human weaknesses in common with us did not mean that he shared our sins. He took on the form of a servant without the defilement of sin, thereby enhancing the human and not diminishing the divine. For that self-emptying whereby the Invisible rendered himself visible, and the Creator and Lord of all things chose to join the ranks of mortals, spelled no failure of power: it was an act of merciful favour. So the one who retained the form of God when he made humanity, was made man in the form of a servant. Each nature kept its proper character without loss; and just as the form of God does not take away the form of a servant, so the form of a servant does not detract from the form of God.

It was the devil's boast that humanity had been deceived by his trickery and so had lost the gifts God had given it; and that it had been stripped of the endowment of immortality and so was subject to the harsh sentence of death. He also boasted that, sunk as he was in evil, he himself derived some consolation from having a partner in crime; and that God had been forced by the principle of justice to alter his verdict on humanity, which he had created in such an honourable state. All this called for the realisation of a secret plan whereby the unalterable God, whose will is indistinguishable from his goodness, might bring the original realisation of his kindness towards us to completion by means of a more hidden mystery, and whereby humanity, which had been led into a state of sin by the craftiness of the devil, might be prevented from perishing contrary to the purpose of God.

So without leaving his Father's glory behind, the Son of God comes down from his heavenly throne and enters the depths of our world, born in an unprecedented order by an unprecedented kind of birth. In an unprecedented order, because one who is invisible at his own level was made visible at ours. The ungraspable willed to be grasped. Whilst remaining pre-existent, he begins to exist in time. The Lord of the universe veiled his measureless majesty and took on a servant's form. The God who knew no suffering did not despise becoming a suffering man, and, deathless as he is, to be subject to the laws of death. By an unprecedented kind of birth, because it was inviolable virginity which supplied the material flesh without experiencing sexual desire. What was taken from the mother of the Lord was the nature without the guilt. And the fact that the birth was miraculous does not imply that in the lord Jesus Christ, born from the virgin's womb, the nature is different from ours. The same one is true God and true man.

There is nothing unreal about this oneness, since both the lowliness of the man and the grandeur of the divinity are in mutual relation. As God is not changed by showing mercy, neither is humanity devoured by the dignity received. The activity of each form is what is proper to it in communion with the other: that is, the Word performs what belongs to the Word, and the flesh accomplishes what belongs to the flesh. One of these performs brilliant miracles the other sustains acts of violence. As the Word does not lose its glory which is equal to that of the Father, so neither does the flesh leave the nature of its kind behind. We must say this again and again: one and the same is truly Son of God and truly son of man. God, by the fact that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; man, by the fact that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. God, by the fact that all things were made through him, and nothing was made without him, man, by the fact that he was made of a woman, made under the law. The birth of flesh reveals human nature; birth from a virgin is a proof of divine power. A lowly cradle manifests the infancy of the child; angels' voices announce the greatness of the most High. Herod evilly strives to kill one who was like a human being at the earliest stage the Magi rejoice to adore on bended knee one who is the Lord of all. And when he came to be baptised by his precursor John, the Father's voice spoke thunder from heaven, to ensure that he did not go unnoticed because the divinity was concealed by the veil of flesh: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Accordingly, the same one whom the devil craftily tempts as a man, the angels dutifully wait on as God. Hunger, thirst, weariness, sleep are patently human. But to satisfy five thousand people with five loaves; to dispense living water to the Samaritan woman, a drink of which will stop her being thirsty ever again; to walk on the surface of the sea with feet that do not sink; to rebuke the storm and level the mounting waves; there can be no doubt these are divine.

So, if I may pass over many instances, it does not belong to the same nature to weep out of deep-felt pity for a dead friend, and to call him back to life again at the word of command, once the mound had been removed from the four-day old grave; or to hang on the cross and, with day changed into night, to make the elements tremble; or to be pierced by nails and to open the gates of paradise for the believing thief. Likewise, it does not belong to the same nature to say I and the Father are one, and to say The Father is greater than I. For although there is in the Lord Jesus Christ a single person who is of God and of man, the insults shared by both have their source in one thing, and the glory that is shared in another. For it is from us that he gets a humanity which is less than the Father; it is from the Father that he gets a divinity which is equal to the Father.

So it is on account of this oneness of the person, which must be understood in both natures, that we both read that the son of man came down from heaven, when the Son of God took flesh from the virgin from whom he was born, and again that the Son of God is said to have been crucified and buried, since he suffered these things not in the divinity itself whereby the Only-begotten is co-eternal and consubstantial with the Father, but in the weakness of the human nature. That is why in the creed, too, we all confess that the only-begotten Son of God was crucified and was buried, following what the apostle said, If they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of majesty. And when our Lord and Saviour himself was questioning his disciples and instructing their faith, he says, Who do people say 1, the son of man, am? And when they had displayed a variety of other people's opinions, he says, Who do you say I am ? —in other words, I who am the son of man and whom you behold in the form of a servant and in real flesh: Who do you say I am? Whereupon the blessed Peter, inspired by God and making a confession that would benefit all future peoples, says, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. He thoroughly deserved to be declared "blessed" by the Lord. He derived the stability of both his goodness and his name from the original Rock, for when the Father revealed it to him, he confessed that the same one is both the Son of God and also the Christ. Accepting one of these truths without the other was no help to salvation; and to have believed that the Lord Jesus Christ was either only God and not man, or solely man and not God, was equally dangerous.

After the Lord's resurrection—which was certainly the resurrection of a real body, since the one brought back to life is none other than the one who had been crucified and had died—the whole point of the forty-day delay was to make our faith completely sound and to cleanse it of all darkness. Hence he talked to his disciples and lived and ate with them, and let himself be touched attentively and carefully by those who were in the grip of doubt; he would go in among his disciples when the doors were locked, and impart the holy Spirit by breathing on them, and open up the secrets of the holy scriptures after enlightening their understanding; again, he would point out the wound in his side, the holes made by the nails, and all the signs of the suffering he had just recently undergone, saying, Look at my hands and feet—it is I. Feel and see, because a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have. All this was so that it would be recognised that the proper character of the divine and of the human nature went on existing inseparable in him; and so that we would realise that the Word is not the same thing as the flesh, but in such a way that we would confess belief in the one Son of God as being both Word and flesh.

This Eutyches must be judged to be extremely destitute of this mystery of the faith. Neither the humility of the mortal life nor the glory of the resurrection has made him recognise our nature in the only-begotten of God. Nor has even the statement of the blessed apostle and evangelist John put fear into him: Every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ came in the flesh is from God, and every spirit which puts Jesus asunder is not from God, and this is Antichrist. But what does putting Jesus as under consist in if not in separating his human nature from him, and in voiding, through the most barefaced fictions, the one mystery by which we have been saved? Once in the dark about the nature of Christ's body, it follows that the same blindness leads him into raving folly about his suffering too. If he does not think that the Lord's cross was unreal and if he has no doubt that the suffering undergone for the world's salvation was real, then let him acknowledge the flesh of the one whose death he believes in. And let him not deny that a man whom he knows to have been subject to suffering had our kind of body, for to deny the reality of the flesh is also to deny the bodily suffering. So if he accepts the Christian faith and does not turn a deaf ear to the preaching of the gospel, let him consider what nature it was that hung, pierced with nails, on the wood of the cross. With the side of the crucified one laid open by the soldier's spear, let him identify the source from which blood and water flowed, to bathe the church of God with both font and cup.

Let him heed what the blessed apostle Peter preaches, that sanctification by the Spirit is effected by the sprinkling of Christ's blood; and let him not skip over the same apostle's words, knowing that you have been redeemed from the empty way of life you inherited from your fathers, not with corruptible gold and silver but by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, as of a lamb without stain or spot. Nor should he withstand the testimony of blessed John the apostle: and the blood of Jesus, the Son of God, purifies us from every sin; and again, This is the victory which conquers the world, our faith. Who is there who conquers the world save one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God ? It is he, Jesus Christ who has come through water and blood, not in water only, but in water and blood. And because the Spirit is truth, it is the Spirit who testifies. For there are three who give testimony—Spirit and water and blood. And the three are one. In other words, the Spirit of sanctification and the blood of redemption and the water of baptism. These three are one and remain indivisible. None of them is separable from its link with the others. The reason is that it is by this faith that the catholic church lives and grows, by believing that neither the humanity is without true divinity nor the divinity without true humanity.

When you cross-examined Eutyches and he replied, "I confess that our Lord was of two natures before the union, but I confess one nature after the union", I am amazed that such an absurd and corrupt declaration of faith was not very severely censured by the judges; and that an extremely foolish statement was disregarded, as if nothing whatever offensive had been heard. It is just as wicked to say that the only-begotten Son of God was of two natures before the incarnation as it is abominable to claim that there was a single nature in him after the Word was made flesh. Eutyches must not suppose that what he said was either correct or tolerable just because no clear statement of yours refuted it. So we remind you, dearest brother, of your charity's responsibility to see to it that if through God's merciful inspiration the case is ever settled, the rash and ignorant fellow is also purged of what is blighting his mind. As the minutes have made clear, he made a good start at abandoning his opinion when, under pressure from your statement, he professed to say what he had not previously said, and to find satisfaction in the faith to which he had previously been a stranger. But when he had refused to be party to the anathematising of his wicked doctrine, your fraternity would have realised that he was persisting in his false belief and that he deserved a verdict of condemnation. If he is honestly and suitably sorry about this, and acknowledges even at this late stage how rightly episcopal authority was set in motion, or if, to make full amends, he condemns every wrong thought he had by word of mouth and by his actual signature, then no amount of mercy towards one who has reformed is excessive. Our Lord, the true and good shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep, and who came not to destroy but to save the souls of men and women, wants us to be imitators of his goodness, so that whilst justice represses sinners, mercy does not reject the converted. The defence of the true faith is never so productive as when false opinion is condemned even by its adherents.

In place of ourself, we have arranged for our brothers, Bishop Julius and the priest Renatus of the church of St Clement, and also my son, the deacon Hilary, to ensure a good and faithful conclusion to the whole case. To their company we have added our notary Dulcitius, of proven loyalty to us. We trust that with God's help he who has fallen into error might condemn the wickedness of his own mind and find salvation.

God keep you safe, dearest brother.

Definition of the faith

The sacred and great and universal synod by God's grace and by decree of your most religious and Christ-loving emperors Valentinian Augustus and Marcian Augustus assembled in Chalcedon, metropolis of the province of Bithynia, in the shrine of the saintly and triumphant martyr Euphemia, issues the following decrees.

In establishing his disciples in the knowledge of the faith, our lord and saviour Christ said: "My peace I give you, my peace I leave to you"', so that no one should disagree with his neighbour regarding religious doctrines but that the proclamation of the truth would be uniformly presented. But the evil one never stops trying to smother the seeds of religion with his own tares and is for ever inventing some novelty or other against the truth; so the Master, exercising his usual care for the human race, roused this religious and most faithful emperor to zealous action, and summoned to himself the leaders of the priesthood from everywhere, so that through the working of the grace of Christ, the master of all of us, every injurious falsehood might be staved off from the sheep of Christ and they might be fattened on fresh growths of the truth.

This is in fact what we have done. We have driven off erroneous doctrines by our collective resolution and we have renewed the unerring creed of the fathers. We have proclaimed to all the creed of the 318; and we have made our own those fathers who accepted this agreed statement of religion

—the 150 who later met in great Constantinople and themselves set their seal to the same creed.

Therefore, whilst we also stand by

—the decisions and all the formulas relating to the creed from the sacred synod which took place formerly at Ephesus, whose leaders of most holy memory were Celestine of Rome and Cyril of Alexandria we decree that

—pre-eminence belongs to the exposition of the right and spotless creed of the 318 saintly and blessed fathers who were assembled at Nicaea when Constantine of pious memory was emperor: and that

—those decrees also remain in force which were issued in Constantinople by the 150 holy fathers in order to destroy the heresies then rife and to confirm this same catholic and apostolic creed.

—The creed of the 318 fathers at Nicaea.

—And the same of the 150 saintly fathers assembled in Constantinople.

This wise and saving creed, the gift of divine grace, was sufficient for a perfect understanding and establishment of religion. For its teaching about the Father and the Son and the holy Spirit is complete, and it sets out the Lord's becoming human to those who faithfully accept it.

But there are those who are trying to ruin the proclamation of the truth, and through their private heresies they have spawned novel formulas:

—some by daring to corrupt the mystery of the Lord's economy on our behalf, and refusing to apply the word "God-bearer" to the Virgin; and

—others by introducing a confusion and mixture, and mindlessly imagining that there is a single nature of the flesh and the divinity, and fantastically supposing that in the confusion the divine nature of the Only-begotten is passible.

Therefore this sacred and great and universal synod, now in session, in its desire to exclude all their tricks against the truth, and teaching what has been unshakeable in the proclamation from the beginning,

—decrees that the creed of the 318 fathers is, above all else, to remain inviolate. And because of those who oppose the holy Spirit, it

—ratifies the teaching about the being of the holy Spirit handed down by the 150 saintly fathers who met some time later in the imperial city

—the teaching they made known to all,

—not introducing anything left out by their predecessors, but clarifying their ideas about the holy Spirit by the use of scriptural testimonies against those who were trying to do away with his sovereignty.

And because of those who are attempting to corrupt the mystery of the economy and are shamelessly and foolishly asserting that he who was born of the holy virgin Mary was a mere man, it has accepted

—the synodical letters of the blessed Cyril, [already accepted by the Council of Ephesus] pastor of the church in Alexandria, to Nestorius and to the Orientals, as being well-suited to refuting Nestorius's mad folly and to providing an interpretation for those who in their religious zeal might desire understanding of the saving creed.

To these it has suitably added, against false believers and for the establishment of orthodox doctrines

—the letter of the primate of greatest and older Rome, the most blessed and most saintly Archbishop Leo, written to the sainted Archbishop Flavian to put down Eutyches's evil-mindedness, because it is in agreement with great Peter's confession and represents a support we have in common.

It is opposed to those who attempt to tear apart the mystery of the economy into a duality of sons; and

—it expels from the assembly of the priests those who dare to say that the divinity of the Only-begotten is passible, and

—it stands opposed to those who imagine a mixture or confusion between the two natures of Christ; and

—it expels those who have the mad idea that the servant-form he took from us is of a heavenly or some other kind of being; and

—it anathematises those who concoct two natures of the Lord before the union but imagine a single one after the union.

So, following the saintly fathers, we all with one voice teach the confession of one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: the same perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity, the same truly God and truly man, of a rational soul and a body; consubstantial with the Father as regards his divinity, and the same consubstantial with us as regards his humanity; like us in all respects except for sin; begotten before the ages from the Father as regards his divinity, and in the last days the same for us and for our salvation from Mary, the virgin God-bearer as regards his humanity; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, acknowledged in two natures which undergo no confusion, no change, no division, no separation; at no point was the difference between the natures taken away through the union, but rather the property of both natures is preserved and comes together into a single person and a single subsistent being; he is not parted or divided into two persons, but is one and the same only-begotten Son, God, Word, Lord Jesus Christ, just as the prophets taught from the beginning about him, and as the Lord Jesus Christ himself instructed us, and as the creed of the fathers handed it down to us.

Since we have formulated these things with all possible accuracy and attention, the sacred and universal synod decreed that no one is permitted to produce, or even to write down or compose, any other creed or to think or teach otherwise. As for those who dare either to compose another creed or even to promulgate or teach or hand down another creed for those who wish to convert to a recognition of the truth from Hellenism or from Judaism, or from any kind of heresy at all: if they be bishops or clerics, the bishops are to be deposed from the episcopacy and the clerics from the clergy; if they be monks or layfolk, they are to be anathematised.

Canons

1 We have deemed it right that the canons hitherto issued by the saintly fathers at each and every synod should remain in force.

2 If any bishop performs an ordination for money and puts the unsaleable grace on sale, and ordains for money a bishop, a chorepiscopus, a presbyter or a deacon or some other of those numbered among the clergy; or appoints a manager, a legal officer or a warden for money, or any other ecclesiastic at all for personal sordid gain; led him who has attempted this and been convicted stand to lose his personal rank; and let the person ordained profit nothing from the ordination or appointment he has bought; but let him be removed from the dignity or responsibility which he got for money. And if anyone appears to have acted even as a go-between in such disgraceful and unlawful dealings, let him too, if he is a cleric, be demoted from his personal rank, and if he is a lay person or a monk, let him be anathematised.

3 It has come to the notice of the sacred synod that some of those enrolled in the clergy are, for sordid gain, acting as hired managers of other people's property, and are involving themselves in worldly business, neglecting the service of God, frequenting the houses of worldly persons and taking over the handling of property out of avarice. So the sacred and great synod has decreed that in future no one, whether a bishop, a cleric or a monk, should either manage property or involve himself as an administrator of worldly business, unless he is legally and unavoidably summoned to take care of minors, or the local bishop appoints him to attend, out of fear of the Lord, to ecclesiastical business or to orphans and unprovided widows and persons in special need of ecclesiastical support. If in future anyone attempts to transgress these decrees, he must be subject to ecclesiastical penalties.

4 Those who truly and sincerely live the monastic life should be accorded appropriate recognition. But since there are some who don the monastic habit and meddle with the churches and in civil matters, and circulate indiscriminately in the cities and even are involved in founding monasteries for themselves, it has been decided that no one is to build or found a monastery or oratory anywhere against the will of the local bishop; and that monks of each city and region are to be subject to the bishop, are to foster peace and quiet, and attend solely to fasting and prayer, staying set apart in their places. They are not to abandon their own monasteries and interfere, or take part, in ecclesiastical or secular business unless they are perhaps assigned to do so by the local bishop because of some urgent necessity. No slave is to be taken into the monasteries to become a monk against the will of his own master. We have decreed that anyone who transgresses this decision of ours is to be excommunicated, lest God's name be blasphemed. However, it is for the local bishop to exercise the care and attention that the monasteries need.

5 In the matter of bishops or clerics who move from city to city, it has been decided that the canons issued by the holy fathers concerning them should retain their proper force.

6 No one, whether presbyter or deacon or anyone at all who belongs to the ecclesiastical order, is to be ordained without title, unless the one ordained is specially assigned to a city or village church or to a martyr's shrine or a monastery. The sacred synod has decreed that the ordination of those ordained without title is null, and that they cannot operate anywhere, because of the presumption of the one who ordained them.

7 We decree that those who have once joined the ranks of the clergy or have become monks are not to depart on military service or for secular office. Those who dare do this, and do not repent and return to what, in God, they previously chose, are to be anathematised.

8 Clerics in charge of almshouses and monasteries and martyrs' shrines are, in accordance with the tradition of the holy fathers, to remain under the jurisdiction of the bishop in each city. They are not to be self-willed and rebellious towards their own bishop. Those who dare to break a rule of this kind in any way whatever, and are not obedient to their own bishop, are, if they are clerics, to be subject to the canonical penalties; and if they are monks or layfolk they are to be made excommunicate.

9 If any cleric has a case to bring against a cleric, let him not leave his own bishop and take himself off to the secular courts, but let him first air the problem before his own bishop, or at least, with the permission of the bishop himself, before those whom both parties are willing to see act as arbiters of their lawsuit. If anyone acts in a contrary fashion, let him be subject to canonical penalties. If a cleric has a case to bring either against his own or against another bishop, let him bring the case to the synod of the province. If a bishop or a cleric is in dispute with the metropolitan of the same province, let him engage either the exarch of the diocese or the see of imperial Constantinople, and let him bring his case before him.

10 A cleric is not allowed to be appointed to churches in two cities at the same time: to the one where he was originally ordained, and to another more important one to which he has betaken himself out of desire to increase a baseless reputation. Those who do this are to be sent back to their own church in which they were ordained at the beginning, and only there are they to serve. But if some have already been transferred from one church to another, they are not to take part in any of the affairs of their former church, or of the martyrs' shrines or almshouses or hospices that come under it. The sacred synod has decreed that those who, subsequent to this decree of this great and universal synod, dare to do anything that is now forbidden are to lose their personal rank.

11 We have decreed that, subject to examination, all paupers and needy persons are to travel with ecclesiastical letters or letters of peace only, and not of commendation, since it befits only reputable persons to be provided with letters of commendation.

12 It has come to our notice that, contrary to the ecclesiastical regulations, some have made approaches to the civil authorities and have divided one province into two by official mandate, with the result that there are two metropolitans in the same province. The sacred synod therefore decrees that in future no bishop should dare do such a thing, since he who attempts it stands to lose his proper station. Such places as have already been honoured by imperial writ with the title of metropolis must treat it simply as honorary, and that goes also for the bishop who is in charge of the church there, without prejudice of course to the proper rights of the real metropolis.

13 Foreign clerics and readers without letters of commendation from their own bishop are absolutely forbidden to serve in another city.

14 Since in certain provinces readers and cantors have been allowed to marry, the sacred synod decrees that none of them is permitted to marry a wife of heterodox views. If those thus married have already had children, and if they have already had the children baptised among heretics, they are to bring them into the communion of the catholic church. If they have not been baptised, they may no longer have them baptised among heretics; nor indeed marry them to a heretic or a Jew or a Greek, unless of course the person who is to be married to the orthodox party promises to convert to the orthodox faith. If anyone transgresses this decree of the sacred synod, let him be subject to canonical penalty.

15 No woman under forty years of age is to be ordained a deacon, and then only after close scrutiny. If after receiving ordination and spending some time in the ministry she despises God's grace and gets married, such a person is to be anathematised along with her spouse.

16 It is not permitted for a virgin who has dedicated herself to the Lord God, or similarly for a monk, to contract marriage. If it is discovered that they have done so, let them be made excommunicate. However, we have decreed that the local bishop should have discretion to deal humanely with them.

17 Rural or country parishes belonging to a church are to stay firmly tied to the bishops who have possession of them, and especially if they have continually and peacefully administered them over a thirty-year period. If, however, within the thirty years any dispute about them has arisen, or should arise, those who are claiming to be wronged are permitted to bring the case before the provincial synod. If there are any who are wronged by their own metropolitan, let their case be judged either by the exarch of the diocese or by the see of Constantinople, as has already been said. If any city has been newly erected, or is erected hereafter, by imperial decree, let the arrangement of ecclesiastical parishes conform to the civil and public regulations.

18 The crime of conspiracy or secret association is entirely prohibited even by the laws of the land; so all the more properly is this forbidden in the church of God. So if any clerics or monks are found to be either forming a conspiracy or a secret society or hatching plots against bishops or fellow clergy, let them lose their personal rank completely.

19 We have heard that in the provinces the synods of bishops prescribed by canon law are not taking place, and that as a result many ecclesiastical matters that need putting right are being neglected. So the sacred synod decrees that in accordance with the canons of the fathers, the bishops in each province are to foregather twice a year at a place approved by the bishop of the metropolis and put any matters arising to rights. Bishops failing to attend who enjoy good health and are free from all unavoidable and necessary engagements, but stay at home in their own cities, are to be fraternally rebuked.

20 As we have already decreed, clerics who are serving a church are not permitted to join a church in another city, but are to be content with the one in which they were originally authorised to minister, apart from those who have been displaced from their own country and been forced to move to another church. If subsequent to this decision any bishop receives a cleric who belongs to another bishop, it is decreed that both the received and the receiver are to be excommunicate until such time as the cleric who has moved returns to his own church.

21 Clerics or layfolk who bring allegations against bishops or clerics are not to be admitted to make their charges without more ado and before any examination, but their reputation must first be investigated.

22 It is not permitted for clerics, following the death of their own bishop, to seize the things that belong to him, as has been forbidden even by earlier canons. Those who do this risk losing their personal rank.

23 It has come to the notice of the sacred synod that certain clerics and monks who have no employment from their own bishop and have sometimes even been excommunicated by him, are frequenting imperial Constantinople and spending long periods there causing disturbances, upsetting the ecclesiastical establishment and ruining people's homes. So the sacred synod decrees that such people are first to be warned by the public attorney of the most holy Constantinopolitan church to get out of the imperial city; and if they shamelessly persist in the same kinds of behaviour, they are to be expelled by the same public attorney even against their will, and are to betake themselves to their own places.

24 Monasteries once consecrated in accordance with the will of the bishop are to remain monasteries in perpetuity, and the effects which belong to them are reserved to the monastery, and they must not be turned into secular hostelries. Those who allow this to happen are to be subject to the canonical penalties.

25 According to our information, certain metropolitans are neglecting the flocks entrusted to them and are delaying the ordination of bishops, so the sacred synod has decided that the ordination of bishops should take place within three months, unless the period of delay has been caused to be extended by some unavoidable necessity. If a metropolitan fails to do this, he is to be subject to ecclesiastical penalties. The income of the widowed church is to be kept safe by the administrator of the said church.

26 According to our information, in some churches the bishops handle church business without administrators; so it has been decided that every church which has a bishop is also to have an administrator, drawn from its own clergy, to administer ecclesiastical matters according to the mind of the bishop concerned so that the church's administration may not go unaudited, and that consequently the church's property is not dispersed and the episcopate not exposed to serious criticism. If he does not comply with this, he is to be subject to the divine canons.

27 The sacred synod decrees that those who carry off girls under pretext of cohabitation, or who are accomplices or co-operate with those who carry them off, are to lose their personal rank if they are clerics, and are to be anathematised if they are monks or layfolk.

28 [in fact a resolution passed by the council at the 16th session but rejected by the Pope]

Following in every way the decrees of the holy fathers and recognising the canon which has recently been read out—the canon of the 150 most devout bishops who assembled in the time of the great Theodosius of pious memory, then emperor, in imperial Constantinople, new Rome — we issue the same decree and resolution concerning the prerogatives of the most holy church of the same Constantinople, new Rome. The fathers rightly accorded prerogatives to the see of older Rome, since that is an imperial city; and moved by the same purpose the 150 most devout bishops apportioned equal prerogatives to the most holy see of new Rome, reasonably judging that the city which is honoured by the imperial power and senate and enjoying privileges equalling older imperial Rome, should also be elevated to her level in ecclesiastical affairs and take second place after her. The metropolitans of the dioceses of Pontus, Asia and Thrace, but only these, as well as the bishops of these dioceses who work among non-Greeks, are to be ordained by the aforesaid most holy see of the most holy church in Constantinople. That is, each metropolitan of the aforesaid dioceses along with the bishops of the province ordain the bishops of the province, as has been declared in the divine canons; but the metropolitans of the aforesaid dioceses, as has been said, are to be ordained by the archbishop of Constantinople, once agreement has been reached by vote in the usual way and has been reported to him.

29 [an extract from the minutes of the 19th session]

The most eminent and illustrious officials asked: What does the sacred synod advise in the case of the bishops ordained by the most reverend Bishop Photius and removed by the most reverend Bishop Eustathius and consigned to be priests after losing the episcopacy? The most reverend Bishops Paschasinus and Lucentius and the priest Bonifatius, representatives of the apostolic see of Rome, replied: It is sacrilege to reduce a bishop to the rank of priest. But if whatever cause there is for removing those persons from the exercise of episcopacy is just, they ought not to occupy the position even of a priest. And if they have been removed from office and are without fault, they shall be restored to the episcopal dignity. The most reverend archbishop of Constantinople, Anatolius, replied: If those who are said to have descended from the episcopal dignity to the rank of priest have been condemned on what are reasonable grounds, they are clearly not worthy to hold even the office of a priest. But if they have been demoted to the lower rank without reasonable cause, then as long as they are seen to be innocent, they have every right to resume the dignity and priesthood of the episcopacy .

30 [an extract from the minutes of the 4th session]

The most eminent and illustrious officials and the exalted assembly declared: Since the most reverend bishops of Egypt have up to now put off subscribing to the letter of the most holy Archbishop Leo, not because they are in opposition to the catholic faith, but because they claim that it is customary in the Egyptian diocese not to do such things in contravention of the will and ordinance of their archbishop, and because they consider they should be given until the ordination of the future bishop of the great city of Alexandria, we think it reasonable and humane that, retaining their present rank in the imperial city, they should be granted a moratorium until such time as an archbishop of the great city of Alexandria is ordained. Most reverend Bishop Paschasinus, representative of the apostolic see, said: If your authority demands it, and you order that some measure of kindness be shown them, let them give guarantees that they will not leave this city before Alexandria receives its bishop. The most eminent and illustrious officials and the exalted assembly replied: Let the resolution of the most holy Bishop Paschasinus be upheld. So let the most reverend bishops of the Egyptians maintain their present rank and, either providing guarantees if they can, or pledging themselves on solemn oath, let them await the ordination of the future bishop of the great city of Alexandria.

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THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON (451 AD)

Definition concerning the two natures of Christ.

Following, then, the holy fathers, we unite in teaching all men to confess the one and only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. This selfsame one is perfect both in deity and in humanness; this selfsame one is also actually God and actually man, with a rational soul [meaning human soul] and a body. He is of the same reality as God as far as his deity is concerned and of the same reality as we ourselves as far as his humanness is concerned; thus like us in all respects, sin only excepted. Before time began he was begotten of the Father, in respect of his deity, and now in these "last days," for us and behalf of our salvation, this selfsame one was born of Mary the virgin, who is God-bearer in respect of his humanness.

We also teach that we apprehend this one and only Christ-Son, Lord, only-begotten — in two natures; and we do this without confusing the two natures, without transmuting one nature into the other, without dividing them into two separate categories, without contrasting them according to area or function. The distinctiveness of each nature is not nullified by the union. Instead, the "properties" of each nature are conserved and both natures concur in one "person" and in one reality [hypostasis]. They are not divided or cut into two persons, but are together the one and only and only-begotten Word [Logos], God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus have the prophets of old testified; thus the Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us; thus the Symbol of Fathers [the Nicene Creed] has handed down to us.

Therefore, now that we have set forth all these things with a care and diligence exact in every respect, the holy and universal Synod defines once and for all that no one may profess, write up or compose, think, or teach to others, any other faith.

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THE COUNCIL OF ORANGE (529)

The Council of Orange was an outgrowth of the controversy between Augustine and Pelagius. This controversy had to do with degree to which a human being is responsible for his or her own salvation, and the role of the grace of God in bringing about salvation. The Pelagians held that human beings are born in a state of innocence, i.e., that there is no such thing as a sinful nature or original sin. As a result of this view, they held that a state of sinless perfection was achievable in this life. The Council of Orange dealt with the Semi-Pelagian doctrine that the human race, though fallen and possessed of a sinful nature, is still "good" enough to able to lay hold of the grace of God through an act of unredeemed human will.

The Canons Of The Council Of Orange

Canon 1. If anyone denies that it is the whole man, that is, both body and soul, that was "changed for the worse" through the offense of Adam's sin, but believes that the freedom of the soul remains unimpaired and that only the body is subject to corruption, he is deceived by the error of Pelagius and contradicts the scripture which says, "The soul that sins shall die" (Ezek. 18:20); and, "Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are the slaves of the one whom you obey?" (Rom. 6:126); and, "For whatever overcomes a man, to that he is enslaved" (2 Pet. 2:19).

Canon 2. If anyone asserts that Adam's sin affected him alone and not his descendants also, or at least if he declares that it is only the death of the body which is the punishment for sin, and not also that sin, which is the death of the soul, passed through one man to the whole human race, he does injustice to God and contradicts the Apostle, who says, "Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned" (Rom. 5:12).

Canon 3. If anyone says that the grace of God can be conferred as a result of human prayer, but that it is not grace itself which makes us pray to God, he contradicts the prophet Isaiah, or the Apostle who says the same thing, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me" (Rom 10:20, quoting Isa. 65:1).

Canon 4. If anyone maintains that God awaits our will to be cleansed from sin, but does not confess that even our will to be cleansed comes to us through the infusion and working of the Holy Spirit, he resists the Holy Spirit himself who says through Solomon, "The will is prepared by the Lord" (Prov. 8:35, LXX), and the salutary word of the Apostle, "For God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13).

Canon 5. If anyone says that not only the increase of faith but also its beginning and the very desire for faith, by which we believe in Him who justifies the ungodly and comes to the regeneration of holy baptism — if anyone says that this belongs to us by nature and not by a gift of grace, that is, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit amending our will and turning it from unbelief to faith and from godlessness to godliness, it is proof that he is opposed to the teaching of the Apostles, for blessed Paul says, "And I am sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). And again, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). For those who state that the faith by which we believe in God is natural make all who are separated from the Church of Christ by definition in some measure believers.

Canon 6. If anyone says that God has mercy upon us when, apart from his grace, we believe, will, desire, strive, labor, pray, watch, study, seek, ask, or knock, but does not confess that it is by the infusion and inspiration of the Holy Spirit within us that we have the faith, the will, or the strength to do all these things as we ought; or if anyone makes the assistance of grace depend on the humility or obedience of man and does not agree that it is a gift of grace itself that we are obedient and humble, he contradicts the Apostle who says, "What have you that you did not receive?" (1 Cor. 4:7), and, "But by the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15:10).

Canon 7. If anyone affirms that we can form any right opinion or make any right choice which relates to the salvation of eternal life, as is expedient for us, or that we can be saved, that is, assent to the preaching of the gospel through our natural powers without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who makes all men gladly assent to and believe in the truth, he is led astray by a heretical spirit, and does not understand the voice of God who says in the Gospel, "For apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5), and the word of the Apostle, "Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our competence is from God" (2 Cor. 3:5).

Canon 8. If anyone maintains that some are able to come to the grace of baptism by mercy but others through free will, which has manifestly been corrupted in all those who have been born after the transgression of the first man, it is proof that he has no place in the true faith. For he denies that the free will of all men has been weakened through the sin of the first man, or at least holds that it has been affected in such a way that they have still the ability to seek the mystery of eternal salvation by themselves without the revelation of God. The Lord himself shows how contradictory this is by declaring that no one is able to come to him "unless the Father who sent me draws him" (John 6:44), as he also says to Peter, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 16:17), and as the Apostle says, "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3).

Canon 9. Concerning the succor of God. It is a mark of divine favor when we are of a right purpose and keep our feet from hypocrisy and unrighteousness; for as often as we do good, God is at work in us and with us, in order that we may do so.

Canon 10. Concerning the succor of God. The succor of God is to be ever sought by the regenerate and converted also, so that they may be able to come to a successful end or persevere in good works.

Canon 11. Concerning the duty to pray. None would make any true prayer to the Lord had he not received from him the object of his prayer, as it is written, "Of thy own have we given thee" (1 Chron. 29:14).

Canon 12. Of what sort we are whom God loves. God loves us for what we shall be by his gift, and not by our own deserving.

Canon 13. Concerning the restoration of free will. The freedom of will that was destroyed in the first man can be restored only by the grace of baptism, for what is lost can be returned only by the one who was able to give it. Hence the Truth itself declares: "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Canon 14. No mean wretch is freed from his sorrowful state, however great it may be, save the one who is anticipated by the mercy of God, as the Psalmist says, "Let thy compassion come speedily to meet us" (Ps. 79:8), and again, "My God in his steadfast love will meet me" (Ps. 59:10).

Canon 15. Adam was changed, but for the worse, through his own iniquity from what God made him. Through the grace of God the believer is changed, but for the better, from what his iniquity has done for him. The one, therefore, was the change brought about by the first sinner; the other, according to the Psalmist, is the change of the right hand of the Most High (Ps. 77:10).

Canon 16. No man shall be honored by his seeming attainment, as though it were not a gift, or suppose that he has received it because a missive from without stated it in writing or in speech. For the Apostle speaks thus, "For if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose" (Gal. 2:21); and "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men" (Eph. 4:8, quoting Ps. 68:18). It is from this source that any man has what he does; but whoever denies that he has it from this source either does not truly have it, or else "even what he has will be taken away" (Matt. 25:29).

Canon 17. Concerning Christian courage. The courage of the Gentiles is produced by simple greed, but the courage of Christians by the love of God which "has been poured into our hearts" not by freedom of will from our own side but "through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Rom. 5:5).

Canon 18. That grace is not preceded by merit. Recompense is due to good works if they are performed; but grace, to which we have no claim, precedes them, to enable them to be done.

Canon 19. That a man can be saved only when God shows mercy. Human nature, even though it remained in that sound state in which it was created, could be no means save itself, without the assistance of the Creator; hence since man cannot safe- guard his salvation without the grace of God, which is a gift, how will he be able to restore what he has lost without the grace of God?

Canon 20. That a man can do no good without God. God does much that is good in a man that the man does not do; but a man does nothing good for which God is not responsible, so as to let him do it.

Canon 21. Concerning nature and grace. As the Apostle most truly says to those who would be justified by the law and have fallen from grace, "If justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose" (Gal. 2:21), so it is most truly declared to those who imagine that grace, which faith in Christ advocates and lays hold of, is nature: "If justification were through nature, then Christ died to no purpose." Now there was indeed the law, but it did not justify, and there was indeed nature, but it did not justify. Not in vain did Christ therefore die, so that the law might be fulfilled by him who said, "I have come not to abolish them <the law and prophets> but to fulfil them" (Matt. 5:17), and that the nature which had been destroyed by Adam might be restored by him who said that he had come "to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10).

Canon 22. Concerning those things that belong to man. No man has anything of his own but untruth and sin. But if a man has any truth or righteousness, it is from that fountain for which we must thirst in this desert, so that we may be refreshed from it as by drops of water and not faint on the way.

Canon 23. Concerning the will of God and of man. Men do their own will and not the will of God when they do what displeases him; but when they follow their own will and comply with the will of God, however willingly they do so, yet it is his will by which what they will is both prepared and instructed.

Canon 24. Concerning the branches of the vine. The branches on the vine do not give life to the vine, but receive life from it; thus the vine is related to its branches in such a way that it supplies them with what they need to live, and does not take this from them. Thus it is to the advantage of the disciples, not Christ, both to have Christ abiding in them and to abide in Christ. For if the vine is cut down another can shoot up from the live root; but one who is cut off from the vine cannot live without the root (John 15:5ff).

Canon 25. Concerning the love with which we love God. It is wholly a gift of God to love God. He who loves, even though he is not loved, allowed himself to be loved. We are loved, even when we displease him, so that we might have means to please him. For the Spirit, whom we love with the Father and the Son, has poured into our hearts the love of the Father and the Son (Rom. 5:5).

Conclusion. And thus according to the passages of holy scripture quoted above or the interpretations of the ancient Fathers we must, under the blessing of God, preach and believe as follows. The sin of the first man has so impaired and weakened free will that no one thereafter can either love God as he ought or believe in God or do good for God's sake, unless the grace of divine mercy has preceded him. We therefore believe that the glorious faith which was given to Abel the righteous, and Noah, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and to all the saints of old, and which the Apostle Paul <sic> commends in extolling them (Heb. 11), was not given through natural goodness as it was before to Adam, but was bestowed by the grace of God. And we know and also believe that even after the coming of our Lord this grace is not to be found in the free will of all who desire to be baptized, but is bestowed by the kindness of Christ, as has already been frequently stated and as the Apostle Paul declares, "For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake" (Phil. 1:29). And again, "He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). And again, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and it is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). And as the Apostle says of himself, "I have obtained mercy to be faithful" (1 Cor. 7:25, cf. 1 Tim. 1:13). He did not say, "because I was faithful," but "to be faithful." And again, "What have you that you did not receive?" (1 Cor. 4:7). And again, "Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights" (Jas. 1:17). And again, "No one can receive anything except what is given him from heaven" (John 3:27). There are innumerable passages of holy scripture which can be quoted to prove the case for grace, but they have been omitted for the sake of brevity, because further examples will not really be of use where few are deemed sufficient.

According to the catholic faith we also believe that after grace has been received through baptism, all baptized persons have the ability and responsibility, if they desire to labor faithfully, to perform with the aid and cooperation of Christ what is of essential importance in regard to the salvation of their soul. We not only do not believe that any are foreordained to evil by the power of God, but even state with utter abhorrence that if there are those who want to believe so evil a thing, they are anathema. We also believe and confess to our benefit that in every good work it is not we who take the initiative and are then assisted through the mercy of God, but God himself first inspires in us both faith in him and love for him without any previous good works of our own that deserve reward, so that we may both faithfully seek the sacrament of baptism, and after baptism be able by his help to do what is pleasing to him. We must therefore most evidently believe that the praiseworthy faith of the thief whom the Lord called to his home in paradise, and of Cornelius the centurion, to whom the angel of the Lord was sent, and of Zacchaeus, who was worthy to receive the Lord himself, was not a natural endowment but a gift of God's kindness.

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THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Session II - 553 A.D.

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Introduction

The emperor Justinian and Pope Vigilius decided to summon this council after the latter withdrew his "Judgment" condemning the "Three Chapters" of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret and Ibas. This "Judgment" had been issued on 11 April 548 but the bishops of the west and especially of Africa unanimously opposed it. The council was summoned by Justinian to Constantinople, although Vigilius would have preferred to convene it in Sicily or Italy so that western bishops might be present. It assembled on 5 May 553 in the great hall attached to Hagia Sophia cathedral.

Since the Roman pontiff refused to take part in the council, because Justinian had summoned bishops in equal numbers from each of the five patriarchal sees, so that there would be many more eastern than western bishops present, Eutychius, patriarch of Constantinople, presided. The decrees of the council were signed by 160 bishops, of whom 8 were Africans.

On 14 May 553 Pope Vigilius issued his "Constitution", which was signed by 16 bishops (9 from Italy, 2 from Africa, 2 from Illyricum and 3 from Asia Minor). This rejected sixty propositions of Theodore of Mopsuestia, but spared his personal memory and refused to condemn either Theodoret or Ibas since, on the testimony of the council of Chalcedon, all suspicion of heresy against them had been removed. Nevertheless, the council in its 8th session on 2 June 553 again condemned the "Three Chapters", for the same reasons as Justinian had done so, in a judgment which concludes with 14 anathemas.

After carefully considering the matter for six months, Vigilius ,weighing up the persecutions of Justinian against his clergy and having sent a letter to Eutychius of Constantinople, approved the council, thus changing his mind "after the example of Augustine". Furthermore he anathematized Theodore and condemned his writings and those of Theodoret and Ibas. On 23 February 554, in a second "Constitution", he tried to reconcile the recent condemnation with what had been decreed at the council of Chalcedon.

The council did not debate ecclesiastical discipline nor did it issue disciplinary canons. Our edition does not include the text of the anathemas against Origen since recent studies have shown that these anathemas cannot be attributed to this council.

For the 14 anathemas (pp. 114-122) the translation is from the Greek text, since this is the more authoritative version.

Sentence against the "Three Chapters"

Our great God and saviour Jesus Christ, as we are told in the parable in the gospel, gives talents to each one according to his ability, and at the proper time asks for an account of what has been done by each one. If the person to whom only one talent has been given is condemned because he has not worked and increased it, but has only preserved it without diminishment, how much more serious and more frightening must be the condemnation to which the person is subjected who not only fails to look after himself but scandalizes others and is a cause of offence to them ? It is clear to all believers that when a problem about the faith comes up it is not only the heretical person who is condemned but also the person who is in a position to correct the heresy of others and fails to do so. To those of us to whom the task has been given of governing the church of the Lord, there comes a fear of the condemnation which threatens those who neglect to do the Lord's work. We hurry to take care of the good seed of faith protecting it from the weeds of heresy which have been planted by the enemy. We observed that the pupils of Nestorius were trying to bring their heresy into the church of God by means of the heretical Theodore, bishop of Mopsuestia and his books as also by the writings of the heretical Theodoret and the disgraceful letter which is alleged to have been sent by Ibas to Mari the Persian. Our observations prompted us to correct what was happening. We assembled in this imperial city, summoned here by the will of God and the command of the most religious emperor.

The most religious Vigilius happened to be present in this imperial city and took part in all the criticisms against the three chapters. He had frequently condemned them by word of mouth and in his writings. Later he gave a written agreement to take part in our council and to study with us the three chapters so that we could all issue an appropriate definition of the true faith. The most pious emperor, prompted by what was acceptable to us, encouraged a meeting between Vigilius and ourselves because it is proper that the priesthood should impose a common conclusion to matters of common concern. Consequently we asked his reverence to carry out his written undertakings. It did not seem right that the scandal over these three chapters should continue and that the church of God should be further disturbed. In order to persuade him, we reminded him of the great example left us by the apostles and of the traditions of the fathers. Even though the grace of the holy Spirit was abundant in each of the apostles, so that none of them required the advice of another in order to do his work, nevertheless they were loathe to come to a decision on the issue of the circumcision of gentiles until they had met together to test their various opinions against the witness of the holy scriptures.

In this way they unanimously reached the conclusion which they wrote to the gentiles: It has seemed good to the holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from unchastity.

The holy fathers, who have gathered at intervals in the four holy councils, have followed the examples of antiquity. They dealt with heresies and current problems by debate in common, since it was established as certain that when the disputed question is set out by each side in communal discussions, the light of truth drives out the shadows of lying.

The truth cannot be made clear in any other way when there are debates about questions of faith, since everyone requires the assistance of his neighbour. As Solomon says in his proverbs: A brother who helps a brother shall be exalted like a strong city; he shall be as strong as a well-established kingdom. Again in Ecclesiastes he says: Two are better than one, for they have a good reward for their toil. And the Lord himself says: Amen I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Vigilius was frequently invited by us all, and most distinguished judges were sent to him by the most pious emperor. Eventually he promised to give judgment personally on the three chapters. When we heard this promise, we remembered the warning of the Apostle that each of us shall give an account of himself to God. We were afraid of the condemnation which threatens those who scandalize one of the least important, and of the much more serious one which threatens those who scandalize so very Christian an emperor, the people and all the churches. We also remembered what was said by God to Paul: Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not be silent; for I am with you, and nobody shall be able to harm you. When we met together, therefore, we first of all briefly made a confession of the faith which our lord Jesus Christ true God, handed down to his holy apostles and by means of them to the holy churches, the same faith which those who afterwards were holy fathers and doctors handed down to the people entrusted to them. We confessed that we believe, protect and preach to the holy churches that confession of faith which was set out at greater length by the 318 holy fathers who met in council at Nicaea and handed down the holy doctrine or creed. The 150 who met in council at Constantinople also set out the same faith and made a confession of it and explained it. The 200 holy fathers who met in the first council of Ephesus agreed to the same faith. We follow also the definitions of the 630 who met in council at Chalcedon, regarding the same faith which they both followed and preached. We confessed that we held to be condemned and anathematized all those who had been previously condemned and anathematized by the catholic church and by the aforesaid four councils. When we had made this confession in this way, we made a start on the examination of the three chapters. First, we considered Theodore of Mopsuestia. When all the blasphemies in his works were exposed, we were astonished at God's patience, that the tongue and mind which had formed such blasphemies were not straightaway burned up by divine fire. We would not even have allowed the official reader of these blasphemies to continue, such was our fear of the anger of God at even a rehearsal of them (since each blasphemy was worse than the one before in the extent of its heresy and shook to their foundation the minds of their listeners), if it had not been the case that those who revelled in these blasphemies seemed to us to require the humiliation which their exposure would bring upon them. All of us, angered by the blasphemies against God, burst into attacks and anathemas against Theodore, during and after the reading, as if he had been living and present there. We said: Lord, be favourable to us; not even the demons themselves have dared to speak such things against you.

O his intolerable tongue! O the wickedness of the man ! O the proud hand he raised against his creator! This disgraceful man, who had made a promise to understand the scriptures, did not remember the words of the prophet Hosea: Woe to them, for they have strayed from me! They have become notorious because of their impiety towards me. They spoke evil things about me, and after they had considered them, they spoke even worse things against me. They will fall into a trap because of the depravity of their tongues. Their contempt will be turned inwards on themselves, because they have broken my covenant and acted impiously against my law. The impious Theodore deserves to come under these curses. He dismissed the prophecies about Christ and he vilified, as far as he could, the great mystery of the arrangements that have been made for our salvation. In many ways he tried to demonstrate that the divine word was nothing but fables composed for the amusement of the gentiles. He ridiculed the other condemnations of the impious made by the prophets, especially the one in which holy Habakkuk says of those who teach false doctrines: Woe to him who makes his neighbours drink of the cup of his wrath, and makes them drunk, to gaze on their caverns. This refers to their teachings which are full of darkness and quite separate from the light.

Why ought we to add anything more? Anyone who wishes can consult the volumes of the heretical Theodore or the heretical chapters from his heretical books which have been included in our acts. Anyone can see his unbelievable folly and the disgraceful utterances made by him. We fear to continue and to rehearse again those shameful things. The writings of the holy fathers against him were also read out to us. We heard what had been written against his folly which was more than all the other heretics, and the historical records and imperial laws which set out his heresy from its beginning. Despite all this, those who defended his heresy, delighting in the insults offered by him to his creator, declared that it was improper to anathematize him after his death. Although we were aware of the ecclesiastical tradition concerning heretics, that they are anathematized even after death, we deemed it necessary to go into this matter as well and it can be found in the acts how several heretics were anathematized after they were dead. In many ways it has become clear to us that those who put forward this argument have no concern for God's judgments, nor for the pronouncements of the apostles, nor for the traditions of the fathers. We would willingly question them concerning what they would say about the Lord, who said of himself: He who believes in him is not condemned, he who does not believe in him is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And about that claim of the Apostle: Even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what you have received, let him be accursed. As we said earlier, I repeat once more: If anyone preaches to you a gospel contrary to what you have received, let him be accursed.

Since the Lord declares that the person is judged already, and the Apostle curses even the angels if they instruct in anything different from what we have preached, how is it possible even for the most presumptuous to assert that these condemnations apply only to those who are still alive? Are they unaware, or rather pretending to be unaware, that to be judged anathematized is just the same as to be separated from God? The heretic, even though he has not been condemned formally by any individual, in reality brings anathema on himself, having cut himself off from the way of truth by his heresy. What reply can such people make to the Apostle when he writes: As for someone who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned.

It was in the spirit of this text that Cyril of holy memory, in the books which he wrote against Theodore, declared as follows: "Whether or not they are alive, we ought to keep clear of those who are in the grip of such dreadful errors. It is necessary always to avoid what is harmful, and not to be worried about public opinion but rather to consider what is pleasing to God". The same Cyril of holy memory, writing to bishop John of Antioch and to the synod which met there about Theodore who was condemned with Nestorius, says, "It was necessary that a brilliant festival should be kept since all those who had expressed opinions in accordance with Nestorius had been rejected, whoever they were. Action was taken against all those who believed, or had at any time believed, in these mistaken views. This is exactly what we and your holiness pronounced: 'We anathematize those who assert that there exist two sons and two Christs. He who is preached by you and us is, as was said, the single Christ, both Son and Lord, the only-begotten as man, as learned Paul says'". Moreover in his letter to the priests and fathers of monks, Alexander, Martinian, John, Paregorious and Maximus, and to those who were living as solitaries along with them, he says: "The holy synod of Ephesus, meeting in accordance with the will of God, has pronounced sentence against the heresy of Nestorius and has condemned according to justice and with accuracy both Nestorius himself and all those who might later, in inane fashion, adopt the same opinions as he held, and those who had previously adhered to the same opinions and who were bold enough to put them in writing, placing upon them all an equal condemnation. It was quite logical that when a condemnation was issued against one person for such stupidity in what he said, then that condemnation should apply not only to that person alone but also, so to speak, against all those who spread the heresies and untruths. They express these falsehoods against the true dogmas of the church, offering worship to two sons, trying to divide what cannot be divided, and introducing to both heaven and earth the offence of the worship of man. But the sacred band of heavenly spirits worship along with us only one lord Jesus Christ". Moreover, several letters of Augustine of sacred memory, who was particularly outstanding among the African bishops, were read in which he indicates that it is correct to condemn heretics even after their death. Other most reverend bishops of Africa have also observed this church custom; moreover the holy church of Rome has issued anathemas against certain bishops even after they were dead, although they had not been accused on matters of faith while they were alive; the acts of our deliberations bear witness to both these cases. Since the followers of Theodore and his heresy, who are plainly opposed to the truth, have tried to adduce some sections of the writings of Cyril and Proclus of holy memory, as though these were in favour of Theodore, it is appropriate to apply to these attempts the observation of the prophet when he writes: The ways of the Lord are right, and the upright walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them. These followers have willfully misunderstood what the holy fathers wrote, even though it was true and appropriate; they have quoted these writings, dissembling excuses for their own iniquities. It seems that the fathers did not lift the anathema against Theodore but rather used the language of concession in order to lead away from their mistake those who offered some defence of Nestorius and his heresy; their aim was to lead them to perfection and to instruct them that not only was Nestorius, the disciple of heresy, condemned but also his teacher Theodore. The fathers indicate their intention in this matter despite the conciliatory forms used: Theodore was to be anathematized. This has been very clearly shown to be the case by us in our acts from the works of Cyril and Proclus of blessed memory in respect of the condemnation of Theodore and his heresy. This conciliatory attitude is also to be found in the holy scriptures. The apostle Paul employed this tactic at the start of his ministry when he was dealing with those who had been Jews; he circumcised Timothy so that by this conciliation and concession he might lead them to perfection. Afterwards, however, he ruled against circumcision, writing on the subject to the Galatians: Now I Paul say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. We found that the defenders of Theodore have done exactly what the heretics were accustomed to do. They have tried to lift the anathema on the said heretical Theodore by omitting some of the things which the holy fathers had written, by including certain confusing falsehoods of their own, and by quoting a letter of Cyril of blessed memory, as if all this were the evidence of the fathers. The passages which they quoted made the truth absolutely clear once the omitted sections were put back in their proper place. The falsehoods were quite apparent when the true writings were collated. In this matter those who issued these empty statements are those who, in the words of scripture, rely on lies, they make empty pleas; they conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity, they weave the spider's web.

After we had investigated in this way Theodore and his heresy, we took the trouble to quote and include in our acts a few of Theodoret's heretical writings against true faith, against the twelve chapters of holy Cyril and against the first synod of Ephesus. We also included some of Theodoret's writings on the side of the heretical Theodore and Nestorius so that it would be made clear, to the satisfaction of anyone reading our acts, that these opinions had been properly rejected and anathematized.

Thirdly, the letter which is alleged to have been written by Ibas to Mari the Persian was brought under scrutiny and we discovered that it too ought to be officially read out. When the letter was read out, its heretical character was immediately apparent to everyone. Until this time there had been some dispute as to whether the aforesaid three chapters ought to be condemned and anathematized. Since the supporters of the heretics Theodore and Nestorius were conspiring to strengthen in another way the case of these men and their heresy, and were alleging that this heretical letter, which approves and defends Theodore and Nestorius, had been accepted by the holy council of Chalcedon, it was therefore necessary for us to demonstrate that that holy synod was unaffected by the heresy which is present in that letter, and that clearly those who make such allegations are doing so not with the assistance of the holy council but so as to give some support to their own heresy by associating it with the name of Chalcedon. It was demonstrated in our acts that Ibas was previously accused of the same heresy which is contained in this letter. This accusation was levelled first by Proclus of holy memory, bishop of Constantinople, and afterwards by Theodosius of blessed memory and Flavian, the bishop there after Proclus, both of whom gave the task of examining the whole matter to Photius, bishop of Tyre, and to Eustathius, bishop of the city of Beirut. When Ibas was later found to be blameworthy, he was deposed from the episcopate. This being the state of affairs, how could anyone be so bold as to allege that that heretical letter was accepted by the holy council of Chalcedon or that the holy council of Chalcedon agreed with it in its entirety? So as to prevent those who misrepresent the holy council of Chalcedon in this way from having any further opportunity to do so we instructed that there should be a formal reading of the official pronouncements of the holy synods, namely the first of Ephesus and that of Chalcedon, on the subject of the letters of Cyril of holy memory and of Leo of blessed memory, formerly pope of older Rome. We gathered from these authorities that nothing which has been written by anyone ought to be accepted unless it has been shown conclusively that it is in accord with the true faith of the holy fathers. Therefore we broke off from our deliberations so as to reiterate in a formal declaration the definition of faith which was promulgated by the holy council of Chalcedon. We compared what was written in the letter with this official statement. When this comparison was made, it was quite apparent that the contents of the letter were quite contradictory to those of the definition of faith. The definition was in accord with the unique, permanent faith set out by the 318 holy fathers, and by the 150, and by those who gathered for the first council at Ephesus. The heretical letter, on the other hand, included the blasphemies of the heretical Theodore and Nestorius and even gave support to them and describes them as doctors, while it condemns the holy fathers as heretics. We make it quite clear to everyone that we do not intend to omit what the fathers had to say in the first and second investigations, which are adduced by the supporters of Theodore and Nestorius in support of their case. Rather these statements and all the others were formally read out and what they contained was submitted to official scrutiny, and we found that they had not allowed the said Ibas to be accepted until they had obliged him to anathematize Nestorius and his heretical doctrines which were affirmed in that letter. This was the view not only of the two bishops whose interventions some have tried to misapply but also of the other religious bishops of that holy council. They also acted thus in the case of Theodoret and insisted that he anathematize those opinions about which he was accused. If they would permit the acceptance of Ibas only if he condemned the heresy which was to be found in his letter, and on condition that he subscribed to a definition of faith set out by the council, how can an attempt be made to allege that this heretical letter was accepted by the same holy council? We are rightly told: What partnership has righteousness with iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? What participation has the temple of God with idols?

Now that we have given the details of what our council has achieved, we repeat our formal confession that we accept the four holy synods, that is, of Nicaea, of Constantinople, the first of Ephesus, and of Chalcedon. Our teaching is and has been all that they have defined concerning the one faith. We consider those who do not respect these things as foreign to the catholic church. Furthermore, we condemn and anathematize, along with all other heretics who have been condemned and anathematized by the same four holy councils and by the holy, catholic and apostolic church, Theodore, formerly bishop of Mopsuestia, and his heretical writings, and also what Theodoret heretically wrote against the true faith, against the twelve chapters of holy Cyril and against the first synod of Ephesus, and we condemn also what he wrote defending Theodore and Nestorius. Additionally, we anathematize the heretical letter which Ibas is alleged to have written to Mari the Persian. This letter denies that God the Word was made incarnate of the ever virgin Mary, the holy mother of God, and that he was made man. It also condemns as a heretic Cyril of holy memory, who taught the truth, and suggests that he held the same opinions as Apollinarius. The letter condemns the first synod of Ephesus for deposing Nestorius without proper process and investigation. It calls the twelve chapters of holy Cyril heretical and contrary to the orthodox faith, while it supports Theodore and Nestorius and their heretical teachings and writings. Consequently we anathematize the aforesaid three chapters, that is, the heretical Theodore of Mopsuestia along with his detestable writings, and the heretical writings of Theodoret, and the heretical letter which Ibas is alleged to have written. We anathematize the supporters of these works and those who write or have written in defence of them, or who are bold enough to claim that they are orthodox, or who have defended or tried to defend their heresy in the names of holy fathers or of the holy council of Chalcedon.

These matters having been treated with thorough-going exactness, we bear in mind what was promised about the holy church and him who said that the gates of hell will not prevail against it (by these we understand the death-dealing tongues of heretics); we also bear in mind what was prophesied about the church by Hosea when he said, I shall betroth you to me in faithfulness and you shall know the Lord; and we count along with the devil, the father of lies, the uncontrolled tongues of heretics and their heretical writings, together with the heretics themselves who have persisted in their heresy even to death. So we declare to them: Behold all you who kindle a fire, who set brands alight! Walk by the light of your fire, and by the brands which you have kindled! Since we are under command to encourage the people with orthodox teaching and to speak to the heart of Jerusalem, that is the church of God, we very properly hurry to sow in righteousness and to reap the fruit of life. In doing this we are lighting for ourselves the lamp of knowledge from the scriptures and the teachings of the fathers. It has therefore seemed necessary to us to sum up in certain statements both our declarations of the truth and our condemnations of heretics and their heretical teachings.

Anathemas against the "Three Chapters"

1. If anyone will not confess that the Father, Son and holy Spirit have one nature or substance, that they have one power and authority, that there is a consubstantial Trinity, one Deity to be adored in three subsistences or persons: let him be anathema. There is only one God and Father, from whom all things come, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things are, and one holy Spirit, in whom all things are.

2. If anyone will not confess that the Word of God has two nativities, that which is before all ages from the Father, outside time and without a body, and secondly that nativity of these latter days when the Word of God came down from the heavens and was made flesh of holy and glorious Mary, mother of God and ever-virgin, and was born from her: let him be anathema.

3. If anyone declares that the [Word] of God who works miracles is not identical with the Christ who suffered, or alleges that God the Word was with the Christ who was born of woman, or was in him in the way that one might be in another, but that our lord Jesus Christ was not one and the same, the Word of God incarnate and made man, and that the miracles and the sufferings which he voluntarily underwent in the flesh were not of the same person: let him be anathema.

4. If anyone declares that it was only in respect of grace, or of principle of action, or of dignity or in respect of equality of honour, or in respect of authority, or of some relation, or of some affection or power that there was a unity made between the Word of God and the man, or if anyone alleges that it is in respect of good will, as if God the Word was pleased with the man, because he was well and properly disposed to God, as Theodore claims in his madness; or if anyone says that this union is only a sort of synonymity, as the Nestorians allege, who call the Word of God Jesus and Christ, and even designate the human separately by the names "Christ" and "Son", discussing quite obviously two different persons, and only pretending to speak of one person and one Christ when the reference is to his title, honour, dignity or adoration; finally if anyone does not accept the teaching of the holy fathers that the union occurred of the Word of God with human flesh which is possessed by a rational and intellectual soul, and that this union is by synthesis or by person, and that therefore there is only one person, namely the lord Jesus Christ, one member of the holy Trinity: let him be anathema. The notion of "union" can be understood in many different ways. The supporters of the wickedness of Apollinarius and Eutyches have asserted that the union is produced by a confusing of the uniting elements, as they advocate the disappearance of the elements that unite. Those who follow Theodore and Nestorius, rejoicing in the division, have brought in a union which is only by affection. The holy church of God, rejecting the wickedness of both sorts of heresy, states her belief in a union between the Word of God and human flesh which is by synthesis, that is by a union of subsistence. In the mystery of Christ the union of synthesis not only conserves without confusing the elements that come together but also allows no division.

5. If anyone understands by the single subsistence of our lord Jesus Christ that it covers the meaning of many subsistences, and by this argument tries to introduce into the mystery of Christ two subsistences or two persons, and having brought in two persons then talks of one person only in respect of dignity, honour or adoration, as both Theodore and Nestorius have written in their madness; if anyone falsely represents the holy synod of Chalcedon, making out that it accepted this heretical view by its terminology of "one subsistence", and if he does not acknowledge that the Word of God is united with human flesh by subsistence, and that on account of this there is only one subsistence or one person, and that the holy synod of Chalcedon thus made a formal statement of belief in the single subsistence of our lord Jesus Christ: let him be anathema. There has been no addition of person or subsistence to the holy Trinity even after one of its members, God the Word, becoming human flesh.

6. If anyone declares that it can be only inexactly and not truly said that the holy and glorious ever-virgin Mary is the mother of God, or says that she is so only in some relative way, considering that she bore a mere man and that God the Word was not made into human flesh in her, holding rather that the nativity of a man from her was referred, as they say, to God the Word as he was with the man who came into being; if anyone misrepresents the holy synod of Chalcedon, alleging that it claimed that the virgin was the mother of God only according to that heretical understanding which the blasphemous Theodore put forward; or if anyone says that she is the mother of a man or the Christ-bearer, that is the mother of Christ, suggesting that Christ is not God; and does not formally confess that she is properly and truly the mother of God, because he who before all ages was born of the Father, God the Word, has been made into human flesh in these latter days and has been born to her, and it was in this religious understanding that the holy synod of Chalcedon formally stated its belief that she was the mother of God: let him be anathema.

7. If anyone, when speaking about the two natures, does not confess a belief in our one lord Jesus Christ, understood in both his divinity and his humanity, so as by this to signify a difference of natures of which an ineffable union has been made without confusion, in which neither the nature of the Word was changed into the nature of human flesh, nor was the nature of human flesh changed into that of the Word (each remained what it was by nature, even after the union, as this had been made in respect of subsistence); and if anyone understands the two natures in the mystery of Christ in the sense of a division into parts, or if he expresses his belief in the plural natures in the same lord Jesus Christ, God the Word made flesh, but does not consider the difference of those natures, of which he is composed, to be only in the onlooker's mind, a difference which is not compromised by the union (for he is one from both and the two exist through the one) but uses the plurality to suggest that each nature is possessed separately and has a subsistence of its own: let him be anathema.

8. If anyone confesses a belief that a union has been made out of the two natures divinity and humanity, or speaks about the one nature of God the Word made flesh, but does not understand these things according to what the fathers have taught, namely that from the divine and human natures a union was made according to subsistence, and that one Christ was formed, and from these expressions tries to introduce one nature or substance made of the deity and human flesh of Christ: let him be anathema. In saying that it was in respect of subsistence that the only-begotten God the Word was united, we are not alleging that there was a confusion made of each of the natures into one another, but rather that each of the two remained what it was, and in this way we understand that the Word was united to human flesh. So there is only one Christ, God and man, the same being consubstantial with the Father in respect of his divinity, and also consubstantial with us in respect of our humanity. Both those who divide or split up the mystery of the divine dispensation of Christ and those who introduce into that mystery some confusion are equally rejected and anathematized by the church of God.

9. If anyone says that Christ is to be worshipped in his two natures, and by that wishes to introduce two adorations, a separate one for God the Word and another for the man; or if anyone, so as to remove the human flesh or to mix up the divinity and the humanity, monstrously invents one nature or substance brought together from the two, and so worships Christ, but not by a single adoration God the Word in human flesh along with his human flesh, as has been the tradition of the church from the beginning: let him be anathema.

10. If anyone does not confess his belief that our lord Jesus Christ, who was crucified in his human flesh, is truly God and the Lord of glory and one of the members of the holy Trinity: let him be anathema.

11. If anyone does not anathematize Arius, Eunomius, Macedonius, Apollinarius Nestorius, Eutyches and Origen, as well as their heretical books, and also all other heretics who have already been condemned and anathematized by the holy, catholic and apostolic church and by the four holy synods which have already been mentioned, and also all those who have thought or now think in the same way as the aforesaid heretics and who persist in their error even to death: let him be anathema.

12. If anyone defends the heretical Theodore of Mopsuestia, who said that God the Word is one, while quite another is Christ, who was troubled by the passions of the soul and the desires of human flesh, was gradually separated from that which is inferior, and became better by his progress in good works, and could not be faulted in his way of life, and as a mere man was baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the holy Spirit, and through this baptism received the grace of the holy Spirit and came to deserve sonship and to be adored, in the way that one adores a statue of the emperor, as if he were God the Word, and that he became after his resurrection immutable in his thoughts and entirely without sin. Furthermore this heretical Theodore claimed that the union of God the Word to Christ is rather like that which, according to the teaching of the Apostle, is between a man and his wife: The two shall become one. Among innumerable other blasphemies he dared to allege that, when after his resurrection the Lord breathed on his disciples and said, Receive the holy Spirit, he was not truly giving them the holy Spirit, but he breathed on them only as a sign. Similarly he claimed that Thomas's profession of faith made when, after his resurrection, he touched the hands and side of the Lord, namely My Lord and my God, was not said about Christ, but that Thomas was in this way extolling God for raising up Christ and expressing his astonishment at the miracle of the resurrection. This Theodore makes a comparison which is even worse than this when, writing about the acts of the Apostles, he says that Christ was like Plato, Manichaeus, Epicurus and Marcion, alleging that just as each of these men arrived at his own teaching and then had his disciples called after him Platonists, Manichaeans, Epicureans and Marcionites, so Christ found his teaching and then had disciples who were called Christians. If anyone offers a defence for this more heretical Theodore, and his heretical books in which he throws up the aforesaid blasphemies and many other additional blasphemies against our great God and saviour Jesus Christ, and if anyone fails to anathematize him and his heretical books as well as all those who offer acceptance or defence to him, or who allege that his interpretation is correct, or who write on his behalf or on that of his heretical teachings, or who are or have been of the same way of thinking and persist until death in this error: let him be anathema.

13. If anyone defends the heretical writings of Theodoret which were composed against the true faith, against the first holy synod of Ephesus and against holy Cyril and his Twelve Chapters, and also defends what Theodoret wrote to support the heretical Theodore and Nestorius and others who think in the same way as the aforesaid Theodore and Nestorius and accept them or their heresy and if anyone, because of them, shall accuse of being heretical the doctors of the church who have stated their belief in the union according to subsistence of God the Word; and if anyone does not anathematize these heretical books and those who have thought or now think in this way, and all those who have written against the true faith or against holy Cyril and his twelve chapters, and who persist in such heresy until they die: let him be anathema.

14. If anyone defends the letter which Ibas is said to have written to Mari the Persian, which denies that God the Word, who became incarnate of Mary the holy mother of God and ever virgin, became man, but alleges that he was only a man born to her, whom it describes as a temple, as if God the Word was one and the man someone quite different; which condemns holy Cyril as if he were a heretic, when he gives the true teaching of Christians, and accuses holy Cyril of writing opinions like those of the heretical Apollinarius ;which rebukes the first holy synod of Ephesus, alleging that it condemned Nestorius without going into the matter by a formal examination; which claims that the twelve chapters of holy Cyril are heretical and opposed to the true faith; and which defends Theodore and Nestorius and their heretical teachings and books. If anyone defends the said letter and does not anathematize it and all those who offer a defence for it and allege that it or a part of it is correct, or if anyone defends those who have written or shall write in support of it or the heresies contained in it, or supports those who are bold enough to defend it or its heresies in the name of the holy fathers of the holy synod of Chalcedon, and persists in these errors until his death: let him be anathema.

Such then are the assertions we confess. We have received them from

1. holy Scripture, from
2. the teaching of the holy fathers, and from
3. the definitions about the one and the same faith made by the aforesaid four holy synods.

Moreover, condemnation has been passed by us against the heretics and their impiety, and also against those who have justified or shall justify the so-called "Three Chapters", and against those who have persisted or will persist in their own error. If anyone should attempt to hand on, or to teach by word or writing, anything contrary to what we have regulated, then if he is a bishop or somebody appointed to the clergy, in so far as he is acting contrary to what befits priests and the ecclesiastical status, let him be stripped of the rank of priest or cleric, and if he is a monk or lay person, let him be anathema.

Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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THE ELEVENTH COUNCIL OF TOLEDO

Symbol Of Faith (675)

[This small local Council, attended by only 17 bishops, has little significance today except for the beautiful confession of faith which was recited at its opening. The official value of this document consists in the fact that in subsequent centuries it was kept in highest regard and considered a genuine expression of the Trinitarian faith; it is one of the important formulas of doctrine. In fact, hardly anywhere is the reflection of the early Church on the Trinitarian mystery and on Christ expressed with such precision and acumen as in this Creed which sums up the tradition of the earlier Councils and patristic theology of the West.]

[From Neuner and Dupuis; The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church, (New York; Alba House, 1982), pp. 102-106. Numbers refer to Neuner-Dupuis ref. Nos., numbers in brackets to The Denzinger Schoenmetzer equivalents]

(The divine Trinity)

308 [525] We confess and believe that the holy and ineffable Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is one God by nature, of one substance, of one nature as also of one majesty and power.

(The Father)

And we profess that the Father is not begotten, not created, but unbegotten. For He Himself, from whom the Son has received His birth and the Holy Spirit His procession, has His origin from no one. He is therefore the source and origin of the whole Godhead. He Himself is the Father of His own essence, who in an ineffable way has begotten the Son from His ineffable substance. Yet He did not beget something different (aliud) from what He Himself is: God has begotten God, light has begotten light. From Him, therefore, is "all fatherhood in heaven and on earth" (cf. Eph. 3.15 Vulg.).

(The Son)

309 [526] We also confess that the Son was born, but not made, from the substance of the Father, without beginning, before all ages, for at no time did the Father exist without the Son, nor the Son without the Father. Yet the Father is not from the Son, as the Son is from the Father, because the Father was not generated by the Son but the Son by the Father. The Son, therefore, is God from the Father, and the Father is God, but not from the son. He is indeed the Father of the Son, not God from the Son; but the latter is the Son of the Father and God from the Father. Yet in all things the Son is equal to God the Father, for He has never begun nor ceased to be born. We also believe that He is of one substance with the Father; wherefore He is called homoousios with the Father, that is of the same being as the Father, for homos in Greek means 'one' and ousia means 'being', and joined together they mean 'one in being'. We must believe that the Son is begotten or born not from nothing or from any other substance, but from the womb of the Father, that is from His substance. Therefore the Father is eternal, and the Son is also eternal. If He was always Father, He always had a Son, whose Father He was, and therefore we confess that the Son was born from the Father without beginning. We do not call the same Son of God a part of a divided nature,[1]because He was generated from the Father, but we assert that the perfect Father has begotten the perfect Son, without diminution or division, for it pertains to the Godhead alone not to have an unequal Son. This Son of God is also Son by nature, not by adoption; of Him we must also believe that God the Father begot Him neither by an act of will nor out of necessity, for in God there is no necessity nor does will precede wisdom.

[1] f. Vigilius Thaps., ContraArianos, Sabellianos etphotinianos dialogus, 11, 13.

(The Holy Spirit)

310 [527] We also believe that the Holy Spirit, the third person in the Trinity, is God, one and equal with God the Father and the Son, of one substance and of one nature, not, however, begotten nor created but proceeding from both, and that He is the Spirit of both. C)f this Holy Spirit, we also believe that He is neither unbegotten nor begotten, for if we called Him unbegotten we would assert two Fathers, or if begotten, we would appear to preach two Sons. Yet He is called the Spirit not of the Father alone, nor of the Son alone, but of both Father and Son. For He does not proceed from the Father to the Son, nor from the Son to sanctify creatures, but He is shown to have proceeded from both at once, because He is known as the love or the sanctity of both. Hence we believe that the Holy Spirit is sent by both, as the Son is sent by the Father. But He is not less than the Father and the Son, in the way in which the Son, on account of the body which He has assumed, testifies that He is less than the Father and the Holy Spirit.

(The oneness in the Trinity)

311 [528] This is the way of speaking about the Holy Trinity as it has been handed down: one must not call it or believe it to be threefold, but Trinity. Nor can it properly be said that in the one God there is the Trinity, but the one God is the Trinity. In the relative names of the persons the Father is related to the Son, the Son to the Father, and the Holy Spirit to both. While they are called three persons in view of their relations, we believe in one nature or substance. Although we profess three persons, we do not profess three substances, but one substance and three persons. For the Father is Father not with respect to Himself but to the Son, and the Son is Son not to Himself but in relation to the Father; and likewise the Holy Spirit is not referred to Himself but is related to the Father and the Son, inasmuch as He is called the Spirit of the Father and the Son. So when we say 'God', this does not express a relationship to another, as of the Father to the Son or of the Son to the Father or of the Holy Spirit to the Father and the Son, but 'God' refers to Himself only.

312 [529] For, if we are asked about the single persons, we must confess that each is God. Therefore, we say that the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God ' each one distinctly; yet there are not three gods, but one God. Similarly, we say that the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty, the Holy Spirit is almighty, each one distinctly; yet there are not three almighty ones, but one Almighty, as we profess one light and one principle. Hence we confess and believe that each person distinctly is fully God, and the three persons together are one God. Theirs is an undivided and equal Godhead, majesty and power, which is neither diminished in the single persons nor increased in the three. For it is not less when each person is called God separately, nor is it greater when all three persons are called one God.

313 [530] This Holy Trinity, which is the one true God, is not without number; yet it is not comprised by number, because in the relationships of the persons there appears number, but in the substance of the Godhead nothing is comprised that could be counted. Therefore they imply number only in so far as they are mutually related, but they lack number in so far as they are by themselves (ad se). For this Holy Trinity has so much one name referring to its nature that it cannot be used in the plural with relation to the three persons. This then is, in our faith, the meaning of the saying in Holy Scripture: "Great is our Lord, abundant in power, and of His wisdom there is no number" (Ps. 147 (146) 5 Vulg.).

(The Trinity in the oneness)

314 [530] However, though we have said that these three persons are one God, we are not allowed to say that the same one is the Father who is the Son, or that He is the Son who is the Father, or that He who is the Holy Spirit is either the Father or the Son. For He is not the Father who is the Son, nor is the Son He who is the Father, nor is the Holy Spirit He who is the Father or the Son, even though the Father is that which the Son is, the Son that which the Father is, the Father and the Son that which the Holy Spirit is, that is one God by nature. For, when we say: He who is the Father is not the Son, we refer to the distinction of persons; but when we say: the Father is that which the Son is, the Son that which the Father is, and the Holy Spirit that which the Father is and the Son is, this clearly refers to the nature or substance, whereby God exists since in substance they are one; for we distinguish the persons, but we do not divide the Godhead.

[531] Hence, we recognise the Trinity in the distinction of persons and we profess the unity on account of the nature or substance. Thus, the three are one by nature, not as person.

(The undivided Trinity)

315 [531] Nevertheless these three persons are not to be considered separable since, according to our belief, none of them ever existed or acted before another, after another, without another. For they are inseparable both in what they are and in what they do, because, according to our faith, between the Father who generates and the Son who is generated or the Holy Spirit who proceeds, there has not been an interval of time in which the one who generates would precede the one who is generated, or there would be no begotten one to Him who begets, or the Holy Spirit in His proceeding would appear later than Father or Son. For this reason we profess and believe that this Trinity is inseparable and distinct (inconfusa). We say, therefore, of these three persons, as our forefathers defined it, that they should be acknowledged, not separated. For if we listen to what Holy Scripture says about Wisdom: "She is a reflection of eternal light" (Wis. 7.26), we see that, as the reflection belongs inseparably to the light, so too, according to our confession, the Son cannot be separated from the Father. Therefore, neither do we confuse these three persons whose nature is one and inseparable, nor do we preach that they are in any way separable.

316 [532] The Holy Trinity itself has indeed deigned clearly to reveal it to us: in these names by which He wanted the single persons to be known, it is impossible to understand one person without the other; one cannot conceive of the Father without the Son, nor can the Son be found without the Father. Indeed, the very relationship expressed in the personal names forbids us to separate the persons, for, though it does not name them together, it implies them. No one can hear any one of these names without necessarily understanding also the other. While then these Three are One and this One Three, each of the persons retains His own characteristics: The Father has eternity without birth; the Son has eternity with birth; the Holy Spirit has procession without birth with eternity.

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THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Session III - 680-681 A. D.

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To make an end of the Monothelite controversy, Emperor Constantine IV asked Pope Donus in 678 to send twelve bishops and four western Greek monastic superiors to represent the pope at an assembly of eastern and western theologians. Pope Agatho, who meanwhile had succeeded Donus, ordered consultation in the west on this important matter. Around Easter 680 a synod in Rome of 125 Italian bishops, with Pope Agatho presiding, assessed the replies of the regional synods of the west and composed a profession of faith in which Monothelitism was condemned. Legates of the pope took this profession to Constantinople, arriving at the beginning of September 680.

On 10 September 680 the emperor issued an edict to Patriarch George of Constantinople, ordering a council of bishops to be convoked. The council assembled on 7 November in the hall of the imperial palace in Constantinople. It immediately called itself an ecumenical council. There were 18 sessions, at the first eleven of which the emperor presided.

In the 8th session, on 7 March 681, the council adopted the teaching of Pope Agatho in condemnation of Monothelitism. Patriarch Macarius of Antioch was one of the few who refused his assent; he was deposed in the 12th session.

The doctrinal conclusions of the council were defined in the 17th session and promulgated in the 18th and last session on 16 September 681. The acts of the council, signed both by 174 fathers and finally by the emperor himself, were sent to Pope Leo II, who had succeeded Agatho, and he, when he had approved them, ordered them to be translated into Latin and to be signed by all the bishops of the west. Constantine IV, however, promulgated the decrees of the council in all parts of the empire by imperial edict. The council did not debate church discipline and did not establish any disciplinary cannons.

Exposition of faith

The only Son and Word of God the Father, who became a man like us in all things but sin, Christ our true God, proclaimed clearly in the words of the gospel; I am the light of the world; anyone who follows me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life, and again, My peace I leave to you, my peace I give you. Our most mild emperor, champion of right belief and adversary of wrong belief, guided in godly wisdom by this teaching of peace spoken by God, has brought together this holy and universal assembly of ours and set at one the whole judgment of the church.

Wherefore this holy and universal synod of ours, driving afar the error of impiety which endured for some time even till the present, following without deviation in a straight path after the holy and accepted fathers, has piously accorded in all things with the five holy and universal synods: that is to say, with

1. the synod of 318 holy fathers who gathered at Nicaea against the madman Arius, and
2. that which followed it at Constantinople of 150 God-led men against Macedonius, opponent of the Spirit, and the impious Apollinarius; similarly too, with
3. the first at Ephesus of 200 godly men brought together against Nestorius, who thought as the Jews and
4. that at Chalcedon of 630 God-inspired fathers against Eutyches and Dioscorus, hateful to God; also, in addition to these, with
5. the fifth holy synod, the latest of them, which was gathered here against Theodore of Mopsuestia, Origen, Didymus and Evagrius, and the writings of Theodoret against the twelve chapters of the renowned Cyril, and the letter said to have been written by Ibas to Mari the Persian.

Reaffirming the divine tenets of piety in all respects unaltered, and banishing the profane teachings of impiety, this holy and universal synod of ours has also, in its turn, under God's inspiration, set its seal on the creed which was made out by the 318 fathers and confirmed again with godly prudence by the 150 and which the other holy synods too accepted gladly and ratified for the elimination of all soul-corrupting heresy

We believe in one God ...[Creed of Nicaea and of Constantinople 1]

The holy and universal synod said:

This pious and orthodox creed of the divine favour was enough for a complete knowledge of the orthodox faith and a complete assurance therein. But since from the first, the contriver of evil did not rest, finding an accomplice in the serpent and through him bringing upon human nature the poisoned dart of death, so too now he has found instruments suited to his own purpose—namely Theodore, who was bishop of Pharan, Sergius, Pyrrhus, Paul and Peter, who were bishops of this imperial city, and further Honorius, who was pope of elder Rome, Cyrus, who held the see of Alexandria, and Macarius, who was recently bishop of Antioch, and his disciple Stephen — and has not been idle in raising through them obstacles of error against the full body of the church sowing with novel speech among the orthodox people the heresy of a single will and a single principle of action in the two natures of the one member of the holy Trinity Christ our true God, a heresy in harmony with the evil belief, ruinous to the mind, of the impious Apollinarius, Severus and Themistius, and one intent on removing the perfection of the becoming man of the same one lord Jesus Christ our God, through a certain guileful device, leading from there to the blasphemous conclusion that his rationally animate flesh is without a will and a principle of action.

Therefore Christ our God has stirred up the faithful emperor, the new David, finding in him a man after his own heart, who, as the scripture says, did not allow his eyes sleep or his eyelids drowsing until through this holy assembly of ours, brought together by God, he found the perfect proclamation of right belief; for according to the God-spoken saying, Where there are two or three gathered in my name, there am I in their midst.

This same holy and universal synod, here present, faithfully accepts and welcomes with open hands the report of Agatho, most holy and most blessed pope of elder Rome, that came to our most reverend and most faithful emperor Constantine, which rejected by name those who proclaimed and taught, as has been already explained, one will and one principle of action in the incarnate dispensation of Christ our true God; and likewise it approves as well the other synodal report to his God-taught serenity, from the synod of 125 bishops dear to God meeting under the same most holy pope, as according with the holy synod at Chalcedon and with the Tome of the all-holy and most blessed Leo, pope of the same elder Rome, which was sent to Flavian, who is among the saints, and which that synod called a pillar of right belief, and furthermore with the synodal letters written by the blessed Cyril against the impious Nestorius and to the bishops of the east.

Following the five holy and universal synods and the holy and accepted fathers, and defining in unison, it professes our lord Jesus Christ our true God, one of the holy Trinity, which is of one same being and is the source of life, to be perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity, the same truly God and truly man, of a rational soul and a body; consubstantial with the Father as regards his divinity, and the same consubstantial with us as regards his humanity, like us in all respects except for sin; begotten before the ages from the Father as regards his divinity, and in the last days the same for us and for our salvation from the holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, who is properly and truly called mother of God, as regards his humanity; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, acknowledged in two natures which undergo no confusion, no change, no separation, no division; at no point was the difference between the natures taken away through the union, but rather the property of both natures is preserved and comes together into a single subsistent being [in unam personam et in unam subsistentiam concurrente]; he is not parted or divided into two persons, but is one and the same only-begotten Son, Word of God, lord Jesus Christ, just as the prophets taught from the beginning about him, and as Jesus the Christ himself instructed us, and as the creed of the holy fathers handed it down to us.

And we proclaim equally two natural volitions or wills in him and two natural principles of action which undergo no division, no change, no partition, no confusion, in accordance with the teaching of the holy fathers. And the two natural wills not in opposition, as the impious heretics said, far from it, but his human will following, and not resisting or struggling, rather in fact subject to his divine and all powerful will. For the will of the flesh had to be moved, and yet to be subjected to the divine will, according to the most wise Athanasius. For just as his flesh is said to be and is flesh of the Word of God, so too the natural will of his flesh is said to and does belong to the Word of God, just as he says himself: I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of the Father who sent me, calling his own will that of his flesh, since his flesh too became his own. For in the same way that his all holy and blameless animate flesh was not destroyed in being made divine but remained in its own limit and category, so his human will as well was not destroyed by being made divine, but rather was preserved, according to the theologian Gregory, who says: "For his willing, when he is considered as saviour, is not in opposition to God, being made divine in its entirety." And we hold there to be two natural principles of action in the same Jesus Christ our lord and true God, which undergo no division, no change, no partition, no confusion, that is, a divine principle of action and a human principle of action, according to the godly-speaking Leo, who says most clearly: "For each form does in a communion with the other that activity which it possesses as its own, the Word working that which is the Word's and the body accomplishing the things that are the body's". For of course we will not grant the existence of only a single natural principle of action of both God and creature, lest we raise what is made to the level of divine being, or indeed reduce what is most specifically proper to the divine nature to a level befitting creatures for we acknowledge that the miracles and the sufferings are of one and the same according to one or the other of the two natures out of which he is and in which he has his being, as the admirable Cyril said. Therefore, protecting on all sides the "no confusion" and "no division", we announce the whole in these brief words: Believing our lord Jesus Christ, even after his incarnation, to be one of the holy Trinity and our true God, we say that he has two natures [naturas] shining forth in his one subsistence[subsistentia] in which he demonstrated the miracles and the sufferings throughout his entire providential dwelling here, not in appearance but in truth, the difference of the natures being made known in the same one subsistence in that each nature wills and performs the things that are proper to it in a communion with the other; then in accord with this reasoning we hold that two natural wills and principles of action meet in correspondence for the salvation of the human race.

So now that these points have been formulated by us with all precision in every respect and with all care, we definitely state that it is not allowable for anyone to produce another faith, that is, to write or to compose or to consider or to teach others; those who dare to compose another faith, or to support or to teach or to hand on another creed to those who wish to turn to knowledge of the truth, whether from Hellenism or Judaism or indeed from any heresy whatsoever, or to introduce novelty of speech, that is, invention of terms, so as to overturn what has now been defined by us, such persons, if they are bishops or clerics, are deprived of their episcopacy or clerical rank, and if they are monks or layfolk they are excommunicated.

Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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SECOND COUNCIL OF NICAEA (787)

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Introduction

A recommendation to summon an ecumenical council, in order to correct the iconoclast heretics, had been addressed to Empress Irene, then acting as regent for her son Emperor Constantine VI (780-797) who was still a minor, both by Patriarch Paul IV of Constantinople (who had repented of his earlier iconoclast views) before his abdication from the see in 784 and by his successor as patriarch, Tarasius. The aim was to unite the church and to condemn the decrees passed by the council of 338 bishops held at Hiereia and St Mary of Blachernae in 754.

The convocation of the council was announced to Pope Hadrian I (772-795) in a letter of Constantine VI and Irene, dated 29 August 784. They urged him either to attend in person or to send legates. Patriarch Tarasius sent the same message in synodal letters to the pope and the three eastern patriarchs. Pope Hadrian I gave his approval for the convocation of the council, stipulating various conditions, and sent as his legates the archpriest Peter and Peter, abbot of the Greek monastery of St Sabas in Rome.

The council, which was summoned by an imperial edict in the summer of 786, met for the first time on 1 August 786, in the presence of Emperor Constantine and Empress Irene. When the proceedings were interrupted by the violent entry of iconoclast soldiers, faithful to the memory of Emperor Constantine V (741-775), the council was adjourned until the arrival of a reliable army under Staurakios. It assembled again at Nicaea on 24 September 787, the papal legates having been recalled from Sicily.

After the bishops suspected of heresy had been admitted, 263 fathers embraced the doctrine concerning the cult of sacred images as explained in the letters of Pope Hadrian I, which were read out at the second session.

The question of the intercession of saints was dealt with in the fourth session.

Once all these matters had been approved, a doctrinal definition was decreed at the seventh session.

At the eighth and last session, which was held at the request of Constantine and Irene in the Magnaura palace in Constantinople, the definition was again decreed and proclaimed and 22 canons were read out. The papal legates presided over the council and were the first to sign the acts; but in reality it was Patriarch Tarasius who presided, and it was he, at the command of the council, who informed Pope Hadrian I about it: "the occasion when the letters of your fraternal holiness were read out and all acclaimed them".

Pope Hadrian I wrote no letter in reply, yet the defence he made of the council in 794 against Charlemagne shows that he accepted what the council had decreed, and that he had sent no acknowledgement because the concessions which he had requested in his letter of 26 October 785 to Constantine and Irene had not been granted to him, especially concerning the restoration of the papacy's patrimony to the state at which it had been prior to 731, that is, before Illyricum had been confiscated by the emperor Leo III. Emperor Constantine VI and his mother Irene signed the acts of the council but it is unclear whether or not they promulgated a decree on the matter.

The translation is from the Greek text, since this is the more authoritative version. {Material in curly parentheses ,{ }, paragraphing, italicizing and bolding, are added by the hypertext editor. The material in square brackets [ ] is found in the hardcopy book from which the translation was taken.}

Definition

The holy, great and universal synod, by the grace of God and by order of our pious and Christ-loving emperor and empress, Constantine and his mother Irene, assembled for the second time in the famous metropolis of the Nicaeans in the province of the Bithynians, in the holy church of God named after Wisdom, following the tradition of the catholic church, has decreed what is here laid down.

{**The council bases itself on the inspiration of Tradition & of itself**}

The one who granted us the light of recognizing him, the one who redeemed us from the darkness of idolatrous insanity, Christ our God, when he took for his bride his holy catholic church, having no blemish or wrinkle, promised he would guard her and assured his holy disciples saying, I am with you every day until the consummation of this age. This promise however he made not only to them but also to us, who thanks to them have come to believe in his name. To this gracious offer some people paid no attention, being hoodwinked by the treacherous foe they abandoned the true line of reasoning, and setting themselves against the tradition of the catholic church they faltered in their grasp of the truth. As the proverbial saying puts it, they turned askew the axles of their farm carts and gathered no harvest in their hands. Indeed they had the effrontery to criticise the beauty pleasing to God established in the holy monuments; they were priests in name, but not in reality. They were those of whom God calls out by prophecy, Many pastors have destroyed my vine, they have defiled my portion. For they followed unholy men and trusting to their own frenzies they calumniated the holy church, which Christ our God has espoused to himself, and they failed to distinguish the holy from the profane, asserting that the icons of our Lord and of his saints were no different from the wooden images of satanic idols.

Therefore the Lord God, not bearing that what was subject to him should be destroyed by such a corruption, has by his good pleasure summoned us together through the divine diligence and decision of Constantine and Irene, our faithful emperor and empress, we who are those responsible for the priesthood everywhere, in order that the divinely inspired tradition of the catholic church should receive confirmation by a public decree. So having made investigation with all accuracy and having taken counsel, setting for our aim the truth, we neither diminish nor augment, but simply guard intact all that pertains to the catholic church.

{**Recapitulation and re-affirmation of everything taught by any previous ecumenical council**}

Thus, following the six holy universal synods, in the first place that assembled in the famous metropolis of the Nicaeans {{1}Nicea I}, and then that held after it in the imperial, God-guarded city: {i.e. {2} Constantinople I} We believe in one God ...[the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed follows]. We abominate and anathematize Arius and those who think like him and share in his mad error; also Macedonius and those with him, properly called the Pneumatomachi; we also confess our Lady, the holy Mary, to be really and truly the God-bearer, because she gave birth in the flesh to Christ, one of the Trinity, our God, just as the first synod at {3}Ephesus decreed; it also expelled from the church Nestorius and those with him, because they were introducing a duality of persons. Along with these synods, we also confess the two natures of the one who became incarnate for our sake from the God-bearer without blemish, Mary the ever-virgin, recognizing that he is perfect God and perfect man, as the synod at {4}Chalcedon also proclaimed, when it drove from the divine precinct the foul-mouthed Eutyches and Dioscorus. We reject along with them Severus Peter and their interconnected band with their many blasphemies, in whose company we anathematize the mythical speculations of Origen, Evagrius and Didymus, as did the fifth synod, that assembled at {5}Constantinople. Further we declare that there are two wills and principles of action, in accordance with what is proper to each of the natures in Christ, in the way that the sixth synod, that at {6}Constantinople, proclaimed, when it also publicly rejected Sergius, Honorius, Cyrus, Pyrrhus, Macarius, those uninterested in true holiness, and their like-minded followers.

To summarize, we declare that we defend free from any innovations all the—written and—unwritten ecclesiastical traditions that have been entrusted to us.

{**Council formulates for the first time what the Church has always believed regarding icons**}

One of these is the production of representational art; this is quite in harmony with the history of the spread of the gospel, as it provides confirmation that the becoming man of the Word of God was real and not just imaginary, and as it brings us a similar benefit. For, things that mutually illustrate one another undoubtedly possess one another's message.

Given this state of affairs and stepping out as though on the royal highway, following as we are the God-spoken teaching of our holy fathers and the tradition of the catholic church — for we recognize that this tradition comes from the holy Spirit who dwells in her—we decree with full precision and care that, like the figure of the honoured and life-giving cross, the revered and holy images, whether painted or made of mosaic or of other suitable material, are to be exposed in the holy churches of God, on sacred instruments and vestments, on walls and panels, in houses and by public ways, these are the images of our Lord, God and saviour, Jesus Christ, and of our Lady without blemish, the holy God-bearer, and of the revered angels and of any of the saintly holy men.

The more frequently they are seen in representational art, the more are those who see them drawn to remember and long for those who serve as models, and to pay these images the tribute of salutation and respectful veneration. Certainly this is not the full adoration {latria} in accordance with our faith, which is properly paid only to the divine nature, but it resembles that given to the figure of the honoured and life-giving cross, and also to the holy books of the gospels and to other sacred cult objects. Further, people are drawn to honour these images with the offering of incense and lights, as was piously established by ancient custom. Indeed, the honour paid to an image traverses it, reaching the model, and he who venerates the image, venerates the person represented in that image.

So it is that the teaching of our holy fathers is strengthened, namely, the tradition of the catholic church which has received the gospel from one end of the earth to the other.

So it is that we really follow Paul, who spoke in Christ, and the entire divine apostolic group and the holiness of the fathers, clinging fast to the traditions which we have received.

So it is that we sing out with the prophets the hymns of victory to the church: Rejoice exceedingly O daughter of Zion, proclaim O daughter of Jerusalem; enjoy your happiness and gladness with a full heart. The Lord has removed away from you the injustices of your enemies, you have been redeemed from the hand of your foes. The Lord the king is in your midst, you will never more see evil, and peace will be upon you for time eternal.

Therefore all those who dare to think or teach anything different, or who follow the accursed heretics in rejecting ecclesiastical traditions, or who devise innovations, or who spurn anything entrusted to the church (whether it be the gospel or the figure of the cross or any example of representational art or any martyr's holy relic), or who fabricate perverted and evil prejudices against cherishing any of the lawful traditions of the catholic church, or who secularize the sacred objects and saintly monasteries, we order that they be suspended if they are bishops or clerics, and excommunicated if they are monks or lay people.

Anathemas concerning holy images

1. If anyone does not confess that Christ our God can be represented in his humanity, let him be anathema.

2. If anyone does not accept representation in art of evangelical scenes, let him be anathema.

3. If anyone does not salute such representations as standing for the Lord and his saints, let him be anathema.

4. If anyone rejects any written or unwritten tradition of the church, let him be anathema.

Canons

1

For those to whom the priestly dignity is allotted, the guide-lines contained in the canonical regulations are testimonies and directives. We accept them gladly and sing out to the Lord God with David, the revealer of God: In the path of your testimonies I have taken delight, as with all manner of wealth; and, You have enjoined justice, your testimonies are for ever; instruct me to give me life. And if the prophetic voice orders us for all eternity to observe the messages of God and to live in them, it is obvious that they remain unshakeable and immovable; thus Moses, who looked on God, declares, To these there is no addition, and from these there is no subtraction. The divine apostle takes pride in them when he cries out, These things which the angels long to gaze upon, and, If an angel brings you a gospel contrary to what you have received, let him be accursed.

Since these things really are such and have been testified to us in these ways, we exult in them as a person would if he were to come across a great mass of booty. We joyfully embrace the sacred canons and we maintain complete and unshaken their regulation, both those expounded by those trumpets of the Spirit, the apostles worthy of all praise, and those from the six holy universal synods and from the synods assembled locally for the promulgation of such decrees, and from our holy fathers. Indeed all of these, enlightened by one and the same Spirit, decreed what is expedient. In the case of those whom they sent away under an anathema, we also anathematize them, those whom they suspended, we also suspend; those whom they excommunicated, we also excommunicate; those whom they placed under penalties, we also deal with in the same way. Let your conduct be free from avariciousness, contenting yourself with what you have, cried out with all explicitness the divine apostle Paul, who mounted to the third heaven and heard words that cannot be uttered.

2

Since we make an undertaking before God as we sing, I shall meditate on your judgments, I shall not neglect your words, it is essential to our salvation that every Christian should observe these things, but more especially those who have been invested with priestly dignity. Therefore we decree that everyone who is to be advanced to the grade of bishop should have a thorough knowledge of the psalter, in order that he may instruct all the clergy subordinate to him, to be initiated in that book. He should also be examined without fail by the metropolitan to see if he is willing to acquire knowledge—a knowledge that should be searching and not superficial—of the sacred canons, the holy gospel, the book of the divine apostle, and all divine scripture; also if he is willing to conduct himself and teach the people entrusted to him according to the divine commandments.

"The substance of our hierarchy are the words handed down from God", that is to say, the true knowledge of the divine scriptures, as the great Dionysius made plain. If someone is doubtful and ill at ease with such conduct and teaching, let him not be ordained. For God said through the prophet: You rejected knowledge, and I shall reject you, so that you may not serve me in a priestly function.

3

Any election of a bishop, priest or deacon brought about by the rulers is to be null and void in accordance with the canon that says: "If any bishop, through the influence of secular rulers, acquires responsibility for a church because of them, let him be suspended and let all those who are in communion with him be excommunicated".

It is necessary that the person who is to be advanced to a bishopric should be elected by bishops, as has been decreed by the holy fathers at Nicaea in the canon that says: "It is by all means desirable that a bishop should be appointed by all [the bishops] in the province. But if this is difficult because of some pressing necessity or the length of the journey involved, let at least three come together and perform the ordination, but only after the absent bishops have taken part in the vote and given their written consent. But in each province the right of confirming the proceedings belongs to the metropolitan".

4

The herald of the truth, Paul, the divine apostle, laying down a sort of rule for the presbyters of Ephesus, or rather for the whole priestly order, declared firmly: I have not coveted silver or gold or anybody's clothing; I have made completely plain to you that it is by working in this fashion that we should provide for the weak being convinced that it is blessed to give.

Therefore we also, having been taught by him, decree that a bishop should never have any sort of design on foul profit, inventing excuses for his sins, nor demand any gold or silver or anything similar from the bishops, clerics and monks subject to him. For the apostle says: The unjust will not inherit the kingdom of God; and, It is not children who should heap up treasures for their parents, but parents for their children.

So if it is discovered that somebody, because of a demand for gold or something similar, or because of some private infatuation of his own, has excluded from the liturgy or excommunicated one of the clerics under his authority, or has closed off one of the holy churches, preventing the celebration of God's liturgies in it, pouring out his own madness against insensible things, then he is truly senseless himself and he should be subjected to suffer what he would inflict and the penalty imposed by him will turn upon his own head, because he has transgressed both the law of God and the rulings of the apostles. For Peter also, the spokesman of the apostles, urges: Be pastors to the flock of God entrusted to you, not under compulsion, but willingly as pleasing to God, not for sordid gain but with enthusiasm, not as men who lord it over those entrusted to you, but as being models for the flock. Then when the chief shepherd is disclosed, you will carry off the imperishable crown of glory.

5

It is a sin leading to death when sinners remain uncorrected, but still worse is it when people flaunt their sin as they override holiness and truth, both preferring mammon to obedience to God and neglecting his legally formulated instructions. The Lord God is not present among such persons unless they humbly turn from their fault. Their duty is to approach God with a contrite heart and implore his forgiveness for their sin and his pardon, rather than to take pride in an unholy distribution of gifts: For the Lord is close to the contrite of heart. Therefore in the case of those who boast that they have been appointed in the church by distributing gifts of gold, and who pin their hopes on this evil custom, which alienates a person from God and from all priesthood, and who take this as a reason for deriding quite shamelessly and openly those who have been chosen by the holy Spirit and appointed for the virtue of their lives, without any distribution of gifts of gold, when they first do this each should take the lowest rank in his order, and if they persist they should be corrected with a penalty.

If someone is found to have done this at any time in connection with an ordination, let matters proceed in accordance with the apostolic canon which says: "If some bishop or priest or deacon has obtained his dignity by means of money, let him and the person who performed the ordination be suspended, and let them be excluded completely from the communion, as Simon Magus was by me, Peter".

Similarly, in accordance with canon 2 of our holy fathers at Chalcedon, which says "If any bishop performs an ordination for money and puts the unsaleable grace on sale, and ordains for money a bishop, a chorepiscopus, a presbyter or deacons or some others of those numbered among the clergy; or appoints a manager, a legal officer or a warden for money, or any other ecclesiastic at all for personal sordid gain; let him who has attempted this and been convicted stand to lose his personal rank, and let the person ordained profit nothing from the ordination or appointment he has bought; but let him be removed from the dignity or responsibility which he got for money. And if anyone appears to have acted even as a go-between in such disgraceful and unlawful dealings, let him too, if he is a cleric, be demoted from his personal rank, and if he is a lay person or a monk, let him be anathematized".

6

Although there is indeed a canon which says, "In each province the canonical investigations should take place twice yearly by means of a gathering of the bishops", because of the trouble and because those attending the meetings lack the resources for such journeys, the holy fathers of the sixth synod decreed "they should be held in any case and despite all excuses, once a year, and all that is incorrect should be put right". We also renew this canon, and should a ruler be found who prevents its observance, let him be excommunicated; however if one of the metropolitan bishops neglects its fulfillment, let him be subject to canonical penalties, unless it is a case of necessity, constraint or some other reasonable cause.

When such a synod is held to discuss canonical and evangelical matters, the gathered bishops should pay particular care and attention to the divine and life-giving laws of God: There is a great reward for their observance; for a law is a lamp, a regulation is a light, and reproof and discipline are the path of life indeed the law of the Lord gives light to the eyes. However, the metropolitan bishop does not have the right to demand anything that a bishop may have brought with him, such as a beast or some other thing; and if he is convicted of doing so, let him pay back fourfold.

7

The divine apostle Paul said: The sins of some people are manifest, those of others appear later. Some sins take the front rank but others follow in their footsteps. Thus in the train of the impious heresy of the defamers of Christians, many other impieties appeared. Just as those heretics removed the sight of venerable icons from the church, they also abandoned other customs, which should now be renewed and which should be in vigour in virtue of both written and unwritten legislation. Therefore we decree that in venerable churches consecrated without relics of the holy martyrs, the installation of relics should take place along with the usual prayers. And if in future any bishop is found out consecrating a church without relics, let him be deposed as someone who has flouted the ecclesiastical traditions.

8

Since some of those who come from the religion of the Hebrews mistakenly think to make a mockery of Christ who is God, pretending to become Christians, but denying Christ in private by both secretly continuing to observe the sabbath and maintaining other Jewish practices, we decree that they shall not be received to communion or at prayer or into the church, but rather let them openly be Hebrews according to their own religion; they should not baptize their children or buy, or enter into possession of, a slave. But if one of them makes his conversion with a sincere faith and heart, and pronounces his confession wholeheartedly, disclosing their practices and objects in the hope that others may be refuted and corrected, such a person should be welcomed and baptized along with his children, and care should be taken that they abandon Hebrew practices. However if they are not of this sort, they should certainly not be welcomed.

9

All those childish baubles and bacchic rantings, the false writings composed against the venerable icons, should be given in at the episcopal building in Constantinople, so that they can be put away along with other heretical books. If someone is discovered to be hiding such books, if he is a bishop, priest or deacon, let him be suspended, and if he is a lay person or a monk, let him be excommunicated.

10

As some clerics, who despise the canonical ordinance, abandon their own dioceses and run off into other dioceses—something that happens with special frequency in this imperial, God-guarded city—and there they lodge with rulers, celebrating the liturgy in their chapels, let it not be permitted for them to be received in any house or church without the approval of their own bishop and that of the bishop of Constantinople. If they do so and persist therein, they are to be suspended.

In the case of those who do this with the approval of the above-mentioned prelates, it is not permitted for them to assume worldly and secular responsibilities, since they are forbidden to do so by the sacred canons; and if someone is misled into occupying himself with the responsibility of the so-called high stewards, he is to desist or be suspended. Rather let him busy himself with the teaching of the children and servants, lecturing them on the divine scriptures because it is for such activity that he received the priesthood.

11

Since we are obliged to observe all the sacred canons, we ought also to maintain in all its integrity the one that says that there should be administrators in each church. Therefore if each metropolitan bishop installs an administrator in his own church, that is well and good; but if not, the bishop of Constantinople on his own authority has the right to appoint one over the other's church, and similarly with metropolitan bishops, if the bishops under them do not choose administrators to hold these posts in their own churches. The same rule is also to be observed with respect to monasteries.

12

If it is discovered that a bishop or a monastic superior is transferring episcopal or monastic farmland to the control of the ruler, or has been conceding it to another person, the transaction is null and void in accordance with the canon of the holy apostles which stipulates: "Let the bishop take care of all ecclesiastical affairs, and let him administer them as if under God's inspection. It is not permitted him to appropriate any of these things, nor to make a present of the things of God to his own relatives. Should the latter be poor, let him care for them as for other poor people, but let him not use them as an excuse for selling off the church's possessions." However, if he pretends that the land is a loss and brings in no profit at all, let him make a present of the place to clerics or landworkers, but even in these circumstances it should not be given to the local rulers. If they use evil cunning and the ruler buys up the land from the landworker or the cleric in question, this sale shall also be null and void in such circumstances, and the land should be restored to the bishopric or monastery. And the bishop or monastic superior who acts thus should be expelled, the bishop from the episcopal house and the monastic superior from the monastery, because they wickedly waste what they have not gathered.

13

On account of the disaster which came about in the churches due to our sins certain venerable houses—episcopal buildings as well as monasteries—were seized by certain men and became public inns. Now if those who hold them choose to restore them, so that they are established once more as formerly they were, this is good and excellent. However if such is not the case, should they be inscribed in the list of priests, we order that they be suspended, and if they are monks or lay persons, that they be excommunicated, seeing that they are criminals condemned by the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit, and let them be assigned there where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched, because they oppose the voice of the Lord declaring, You shall not make my Father's house a house of trade.

14

It is perfectly clear to everyone that a certain order has been established in the priesthood, and that it is God's good pleasure that the appointment to priestly offices should be observed with care. However we have noticed that some, without the imposition of hands, are adopting the clerical tonsure while still youngsters, and without having received the imposition of hands from the bishop they are undertaking to read publicly from the ambo during the church service, even though they are acting uncanonically. We urge therefore that this be discontinued, and that the same regulation be observed among monks.

Each monastic superior has permission for the imposition of hands on a reader for his own monastery, and only for that monastery, provided that the monastic superior has himself received from the bishop the imposition of hands to rule there, and obviously provided that he is himself a priest. Similarly it is an ancient custom that chorepiscopi, with the permission of the bishop, should appoint readers.

15

From now on, no cleric should be appointed to office in two churches. Such a procedure savours of commerce and sordid profit-making, and is quite foreign to ecclesiastical custom. We have learned from the Lord's own voice: No one can serve two masters, because either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. Therefore, following the advice of the apostle, Each should stay where he has been called, and remain in one church. In ecclesiastical matters, whatever is done for the sake of sordid gain constitutes something alien to God. But as far as the needs of this present life are concerned, there are various gainful occupations; each may use these, as he prefers, to procure what is needed for the body. As the apostle said: These hands of mine have provided for my own needs and for the persons accompanying me. These are the regulations for this God-protected city; for what concerns places in the country, a concession may be granted because of the lack of population.

16

All indulgence and adornment bestowed on the body is alien to the priestly order. Therefore all those bishops and clerics who deck themselves out in brilliant and showy clothes should be called to order, and if they persist let them be punished. The same holds for those who use perfumes. However, since the root of bitterness has sprouted, there has appeared in the catholic church the plague of a heresy which delights in the defamation of Christians. Those who adopt this heresy not only heap insults on representational art, but also reject all forms of reverence and make a mockery of those who live pious and holy lives, thus fulfilling in their own regard that saying of scripture, For the sinner piety is an abomination. So if persons are found who make fun of those who wear simple and respectful clothing, they should be corrected with punishment. Indeed, from the earliest times all those ordained to the priesthood have been accustomed to present themselves in public dressed in modest and respectful clothing, and anyone who adds to his apparel for the sake of decoration and not out of necessity deserves, as the great Basil remarked, to be accused of "vainglory". Neither did anyone dress in variegated clothes made of silk, nor did they add various coloured ornaments to the fringes of their garments. They had heard the tongue that spoke God's words declare, Those who dress in soft clothes are in the houses of kings.

17

Some monks abandon their own monasteries because they desire to be in authority and disdain obeying others, and then they attempt to found houses of prayer, although they lack adequate resources. If somebody undertakes to do this, let him be prevented by the local bishop. If someone possesses adequate resources, however, his plans should be brought to completion. The same ruling holds for both laity and clerics.

18

Be irreproachable even for those outside, says the divine apostle. Now for women to live in the houses of bishops or in monasteries is a cause for every sort of scandal. Therefore if anybody is discovered to be keeping a woman, whether a slave or free, in the bishop's house or in a monastery in order to undertake some service, let him be censured, and if he persists let him be deposed. Should it happen that women are living in the suburban residence and the bishop or monastic superior wishes to journey there, no woman should be allowed to undertake any sort of work during the time that the bishop or monastic superior is present; she should stay on her own in some other area until the bishop has retired, in order to avoid all possible criticism.

19

The blight of avarice has spread to such an extent among ecclesiastical authorities that even some so called pious men and women, forgetting the Lord's commands, have been tricked into authorizing, for the sake of cash payments, the entry of those presenting themselves for the priestly order and the monastic life. Thus it happens, as the great Basil says, "when people begin wrongly, all they do is to be rejected", for it is not possible to serve God through mammon. So, if somebody is found out to be doing this, if he is a bishop or a male monastic superior or one of the priests, let him stop or be deposed, in accordance with canon 2 of the holy council of Chalcedon. If the person is a female monastic superior, let her be expelled from the monastery and put under obedience in another monastery, and similarly for a male monastic superior who has not received priestly ordination.

With regard to gifts given by parents under the concept of dowries for their children, or with regard to the personally acquired goods that the latter present provided that those presenting them declare that these are gifts offered to God, we have decreed that these gifts are to remain in the monastery, whether the person stays or leaves, in accordance with their explicit undertaking, unless there is a reprehensible cause on the part of the person in charge.

20

We decree that from now on no more double monasteries are to be started because this becomes a cause of scandal and a stumbling block for ordinary folk. If there are persons who wish to renounce the world and follow the monastic life along with their relatives, the men should go off to a male monastery and their wives enter a female monastery, for God is surely pleased with this.

The double monasteries that have existed up to now should continue to exist according to the rule of our holy father Basil, and their constitutions should follow his ordinances. Monks and nuns should not live in one monastic building, because adultery takes advantage of such cohabitation. No monk should have the licence to speak in private with a nun, nor any nun with a monk. A monk should not sleep in a female monastery, nor should he eat alone with a nun. When the necessary nourishment is being carried from the male area for the nuns, the female superior, accompanied by one of the older nuns, should receive it outside the door. And if it should happen that a monk wishes to pay a visit to one of his female relatives, let him speak with her in the presence of the female superior, but briefly and rapidly, and let him leave her quickly.

21

It is not right for a monk or a nun to leave his or her own monastery and transfer to another. However should this occur, it is obligatory that hospitality be given but such a person should not be accepted as a member without the agreement of his or her monastic superior.

22

It is very important to dedicate everything to God and not to become slaves of our own desires; for whether you eat or drink, the divine apostle says, do all for the glory of God. Now Christ our God has instructed us in his gospels to eradicate the beginnings of sins. So not only adultery is rebuked by him, but also the movement of one's intention towards the performance of adultery, when he says: He who looks on a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Thus instructed we should purify our intentions: For if all things are lawful, not all things are expedient, as we learn from the words of the apostle. Now everybody is certainly obliged to eat in order to live, and in the case of those whose life includes marriage and children and the conditions proper to layfolk it is not reprehensible that men and women should eat in one another's company; though they should at least say grace to thank the giver of their nourishment, and they should avoid certain theatrical entertainments, diabolical songs, the strumming of lyres and the dancing fit for harlots, against all such there is the curse of the prophet which says, Woe on those who drink their wine to the sound of lyre and harp, those who pay no attention to the deeds of the Lord and have never a thought for the works of his hands. If ever such people are found among Christians, they should reform, and if they do not, let the canonical sanctions established by our predecessors be imposed on them.

Those whose mode of life is contemplative and solitary should sit and be silent, because they have entered into a contract with the Lord that the yoke they carry will be a solitary one. Indeed, all those who have chosen the life of priests are certainly not free to eat privately in the company of women, but at the most in the company of certain God-fearing and pious men and women, in order that such a meal taken in common may draw them to spiritual betterment. Let the same be done in the case of relatives.

As for another situation, if a monk or even a man in priestly orders happens to be making a journey and is not carrying with him his indispensable provisions, and then wishes to satisfy his needs in a public inn or in someone's house, he is allowed to do so when it is a case of pressing necessity.

Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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NICAEA II
and the Iconoclast Synod of Constantinople

The Iconoclast Heresy

At the beginning of the 8th century, Leo III, emperor of the Eastern Roman empire, attacked the use of images as aids in worship. As such, he was the first leader of the iconoclasts (image breakers). Statues and icons of Jesus, Mary, and various other holy men and women were being used as aids in worship. Leo III came into power after a series of military defeats. There was also a major earthquake at the beginning of his reign. Some scholars have speculated the Leo launched his attack on the use of images because he felt that these disasters were the result of God's judgement. Other scholars think that he might have yielded to pressure from Jews and Muslims who stated that Christians were no longer obeying the commandment against idolatry. In any case, Leo III and successors for the next century or so fought against the use of images in worship. In 753, Constantine V, Leo's son, called a synod at which a gathering of 338 bishops produced the statement below:

The Synod of Constantinople (Hiera, 753 AD)

When, however, they are blamed for undertaking to depict the divine nature of Christ, which should not be depicted, they take refuge in the excuse: We represent only the flesh of Christ which we have seen and handled. But that is a Nestorian error. For it should be considered that that flesh was also the flesh of God the Word, without any separation, perfectly assumed by the divine nature and made wholly divine. How could it now be separated and represented apart? So is it with the human soul of Christ which mediates between the Godhead of the Son and the dullness of the flesh. As the human flesh is at the same time flesh of God the Word, so is the human soul also soul of God the Word, and both at the same time, the soul being deified as well as the body, and the Godhead remained undivided even in the separation of the soul from the body in his voluntary passion. For where the soul of Christ is, there is also his Godhead; and where the body of Christ is, there too is his Godhead. If then in his passion the divinity remained inseparable from these, how do the fools venture to separate the flesh from the Godhead, and represent it by itself as the image of a mere man? They fall into the abyss of impiety, since they separate the flesh from the Godhead, ascribe to it a subsistence of its own, a personality of its own, which they depict, and thus introduce a fourth person into the Trinity. Moreover, they represent as not being made divine, that which has been made divine by being assumed by the Godhead. Whoever, then, makes an image of Christ, either depicts the Godhead which cannot be depicted, and mingles it with the manhood (like the Monophysites), or he represents the body of Christ as not made divine and separate and as a person apart, like the Nestorians.

The only admissible figure of the humanity of Christ, however, is bread and wine in the holy Supper. This and no other form, this and no other type, has he chosen to represent his incarnation . . .

Thirty-five years later, Irene, the regent for Constantine VI, called another council at which 350 bishops repudiated the decision documented above. The result of their deliberations is given below:

Council of Nicaea (7th Ecumenical, 787 AD)

To make our confession short, we keep unchanged all the ecclesiastical traditions handed down to us, whether in writing or verbally, one of which is the making of pictorial representations, agreeable to the history of the preaching of the Gospel, a tradition useful in many respects, but especially in this, that so the incarnation of the Word of God is shown forth as real and not merely fantastic, for these have mutual indications and without doubt have also mutual significations.

We, therefore, following the royal pathway and the divinely inspired authority of our Holy Fathers and the traditions of the Catholic Church (for, as we all knoweth Holy Spirit indwells her), define with all certitude and accuracy that just as the figure of the precious and life-giving Cross, so also the venerable and holy images, as well in painting and mosaic as of other fit materials, should be set forth in the holy churches of God, and on the sacred vessels and on the vestments and on hangings and in pictures both in houses and by the wayside, to wit, the figure of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, of our spotless Lady, the Mother of God, of the honourable Angels, of all Saints and of all pious people. For by so much more frequently as they are seen in artistic representation, by so much more readily are men lifted up to the memory of their prototypes, and to a longing after them; and to these should be given due salutation and honorable reverence not indeed that true worship of faith which pertains alone to the divine nature; but to these, as to the figure of the precious and life-giving Cross and to the Book of the Gospels and to the other holy objects, incense and lights may be offered according to ancient pious custom. For the honor which is paid to the image passes on to that which the image represents, and he who reveres the image reveres in it the subject represented . . .

I have included these two documents to show that the debate over the use of images in worship is not new; that it is, in fact, part of an ongoing debate over what is to be worshipped. The sources which I have examined (these are, admittedly, works by Protestant authors), indicated that there were various branches of the church which opposed or supported the iconoclast position to varying degrees, and that the documents produced by the iconoclasts of the 8th and 9th centuries were the basis of the position taken by the reformers in the 16th century.

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THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Session IV - 869-870

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Introduction

This council, designated as the eighth ecumenical council by western canonists, is not found in any canonical collections of the Byzantines; its acts and canons are completely ignored by them. Modern scholars have shown that it was included in the list of ecumenical councils only later, that is, after the eleventh century. We have decided to include the council, for the sake of historical completeness.

Emperor Basil I and the patriarch Ignatius, after being restored to his see of Constantinople, asked Pope Nicholas I to call a council to decide about the bishops and priests who had been ordained by Photius. It was held at Constantinople after the arrival of legates from Pope Hadrian II, who had meanwhile succeeded Nicholas. These legates were Donatus, Stephen and Marinus and they presided at the council. It began in the cathedral of Hagia Sophia on 5 October 869. The tenth and last session was held on 28 February 870, when 27 canons were read out and approved by the council. All who were willing to sign the Liber satisfactionis, which had been sent by Pope Hadrian II, were admitted to the council. The account made by Anastasius contains the authentic list of those who signed the acts of the council. Emperor Basil I and his sons, Constantine and Leo, signed the acts after the patriarchs and in the same year they promulgated the council's decisions, after drawing up a decree for this purpose.

As regards the canonical authority of these deliberations, various facts regarding the council held in the cathedral of Hagia Sophia in November 879, so that Photius might be restored to the see of Constantinople, should be remembered. Peter, a Roman cardinal, presided at this council. It took account of a letter of Pope John VIII, which had been sent to the emperor and translated into Greek. This reads (chapter 4): "We declare that the synod held at Rome against the most holy patriarch Photius in the time of the most blessed pope Hadrian, as well as the holy synod of Constantinople attacking the same most holy Photius (i.e., in 869-870), are totally condemned and abrogated and must in no way be invoked or named as synods. Let this not happen". Some people have thought that this text had been altered by Photius; but in the so-called "unaltered" text of the letter this passage is replaced by dots (. . .), and the following passage reads: "For the see of blessed Peter, the key-bearer of the heavenly kingdom, has the power to dissolve, after suitable appraisal, any bonds imposed by bishops. This is so because it is agreed that already many patriarchs, for example Athanasius .. .. after having been condemned by a synod, have been, after formal acquittal by the apostolic see, promptly reinstated". Ivo of Chartres explicitly affirms: "The synod of Constantinople which was held against Photius must not be recognised. John VIII wrote to the patriarch Photius (in 879): We make void that synod which was held against Photius at Constantinople and we have completely blotted it out for various reasons as well as for the fact that Pope Hadrian did not sign its acts". Ivo adds from the instructions that John VIII gave to his legates for the council in 879: "You will say that, as regards the synods which were held against Photius under Pope Hadrian at Rome or Constantinople, we annul them and wholly exclude them from the number of the holy synods". For these reasons there is no ground for thinking that the text was altered by Photius.

An authentic copy of the acts of the council of 869-870 was sent to Rome, as of right. Anastasius, the librarian, ordered a complete copy to be made for himself. Then, when the legates' copy was stolen, he translated his own copy into Latin, on Pope Hadrian's orders, making a word for word translation. Anastasius also makes it plain that the Greeks adopted every means to distort the acts, "by abbreviating here and by expanding or changing there". He adds: "Whatever is found in the Latin copy of the acts of the eighth synod is completely free from the alloy of falsehood; however, whatever more is found in the Greek text is thoroughly infected with poisonous lies".

The Greek text has been partly preserved from total destruction in the summary of an anonymous writer who copied out anti-Photian texts. This summary has 14 canons, as opposed to the 27 of Anastasius, and only contains excerpts, dealing with the most important points, of these canons. Where comparison is possible, the Latin version of Anastasius hardly departs from the Greek text. Indeed it is so literal that at times it can only be understood by comparison with the Greek text, and when the latter is missing we must sometimes rely on conjecture.

The documents printed below are taken from the following: the "Definition" from the Roman edition, (Concilia generalia Ecclesiae catholicae [Editio Romana], Rome 4 vols, 1608-1612) 3, 284-287; the canons from Les canons des conciles oecumeniques, ed. P-P. Jouannou (Pontificia commissione per la redazione del codice di diritto canonico orientale. Fonti. Fasc. IX: Discipline generale antique [IIe-IXe s.] tome 1 part 1), Grottaferata 1962 289-342.

The English translation is from the Latin text, for the reasons mentioned above. The material in curly brackets { } has been added by the hypertext editor, as also has some of the formatting

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Definition Of The Holy And Universal Eighth Synod

The holy, great and universal synod, which was assembled by God's will and the favour of our divinely approved emperors Basil and Constantine, the holy friends of Christ, in this royal and divinely protected city and in the most famous church bearing the name of holy and great Wisdom, declared the following.

The Word, of one nature with the almighty God and Father, is he who established heaven like a vault and fixed the ends of the earth and the place of all other things. He made it to be contingent and he rules, preserves and saves it. He says through the voice of the prophet, Isaiah: Lift up your eyes to heaven, because heaven has been fashioned like smoke, but the earth shall wear out like a garment; its inhabitants shall perish like them; but my salvation shall last for ever and my justice shall not fail. He was made like us for our sake and has established on earth heavenly justice and said, Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away. He said to all who believed in him: If you continue in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free.

It was our God and Lord of infinite power alone who, just like a farmer of supreme wisdom and power, uprooted and scattered and rightfully obliterated many others from an earlier time and from long ago who, given over to lies and in opposition to the truth, were sowing -- to use the gospel image -- evil tares in his field, that is, in the church, and were trying to overwhelm the pure grain of divine justice. He always prepared his manner of deliverance so as to give warning, he established his justice and revealed it with greater clarity. But nevertheless, in our time too, the sower of tares is trying to make the field of the church useless through some utterly depraved and impious people. With that one and the same providence, he has shown that this field is worthy of compassion and snatched it from the filth of iniquity and called it back to its ancient purity. For, to destroy injustice and reinforce divine justice, he has raised up, as an unwavering follower of his commandments, a person proved to be incorrupt in both his knowledge and his maintenance of the truth, our most devout and serene emperor, who is a friend of divine justice and an enemy of injustice. He, by means of the divine help and the overall favour of the church, has gathered together architects from the ends of the earth into this royal city, which must be built up by God, and has assembled a universal synod which, while guarding the strong defences of

> — the gospel sanctions,
> — the laws of Moses and the prophets together with
> — the commands of the apostles
> — and fathers as well as of
> — the councils,

has revived the established forms of right conduct and proclaimed truth and justice in the courts of the church.

{Now the customary recapitulation and reassertion of all previous ecumenical councils}

Consequently, all of us bishops who have come to take part in the synod and to strengthen the true and undefiled faith of Christians and the teaching of orthodox religion, we declare our belief in one God, in three persons consubstantial, divine and autonomous, as, for example, we may look at the one nature of light in three suns not unlike each other or in the same number of dazzling objects. We confess, indeed, God to be one, unique in respect of substance, but threefold or three if we are speaking of him in respect of persons, and we declare he has not received from himself that he has been made, nor in any way whatsoever from anyone else; but that he is alone, ever existing without beginning, and eternal, ever the same and like to himself, and suffering no change or alteration, that he exists as the maker and source of all beings endowed with intelligence and feeling. For the holy and great synod of { 1 } Nicaea spoke thus when expounding the creed: Light from light, true God, clearly declaring the Son to be from the Father who is true God, and the rest as the catholic church received it. We too, accepting this in the identical meaning, anathematize as of unsound mind and an enemy of the truth, Arius and all who, with him and following him, speculate with faulty perceptions on the term "hetero-substantial", that is otherness of substance and unlikeness, with reference to the divinely-ruling and blessed Trinity. But no less do we accept the second, holy and universal synod {2 Constantinople I}, and we anathematize that adversary of the Spirit or rather adversary of God, Macedonius; for we admit in the distinction of persons no difference of substance between the Father, the Son and the divine and autonomous Spirit, as the aforementioned heresiarchs did, nor do we confuse, like the lunatic Sabellius, the persons in one and the same substance. Moreover, we also confess that the unique Word of God became incarnate and was made like us for our sake, for it was not an angel or an envoy but the Lord himself who came and saved us and was made Emmanuel with us; and he was true God, God of Israel and saviour of all, in accordance with the divine and prophetic utterances. For this reason we confess that Mary, most holy and without experience of marriage, who bore him, is properly and truly mother of God, just as the third universal synod, which first assembled at { 3 } Ephesus, proclaimed. In union with that council we too anathematize Nestorius, that worshipper of the man and most self-opinionated individual who possessed a Jewish mentality. We teach that the one and same Christ and Lord is twofold, that is, perfect God and perfect man, possessing in one person the differences of each nature but keeping their properties always unchangeable and unconfused, just as the fourth, holy and universal synod {4 Chalcedon } solemnly taught. In accepting this synod together with the three councils previously enumerated, just like the quadruplicity of the holy gospels, we anathematize the insane Eutyches and the mad Dioscorus. In addition, proclaiming the two natures in the one Christ, according to the still clearer teaching of the fifth, holy and universal synod { 5 Constantinople II}, we anathematize Severus , Peter and Zoharas the Syrian, as well as Origen with his useless knowledge, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Didymus along with Evagrius, who also, although of the same or different opinions, were ensnared in the same pit of damnation.

Further, we accept the sixth, holy and universal synod {6 Constantinople III}, which shares the same beliefs and is in harmony with the previously mentioned synods in that it wisely laid down that in the two natures of the one Christ there are, as a consequence, two principles of action and the same number of wills. So, we anathematize Theodore who was bishop of Pharan, Sergius, Pyrrhus, Paul and Peter, the unholy prelates of the church of Constantinople, and with these, Honorius of Rome, Cyrus of Alexandria as well as Macarius of Antioch and his disciple Stephen, who followed the false teachings of the unholy heresiarchs Apollinarius, Eutyches and Severus and proclaimed that the flesh of God, while being animated by a rational and intellectual soul, was without a principle of action and without a will, they themselves being impaired in their senses and truly without reason. For if the one and same Christ and God exists as perfect God and perfect man, it is most certain that none of the natures which belong to him can exist partially without a will or without a principle of action, but that he carried out the mystery of his stewardship when willing and acting in accordance with each substance; this is how the chorus of all God's spokesmen, having knowledge of it from the apostles down to our own time, have constructed a colourful representation of that human form, assigning to each part of the one Christ natural properties distinct from each other, by which the meanings and conceptions of his divine nature and of his human nature are believed beyond all doubt to remain without confusion.

We also know that the seventh, holy and universal synod, held for the second time at { 7 } Nicaea, taught correctly when it professed the one and same Christ as both invisible and visible lord, incomprehensible and comprehensible, unlimited and limited, incapable and capable of suffering, inexpressible and expressible in writing. In agreement with that synod, this holy and universal synod publicly anathematizes Anastasius , Constantine and Nicetas , that irrational prelature whose name stinks, or, to put it better, that plain corruption; so too Theodosius of Ephesus, Sisinnius Pastilas and Basil Tricacabus, not forgetting Theodoret, Antony and John, once prelates of new Rome, the royal city of Christians, but better called defamers of Christ. They declared by word and deed that, despite what the list of prophets proclaimed about Christ, he had been incapable of destroying the statues of the idols. Furthermore, we also anathematize Theodore, who was called Krithinos, whom this great and holy synod summoned and condemned and loudly dinned an anathema into his ears. Similarly we anathematize all those who agreed with or supported those who said that the Word of the divine incarnation came about and existed by fantasy and supposition, indeed that through the removal of the image of our Christ and saviour there came the simultaneous removal of the accepted form of the true body which bore God within it. Everything which cannot be grasped by the imagination is surely to be understood in two ways, either as not existing or as in fact existing but minimally understandable, inasmuch as being invisible and hidden.

Therefore, if anyone happens to have taught any of these things about Christ the God and saviour of us all, he will be clearly proclaimed an enemy of true religion, since the first of these declares that Emmanuel was not truly made man and the second declares that he was indeed man but lacked human qualities, laid aside the flesh he assumed and had recourse in everything to his divine [nature] and to his incomprehensibility; this is alien to all the divinely inspired scriptures, which also clearly state that he will come once more as judge of all, and he is to be seen in the same way as he was seen by his disciples and apostles when he was taken up into heaven.

That theory is full of Manichaean ideas and ungodliness inasmuch as it foolishly declares that a saying of the divinely inspired David was spoken about Christ, in which it says, He has set his tabernacle in the sun, since this impiety supposes that the casting off and laying aside of the Lord's deified body is meant. But the word of truth confidently says, both concerning the well-named Manes and all those who share his thought and are authors of the heresy about the destruction of icons and all other heresiarchs and enemies of religion: They have not known nor understood, but they walked in darkness. 0 you who abandon the right way and walk in the way of darkness, who rejoice in wrongdoing and exult in evil conversion; O you whose paths are evil and steps crooked so that they take you far from the right way and make you foreign to right thinking! Again, those who sowed what was corrupted by the wind have received destruction as their reward; and again, He that trusts in lies feeds the winds: and the same person runs after birds that fly away. For he has abandoned the rows of his vines, he wanders in the furrows of his field; for he wanders through a waterless desert and a great parched plain, yet gathers no fruit in his hands.

For this reasons [the church] brands all these with an anathema and, besides recognizing the seven, holy and universal synods already enumerated by us, has gathered together this eighth universal synod through the grace of our all powerful Christ and God and the piety and zeal of our most serene and divinely strengthened emperor, to cut down and destroy the shoots of injustice that have sprung up against those synods, together with the evil stirrings and influences, in order to bring about peaceful order in the church and stability in the world. For it is not only the removal of true teaching which knows how to destroy those of evil mind and to agitate and disturb the church, but also quibbling over the meaning of the divine commandments equally brings the same destruction on those who are not vigilant, and the world is filled with storms and disturbances by those who are reckoned as Christians.

{Now the council strikes out on its own}

This is what happened in recent times through the folly, cunning and evil machinations of the wretched Photius. He entered the sheepfold not through the door but through a window, and, like a thief or a robber, a destroyer of souls, as the Lord's words indicate, has tried, on every occasion and by every means, to steal, slaughter and destroy the right-thinking sheep of Christ and, by engineering all manner of persecution, he has not ceased from contriving numerous arrests and imprisonments, confiscations of property, protracted periods of exile and, in addition to these, accusations, charges, false testimonies and forgeries against all who worked for true religion and fought for the truth. For he, like another Severus or Dioscorus, engineered the expulsion of the most just, lawful and canonically appointed high priest of the church of Constantinople, namely the most holy patriarch Ignatius, and like an adulterous robber, breaking into his see and repeatedly submitting him to a thousand charges involving dethronement and as many anathemas, he roused continuous turmoil and storms for all the churches of Christ our saviour, in a multiplicity of ways.

However, the salt of the earth has not lost its savour, nor has the eye of the church become completely darkened, nor has the light of true religion been extinguished by the spirits of wickedness; nor has the fire of divine charity lost its destroying and burning power over sinful and worthless material, nor has the word of the Lord, which is sharper than a two-edged sword and a discerner of thoughts, been found ineffectual, nor did the foundation of solid stone collapse when submerged by swollen waters and floods of rivers and storms, but the precious cornerstone, which was laid down in Sion, that is, in the church, upon which the foundation stone of the apostles and prophets was laid for the building up of the church, in our time has sent out from every one of the church's established ranks, even into the ruling city, the new Rome, many other stones rolling over the land, as the prophet says, to destroy and lay waste the intrigues of those who desired and attempted to destroy truth and divine justice.

But with greater force and particular significance, Nicholas, the most blessed and aptly-named pope of old Rome, was sent from above as another cornerstone for the church, preserving as far as possible the figurative likeness, as from an exalted and pre-eminent place, to confront the carefully organised opposition of Photius. By the missiles of his letters and speeches, he struck down the powerful leading supporters of Photius and, reflecting a story of the old Testament, after the manner of the zealot Phinehas, he pierced Photius with the lance of truth as if he were another Midianite defiling the assembly of Israel; and he completely destroyed him on his not [added in Hrd [1]] agreeing to accept the remedies of a healing discipline aimed at treating the scars and healing the adulterous wound, and just as another Peter dealt with Ananias and Sapphira, who stole what belonged to God, by an anathema included as it were in his priestly dignity, he committed him to death.

Following these directives and decrees, the most religious friend of Christ, our emperor, whom the heavenly Emperor and Lord of majesty has raised up for the salvation of the world, has consigned Photius to a suitable place and recalled the most holy patriarch Ignatius to his rightful seat. Furthermore, for the perfect discernment and definition of what is agreed to be good and is beneficial, he has gathered together vicars from all the patriarchal seats and the whole college of bishops which is under his authority. Those of us who came together have celebrated this great and universal synod and, with much examination, testing and discussion, with due care and consistency, we have cut out with the sword of the spirit the roots of scandals and weeds along with their shoots, as we establish the truly innocent and most holy patriarch Ignatius in the controlling seat, while we condemn Photius, the interloper and illegal occupier with all his supporters and promoters of evil. For almighty God says somewhere by the mouth of a prophet: Because of the wickedness of their deeds I will drive them out of my house. I will do no more to love them. Ephraim is stricken, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit; and again: Canaan, there is a deceitful balance in his hand, he has loved oppression. And Ephraim said: But yet I am become rich, I have found for myself a place of repose: all his labours shall not find me, despite the iniquities that I have committed; and again: And the house of Jacob shall possess their own possessions. The house of Jacob shall be afire and the house of Joseph aflame, and the house of Esau stubble; they shall burn them and consume them, and there shall be no survivor to the house of Esau, for the Lord has spoken.

For the wretched Photius was truly like the person who did not make God his refuge; but trusted in the abundance of his cunning and sought refuge in the vanity of his iniquities, following the example of Ephraim of old, in turning his back on the divine mercy; the word of the prophet mocks and derides him, saying: Ephraim is become as bread baked under ashes, that is not turned. Strangers have devoured his strength and he knew it not, grey hairs also are spread upon him, and he is ignorant of it. He shall be humbled by the insult of Israel before his face; and in all this he has not returned to the Lord, his God. Ephraim is become as a dove, that called upon the table of Egypt and went to the Assyrians. When they shall go, I will spread my net upon them as upon the birds of the air; I will bring them down, I will strike them to make their tribulation heard. For Photius was lifted up to the heights of arrogance in attacking the most blessed pope of old Rome, Nicholas, and he vomited out the poison of his evil. He gathered together false vicars from three supposedly eastern sees, set up what was thought to be a synodical council, and, making lists of the names of accusers and witnesses, fashioning profiles and speeches which seemed to be suited to each person who plays a part in a synodical investigation, and making up, writing down and organizing forged records as accounts of those proceedings, he had the audacity to anathematize the aforementioned most blessed pope Nicholas and all those in communion with him. Photius did this in such a way that as a result all the existing bishops and priests, that is, the other patriarchal sees and all the clerics within them, were included in the same anathema, for all were most certainly in communion with the leading bishop, and amongst them himself and his followers. The word of the prophet condemns and refutes him when it says: They have multiplied their transgressions, they have enacted extraneous laws and invoked their confession; and again: They conceived in their heart lying words and turned justice back, and righteousness has stood afar off from them; for truth has been destroyed in their streets and they have been unable to follow the right path. Truth has disappeared and changed their mind so that it cannot understand. And: He who turns from evil is attacked, and the Lord saw and it displeased him because there was no judgment, and again: Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of Judah and for four, I will grant them no reprieve; because they have rejected the law of the Lord and have not kept his statutes. Therefore, as regards the man who has acted in this way and has disturbed and shaken the whole holy, catholic and apostolic church with so many brazen attacks of this kind, has utterly refused to be converted and repent, and has refused to submit to the decrees and judgment of the holy patriarchal sees, just as long ago the most blessed pope Nicholas and then his successor, the most holy pope Hadrian,— anathematized him, so too this holy and universal synod has reproved him and put him under an ever severer anathema while addressing to him, in the person of all God's people, the words of the prophet Isaiah: Just as a garment soiled in blood will not be clean, so you will not be clean, for you have defiled the church of Christ and have been a source of scandal and destruction to the people of God on many counts and in many ways. We command that those who do not share this view, but give Photius their willing support, if they are bishops or clerics, must be deposed for ever; we anathematize monks or lay people, until such time as they are converted from their false ways and wickedness.

Canons

1

If we wish to proceed without offence along the true and royal road of divine justice, we must keep the declarations and teachings of the holy fathers as if they were so many lamps which are always alight and illuminating our steps which are directed towards God. Therefore, considering and esteeming these as a second word of God, in accordance with the great and most wise Denis, let us sing most willingly along with the divinely inspired David, The commandment of the Lord is bright, enlightening the eyes, and, Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my paths; and with the author of Proverbs we say, Your commandment is a lamp and your law a light, and like Isaiah we cry to the lord God with loud voice, because your commands are a light for the earth. For the exhortations and warnings of the divine canons are rightly likened to light inasmuch as the better is distinguished from the worse and what is advantageous and useful is distinguished from what is not helpful but harmful.

Therefore we declare that we are preserving and maintaining the canons which have been entrusted to the holy, catholic and apostolic church by the holy and renowned apostles, and by universal as well as local councils of orthodox [bishops], and even by any inspired father or teacher of the church. Consequently, we rule our own life and conduct by these canons and we decree that all those who have the rank of priests and all those who are described by the name of Christian are, by ecclesiastical law, included under the penalties and condemnations as well as, on the other hand, the absolutions and acquittals which have been imposed and defined by them. For Paul, the great apostle, openly urges us to preserve the traditions which we have received, either by word or by letter, of the saints who were famous in times past.

2

Obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as persons who will have to give account, commands Paul, the great apostle. So, having both the most blessed pope Nicholas as the instrument of the holy Spirit and his successor, the most holy pope Hadrian, we declare and order that everything which has been expounded and promulgated by them in a synod at various times, both for the defence and well-being of the church of Constantinople and of its chief priest, namely Ignatius, its most holy patriarch, as well as for the expulsion and condemnation of Photius, the upstart and usurper, should be maintained and observed together with the canons there set forth, unchanged and unaltered, and no bishop, priest or deacon or anyone from the ranks of the clergy should dare to overturn or reject any of these things.

Whoever, then, shall be found, after these directives of ours, despising any of the articles or decrees which have been promulgated by these popes, must be stripped of his dignity and rank, if he is a priest or cleric; a monk or lay person, of whatever dignity, must be excommunicated until he repents and promises to observe all the decrees in question.

3

We decree that the sacred image of our lord Jesus Christ, the redeemer and saviour of all people, should be venerated with honour equal to that given to the book of the holy gospels. For, just as through the written words which are contained in the book, we all shall obtain salvation, so through the influence that colours in painting exercise on the imagination, all, both wise and simple, obtain benefit from what is before them; for as speech teaches and portrays through syllables, so too does painting by means of colours. It is only right then, in accordance with true reason and very ancient tradition, that icons should be honoured and venerated in a derivative way because of the honour which is given to their archetypes, and it should be equal to that given to the sacred book of the holy gospels and the representation of the precious cross.

If anyone then does not venerate the icon of Christ, the saviour, let him not see his face when he comes in his father's glory to be glorified and to glorify his saints', but let him be cut off from his communion and splendour; similarly the image of Mary, his immaculate mother and mother of God, we also paint the icons of the holy angels just as divine scripture depicts them in words; we also honour and venerate those of the highly renowned apostles, prophets, martyrs and holy men as well as those of all the saints. Let those who are not so disposed be anathema from the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit.

4

In tearing up by the roots the love of power, as being an evil root nourishing the scandals which have arisen in the church, we condemn, with a just decree, him who boldly, cunningly and unlawfully, like a dangerous wolf, leapt into the sheepfold of Christ; we are speaking about Photius, who has filled the whole world with a thousand upheavals and disturbances. We declare that he never was nor is now a bishop, nor must those, who were consecrated or given advancement by him to any grade of the priesthood, remain in that state to which they were promoted. Moreover, we debar from this kind of preferment those who received from Photius the customary rescripts for promotion to special office.

As for the churches which Photius and those who were ordained by him are thought to have consecrated and the altars which they are thought to have renovated after they had been torn down, we decree that they are to be consecrated, anointed and renovated again. In sum, everything that was done in his person and by him, for the establishing or penalizing of the sacerdotal state, has been abrogated. For the God of the whole universe says through his prophet: Because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me and, You have forgotten the laws of your God, I also will forget your children. The more they increased, the more they sinned against me; I will change their glory into shame. They feed on the sin of my people; they bloat their souls with their iniquities. And again he says: Because Ephraim has multiplied altars for sinning, they have become to him altars for sins; I will write copiously about them.

5

Since we desire to ensure, in Christ, that the stability of the canons should always remain firm in the churches, we renew and confirm the limits and conditions which were formerly decreed by the holy apostles and our holy fathers and which made it a law in the church that nobody, who is a neophyte in the faith or priestly office, should be made a bishop, lest he be puffed up and fall into the judgment and snare of the devil, as the Apostle says. Therefore, in accordance with the previous canons, we declare that nobody of senatorial rank or a secular way of life, who has recently been admitted to the tonsure with the intention or expectation of the honour of becoming a bishop or patriarch, and who has been made a cleric or monk, should rise to such a level, even if he is shown to have completed a considerable time in each stage of the divine priesthood. For it is clear that the tonsure was not received for religious reasons, love of God or hope of progressing along the path of the virtues, but for love of glory and honour. We exclude such people still more rigorously if they are pushed forward by imperial backing.

However, if someone gives no suspicion of seeking the worldly benefits just mentioned, but, prompted by the actual good of a humility which is centered on Christ, renounces the world and becomes a cleric or monk and, while passing through every ecclesiastical grade, is found without reproach and of good character during the periods of time currently established, so that he completes one year in the order of lector, two in that of subdeacon, three as deacon and four as priest, this holy and universal synod has decreed that such a one may be chosen and admitted. As for those who have remained religiously in the order of cleric or monk and have been judged worthy of the dignity and honour of the episcopacy, we reduce the aforesaid period of time to that which the superiors of these bishops approved at the time. If, however, anyone has been advanced to this supreme honour contrary to this directive of ours, he must be condemned and completely excluded from all priestly functions, because he has been elevated contrary to the sacred canons.

6

It appears that Photius, after the sentences and condemnations most justly pronounced against him by the most holy pope Nicholas for his criminal usurpation of the church of Constantinople, in addition to his other evil deeds, found some men of wicked and sycophantic character from the squares and streets of the city and proposed and designated them as vicars of the three most holy patriarchal sees in the east. He formed with these a church of evil-doers and a fraudulent council and set in motion accusations and charges entailing deposition against the most blessed pope Nicholas and repeatedly, impudently and boldly issued anathemas against him and all those in communion with him. The records of all these things have been seen by us, records which were cobbled together by him with evil intent and lying words, and all of which have been burnt during this very synod.

Therefore, to safeguard church order, we anathematize first and foremost the above-mentioned Photius for the reason given; next everyone who henceforth acts deceitfully and fraudulently and falsifies the word of truth and goes through the motions of having false vicars or composes books full of deceptions and explains them in favour of his own designs. With equal vigour Martin, the most holy pope of Rome, a valiant contender for the true faith, rejected behaviour of this kind by a synodal decree.

7

Moses, the divine spokesman, clearly declares in his law that what is right should also be rightly executed, since a good act is not good unless it is carried out in accordance with reason. So it is indeed good and very advantageous to paint holy and venerable images as also to teach others the disciplines of divine and human wisdom. But it is not good nor at all profitable for any of these things to be done by those who are unworthy.

For this reason we declare and proclaim that those declared anathema by this holy and universal synod may not, on any account, work on sacred images in holy places of worship nor teach anywhere at all, until they are converted from their error and wickedness. Whoever, therefore, after this directive of ours, admits them in any way to paint sacred images in churches, or to teach, must be removed from office if he is a cleric; if he is a lay person, he must be excommunicated and debarred from taking part in the divine mysteries.

8

The great apostle Paul says somewhere: All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things are beneficial. Therefore, we ought to do everything for the advantage and perfection of the holy church of God and nothing at all to promote controversy and vainglory. Since a report has come to our ears that not only heretics and those who have wrongly obtained the patriarchate of Constantinople, but also the orthodox and legitimate patriarchs, demand and extract from the order of priests guarantees, written in their own hands, which are designed for the security, benefit and, as it were, permanence of the above persons, it has therefore seemed good to this holy and universal synod that nobody at all should do this from now on, with the exception of what is demanded at the time of episcopal consecrations, according to rule and custom, in order to witness to the purity of our faith; every other way of doing it is completely inappropriate and has no part in the building up of the church. So whoever dares to nullify this directive of ours, either by asking for such a document or by providing it to those who ask, shall lose his own office.

9

From the very beginning the wretched Photius brought about in the church of Constantinople an abundance of all kinds of wickedness. We have learnt that even before his tyrannical period in office he used to give documents, signed by his own hand, to his followers who were learning the wisdom that has been made foolish by God, even though this system was clearly a new invention and thoroughly alien to our holy fathers and doctors of the church.

Since therefore they direct us to loose every bond of wickedness and to make void enforced contracts, the holy and universal synod has declared that nobody, from now on, should hold or keep such a contract, but all, without hindrance, hesitation or fear, may both teach and study if they are competent for either task, with the exception of those who are found to be enslaved to error or heretical beliefs since we strictly forbid such persons to teach or to pursue studies. If anyone shall be found rejecting and transgressing against this directive, he shall lose his rank if he is a cleric; if a lay person, he shall be excommunicated as one who does not believe the Lord's word which says, Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven .

10

As divine scripture clearly proclaims, Do not find fault before you investigate, and understand first and then find fault, and does our law judge a person without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?. Consequently this holy and universal synod justly and fittingly declares and lays down that no lay person or monk or cleric should separate himself from communion with his own patriarch before a careful enquiry and judgment in synod, even if he alleges that he knows of some crime perpetrated by his patriarch, and he must not refuse to include his patriarch's name during the divine mysteries or offices.

In the same way we command that bishops and priests who are in distant dioceses and regions should behave similarly towards their own metropolitans, and metropolitans should do the same with regard to their own patriarchs. If anyone shall be found defying this holy synod, he is to be debarred from all priestly functions and status if he is a bishop or cleric; if a monk or lay person, he must be excluded from all communion and meetings of the church until he is converted by repentance and reconciled.

11

Though the old and new Testament teach that a man or woman has one rational and intellectual soul, and all the fathers and doctors of the church, who are spokesmen of God, express the same opinion, some have descended to such a depth of irreligion, through paying attention to the speculations of evil people, that they shamelessly teach as a dogma that a human being has two souls, and keep trying to prove their heresy by irrational means using a wisdom that has been made foolishness.

Therefore this holy and universal synod is hastening to uproot this wicked theory now growing like some loathsome form of weed. Carrying in its hand the winnowing fork of truth, with the intention of consigning all the chaff to inextinguishable fire, and making clean the threshing floor of Christ, in ringing tones it declares anathema the inventors and perpetrators of such impiety and all those holding similar views; it also declares and promulgates that nobody at all should hold or preserve in any way the written teaching of the authors of this impiety. If however anyone presumes to act in a way contrary to this holy and great synod, let him be anathema and an outcast from the faith and way of life of Christians.

12

The apostolic and conciliar canons clearly forbid the nomination and consecration of bishops which have come about as a result of the power and intrigues of the civil authorities. Therefore we declare and proclaim, in full agreement with them, that if any bishop has received his consecration through the manipulation and constraint of such persons, he should be deposed absolutely as one who has desired and consented to have the gift of God not from the will of God and ecclesiastical law and decree, but from human beings and through their machinations as a result of the prompting of carnal desire.

13

The divine word says, The worker is worthy of his pay For this reason we too decree and proclaim that the clerics of the great church [of Constantinople], who have served in the lower orders, may rise to the higher grades and, if they have shown themselves worthy, may deservedly enjoy higher dignities, since some of those who now enjoy them either will be called through promotion to more important duties or will vacate them by dying. But those who do not belong to this particular clergy and yet insinuate themselves into it, must not receive the dignities and honours due to those who have laboured in it a long time, for in that case the clerics of the church [of Constantinople] would be found to have no promotion.

Those who manage the houses or estates of leading persons must by no means have the possibility of being admitted or inducted into the clergy of the great church [of Constantinople]: No soldier on service for God gets entangled in civilian pursuits. If indeed anyone, contrary to the directive we have now issued, is promoted to any dignity whatsoever in this great church, he must be excluded from all ecclesiastical dignity as one who has been promoted contrary to the decision of the great synod.

14

We declare that those who are called by divine grace to the office of bishop, since they bear the image and likeness of the holy hierarchies in heaven, that is of the angels, in accordance with what is clearly an hierarchical dignity and function, should be held as worthy of all honour on the part of everyone, rulers and ruled alike.

We also declare that they must not go to meet a general or any other high official a long way from their churches, nor should they dismount from their horses or mules a long way off or bow down in fear and trembling and prostrate themselves; nor should they go to table for dinner with secular dignitaries and show the same honours as they do to generals, but according to what is in keeping with their own spiritual dignity and honour, they should render to everyone his due: Tribute to whom tribute is due, honour to whom honour is due. They must show that the confessors of the emperors, who are friends of Christ, and those who have the same dignity, deserve great respect from the leading persons of those emperors. Thus the bishop will have the courage to reprimand generals and other leading officials and all other secular authorities as often as he finds them doing something unjust or unreasonable, and in this way to correct them and make them better.

But if some bishop, after the holy directive of this council, shall ignore the honour duly and canonically bestowed on him, and permits something to happen according to the old, debased and disordered custom which is contrary to what has now been declared, he must be suspended for a year and the official involved is to be considered unworthy to take part in the mysteries or the means of grace for two years.

15

This holy and universal synod, in renewing the canons of the apostles and fathers, has decreed that no bishop may sell or in any way dispose of precious objects or consecrated vessels except for the reason laid down long ago by the ancient canons, that is to say, objects received for the redemption of captives. They must not hand over endowments of churches by emphyteutic leases nor put on sale other agricultural properties, thereby damaging ecclesiastical revenues. We decree that such revenues are for church purposes, the feeding of the poor and the assistance of pilgrims. However, bishops have full powers to improve and enlarge, as opportunity offers, the ecclesiastical properties which produce these revenues. Moreover, they have the right to apportion or bestow their own property on whomsoever they wish and choose, in accordance with their own powers and rights of ownership.

Now that this decree has been made, whoever appears to have acted in a way contrary to this holy and universal synod, must be deposed on the grounds of violating divine law and precepts. Any sale which was made by the bishop, either in writing or otherwise, must be made entirely void, as well as any emphyteutic lease or any other act disposing of precious objects or endowments. Whoever buys or acquires any of the aforementioned precious objects or endowments and does not restore to the church what belongs to it and does not hand over for burning the bills of sale or leases, is anathema until he does what has been determined by this holy and universal synod.

If a bishop is found guilty of having built a monastery with the revenues of a church, he must hand over the monastery to the same church. But if he built it from his own money or other sources, he may have it for his whole life under his own jurisdiction and direction; he may also bequeath it after his death to whomsoever he wishes, but it may not be used as a secular dwelling.

16

A matter which merits great sorrow, even many tears, has come to our ears from many of the faithful. They say that under the previous emperor some laymen of the senatorial order were seen to plait their hair and arrange it on their heads, and to adopt a kind of priestly dignity in accordance with their different ranks at the emperor's court. They did this by wearing various ornaments and articles of clothing which are proper to priests and, as it was thought, made themselves out to be bishops by wearing a pallium over their shoulders and every other piece of episcopal dress. They also adopted as their patriarch the one who took the leading role in these buffooneries. They insulted and made a mockery of a variety of holy things, such as elections, promotions and consecrations of bishops, or by bringing up subtle but false accusations against bishops, and condemning and deposing them, switching in turn from distress to collusion as prosecutors and defendants.

Such a way of behaving has never been heard of since time began, even among the pagans. It shows that those we have now brought to light are in a worse and more wretched state than the pagan nations. The sacred and universal synod, therefore, has declared and promulgated that these attempts to do evil must be condemned as crimes, and no member of the faithful who bears the name of Christian should henceforth attempt to do or tolerate such a thing, or to protect by silence anyone who has committed such an impious act. If any emperor or any powerful or influential person should attempt to mock holy things in such a way, or with evil intent to carry out or permit such a great wrong to be done against the divine priesthood, he must first be condemned by the patriarch of the time, acting with his fellow bishops, and be excommunicated and declared unworthy to share in the divine mysteries, and then he must accept certain other corrective practices and penances which are judged appropriate. Unless he repents quickly, he must be declared anathema by this holy and universal synod as one who has dishonoured the mystery of the pure and spotless faith.

However, if the patriarch of Constantinople and his suffragan bishops come to know of any others who have committed crimes of this kind and neglect to act against them with the necessary zeal, they must be deposed and debarred from the dignity of their priesthood. Those who in any way have shown, or shall show in future, such impious conduct and have not confessed it in any way and received the appropriate penance, are declared excommunicate by this synod for three years; during the first year they must remain outside the church as public penitents, during the second year they may stand inside the church among the. ranks of the catechumens, during the third year they may join the faithful and thus become worthy of the sanctifying effects of the holy mysteries.

17

The first, holy and universal synod of Nicaea orders that the ancient custom should be preserved throughout Egypt and the provinces subject to her, so that the bishop of Alexandria has them all under his authority; it declares, "Because such a custom has prevailed in the city of Rome". Therefore this great and holy synod decrees that in old and new Rome and the sees of Antioch and Jerusalem the ancient custom must be preserved in all things, so that their prelates should have authority over all the metropolitans whom they promote or confirm in the episcopal dignity, either through the imposition of hands or the bestowal of the pallium; that is to say, the authority to summon them, in case of necessity, to a meeting in synod or even to reprimand and correct them, when a report about some wrongdoing leads to an accusation.

But since some metropolitans give as an excuse for not responding to the summons of their apostolic prelate that they are detained by their temporal rulers, it has been decided that such an excuse will be utterly invalid. For since a ruler frequently holds meetings for his own purposes, it is intolerable that he should prevent leading prelates from going to synods for ecclesiastical business or hold some back from their meetings. We have learnt, however, that such an obstacle and alleged refusal of permission can come about in various ways at the suggestion of the metropolitan.

Metropolitans have had the custom of holding synods twice a year and therefore, they say, they cannot possibly come to the chief one, that of the patriarch. But this holy and universal synod, without forbidding the meetings held by the metropolitans, is conscious that the synods summoned by the patriarchal see are more necessary and profitable than the metropolitan ones, and so demands that they take place. A metropolitan synod affects the good order of only one province, a patriarchal synod often affects the good order of a whole civil diocese, and in this way the common good is provided for. So it is fitting that the common good take priority over a particular one, especially when the summons to meet has been issued by those of greater authority. The fact is that certain metropolitans seem to regard with contempt the ancient custom and canonical tradition, by their not meeting together for the common good. Therefore the laws of the church demand, with severe penalties and leaving no loop-hole, that they comply with the summons of their patriarchs whether they are summoned as a body or individually.

We refuse to listen to the offensive claim made by some ignorant people that a synod cannot be held in the absence of the civil authorities. The reason for this is that the sacred canons have never prescribed the presence of secular rulers at synods but only the presence of bishops. Hence we find that they have not been present at synods but only at universal councils. Furthermore, it is not right that secular rulers should be observers of matters that sometimes come before the priests of God.

Therefore, if any metropolitan ignores his patriarch and disobeys his summons, whether addressed to him alone or to several or to all, unless prevented by a genuine illness or a pagan invasion, and for two whole months after notice of the summons makes no attempt to visit his patriarch, or if he hides in some way or pretends he has no knowledge of the patriarch's summons, he must be excommunicated. If he shows the same stubbornness and disobedience for a year, he must be unconditionally deposed and suspended from all sacerdotal functions and excluded from the dignity and honour that belong to metropolitans. If any metropolitan disobeys even this directive, let him be anathema.

18

This holy and great synod has decided that the goods or privileges which belong to the churches of God as a result of long enduring custom and have been granted, whether in writing or not, by emperors of revered memory or by other religious people and possessed by the churches for thirty years, must in no way be removed by force on the part of any secular person, or taken away by him on any pretext whatsoever, from the jurisdiction of the prelate who has them. Whatever is known to have been possessed by the churches for thirty years must remain subject to the control and use of the prelate of the church. Any secular person who acts in a way contrary to this present decree shall be ad judged as one who commits sacrilege and, until he reforms himself and restores or gives back the privileges and goods belonging to the church, let him be anathema.

19

Paul, the great apostle, condemns greed as another form of idolatry and wants all who unite under the name of Christian to abstain from every form of shameful love of gain. It is all the more wrong, therefore, for those who have the ministry of the priesthood to burden their fellow-bishops and suffragans in any way whatsoever.

For this reason this holy and universal synod has decreed that no archbishop or metropolitan should leave his own church and visit other churches under the pretext of an official visitation, nor abuse his authority over other churches and consume the revenues which they have at their disposal and for feeding the poor, and thus, by a form of greed, be a burden to the consciences of our brothers and fellow ministers. An exception is made in the case of hospitality, which may sometimes arise on account of necessary travel. But even then he must accept, with reverence and fear of God, nothing else than what is found prepared from that which is currently at hand. He should quickly continue the journey he has undertaken without asking or demanding any at all of the things which belong to that church or the suffragan bishop. For if the sacred canons decree that every bishop should be sparing in his use of what belongs to his own church, and should no way spend or consume the ecclesiastical revenues in an unfitting or unreasonable way for his own advantage, what kind of impiety do you think he will be found guilty of if he has no scruples about going around and burdening the churches entrusted to other bishops and thereby incurring the charge of sacrilege ?

Whoever attempts to do such a thing, after this directive of ours, shall incur from the patriarch of the time the punishment commensurate with his unjust and greedy behaviour, and shall be deposed and excommunicated as the sacrilegious person he is or, to put it otherwise, as an idolater, according to the teaching of the great Apostle.

20

It has come to the ears of this holy synod that in certain places some, on their own authority and without the agreement of those who are entrusted with such decisions, callously and mercilessly expel people who have received some of their lands by emphyteusis, on the pretext that the contract about the agreed rent has been broken.

This must not be allowed to happen unless the person who made the emphyteutic contract first listens to the objections through the mediation of some suitable and trustworthy persons. Then, if the leaseholder has not paid for three years the rent due, he may be expelled from his lands. But it is necessary, after the rent has been unpaid for three years, to go to the authorities of the city or region and bring before them a charge against the person who obtained the emphyteutic lease, and to show how he has defaulted. Only then, after the decision and judgment of the officials, may the church take back its property. Nobody may effect the confiscation of the aforesaid lands on his own initiative and authority, since this would be a sign of the worst form of profiteering and greed.

So, if any bishop or metropolitan, contrary to this directive of ours, confiscates any property from anyone, thinking he is protecting his own church, let him be suspended by his patriarch for a time, having first restored what he took away. If he persists in his disobedience to the decision of this holy universal synod, he must be completely removed from office.

21

We believe that the saying of the Lord that Christ addressed to his holy apostles and disciples, Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever despises you despises me, was also addressed to all who were likewise made supreme pontiffs and chief pastors in succession to them in the catholic church. Therefore we declare that no secular powers should treat with disrespect any of those who hold the office of patriarch or seek to move them from their high positions, but rather they should esteem them as worthy of all honour and reverence. This applies in the first place to the most holy pope of old Rome, secondly to the patriarch of Constantinople, and then to the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. Furthermore, nobody else should compose or edit writings or tracts against the most holy pope of old Rome, on the pretext of making incriminating charges, as Photius did recently and Dioscorus a long time ago. Whoever shows such great arrogance and audacity, after the manner of Photius and Dioscorus, and makes false accusations in writing or speech against the see of Peter, the chief of the apostles, let him receive a punishment equal to theirs.

If, then, any ruler or secular authority tries to expel the aforesaid pope of the apostolic see, or any of the other patriarchs, let him be anathema. Furthermore, if a universal synod is held and any question or controversy arises about the holy church of Rome, it should make inquiries with proper reverence and respect about the question raised and should find a profitable solution; it must on no account pronounce sentence rashly against the supreme pontiffs of old Rome.

22

This holy and universal synod declares and decrees, in agreement with earlier councils, that the promotion and consecration of bishops should be done by means of an election and decision of the college of bishops. So it promulgates as law that no lay authority or ruler may intervene in the election or promotion of a patriarch, a metropolitan or any bishop, lest there be any irregularity leading to improper confusion or quarrelling, especially since it is wrong for any ruler or other lay person to have any influence in such matters. Rather he should be silent and mind his own business until the election of the future bishop has been completed with due process by the ecclesiastical assembly. But if any lay person is invited by the church to join in the discussion and to help with the election, he is permitted to accept the invitation with respect, if he so wishes. For in this way he may be able to promote a worthy pastor in a regular manner, to the benefit of his church.

If any secular authority or ruler, or a lay person of any other status, attempts to act against the common, agreed and canonical method of election in the church, let him be anathema- this is to last until he obeys and agrees to what the church shows it wants concerning the election and appointment of its leader.

23

We have also learnt that some bishops, at the request of certain people, have unreasonably made a gift of properties belonging to other churches. Thus they usurp the authority of other bishops, so far as they can. This conduct will clearly bring on them the curse of the prophet who says, Woe to those who add house to house and field to field in order to defraud their neighbour, and it has made them guilty of sacrilege. For this reason, this great and universal synod has decided that no brother of ours in the episcopate or anyone else may transact such a wicked property deal, nor, if asked by someone, dispose of any property belonging to other churches, nor install priests or any other clerics in churches that are not under his jurisdiction, without the permission of the bishop responsible for the church in question. Furthermore, no priests or deacons, who are consecrated for holy functions, should perform, of their own accord and decision, any sacred functions in churches to which they have not been appointed from the beginning. This behaviour is unlawful and utterly alien to the canonical regulations.

Whoever, after this declaration of ours, shall be seen to do any of these things which have now been forbidden, must be excommunicated for a period of time, and the contractual arrangements, whether written or not, must be completely dissolved and abrogated because they were made in contravention of the canons. Likewise, the priest or deacon is to be suspended until he withdraws from the church to which he does not belong. But if he ignores the suspension, he must be got rid of completely and dispossessed of every sacred office.

24

Divine scripture says, Cursed is everyone who does the work of the Lord with slackness Yet some metropolitans have fallen into the depths of negligence and sloth. They summon the bishops subject to their jurisdiction and commit to them the divine offices of their own church as well as litanies and all the sacred ministries which are personal to themselves. The consequence is that they celebrate through the agency of these bishops everything they should readily do themselves. In this way they make those who have merited the dignity of bishop seem like clerics in their service.

These metropolitans, contrary to church law, give themselves to secular business and administration, failing to persevere in prayers and petitions for their own sins and the ignorance of their people. Some excuse this behaviour even though it is utterly and completely contrary to canonical regulations. What is still more serious, it is said that the bishops are told to complete the above ministries at allotted times each month at their own expense. This is totally alien to all apostolic sanction. All this makes such people worthy of the most severe condemnation possible, for they are shown by their actions to be infected by a form of satanic pride and arrogance.

Any metropolitan who, after this directive of the holy and universal synod, is consumed by a similar pride, arrogance or contempt and does not carry out with fear, promptitude and a good conscience the necessary ministries in his own city, but seeks to carry them out through his suffragan bishops, must be punished by his patriarch and be either reformed or deposed.

25

The holy synod has duly decided that the bishops, priests, deacons and subdeacons of the great church [of Constantinople], who received their consecration from Methodius and Ignatius, the most holy patriarchs, and became hard of heart like the arrogant and unfeeling heart of Pharaoh, and even now are in complete disagreement with this holy and universal synod and, while rejecting harmony with us in the word of truth, have wholeheartedly supported the cause of the usurper Photius, must be deposed and suspended from all sacerdotal functions, just as the most blessed pope Nicholas decreed not long ago. On no account are such men to be readmitted into the ranks of the clergy, even if they wish in future to change their ways. An exception will be made in regard to receiving the means of holiness, and it is only our mercy which makes us think that they are worthy of this. They do not deserve to have the opportunity of being restored by their repentance to their former status, as is illustrated by the case of the odious Esau, though he begged in tears for that favour.

26

This holy synod has also decided that any priest or deacon who has been deposed by his bishop for some crime, or who alleges he has suffered some kind of injustice and is not satisfied with the judgment of his bishop, saying that he does not trust him and that he has been wronged, either because of the enmity which the bishop has for him or because of favours the bishop wants to bestow on certain others, such a person has the right to have recourse to the metropolitan of his province and to denounce his deposition from office, which he thinks is unjust, or any other injury. The metropolitan should be willing to take up such cases and to summon the bishop who has deposed the cleric or injured him in any way. He should examine the case himself, with the help of other bishops, so as either to confirm the deposition of the cleric beyond all doubt, or to quash it by means of a general synod and the judgment of many persons.

In the same way we decree that bishops may have recourse to the patriarch, their head, if they complain that they have suffered similar things from their metropolitan, so that the business in question may receive a just and right decision from their patriarch and the metropolitans under him. No metropolitan bishop may be judged by his neighbouring metropolitan bishops, even though it is alleged that he has committed serious crimes, but he may only be judged by his own patriarch; we decree that this judgment will be just and beyond suspicion because a number of esteemed people will be gathered around the patriarch, and for this reason his judgment will be fully ratified and confirmed. If anyone does not, agree with what we have promulgated, let him be excommunicated.

27

We decree that, in ecclesiastical promotions and consecrations, the marks which signify the rank to which each person belongs, should be kept, in accordance with the traditional usages of each province, region and city. Thus bishops who have been permitted to wear the pallium at certain times, may wear it at those times and places but should not abuse so great and honourable a garment through pride, vainglory, human conceit and self-love, by wearing it unnecessarily throughout the divine sacrifice and every other ecclesiastical ceremony. We decree that those who have devoutly embraced the monastic life and merited the dignity of a bishop, should keep the appearance and garments of the monastic habit and that holy way of life. None of them has the right to lay aside that type of dress out of pride and wilful arrogance, lest he is found thereby to violate his personal vows. Just as the continual wearing of the pallium shows the bishop as given to ostentation and vainglory, so the laying aside of the monastic habit exposes him to the same charges.

Therefore, any bishop who wears the pallium outside the occasions stipulated in writing, or lays aside the monastic dress, must either be corrected or be deposed by his patriarch.

Notes

[1] J. Hardouin, Conciliorum collectio regia maxima adp. Philippi Labbei et p. Gabrielis Cossartii e Societate Jesu labores haud modica accessione facta et emendationibus pluribus additis ..., 12 vols. Paris 1714-1715

Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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FIRST LATERAN COUNCIL (1123)

Canons

Introduction

In 1123, during the pontificate of Pope Callistus II, a general Roman council was held "for various important matters of the church", as Callistus himself says in the letter of convocation which he sent on 25 June 1122 to bishop Baldric of Doll. A great number of bishops, abbots and religious, numbering at least 300, gathered in Rome from the western churches, although none that we know of came from the eastern churches {1}. There is no evidence that legates of the emperor Henry V took part. The council began on 18 March 1123, with the pope presiding. There were at least two sessions. The council ended before 6 April, probably on 27 March.

This council is often called "general" in the letters and decrees of Pope Callistus II. It is reasonable, however, to doubt its ecumenicity. Indeed the manner in which the council was called and conducted by the pope and the fathers differed from that of the older councils. Moreover several other councils, similar to Lateran I, were convened in the 11th and 12th centuries but were not termed ecumenical. The ecumenicity of this council seems, as far as we can tell, to have been confirmed later by the tradition of the Roman church.

There had long been conflict between church and state, though some sort of a solution had been reached a short time before at the Concordat of Worms (September 1122). Thus, questions concerning the investiture of prelates and the freedom of the church were a major concern of the council. The said concordat was approved and confirmed by the council's authority, though not without opposition on the part of many, as Gerhoh of Reichersberg {2} testifies; canons 3-4, 8 and 12 make mention of this debate. Thereby a measure of peace and discipline was restored to the church.

The fathers devoted themselves principally to the reform of the church, to the abolition of simony and to the correction of ecclesiastical abuses. There were a few other matters of lesser importance. Also, the struggle for the Corsican episcopacy between the churches of Genoa and Pisa was a considerable problem, and a commission of twenty-four fathers had to be created by the pope in order to resolve the matter; for this see canons 1, 7, and also canons 2, 5-6, 9, 11, 16. Thus pope Callistus, following as closely as he could the examples of Gregory VII and Urban II {3}, and supported by the approval of the council, brought to a successful conclusion matters which had engrossed the whole church's effort and zeal for almost fifty years.

A number of canons were ratified by the council fathers, perhaps at the session on 27 March. Many of these were included in Gratian's Decrees (c. 1140), namely canons 1, 3-4, 6, 9, 12, 14, 16B, 19-22B, and part of 8, 18B. As far as we know, Baronius was the first to print others which Gratian did not accept (Br {4} 12, 1607, 149-150; ed. Theiner 18, 1869, 343-344). Twelve more follow in the Roman edition (Rm {5} 4, 1612, 16- 17), where a complete text of the canons may be found. We have examined all the canons in the following: Bn {6} 3/2 (1618) 464-465; ER {7} 27 (1644) 37-43; S. Baluze, in P. de Marca, Dissertationum de concordia sacerdotii et imperii ...libri II Paris l663, 363 (=BdM); LC10 {8} (l67l) 896-900; Hrd {9} 6/2 (1714) 1111-1114; Cl {10} 12 (1730) 1333-1337; E. Martene and U. Durand, in Veterum scriptorum et monumentorum ... collectio, VII Paris 1733, 68-69, four canons only (= MD); Msi {11} 2 (1748) 355-358; Msi 21 (1776) 281-286; G.H. Pertz, in MGH {12}, Leges in f.ø, II/2 Hanover 1837, 182-183 (= Pertz); PL 163 (1854) 1361-1365; L. Weiland, in MGH, Const., I Hanover 1893, 574-576 (= MGH).

The text of the canons presents some difficulties. Bn 2, ER, LC, Hrd, Cl and Msi must have printed the same text as that used by Rm (though with some differences). This commonly accepted version, which we call B, consists of 22 canons and seems to derive from two manuscript codices (not from Rm, since this has the different readings). In addition, seven canons (2, 5, 10-11, 13, 15, 17) printed by Br seem to relate to B, even though they often do not agree with 13 in their readings. A second version of the canons, "from an ancient manuscript codex of the monastery of Aniane", which is now in the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris, was published by BdM. The order of the canons in it, and often the readings, are different from B; moreover six canons (11 and the last five, 18-22B) are missing and two (15-16) are completely different from B. Regarding this other version, which we call alpha, MD published four canons (6, 12, 15- 16) "from a manuscript of the marquis of Laubes", and Pertz published sixteen canons (15 and 18-22B are missing, in place of which are what appear to be two rubrics) from Vienna MS. Codex of Canon Law 91 (now 2178). Migne transcribed the text of Pertz. LC took several readings of (alpha and included them in B[eta] as variant readings. Finally, the text printed by Msi "from a Pistoia codex of canons", as well as the order of canons in it, appear similar to alpha; although canons 15-16 are preserved according to the B text and 18-19 are added to B. If alpha is earlier than B, then the text of Msi seems to date from an earlier time and to have been corrected occasionally from B; therefore we conclude that this text belongs to alpha.

We believe the (alpha version is older than B[eta].For, the canons from alpha(except ll-12, 15-17) are mentioned in Simeon of Durham's "Historia Regum" {13} (= S), which is contemporaneous. This point has not been noticed by scholars. In addition, Gratian's Decrees ascribe the last 5 canons to the earlier pontificate of Urban II (1088-99) and not to the time of Lateran I, as Br noted; therefore alpha seems right to omit these five canons. The document on which Br and possibly Rm depend is a Vatican codex "which contains the Collection of Anselm [of Lucca], in which the canons of this council are included as an appendix after chapter 55". Maybe, therefore, our B should be attributed to this peculiar version in Anselm of Lucca's text. Certainly all the known manuscript codices are related to alpa, so far as we are aware {14}, including the 12th century Vatican Reginensis lat. 987 (= R), which was the first to be examined by us. We think that little confidence can be placed in MGH, which is the only critical edition so far made. Its editor, Weiland, divided the sources into three groups: the "Parisian", more correctly called the "Roman"- the Pistoian codex; and the codices used by BdM and Pertz. But he completely ignored the similarities between the three groups, and in the end collated only the two sources of the third group, omitting for no reason canon 17. We have collated together R and all the other editions, and have prepared our text with the alpha version as the basis. We think that R and BdM are the most reliable sources. We have relegated the alternative version of canons 15-16 to a footnote, and the last five canons to an appendix. We have not used the MGH text except in a few instances. There is a preface to the canons in R, S, BdM and Msi vol 1, but we do not reproduce it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY H-L 5/1 (1912) 630-634; DThC 8/2 (1925) 2628-2637; DDrC 6 (1957) 344-346; LThK 6 (vol 2 1961) 815-816; NCE 8 (1967) 406; HC 3 (1980) 401-402; U. Robert, Histoire du pape Calixte II, Paris-Besancon 1891, 162-177, A. Hauck, Die Rezeption und Umbildung der allgemeinen Synode im Mittelalter, Historische Vierteljahrschrifl 10 (1907) 468 ff.; G. Meyer von Knonau, Jahrbucher des deutschen Reiches . . ., VII Leipzig 1909, 228-239; G Tangl, Die Teilnehmer an den allgemeinen Konzilien des Mittelalters, Weimar 1922, 196-205; H. J. Schroeder, Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils, St. Louis, Mo. —London 1937, 177-194; A. Eliche, La reforme gregorienne et la reconquete chretienne (Histoire de l'Eglise 8), Paris 1950, 390-393; G. Eranzen, L'ecclesiologie des conciles medievaux, in Le concile, 125-141; R Eoreville, Latran I, II, III et Latran IV (Histoire des Conciles 6), Paris 1965; M. Mollat and P. Tombeur, Les conciles Latran I a Latran IV: Concordance, index, listes de frequence, tables comparatives (Conciles oecumeniques medievaux 1), Louvain 1974.

Canons

1. Following the examples of the holy fathers and renewing them as we are bound by our office, by the authority of the apostolic see we altogether forbid anyone to be ordained or promoted in the church of God for money. If anyone indeed should have been ordained or promoted in the church in such a fashion, let him be utterly deprived of the office acquired. {15}

2. {16} We absolutely forbid those excommunicated by their own bishops to be received into communion by other bishops, abbots and clergy {17}

3. {18} No one may consecrate as a bishop someone who is not canonically elected. If anyone should presume to do this, let both consecrator and consecrated be deposed {19} beyond hope of restoration.

4. {20} Absolutely no archdeacon, archpriest {21}, provost or dean {22} may grant to anyone the care of souls or prebends in a church without the decision or consent of the bishop. Rather, as it is constituted by the holy canons, let the care of souls and the dispensing of ecclesiastical affairs remain in the decision and power of the bishop. Indeed, if anyone presumes to do something against this, or to claim for himself the power which pertains to the bishop, let him be banished from the bounds of the church

5. {23} The ordinations made by the heresiarch Burdinus {24}, after he was condemned by the Roman church, and whatever was afterwards done by pseudo-bishops ordained by him, we judge to be null and void.

6. {25} No one except a priest {26} may be ordained to the office of provost, archpriest or dean; no one except a deacon may be ordained to the office of archdeacon. {27} {28}

7. {29} We absolutely forbid priests, deacons or subdeacons to live with concubines and wives, and to cohabit with other women, except those whom the council of Nicaea permitted to dwell with them solely on account of necessity, namely a mother, sister, paternal or maternal aunt, or other such persons, about whom no suspicion could justly arise

8. {30} We further resolve, in accordance with the statute of the most blessed pope Stephen, that lay persons, however religious they may be, have no power to dispose of any ecclesiastical business; but following the apostolic canons, let the bishop have the care of all ecclesiastical matters, and let him manage them as in the sight of God. Therefore {31} if any prince or other lay person should arrogate to himself the disposition or donation {32} of ecclesiastical things or possessions, let him be regarded as sacrilegious.

9. {33} We prohibit unions between blood relatives, because both the divine and secular laws prohibit them. For, the divine laws not only cast out those doing this and their progeny but also call them accursed; the secular laws call such people disreputable and deprive them of inheritance. We, therefore, following our fathers, mark them with infamy and judge them to be infamous.

[crusades]

10. {34} To those who set out for Jerusalem and offer effective help towards the defence of the Christian people and overcoming the tyranny of the infidels, we grant the remission of their sins, and we place their houses and families and all their goods under the protection of blessed Peter and the Roman church, just as has been decreed by our lord pope Urban. Whoever dares to distrain or carry off their houses, families and goods, while they are on their way, shall be punished with excommunication. {35} Those who have put crosses on their clothes, with a view to journeying to Jerusalem or to Spain, and have later taken them off, we command by our apostolic authority to wear the crosses again and to complete the journey between this Easter and the following Easter. Otherwise, from that moment we cut them off from entry into church and forbid divine services in all their lands, apart from the baptism of infants and confessions for the dying.

11. {36} With the advice of our brothers and of the whole curia, and also with the wish and consent of the prefect, we order the abolition of that immoral practice hitherto obtaining with respect to the dead Porticani, so that the goods of Porticani dwellers dying without heirs are not to be dispersed against the wishes of those dying. This, however, is to the extent that the Porticani remain obedient and faithful to the Roman church and to us and our successors. {37}

12. {38} In accordance with the canons of the holy fathers, we absolutely forbid and prohibit the laity, under the penalty of anathema, to remove the offerings from the most sacred and revered altars of blessed Peter and of the Saviour and of St Mary Rotunda and of St Nicholas of Bari, of St Giles {39}, or from the altars or crosses of all the other churches. By {40} apostolic authority we forbid the fortification or taking hold of churches by {41} lay persons {42}. {43}

13. {44} Whoever knowingly makes or intentionally spends counterfeit money shall be separated from the communion of the faithful as one accursed, an oppressor of the poor and a disturber of the state.

14. {45} If anyone tries to attack pilgrims to Rome and foreigners {46} visiting the shrines of the apostles and the oratories of other saints, or to rob them of the things they bring, or to trouble merchants {47} with new exactions of tolls and fees, let him be deprived of Christian communion until he makes reparation.

15. {48} We confirm, with the authority of the holy Spirit, whatever has been determined by the Roman pontiffs our predecessors concerning the peace and truce of God or arson or the public highways.

Msi (as canon 14) and B (as canon 13) have a different text namely

If anyone should violate a truce, he is to be admonished up to three times by the bishop to make reparation. If he acts in contempt of the third admonition to make reparation, the bishop, either with the counsel of the metropolitan {49} or with two or one of the neighbouring bishops, shall declare the sentence of anathema on the rebel, and denounce him in writing to the bishops all around

16. {50} Following in the footsteps of the holy fathers, we order by general decree, that monks be subject to their own bishops {51} with all humility, and show due obedience and devoted submission to them in all things, as if to masters and shepherds of the church of God. They may not celebrate masses in public anywhere. Moreover, let them completely abstain from public visitations of the sick, from anointings and even from hearing confessions, for these things in no way pertain to their calling. Indeed, in the churches where their ministry is recognized, they may only have priests who were ordained by their own bishop, to whom they will answer for the care of souls which they have assumed.

In Pertz there is only "We absolutely forbid anointings and visits to the sick and public masses by monks" and then : "The examples of Leo to Dioscorus, that on the day of the resurrection there may be a Levitical and a sacerdotal ordination, ch 19. That on Sunday morning, continuing the fast of Saturday, there can be an ordination, ch 20".

Msi (as canon 18) and B (as canon 17) have a different text, namely :

We forbid abbots and monks to give public penances, to visit the sick, to perform anointings and to chant public masses. They shall receive chrism, holy oil, consecrations of altars and ordinations of clerics from the bishops in whose dioceses they reside.

17. {52} In our desire to preserve in peace, by the grace of God, the possessions of the holy Roman church, we strictly forbid, under pain of anathema, any military {53} person to presume to seize or hold by force Benevento, the city of blessed Peter. If anyone should dare otherwise, he shall be bound by the chain of anathema.

The remaining canons are missing in alpha, and Msi has canons 18-19 together with canon 16. The first part of this canon (Priests ... pertain to the bishop) may belong to canon 16 (B).

18. Priests are to be appointed to parish churches by the bishops, to whom they shall answer for the care of souls and for those matters which pertain to the bishop. They may not receive tithes or churches from lay persons without the consent and wish of the bishops; and if they presume to do otherwise, they shall be subject to the canonical penalty. {54}

19. We allow the service which monasteries and their churches have paid from the time of {55} pope Gregory VII until now. We altogether forbid abbots and monks to have the possessions of churches and bishops by a thirty {56} years provision. {57}

20. Having in mind the examples in the traditions of the fathers, and discharging the duty of our pastoral office, we decree that churches and what belongs to them, both persons and possessions, namely clerics, monks and their lay brothers, as well as those who come to pray and what they bring with them, are to be under protection and not be harmed. If anyone dares to act contrary to this and after recognizing his villainy, has not properly made amends within the space of thirty days, let him be banished from the bounds of the church and be smitten with the sword of anathema.

21. We absolutely forbid priests, deacons, subdeacons and monks to have concubines or to contract marriages. We adjudge, as the sacred canons have laid down, that marriage contracts between such persons should be made void and the persons ought to undergo penance.

22. We condemn the alienations which have been made everywhere, especially by Otto {58}, Jeremias, and perhaps Philip {59}, of the property of the exarchate of Ravenna. Moreover, we declare in general to be invalid the alienations made in whatever fashion by all persons, whether they were intruded or were canonically elected in the name of a bishop or an abbot, who should be consecrated in accordance with the usage of his own church, and the ordinations conferred by them without the consent of the clergy of the church or through simony. We also forbid absolutely that any cleric should presume to alienate in any way his prebend or any ecclesiastical benefice. Any such action in the past or the future shall be invalid and subject to canonical penalty."

Notes

1 There are no surviving acts of the council. On the number of fathers, see K.J. Hefele, Histoire des conciles d'apres les documents originaux, trans. and continued by H. Leclerq, 11 vols. 1907-1952., 5/1, 631 n. 2; and also Simeon of Durham Opera Omnia ..., II ed. T. Arnold (Rolls series 75), London 1885, 272; Annali genovesi di Caffaro ..., ed. L. Belgrano (Fonti per las storia d'Italia 11), I Rome-Genoa 1890, 19

2 See Gerhoh of Reichersberg, Libellus de ordine donorum sancti Spiritus, ed. E. Sackur, in Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Hannover and Berlin 1826-, Libelli, III Hanover 1897, 280; see also Hefele 5/1, 631

3 See also canon 10 on the recovery of the holy Land, and canons 14-15 on peace among Christians.

4 C. Baronius (continued by O. Raynaldi), Anales ecclesiastici, ed. J. D. Mansi, 38 vols. Lucca 1728-1759)

5 Ton hagion iokoumenikon synodon tes katholikes ekklesias apanta. Concilia generalia Ecclesiae catholicae [Editio Romana], 4 vols. Rome 1608-1612.

6 S. Binius, Concilia generalia et provincialia ..., 5 vols. Cologne 1609; 9 vols. ibid [ed. 2] . 1618; 11 vols. Paris[ed. 3] 1636.

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8 P. Labbe and G. Cossart, Sacrosancta concilia ad regiam editionem exacta quae nunc quarta parte prodit auctior studio Philippi Labbei et Gabrielis Cossartii ..., 17 vols. Paris 1671-1672

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10 N. Coleti, Sacrosancta concilia ad regiam editionem exacta quae olim quarta parte prodiit ... longe locupletior et emendatior exhibeture ..., 23 vols. Venice 1728-1733

11 J. D. Mansi (continued by J.B. Martin and L. Petit), Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio ..., 53 vols. Florence, Venice, Paris and Leipzig 1759-1927

12 in Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Hannover and Berlin 1826-,

13 See Simeon and Durham., Opera Omnia ..., II 270-272

14 We have not seen Olmutz Chapter Codex 205; see Pertz, Archiv 10 (1849) 682.

15 Council of Toulouse (1119), canon 1 (Msi 21, 226); ch. 10 C. I q. 1 (Fr 1, 360); see Schroeder 179 n. 4

16 Canon 3 in Msi, 9 in B

17 See council of Melfi (1089), canon 15 (Msi 20, 724)

18 Canon 2 in Msi, 10 in B

19 condemned Pertz

20 Canon 5 in Msi, 7 in B

21 priest Msi

22 deacon Msi

23 Canon 9 in Msi, 6 in B

24 Maurice Burdinus, antipope Gregory VIII (1118-1121)

25 Canon 4 in Msi, 2 in B

26 or a deacon added in alpha except S

27 Council of Toulouse (119), canon 2 (Msi 21, 226);

28 no one ... deacon omitted in Pertz

29 Canon 3 in B

30 Canon 6 in Msi, 4 in B

31 included in canon 9 in Pertz

32 domination in Pertz and variant reading in B

33 Canon 8 in Msi, 5 in B

34 Canon 12 in Msi, 12 in B

35 included in canon 13 in Msi, Pertz

36 Omitted in R S BdM; canon 12 in B, 14 in Pertz

37 This, however ... our successors omitted in Baronius

38 Omitted in S; Canon 11 in BdM, 14 in B, 15 in Msi vol 1

39 and of St Nicholas ... St Giles omitted in Msi 1 B.

40 included in canon 12 in B

41 omitted in B

42 omitted in B

43 by ... persons omitted in E. Martene and U. Durand, Thesaurus novus anecdotorum seu collectio monumentorum ..., 5 vols. Paris 1717.

44 Canon 16 in Msi, 15 in B

45 Canon 17 in Msi, 16 in B

46 or merchants added in R, BdM

47 omitted in R, BdM, B (in B as variant reading)

48 Omitted in S, Pertz

49 with ...metropolitan] the metropolitan Br and variant reading in B

50 Omitted in S;

51 omitted in R

52 Omitted in S; Canon 10 in Msi, 11 in Pertz, 8 in B

53 omitted in Baronius and variant reading in B

54 and if ... penalty omitted in Msi; see canon 19

55 holy (?saint) added in Msi

56 3 years Msi

57 But if they presume to do otherwise they shall be subject to canonical penalty added in Msi

58 Atto variant reading in B

59 dissident archbishops of the church of Ravenna in 12th century

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SECOND LATERAN COUNCIL (1139)

Canons

Introduction

In Lent of 1139 a general council was summoned by Pope Innocent II and held in the Lateran basilica {1}. As we know, the synod had been convoked the previous year; for the papal legates in England and Spain pressed the bishops and abbots to go to the council. Thus, a good number of fathers, at least five hundred, met in Rome. One of these came from the East, the patriarch of Antioch, but he was a Latin. With the pope presiding the council began on 2 April and it seems to have ended before 17 April, as far as we can judge from the sources.

This council is called "general" in the records and more frequently "plenary" by Innocent himself. However, there is a doubt as to its ecumenicity for the same reasons that affect Lateran I.

The Roman church, which for a long time had been divided in its obedience between Innocent II (1130-1143) and Anacletus II (1130-1138), seems to have overcome schism and factionalism, and indeed to have recovered its peace. This was due to the death of Anacletus in 1138 and the efforts of Bernard of Clairvaux, who had fought with the utmost zeal on behalf of Innocent for the restoration of unity. But Innocent, perhaps upset by the agreements which Anacletus had arrived at, vigorously cited and condemned Anacletus' part in the evil affair {2}, an action which seems to have provoked a complaint from Bernard.

Some heretics were also condemned by the fathers, namely those who followed the monk Henry, and canons were enacted concerning the reform of the church. The pope and the council fathers, following the example and mind of Pope Gregory VII, took up a good many canons which had been established by previous councils, with a view to restoring ecclesiastical discipline to an unblemished state. They furnish a sort of body of precepts for the whole church, taken from councils in the times of Gregory VII (canon 10), Urban II (canons 3, 21-22), Callistus II (canons 3, 7, 23-25) and especially Innocent II (canons 1, 4-7, 9-12, 14-20). Gratian included many of them shortly afterwards in his Decrees (canons 2, 4-6, 8, 19-21, 26-28 and parts of 7, 10, 12, 15-16, 18, 22). Orderic Vitalis, however, was sceptical about their effectiveness in practice.

Baronius was the first to print the thirty canons (Annales ecclesiastici 12,1607, 277-280), having taken them from two manuscript codices ("a register of the Vatican library and a Vatican codex of decrees"). The Roman editors shortly after produced a more accurate version (Rm {3} 4, 1612, 21 -23), from "manuscript codices of the Vatican library and of Anthony Augustine of Tarragona"; this was copied by all later editions, as we have verified, though with some errors. These later editions are as follows: Bn2 {4} 3/2 (1618) 487-489; ER {5} 17 (1644) 123-133; LC {6} 10 (1671) 1002-1009; Hrd {7} 6/2 (1714) 1207-1214; Cl {8} 12 (1730) 1497-1507;Msi {9} 21 (1776) 526-533.The canon which E. Martene and U. Durand published (Thesaurus novus anecdotorum, IV, Paris 1717, 139-140) as being "omitted in the editions, from a manuscript of St Vincent of Bisignano", is in fact the same as canons 15 and 30. Having collated together all these editions, we have followed the text of the Roman edition.

Canons

1. We decree that if anyone has been ordained simoniacally, he is to forfeit entirely the office which he illicitly usurped.

2. If anyone has acquired, through payment, a prebend, priory, deanery or any ecclesiastical honour or preferment, or a holy thing of the church of any kind, such as chrism or holy oil, or the consecrations of altars or churches, where the execrable passion of avarice has been the motive, let him be deprived of the honour which he wrongly acquired, and let the buyer and seller and intermediary be stigmatised with the mark of infamy. And let nothing be demanded for sustenance or under the pretext of any custom from anyone before or afterwards, nor should the person himself presume to give anything, since this is simony; but let him enjoy freely and without any diminution the dignity and benefice which has been conferred on him

3. We utterly prohibit those who have been excommunicated by their bishops to be received by others. Indeed, whoever knowingly presumes to communicate someone who has been excommunicated, before he is absolved by the one who excommunicated him, is to be held liable to the same sentence.

4. We also enjoin that bishops as well as clergy take pains to be pleasing to God and to humans in both their interior and exterior comportment. Let them give no offence in the sight of those for whom they ought to be a model and example, by the excess, cut or colour of their clothes, nor with regard to the tonsure, but rather, as is fitting for them, let them exhibit holiness. If after a warning from the bishops they are unwilling to change their ways, let them be deprived of their ecclesiastical benefices.

5. We enjoin that what was laid down in the sacred council of Chalcedon be rigidly adhered to, namely, that the goods of deceased bishops are not to be seized by anyone at all, but are to remain freely at the disposal of the treasurer and the clergy for the needs of the church and the succeeding incumbent. Therefore, from now on, let that detestable and wicked rapacity cease. Furthermore, if anyone dares to attempt this behaviour henceforth, he is to be excommunicated. And those who despoil the goods of dying priests or clerics are to be subject to the same sentence.

6. We also decree that those in the orders of subdeacon and above who have taken wives or concubines are to be deprived of their position and ecclesiastical benefice. For since they ought to be in fact and in name temples of God, vessels of the Lord and sanctuaries of the holy Spirit, it is unbecoming that they give themselves up to marriage and impurity.

7. Adhering to the path trod by our predecessors, the Roman pontiffs Gregory VII, Urban and Paschal, we prescribe that nobody is to hear the masses of those whom he knows to have wives or concubines. Indeed, that the law of continence and the purity pleasing to God might be propagated among ecclesiastical persons and those in holy orders, we decree that where bishops, priests, deacons, subdeacons, canons regular, monks and professed lay brothers have presumed to take wives and so transgress this holy precept, they are to be separated from their partners. For we do not deem there to be a marriage which, it is agreed, has been contracted against ecclesiastical law. Furthermore, when they have separated from each other, let them do a penance commensurate with such outrageous behaviour.

8. We decree that the selfsame thing is to apply also to women religious if, God forbid, they attempt to marry.

9. Moreover, the evil and detestable practice has grown, so we understand, whereby monks and canons regular, after receiving the habit and making their profession, are learning civil law and medicine with a view to temporal gain, in scornful disregard of the rules of their blessed teachers Benedict and Augustine. In fact, burning with the fire of avarice, they make themselves the advocates of suits; and since they have to neglect the psalmody and hymns, placing their trust in the power of fine rhetoric instead, they confuse what is right and what is wrong, justice and iniquity, by reason of the variety of their arguments. But the imperial constitutions testify that it is truly absurd and reprehensible for clerics to want to be experts in the disputes of law courts. We decree by apostolic authority that lawbreakers of this kind are to be severely punished. There are also those who, neglecting the care of souls, completely ignore their state in life, promise health in return for hateful money and make themselves healers of human bodies. And since an immodest eye manifests an immodest heart, religion ought to have nothing to do with those things of which virtue is ashamed to speak. Therefore, we forbid by apostolic authority this practice to continue, so that the monastic order and the order of canons may be preserved without stain in a state of life pleasing to God, in accord with their holy purpose. Furthermore, bishops, abbots and priors who consent to and fail to correct such an outrageous practice are to be deprived of their own honours and kept from the thresholds of the church.

10. We prohibit, by apostolic authority, that the tithes of churches be possessed by lay people where canonical authority shows these were assigned for religious purposes. For whether they accept them from bishops or kings, or any person whatsoever, let them know that they are committing the crime of sacrilege and incurring the threat of eternal damnation, unless they hand them back to the church. We also direct that lay people who are in possession of churches must either restore them to the bishops or become subject to excommunication. We reiterate our decision that nobody is to hold the office of archdeacon or dean unless he is ordained deacon or priest; and archdeacons, deans or provosts who are without these orders are to be deprived of the honour they have received, if through disobedience they refuse to be ordained. Moreover, we forbid the aforesaid honours to be conferred on youths or those not yet in sacred orders; let them be conferred rather on those who are outstanding in prudence and integrity of life. We also enjoin that churches are not to be entrusted to hired priests and that each and every church with sufficient means is to have its own priest

11. We also prescribe that priests, clerics, monks, pilgrims, merchants and peasants, in their coming and going and their work on the land, and the animals with which they plough and carry seeds to the fields, and their sheep {10}, be left in peace at all times.

12. We decree that the truce {11} is to be inviolably observed by all from sunset on Wednesday until sunrise on Monday, and from Advent until the octave of the Epiphany, and from Quinquagesima until the octave of Easter. If anyone tries to break the truce, and he does not comply after the third warning, let his bishop pronounce sentence of excommunication on him, and communicate his decision in writing to the neighbouring bishops. Moreover let none of the bishops receive into communion the excommunicated person, but rather let each confirm the sentence received in writing. If anyone presumes to infringe this, he will do so at the risk of his position. Since a threefold cord is not quickly broken, we enjoin bishops, having regard for God alone and the salvation of the people, and laying aside all timidity, to furnish each other with mutual counsel and help towards firmly maintaining peace, and not to omit this duty by reason of any affection or aversion. For if anyone is found to be lukewarm in this work of God, let him incur the loss of his dignity

13. Furthermore, we condemn that practice accounted despicable and blameworthy by divine and human laws, denounced by Scripture in the old and new Testaments, namely, the ferocious greed of usurers; and we sever them from every comfort of the church, forbidding any archbishop or bishop, or an abbot of any order whatever or anyone in clerical orders, to dare to receive usurers, unless they do so with extreme caution; but let them be held infamous throughout their whole lives and, unless they repent, be deprived of a Christian burial.

14. We entirely forbid, moreover, those abominable jousts and tournaments in which knights come together by agreement and rashly engage in showing off their physical prowess and daring, and which often result in human deaths and danger to souls. If any of them dies on these occasions, although penance and viaticum are not to be denied him when he requests them, he is to be deprived of a church burial.

15. In the same way we have decided to legislate that if anyone, at the instigation of the devil, incurs the guilt of the following sacrilege, that is, to lay violent hands on a cleric or a monk, he is to be subject to the bond of anathema; and let no bishop presume to absolve such a person unless he is in immediate danger of death, until he has been presented before the apostolic See and submits to its decision. We also prescribe that nobody dare to lay hands on those who flee to a church or cemetery. If anyone does this, let him be excommunicated.

16. It is undoubtedly the case that since ecclesiastical honours depend not on blood-relationships but on merit, and since the church of God awaits successors not on the basis of any right of inheritance, nor according to the flesh, it requires virtuous, wise and devout persons for its administration and the distribution of its offices. Therefore we prohibit, by apostolic authority, anyone to exercise a claim over or to demand, by hereditary right, churches, prebends, provostships, chaplaincies or any ecclesiastical offices. If anyone, unjustly and guilty of ambition, dares to attempt this, he will be duly punished and deprived of the object of his suit.

17. With good reason we entirely prohibit unions within the bounds of consanguinity; for the teachings of holy fathers and the holy church of God detest incestuous behaviour of this kind, which (under the influence of the enemy of the human race) is engaged in nowadays. Even the secular laws pronounce those born of such a union infamous, and refuse them the right of inheritance

18. We completely detest and forbid, by the authority of God and the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, that most dreadful, devastating and malicious crime of incendiarism For this pernicious and inimical calamity surpasses all other kinds of destruction. Nobody is unaware of the extent to which it is injurious to the people of God and the damage it brings to souls and bodies. It is necessary, therefore, to oppose it and to labour with all one's might, that so great a harm and danger be eradicated and suppressed for the sake of the people. If anyone, then, after the publication of this prohibition of ours, from some wicked design born of hate or vengeance, starts a fire or causes it to be started, or knowingly provides counsel or help to those starting one, let him be excommunicated. And when an arsonist dies, he is to be deprived of a Christian burial. Nor is he to be absolved unless, having first made reparation for the loss according to his means, he swears that he will never raise a fire again. Moreover, let him be given the penance of remaining a whole year in Jerusalem or Spain in the service of God.

19. If any archbishop or bishop relaxes this decree, he is to make restitution for the loss and abstain from his episcopal office for a year.

20. As is right, we do not deny to kings and princes the power to dispense justice, in consultation with the archbishops and bishops.

21. We decree that sons of priests are to be removed from the ministries of the sacred altar unless they are living religiously in monasteries or canonries.

22. Because there is one thing that conspicuously causes great disturbance to holy church, namely, false penance, we warn our brothers in the episcopate and priests not to allow the souls of the laity to be deceived or dragged off to hell by false penances. It is agreed that a penance is false when many sins are disregarded and a penance is performed for one only, or when it is done for one sin in such a way that the penitent does not renounce another. Thus it is written: Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point, has become guilty of all of it; this evidently pertains to eternal life. Therefore, just as a person who is entangled in all sins will not enter the gate of eternal life, so also if a person remains in one sin {12}. False penance also occurs when the penitent does not resign a position at a court or in business which cannot be carried on without sin, or if hate is harboured in his heart, or if the person does not make amends to whomever he offended, or if an injured party does not pardon the offender, or if anyone unjustly carries arms.

23. Those who, simulating a kind of religiosity, condemn

—1. the sacrament of the Lord's body and blood,
—2. the baptism of children,
—3. the priesthood and other ecclesiastical orders, and
—4. legitimate marriages,

we expel from the church of God and condemn as heretics, and prescribe that they be constrained by the secular powers. We also bind up their defenders in the fetter of the same condemnation. {13}

24. We also prescribe that no sale-price is to be demanded for chrism, holy oil and burials.

25. If anyone receives provostships, prebends or other ecclesiastical benefices from the hand of a lay person, let him be deprived of the benefice unworthily received. For the decrees of the holy fathers state that lay people, no matter how devout they may be, have no power of disposal over ecclesiastical property.

26. We decree that the pernicious and detestable custom which has spread among some women who although they live neither according to the rule of blessed Benedict, nor Basil nor Augustine, yet wish to be thought of by everyone as nuns, is to be abolished. For when, living according to the rule in monasteries, they ought to be in church or in the refectory or dormitory in common, they build for themselves their own retreats and private dwelling-places where, under the guise of hospitality, indiscriminately and without any shame they receive guests and secular persons contrary to the sacred canons and good morals. Because everyone who does evil hates the light, these women think that, hidden in the tabernacle of the just {14}, they can conceal themselves from the eyes of the Judge who sees everything; so we prohibit in every way this unrighteous, hateful and disgraceful conduct and forbid it to continue under pain of anathema.

27. In the same way, we prohibit nuns to come together with canons or monks in choir for the singing of the office.

28. Since the decrees of the fathers prohibit churches to be left vacant for more than three months, we forbid under anathema the canons of the episcopal see to exclude religious men from the election following on the death of the bishop; but let a virtuous and suitable person be elected as bishop with their advice. Because if an election is held with these religious persons excluded, where this is done without their knowledge and consent, it is null and void.

29. We prohibit under anathema that murderous art of crossbowmen and archers, which is hateful to God, to be employed against Christians and Catholics from now on.

30. We render void the ordinances enacted by Peter Leoni and other schismatics and heretics, and deem them null.

Notes

1. There are no surviving acts of the council and very little can be surmised from the records and chronicles. The sources are collected in Hefele, Histoire des conciles d'apres les documents originaux, trans. and continued by H. Leclerq 1907-52., 5/1, 721-722; but see also, Bernhardi Jahrbuecher der deutschen Geschichte, I Leipzig 1883, 154-160.

2. his earlier name was Peter Pierleoni. See canon 30

3. Ton hagion iokoumenikon synodon tes katholikes ekklesias apanta. Concilia generalia Ecclesiae catholicae [Editio Romana], 4 vols. Rome 1608-1612.

4. Binius, Concilia generalia et provincialia ..., 5 vols. Cologne 1609; 9 vols. ibid [ed. 2] . 1618; 11 vols. Paris[ed. 3] 1636

5. Conciliorum omnium generalium et provincialium collectio [Editio Regia], 37 vols. Paris 1644

6. P. Labbe and G. Cossart, Sacrosancta concilia ad regiam editionem exacta quae nunc quarta parte prodit auctior studio Philippi Labbei et Gabrielis Cossartii ..., 17 vols. Paris 1671-1672

7. Hardouin, Conciliorum collectio regia maxima ad p. Philippi Labbei et p. Gabrielis Cossartii e Societate Jesu labores haud modica accessione facta et emendationibus pluribus additis ..., 12 vols. Paris 1714-1715

8. N. Coleti, Sacrosancta concilia ad regiam editionem exacta quae olim quarta parte prodiit ... longe locupletior et emendatior exhibeture ..., 23 vols. Venice 1728-1733

9. J. D. Mansi (continued by J.B. Martin and L. Petit), Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio ..., 53 vols. Florence, Venice, Paris and Leipzig 1759-1927

10. and the animals ... sheep omitted in Baronius

11. of God added in Baronius

12. Therefore ... sin omitted in Baronius

13. Cathars

14. of the just variant reading in Rm Bn, of the unjust others

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Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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THIRD LATERAN COUNCIL (1179)

Canons

Introduction

By an agreement reached at Venice in 1177, the bitter conflict which had arisen about twenty years earlier between Pope Alexander III (1159-1181) and Emperor Frederick I (1152-1190) was brought to an end. For when Pope Hadrian IV had died in 1159, the cardinals elected two popes together, namely Roland of Siena, who took the name of Alexander III, and Octavian of Rome who though he was nominated by fewer cardinals, nevertheless with the support of the emperor Frederick usurped the name of Pope Victor IV. The emperor, wishing to remove everything which stood in the way of his authority in Italy, declared war upon the Italian states and especially the Roman church which after its struggle for ecclesiastical liberty for so many years, was enjoying great authority. The emperor carried on the war for a long time. A serious schism had arisen out of this conflict, and after Victor IV two antipopes were nominated in opposition to Alexander III, namely Paschal III (1164-1168) and Callistus III (1168-1178). At last, when Alexander had gained the victory, he promised the emperor at Venice that he would summon a general council.

The particular object of this council was to put an end to the schism within the church and the quarrel between the emperor and the papacy. It was summoned by Pope Alexander in 1178, "so that according to the custom of the ancient fathers, the good should be sought and confirmed by many, and that with the cooperation of the grace of the holy Spirit, by the efforts of all, there should be carried out what was required for the correction of abuses and the establishment of what was pleasing to God". The council was held at Rome in March 1179. About three hundred fathers assembled from the provinces of Europe and some from the Latin east, and a single legate from the Greek church. It began on 5 March, according to Archbishop William of Tyre, our chief authority. The bishops first heard Rufinus, bishop of Assisi, who in a highly polished address praised the Roman pontiff and the Roman church, "that church to which alone belongs the decision and power to summon a general council, to lay down new canons and cancel the old; indeed, though the fathers had summoned a solemn council many times in the past, yet the obligation and reason to do this was never more expedient than at the present".

We do not have the same reasons for doubting the ecumenical nature of this council as we have for Lateran I and II. For, the way in which the council was summoned and conducted by the pope, and the number of fathers who gathered from the whole Latin world and devoted their efforts to strengthening the unity of the church and condemning heretics, resemble rather the ancient councils than Lateran I and II and exemplify the typical council of the Middle Ages presided over by the Roman pontiff. For this reason it is not surprising that chronicles of the period frequently refer to this council as Lateran I.

Although we do not possess the acts of the council, we have evidence from chronicles and annals and especially from the canons which the fathers laid down in the final session on 19 March. Accordingly, to avoid future schisms it was first laid down that nobody was to be regarded as Roman pontiff unless he had been elected by two thirds of the cardinals (canon 1) ; all appointments by antipopes were deemed invalid (canon 2), heretics called Cathars were excommunicated and likewise were the bands of mercenaries, or rather criminals, which were causing utter destruction in some parts of Europe; it was declared, and this seems an innovation, that arms should be taken up against them (canon 27) ; it was also decided not to pass judgment about the preaching of the Waldensians. All this seems to have been directed to strengthening the unity of the church. In addition, Alexander III and the fathers, renewing the precedent of Lateran I and II, laid down several canons for the reform of the church and some concerning morals and civil affairs.

The canons of this council played a notable part in the future government of the church. They were frequently included in the collections of decretals compiled in the late 12th and early 13th century, and afterwards all were inserted into Pope Gregory IX's Decretals. Walter Holtzmann and other scholars considered that these decretal collections in fact arose from this Lateran council and its canons. Certainly the canons, unlike those of Lateran I and II and many preceding councils, appear to have been worked out by an excellent legal mind so that it is probable they were composed under the authority of Alexander III himself, who was an expert lawyer. The canons, except for those which refer to Lateran II or the council of Rheims in 1148 (see canons 2, 11, 20-22) or to Gratian's Decrees (see canons 1-4, 7, 11, 13-14, 17-18), are new and original.

The tradition of the canons has not yet been adequately examined and remains very uncertain. Many manuscript codices survive for this council (in contrast to Lateran I and II). However, they do not seem to give us the version of the canons which was confirmed by ecclesiastical authority and which Archbishop William of Tyre, with the authority of the fathers, had himself drawn up. Frequently the canons are to be found in chronicles and decretal collections. They are included in four contemporary English chronicles: those of Abbot Benedict of Peterborough, Gervase of Canterbury, William of Newburgh, and Roger of Hoveden. And in the following collections of decretals: the collection called the Appendix of the Lateran council, the collections of Bamberg, Berlin I, Canterbury I-II, Kassel, Cheltenham, Claudian, Cotton, Dertosa, Douai, Durham, Eberbach, Erlangen, Florian, Klosterneuberg, Leipzig, Oriel II, Paris I, Peterhouse, Rochester, Sangerman, and Tanner; and there are a considerable number of collections still to be examined. The canons are also contained in the book called "Rommersdorfer Briefbuch", the Cartulary of Rievaulx, and the codices Florence Ricc. 288 (Day-book), Innsbruck Univ. 90 (Gratian's Decrees), and (which seem to have been unnoticed hitherto) Vatican Regin. lat. 596, 12th century (fos. 6V-8v), and 984, 12th century (fos. 2r-7v). We can say for certain that the canons of the council were spread abroad through the whole Latin church, and were of great weight in its concerns and transactions.

The first printed edition was made by Cr2 (2, 1551, 836-843). He edited, from a manuscript now lost or unknown, the whole collection known as the Appendix of the Lateran council, which is divided into fifty parts; all 27 canons of Lateran III are in the first part. This text was copied by Su (3, 1567, 626-633) and Bn (3, 1606, 1345-1350), though Su introduced some errors. Bn who was the first to give the name "Appendix of the Lateran council" to the collection, added some variant readings and rubrics which he had found in the chronicle of Roger of Hoveden. The Roman editors (Rm 4, 1612, 27-33), using also the manuscript codex of Antonio Augustine of Tarragona, produced a more accurate text and more variant readings. Later editions, all of which we have examined, followed the Roman text, narnely:ER27 (1644) 439-463;LC10 (1671) 1507-1523;Hrd 6 (1714) 1673-1684; Cl 13 (1730) 416-432; Msi 22 (1778) 217-233. Boehmer, who published his edition in 1747, before Msi, is an exception. He took the canons from the Kassel collection of decretals, where the order and some readings are different. Finally Herold, in his unpublished Bonn dissertation of 1952, examined thoroughly the whole tradition and established the order of the canons; using 36 sources, he concluded there were 34 different traditions!

As things now stand, it is impossible to use all the known sources for our edition. For, these sources reveal only a limited part of the whole tradition and, what is even more important, we do not yet understand the relations between the individual traditions. Even Herold has not examined these relations sufficiently. We have therefore preferred to publish the text of a single tradition, namely that of the Appendix of the Lateran council, using Cr2 and Rm as the best text of this tradition and including the variant readings listed in Rm. This "Appendix" is a good text, as even Herold's text (= H) shows. We have given Herold's variant readings in the critical apparatus, and we have noted in footnotes the order in which he places the 23 canons that he includes.

Canons

1. Although clear enough decrees have been handed down by our predecessors to avoid dissension in the choice of a sovereign pontiff, nevertheless in spite of these, because through wicked and reckless ambition the church has often suffered serious division, we too, in order to avoid this evil, on the advice of our brethren and with the approval of the sacred council, have decided that some addition must be made. Therefore we decree that if by chance, through some enemy sowing tares, there cannot be full agreement among the cardinals on a successor to the papacy, and though two thirds are in agreement a third party is unwilling to agree with them or presumes to appoint someone else for itself, that person shall be held as Roman pontiff who has been chosen and received by the two thirds. But if anyone trusting to his nomination by the third party assumes the name of bishop, since he cannot take the reality, both he and those who receive him are to incur excommunication and be deprived of all sacred order, so that viaticum be denied them, except at the hour of death, and unless they repent, let them receive the lot of Dathan and Abiron, who were swallowed up alive by the earth. Further, if anyone is chosen to the apostolic office by less than two thirds, unless in the meantime he receives a larger support, let him in no way assume it, and let him be subject to the foresaid penalty if he is unwilling humbly to refrain. However, as a result of this decree, let no prejudice arise to the canons and other ecclesiastical constitutions according to which the decision of the greater and senior {1} part should prevail, because any doubt that can arise in them can be settled by a higher authority; whereas in the Roman church there is a special constitution, since no recourse can be had to a superior.

2. Renewing the decision taken by our predecessor of happy memory, Innocent, we decree that the ordinances made by the heresiarchs Octavian {2} and Guido {3}, and also by John of Struma {4} who followed them, and by those ordained by them, are void; and furthermore that if any have received ecclesiastical dignities or benefices through the foresaid schismatics, they are to be deprived of them. Moreover alienations or seizures of ecclesiastical property, which have been made by these schismatics or by lay persons, are to lack all validity and are to return to the church without any burden to it. If anyone presumes to act against this, let him know that he is excommunicated. We decree that those who of their own accord have taken an oath to remain in schism are suspended from sacred orders and dignities.

3. Since in holy orders and ecclesiastical ministries both maturity of age, a serious character and knowledge of letters should be required, much more should these qualities be required in a bishop, who is appointed for the care of others and ought to show in himself how others should live in the house of the Lord. Therefore, lest what has been done with regard to certain persons through the needs of the time should be taken as a precedent for the future, we declare by the present decree that no one should be chosen bishop unless he has already reached the age of thirty, been born in lawful wedlock and also is shown to be worthy by his life and learning. When he has been elected and his election has been confirmed, and he has the administration of ecclesiastical property, after the time has passed for the consecration of bishops as laid down by the canons let the person to whom the benefices which he held belong, have the free disposition of them. Further, with regard to the inferior ministries, for instance that of dean or archdeacon, and others which have the care of souls annexed, let no one at all receive them, or even the rule of parish churches, unless he has already reached his twenty-fifth year of age, and can be approved for his learning and character. When he has been nominated, if the archdeacon is not ordained deacon, and the deans (and the rest after due warning) are not ordained priests within the time fixed by the canons, let them be removed from that office and let it be conferred on another who is both able and willing to fulfill it properly; and let them not be allowed the evasion of recourse to an appeal, should they wish by an appeal to protect themselves against a transgression of the constitution. We order that this should be observed with regard to both past and future appointments, unless it is contrary to the canons. Certainly if clerics appoint someone contrary to this rule, let them know that they are deprived of the power of election and are suspended from ecclesiastical benefices for three years. For it is right that at least the strictness of ecclesiastical discipline should restrain those who are not recalled from evil by the fear of God. But if any bishop has acted in anyone's interest contrary to this decree, or has consented to such actions, let him lose the power of conferring the foresaid offices, and let these appointments be made by the chapter, or by the metropolitan if the chapter cannot agree.

4. Since the apostle decided that he ought to support himself and those accompanying him by his own hands, so that he might remove the opportunity of preaching from false apostles and might not be burdensome to those to whom he was preaching, it is recognized that it is a very serious matter and calls for correction that some of our brethren and fellow bishops are so burdensome to their subjects in the procurations demanded that sometimes, for this reason, subjects are forced to sell church ornaments and a short hour consumes the food of many days. Therefore we decree that archbishops on their visitations of their dioceses are not to bring with them more than forty or fifty horses or other mounts, according to the differences of dioceses and ecclesiastical resources; cardinals should not exceed twenty or twenty-five, bishops are never to exceed twenty or thirty, archdeacons five or seven, and deans, as their delegates, should be satisfied with two horses. Nor should they set out with hunting dogs and birds, but they should proceed in such a way that they are seen to be seeking not their own but the things of Jesus Christ. Let them not seek rich banquets but let them receive with thanksgiving what is duly and suitably provided {5}. We also forbid bishops to burden their subjects with taxes and impositions. But we allow them, for the many needs which sometimes come upon them, if the cause be clear and reasonable, to ask for assistance moderated by charity. For since the apostle says children ought not to lay up for their parents, but parents for their children, it seems to be far removed from paternal affection if superiors are burdensome to their subjects, when like a shepherd they ought to cherish them in all their needs. Archdeacons or deans should not presume to impose charges or taxes on priests or clerics. Indeed, what has been said above by way of permission about the number of horses may be observed in those places where there are greater resources or revenues, but in poorer places we wish measure so to be observed that the visit of greater personages should not be a burden to the humbler, lest by such a grant those who were accustomed to use fewer horses should think that the widest powers have been granted to them.

5. If a bishop ordains someone as deacon or priest without a definite title from which he may draw the necessities of life, let the bishop provide him with what he needs until he shall assign him the suitable wages of clerical service in some church, unless it happens that the person ordained is in such a position that he can find the support of life from his own or family inheritance.

6. A most reprehensible custom has become established in certain places whereby our brethren and fellow bishops and even archdeacons have passed sentence of excommunication or suspension, without any previous admonition on those who they think will lodge an appeal. Others too, while they fear the sentence and canonical discipline of a superior, lodge an appeal without any real grounds and thus make use of a means ordained for the help of the innocent as a defence of their own wrongdoing. Therefore to prevent prelates burdening their own subjects without reason, or subjects at their will being able to escape the correction of prelates under cover of an appeal, we lay down by this present decree that prelates should not pass sentence of suspension or excommunication without a previous canonical warning, unless the fault is such that by its nature it incurs the penalty of excommunication {6} , and that subjects should not recklessly have recourse to an appeal, contrary to ecclesiastical discipline, before the introduction of their case. But if anyone believes that because of his own need he should make an appeal, let a proper limit be fixed for his making it, and if it happens that he fails to do so within this limit, let the bishop freely use his own authority. If in any business someone makes an appeal, but fails to appear when the defendant has arrived, let him make a proper repayment of the defendant's expenses, if he is in a position to do so; in this way, at least by fear, a person may be deterred from lightly making an appeal to the injury of another. But we wish that in religious houses especially this should be observed, namely that monks or other religious, when they are to be corrected for any fault, should not presume to appeal against the regular discipline of their superior or chapter, but they should humbly and devoutly submit to what is usefully enjoined them for their salvation.

7. Since in the body of the church everything should be treated with a spirit of charity, and what has been freely received should be freely given, it is utterly disgraceful that in certain churches trafficking is said to have a place, so that a charge is made for the enthroning of bishops, abbots or ecclesiastical persons, for the installation of priests in a church, for burials and funerals, for the blessing of weddings or for other sacraments, and that he who needs them cannot gain them unless he first makes an offering to the person who bestows them. Some think that this is permitted in the belief that long standing custom has given it the force of law. Such people, blinded by avarice, are not aware that the longer an unhappy soul is bound by crimes the graver they are. Therefore, so that this may not be done in the future, we severely forbid that anything be demanded for the enthronement of ecclesiastical persons or the institution of priests, for burying the dead as well as for blessing marriages or for any other sacrament. But if anyone presumes to act against this, let him know that he will have his lot with Giezi {7}, whose action he imitates by his demand of a disgraceful present. Moreover we forbid bishops, abbots or other prelates to impose upon churches new dues, increase the old or presume to appropriate to their own use part of the revenues, but let them readily preserve for their subjects those liberties which superiors wish to be preserved for themselves. If anyone acts otherwise, his action is to be held invalid.

8. Let no ecclesiastical ministries or even benefices or churches be assigned or promised to anyone before they are vacant, so that nobody may seem to wish for the death of his neighbour to whose position or benefice he believes himself to be the successor. For since we find this forbidden even in the laws of the pagans themselves, it is utterly disgraceful and calls for the punishment of God's judgment if the hope of future succession should have any place in God's church when even pagans have taken care to condemn it. But whenever ecclesiastical prebends or any offices happen to become vacant in a church, or are even now vacant, let them no longer remain unassigned and let them be conferred within six months on persons who are able to administer them worthily. If the bishop, when it concerns him, delays to make the appointment, let it be done by the chapter; but if the election belongs to the chapter and it does not make the appointment within the prescribed time, let the bishop proceed according to God's will, with the advice of religious men; or if by chance all fail to do so, let the metropolitan dispose of these matters without opposition from them and in accordance with God's will.

9. Since we ought both to plant holy religion and in every way to cherish it when planted, we shall never fulfil this better than if we take care to nourish what is right and to correct what stands in the way of the progress of truth by means of the authority entrusted to us {8}. Now we have learnt from the strongly worded complaints of our brethren and fellow bishops that the Templars and Hospitallers, and other professed religious, exceeding the privileges granted them by the apostolic see have often disregarded episcopal authority, causing scandal to the people of God and grave danger to souls. We are told that they receive churches from the hands of lay persons; that they admit those under excommunication and interdict to the sacraments of the church and to burial; that in their churches they appoint and remove priests without the knowledge of the bishop; that when the brothers go to seek alms, and it is granted that the churches should be open on their arrival once a year and the divine services should be celebrated in them, several of them from one or more houses often go to a place under interdict and abuse the privileges granted {9} to them by holding divine service, and then presume to bury the dead in the said churches. On the occasion also of the brotherhoods which they establish in many places, they weaken the bishops' authority, for contrary to their decision and under cover of some privileges they seek to defend all who wish to approach and join their brotherhood. In these matters, because the faults arise not so much with the knowledge or advice of the superiors as from the indiscretion of some of the subjects, we have decreed that abuses should be removed and doubtful points settled. We absolutely forbid that these orders and all other religious should receive churches and tithes from the hands of lay persons, and we even order them to put away what they have recently received contrary to this decree. We declare that those who are excommunicated, or interdicted by name, must be avoided by them and all others according to the sentence of the bishop. In churches which do not belong to them by full right, let them present to the bishops the priests to be instituted, so that while they are answerable to the bishops for the care of the people, they may give to their own members a proper account of temporal matters. Let them not presume to remove those priests who have been appointed without first consulting the bishops. If the Templars or Hospitallers come to a church which is under an interdict, let them be allowed to hold the services of the church only once a year and let them not bury there the bodies of the dead. With regard to the brotherhoods we declare as follows: if any do not give themselves entirely to the said brothers but decide to keep their possessions, they are in no way on this account exempt from the sentence of the bishops, but the bishops may exercise their power over them as over other parishioners whenever they are to be corrected for their faults. What has been said about the said brothers, we declare shall be observed with regard to other religious who presume to claim for themselves the rights of bishops and dare to violate their canonical decisions and the tenor of our privileges. If they do not observe this decree, let the churches in which they dare so to act be placed under an interdict, and let what they do be considered void.

10. Monks are not to be received in a monastery for money nor are they allowed money of their own. They are not to be stationed individually in towns or cities or parish churches, but they are to remain in larger communities or with some of their brethren, nor are they to await alone among people of the world the attack of their spiritual foes, since Solomon says, Woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up. If anyone when demanded gives something for his reception, let him not proceed to sacred orders and let the one who has received him be punished by loss of his office. If he has money in his possession, unless it has been granted him by the abbot for a specific purpose, let him be removed from the communion of the altar, and any one who is found at his death with money in his possession {10} is not to receive burial among his brethren and mass is not to be offered for him. We order that this is also to be observed with regard to other religious. Let the abbot who does not exercise care in such matters know that he will incur the loss of his office. Neither priories nor obediences are to be handed over to anyone for a sum of money; otherwise both giver and receiver are to be deprived of ministry in the church. Priors, when they have been appointed to conventual churches, are not to be changed except for a clear and reasonable cause, for instance if they are wastrels or live immoral lives or have committed an offence for which they clearly should be removed, or if on account of the demands of higher office they should be transferred on the advice of their brethren.

11. Clerics in holy orders, who in open concubinage keep their mistresses in their houses, should either cast them out and live continently or be deprived of ecclesiastical office and benefice. Let all who are found guilty of that unnatural vice for which the wrath of God came down upon the sons of disobedience and destroyed the five cities with fire, if they are clerics be expelled from the clergy or confined in monasteries to do penance; if they are laymen they are to incur excommunication and be completely separated from the society of the faithful. If any cleric without clear and necessary cause presumes to frequent convents of nuns, let the bishop keep him away; and if he does not stop, let him be ineligible for an ecclesiastical benefice.

12. Clerics in the subdiaconate and above and also those in minor orders, if they are supported by ecclesiastical revenues, should not presume to become advocates in legal matters before a secular judge, unless they happen to be defending their own case or that of their church, or acting on behalf of the helpless who cannot conduct their own cases. Let clerics not presume to take upon themselves the management of towns or even secular jurisdiction under princes or seculars so as to become their ministers of justice. If anyone dares to act contrary to this decree, and so contrary to the teaching of the Apostle who says, No soldier of God gets entangled in secular affairs, and acts as a man of this world, let him be deprived of ecclesiastical ministry, on the grounds that neglecting his duty as a cleric he plunges into the waves of this world to please its princes. We decree in the strictest terms that any religious who presumes to attempt any of the above-mentioned things should be punished.

13. Because some, setting no limit to their avarice, strive to obtain several ecclesiastical dignities and several parish churches contrary to the decrees of the holy canons, so that though they are scarcely able to fulfil one office sufficiently they claim the revenues of very many, we strictly forbid this for the future. Therefore when it is necessary to entrust a church or ecclesiastical ministry to anyone, the person sought for this office should be of such a kind that he is able to reside in the place and exercise his care for it himself. If the contrary is done both he who receives it is to be deprived of it, because he has received it contrary to the sacred canons, and he who gave it is to lose his power of bestowing it.

14. Because the ambition of some has now gone to such lengths that they are said to hold not two or three but six or more churches, and since they cannot devote the proper care to two, we order, through our brethren and most dear fellow bishops, that this be corrected, and with regard to this pluralism, so contrary to the canons, and which gives rise to loose conduct and instability, and causes definite danger to the souls of those who are able to serve the churches worthily, it is our wish to relieve their want by ecclesiastical benefices. Further, since some of the laity have become so bold that disregarding the authority of bishops they appoint clerics to churches and even remove them when they wish, and distribute the property and other goods of the church for the most part according to their own wishes, and even dare to burden the churches themselves and their people with taxes and impositions, we decree that those who from now on are guilty of such conduct are to be punished by anathema. Priests or clerics who receive the charge of a church from the hands of lay persons {11}, without the authority of their own bishop, are to be deprived of communion, and if they persist, they are to be deposed from the ecclesiastical ministry and order. We firmly decree that because some of the laity force ecclesiastics and even bishops to come before their courts, those who presume to do so in the future are to be separated from the communion of the faithful. Further we forbid lay persons, who hold tithes to the danger of their souls, to transfer them in any way {12} to other lay persons. If anyone receives them and does not hand them over to the church, let him be deprived of Christian burial.

15. Although in duties of charity we are especially under obligation to those from whom we know we have received a gift, on the contrary certain clerics, after receiving many goods from their churches, have presumed to transfer these goods to other uses. We forbid this, knowing that it is also forbidden by ancient canons. Therefore, as we wish to prevent damage to the churches, we order that such goods should remain under the control of the churches, whether the clerics die intestate or wish to bestow them upon others. Besides, since in certain places certain persons called deans are appointed for a fee and exercise episcopal jurisdiction for a sum of money, by the present decree we declare that those who in future presume to do this should be deprived of their office and the bishop shall lose the power of conferring this office.

16. Since in every church what is approved by the greater and senior {13} part of the brethren should unhesitatingly be observed, it is a very serious and blameworthy matter that in certain churches a few persons, sometimes not so much for a good reason as for their own will, frequently prevent an election and do not allow the ecclesiastical appointment to go forward. Therefore we declare by the present decree that unless some reasonable objection is shown by the smaller and junior party, apart from an appeal, whatever is determined by the greater and senior {14} part of the chapter should always prevail and should be put into effect. Nor let it stand in the way of our decree if someone perchance says that he is under oath to preserve the custom of his church. For this is not to be called an oath but rather perjury, which is opposed to the advantage of the church and the decrees of the holy fathers. If anyone presumes to maintain under oath such customs, which are neither supported by reason nor in accord with the sacred decrees, let him be denied the reception of the body of the Lord until he performs fit penance.

17. Since in certain places the founders of churches or their heirs abuse the power in which the church has supported them until now, and though there ought to be one superior in the church of God they nevertheless contrive to choose several without regard to subordination, and though there ought to be one rector in each church they nevertheless put forward several in order to protect their own interests; for these reasons we declare by the present decree that if the founders support several candidates, that one should be in charge of the church who is supported by greater merits and is chosen and approved by the consent of the greater number. If this cannot be done without scandal, let the bishop arrange in the manner that he sees best according to the will of God. He should also do this if the question of the right of patronage arises among several persons, and it has not been settled to whom it belongs within three {15} months.

18. Since the church of God is bound to provide like a mother for those in want, with regard to both the things which concern the support of the body and those which lead to the progress of the soul, therefore, in order that the opportunity of learning to read and progress in study is not withdrawn from poor children who cannot be helped by the support of their parents, in every cathedral church a master is to be assigned some proper benefice so that he may teach the clerics of that church and the poor scholars. Thus the needs of the teacher are to be supplied and the way to knowledge opened for learners. In other churches and monasteries too, if anything in times past has been assigned in them for this purpose, it should be restored. Let no one demand any money for a licence to teach, or under cover of some custom seek anything from teachers, or forbid anyone to teach who is suitable and has sought a licence. Whoever presumes to act against this decree is to be deprived of ecclesiastical benefice. Indeed, it seems only right that in the church of God a person should not have the fruit of his labour if through self-seeking he strives to prevent the progress of the churches by selling the licence to teach.

19. It is recognized as a very serious matter, as regards the sin of those who do it no less than the loss of those who suffer it, that in several parts of the world the governors and officials of cities, and others too who are seen to have power, often impose on churches so many burdens and oppress them with such heavy and frequent impositions, that under them the priesthood seems to be in a worse condition than it was under Pharaoh, who had no knowledge of the divine law. He indeed, though he reduced all others to slavery, left his priests and their possessions in their ancient freedom, and provided them with support from public funds. But these others impose burdens of nearly every kind upon the churches and afflict them with so many exactions that the lamentation of Jeremiah seems to apply to them, The prince of provinces has become a tributary. For whenever they think that entrenchments or expeditions or anything else should be made, they wish that almost everything should be seized from the goods assigned to the use of churches, clerics and Christ's poor. They even so reduce the jurisdiction and authority of bishops and other prelates that these seem to retain no power over their own subjects. But though we must in this matter grieve for the churches, we must grieve none the less for those who seem to have utterly cast aside the fear of God and respect for the ecclesiastical order. Therefore we strictly forbid them under pain of anathema to attempt such acts in future, unless the bishop and clergy see the need or advantage to be so great that they believe that where the means of the laity are insufficient, aid should be given voluntarily by the churches to relieve common needs. But if in future officials or others presume to continue such practices and after warning refuse to stop, let both them and their supporters know that they are excommunicated, and let them not be restored to the communion of the faithful unless they make due satisfaction.

20. Following the footsteps of our predecessors of happy memory, popes Innocent and Eugenius, we forbid those abominable jousts and fairs, which are commonly called tournaments, in which knights come together by agreement and rashly engage in showing off their physical prowess and daring, and which often result in human deaths and danger to souls. If any of them dies on these occasions, although forgiveness {16} is not to be denied him when he requests it, he is to be deprived of a church burial.

21. We decree that truces are to be inviolably observed by all from after sunset on Wednesday until sunrise on Monday, and from Advent until the octave of the Epiphany, and from Septuagesima until the octave of Easter. If anyone tries to break the truce, and he does not comply after the third warning, let his bishop pronounce sentence of excommunication and communicate his decision in writing to the neighbouring bishops. Moreover, let no bishop receive into communion the excommunicated person, but rather let him confirm the sentence received in writing. If anyone presumes to infringe this, he will do so at the risk of his position. Since a threefold cord is not quickly broken, we enjoin bishops, having regard only for God and the salvation of the people, and laying aside all timidity, to furnish each other with mutual counsel and help towards firmly maintaining peace, and not to omit this duty by reason of any affection or aversion. For if anyone is found to be lukewarm in the work of God, let him incur the loss of his dignity.

22. We renew our decree that priests, monks, clerics, lay brothers, merchants and peasants, in their coming and going and their work on the land, and the animals which carry seeds to the field, should enjoy proper security, and that nobody should impose on anyone new demands for tolls, without the approval of kings and princes, or renew those already imposed or in any way increase the old. If anyone presumes to act against this decree and does not stop after warning, let him be deprived of Christian society until he makes satisfaction.

23. Although the Apostles says that we should pay greater honour to our weaker members, certain ecclesiastics, seeking what is their own and not the things of Jesus Christ, do not allow lepers, who cannot dwell with the healthy or come to church with others, to have their own churches and cemeteries or to be helped by the ministry of their own priests. Since it is recognized that this is far from Christian piety, we decree, in accordance with apostolic charity, that wherever so many are gathered together under a common way of life that they are able to establish a church for themselves with a cemetery and rejoice in their own priest, they should be allowed to have them without contradiction. Let them take care, however, not to harm in any way the parochial rights of established churches. For we do not wish that what is granted them on the score of piety should result in harm to others. We also declare that they should not be compelled to pay tithes for their gardens or the pasture of animals.

24. Cruel avarice has so seized the hearts of some that though they glory in the name of Christians they provide the Saracens with arms and wood for helmets, and become their equals or even their superiors in wickedness and supply them with arms and necessaries to attack Christians. There are even some who for gain act as captains or pilots in galleys or Saracen pirate vessels. Therefore we declare that such persons should be cut off from the communion of the church and be excommunicated for their wickedness, that catholic princes and civil magistrates should confiscate their possessions, and that if they are captured they should become the slaves of their captors. We order that throughout the churches of maritime cities frequent and solemn excommunication should be pronounced against them. Let those also be under excommunication who dare to rob Romans or other Christians who sail for trade or other honourable purposes. Let those also who in the vilest avarice presume to rob shipwrecked Christians, whom by the rule of faith they are bound to help, know that they are excommunicated unless they return the stolen property.

25. Nearly everywhere the crime of usury has become so firmly rooted that many, omitting other business, practise usury as if it were permitted, and in no way observe how it is forbidden in both the Old and New Testament. We therefore declare that notorious usurers should not be admitted to communion of the altar or receive Christian burial if they die in this sin. Whoever receives them or gives them Christian burial should be compelled to give back what he has received, and let him remain suspended from the performance of his office until he has made satisfaction according to the judgment of his own bishop.

26. Jews and Saracens are not to be allowed to have Christian servants in their houses, either under pretence of nourishing their children or for service or any other reason. Let those be excommunicated who presume to live with them. We declare that the evidence of Christians is to be accepted against Jews in every case, since Jews employ their own witnesses against Christians, and that those who prefer Jews to Christians in this matter are to lie under anathema, since Jews ought to be subject to Christians and to be supported by them on grounds of humanity alone. If any by the inspiration of God are converted to the Christian faith, they are in no way to be excluded from their possessions, since the condition of converts ought to be better than before their conversion. If this is not done, we enjoin on the princes and rulers of these places, under penalty of excommunication, the duty to restore fully to these converts the share of their inheritance and goods.

27. As St. Leo says, though the discipline of the church should be satisfied with the judgment of the priest and should not cause the shedding of blood, yet it is helped by the laws of catholic princes so that people often seek a salutary remedy when they fear that a corporal punishment will overtake them. For this reason, since in Gascony and the regions of Albi and Toulouse and in other places the loathsome heresy of those whom some call the Cathars, others the Patarenes, others the Publicani, and others by different names, has grown so strong that they no longer practise their wickedness in secret, as others do, but proclaim their error publicly and draw the simple and weak to join them, we declare that they and their defenders and those who receive them are under anathema, and we forbid under pain of anathema that anyone should keep or support them in their houses or lands or should trade with them. If anyone dies in this sin, then neither under cover of our privileges granted to anyone, nor for any other reason, is mass to be offered for them or are they to receive burial among Christians. With regard to the Brabanters, Aragonese, Navarrese, Basques, Coterelli and Triaverdini {17}, who practise such cruelty upon Christians that they respect neither churches nor monasteries, and spare neither widows, orphans, old or young nor any age or sex, but like pagans destroy and lay everything waste, we likewise decree that those who hire, keep or support them, in the districts where they rage around, should be denounced publicly on Sundays and other solemn days in the churches, that they should be subject in every way to the same sentence and penalty as the above-mentioned heretics and that they should not be received into the communion of the church, unless they abjure their pernicious society and heresy. As long as such people persist in their wickedness, let all who are bound to them by any pact know that they are free from all obligations of loyalty, homage or any obedience. On these {18} and on all the faithful we enjoin, for the remission of sins, that they oppose this scourge with all their might and by arms protect the Christian people against them. Their goods are to be confiscated and princes free to subject them to slavery. Those who in true sorrow for their sins die in such a conflict should not doubt that they will receive forgiveness for their sins and the fruit of an eternal reward. We too trusting in the mercy of God and the authority of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, grant to faithful Christians who take up arms against them, and who on the advice of bishops or other prelates seek to drive them out, a remission for two years of penance imposed on them, or, if their service shall be longer, we entrust it to the discretion of the bishops, to whom this task has been committed, to grant greater indulgence, according to their judgment, in proportion to the degree of their toil. We command that those who refuse to obey the exhortation of the bishops in this matter should not be allowed to receive the body and blood of the Lord. Meanwhile we receive under the protection of the church, as we do those who visit the Lord's sepulchre, those who fired by their faith have taken upon themselves the task of driving out these heretics, and we decree that they should remain undisturbed from all disquiet both in their property and persons. If any of you presumes to molest them, he shall incur the sentence of excommunication from the bishop of the place, and let the sentence be observed by all until what has been taken away has been restored and suitable satisfaction has been made for the loss inflicted. Bishops and priests who do not resist such wrongs are to be punished by loss of their office until they gain the pardon of the apostolic see.

Notes

1. sounder in Cr, LC-Msi, H

2. antipope Victor IV (1159-1164)

3. antipope Paschal III (1164-1168)

4. antipope Callistus III (1168-1178)

5. Let them not... provided omitted in Cr Su.

6. suspension or excommunication variant reading in Rm, H

7. see 4 Kg, 20-27

8. by God added in H

9. by us added in H

10. and has not repented in a fitting manner added in H

11. whether under cover of patronage or in any other way added in H

12. without the consent of their bishop added in H

13. sounder in H

14. sounder variant reading in Rm

15. four variant reading in Rm, two in H

16. penance H

17. omitted in H

18. princes H

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FOURTH LATERAN COUNCIL (1215)

Constitutions

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Introduction

During the pontificate of Innocent III (1198-1216) there appears to have occurred much growth in the reform of the church and in its freedom from subservience to the empire as well as in the primacy of the bishop of Rome and in the summoning of ecclesiastical business to the Roman curia. Innocent himself, turning his whole mind to the things of God, strove to build up the Christian community. Spiritual things, and therefore the church, were to have first place in this endeavour; so that human affairs were to be dependent upon, and to draw their justification from, such considerations.

The council may therefore be regarded as a great summary of the pontiff's work and also as his greatest initiative. He was not able, however, to bring it to completion since he died shortly afterwards (1216) . Christian disasters in the holy Land probably provided the occasion for Innocent to call the council. Thus the pontiff ordered a new crusade to be proclaimed. But he also used the crusade as an instrument of ecclesiastical administration, combined with reform of the church, namely in a fierce war against heretics which he thought would restore ecclesiastical society.

The council was summoned on 19 April 1213 to meet in November 1215. All the bishops and abbots of the church as well as priors and even (which was new) chapters of churches and of religious orders — namely Cistercians, Premonstratensians, Hospitallers and Templars — and the kings and civil authorities throughout Europe were invited. The bishops were explicitly asked to propose topics for discussion at the council, something which does not seem to have happened at the preceding Lateran councils. This was done by the legates who had been dispatched throughout Europe to preach the crusade. In each province only one or two bishops were allowed to remain at home; all the rest were ordered to be present. The purposes of the council were clearly set forth by Innocent himself : "to eradicate vices and to plant virtues, to correct faults and to reform morals, to remove heresies and to strengthen faith, to settle discords and to establish peace, to get rid of oppression and to foster liberty, to induce princes and Christian people to come to the aid and succour of the holy Land... ". It seems that when Innocent summoned the council he wished to observe the customs of the early ecumenical councils, and indeed this fourth Lateran council was regarded as an ecumenical council by all learned and religious men of the age.

When the council began in the Lateran basilica in November 1215 there were present 404 bishops from throughout the western church, and from the Latin eastern church a large number of abbots, canons and representatives of the secular power. No Greeks were present, even those invited, except the patriarch of the Maronites and a legate of the patriarch of Alexandria. The bond with the Greek church was indeed neglected, and matters became more serious through the actions of Latin bishops living in the east or through the decrees of the council.

The council began on 11 November with the pontiff's sermon. He was especially looking for a religious outcome to the council. Soon, however secular matters and power politics came to the fore. At the second session (on 20 November) the struggle for the empire between Frederick II and Otto IV was brought before the council and gave rise to a bitter and contentious debate. This affected the nature of the council in a way that had not been foreseen and revealed a certain ineffectiveness in Innocent's plans for governing the church. Finally, the third session (on 30 November) was devoted to reading and approving the constitutions, which were proposed by the pontiff himself. The last decree dealt with preparations for a crusade — "Jesus Christ's business" — and fixed 1 June 1217 for its start, though this was prevented by the pontiff's death.

The seventy constitutions would seem to give proof of the council's excellent results. The work of Innocent appears clearly in them even though they were probably not directly composed by him. He regarded them as universal laws and as a summary of the jurisdiction of his pontificate. Few links with earlier councils survive, those with the third Lateran council being the only relevant ones of which we know.

Thus,

—the first constitution is regarded as a new profession of faith.

—The second and third constitutions, which deal with heretics and contain dogmatic statements, are new.

—The remainder, which deal with the reform of the church, appear for the most part to be new either in form or in content. They deal with

—the church's discipline (6-13) ,

—the reform of clerical morals (14-22) ,

—episcopal elections and the administration of benefices (23-32) ,

—exaction of taxes (33-34) ,

—canonical suits (35-49) ,

—matrimony (50-52) ,

—tithes (53-61) ,

—simony (63-66) , and

—Jews (67-70) .

The constitutions were first edited by Cr 2 (1538) CLXv-CLXXIIv, the text of which was used in Cr 2 (1551) 946-967, Su 3 (1567) 735-756, and Bn 3/2 (1606) 1450-1465. Roman editors produced a more accurate edition (Rm 4 [1612] 43-63) , collating the common text "with manuscript codices from the Vatican". Rm was followed by Bn 3/2 (1618) 682-696 and ER 28 (1644) 154-225. LC 11/1 (1671) 142-233 provided a text "in Greek and Latin..... from a Mazarin codex" (=M) with various readings from a d'Achery codex (=A) . The Greek translation, however, which LC had thought to be contemporary, does not provide a complete text and was taken from a later codex. LC was followed by Hrd 7 (1714) 15-78, Cl 13 (1730) 927-1018, and Msi 22 (1778) 981-1068. There are many surviving manuscripts of the constitutions, as has been shown by Garcia, who is preparing a critical edition. That is to say, twenty manuscripts containing the constitutions and twelve others containing the constitutions together with commentaries; and probably there are others which are not yet known. The constitutions were taken into Compilatio IV, except 42 and [71], and into Decretalia of Gregory IX, except 42, 49 and [71]. The present edition follows the Roman edition, but all the variant readings that have so far been brought to light by scholars have been cited with {n} referring to the endnotes.

Constitutions

1. Confession of Faith

We firmly believe and simply confess that there is only one true God, eternal and immeasurable, almighty, unchangeable, incomprehensible and ineffable, Father, Son and holy Spirit, three persons but one absolutely simple essence, substance or nature {1}. The Father is from none, the Son from the Father alone, and the holy Spirit from both equally, eternally without beginning or end; the Father generating, the Son being born, and the holy Spirit proceeding; consubstantial and coequal, co-omnipotent and coeternal; one principle of all things, creator of all things invisible and visible, spiritual and corporeal; who by his almighty power at the beginning of time created from nothing both spiritual and corporeal creatures, that is to say angelic and earthly, and then created human beings composed as it were of both spirit and body in common. The devil and other demons were created by God naturally good, but they became evil by their own doing. Man, however, sinned at the prompting of the devil.

This holy Trinity, which is undivided according to its common essence but distinct according to the properties of its persons, gave the teaching of salvation to the human race through Moses and the holy prophets and his other servants, according to the most appropriate disposition of the times. Finally the only-begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ, who became incarnate by the action of the whole Trinity in common and was conceived from the ever virgin Mary through the cooperation of the holy Spirit, having become true man, composed of a rational soul and human flesh, one person in two natures, showed more clearly the way of life. Although he is immortal and unable to suffer according to his divinity, he was made capable of suffering and dying according to his humanity. Indeed, having suffered and died on the wood of the cross for the salvation of the human race, he descended to the underworld, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. He descended in the soul, rose in the flesh, and ascended in both. He will come at the end of time to judge the living and the dead, to render to every person according to his works, both to the reprobate and to the elect. All of them will rise with their own bodies, which they now wear, so as to receive according to their deserts, whether these be good or bad; for the latter perpetual punishment with the devil, for the former eternal glory with Christ.

There is indeed one universal church of the faithful, outside of which nobody at all is saved, in which Jesus Christ is both priest and sacrifice. His body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine, the bread and wine having been changed in substance, by God's power, into his body and blood, so that in order to achieve this mystery of unity we receive from God what he received from us. Nobody can effect this sacrament except a priest who has been properly ordained according to the church's keys, which Jesus Christ himself gave to the apostles and their successors. But the sacrament of baptism is consecrated in water at the invocation of the undivided Trinity — namely Father, Son and holy Spirit — and brings salvation to both children and adults when it is correctly carried out by anyone in the form laid down by the church. If someone falls into sin after having received baptism, he or she can always be restored through true penitence. For not only virgins and the continent but also married persons find favour with God by right faith and good actions and deserve to attain to eternal blessedness.

2. On the error of abbot Joachim

We therefore condemn and reprove that small book or treatise which abbot Joachim published against master Peter Lombard concerning the unity or essence of the Trinity, in which he calls Peter Lombard a heretic and a madman because he said in his Sentences, "For there is a certain supreme reality which is the Father and the Son and the holy Spirit, and it neither begets nor is begotten nor does it proceed". He asserts from this that Peter Lombard ascribes to God not so much a Trinity as a quaternity, that is to say three persons and a common essence as if this were a fourth person. Abbot Joachim clearly protests that there does not exist any reality which is the Father and the Son and the holy Spirit-neither an essence nor a substance nor a nature — although he concedes that the Father and the Son and the holy Spirit are one essence, one substance and one nature. He professes, however, that such a unity is not true and proper but rather collective and analogous, in the way that many persons are said to be one people and many faithful one church, according to that saying : Of the multitude of believers there was one heart and one mind, and Whoever adheres to God is one spirit with him; again He who plants and he who waters are one, and all of us are one body in Christ; and again in the book of Kings, My people and your people are one. In support of this opinion he especially uses the saying which Christ uttered in the gospel concerning the faithful : I wish, Father, that they may be one in us, just as we are one, so that they may be made perfect in one. For, he says, Christ's faithful are not one in the sense of a single reality which is common to all. They are one only in this sense, that they form one church through the unity of the catholic faith, and finally one kingdom through a union of indissoluble charity. Thus we read in the canonical letter of John : For there are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father and the Word and the holy Spirit, and these three are one; and he immediately adds, And the three that bear witness on earth are the spirit, water and blood, and the three are one, according to some manuscripts.

We, however, with the approval of this sacred and universal council, believe and confess with Peter Lombard that there exists a certain supreme reality, incomprehensible and ineffable, which truly is the Father and the Son and the holy Spirit, the three persons together and each one of them separately. Therefore in God there is only a Trinity, not a quaternity, since each of the three persons is that reality — that is to say substance, essence or divine nature-which alone is the principle of all things, besides which no other principle can be found. This reality neither begets nor is begotten nor proceeds; the Father begets, the Son is begotten and the holy Spirit proceeds. Thus there is a distinction of persons but a unity of nature. Although therefore the Father is one person, the Son another person and the holy Spirit another person, they are not different realities, but rather that which is the Father is the Son and the holy Spirit, altogether the same; thus according to the orthodox and catholic faith they are believed to be consubstantial. For the Father, in begetting the Son from eternity, gave him his substance, as he himself testifies : What the Father gave me is greater than all. It cannot be said that the Father gave him part of his substance and kept part for himself since the Father's substance is indivisible, inasmuch as it is altogether simple. Nor can it be said that the Father transferred his substance to the Son, in the act of begetting, as if he gave it to the Son in such a way that he did not retain it for himself; for otherwise he would have ceased to be substance. It is therefore clear that in being begotten the Son received the Father's substance without it being diminished in any way, and thus the Father and the Son have the same substance. Thus the Father and the Son and also the holy Spirit proceeding from both are the same reality.

When, therefore, the Truth prays to the Father for those faithful to him, saying I wish that they may be one in us just as we are one, this word one means for the faithful a union of love in grace, and for the divine persons a unity of identity in nature, as the Truth says elsewhere, You must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect {2}, as if he were to say more plainly, You must be perfect in the perfection of grace, just as your Father is perfect in the perfection that is his by nature, each in his own way. For between creator and creature there can be noted no similarity so great that a greater dissimilarity cannot be seen between them. If anyone therefore ventures to defend or approve the opinion or doctrine of the aforesaid Joachim on this matter, let him be refuted by all as a heretic. By this, however, we do not intend anything to the detriment of the monastery of Fiore, which Joachim founded, because there both the instruction is according to rule and the observance is healthy; especially since Joachim ordered all his writings to be handed over to us, to be approved or corrected according to the judgment of the apostolic see. He dictated a letter, which he signed with his own hand, in which he firmly confesses that he holds the faith held by the Roman church, which is by God's plan the mother and mistress of all the faithful.

We also reject and condemn that most perverse doctrine of the impious Amalric, whose mind the father of lies blinded to such an extent that his teaching is to be regarded as mad more than as heretical.

3. On Heretics

We excommunicate and anathematize every heresy raising itself up against this holy, orthodox and catholic faith which we have expounded above. We condemn all heretics, whatever names they may go under. They have different faces indeed but their tails are tied together inasmuch as they are alike in their pride. Let those condemned be handed over to the secular authorities present, or to their bailiffs, for due punishment. Clerics are first to be degraded from their orders. The goods of the condemned are to be confiscated, if they are lay persons, and if clerics they are to be applied to the churches from which they received their stipends. Those who are only found suspect of heresy are to be struck with the sword of anathema, unless they prove their innocence by an appropriate purgation, having regard to the reasons for suspicion and the character of the person. Let such persons be avoided by all until they have made adequate satisfaction. If they persist in the excommunication for a year, they are to be condemned as heretics. Let secular authorities, whatever offices they may be discharging, be advised and urged and if necessary be compelled by ecclesiastical censure, if they wish to be reputed and held to be faithful, to take publicly an oath for the defence of the faith to the effect that they will seek, in so far as they can, to expel from the lands subject to their jurisdiction all heretics designated by the church in good faith. Thus whenever anyone is promoted to spiritual or temporal authority, he shall be obliged to confirm this article with an oath. If however a temporal lord, required and instructed by the church, neglects to cleanse his territory of this heretical filth, he shall be bound with the bond of excommunication by the metropolitan and other bishops of the province. If he refuses to give satisfaction within a year, this shall be reported to the supreme pontiff so that he may then declare his vassals absolved from their fealty to him and make the land available for occupation by Catholics so that these may, after they have expelled the heretics, possess it unopposed and preserve it in the purity of the faith — saving the right of the suzerain provided that he makes no difficulty in the matter and puts no impediment in the way. The same law is to be observed no less as regards those who do not have a suzerain.

Catholics who take the cross and gird themselves up for the expulsion of heretics shall enjoy the same indulgence, and be strengthened by the same holy privilege, as is granted to those who go to the aid of the holy Land. Moreover, we determine to subject to excommunication believers who receive, defend or support heretics. We strictly ordain that if any such person, after he has been designated as excommunicated, refuses to render satisfaction within a year, then by the law itself he shall be branded as infamous and not be admitted to public offices or councils or to elect others to the same or to give testimony. He shall be intestable, that is he shall not have the freedom to make a will nor shall succeed to an inheritance. Moreover nobody shall be compelled to answer to him on any business whatever, but he may be compelled to answer to them. If he is a judge sentences pronounced by him shall have no force and cases may not be brought before him; if an advocate, he may not be allowed to defend anyone; if a notary, documents drawn up by him shall be worthless and condemned along with their condemned author; and in similar matters we order the same to be observed. If however he is a cleric, let him be deposed from every office and benefice, so that the greater the fault the greater be the punishment. If any refuse to avoid such persons after they have been pointed out by the church, let them be punished with the sentence of excommunication until they make suitable satisfaction. Clerics should not, of course, give the sacraments of the church to such pestilent people nor give them a Christian burial nor accept alms or offerings from them; if they do, let them be deprived of their office and not restored to it without a special indult of the apostolic see. Similarly with regulars, let them be punished with losing their privileges in the diocese in which they presume to commit such excesses.

"There are some who holding to the form of religion but denying its power (as the Apostle says) , claim for themselves the authority to preach, whereas the same Apostle says, How shall they preach unless they are sent? Let therefore all those who have been forbidden or not sent to preach, and yet dare publicly or privately to usurp the office of preaching without having received the authority of the apostolic see or the catholic bishop of the place", be bound with the bond of excommunication and, unless they repent very quickly, be punished by another suitable penalty. We add further that each archbishop or bishop, either in person or through his archdeacon or through suitable honest persons, should visit twice or at least once in the year any parish of his in which heretics are said to live. There he should compel three or more men of good repute, or even if it seems expedient the whole neighbourhood, to swear that if anyone knows of heretics there or of any persons who hold secret conventicles or who differ in their life and habits from the normal way of living of the faithful, then he will take care to point them out to the bishop. The bishop himself should summon the accused to his presence, and they should be punished canonically if they are unable to clear themselves of the charge or if after compurgation they relapse into their former errors of faith. If however any of them with damnable obstinacy refuse to honour an oath and so will not take it, let them by this very fact be regarded as heretics. We therefore will and command and, in virtue of obedience, strictly command that bishops see carefully to the effective execution of these things throughout their dioceses, if they wish to avoid canonical penalties. If any bishop is negligent or remiss in cleansing his diocese of the ferment of heresy, then when this shows itself by unmistakeable signs he shall be deposed from his office as bishop and there shall be put in his place a suitable person who both wishes and is able to overthrow the evil of heresy.

4. On the pride of the Greeks towards the Latins

Although we would wish to cherish and honour the Greeks who in our days are returning to the obedience of the apostolic see, by preserving their customs and rites as much as we can in the Lord, nevertheless we neither want nor ought to defer to them in matters which bring danger to souls and detract from the church's honour. For, after the Greek church together with certain associates and supporters withdrew from the obedience of the apostolic see, the Greeks began to detest the Latins so much that, among other wicked things which they committed out of contempt for them, when Latin priests celebrated on their altars they would not offer sacrifice on them until they had washed them, as if the altars had been defiled thereby. The Greeks even had the temerity to rebaptize those baptized by the Latins; and some, as we are told, still do not fear to do this. Wishing therefore to remove such a great scandal from God's church, we strictly order, on the advice of this sacred council, that henceforth they do not presume to do such things but rather conform themselves like obedient sons to the holy Roman church, their mother, so that there may be one flock and one shepherd. If anyone however does dare to do such a thing, let him be struck with the sword of excommunication and be deprived of every ecclesiastical office and benefice.

5. The dignity of the patriarchal sees

Renewing the ancient privileges of the patriarchal sees, we decree, with the approval of this sacred universal synod, that after the Roman church, which 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, the church of Constantinople shall have the first place, the church of Alexandria the second place, the church of Antioch the third place, and the church of Jerusalem the fourth place, each maintaining its own rank. Thus after their pontiffs have received from the Roman pontiff the pallium, which is the sign of the fullness of the pontifical office, and have taken an oath of fidelity and obedience to him they may lawfully confer the pallium on their own suffragans, receiving from them for themselves canonical profession and for the Roman church the promise of obedience. They may have a standard of the Lord's cross carried before them anywhere except in the city of Rome or wherever there is present the supreme pontiff or his legate wearing the insignia of the apostolic dignity. In all the provinces subject to their jurisdiction let appeal be made to them, when it is necessary, except for appeals made to the apostolic see, to which all must humbly defer.

6. On yearly provincial councils

As is known to have been ordained of old by the holy fathers, metropolitans should not fail to hold provincial councils each year with their suffragans in which they consider diligently and in the fear of God the correction of excesses and the reform of morals, especially among the clergy. Let them recite the canonical rules, especially those which have been laid down by this general council, so as to secure their observance, inflicting on transgressors the punishment due. In order that this may be done more effectively, let them appoint for each diocese suitable persons, that is to say prudent and honest persons, who will simply and summarily, without any jurisdiction, throughout the whole year, carefully investigate what needs correction or reform and will then faithfully report these matters to the metropolitan and suffragans and others at the next council, so that they may proceed with careful deliberation against these and other matters according to what is profitable and decent. Let them see to the observance of the things that they decree, publishing them in episcopal synods which are to be held annually in each diocese. Whoever neglects to carry out this salutary statute is to be suspended from his benefices and from the execution of his office, until his superior decides to release him.

7. The correction of offences and the reform of morals

By this inviolable constitution we decree that prelates of churches should prudently and diligently attend to the correction of their subjects' offences especially of clerics, and to the reform of morals. Otherwise the blood of such persons will be required at their hands. In order that they may be able to exercise freely this office of correction and reform, we decree that no custom or appeal can impede the execution of their decisions, unless they go beyond the form which is to be observed in such matters. The offences of canons of a cathedral church, however, which have customarily been corrected by the chapter, are to be corrected by the chapter in those churches which until now have had this custom, at the instance and on the orders of the bishop and within a suitable time-limit which the bishop will decide. If this is not done, then the bishop, mindful of God and putting an end to all opposition, is to go ahead with correcting the persons by ecclesiastical censure according as the care of souls requires, and he shall not omit to correct their other faults according as the good of souls requires, with due order however being observed in all things {3}. For the rest, if the canons stop celebrating divine services without manifest and reasonable cause, especially if this is in contempt of the bishop, then the bishop himself may celebrate in the cathedral church if he wishes, and on complaint from him, the metropolitan, as our delegate in the matter, may, when he has learned the truth, punish the persons concerned in such fashion that for fear of punishment they shall not venture such action in the future. Let prelates of churches therefore carefully see that they do not turn this salutary statute into a form of financial gain or other exaction, but rather let them carry it out assiduously and faithfully, if they wish to avoid canonical punishment, since in these matters the apostolic see, directed by the Lord, will be very vigilant.

8. On inquests

"How and in what way a prelate ought to proceed to inquire into and punish the offences of his subjects may be clearly ascertained from the authorities of the new and old Testament, from which subsequent sanctions in canon law derive", as we said distinctly some time ago and now confirm with the approval of this holy council.

"For we read in the gospel that the steward who was denounced to his lord for wasting his goods heard him say : What is this that I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be my steward. And in Genesis the Lord says : I will go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry which has come to me. From these authorities it is clearly shown that not only when a subject has committed some excess but also when a prelate has done so, and the matter reaches the ears of the superior through an outcry or rumour which has come not from the malevolent and slanderous but from prudent and honest persons, and has come not only once but frequently (as the outcry suggests and the rumour proves) , then the superior ought diligently to seek out the truth before senior persons of the church. If the seriousness of the matter demands, then the fault of the offender should be subjected to canonical punishment. However, the superior should carry out the duty of his office not as if he were the accuser and the judge but rather with the rumour providing the accusation and the outcry making the denunciation. While this should be observed in the case of subjects, all the more carefully should it be observed in the case of prelates, who are set as a mark for the arrow. Prelates cannot please everyone since they are bound by their office not only to convince but also to rebuke and sometimes even to suspend and to bind. Thus they frequently incur the hatred of many people and risk ambushes. Therefore the holy fathers have wisely decreed that accusations against prelates should not be admitted readily, without careful provision being taken to shut the door not only to false but also to malicious accusations, lest with the columns being shaken the building itself collapses. They thus wished to ensure that prelates are not accused unjustly, and yet that at the same time they take care not to sin in an arrogant manner, finding a suitable medicine for each disease : namely, a criminal accusation which entails loss of status, that is to say degradation, shall in no wise be allowed unless it is preceded by a charge in lawful form. But when someone is so notorious for his offences that an outcry goes up which can no longer be ignored without scandal or be tolerated without danger, then without the slightest hesitation let action be taken to inquire into and punish his offences, not out of hate but rather out of charity. If the offence is grave, even though not involving his degradation, let him be removed from all administration, in accordance with the saying of the gospel that the steward is to be removed from his stewardship if he cannot give a proper account of it".

The person about whom the inquiry is being made ought to be present, unless he absents himself out of contumacy. The articles of the inquiry should be shown to him so that he may be able to defend himself. The names of witnesses as well as their depositions are to be made known to him so that both what has been said and by whom will be apparent; and legitimate exceptions and responses are to be admitted, lest the suppression of names leads to the bold bringing false charges and the exclusion of exceptions leads to false depositions being made. A prelate should therefore act the more diligently in correcting the offences of his subjects in proportion as he would be worthy of condemnation were he to leave them uncorrected. Notorious cases aside, he may proceed against them in three ways : namely, by accusation, denunciation and inquest. Let careful precaution nevertheless be taken in all cases lest serious loss is incurred for the sake of a small gain. Thus, just as a charge in lawful form ought to precede the accusation, so a charitable warning ought to precede the denunciation, and the publication of the charge ought to precede the inquest, with the principle always being observed that the form of the sentence shall accord with the rules of legal procedure. We do not think, however, that this order needs to be observed in all respects as regards regulars, who can be more easily and freely removed from their offices by their own superiors, when the case requires it.

9. On different rites within the same faith

Since in many places peoples of different languages live within the same city or diocese, having one faith but different rites and customs, we therefore strictly order bishops of such cities and dioceses to provide suitable men who will do the following in the various rites and languages : celebrate the divine services for them, administer the church's sacraments, and instruct them by word and example. We altogether forbid one and the same city or diocese to have more than one bishop, as if it were a body with several heads like a monster. But if for the aforesaid reasons urgent necessity demands it, the bishop of the place may appoint, after careful deliberation, a catholic bishop who is appropriate for the nations in question and who will be his vicar in the aforesaid matters and will be obedient and subject to him in all things. If any such person behaves otherwise, let him know that he has been struck by the sword of excommunication and if he does not return to his senses let him be deposed from every ministry in the church, with the secular arm being called in if necessary to quell such great insolence.

10. On appointing preachers

Among the various things that are conducive to the salvation of the Christian people, the nourishment of God's word is recognized to be especially necessary, since just as the body is fed with material food so the soul is fed with spiritual food, according to the words, man lives not by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. It often happens that bishops by themselves are not sufficient to minister the word of God to the people, especially in large and scattered dioceses, whether this is because of their many occupations or bodily infirmities or because of incursions of the enemy or for other reasons-let us not say for lack of knowledge, which in bishops is to be altogether condemned and is not to be tolerated in the future. We therefore decree by this general constitution that bishops are to appoint suitable men to carry out with profit this duty of sacred preaching, men who are powerful in word and deed and who will visit with care the peoples entrusted to them in place of the bishops, since these by themselves are unable to do it, and will build them up by word and example. The bishops shall suitably furnish them with what is necessary, when they are in need of it, lest for want of necessities they are forced to abandon what they have begun. We therefore order that there be appointed in both cathedral and other conventual churches suitable men whom the bishops can have as coadjutors and cooperators not only in the office of preaching but also in hearing confessions and enjoining penances and in other matters which are conducive to the salvation of souls. If anyone neglects to do this, let him be subject to severe punishment.

11. On schoolmasters for the poor

Zeal for learning and the opportunity to make progress is denied to some through lack of means. The Lateran council therefore dutifully decreed that "in each cathedral church there should be provided a suitable benefice for a master who shall instruct without charge the clerics of the cathedral church and other poor scholars, thus at once satisfying the teacher's needs and opening up the way of knowledge to learners". This decree, however, is very little observed in many churches. We therefore confirm it and add that not only in every cathedral church but also in other churches with sufficient resources, a suitable master elected by the chapter or by the greater and sounder part of it, shall be appointed by the prelate to teach grammar and other branches of study, as far as is possible, to the clerics of those and other churches. The metropolitan church shall have a theologian to teach scripture to priests and others and especially to instruct them in matters which are recognized as pertaining to the cure of souls. The income of one prebend shall be assigned by the chapter to each master, and as much shall be assigned by the metropolitan to the theologian. The incumbent does not by this become a canon but he receives the income of one as long as he continues to teach. If the metropolitan church finds providing for two masters a burden, let it provide for the theologian in the aforesaid way but get adequate provision made for the grammarian in another church of the city or diocese.

12. On general chapters of monks

In every kingdom or province let there be held every three years, saving the right of diocesan bishops, a general chapter of those abbots, and priors who do not have abbots over them, who have not been accustomed to hold one. All should attend, unless they have a canonical impediment, at one of the monasteries which is suitable for the purpose; with this limitation, that none of them brings with him more than six mounts and eight persons. Let them invite in charity, at the start of this innovation, two neighbouring Cistercian abbots to give them appropriate advice and help, since from long practice the Cistercians are well informed about holding such chapters. The two abbots shall then coopt without opposition two suitable persons from among them. The four of them shall then preside over the whole chapter, in such a way however that none of them assumes the leadership; so that they can if necessary be changed after careful deliberation. This kind of chapter shall be held continuously over a certain number of days, according to Cistercian custom. They shall treat carefully of the reform of the order and the observance of the rule. What has been decided, with the approval of the four presiding, is to be observed inviolably by all without any excuse or contradiction or appeal. They shall also decide where the next chapter is to be held. Those attending shall lead a common life and divide out proportionately all the common expenses. If they cannot all live in the same house, let them at least live in groups in various houses.

Let religious and circumspect persons be appointed at the chapter who will make it their business to visit on our behalf all the abbeys of the kingdom or province, of both monks and nuns, according to the manner prescribed for them. Let them correct and reform what seems to need correction and reform. Thus if they know of the superior of a place who should certainly be removed from office, let them denounce the person to the bishop concerned so that he may see to his or her removal. If the bishop will not do this, let the visitors themselves refer the matter to the apostolic see for examination. We wish and command canons regular to observe this according to their order. If there emerges out of this innovation any difficulty that cannot be resolved by the aforesaid persons, let it be referred, without offence being given, to the judgment of the apostolic see; but let the other matters, about which after careful deliberation they were in agreement, be observed without breach. Diocesan bishops, moreover, should take care to reform the monasteries under their jurisdiction, so that when the aforesaid visitors arrive they will find in them more to commend than to correct. Let them be very careful lest the said monasteries are weighed down by them with unjust burdens, for just as we wish the rights of superiors to be upheld so we do not wish to support wrongs done to subjects. Furthermore, we strictly command both diocesan bishops and those who preside at chapters to restrain by ecclesiastical censure, without appeal, advocates, patrons, lords' deputies, governors, officials, magnates, knights, and any other people, from daring to cause harm to monasteries in respect of their persons and their goods. Let them not fail to compel such persons, if by chance they do cause harm, to make satisfaction, so that almighty God may be served more freely and more peacefully.

13. A prohibition against new religious orders

Lest too great a variety of religious orders leads to grave confusion in God's church, we strictly forbid anyone henceforth to found a new religious order. Whoever wants to become a religious should enter one of the already approved orders. Likewise, whoever wishes to found a new religious house should take the rule and institutes from already approved religious orders. We forbid, moreover, anyone to attempt to have a place as a monk in more than one monastery or an abbot to preside over more than one monastery.

14. Clerical incontinence

In order that the morals and conduct of clerics may be reformed for the better, let all of them strive to live in a continent and chaste way, especially those in holy orders. Let them beware of every vice involving lust, especially that on account of which the wrath of God came down from heaven upon the sons of disobedience, so that they may be worthy to minister in the sight of almighty God with a pure heart and an unsullied body. Lest the ease of receiving pardon prove an incentive to sin, we decree that those who are caught giving way to the vice of incontinence are to be punished according to canonical sanctions, in proportion to the seriousness of their sins. We order such sanctions to be effectively and strictly observed, in order that those whom the fear of God does not hold back from evil may at least be restrained from sin by temporal punishment. Therefore anyone who has been suspended for this reason and presumes to celebrate divine services, shall not only be deprived of his ecclesiastical benefices but shall also, on account of his twofold fault, be deposed in perpetuity. Prelates who dare to support such persons in their wickedness, especially if they do it for money or for some other temporal advantage, are to be subject to like punishment. Those clerics who have not renounced the marriage bond, following the custom of their region, shall be punished even more severely if they fall into sin, since for them it is possible to make lawful use of matrimony.

15. Clerical gluttony and drunkenness

All clerics should carefully abstain from gluttony and drunkenness. They should temper the wine to themselves and themselves to the wine. Let no one be urged to drink, since drunkenness obscures the intellect and stirs up lust. Accordingly we decree that that abuse is to be entirely abolished whereby in some places drinkers bind themselves to drink equal amounts, and that man is most praised who makes the most people drunk and himself drains the deepest cups. If anyone shows himself worthy of blame in these matters, let him be suspended from his benefice or office, unless after being warned by his superior he makes suitable satisfaction. We forbid all clerics to hunt or to fowl, so let them not presume to have dogs or birds for fowling {4}.

16. Decorum in the dress and behaviour of clerics

Clerics should not practice callings or business of a secular nature, especially those that are dishonourable. They should not watch mimes, entertainers and actors. Let them avoid taverns altogether, unless by chance they are obliged by necessity on a journey. They should not play at games of chance or of dice, nor be present at such games. They should have a suitable crown and tonsure, and let them diligently apply themselves to the divine services and other good pursuits. Their outer garments should be closed and neither too short nor too long. Let them not indulge in red or green cloths, long sleeves or shoes with embroidery or pointed toes, or in bridles, saddles, breast-plates and spurs that are gilded or have other superfluous ornamentation. Let them not wear cloaks with sleeves at divine services in a church, nor even elsewhere, if they are priests or parsons, unless a justifiable fear requires a change of dress. They are not to wear buckles or belts ornamented with gold or silver, or even rings except for those whose dignity it befits to have them. All bishops should wear outer garments of linen in public and in church, unless they have been monks, in which case they should wear the monastic habit; and let them not wear their cloaks loose in public but rather fastened together behind the neck or across the chest.

17. Dissolute prelates

We regretfully relate that not only certain lesser clerics but also some prelates of churches pass almost half the night in unnecessary feasting and forbidden conversation, not to mention other things, and leaving what is left of the night for sleep, they are barely roused at the dawn chorus of the birds and pass away the entire morning in a continuous state of stupor. There are others who celebrate mass barely four times a year and, what is worse, do not bother to attend; if they happen to be present when it is being celebrated, they flee the silence of the choir and pay attention to conversations of the laity outside and so while they attend to talk that is unnecessary for them, they do not give an attentive ear to the things of God. We altogether forbid these and similar things on pain of suspension. We strictly command such persons, in virtue of obedience, to celebrate the divine office, day and night alike, as far as God allows them, with both zeal and devotion.

18. Clerics to dissociate from shedding-blood

No cleric may decree or pronounce a sentence involving the shedding of blood, or carry out a punishment involving the same, or be present when such punishment is carried out. If anyone, however, under cover of this statute, dares to inflict injury on churches or ecclesiastical persons, let him be restrained by ecclesiastical censure. A cleric may not write or dictate letters which require punishments involving the shedding of blood, in the courts of princes this responsibility should be entrusted to laymen and not to clerics. Moreover no cleric may be put in command of mercenaries or crossbowmen or suchlike men of blood; nor may a subdeacon, deacon or priest practise the art of surgery, which involves cauterizing and making incisions; nor may anyone confer a rite of blessing or consecration on a purgation by ordeal of boiling or cold water or of the red-hot iron, saving nevertheless the previously promulgated prohibitions regarding single combats and duels.

19. That profane objects may not be stored in churches

We are unwilling to tolerate the fact that certain clerics deposit in churches their own and even others' furniture, so that the churches look like lay houses rather than basilicas of God, regardless of the fact that the Lord would not allow a vessel to be carried through the temple. There are others who not only leave their churches uncared for but also leave the service vessels and ministers' vestments and altar cloths and even corporals so dirty that they at times horrify some people. Because zeal for God's house consumes us, we strictly forbid objects of this kind to be allowed into churches, unless they have to be taken in on account of enemy incursions or sudden fires or other urgent necessities, and then in such a way that when the emergency is over the objects are taken back to where they came from. We also order the aforesaid churches, vessels, corporals and vestments to be kept neat and clean. For it seems too absurd to take no notice of squalor in sacred things when it is unbecoming even in profane things.

20. Chrism and the Eucharist to be kept under lock and key

We decree that the chrism and the eucharist are to be kept locked away in a safe place in all churches, so that no audacious hand can reach them to do anything horrible or impious. If he who is responsible for their safe-keeping leaves them around carelessly, let him be suspended from office for three months; if anything unspeakable happens on account of his carelessness, let him be subject to graver punishment.

21. On yearly confession to one's own priest, yearly communion, the confessional seal

All the faithful of either sex, after they have reached the age of discernment, should individually confess all their sins in a faithful manner to their own priest at least once a year, and let them take care to do what they can to perform the penance imposed on them. Let them reverently receive the sacrament of the eucharist at least at Easter unless they think, for a good reason and on the advice of their own priest, that they should abstain from receiving it for a time. Otherwise they shall be barred from entering a church during their lifetime and they shall be denied a Christian burial at death. Let this salutary decree be frequently published in churches, so that nobody may find the pretence of an excuse in the blindness of ignorance. If any persons wish, for good reasons, to confess their sins to another priest let them first ask and obtain the permission of their own priest; for otherwise the other priest will not have the power to absolve or to bind them. The priest shall be discerning and prudent, so that like a skilled doctor he may pour wine and oil over the wounds of the injured one. Let him carefully inquire about the circumstances of both the sinner and the sin, so that he may prudently discern what sort of advice he ought to give and what remedy to apply, using various means to heal the sick person. Let him take the utmost care, however, not to betray the sinner at all by word or sign or in any other way. If the priest needs wise advice, let him seek it cautiously without any mention of the person concerned. For if anyone presumes to reveal a sin disclosed to him in confession, we decree that he is not only to be deposed from his priestly office but also to be confined to a strict monastery to do perpetual penance.

22. Physicians of the body to advise patients to call physicians of the soul

As sickness of the body may sometimes be the result of sin — as the Lord said to the sick man whom he had cured, Go and sin no more, lest something worse befall you — so we by this present decree order and strictly command physicians of the body, when they are called to the sick, to warn and persuade them first of all to call in physicians of the soul so that after their spiritual health has been seen to they may respond better to medicine for their bodies, for when the cause ceases so does the effect. This among other things has occasioned this decree, namely that some people on their sickbed, when they are advised by physicians to arrange for the health of their souls, fall into despair and so the more readily incur the danger of death. If any physician transgresses this our constitution, after it has been published by the local prelates, he shall be barred from entering a church until he has made suitable satisfaction for a transgression of this kind. Moreover, since the soul is much more precious than the body, we forbid any physician, under pain of anathema, to prescribe anything for the bodily health of a sick person that may endanger his soul.

23. Churches are to be without a prelate for no more than 3 months

Lest a rapacious wolf attack the Lord's flock for want of a shepherd, or lest a widowed church suffer grave injury to its good, we decree, desiring to counteract the danger to souls in this matter and to provide protection for the churches, that a cathedral church or a church of the regular clergy is not to remain without a prelate for more than three months. If the election has not been held within this time, provided there is no just impediment, then those who ought to have made the election are to lose the power to elect for that time and it is to devolve upon the person who is recognized as the immediate superior. The person upon whom the power has devolved, mindful of the Lord, shall not delay beyond three months in canonically providing the widowed church, with the advice of his chapter and of other prudent men, with a suitable person from the same church, or from another if a worthy candidate cannot be found in the former, if he wishes to avoid canonical penalty.

24. Democratic election of pastors

On account of the various forms of elections which some try to invent, there arise many difficulties and great dangers for the bereaved churches. We therefore decree that at the holding of an election, when all are present who ought to, want to and conveniently can take part, three trustworthy persons shall be chosen from the college who will diligently find out, in confidence and individually, the opinions of everybody. After they have committed the result to writing, they shall together quickly announce it. There shall be no further appeal, so that after a scrutiny that person shall be elected upon whom all or the greater or sounder part of the chapter agree. Or else the power of electing shall be committed to some suitable persons who, acting on behalf of everybody, shall provide the bereaved church with a pastor. Otherwise the election made shall not be valid, unless perchance it was made by all together as if by divine inspiration and without flaw. Those who attempt to make an election contrary to the aforesaid forms shall be deprived of the power of electing on that occasion. We absolutely forbid anyone to appoint a proxy in the matter of an election, unless he is absent from the place where he ought to receive the summons and is detained from coming by a lawful impediment. He shall take an oath about this, if necessary, and then he may commit his representation to one of the college, if he so wishes. We also condemn clandestine elections and order that as soon as an election has taken place it should be solemnly published.

25. Invalid elections

Whoever presumes to consent to his being elected through abuse of the secular power, against canonical freedom, both forfeits the benefit of being elected and becomes ineligible, and he cannot be elected to any dignity without a dispensation. Those who venture to take part in elections of this kind, which we declare to be invalid by the law itself, shall be suspended from their offices and benefices for three years and during that time shall be deprived of the power to elect.

26. Nominees for prelatures to be carefully screened

There is nothing more harmful to God's church than for unworthy prelates to be entrusted with the government of souls. Wishing therefore to provide the necessary remedy for this disease, we decree by this irrevocable constitution that when anyone has been entrusted with the government of souls, then he who holds the right to confirm him should diligently examine both the process of the election and the character of the person elected, so that when everything is in order he may confirm him. For, if confirmation was granted in advance when everything was not in order, then not only would the person improperly promoted have to be rejected but also the author of the improper promotion would have to be punished. We decree that the latter shall be punished in the following way : if his negligence has been proved, especially if he has approved a man of insufficient learning or dishonest life or unlawful age, he shall not only lose the power of confirming the person's first successor but shall also, lest by any chance he escapes punishment, be suspended from receiving the fruits of his own benefice until it is right for him to be granted a pardon. If he is convicted of having erred intentionally in the matter, then he is to be subject to graver punishment. Bishops too, if they wish to avoid canonical punishment, should take care to promote to holy orders and to ecclesiastical dignities men who will be able to discharge worthily the office entrusted to them. Those who are immediately subject to the Roman pontiff shall, to obtain confirmation of their office, present themselves personally to him, if this can conveniently be done, or send suitable persons through whom a careful inquiry can be made about the process of the election and the persons elected. In this way, on the strength of the pontiff's informed judgment, they may finally enter into the fullness of their office, when there is no impediment in canon law. For a time, however, those who are in very distant parts, namely outside Italy, if they were elected peaceably, may by dispensation, on account of the needs and benefit of the churches, administer in things spiritual and temporal, but in such a way that they alienate nothing whatever of the church's goods. They may receive the customary consecration or blessing.

27. Candidates for the priesthood to be carefully trained and scrutinized

To guide souls is a supreme art. We therefore strictly order bishops carefully to prepare those who are to be promoted to the priesthood and to instruct them, either by themselves or through other suitable persons, in the divine services and the sacraments of the church, so that they may be able to celebrate them correctly. But if they presume henceforth to ordain the ignorant and unformed, which can indeed easily be detected, we decree that both the ordainers and those ordained are to be subject to severe punishment. For it is preferable, especially in the ordination of priests, to have a few good ministers than many bad ones, for if a blind man leads another blind man, both will fall into the pit.

28. Who asks to resign must resign

Certain persons insistently ask for permission to resign and obtain it, but then do not resign. Since in such a request to resign they would seem to have in mind either the good of the churches over which they preside or their own well-being, neither of which do we wish to be impeded either by the arguments of any people seeking their own interests or even by a certain fickleness, we therefore decree that such persons are to be compelled to resign.

29. Multiple benefices require papal dispensation

With much foresight it was forbidden in the Lateran council for anyone to receive several ecclesiastical dignities and several parish churches, contrary to the regulations of the sacred canons, on pain of both the recipient losing what he had received and the conferrer being deprived of the power to confer. On account of the presumption and covetousness of certain persons, however, none or little fruit is resulting from this statute. We therefore, desiring to remedy the situation more clearly and expressly, ordain by this present decree that whoever receives any benefice with the cure of souls attached, if he was already in possession of such a benefice, shall be deprived by the law itself of the benefice held first, and if perchance he tries to retain this he shall also be deprived of the second benefice. Moreover, the person who has the right to confer the first benefice may freely bestow it, after the recipient has obtained a second benefice, on someone who seems to deserve it. If he delays in conferring it beyond three months, however, then not only is the collation to devolve upon another person, according to the statute of the Lateran council, but also he shall be compelled to assign to the use of the church belonging to the benefice as much of his own income as is established as having been received from the benefice while it was vacant. We decree that the same is to be observed with regard to parsonages adding that nobody shall presume to hold several dignities or parsonages in the same church even if they do not have the cure of souls. As for exalted and lettered persons, however, who should be honoured with greater benefices, it is possible for them to be dispensed by the apostolic see, when reason demands it.

30. Penalties for bestowing ecclesiastical benefices on the unworthy

It is very serious and absurd that prelates of churches, when they can promote suitable men to ecclesiastical benefices, are not afraid to choose unworthy men who lack both learning and honesty of behaviour and who follow the urgings of the flesh rather than the judgment of reason. Nobody of a sound mind is ignorant of how much damage to churches arises from this. Wishing therefore to remedy this ill, we order that they pass over unworthy persons and appoint suitable persons who are willing and able to offer a pleasing service to God and to the churches, and that careful inquiry be made about this each year at the provincial council. Therefore he who has been found guilty after a first and second correction is to be suspended from conferring benefices by the provincial council, and a prudent and honest person is to be appointed at the same council to make up for the suspended person's failure in this matter. The same is to be observed with regard to chapters who offend in these matters. The offence of a metropolitan, however, shall be left by the council to be reported to the judgment of the superior. In order that this salutary provision may have fuller effect, a sentence of suspension of this kind may not be relaxed at all without the authority of the Roman pontiff or of the appropriate patriarch, so that in this too the four patriarchal sees shall be specially honoured.

31. Canons' sons cannot be canons where their fathers are

In order to abolish a very bad practice that has grown up in many churches, we strictly forbid the sons of canons, especially if they are illegitimate, to become canons in the secular churches in which their fathers hold office. If the contrary is attempted, we declare it to be invalid. Those who attempt to make such persons canons are to be suspended from their benefices.

32. Parish priests to have adequate incomes

There has grown up in certain parts a vicious custom which should be eradicated, namely that patrons of parish churches and certain other people claim the incomes from the churches wholly for themselves and leave to the priests, for the appointed services, such a small portion that they cannot live fittingly on it. For in some regions, as we have learnt for certain, parish priests receive for their sustenance only a quarter of a quarter, that is to say a sixteenth, of the tithes. Whence it comes about in these regions that almost no parish priest can be found who is even moderately learned. As the mouth of the ox should not be muzzled when it is treading out the grain, and he who serves at the altar should live from it, we therefore decree that, notwithstanding any custom of a bishop or a patron or anyone else, a sufficient portion is to be assigned to the priest. He who has a parish church is to serve it not through a vicar but in person, in the due form which the care of that church requires, unless by chance the parish church is annexed to a prebend or a dignity. In that case we allow that he who has such a prebend or dignity should make it his business, since he must serve in the greater church, to have a suitable and permanent vicar canonically instituted in the parish church; and the latter is to have, as has been said, a fitting portion from the revenues of the church. Otherwise let him know that by the authority of this decree he is deprived of the parish church, which is freely to be conferred on someone else who is willing and able to do what has been said. We utterly forbid anyone to dare deceitfully to confer a pension on another person, as it were as a benefice, from the revenues of a church which has to maintain its own priest.

33. Renumeration for visitations to be reasonable

Procurations which are due, by reason of a visitation, to bishops, archdeacons or any other persons, as well as to legates or nuncios of the apostolic see, should by no means be exacted, without a clear and necessary reason, unless the visitations were carried out in person, and then let them observe the moderation in transport and retinue laid down in the Lateran council. We add the following moderation with regard to legates and nuncios of the apostolic see : that when it is necessary for them to stay in any place, and in order that the said place may not be burdened too much on their behalf, they may receive moderate procurations from other churches and persons that have not yet been burdened with procurations of their own, on condition that the number of procurations does-not exceed the number of days in the stay; and when any of the churches or persons have not sufficient means of their own, two or more of them may be combined into one. Those who exercise the office of visitation, moreover, shall not seek their own interests but rather those of Jesus Christ, by devoting themselves to preaching and exhortation, to correction and reformation, so that they may bring back fruit which does not perish. He who dares to do the contrary shall both restore what he has received and pay a like amount in compensation to the church which he has thus burdened.

34. Prelates forbidden to procure ecclesiastical services at a profit

Many prelates, in order to meet the cost of a procuration or some service to a legate or some other person, extort from their subjects more than they pay out, and in trying to extract a profit from their losses they look for booty rather than help in their subjects. We forbid this to happen in the future. If by chance anyone does attempt it, he shall restore what he has extorted and be compelled to give the same amount to the poor. The superior to whom a complaint about this has been submitted shall suffer canonical punishment if he is negligent in executing this statute.

35. On appeal procedures

In order that due honour may be given to judges and consideration be shown to litigants in the matter of trouble and expenses, we decree that when somebody sues an adversary before the competent judge, he shall not appeal to a superior judge before judgment has been given, without a reasonable cause; but rather let him proceed with his suit before the lower judge, without it being possible for him to obstruct by saying that he sent a messenger to a superior judge or even procured letters from him before they were assigned to the delegated judge. When, however, he thinks that he has reasonable cause for appealing and has stated the probable grounds of the appeal before the same judge, such namely that if they were proved they would be reckoned legitimate, the superior judge shall examine the appeal. If the latter thinks the appeal is unreasonable, he shall send the appellant back to the lower judge and sentence him to pay the costs of the other party; otherwise he shall go ahead, saving however the canons about major cases being referred to the apostolic see.

36. On interlocutory sentences

Since the effect ceases when the cause ceases, we decree that if an ordinary judge or a judge delegate has pronounced a comminatory or an interlocutory sentence which would prejudice one of the litigants if its execution was ordered, and then acting on good advice refrains from putting it into effect, he shall proceed freely in hearing the case, notwithstanding any appeal made against such a comminatory or interlocutory sentence, provided he is not open to suspicion for some other legitimate reason. This is so that the process is not held up for frivolous reasons.

37. On Summons by Apostolic Letter

Some people, abusing the favour of the apostolic see, try to obtain letters from it summoning people to distant judges, so that the defendant, wearied by the labour and expense of the action, is forced to give in or to buy off the importunate bringer of the action. A trial should not open the way to injustices that are forbidden by respect for the law. We therefore decree that nobody may be summoned by apostolic letters to a trial that is more than two days' journey outside his diocese, unless the letters were procured with the agreement of both parties or expressly mention this constitution. There are other people who, turning to a new kind of trade, in order to revive complaints that are dormant or to introduce new questions, make up suits for which they procure letters from the apostolic see without authorization from their superiors. They then offer the letters for sale either to the defendant, in return for his not being vexed with trouble and expense on account of them, or to the plaintiff, in order that by means of them he may wear out his adversary with undue distress. Lawsuits should be limited rather than encouraged. We therefore decree by this general constitution that if anyone henceforth presumes to seek apostolic letters on any matter without a special mandate from his superior, then the letters are invalid and he is to be punished as a forger, unless by chance persons are involved for whom a mandate should not in law be demanded.

38. Written records of trials to be kept

An innocent litigant can never prove the truth of his denial of a false assertion made by an unjust judge, since a denial by the nature of things does not constitute a direct proof. We therefore decree, lest falsehood prejudice truth or wickedness prevail over justice, that in both ordinary and extraordinary trials the judge shall always employ either a public official, if he can find one, or two suitable men to write down faithfully all the judicial acts — that is to say the citations, adjournments, objections and exceptions, petitions and replies, interrogations, confessions, depositions of witnesses, productions of documents, interlocutions {5}, appeals, renunciations, final decisions and the other things that ought to be written down in the correct order — stating the places, times and persons. Everything thus written down shall be given to the parties in question, but the originals shall remain with the scribes, so that if a dispute arises over how the judge conducted the case, the truth can be established from the originals. With this measure being applied, such deference will be paid to honest and prudent judges that justice for the innocent will not be harmed by imprudent and wicked judges. A judge who neglects to observe this constitution shall, if some difficulty arises from his negligence, be punished as he deserves by a superior judge; nor shall presumption be made in favour of his handling of the case except insofar as it accords with the legal documents.

39. On knowingly receiving stolen goods

It often happens, when a person has been unjustly robbed and the object has been transferred by the robber to a third party, that he is not helped by an action of restitution against the new possessor because he has lost the advantage of possession, and he loses in effect the right of ownership on account of the difficulty of proving his case. We therefore decree, notwithstanding the force of civil law, that if anyone henceforth knowingly receives such a thing, then the one robbed shall be favoured by his being awarded restitution against the one in possession. For the latter as it were succeeds the robber in his vice, inasmuch as there is not much difference, especially as regards danger to the soul, between unjustly hanging on to another's property and seizing it.

40. True owner is the true possessor even if not possessing the object for a year

It sometimes happens that when possession of something is awarded to the plaintiff in a suit, on account of the contumacy of the other party, yet because of force or fraud over the thing he is unable to obtain custody of it within a year, or having gained it he loses it. Thus the defendant profits from his own wickedness, because in the opinion of many the plaintiff does not qualify as the true possessor at the end of a year. Lest therefore a contumacious party is in a better position than an obedient one, we decree, in the name of canonical equity, that in the aforesaid case the plaintiff shall be established as the true possessor after the year has elapsed. Furthermore, we issue a general prohibition against promising to abide by the decision of a layman in spiritual matters, since it is not fitting for a layman to arbitrate in such matters.

41. No one is to knowingly prescribe an object to the wrong party

Since whatever does not proceed from faith is sin, and since in general any constitution or custom which cannot be observed without mortal sin is to be disregarded, we therefore define by this synodal judgment that no prescription, whether canonical or civil, is valid without good faith. It is therefore necessary that the person who prescribes should at no stage be aware that the object belongs to someone else.

42. Clerics and laity are not to usurp each others rights

Just as we desire lay people not to usurp the rights of clerics, so we ought to wish clerics not to lay claim to the rights of the laity. We therefore forbid every cleric henceforth to extend his jurisdiction, under pretext of ecclesiastical freedom, to the prejudice of secular justice. Rather, let him be satisfied with the written constitutions and customs hitherto approved, so that the things of Caesar may be rendered unto Caesar, and the things of God may be rendered unto God by a right distribution.

43. Clerics cannot be forced to take oaths of fealty to those from whom they hold no temporalities

Certain laymen try to encroach too far upon divine right when they force ecclesiastics who do not hold any temporalities from them to take oaths of fealty to them. Since a servant stands or falls with his Lord, according to the Apostle, we therefore forbid, on the authority of this sacred council, that such clerics be forced to take an oath of this kind to secular persons.

44. Only clerics may dispose of church property

Lay people, however devout, have no power to dispose of church property. Their lot is to obey, not to be in command. We therefore grieve that charity is growing cold in some of them so that they are not afraid to attack through their ordinances, or rather their fabrications, the immunity of ecclesiastical freedom, which has in the past been protected with many privileges not only by holy fathers but also by secular princes. They do this not only by alienating fiefs and other possessions of the church and by usurping jurisdictions but also by illegally laying hands on mortuaries and other things which are seen to belong to spiritual justice. We wish to ensure the immunity of churches in these matters and to provide against such great injuries. We therefore decree, with the approval of this sacred council, that ordinances of this kind and claims to fiefs or other goods of the church, made by way of a decree of the lay power, without the proper consent of ecclesiastical persons, are invalid since they can be said to be not laws but rather acts of destitution or destruction and usurpations of jurisdiction. Those who dare to do these things are to be restrained by ecclesiastical censure.

45. Penalties for patrons who steal church goods or physically harm their clerics

Patrons of churches, lords' deputies and advocates have displayed such arrogance in some provinces that they not only introduce difficulties and evil designs when vacant churches ought to be provided with suitable pastors, but they also presume to dispose of the possessions and other goods of the church as they like and, what is dreadful to relate, they are not afraid to set about killing prelates. What was devised for protection should not be twisted into a means of repression. We therefore expressly forbid patrons, advocates and lords' deputies henceforth to appropriate more in the aforesaid matters than is permitted in law. If they dare to do the contrary, let them be curbed with the most severe canonical penalties. We decree, moreover, with the approval of this sacred council, that if patrons or advocates or feudatories or lords' deputies or other persons with benefices venture with unspeakable daring to kill or to mutilate, personally or through others, the rector of any church or other cleric of that church, then the patron shall lose completely his right of patronage, the advocate his advocation, the feudatory his fief, the lord's deputy his deputyship and the beneficed person his benefice. And lest the punishment be remembered for less time than the crime, nothing of the aforesaid shall descend to their heirs, and their posterity to the fourth generation shall in nowise be admitted into a college of clerics or to hold the honour of any prelacy in a religious house, except when out of mercy they are dispensed to do so.

46. Taxes cannot be levied on the Church, but the Church can volunteer contributions for the common good

The Lateran council, wishing to provide for the immunity of the church against officials and governors of cities and other persons who seek to oppress churches and churchmen with tallages and taxes and other exactions, forbade such presumption under pain of anathema. It ordered transgressors and their supporters to be excommunicated until they made adequate satisfaction. If at some time, however, a bishop together with his clergy foresee so great a need or advantage that they consider, without any compulsion, that subsidies should be given by the churches, for the common good or the common need, when the resources of the laity are not sufficient, then the above-mentioned laymen may receive them humbly and devoutly and with thanks. On account of the imprudence of some, however, the Roman pontiff, whose business it is to provide for the common good, should be consulted beforehand. We add, moreover, since the malice of some against God's church has not abated, that the ordinances and sentences promulgated by such excommunicated persons, or on their orders, are to be deemed null and void and shall never be valid. Since fraud and deceit should not protect anyone, let nobody be deceived by false error to endure an anathema during his term of government as though he is not obliged to make satisfaction afterwards. For we decree that both he who has refused to make satisfaction and his successor, if he does not make satisfaction within a month, is to remain bound by ecclesiastical censure until he makes suitable satisfaction, since he who succeeds to a post also succeeds to its responsibilities.

47. On unjust excommunication

With the approval of this sacred council, we forbid anyone to promulgate a sentence of excommunication on anyone, unless an adequate warning has been given beforehand in the presence of suitable persons, who can if necessary testify to the warning. If anyone dares to do the contrary, even if the sentence of excommunication is just, let him know that he is forbidden to enter a church for one month and he is to be punished with another penalty if this seems expedient. Let him carefully avoid proceeding to excommunicate anyone without manifest and reasonable cause. If he does so proceed and, on being humbly requested, does not take care to revoke the process without imposing punishment, then the injured person may lodge a complaint of unjust excommunication with a superior judge. The latter shall then send the person back to the judge who excommunicated him, if this can be done without the danger of a delay, with orders that he is to be absolved within a suitable period of time. If the danger of delay cannot be avoided, the task of absolving him shall be carried out by the superior judge, either in person or through someone else, as seems expedient, after he has obtained adequate guarantees. Whenever it is established that the judge pronounced an unjust excommunication, he shall be condemned to make compensation for damages to the one excommunicated, and be nonetheless punished in another way at the discretion of the superior judge if the nature of the fault calls for it, since it is not a trivial fault to inflict so great a punishment on an innocent person — unless by chance he erred for reasons that are credible — especially if the person is of praiseworthy repute. But if nothing reasonable is proved against the sentence of excommunication by the one making the complaint, then the complainant shall be condemned in punishment, for the unreasonable trouble caused by his complaint, to make compensation or in some other way according to the discretion of the superior judge, unless by chance his error was based on something that is credible and so excuses him; and he shall moreover be compelled upon a pledge to make satisfaction in the matter for which he was justly excommunicated, or else he shall be subject again to the former sentence which is to be inviolably observed until full satisfaction has been made. If the judge, however, recognizes his error and is prepared to revoke the sentence, but the person on whom it was passed appeals, for fear that the judge might revoke it without making satisfaction, then the appeal shall not be admitted unless the error is such that it may deserve to be questioned. Then the judge, after he has given sufficient security that he will appear in court before the person to whom the appeal had been made or one delegated by him, shall absolve the excommunicated person and thus shall not be subject to the prescribed punishment. Let the judge altogether beware, if he wishes to avoid strict canonical punishment, lest out of a perverse intention to harm someone he pretends to have made an error.

48. Challenging an ecclesiastical judge

Since a special prohibition has been made against anyone presuming to promulgate a sentence of excommunication against someone without adequate warning being given beforehand, we therefore wish to provide against the person warned being able, by means of a fraudulent objection or appeal, to escape examination by the one issuing the warning. We therefore decree that if the person alleges he holds the judge suspect, let him bring before the same judge an action of just suspicion; and he himself in agreement with his adversary (or with the judge, if he happens not to have an adversary) shall together choose arbiters or, if by chance they are unable to reach agreement together, he shall choose one arbiter and the other another, to take cognisance of the action of suspicion. If these cannot agree on a judgment they shall call in a third person so that what two of them decide upon shall have binding force. Let them know that they are bound to carry this out faithfully, in accordance with the command strictly enjoined by us in virtue of obedience and under the attestation of the divine judgment. If the action of suspicion is not proved in law before them within a suitable time, the judge shall exercise his jurisdiction; if the action is proved, then with the consent of the objector the challenged judge shall commit the matter to a suitable person or shall refer it to a superior judge so that he may conduct the matter as it should be conducted. As for the person who has been warned but then hastens to make an appeal, if his offence is made manifest in law by the evidence of the case or by his own confession or in some other way, then provocation of this kind is not to be tolerated, since the remedy of an appeal was not established to defend wickedness but to protect innocence. If there is some doubt about his offence, then the appellant shall, lest he impedes the judge's action by the subterfuge of a frivolous appeal, set before the same judge the credible reason for his appeal, such namely that if it was proved it would be considered legitimate. Then if he has an adversary, let him proceed with his appeal within the time laid down by the same judge according to the distances, times and nature of the business involved. If he does not prosecute his appeal, the judge himself shall proceed notwithstanding the appeal. If the adversary does not appear when the judge is proceeding in virtue of his office, then once the reason for the appeal has been verified before the superior judge the latter shall exercise his jurisdiction. If the appellant fails to get the reason for his appeal verified, he shall be sent back to the judge from whom it has been established that he appealed maliciously. We do not wish the above two constitutions to be extended to regulars, who have their own special observances. '

49. Penalties for excommunication out of avarice

We absolutely forbid, under threat of the divine judgment, anyone to dare to bind anyone with the bond of excommunication, or to absolve anyone so bound, out of avarice. We forbid this especially in those regions where by custom an excommunicated person is punished by a money penalty when he is absolved. We decree that when it has been established that a sentence of excommunication was unjust, the excommunicator shall be compelled by ecclesiastical censure to restore the money thus extorted, and shall pay as much again to his victim for the injury unless he was deceived by an understandable error. If perchance he is unable to pay, he shall be punished in some other way.

50. Prohibition of marriage is now perpetually restricted to the fourth degree

It should not be judged reprehensible if human decrees are sometimes changed according to changing circumstances, especially when urgent necessity or evident advantage demands it, since God himself changed in the new Testament some of the things which he had commanded in the old Testament. Since the prohibitions against contracting marriage in the second and third degree of affinity, and against uniting the offspring of a second marriage with the kindred of the first husband, often lead to difficulty and sometimes endanger souls, we therefore, in order that when the prohibition ceases the effect may also cease, revoke with the approval of this sacred council the constitutions published on this subject and we decree, by this present constitution, that henceforth contracting parties connected in these ways may freely be joined together. Moreover the prohibition against marriage shall not in future go beyond the fourth degree of consanguinity and of affinity, since the prohibition cannot now generally be observed to further degrees without grave harm. The number four agrees well with the prohibition concerning bodily union about which the Apostle says, that the husband does not rule over his body, but the wife does; and the wife does not rule over her body, but the husband does; for there are four humours in the body, which is composed of the four elements. Although the prohibition of marriage is now restricted to the fourth degree, we wish the prohibition to be perpetual, notwithstanding earlier decrees on this subject issued either by others or by us. If any persons dare to marry contrary to this prohibition, they shall not be protected by length of years, since the passage of time does not diminish sin but increases it, and the longer that faults hold the unfortunate soul in bondage the graver they are.

51. Clandestine marriages forbidden

Since the prohibition against marriage in the three remotest degrees has been revoked, we wish it to be strictly observed in the other degrees. Following in the footsteps of our predecessors, we altogether forbid clandestine marriages and we forbid any priest to presume to be present at such a marriage. Extending the special custom of certain regions to other regions generally, we decree that when marriages are to be contracted they shall be publicly announced in the churches by priests, with a suitable time being fixed beforehand within which whoever wishes and is able to may adduce a lawful impediment. The priests themselves shall also investigate whether there is any impediment. When there appears a credible reason why the marriage should not be contracted, the contract shall be expressly forbidden until there has been established from clear documents what ought to be done in the matter. If any persons presume to enter into clandestine marriages of this kind, or forbidden marriages within a prohibited degree, even if done in ignorance, the offspring of the union shall be deemed illegitimate and shall have no help from their parents' ignorance, since the parents in contracting the marriage could be considered as not devoid of knowledge, or even as affecters of ignorance. Likewise the offspring shall be deemed illegitimate if both parents know of a legitimate impediment and yet dare to contract a marriage in the presence of the church, contrary to every prohibition. Moreover the parish priest who refuses to forbid such unions, or even any member of the regular clergy who dares to attend them, shall be suspended from office for three years and shall be punished even more severely if the nature of the fault requires it. Those who presume to be united in this way, even if it is within a permitted degree, are to be given a suitable penance. Anybody who maliciously proposes an impediment, to prevent a legitimate marriage, will not escape the church's vengeance.

52. On rejecting evidence from hearsay at a matrimonial suit

It was at one time decided out of a certain necessity, but contrary to the normal practice, that hearsay evidence should be valid in reckoning the degrees of consanguinity and affinity, because on account of the shortness of human life witnesses would not be able to testify from first-hand knowledge in a reckoning as far as the seventh degree. However, because we have learned from many examples and definite proofs that many dangers to lawful marriages have arisen from this, we have decided that in future witnesses from hearsay shall not be accepted in this matter, since the prohibition does not now exceed the fourth degree, unless there are persons of weight who are trustworthy and who learnt from their elders, before the case was begun, the things that they testify : not indeed from one such person since one would not suffice even if he or she were alive, but from two at least, and not from persons who are of bad repute and suspect but from those who are trustworthy and above every objection, since it would appear rather absurd to admit in evidence those whose actions would be rejected. Nor should there be admitted in evidence one person who has learnt what he testifies from several, or persons of bad repute who have learnt what they testify from persons of good repute, as though they were more than one and suitable witnesses, since even according to the normal practice of courts the assertion of one witness does not suffice, even if he is a person resplendent with authority, and since legal actions are forbidden to persons of bad repute. The witnesses shall affirm on oath that in bearing witness in the case they are not acting from hatred or fear or love or for advantage; they shall designate the persons by their exact names or by pointing out or by sufficient description, and shall distinguish by a clear reckoning every degree of relationship on either side; and they shall include in their oath the statement that it was from their ancestors that they received what they are testifying and that they believe it to be true. They shall still not suffice unless they declare on oath that they have known that the persons who stand in at least one of the aforesaid degrees of relationship, regard each other as blood-relations. For it is preferable to leave alone some people who have been united contrary to human decrees than to separate, contrary to the Lord's decrees, persons who have been joined together legitimately.

53. On those who give their fields to others to be cultivated so as to avoid tithes

In some regions there are intermingled certain peoples who by custom, in accordance with their own rites, do not pay tithes, even though they are counted as Christians. Some landlords assign their lands to them so that these lords may obtain greater revenues, by cheating the churches of the tithes. Wishing therefore to provide for the security of churches in these matters, we decree that when lords make over their lands to such persons in this way for cultivation, the lords must pay the tithes to the churches in full and without objection, and if necessary they shall be compelled to do so by ecclesiastical censure. Such tithes are indeed to be paid of necessity, inasmuch as they are owed in virtue of divine law or of approved local custom.

54. Tithes should be paid before taxes

It is not within human power that the seed should answer to the sower since, according to the saying of the Apostle, Neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but rather he who gives the growth, namely God, who himself brings forth much fruit from the dead seed. Now, some people from excess of greed strive to cheat over tithes, deducting from crops and first-fruits the rents and dues, which meanwhile escape the payment of tithes. Since the Lord has reserved tithes unto himself as a sign of his universal lordship, by a certain special title as it were, we decree, wishing to prevent injury to churches and danger to souls, that in virtue of this general lordship the payment of tithes shall precede the exaction of dues and rents, or at least those who receive untithed rents and dues shall be forced by ecclesiastical censure, seeing that a thing carries with it its burden, to tithe them for the churches to which by right they are due.

55. Tithes are to be paid on lands acquired, notwithstanding privileges

Recently abbots of the Cistercian order, assembled in a general chapter, wisely decreed at our instance that the brethren of the order shall not in future buy possessions from which tithes are due to churches, unless by chance it is for founding new monasteries; and that if such possessions were given to them by the pious devotion of the faithful, or were bought for founding new monasteries, they would assign them for cultivation to other people, who would pay the tithes to the churches, lest the churches be further burdened on account of the Cistercians' privileges. We therefore decree that on lands assigned to others and on future acquisitions, even if they cultivate them with their own hands or at their own expense, they shall pay tithes to the churches which previously received the tithes from the lands, unless they decide to compound in another way with the churches. Since we consider this decree to be acceptable and right, we wish it to be extended to other regulars who enjoy similar privileges, and we order prelates of churches to be readier and more effectual in affording them full justice with regard to those who wrong them and to take pains to maintain their privileges more carefully and completely.

56. A parish priest shall not lose a tithe on account of some people making a pact

Many regulars, as we have learnt, and sometimes secular clerics, when letting houses or granting fiefs, add a pact, to the prejudice of the parish churches, to the effect that the tenants and vassals shall pay tithes to them and shall choose to be buried in their ground. We utterly reject pacts of this kind, since they are rooted in avarice, and we declare that whatever is received through them shall be returned to the parish churches.

57. Interpreting the words of privileges

In order that privileges which the Roman church has granted to certain religious may remain unimpaired, we have decided that certain things in them must be clarified lest through their not being well understood they lead to abuse, on account of which they could deservedly be revoked. For, a person deserves to lose a privilege if he abuses the power entrusted to him. The apostolic see has rightly granted an indult to certain regulars to the effect that ecclesiastical burial should not be refused to deceased members of their fraternity if the churches to which they belong happen to be under an interdict as regards divine services, unless the persons were excommunicated or interdicted by name, and that they may carry off for burial to their own churches their confraters whom prelates of churches will not allow to be buried in their own churches, unless the confraters have been excommunicated or interdicted by name. However, we understand this to refer to confraters who have changed their secular dress and have been consecrated to the order while still alive, or who in their lifetime have given their property to them while retaining for themselves as long as they live the usufruct of it. Only such persons may be buried at the non-interdicted churches of these regulars and of others in which they have chosen to be buried. For if it were understood of any persons joining their fraternity for the annual payment of two or three pennies, ecclesiastical discipline would be loosened and brought into contempt. Even the latter may, however, obtain a certain remission granted to them by the apostolic see. It has also been granted to such regulars that if any of their brethren, whom they have sent to establish fraternities or to receive taxes, comes to a city or a castle or a village which is under an interdict as regards divine services, then churches may be opened once in the year at their "joyous entry" so that the divine services may be celebrated there, after excommunicated persons have been excluded. We wish this to be understood as meaning that in a given city, castle or town one church only shall be opened for the brethren of a particular order, as mentioned above, once in the year. For although it was said in the plural that churches may be opened at their "joyous entry", this on a true understanding refers not to each individual church of a given place but rather to the churches of the aforesaid places taken together. Otherwise if they visited all the churches of a given place in this way, the sentence of interdict would be brought into too much contempt. Those who dare to usurp anything for themselves contrary to the above declarations shall be subjected to severe punishment.

58. On the same in favour of bishops

We wish to extend to bishops, in favour of the episcopal office, the indult which has already been given to certain religious. We therefore grant that when a country is under a general interdict, the bishops may sometimes celebrate the divine services, behind closed doors and in a lowered voice, without the ringing of bells, after excommunicated and interdicted persons have been excluded, unless this has been expressly forbidden to them. We grant this, however, to those bishops who have not given any cause for the interdict, lest they use guile or fraud of any sort and so turn a good thing into a damaging loss.

59. Religious cannot give surety without permission of his abbot and convent

We wish and order to be extended to all religious what has already been forbidden by the apostolic see to some of them : namely that no religious, without the permission of his abbot and the majority of his chapter, may stand surety for someone or accept a loan from another beyond a sum fixed by the common opinion. Otherwise the convent shall not be held responsible in any way for his actions, unless perchance the matter has clearly redounded to the benefit of his house. Anyone who presumes to act contrary to this statute shall be severely disciplined.

60. Abbots not to encroach on episcopal office

From the complaints which have reached us from bishops in various parts of the world, we have come to know of serious and great excesses of certain abbots who, not content with the boundaries of their own authority, stretch out their hands to things belonging to the episcopal dignity : hearing matrimonial cases, enjoining public penances, even granting letters of indulgences and like presumptions. It sometimes happens from this that episcopal authority is cheapened in the eyes of many. Wishing therefore to provide for both the dignity of bishops and the well-being of abbots in these matters, we strictly forbid by this present decree any abbot to reach out for such things, if he wishes to avoid danger for himself, unless by chance any of them can defend himself by a special concession or some other legitimate reason in respect of such things.

61. Religious may not receive tithes from lay hands

It was forbidden at the Lateran council, as is known, for any regulars to dare to receive churches or tithes from lay hands without the bishop's consent, or in any way to admit to the divine services those under excommunication or those interdicted by name. We now forbid it even more strongly and will take care to see that offenders are punished with condign penalties. We decree, nevertheless that in churches which do not belong to them by full right the regulars shall, in accordance with the statutes of that council, present to the bishop the priests who are to be instituted, for examination by him about the care of the people; but as for the priests' ability in temporal matters, the regulars shall furnish the proof unto themselves. Let them not dare to remove those who have been instituted without consulting the bishop. We add, indeed, that they should take care to present those who are either noted for their way of life or recommended by prelates on probable grounds.

62. Regarding saint's relics

The Christian religion is frequently disparaged because certain people put saints' relics up for sale and display them indiscriminately. In order that it may not be disparaged in the future, we ordain by this present decree that henceforth ancient relics shall not be displayed outside a reliquary or be put up for sale. As for newly discovered relics, let no one presume to venerate them publicly unless they have previously been approved by the authority of the Roman pontiff. Prelates, moreover, should not in future allow those who come to their churches, in order to venerate, to be deceived by lying stories or false documents, as has commonly happened in many places on account of the desire for profit. We also forbid the recognition of alms-collectors, some of whom deceive other people by proposing various errors in their preaching, unless they show authentic letters from the apostolic see or from the diocesan bishop. Even then they shall not be permitted to put before the people anything beyond what is contained in the letters.

We have thought it good to show the form of letter which the apostolic see generally grants to alms-collectors, in order that diocesan bishops may follow it in their own letters. It is this : "Since, as the Apostle says, we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive according to what we have done in the body, whether it be good or bad, it behooves us to prepare for the day of the final harvest with works of mercy and to sow on earth, with a view to eternity, that which, with God returning it with multiplied fruit, we ought to collect in heaven; keeping a firm hope and confidence, since he who sows sparingly reaps sparingly, and he who sows bountifully shall reap bountifully unto eternal life. Since the resources of a hospital may not suffice for the support of the brethren and the needy who flock to it, we admonish and exhort all of you in the Lord, and enjoin upon you for the remission of your sins, to give pious alms and grateful charitable assistance to them, from the goods that God has bestowed upon you; so that their need may be cared for through your help, and you may reach eternal happiness through these and other good things which you may have done under God's inspiration. "

Let those who are sent to seek alms be modest and discreet, and let them not stay in taverns or other unsuitable places or incur useless or excessive expenses, being careful above all not to wear the garb of false religion. Moreover, because the keys of the church are brought into contempt and satisfaction through penance loses its force through indiscriminate and excessive indulgences, which certain prelates of churches do not fear to grant, we therefore decree that when a basilica is dedicated, the indulgence shall not be for more than one year, whether it is dedicated by one bishop or by more than one, and for the anniversary of the dedication the remission of penances imposed is not to exceed forty days. We order that the letters of indulgence, which are granted for various reasons at different times, are to fix this number of days, since the Roman pontiff himself, who possesses the plenitude of power, is accustomed to observe this moderation in such things.

63. On simony

As we have certainly learnt, shameful and wicked exactions and extortions are levied in many places and by many persons, who are like the sellers of doves in the temple, for the consecration of bishops, the blessing of abbots and the ordination of clerics. There is fixed how much is to be paid for this or that and for yet another thing. Some even strive to defend this disgrace and wickedness on the grounds of long-established custom, thereby heaping up for themselves still further damnation. Wishing therefore to abolish so great an abuse, we altogether reject such a custom which should rather be termed a corruption. We firmly decree that nobody shall dare to demand or extort anything under any pretext for the conferring of such things or for their having been conferred. Otherwise both he who receives and he who gives such an absolutely condemned payment shall be condemned with Gehazi and Simon.

64. Simony with regards to monks and nuns

The disease of simony has infected many nuns to such an extent that they admit scarcely any as sisters without a payment, wishing to cover this vice with the pretext of poverty. We utterly forbid this to happen in the future. We decree that whoever commits such wickedness in the future, both the one admitting and the one admitted, whether she be a subject or in authority, shall be expelled from her convent without hope of reinstatement, and be cast into a house of stricter observance to do perpetual penance. As regards those who were admitted in this way before this synodal statute, we have decided to provide that they be moved from the convents which they wrongly entered, and be placed in other houses of the same order. If perchance they are too numerous to be conveniently placed elsewhere, they may be admitted afresh to the same convent, by dispensation, after the prioress and lesser officials have been changed, lest they roam around in the world to the danger of their souls. We order the same to be observed with regard to monks and other religious. Indeed, lest such persons be able to excuse themselves on the grounds of simplicity or ignorance, we order diocesan bishops to have this decree published throughout their dioceses every year.

65. Simony and extortion

We have heard that certain bishops, on the death of rectors of churches, put these churches under an interdict and do not allow anyone to be instituted to them until they have been paid a certain sum of money. Moreover, when a knight or a cleric enters a religious house or chooses to be buried with religious, the bishops raise difficulties and obstacles until they receive something in the way of a present, even when the person has left nothing to the religious house. Since we should abstain not only from evil itself but also from every appearance of evil, as the Apostle says, we altogether forbid exactions of this kind. Any offender shall restore double the amount exacted, and this is to be faithfully used for the benefit of the places harmed by the exactions.

66. Simony and avarice in clerics

It has frequently been reported to the apostolic see that certain clerics demand and extort payments for funeral rites for the dead, the blessing of those marrying, and the like; and if it happens that their greed is not satisfied, they deceitfully set up false impediments. On the other hand some lay people, stirred by a ferment of heretical wickedness, strive to infringe a praiseworthy custom of holy church, introduced by the pious devotion of the faithful, under the pretext of canonical scruples. We therefore both forbid wicked exactions to be made in these matters and order pious customs to be observed, ordaining that the church's sacraments are to be given freely but also that those who maliciously try to change a praiseworthy custom are to be restrained, when the truth is known, by the bishop of the place.

67. Jews and excessive Usury

The more the Christian religion is restrained from usurious practices, so much the more does the perfidy of the Jews grow in these matters, so that within a short time they are exhausting the resources of Christians. Wishing therefore to see that Christians are not savagely oppressed by Jews in this matter, we ordain by this synodal decree that if Jews in future, on any pretext, extort oppressive and excessive interest from Christians, then they are to be removed from contact with Christians until they have made adequate satisfaction for the immoderate burden. Christians too, if need be, shall be compelled by ecclesiastical censure, without the possibility of an appeal, to abstain from commerce with them. We enjoin upon princes not to be hostile to Christians on this account, but rather to be zealous in restraining Jews from so great oppression. We decree, under the same penalty, that Jews shall be compelled to make satisfaction to churches for tithes and offerings due to the churches, which the churches were accustomed to receive from Christians for houses and other possessions, before they passed by whatever title to the Jews, so that the churches may thus be preserved from loss.

68. Jews appearing in public

A difference of dress distinguishes Jews or Saracens from Christians in some provinces, but in others a certain confusion has developed so that they are indistinguishable. Whence it sometimes happens that by mistake Christians join with Jewish or Saracen women, and Jews or Saracens with Christian women. In order that the offence of such a damnable mixing may not spread further, under the excuse of a mistake of this kind, we decree that such persons of either sex, in every Christian province and at all times, are to be distinguished in public from other people by the character of their dress — seeing moreover that this was enjoined upon them by Moses himself, as we read. They shall not appear in public at all on the days of lamentation and on passion Sunday; because some of them on such days, as we have heard, do not blush to parade in very ornate dress and are not afraid to mock Christians who are presenting a memorial of the most sacred passion and are displaying signs of grief. What we most strictly forbid however, is that they dare in any way to break out in derision of the Redeemer. We order secular princes to restrain with condign punishment those who do so presume, lest they dare to blaspheme in any way him who was crucified for us, since we ought not to ignore insults against him who blotted out our wrongdoings.

69. Jews not to hold public offices

It would be too absurd for a blasphemer of Christ to exercise power over Christians. We therefore renew in this canon, on account of the boldness of the offenders, what the council of Toledo providently decreed in this matter : we forbid Jews to be appointed to public offices, since under cover of them they are very hostile to Christians. If, however, anyone does commit such an office to them let him, after an admonition, be curbed by the provincial council, which we order to be held annually, by means of an appropriate sanction. Any official so appointed shall be denied commerce with Christians in business and in other matters until he has converted to the use of poor Christians, in accordance with the directions of the diocesan bishop, whatever he has obtained from Christians by reason of his office so acquired, and he shall surrender with shame the office which he irreverently assumed. We extend the same thing to pagans.

70. Jewish converts may not retain their old rite

Certain people who have come voluntarily to the waters of sacred baptism, as we learnt, do not wholly cast off the old person in order to put on the new more perfectly. For, in keeping remnants of their former rite, they upset the decorum of the Christian religion by such a mixing. Since it is written, cursed is he who enters the land by two paths, and a garment that is woven from linen and wool together should not be put on, we therefore decree that such people shall be wholly prevented by the prelates of churches from observing their old rite, so that those who freely offered themselves to the Christian religion may be kept to its observance by a salutary and necessary coercion. For it is a lesser evil not to know the Lord's way than to go back on it after having known it.

71. Crusade to recover the holy Land

It is our ardent desire to liberate the holy Land from infidel hands. We therefore declare, with the approval of this sacred council and on the advice of prudent men who are fully aware of the circumstances of time and place, that crusaders are to make themselves ready so that all who have arranged to go by sea shall assemble in the kingdom of Sicily on 1 June after next : some as necessary and fitting at Brindisi and others at Messina and places neighbouring it on either side, where we too have arranged to be in person at that time, God willing, so that with our advice and help the Christian army may be in good order to set out with divine and apostolic blessing. Those who have decided to go by land should also take care to be ready by the same date. They shall notify us meanwhile so that we may grant them a suitable legate a latere for advice and help. Priests and other clerics who will be in the Christian army, both those under authority and prelates, shall diligently devote themselves to prayer and exhortation, teaching the crusaders by word and example to have the fear and love of God always before their eyes, so that they say or do nothing that might offend the divine majesty. If they ever fall into sin, let them quickly rise up again through true penitence. Let them be humble in heart and in body, keeping to moderation both in food and in dress, avoiding altogether dissensions and rivalries, and putting aside entirely any bitterness or envy, so that thus armed with spiritual and material weapons they may the more fearlessly fight against the enemies of the faith, relying not on their own power but rather trusting in the strength of God. We grant to these clerics that they may receive the fruits of their benefices in full for three years, as if they were resident in the churches, and if necessary they may leave them in pledge for the same time.

To prevent this holy proposal being impeded or delayed, we strictly order all prelates of churches, each in his own locality, diligently to warn and induce those who have abandoned the cross to resume it, and them and others who have taken up the cross, and those who may still do so, to carry out their vows to the Lord. And if necessary they shall compel them to do this without any backsliding, by sentences of excommunication against their persons and of interdict on their lands, excepting only those persons who find themselves faced with an impediment of such a kind that their vow deservedly ought to be commuted or deferred in accordance with the directives of the apostolic see. In order that nothing connected with this business of Jesus Christ be omitted, we will and order patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, abbots and others who have the care of souls to preach the cross zealously to those entrusted to them. Let them beseech kings, dukes, princes, margraves, counts, barons and other magnates, as well as the communities of cities, vills and towns — in the name of the Father, Son and holy Spirit, the one, only, true and eternal God — that those who do not go in person to the aid of the holy Land should contribute, according to their means, an appropriate number of fighting men together with their necessary expenses for three years, for the remission of their sins in accordance with what has already been explained in general letters and will be explained below for still greater assurance. We wish to share in this remission not only those who contribute ships of their own but also those who are zealous enough to build them for this purpose. To those who refuse, if there happen to be any who are so ungrateful to our lord God, we firmly declare in the name of the apostle that they should know that they will have to answer to us for this on the last day of final judgment before the fearful judge. Let them consider beforehand, however with what conscience and with what security it was that they were able to confess before the only-begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ, to whom the Father gave all things into his hands, if in this business, which is as it were peculiarly his, they refuse to serve him who was crucified for sinners, by whose beneficence they are sustained and indeed by whose blood they have been redeemed.

Lest we appear to be laying on men's shoulders heavy and unbearable burdens which we are not willing to lighten, like those who say yes but do nothing behold we, from what we have been able to save over and above necessities and moderate expenses, grant and give thirty thousand pounds to this work, besides the shipping which we are giving to the crusaders of Rome and neighbouring districts. We will assign for this purpose, moreover, three thousand marks of silver, which we have left over from the alms of certain of the faithful, the rest having been faithfully distributed for the needs and benefit of the aforesaid Land by the hands of the abbot patriarch of Jerusalem, of happy memory, and of the masters of the Temple and of the Hospital. We wish, however, that other prelates of churches and all clerics may participate and share both in the merit and in the reward. We therefore decree, with the general approval of the council, that all clerics, both those under authority and prelates, shall give a twentieth of their ecclesiastical revenues for three years to the aid of the holy Land, by means of the persons appointed by the apostolic see for this purpose; the only exceptions being certain religious who are rightly to be exempted from this taxation and likewise those persons who have taken or will take the cross and so will go in person. We and our brothers, cardinals of the holy Roman church, shall pay a full tenth. Let all know, moreover, that they are obliged to observe this faithfully under pain of excommunication, so that those who knowingly deceive in this matter shall incur the sentence of excommunication. Because it is right that those who persevere in the service of the heavenly ruler should in all justice enjoy special privilege, and because the day of departure is somewhat more than a year ahead, crusaders shall therefore be. exempt from taxes or levies and other burdens. We take their persons and goods under the protection of St Peter and ourself once they have taken up the cross. We ordain that they are to be protected by archbishops, bishops and all prelates of the church, and that protectors of their own are to be specially appointed for this purpose, so that their goods are to remain intact and undisturbed until they are known for certain to be dead or to have returned. If anyone dares to act contrary to this, let him be curbed by ecclesiastical censure.

If any of those setting out are bound by oath to pay interest, we ordain that their creditors shall be compelled by the same punishment to release them from their oath and to desist from exacting the interest; if any of the creditors does force them to pay the interest, we command that he be forced by similar punishment to restore it. We order that Jews be compelled by the secular power to remit interest, and that until they do so all intercourse shall be denied them by all Christ's faithful under pain of excommunication. Secular princes shall provide a suitable deferral for those who cannot now pay their debts to Jews, so that after they have undertaken the journey and until there is certain knowledge of their death or of their return, they shall not incur the inconvenience of paying interest. The Jews shall be compelled to add to the capital, after they have deducted their necessary expenses, the revenues which they are meanwhile receiving from property held by them on security. For, such a benefit seems to entail not much loss, inasmuch as it postpones the repayment but does not cancel the debt. Prelates of churches who are negligent in showing justice to crusaders and their families should know that they will be severely punished.

Furthermore, since corsairs and pirates greatly impede help for the holy Land, by capturing and plundering those who are travelling to and from it, we bind with the bond of excommunication everyone who helps or supports them. We forbid anyone, under threat of anathema, knowingly to communicate with them by contracting to buy or to sell; and we order rulers of cities and their territories to restrain and curb such persons from this iniquity. Otherwise, since to be unwilling to disquiet evildoers is none other than to encourage them, and since he who fails to oppose a manifest crime is not without a touch of secret complicity, it is our wish and command that prelates of churches exercise ecclesiastical severity against their persons and lands. We excommunicate and anathematize, moreover, those false and impious Christians who, in opposition to Christ and the Christian people, convey arms to the Saracens and iron and timber for their galleys. We decree that those who sell them galleys or ships, and those who act as pilots in pirate Saracen ships, or give them any advice or help by way of machines or anything else, to the detriment of the holy Land, are to be punished with deprivation of their possessions and are to become the slaves of those who capture them. We order this sentence to be renewed on Sundays and feast-days in all maritime towns; and the bosom of the church is not to be opened to such persons unless they send in aid of the holy Land the whole of the damnable wealth which they received and the same amount of their own, so that they are punished in proportion to their offence. If perchance they do not pay, they are to be punished in other ways in order that through their punishment others may be deterred from venturing upon similar rash actions. In addition, we prohibit and on pain of anathema forbid all Christians, for four years, to send or take their ships across to the lands of the Saracens who dwell in the east, so that by this a greater supply of shipping may be made ready for those wanting to cross over to help the holy Land, and so that the aforesaid Saracens may be deprived of the not inconsiderable help which they have been accustomed to receiving from this.

Although tournaments have been forbidden in a general way on pain of a fixed penalty at various councils, we strictly forbid them to be held for three years, under pain of excommunication, because the business of the crusade is much hindered by them at this present time. Because it is of the utmost necessity for the carrying out of this business that rulers of the Christian people keep peace with each other, we therefore ordain, on the advice of this holy general synod, that peace be generally kept in the whole Christian world for at least four years, so that those in conflict shall be brought by the prelates of churches to conclude a definitive peace or to observe inviolably a firm truce. Those who refuse to comply shall be most strictly compelled to do so by an excommunication against their persons and an interdict on their lands, unless their wrongdoing is so great that they ought not to enjoy peace. If it happens that they make light of the church's censure, they may deservedly fear that the secular power will be invoked by ecclesiastical authority against them as disturbers of the business of him who was crucified.

We therefore, trusting in the mercy of almighty God and in the authority of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, do grant, by the power of binding and loosing that God has conferred upon us, albeit unworthy, unto all those who undertake this work in person and at their own expense, full pardon for their sins about which they are heartily contrite and have spoken in confession, and we promise them an increase of eternal life at the recompensing of the just; also to those who do not go there in person but send suitable men at their own expense, according to their means and status, and likewise to those who go in person but at others' expense, we grant full pardon for their sins. We wish and grant to share in this remission, according to the quality of their help and the intensity of their devotion, all who shall contribute suitably from their goods to the aid of the said Land or who give useful advice and help. Finally, this general synod imparts the benefit of its blessings to all who piously set out on this common enterprise in order that it may contribute worthily to their salvation.

Notes

1. three persons ... nature omitted in Cr.

2. as if ... perfect omitted in Cr.

3. and he ... things omitted in A.M.

4. We forbid ... fowling omitted in Cr M.

5. confessions ... interlocutions omitted in Cr.

—Cr = P. Crabbe, Concilia omnia, tam generalia, quam particularia ..., 2 vols. Cologne 1538; 3 vols. ibid 1551
—M = the Mazarin codex used by P. Labbe and G. Cossart, Sacrosancta concilia ad regiam editionem exacta quae nunc quarta parte prodit auctior studio Philippi Labbei et Gabrielis Cossartii ..., 17 vols. Paris 1671-72
—A = the d'Achery codex used by Labbe and Cossart

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FIRST COUNCIL OF LYONS (1245)

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Introduction and Abbreviations

The dispute, distinctive of the Middle Ages, between the papacy and the empire became very serious under Pope Innocent IV and Emperor Frederick II. Already in 1240 Pope Gregory IX had tried to define the questions between the two powers by calling a general council, but Frederick II by arms had prevented the council from meeting. When Innocent IV succeeded as pope in 1243 he gave his earnest attention to renewing this policy. He was able to make his way in 1244 to Lyons, which was outside the direct authority of the emperor, and there proclaimed a council. Some letters of summons exist, dated 3 January 1245 and the days following, in which the purpose of the council is stated thus: "That the church, through the salutary counsel of the faithful and their fruitful help, may have the dignity of its proper position; that assistance may speedily be brought to the unhappy crisis in the holy Land and the sufferings of the eastern empire; that a remedy may be found against the Tartars and other enemies of the faith and persecutors of the Christian people; further, for the issue between the church and the emperor; for these reasons we think that the kings of the earth, the prelates of the church and other princes of the world should be summoned". The chief purposes for which the council was called—and from the beginning it was called "general"—seem to have been political ones.

When the council opened on 26 June 1245, in a meeting which was probably only preparatory, there were present three patriarchs and about 150 bishops besides other religious and secular persons, among whom was the Latin emperor of Constantinople. Emperor Frederick II sent a legation headed by Thaddaeus of Suessa. Many bishops and prelates were unable to attend the council because they had been prevented by the invasions of the Tartars in the east or the attacks of the Saracens in the holy Land, or because Frederick II had intimidated them (especially the Sicilians and Germans). Thus it was that the four chief parties of the council were the French and probably the Spanish, English and Italian. In the three sessions which were held during the council (26 June, 5 and 17 July) the fathers, not without hesitation and dispute, had to treat especially of Frederick II. There seems to have been a bitter conflict between Innocent IV on the one side and Thaddaeus of Suessa on the other. The sources, especially the Brevis nota and Matthew Paris, tell us clearly about the nature of the discussion and the determined attitude of the pope, who induced the council to depose the emperor at the session on 17 July 1245, a matter that appeared unprecedented to the fathers themselves. The council on this question shows us clearly the critical position reached by the medieval theory and practice of ruling a Christian state, which rested on a double order of authority.

In the same session of 17 July the council also approved some strictly legal constitutions and others on usury, the Tartars and the Latin east. But the council, unlike the previous councils of the Middle Ages, did not approve canons concerning the reform of the church and the condemnation of heresy. Enthusiasm for the Gregorian reform movement seems to have died down completely. The council, however, concerned itself with promoting and confirming the general canonical legislation for religious life.

The transmission of the text of the constitutions is involved and still partly obscure. Only in recent times has it been realised that the authentic and definitive drawing up of the constitutions, and their promulgation, took place after the council. This collection consists of 22 constitutions, all of which are of a legal nature, and was sent to the universities by Innocent IV on 25 August 1245 (Coll. I). A second collection of 12 decrees was published by Innocent IV on 21 April 1246 (Coll. II). A final collection (Coll. I + II and 8 other decrees) was issued on 9 September 1253 (Coll. III), and was included (except for const. 2) in Liber Sextus in 1298. Coll. I, however, is not identical with the constitutions of the council. For in it can be found neither the condemnation of Frederick II, which seems to have been the chief matter of the council, nor the five constitutions pertaining to the important questions introduced by Innocent IV at the opening of the council, namely those concerned with the Tartars, the Latin east and the crusades.

Stephen Kuttner has shown that the constitutions have been transmitted to us through three versions: the conciliar version (= M), known principally from the chronicle of Matthew of Paris (const. 1-19, and the const. on the crusade corresponding to R 17); the intermediate version (= R), known from the register of Innocent IV (const. 1-17, of which const. 1-12 correspond to M 1-10); and the definitive version (= Coll. I), containing two constitutions (18 and 22) which are absent from the other versions, but lacking the constitutions not directly concerned with the law (R 13-17).

Indeed, the origins of the constitutions must be placed before the council, as is shown by an earlier version of constitutions M 13, 15 and 19, antedating the council. Evidently the council fathers were discussing matters which had already been partly worked out, and it was somewhat later that the constitutions acquired their more accurate and definite legal form.

The constitutions taken from Matthew Paris were edited in Bn[1] III/2 (1606) 1482-1489. Those from the register of Innocent IV were edited in Rm IV (1612) 73-78. All later editions followed Rm. However, I. H. Boehmer and Msi[1] 2 (1748) 1073-1098 (afterwards in Msi 23 (1779) 651-674) printed Coll. III. in addition. Coll. I, as such, has never been edited; but there exists both an indirect transmission (Coll. I + II, Coll. III, Liber Sextus) and a direct, single-family transmission through eight manuscript codices: Arras, Bibl. Municipale 541; Bratislava, formerly Cathedral Library, 13; Innsbruck, Universitaetsbibl., 70, fos. 335v-338v (= I); Kassel, Landesbibl., Iur. fol. 32; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibl., Lat. 8201e, fos. 219v-220r, and Lat. 9654; Trier, Stadtbibl., 864; Vienna, Nationalbibl., 2073, fos. 238v-242v (= W).

Our edition of the constitutions tries to give all the documents truly belonging to the council. Coll. I has been taken as the base, and variants from M and R are set out in the critical apparatus. The text of Coll. I has been established from codices I and W, which we have seen in microfilm. With regard to M, the edition of H. R. Luard has been used. With regard to R, we have examined directly the register of Innocent IV. We think, moreover, that the last five constitutions in R (13-17, 17 is also in M and Annales de Burton) should also be included among the constitutions of the council, even though they were not included in Coil. I. We have printed the text of these five constitutions from the register of Innocent IV; as regards const. 17 we have also compared M and Annales de Burton (= Bu).

We think that the bull of deposition of the emperor Frederick II must be considered a statute of the council, and we place this in front of the constitutions. The transmission of the text of the bull is involved, and the editions are very faulty. There are three copies of the bull: Vatican Archives, AA. Arm. I-XVIII, 171 (= V); Paris, Archives Nationales, L 245 no. 84 (= P); Lyons, Archives du Rhone, Fonds du chap. primat., Arm. Cham. vol. XXVII no. 2 (= L). Of these only V has been published. Other transcriptions of the bull are given in the register of Innocent IV, in some chronicles (Matthew of Paris, Annals of Plasencia, Annals of Melrose), in collections of decretals, and in some more recent publications (Bzovius). Our edition takes as its base V, P and L.

Bull Deposing The Emperor Frederick II

Innocent {1}, bishop, servant of the servants of God, in the presence of the holy council, for an everlasting record.

Raised, though unworthy, to the highest point of the apostolic dignity, by the will of the divine majesty, we ought to exercise a watchful, diligent and wise care of all Christians, to examine with close attention the merits of individuals and to weigh them in the balance of prudent deliberation, so that we may raise by suitable favours those whom a rigorous and just examination shows to be worthy, and depress the guilty with due penalties, weighing always the merit and the reward in a fair scale, repaying to each the amount of penalty or favour according to the nature of his work. Indeed since the terrible conflict of war has afflicted some countries of the Christian world for a long time, as we desired with our whole heart the peace and tranquillity of the holy church of God and of all the Christian people in general, we thought that we should send special ambassadors, men of great authority, to {2} the secular prince who was the special cause of this discord and suffering. He was the man whom our predecessor of happy memory, Pope Gregory {3}, had bound by anathema because of his excesses. The ambassadors we sent, men eager for his salvation, were our venerable brethren Peter of Albano {4}, at that time bishop of Rouen, William of Sabina {5}, at that time bishop of Modena, and our beloved son William {6}, cardinal-priest of the basilica of the Twelve Apostles and at that time abbot of Saint Facundus. Through them we proposed to him, because we and our brethren desired to have peace with him and with all people, as far as lay in our power, that we were ready to grant peace and tranquillity to him and also to the rest of the whole world.

Because the restitution of the prelates, clerics and all others whom he kept in captivity, and of all both clerics and laymen whom he had taken in the galleys7, could especially lead the way to peace, we asked and begged him through our said ambassadors to set these prisoners free. This both he and his envoys had promised before we had been called to the apostolic office. Further we informed him that our ambassadors were ready on our behalf to hear and treat of peace, and even of satisfaction, should the emperor be ready to make it with regard to all those things for which he had incurred excommunication; and besides to offer him that if the church had injured him in anything contrary to justice-though it did not believe it had done so—it was ready to put it to rights and restore the proper position. If he said that he had harmed the church in nothing unjustly, or that we had harmed him contrary to justice, we were ready to call the kings, prelates and princes, both ecclesiastical and lay, to some safe place where either by themselves or by official representatives they might come together, and that the church was ready on the advice of the council to satisfy him if in anything it had harmed him, and to recall the sentence of excommunication if it had been brought unjustly against him, and with all clemency and mercy, in so far as it could be done without offence to God and its own honour, to receive satisfaction from him for the injuries and wrongs done to the church itself and its members through him.

The church also wished to secure peace for his friends and supporters and the enjoyment of full security, so that for this reason they should never incur any danger. But though in our relations with him, for the sake of peace, we have always taken care to rely on paternal admonitions and gentle entreaty, yet he, following the hardness of Pharaoh and blocking his ears like an asp, with proud obstinacy and obstinate pride has despised such prayers and admonitions. Furthermore on the Maundy Thursday previous to that which has just passed, in our presence and that of our brother cardinals, and in the presence of our dear son in Christ, the illustrious emperor of Constantinople {8}, and of a considerable gathering of prelates, before the senate and people of Rome and a very large number of others, who on that day because of its solemnity had come to the apostolic see from different parts of the world, he guaranteed on oath, through the noble count Raymond of Toulouse, and Masters Peter de Vinea and Thaddaeus of Suessa, judges of his court, his envoys and proctors who had in this matter a general commission, that he would keep our commands and those of the church. However afterwards he did not fulfil what he had sworn. Indeed it is likely enough that he took the oath, as can be clearly gathered from his following actions, with the express intention of mocking rather than obeying us and the church, since after more than a year he could not be reconciled to the bosom of the church, nor did he trouble to make satisfaction for the losses and injuries he had caused it, even though he was asked to do this. For this reason, as we are unable without giving offence to Christ to bear any longer his wickedness, we are compelled, urged on by our conscience, justly to punish him.

To say nothing about his other crimes, he has committed four of the greatest gravity, which cannot be hidden by evasion. For, he has often failed to keep his oath; he deliberately broke the peace previously established between the church and the empire; he committed a sacrilege by causing the arrest of cardinals of the holy Roman church and of prelates and clerics of other churches, both religious and secular, who were coming to the council which our predecessor had decided to summon; he is also suspect of heresy, by proofs which are not light or doubtful but clear and inescapable.

It is clear that he has often been guilty of perjury. For, once when he was staying in Sicily, before he had been elected to the dignity of emperor, in the presence of Gregory of happy memory, cardinal deacon of Saint Theodore {9} and legate of the apostolic see, he took an oath of loyalty to our predecessor Pope Innocent10 of happy memory and his successors and the Roman church, in return for the grant of the kingdom of Sicily made to him by this same church. Likewise, as is said, after he had been elected to that same dignity and had come to Rome, in the presence of Innocent and his brother cardinals and before many others, he renewed that oath, making his pledge of homage in the pope's hands. Then, when he was in Germany he swore to the same Innocent, and on his death to our predecessor Pope Honorius {11} of happy memory and his successors and the Roman church itself, in the presence of the princes and nobles of the empire, to preserve as far as was in his power, the honours, rights and possessions of the Roman church, and loyally to protect them, and without difficulty to see to the restoration of whatever came into his hands, expressly naming the said possessions in the oath: afterwards he confirmed this when he had gained the imperial crown. But he has deliberately broken these three oaths, not without the brand of treachery and the charge of treason. For against our predecessor Gregory and his brother cardinals, he has dared to send threatening letters to these cardinals, and in many ways to slander Gregory before his brother cardinals, as is clear from the letters which he then sent to them, and almost throughout the whole world, as it is said, he has presumed to defame him.

He also personally caused the arrest of our venerable brother Otto {12}, bishop of Porto, at that time cardinal deacon of Saint Nicholas in Carcere Tulliano, and James of happy memory, bishop of Palestrina {13}, legates of the apostolic see, noble and important members of the Roman church. He had them stripped of all their goods, and after more than once being led shamefully through different places, committed to prison. Furthermore this privilege which our lord Jesus Christ handed to Peter and in him to his successors, namely, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven, in which assuredly consists the authority and power of the Roman church, he did his best to diminish or take away from the church itself, writing that he did not fear Pope Gregory's condemnations. For, not only by despising the keys of the church he did not observe the sentence of excommunication pronounced against him, but also by himself and his officials he prevented others from observing that and other sentences of excommunication and interdict, which he altogether set at nought. Also without fear he seized territories of the said Roman church, namely the Marches, the Duchy, Benevento, the walls and towers of which he has caused to be demolished, and others with few exceptions in parts of Tuscany and Lombardy and certain other places which he holds, and he still keeps hold of them. And as if it were not enough that he was clearly going against the aforesaid oaths by such presumption, either by himself or through his officials he has forced the inhabitants of these territories to break their oath, absolving them in fact, since he cannot do it in law, from the oaths of loyalty by which they were bound to the Roman church, and making them nonetheless forswear the said loyalty and take an oath of loyalty to himself.

It is absolutely clear that he is the violator of the peace. For, previously at a time when peace had been restored between himself and the church, he took an oath before the venerable John of Abbeville {14}, bishop of Sabina, and Master Thomas {15}, cardinal priest of the title of Saint Sabina, in the presence of many prelates, princes and barons, that he would observe and obey exactly and without reserve all the commands of the church with regard to those things for which he had incurred excommunication, after the reasons of that excommunication had been set out in order before him. Then, when remitting every sanction and penalty to the Teutonic knights, the inhabitants of the kingdom of Sicily and any others who had supported the church against him, he guaranteed on his soul through Thomas, count of Acerra, that he would never wrong them or cause them to be wronged on the ground that they had supported the church. But he did not keep the peace and violated these oaths without any sense of shame that he was guilty of perjury. For afterwards he caused some of these very men, both nobles and others, to be captured; and after stripping them of all their goods, he had their wives and children imprisoned; and contrary to the promise he had made to bishop John of Sabina and cardinal Thomas, he invaded the lands of the church without hesitation, even though they promulgated in his presence that henceforth he would incur sentence of excommunication if he broke his promise. And when these two ecclesiastics, by their apostolic authority, ordered that neither by himself nor through others should he hinder postulations, elections or confirmations of churches and monasteries in the kingdom of Sicily from being held freely in future according to the statutes of the general council; that henceforth nobody in the same kingdom should impose taxes or collections on ecclesiastical persons or their property; that in the same kingdom no cleric or ecclesiastical person should in future be brought before a lay judge in a civil or criminal case, except for a suit in civil law over feudal rights; and that he should make adequate compensation to the Templars, Hospitallers and other ecclesiastical persons for the loss and injury inflicted upon them; he nevertheless refused to obey these commands.

It is clear that in the kingdom of Sicily eleven or more archiepiscopal and many episcopal sees, abbacies and other churches are at present vacant, and through his agency, as is patent, these have long been deprived of prelates, to their own grave loss and the ruin of souls. And though perhaps in some churches of the kingdom elections have been held by chapters, since however they have elected clerics who are Frederick's dependants, it can be concluded in all probability that they did not have a free power of choice. Not only has he caused the possessions and goods of churches in the kingdom to be seized at his pleasure, but also the crosses, thuribles, chalices and other sacred treasures of theirs, and silk cloth, to be carried off, like one who sets at nought divine worship, and although it is said that they have been restored in part to the churches, yet a price was first exacted for them. Indeed clerics are made to suffer in many ways by collections and taxes, and not only are they dragged before a lay court but also, as it is asserted, they are compelled to submit to duels and are imprisoned, killed and tortured to the disturbance and insult of the clerical order. Satisfaction has not been made to the said Templars, Hospitallers and ecclesiastical persons for the loss and injury done to them.

It is also certain that he is guilty of sacrilege. For when the aforesaid bishops of Porto and Palestrina, and many prelates of churches and clerics, both religious and secular, summoned to the apostolic see to hold the council which Frederick himself had previously asked for, were coming by sea, since the roads had been entirely blocked at his command, he stationed his son Enzo with a large number of galleys and, by means of many others duly placed long beforehand, he laid an ambush against them in the parts of Tuscany on the coast; and so that he might vomit forth in more deadly fashion the poison which had long gathered within him, by an act of sacrilegious daring he caused them to be captured; during their seizure some of the prelates and others were drowned, a number were killed, some were put to flight and pursued, and the rest were stripped of all their possessions, ignominiously led from place to place to the kingdom of Sicily, and there harshly imprisoned. Some of them, overcome by the filth and beset by hunger, perished miserably.

Furthermore, he has deservedly become suspect of heresy. For, after he had incurred the sentence of excommunication pronounced against him by the aforesaid John, bishop of Sabina, and cardinal Thomas, after the said pope Gregory had laid him under anathema, and after the capture of cardinals of the Roman church, prelates, clerics and others coming at different times to the apostolic see; he has despised and continues to despise the keys of the church, causing the sacred rites to be celebrated or rather, as far as in him lies, to be profaned, and he has consistently asserted, as said above, that he does not fear the condemnations of the aforesaid pope Gregory. Besides, he is joined in odious friendship with the Saracens; several times he has sent envoys and gifts to them, and receives the like from them in return with expressions of honour and welcome; he embraces their rites; he openly keeps them with him in his daily services; and, following their customs, he does not blush to appoint as guards, for his wives descended from royal stock, eunuchs whom it is seriously said he has had castrated. And what is more loathsome, when he was in the territory overseas, after he had made an agreement, or rather had come to a wicked understanding with the sultan, he allowed the name of Mahomet to be publicly proclaimed day and night in the Lord's temple. Recently, after the sultan of Babylon and his followers had brought serious loss and untold injury to the holy Land and its Christian inhabitants, he caused the envoys of the sultan to be honourably received and lavishly entertained throughout the kingdom of Sicily with, it is said, every mark of honour being paid to the sultan. Using the deadly and hateful service of other unbelievers against the faithful, and securing a bond by friendship and marriage with those who, wickedly making light of the apostolic see, have separated from the unity of the church, he brought about by assassins the death of the famous duke Ludwig of Bavaria {16}, who was specially devoted to the Roman church, with disregard of the Christian religion, and he gave his daughter in marriage to Vatatzes {17}, that enemy of God and the church who, together with his counsellors and supporters, was solemnly separated by excommunication from the communion of the faithful.

Rejecting the customs and actions of Christian princes and heedless of salvation and reputation, he gives no attention to works of piety. Indeed to say nothing of his wicked acts of destruction, though he has learnt to oppress, he does not care mercifully to relieve the oppressed, and instead of holding out his hand in charity, as befits a prince, he sets about the destruction of churches and crushes religious and other ecclesiastical persons by constant affliction. Nor is he seen to have built churches, monasteries, hospitals or other pious places. Surely these are not light but convincing proofs for suspecting him of heresy? The civil law declares that those are to be regarded as heretics, and ought to be subject to the sentences issued against them, who even on slight evidence are found to have strayed from the judgment and path of the catholic religion. Besides this the kingdom of Sicily, which is the special patrimony of blessed Peter and which Frederick held as a fief from the apostolic see, he has reduced to such a state of utter desolation and servitude, with regard to both clergy and laity, that these have practically nothing at all; and as nearly all upright people have been driven out, he has forced those who remain to live in an almost servile condition and to wrong in many ways and attack the Roman church, of which in the first place they are subjects and vassals. He could also be rightly blamed because for more than nine years he has failed to pay the annual pension of a thousand gold pieces, which he is bound to pay to the Roman church for this kingdom.

We therefore, after careful discussion with our brother cardinals and the sacred council on his wicked transgressions already mentioned and many more besides, since though unworthy we hold on earth the place of Jesus Christ, and to us in the person of the blessed apostle Peter has been said, whatever you bind on earth etc., denounce the said prince, who has made himself so unworthy of the empire and kingdoms and every honour and dignity and who also, because of his crimes, has been cast out by God from kingdom and empire; we mark him out as bound by his sins, an outcast and deprived by our Lord of every honour and dignity; and we deprive him of them by our sentence. We absolve from their oath for ever all those who are bound to him by an oath of loyalty, firmly forbidding by our apostolic authority anyone in the future to obey or heed him as emperor or king, and decreeing that anyone who henceforth offers advice, help or favour to him as to an emperor or king, automatically incurs excommunication. Let those whose task it is to choose an emperor in the same empire, freely choose a successor to him. With regard to the aforesaid kingdom of Sicily, we shall take care to provide, with the counsel of our brother cardinals, as we see to be expedient.

Given at Lyons on 17 July in the third year of our pontificate.

Constitutions

I

1.On rescripts

Since in many articles of law failure to define their scope is blameworthy, after prudent consideration we decree that by the general clause "certain others" which frequently occurs in papal letters, no more than three or four persons are to be brought to court. The petitioner should state the names in his first citation, lest by chance a place is left for fraud if the names can be freely altered {18}.

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2. {19} Those to whom cases should be entrusted

By {20} the present decree we ordain that the apostolic see or its legates should not entrust cases to any persons except those who possess a dignity or belong to cathedrals or other collegiate churches of high standing; and such cases are to be conducted only in cities or large and well-known places where are to be found many men learned in the law. Judges who, contrary to this statute, cite either one or both parties to other places may be disobeyed without penalty, unless the citation takes place with the consent of both parties.

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3. {21} Curtailing legal expenses

As we wish, to the best of our power, to curtail the expenses of lawsuits by shortening the legal process, extending the decree of Innocent III of happy memory on this matter, we decree that if anyone wishes to bring several personal claims against another, he must be careful to gain letters on all these claims to the same judges and not to different ones. If anyone acts contrary to this, his letters and the processes initiated by them are to lack all validity; besides if he has caused inconvenience to the defendant by them, he is to be condemned to pay the legal expenses. Also if the defendant during the course of the same trial declares that he has a charge against the plaintiff, he ought, through benefit either of reconvention or of convention, if he prefers to obtain letters against him, to have his case tried before the same judges, unless he can reject them as being suspect. If he acts contrary to this, he should suffer the same penalty.

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4. {22} On challenging elections etc.

We decree that if anyone attacks an election, postulation or provision already made, bringing some objection to the form or the person, and should happen to appeal to us in this matter, both the objector and the defendant, and in general all those who are concerned and whom the case affects, either by themselves or by their procurators instructed for the case, should make their way to the apostolic see within a month of the lodging of the objection. But if one party {23} does not come after twenty days, and the other party has arrived and is waiting, the case about the election may proceed according to law, notwithstanding the absence of anyone. We wish and command that this is to be observed in dignities parsonages and canonries. We {24} also add that anyone who does not fully prove the objection he has brought regarding the form, shall be condemned to pay the expenses which the other party claims to have incurred on this account. But anyone who fails to prove his objection against the person, should know that he is suspended from ecclesiastical benefices for three years, and if within that time he continues to act with similar reckless conduct, that by the law itself he is deprived of these benefices for ever, and he is to have no hope or confidence of mercy in this matter, unless it is established by the clearest proof that a probable and sufficient cause excuses him from a malicious accusation.

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5. {25} Only unconditional votes valid

In {26} elections, postulations and ballots, from which the right of election arises, we completely disapprove of conditional, alternative and indefinite votes, and we decree that the said votes are to be held invalid, and that the election is to be determined by unconditional votes; for the power of decision of those who do not express a clear opinion is transferred to the others {27}.

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6. {28} Jurisdiction of conservators

We decree that conservators, whom we frequently appoint, may defend from manifest injury and violence those whom we entrust to their protection, but that their power does not extend to other matters which require a judicial investigation.

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7. {29} Legates and benefices

We are required by our office to watch for remedies for our subjects, because while we relieve their burdens and remove their stumbling blocks, so we rest in their ease and enjoy their peace. Therefore we enact by the present decree that legates of the Roman church, however much they hold the full power of legates whether they have been sent by us or claim the dignity of that office on behalf of their own churches, have no power from the office of legate of conferring benefices, unless we have judged that this is specially to be granted to a particular one. We do not, however, wish this restriction to hold with our brother cardinals while acting as legates, because just as they rejoice in a prerogative of honour, so we wish them to exercise a wider authority.

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8. {30} Judge delegates

The law seems to be clear that a judge delegate, unless he has received a special concession for the purpose from the apostolic see, cannot order either of the parties to appear in person before him, unless it be a criminal case or, in order to obtain a statement of the truth or an oath regarding calumny, the necessity of the law demands that the parties appear before him.

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9. {31} On peremptory exceptions

The objection of a peremptory exception or of any major defence concerning the trial of a case, raised before the contestation of the suit, shall not prevent or hold up the contestation, unless the objector makes an exception concerning a matter already judged or concluded or brought to a solution, even though the objector says that the rescript would not have been granted if the grantor had been aware of the things which are adverse to the plaintiff.

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10. {32} The objection of robbery

We are well aware of the frequent and persistent complaint that the exception of robbery, sometimes maliciously introduced in trials, hinders and confuses ecclesiastical cases. For while the exception is admitted, sometimes appeals are introduced. Thus the hearing of the chief case is interrupted and often comes to nothing. Thus we who are ever ready to take labours upon ourselves so that we may win peace for others, wishing to limit lawsuits and to remove material for malicious accusations, decree that in civil suits a judge is not to hold up the proceedings of the major issue on account of an objection of robbery brought by anyone except the plaintiff. But if the defendant declares in civil suits that he has been robbed by the plaintiff, or in criminal cases by anyone at all, then he must prove his assertion within fifteen days after the day on which the claim is put forward; otherwise he is to be condemned to pay the expenses which the plaintiff has incurred on this account, after a judicial estimate has been made, or let him be punished otherwise if the judge thinks right. By the word "robbed" we wish to be understood in this case a criminal accusation whereby someone declares that he has been stripped by violence of all his substance or a greater part of it. This we think is the only honest interpretation of the canons, for we ought not to meet our opponents either naked or without arms. For the one stripped has the advantage that he cannot be stripped again. Among the schoolmen the matter is debated, whether one who has been robbed by a third party can bring an exception against his accuser, or whether a time should be granted him by the judge within which he should ask for restitution, lest perchance he should wish to continue in this state in order to evade every accuser, and this we think is fully according to justice. If he does not seek restitution within the time granted, or does not bring his case to a conclusion even though he could do so, then he can be accused regardless of the exception of robbery. In addition to this we decree that robbery of private goods cannot in any way be brought up against one for ecclesiastics or vice versa.

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11. {33} No-show plaintiffs

A plaintiff who does not take the trouble to come on the date for which he has caused his appeal to be cited, should be condemned on his arrival to pay the expenses incurred by the defendant on account of this, and he is not to be admitted to another citation unless he gives a sufficient surety that he will appear on the date.

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12. {34} On early possession for the sake of preservation

We decree that a person who, in order to obtain a dignity, parsonage or ecclesiastical benefice, brings a suit against the possessor, may not be admitted to possession of it for the sake of its preservation, on the grounds of the other's contumacy; this is to prevent his entering upon it from appearing irregular. But in this case the divine presence may make up for the absence of the contumacious one, so that though the suit is not opposed, the matter may be brought to the proper conclusion after a careful examination.

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13. {35} On the acceptability of negative assertions

We decree that negative assertions, which can only be proved by the admission of the opponent, may be accepted by the judges if they see this to be expedient in the interests of equity.

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14. {36} The exception of major excommunication

After due consideration our holy mother the church decrees that the exception of a major excommunication should hold up the suit and delay the agents, in whatever part of the proceedings it is produced. Thus ecclesiastical censure will be the more feared, the danger of communion avoided, the vice of contumacy checked, and those excommunicated, while they are excluded from the acts of the community, may the more easily be brought, through a sense of shame, to the grace of humility and reconciliation. But with the growth of human evil what was provided as a remedy has turned to harm. For while in ecclesiastical cases this exception is frequently brought up through malice, it happens that business is delayed and the parties worn out by toil and expense. Therefore, since this has crept in like a general plague, we think it right to apply a general remedy. Thus if anyone brings up the objection of excommunication, he should set out the kind of excommunication and the name of the person who imposed the penalty. He must know that he is bringing the matter into public notice, and he must prove it with the clearest evidence within eight days, not counting the day on which he brings it forward. If he does not prove it, the judge should not fail to proceed in the case, condemning the accused to repay the sum which the plaintiff shows he has incurred, after an estimate has been made. If however later, while the hearing continues and the proof is progressing, an exception is made either with regard to the same excommunication or another and is proved, the plaintiff is to be excluded from the proceedings until he has deserved to gain the grace of absolution, and all that has gone before shall nevertheless be regarded as valid; provided that this exception is not put forward more than twice, unless a new excommunication has arisen or a clear and ready proof has come to light concerning the old. If such an exception is brought forward after the case has been decided though it will prevent the execution it will not weaken the verdict, with the qualification that, if the plaintiff has been publicly excommunicated, and the judge knows this at any time, then even if the accused shall not make an exception on this score, the judge should not delay in removing the plaintiff from his office.

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15. {37} On Judges Who Give Dishonest Judgment

Since before the judgment seat of the eternal king a person will not be held guilty when a judge unjustly condemns him, according to the words of the prophet, the Lord will not condemn him when he is judged, ecclesiastical judges must take care and be on the watch that in the process of justice dislike has no power, favour does not take an undue place, fear is banished, and reward or hope of reward does not overturn justice. Let them bear the scales in their hands and weigh with an equal balance, so that in all that is done in the court, especially in forming and giving the verdict, they may have God only before their eyes following the example of him who when entering the tabernacle referred the complaints of the people to the Lord to judge according to his command. If any ecclesiastical judge, whether ordinary or delegated, careless of his reputation and seeking his own honour, acts against his conscience and justice in any way to the injury of one party in his judgment, whether from favour or from base motives, let him know that he is suspended from the exercise of his office for a year and he is to be condemned to pay to the injured party the damages incurred; further, let him know that if during the period of his suspension he sacrilegiously takes part in the sacred rites of the church, he is caught in the noose of irregularity according to the canonical sanctions, from which he can be freed only by the apostolic see, saving the other constitutions which assign and inflict punishment on judges who give dishonest judgment. For it is right that he who dares to offend in so many ways should suffer a multiple penalty.

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16. {38} On appeals

It is our earnest wish to lessen lawsuits and to relieve subjects of their troubles. Therefore we decree that if anyone thinks that he should appeal to us in a court of law or outside it because of an interlocutory decree or a grievance, let him at once put in writing the reason for his appeal, seeking a writ which we order to be granted him. In this writ the judge is to declare the reason for the appeal, and why the appeal has not been granted or whether it was granted out of respect for a superior. After this let time be granted to the appellant, according to distance and the nature of the persons and the business, to follow up his appeal. If the appellee wishes it and the principals petition for it, let them approach the apostolic see, either by themselves or through agents who have been instructed and given a commission to act, bringing with them the reasons and documents relating to the case. Let them come so prepared that if it seems good to us, when the matter of the appeal has been dealt with or committed to the parties for agreement, the principal case may proceed, insofar as it can and should by law; without however any change in what tradition has ordained about appeals from definitive sentences. If the appellant does not observe the above provisions, he is not to be reckoned an appellant and he must return to the examination of the former judge, and is to be condemned to pay the legitimate expenses. If the appellee disregards this statute, he shall be proceeded against as contumacious, as regards both the costs and the case, in so far as this is allowed by the law. Indeed it is right that the laws should raise their hands against someone who mocks the law, judge and litigant.

17. {39} On the same

When reasonable grounds for suspicion have been noted against a judge, and arbitrators have been chosen by the parties according to the form of law to investigate it, it often happens that when the two arbitrators fail to agree and do not summon a third one, with whom both or one of them can proceed to settle the matter as they are obliged, the judge brings a sentence of excommunication against them, which they through dislike or favour for long disregard. Thus the case itself, interrupted more than it should be, does not proceed to a settlement of the principal business. As it is our wish therefore to apply a necessary remedy for a disease of this nature, we decree that a fitting time-limit should be fixed by the judge for the two arbitrators, so that within it they may either agree or by consent summon a third one, with whom both or one of them may put an end to the suspicion. Otherwise the judge thenceforth shall proceed in the principal business.

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18. {40} On employing assassins

The son of God, Jesus Christ, for the redemption of the human race descended from the height of heaven to the lowest part of the world and underwent a temporal death. But when after his resurrection he was about to ascend to his Father, that he might not leave the flock redeemed by his glorious blood without a shepherd, he entrusted its care to the blessed apostle Peter, so that by the firmness of his own faith he might strengthen others in the Christian religion and kindle their minds with the ardour of devotion to the works of their salvation. Hence we who by the will of our Lord, though without merit of our own, have been made successors of this apostle and hold on earth, though unworthy, the place of our Redeemer, should always be careful and vigilant in the guarding of that flock and be forced to direct our thoughts continuously to the salvation of souls by removing what is harmful and doing what is profitable. Thus casting off the sleep of negligence and with the eyes of our heart ever vigilant, we may be able to win souls to God with the cooperation of his grace. Since therefore there are people who with a terrible inhumanity and loathsome cruelty thirst for the death of others and cause them to be killed by assassins, and thus bring about not only the death of the body but also of the soul, unless the abundant divine grace prevents it, we wish to meet such danger to souls, so that the victims may be defended beforehand by spiritual arms and all power may be bestowed by God for justice and the exercise of right judgment, and to strike those wicked and reckless people with the sword of ecclesiastical punishment, so that the fear of punishment may set a limit to their audacity. We do so especially since some persons of high standing, fearing to be killed in such a way, are forced to beg for their own safety from the master of these assassins, and thus so to speak to redeem their life in a way that is an insult to Christian dignity. Therefore, with the approval of the sacred council, we decree that if any prince, prelate or any ecclesiastical or secular person shall cause the death of any Christian by such assassins, or even command it—even though death does not follow from this-or receives, defends or hides such persons, he automatically incurs the sentence of excommunication and of deposition from dignity, honour, order, office and benefice, and these are to be conferred on others by those who have the right to do so. Let such a one with all his worldly goods be cast out for ever by all Christian people as an enemy of religion, and after it has been established by reasonable evidence that so loathsome a crime has been committed, no other sentence of excommunication, deposition or rejection shall in any way be needed.

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19. {41} On excommunication 1

Since the aim of excommunication is healing and not death, correction and not destruction, as long as the one against whom it is pronounced does not treat it with contempt, let an ecclesiastical judge proceed with caution, so that in pronouncing It he may be seen as one who acts with a correcting and healing hand. Whoever pronounces an excommunication, therefore, should do this in writing and should write down expressly the reason why the excommunication was pronounced. He is bound to hand over a copy of this written document to the one excommunicated within a month after the date of sentence, if requested to do so. As to this request, we wish a public document to be drawn up or testimonial letters to be furnished, sealed with an official seal. If any judge rashly violates this constitution, let him know that he is suspended for one month from entering a church or attending divine services. The superior to whom the one excommunicated has recourse, should readily remove the excommunication and condemn the judge who pronounced it to repay the expenses and all losses, or punish him in other ways with a fitting penalty, so that judges may learn by the lesson of punishment how serious it is to hurl the bolt of excommunication without due consideration. We wish the same to be observed in sentences of suspension and interdict. Let prelates of churches and all judges take care that they do not incur the foresaid penalty of suspension. But if it happens that they take part m divine offices as before, they will not escape irregularity according to the canonical sanctions, in a matter where dispensation cannot be granted except by the sovereign pontiff.

20. {42} On excommunication 2

The question is sometimes asked whether, when a person who asks to be absolved by a superior by way of precaution, asserting that the sentence of excommunication pronounced against him is void, the act of absolution should be performed for him without objection; and whether one who declares before such absolution that he will prove in a court of law that he was excommunicated after a legitimate appeal, or that an intolerable mistake was clearly expressed in the sentence, should be avoided in all things except in what concerns the proof. To the first question we decree that the following is to be observed: absolution is not to be refused to the petitioner, even though the pronouncer of the sentence or the adversary opposes it, unless he says that the petitioner was excommunicated for a manifest offence, in which case a limit of eight days is to be granted to the one saying this. If he proves his objection, the sentence is not to be set aside unless there is sufficient guarantee of amendment or an adequate assurance that the petitioner will appear in court if the offence with which he is charged is still doubtful. To the second question, we decree that he who is allowed to submit a proof, as long as the matter of proof is in dispute, is to be avoided in all matters in the court in which he is engaged as an agent, but outside the court he may take part in offices, postulations, elections and other lawful acts.

21. {43} On excommunication 3

We decree {44} that no judge should presume to pronounce, before a canonical warning, a sentence of major excommunication upon persons who associate, in speech or other ways by which an associate incurs a minor excommunication, with persons already excommunicated by the judge; saving those decrees which have legitimately been promulgated against those who presume to associate with one condemned for grievous crime. But it the excommunicated person becomes hardened in speech or other ways by which an associate incurs a minor excommunication, the judge can, after canonical warning, condemn such associates with a similar censure. Otherwise excommunication pronounced against these associates is not to have any binding power, and those who pronounce it may fear the penalty of the law.

22. {45} On excommunication 4

Since there is danger that bishops and their superiors in the execution of their pontifical office, which is often their duty, may incur in some case an automatic sentence of interdict or suspension, we have thought it right, after careful consideration, to decree that bishops and other higher prelates in no way incur, because of any decree, sentence or order, the aforesaid sentence by reason of the law itself, unless there is express mention in them of bishops and superiors. In the constitution Solet a nonnullis, previously promulgated by us, it is laid down that when someone offers in court to prove that a sentence of excommunication was passed against him after a legitimate appeal, he is not to be avoided during the period of proof in matters which lie outside the court, such as elections, postulations and offices. To this we add that this constitution should not be extended to the sentences of bishops and archbishops, but what was previously observed in such actions should be observed in the future for these too.

II

1. {46} Management of church debts

Our pastoral care incites and urges us to look to the interest of those churches which have fallen into debt, and to provide by a salutary constitution that this should not happen for the future. The abyss of usury has almost destroyed many churches, and some prelates are found to be very careless and remiss in the payment of debts, especially those contracted by their predecessors, too ready to contract heavier debts and mortgage the property of the church, slothful in guarding what has been acquired, and preferring to win praise for themselves by making some small innovation than to guard their possessions, recover what has been thrown away, restore what is lost and repair damage. For this reason, so that they may not be able for the future to excuse themselves for an inefficient administration and to throw the blame on their predecessors and others, we lay down the following rules, with the approval of the present council. Bishops, abbots, deans and others who exercise a lawful and common administration, within one month after they have assumed office, having first informed their immediate superior, so that he may be present either in person or through some suitable and faithful ecclesiastical person, in the presence of the chapter or convent especially summoned for this purpose, must see that an inventory is made of the goods that belong to the administration they have taken up. In this the movable and immovable goods, books, charters, legal instruments, privileges, ornaments or fittings of the church, and all things which belong to the equipment of the estate, whether urban or rural, as well as debts and credits, are to be carefully written down. Thus, what was the condition of the church or the administration when they took it up, how they governed it during their incumbency, and what was its state when they laid it down by death or withdrawal, may be clearly known to the superior, if necessary, and those who are appointed for the service of the church. Archbishops who have no superior except the Roman pontiff, are to see to it that for this purpose they summon one of their suffragans, either in person or through another, as is expressed above, and abbots and other lesser exempt prelates, a neighbouring bishop, who is to claim no right for himself in the exempt church. The said inventory is to be furnished with the seals of the new incumbent and his chapter, and of the archbishop's suffragan or the neighbouring bishop called for the purpose. It is to be preserved in the archives of the church with due safeguards. Moreover a transcript of this inventory is to be given to both the new incumbent and the prelate summoned for the above purpose, and is to be similarly sealed. Existing goods are to be carefully guarded, their administration carried out in a worthy manner, and the debts which have been found are to be speedily paid, if possible, from the movable possessions of the church. If these movable goods are not sufficient for a speedy payment, all revenues are to be directed to the payment of debts that are usurious or burdensome; only necessary expenses are to be deducted from these revenues, after a reasonable estimate has been made by the prelate and his chapter. But if the debts are not burdensome or usurious, a third part of these revenues is to be set aside for this obligation, or a greater part with the agreement of those whom we have said must be summoned to take the inventory.

Further we strictly forbid, with the authority of the same council, those mentioned above to mortgage to others their persons or the churches entrusted to them, or to contract debts on behalf of themselves or the churches which may be a source of trouble. If evident necessity and the reasonable advantage of their churches should persuade them, then prelates with the advice and consent of their superiors, and archbishops and exempt abbots with the advice and consent of those already mentioned and of their chapter, may contract debts which, if possible, are not usurious and which are never in fairs or public markets. The names of the debtors and creditors and the reason why the debt was contracted are to be included in the written contract, even if it is turned to the advantage of the church, and for this purpose we wish that in no way ecclesiastical persons or churches should be given as security. Indeed the privileges of churches, which we command should be faithfully guarded in a safe place, are never to be given as securities, nor are other things, except for necessary and useful debts contracted with the full legal forms mentioned above.

That this salutary constitution should be kept unbroken, and the advantage which we hope from it may be clearly seen, we consider that we must lay down by an inviolable decree that all abbots and priors as well as deans and those in charge of cathedrals or other churches, at least once a year in their chapters, should render a strict account of their administration, and a written and sealed account should be faithfully read out in the presence of the visiting superior. Likewise archbishops and bishops are to take care each year to make known to their chapters with due fidelity the state of administration of the goods belonging to their households, and bishops to their metropolitans, and metropolitans to the legates of the apostolic see, or to others to whom the visitation of their churches has been assigned by the same see. Written accounts are always to be kept in the treasury of the church for a record, so that in the accounts a careful comparison can be made between future years and the present and past; and the superior may learn from this the care or negligence of the administration. Let the superior requite any negligence, keeping God only before his eyes and putting aside love, hate and fear of humans, with such a degree and kind of correction that he may not on this account receive from God or his superior or the apostolic see condign punishment. We order that this constitution is to be observed not only by future prelates but also by those already promoted.

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2. {47} On help for the empire of Constantinople

Though we are engaged in difficult matters and distracted by manifold anxieties, yet among those things which demand our constant attention is the liberation of the empire of Constantinople. This we desire with our whole heart, this is ever the object of our thoughts. Yet though the apostolic see has eagerly sought a remedy on its behalf by earnest endeavour and many forms of assistance, though for long Catholics have striven by grievous toils, by burdensome expense, by care, sweat, tears and bloodshed, yet the hand that extended such aid could not wholly, hindered by sin, snatch the empire from the yoke of the enemy. Thus not without cause we are troubled with grief. But because the body of the church would be shamefully deformed by the lack of a loved member, namely the aforesaid empire, and be sadly weakened and suffer loss; and because it could rightly be assigned to our sloth and that of the church, if it were deprived of the support of the faithful, and left to be freely oppressed by its enemies; we firmly propose to come to the help of the empire with swift and effective aid. Thus at the same time as the church eagerly rises to its assistance and stretches out the hand of defence, the empire can be saved from the dominion of its foes, and be brought back by the Lord's guidance to the unity of that same body, and may feel after the crushing hammer of its enemies the consoling hand of the church its mother, and after the blindness of error regain its sight by the possession of the catholic faith. It is the more fitting that prelates of churches and other ecclesiastics should be watchful and diligent for its liberation, and bestow their help and assistance, the more they are bound to work for the increase of the faith and of ecclesiastical liberty, which could chiefly come about from the liberation of the empire; and especially because while the empire is helped, assistance is consequently rendered to the holy Land.

Indeed, so that the help to the empire may be speedy and useful, we decree, with the general approval of the council, that half of all incomes of dignities parsonages and ecclesiastical prebends, and of other benefices of ecclesiastics who do not personally reside in them for at least six months, whether they hold one or more, shall be assigned in full for three years to the help of the said empire, having been collected by those designated by the apostolic see. Those are exempt who are employed in our service or in that of our brother cardinals and of their prelates, those who are on pilgrimages or in schools, or engaged in the business of their own churches at their direction, and those who have or will take up the badge of the cross for the aid of the holy Land or who will set out in person to the help of the said empire; but if any of these, apart from the crusaders and those setting out, receive from ecclesiastical revenues more than a hundred silver marks, they should pay a third part of the remainder in each of the three years. This is to be observed notwithstanding any customs or statutes of churches to the contrary, or any indulgences granted by the apostolic see to these churches or persons, confirmed by oath or any other means. And if by chance in this matter any shall knowingly be guilty of any deceit, they shall incur the sentence of excommunication.

We ourselves, from the revenues of the church of Rome, after first deducting a tenth from them to be assigned to the aid of the holy Land, will assign a tenth part in full for the support of the said empire. Further, when help is given to the empire, assistance is given in a very particular way and directed to the recovery of the holy Land, while we are striving for the liberation of the empire itself. Thus trusting in the mercy of almighty God and the authority of his blessed apostles Peter and Paul, from the power of binding and loosing which he conferred upon us though unworthy, we grant pardon of their sins to all those who come to the help of the said empire, and we desire they may enjoy that privilege and immunity which is granted to those who come to the help of the holy Land.

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3. {48} Admonition to be made by prelates to the people in their charge

In the belief that it is for ever our native country, from times long past all the children of the church have not only poured out countless sums of money but have also freely shed their blood to recover the holy Land, which the Son of God has consecrated with the shedding of his own blood. This we learn, sad at heart, from what has happened across the sea where the unbelievers fight against the faithful. Since it is the special prayer of the apostolic see that the desire of all for the redemption of the holy Land may, if God so wills, be speedily accomplished, we have made due provision, in order to win God's favour, to arouse you to this task by our letter. Therefore we earnestly beg all of you, commanding you in our lord Jesus Christ, that by your pious admonitions you should persuade the faithful committed to your care, in your sermons or when you Impose a penance upon them, granting a special indulgence, as you see it to be expedient, that in their wills, in return for the remission of their sins, they should leave something for the help of the holy Land or the eastern empire. You are carefully to provide that what they give for this support by way of money, through reverence of our crucified Lord, is faithfully preserved in definite places under your seal, and that what is bequeathed for this purpose in other forms is accurately recorded in writing. May your own devotion carry out this work of piety, in which the only aim is God's cause and the salvation of the faithful, so readily that with full assurance you may look at least for the reward of glory from the hand of the divine judge.

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4. {49} On the Tartars

Since we desire above all things that the Christian religion should be spread still further and more widely throughout the world, we are pierced with the deepest sorrow when any people by aim and action go against our wishes, and strive with all their might to blot out utterly this religion from the face of the world. Indeed the wicked race of the Tartars, seeking to subdue, or rather utterly destroy the Christian people, having gathered for a long time past the strength of all their tribes, have entered Poland, Russia, Hungary and other Christian countries. So savage has been their devastation that their sword spared neither sex nor age, but raged with fearful brutality upon all alike. It caused unparalleled havoc and destruction in these countries in its unbroken advance; for their sword, not knowing how to rest in the sheath, made other kingdoms subject to it by a ceaseless persecution. As time went on, it could attack stronger Christian armies and exercise its savagery more fully upon them. Thus when, God forbid, the world is bereaved of the faithful, faith may turn aside from the world to lament its followers destroyed by the barbarity of this people. Therefore, so that the horrible purpose of this people may not prevail but be thwarted, and by the power of God be brought to the opposite result, all the faithful must carefully consider and ensure by their earnest endeavour that the Tartar advance may be hindered and prevented from penetrating any further by the power of their mailed arm. Therefore, on the advice of the holy council, we advise, beg, urge and earnestly command all of you, as far as you can, carefully to observe the route and approaches by which this people can enter our land, and by ditches, walls or other defences and fortifications, as you think fitting, to keep them at bay, so that their approach to you may not easily be open. Word of their arrival should previously be brought to the apostolic see. Thus we may direct the assistance of the faithful to you, and thus you may be safe against the attempts and raids of this people. For to the necessary and useful expenses which you should make for that purpose, we shall contribute handsomely, and we shall see that contributions are made in proportion by all Christian countries, for in this way we may meet common dangers. Nevertheless, in addition to this, we shall send similar letters to all Christians through whose territories this people could make its approach.

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5 [On the crusade{50}]{51}

Deeply sorrowful at the grievous dangers of the holy Land, but especially at those which have recently happened to the faithful settled there, we seek with all our heart to free it from the hands of the wicked. Thus with the approval of the sacred council, in order that the crusaders may prepare themselves, we lay it down that at an opportune time, to be made known to all the faithful by preachers and our special envoys, all who are ready to cross the sea should gather at suitable places for this purpose, so that they may proceed from there with the blessing of God and the apostolic see to the assistance of the holy Land. Priests and other clerics who will be in the Christian army, both those under authority and prelates, shall diligently devote themselves to prayer and exhortation, teaching the crusaders by word and example to have the fear and love of God always before their eyes, so that they say or do nothing that might offend the majesty of the eternal king. If they ever fall into sin, let them quickly rise up again through true penitence. Let them be humble in heart and in body, keeping to moderation both in food and in dress, avoiding altogether dissensions and rivalries, and putting aside entirely any bitterness or envy, so that thus armed with spiritual and material weapons they may the more fearlessly fight against the enemies of the faith, relying not on their own power but rather trusting in the strength of God. Let nobles and the powerful in the army, and all who abound in riches, be led by the holy words of prelates so that, with their eyes fixed on the crucified one for whom they have taken up the badge of the cross, they may refrain from useless and unnecessary expenditure, especially in feasting and banquets, and let them give a share of their wealth to the support of those persons through whom the work of God may prosper; and on this account, according to the dispensation of the prelates themselves, they may be granted remission of their sins. We grant to the aforesaid clerics that they may receive the fruits of their benefices in full for three years, as if they were resident in the churches, and if necessary they may leave them in pledge for the same time.

To prevent this holy proposal being impeded or delayed, we strictly order all prelates of churches, each in his own locality, diligently to warn and induce those who have abandoned the cross to resume it, and them and others who have taken up the cross, and those who may still do so, to carry out their vows to the Lord. And if necessary they shall compel them to do this without any backsliding, by sentences of excommunication against their persons and of interdict on their lands, excepting only those persons who find themselves faced with an impediment of such a kind that their vow deservedly ought to be commuted or deferred in accordance with the directives of the apostolic see. In order that nothing connected with this business of Jesus Christ be omitted, we will and order patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, abbots and others who have the care of souls to preach the cross zealously to those entrusted to them. Let them beseech kings, dukes, princes, margraves, counts, barons and other magnates, as well as the communes of cities, vills and towns—in the name of the Father, Son and holy Spirit, the one, only, true and eternal God—that those who do not go in person to the aid of the holy Land should contribute, according to their means an appropriate number of fighting men together with their necessary expenses for three years, for the remission of their sins, in accordance with what has already been explained in general letters and will be explained below for still greater assurance. We wish to share in this remission not only those who contribute ships of their own but also those who are zealous enough to build them for this purpose. To those who refuse, if there happen to be any who are so ungrateful to our lord God, we firmly declare in the name of the apostle that they should know that they will have to answer to us for this on the last day of final judgment before the fearful judge. Let them consider beforehand, however, with what knowledge and with what security it was that they were able to confess before the only-begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ, to whom the Father gave all things into his hands, if in this business, which is as it were peculiarly his, they refuse to serve him who was crucified for sinners, by whose beneficence they are sustained and indeed by whose blood they have been redeemed.

We therefore decree, with the general approval of the council, that all clerics, both those under authority and prelates, shall give a twentieth of the revenues of their churches for a full three years to the aid of the holy Land, by means of the persons appointed by the apostolic see for this purpose; the only exceptions being certain religious who are rightly to be exempted from this taxation and likewise those persons who have taken or will take the cross and so will go in person. We and our brothers, cardinals of the holy Roman church, shall pay a full tenth. Let all know, moreover, that they are obliged to observe this faithfully under pain of excommunication, so that those who knowingly deceive in this matter shall incur the sentence of excommunication. Because it is right that those who persevere in the service of the heavenly ruler should in all justice enjoy special privilege, the crusaders shall therefore be exempt from taxes or levies and other burdens. We take their persons and goods under the protection of St Peter and ourself once they have taken up the cross. We ordain that they are to be protected by archbishops, bishops and all prelates of the church of God, and that protectors of their own are to be specially appointed for this purpose, so that their goods are to remain intact and undisturbed until they are known for certain to be dead or to have returned. If anyone dares to act contrary to this, let him be curbed by ecclesiastical censure.

If any of those setting out are bound by oath to pay interest, we ordain that their creditors shall be compelled by the same punishment to release them from their oath and to desist from exacting the interest; if any of the creditors does force them to pay the interest, we command that he be forced by similar punishment to restore it. We order that Jews be compelled by the secular power to remit interest, and that until they do so all intercourse shall be denied them by all Christ's faithful under pain of excommunication. Secular princes shall provide a suitable deferral for those who cannot now pay their debts to Jews, so that after they have undertaken the journey, and until there is certain knowledge of their death or of their return, they shall not incur the inconvenience of paying interest. The Jews shall be compelled to add to the capital, after they have deducted their necessary expenses, the revenues which they are meanwhile receiving from property held by them on security. For, such a benefit seems to entail not much loss, inasmuch as it postpones the repayment but does not cancel the debt. Prelates of churches who are negligent in showing justice to crusaders and their families should know that they will be severely punished. Furthermore, since corsairs and pirates greatly impede help for the holy Land, by capturing and plundering those who are travelling to and from it, we bind with the bond of excommunication them and their principal helpers and supporters. We forbid anyone, under threat of anathema, knowingly to communicate with them by contracting to buy or to sell; and we order rulers of cities and their territories to restrain and curb such persons from this iniquity. Otherwise, since to be unwilling to disquiet evildoers is none other than to encourage them, and since he who fails to oppose a manifest crime is not without a touch of secret complicity, it is our wish and command that prelates of churches exercise ecclesiastical severity against their persons and lands. We excommunicate and anathematise, moreover, those false and impious Christians who, in opposition to Christ and the Christian people, convey {52} arms and iron and timber for galleys; and we decree that those who sell them galleys or ships, and those who act as pilots in pirate Saracen ships, or give them any help or advice by way of machines or anything else, to the detriment of the holy Land, are to be punished with deprivation of their possessions and are to become the slaves of those who capture them. We order this sentence to be renewed publicly on Sundays and feast-days in all maritime towns; and the bosom of the church is not to be opened to such persons unless they send in aid of the holy Land all that they received from this damnable commerce and the same amount of their own, so that they are punished in proportion to their sins. If perchance they do not pay, they are to be punished in other ways in order that through their punishment others may be deterred from venturing upon similar rash actions. In addition, we prohibit and on pain of anathema forbid all Christians, for four years, to send or take their ships across to the lands of the Saracens who dwell in the east, so that by this a greater supply of shipping may be made ready for those wanting to cross over to help the holy Land, and so that the aforesaid Saracens may be deprived of the not inconsiderable help which they have been accustomed to receiving from this.

Although tournaments have been forbidden in a general way on pain of a fixed penalty at various councils, we strictly forbid them to be held for three years, under pain of excommunication, because the business of the crusade is much hindered by them at this present time. Because it is of the utmost necessity for the carrying out of this business that rulers and Christian peoples keep peace with each other, we therefore ordain, on the advice of this holy and general synod, that peace be generally kept in the whole Christian world for four years, so that those in conflict shall be brought by the prelates of churches to conclude a definitive peace or to observe inviolably a firm truce. Those who refuse to comply shall be most strictly compelled to do so by an excommunication against their persons and an interdict on their lands, unless the malice of the wrongdoers is so great that they ought not to enjoy peace. If it happens that they make light of the church's censure, they may deservedly fear that the secular power will be invoked by ecclesiastical authority against them, as disturbers of the business of him who was crucified.

We therefore, trusting in the mercy of almighty God and in the authority of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, do grant, by the power of binding and loosing that God has conferred upon us, albeit unworthy, unto all those who undertake this work in person and at their own expense, full pardon for their sins about which they are heartily contrite and have spoken in confession, and we promise them an increase of eternal life at the recompensing of the just. To those who do not go there in person but send suitable men at their own expense, according to their means and status, and likewise to those who go in person but at others' expense, we grant full pardon for their sins. We grant to share in this remission, according to the amount of their help and the intensity of their devotion, all who shall contribute suitably from their goods to the aid of the said Land or who give useful advice and help regarding the above. Finally, this holy and general synod imparts the benefit of its prayers and blessings to all who piously set out on this enterprise in order that it may contribute worthily to their salvation.

Notes

1 Pope Innocent IV

2 Frederick added in P

3 Pope Gregory IX (1227-1241)

4 Peter of Colmeiu, cardinal 1244-1253

5 William of Savoy, cardinal 1244-1251

6 William of Talliante, cardinal 1244-1250

7 On 3 May 1241

8 Baldwin II, Latin emperor in the east (d. 1261)

9 Gregory of Crescentio, cardinal 1205-1226

10 Pope Innocent III (1198-1216)

11 Honorius III (1216-1227)

12 Otto of Montferrat, cardinal 1227-1251

13 James of Pecoraria, cardinal 1231-1244

14 John Halgrin, cardinal 1227-1238

15 Thomas de Episcopo, cardinal 1216-1243

16 Ludwig I, duke of Bavaria (1183-1231)

17 John III Vatatzes, Greek emperor in the east (1222-1254)

18 The petitioner ... altered omitted in M.

19 const. 4 in M, 2 in R

20 In the conduct of cases uncertainty is insidious, and the renown of persons and places is very advantageous. Therefore by added in M.

21 const. 6 in M, 8 in R

22 const. 11 in M, omitted in R

23 the party which appealed W

24 const. 12 in M, omitted in R

25 const. 9 in M, 3 in R

26 Since legitimate acts are not tied to particular days and conditions by a legal sanction, and among legitimate acts the election of bishops is important, since by it the electors and the one elected are bound together by the ties of a spiritual marriage added in M.

27 for ... others omitted in M.

28 const. 10/11 in M, 4 in R

29 const. 13 in M, omitted in R

30 const. 7 in M, 5 in R.

31 const. 3 in M, 6 in R

32 const. 14 in M, omitted in R

33 const. 5 in M, 7 in R.

34 const. 2 in M, 9 in R.

35 const. 8 in M, 10 in R.

36 const. 15 in M, omitted in R

37 const. 16 in M, omitted in R

38 const. 17 in M, omitted in R

39 const. 11 in R, omitted in M

40 const. 22 in W, omitted in M R

41 const. 18 in M W, omitted in R

42 const 19 in M W, omitted in R

43 const. 1 in M, 12 in R, 20 in W

44 Judges damnably abuse an ecclesiastical censure when they use it rashly to try to expel innocent persons from the bosom of mother church on account of someone else's fault; thereby the persons illegally named are not harmed, and the censure is said to fall on the issuer on account of his misuse of the keys. Wishing to prevent such rashness we ordain by this decree added in M.

45 const 21 in W, omitted in M R

46 const. 13 in R, omitted in others

47 const. 14 in R, omitted in others

48 const. 15 in R, omitted in others

49 const. 16 in R, omitted in others

50 omitted in R

51 const 17 in R, omitted in others

52 to the Saracens added in M Bu.

Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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SECOND COUNCIL OF LYONS (1274)

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Introduction

After the death of Pope Clement IV (29 November 1268) almost three years passed before the cardinals were able to elect a new pope, Gregory X (1 September 1271). The political aspect of Europe in those times was undergoing great change. The popes themselves in their struggles with the German emperors had sought help from various states and had placed Charles of Anjou on the throne of Sicily. This long conflict, which the popes fought in order to protect their freedom and immunity, had finally upset the traditional system of government in Christendom. This system depended on two institutions, the papacy and the empire. In the East, moreover, the emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus had captured Constantinople in 1261 and brought the Latin empire there to an end.

Since the state of affairs was undoubtedly complex and difficult, Gregory X had conceived a very broad plan involving the whole Christian world. In this plan the eastern question was of the highest importance. The pope sought to conclude a treaty with Michael VIII Palaeologus and to unite the eastern and western churches. For if the churches were united and the strength of all Christian peoples were combined, the problem of the holy Land could be resolved and the Roman church could flourish with fresh authority and influence in the western states.

Gregory X, therefore, when he convoked the general council on 31 March 1272, outlined three themes: union with the Greeks, the crusade, and the reform of the church. Regarding the third theme, which was not only traditional in medieval councils but was also required by the actual state of ecclesiastical morals, the pope in March 1273 sought the opinion of all Christian people and asked for their help. Some reports sent to him for this purpose are still extant. After long preparatory arrangements the council assembled at Lyons and opened on 7 May 1274. Probably there were present about 300 bishops, 60 abbots and a large number of other clergy, many of whom apparently were theologians (Thomas Aquinas died while on his journey to Lyons), as well as king James of Aragon and the delegates sent by the rulers of France, Germany, England and Sicily. The Greeks arrived late, on 24 June, since they had been shipwrecked. Meanwhile a delegation of Tartars had also arrived. Although the number of participants does not seem to have been especially large, the whole Christian world was present either in person or through representatives, and it was evident that the council, as Gregory X had wished, was universal and ecumenical.

The council had six general sessions: on 7 and 18 May, 4 or 7 June, 6, 16 and 17 July. In the fourth session the union of the Greek church with the Latin church was decreed and defined, this union being based on the consent which the Greeks had given to the claims of the Roman church. In the last session the dogmatic constitution concerning the procession of the holy Spirit was approved, this question having been a cause of disagreement between the two churches. The union however appears to have been imposed, on the Greek side by the emperor Michael VIII. He wanted the support of the pope in order to deter Charles of Anjou from an attack on the Byzantine empire, while the majority of the Greek clergy opposed the union. The union was therefore fleeting, either because in the East the clergy steadily resisted it, or because the popes after Gregory X changed their plan of action.

The weakness of the union with the Greeks also rendered a crusade impossible. Gregory X won the approval of the principal states of Europe for the undertaking and was able, in the second session, to impose heavy taxes (a tenth for six years) in order to carry it out (const. Zelus fidei, below pp. 309-314). The council however merely decided to engage in the crusade; no start was made at getting things done and the project came to nothing. Moreover Gregory died soon afterwards (10 January 1276), and he was not sufficiently influential or powerful to bring to a conclusion his plans for church and state.

With regard to the reform of the church, Gregory complained in the council's last session that discussion had not been sufficient to pass any definite decree. However, he was able to bring about that certain constitutions relating to the parish should be delegated to the curia. For the rest, some constitutions concerning church institutions were approved in various sessions. The most important one prescribed that a pope should be elected by the college of cardinals assembled in conclave (const. 2); constitution 23 attempts to adjust relations between secular clerics and religious; constitutions 26-27 treat of usury; and others treat of particular questions about the reform of morals and of the church.

There are at least two redactions (conciliar and post-conciliar) of the council's constitutions, as S. Kuttner has shown. In the second session the fathers had approved the decree Zelus fidei, which was rather a collection of constitutions about the holy Land, the crusade, the war against Saracens and pirates, and the order and procedure to be observed in the council (here for the first time the nations appear as ecclesiastical parts of a council). Next, twenty-eight constitutions were approved in the following sessions: const. 3-9, 15, 19, 24, 29-30 in the third, const. 2, 10-12, 16-17, 20-22, 25-28, 31 in the fifth, const. 1, 23 in the sixth session. The pope promulgated a collection of the council's constitutions on 1 November 1274, sent this to the universities with the bull Cum nuper, and informed all the faithful in the encyclical Infrascriptas. In this collection, however, three of the thirty-one constitutions are post-conciliar (const. 13-14, 18). These concern the parish, on which subject the pope and the council fathers had decided in the last session of the council that some decrees should be made later on. Moreover the constitution Zelus fidei is missing from the collection, perhaps because it contained no juridical statutes of universal validity; and the other constitutions had been subjected to the examination of the curia and emended, notably as far as we know const. 2 on the conclave and const. 26-27 On usury.

The collection of constitutions promulgated by Gregory X was incorporated into Boniface VIII's Liber Sextus (1298) . It also survives, together with the encyclical Infrascriptas, in Gregory X's register (=R), on which we have based our text. The conciliar redaction, however, is known only in part. The constitution Zelus fidei was discovered first by H. Finke in an Osnabruck codex (= O), and then by S. Kuttner, without its beginning, in a Washington codex (= W), it is also extant in three English cartularies, which we have not examined; our edition relies on the transcriptions of Finke (= F) and Kuttner (= K). The other constitutions of the conciliar redaction we know only from W and, as regards const. 2, from eight scrolls containing the approval of the council fathers for this constitution (Vatican Archives, AA. arm. I-XVIII, 2187-2194 = V I-8). We therefore give the conciliar redaction on the basis of V and W; but W is very incomplete, having only 20 constitutions (const. 2-8, 9 mutilated, 10-12 16-17, 20, 22-23, 25-27, 31), and is full of errors. As the best solution at this intermediate stage, we therefore give the constitution Zelus fidei (below pp. 309-314) separately from the post-conciliar collection (below pp. 314-331), and we note in the critical apparatus the latter the variant readings of the conciliar redaction. In the main editions of the council's acts only the collection of constitutions promulgated by Gregory X is to be found; all these editions depend on Rm (4, 95-104), which is taken from R (R was edited later by Guiraud).

Constitutions

I

[1a]. Zeal for the faith, fervent devotion and compassionate love ought to rouse the hearts of the faithful, so that all who glory in the name of Christian grieved to the heart by the insult to their redeemer, should rise vigorously and openly in defence of the holy Land and support for God's cause. Who, filled with the light of the true faith and thinking over with filial affection the marvellous favours conferred on the human race by our saviour in the holy Land, would not burn with devotion and charity, and sorrow deeply with that holy Land, portion of the Lord's inheritance ? Whose heart will not soften with compassion for her, from so many proofs of love given in that land by our creator? Alas! the very land in which the Lord deigned to work our salvation and which, in order to redeem humanity by payment of his death, he has consecrated by his own blood, has been boldly attacked and occupied over a long period by the impious enemies of the Christian name, the blasphemous and faithless Saracens. They not only rashly retain their conquest, but lay it waste without fear. They slaughter savagely the Christian people there to the greater offence of the creator, to the outrage and sorrow of all who profess the catholic faith. "Where is the God of the Christians ?" is the Saracens' constant reproach, as they taunt them. Such scandals, which neither mind can fully conceive nor tongue tell, inflamed our heart and roused our courage so that we who from experience overseas have not only heard of those events but have looked with our eyes and touched with our hands, might rise to avenge, as far as we can, the insult to the crucified one. Our help will come from those afire with zeal of faith and devotion. Because the liberation of the holy Land should concern all who profess the catholic faith, we convoked a council, so that after consultation with prelates, kings, princes and other prudent men, we might decide and ordain in Christ the means for liberating the holy Land. We also proposed to lead back the Greek peoples to the unity of the church; proudly striving to divide in some way the Lord's seamless tunic, they withdrew from devotion and obedience to the apostolic see. We purposed also a reform of morals, which have become corrupt owing to the sins of both clergy and people. In everything we have mentioned he to whom nothing is impossible will direct our acts and counsels; when he wills, he makes what is difficult easy, and leveling by his power the crooked ways, makes straight the rough going. Indeed, in order the more readily to effect our plans, having regard to the risks from wars and dangers of journeys for those whom we judged should be summoned to the council, we did not spare ourself and our brothers but rather sought hardships so that we might arrange rest for others. We came to the city of Lyons with our brothers and curia, believing that in this place those summoned to the council might meet with less exertion and expense. We came undertaking various dangers and troubles, running many risks, to where all those summoned to the council were assembled, either in person or through suitable representatives. We held frequent consultations with them about help for the holy Land, and they, zealous to avenge the insult to the Saviour, thought out the best ways to succour the said Land and gave, as was their duty, advice and insight. [I b].

Having listened to their advice, we rightly commend their resolutions and praiseworthy enthusiasm for the liberation of that Land. Lest, however, we seem to lay on others' shoulders heavy burdens, hard to bear, which we are unwilling to move with our finger, we begin with ourself; declaring that we hold all we have from God's only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, by whose gift we live, by whose favour we are sustained, by whose blood even we have been redeemed. We and our brothers, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, shall pay fully for six successive years a tenth of all our ecclesiastical revenues, fruits and incomes for the aid of the holy Land. With the approval of this sacred council, we decree and ordain that for the said six years, beginning from the next feast of the birthday of blessed John the Baptist, all ecclesiastical persons of whatever rank or pre-eminence, condition, order, or religious state or order—and we wish none to invoke for themselves and their churches any privileges or indults, in whatever form of words or expression these were granted, rather we recall completely those we have granted till now—shall pay wholly and without any reduction a tenth of all ecclesiastical revenues, fruits and incomes of each year in the following way: that is, half on the feast of the Lord's birth and the other half on the feast of blessed John the Baptist. In order to observe more carefully the reverence due to him whose undertaking this is, in himself and in his saints and especially in the glorious Virgin whose intercession we ask in this and in our other needs, and in order that there may be a fuller subsidy for the holy Land, we order that the constitution of Pope Gregory our predecessor of happy memory against blasphemers be inviolably observed. The fines prescribed in this constitution are to be exacted in full through the authorities of the place where blasphemy is committed, and through others who exercise temporal jurisdiction there. Coercive measures, if necessary, are to be taken through diocesan and other local ordinaries. The money is to be assigned to the collectors for the subsidy. Moreover, we strictly command confessors who hear confessions by ordinary jurisdiction or by privilege to prompt and enjoin on their penitents to give the said money to the holy Land in full satisfaction for their sins; and they should persuade those making wills to leave, in proportion to their means, some of their goods for aid to the holy Land. We direct also that in each church there should be placed a box fitted with three keys, the first to be kept in the possession of the bishop, the second in that of the priest of the church, the third in that of some conscientious lay person. The faithful are to be instructed to place their alms, as the Lord inspires them, in this box for the remission of their sins. Mass is to be sung publicly in the churches once a week, on a certain day to be announced by the priest, for the remission of such sins and especially of those offering alms. Besides these measures, to provide more assistance for the holy Land, we exhort and urge kings and princes, marquises, counts and barons, magistrates, governors and other secular leaders to arrange that in the lands subject to their jurisdiction each of the faithful pays a coin to the value of a tournois or of one sterling in accordance with the customs or circumstances of the region, and they should order a further small tax of no burden to anyone for the remission of sins; these contributions are to be made each year in aid of the holy Land, so that just as nobody may excuse himself from compassion for the wretched state of the holy Land, nobody may be dismissed from contributing or shut out from meriting. Also, lest these prudent arrangements concerning the subsidy to the holy Land be hindered by anyone's fraud or malice or craft, we excommunicate and anathematise one and all who knowingly offer hindrance, directly or indirectly, publicly or secretly, to the payment, as described above, of the tithes in aid of the holy Land.

Furthermore, since corsairs and pirates greatly impede those travelling to and from that Land, by capturing and plundering them, we bind with the bond of excommunication them and their principal helpers and supporters. We forbid anyone, under threat of anathema, knowingly to communicate with them by contracting to buy or sell. We also order rulers of cities and their territories to restrain and curb such persons from this iniquity; otherwise it is our wish that prelates of churches exercise ecclesiastical severity in their land. We excommunicate and anathematise, moreover, those false and impious Christians who, in opposition to Christ and the Christian people, convey to the Saracens arms and iron, which they use to attack Christians and timber for their galleys and other ships; and we decree that those who sell them galleys or ships, and those who act as pilots in pirate Saracen ships, or give them any help or advice by way of machines or anything else to the detriment of Christians and especially of the holy Land, are to be punished with deprivation of their possessions and are to become the slaves of those who capture them. We order this sentence to be renewed publicly on Sundays and feast-days in all maritime towns; and the bosom of the church is not to be opened to such persons unless they send in aid of the holy Land all that they received from this damnable commerce and the same amount of their own, so that they are punished in proportion to their sins. If perchance they do not pay, they are to be punished in other ways in order that through their punishment others may be deterred from venturing upon similar rash actions. In addition, we prohibit and on pain of anathema forbid all Christians, for six years, to send or take their ships across to the lands of the Saracens who dwell in the east, so that by this a greater supply of shipping may be made ready for those wanting to cross over to help the holy Land, and so that the aforesaid Saracens may be deprived of the considerable help which they have been accustomed to receiving from this. Because it is of the utmost necessity for the carrying out of this business that rulers and Christian peoples keep peace with each other, we therefore ordain, with the approval of this holy and general synod, that peace be generally kept in the whole world among Christians, so that those in conflict shall be led by the prelates of churches to observe inviolably for six years a definitive agreement or peace or a firm truce. Those who refuse to comply shall be most strictly compelled to do so by a sentence of excommunication against their persons and an interdict on their lands, unless the malice of the wrongdoers is so great that they ought not to enjoy peace. If it happens that they make light of the church's censure, they may deservedly fear that the secular power will be invoked by ecclesiastical authority against them as disturbers of the business of him who was crucified. We therefore, trusting in the mercy of almighty God and in the authority of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, do grant, by the power of binding and loosing that God has conferred upon us, albeit unworthy, unto all those who undertake this work of crossing the sea to aid the holy Land, in person and at their own expense, full pardon for their sins about which they are truly and heartily contrite and have spoken in confession, and we promise them an increase of eternal life at the recompensing of the just. To those who do not go there in person but send suitable men at their own expense, according to their means and status, and likewise to those who go in person but at others' expense, we grant full pardon for their sins. We wish to grant to share in this remission, according to the nature of their help and the intensity of their devotion, all who shall contribute suitably from their goods to the aid of the said Land, or who give useful advice and help regarding the above, and all who make available their own ships for the help of the holy Land or who undertake to build ships for this purpose. Finally, this dutiful and holy general synod imparts the benefit of its prayers and blessings to all who piously set out on this enterprise in order that it may contribute to their salvation.[Id].

Not to us but to the Lord we give glory and honour; let us also thank him that to so sacred a council a very great number of patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors provosts, deans, archdeacons and other prelates of churches, both personally and by suitable procurators, and the procurators of chapters, colleges and convents, have assembled at our call. However, although for the happy pursuit of so great an enterprise their advice would be useful, and their presence as beloved sons is so delightful, filling us in a certain way with spiritual joy, there are difficulties for some as to staying on. Various inconveniences result from their great number; we do not wish them to suffer any longer the squeezing of the enormous crowd; and their absence may be harmful to them and their churches. A certain prudent love moves us to decide with our brothers' advice how to lighten the burden of these representatives, while pursuing our object no less ardently or zealously. We therefore have decided that all patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, abbots and priors whom we summoned specially and by name are to remain, they are not to depart without our special leave before the council ends. The other non-mitred abbots and priors and the other {1} abbots and priors, who were not summoned by us specially and by name, and the provosts, deans, archdeacons and other prelates of churches, and the procurators of any prelates, chapters, colleges and convents, have our gracious leave to depart with the blessing of God and our own. We commission all who so depart to leave enough procurators, as described below, to receive our commands and both the decrees of our present council and any other decrees that may, with God's inspiration, be issued in the future. Thus, all so departing are to leave behind the following adequate number of procurators: namely, four from the realm of France, four from the realm of Germany, four from the realms of the Spains, four from the realm of England one from the realm of Scotland {2} , two from the realm of Sicily, two from Lombardy, one from Tuscany, one from the states of the church, one from the realm of Norway, one from the realm of Sweden, one from the realm of Hungary {3} , one from the realm of Dacia, one from the realm of Bohemia, one from the duchy of Poland. Furthermore {4} , it has come to our ears that some archbishops, bishops and other prelates, when they were summoned by us to the council, asked an excessive contribution from their subjects and committed great extortion, imposing heavy taxes on them. Some of these prelates, although they made great exactions, did not come to the council. Since it neither was nor is our intention that prelates in coming to the council should associate the virtue of obedience with the oppression of their subjects, we admonish prelates one and all with great firmness, that none may presume to use the council as a pretext for burdening his subjects with taxes or exactions. If in fact some prelates have not come to the council and have made demands on the pretext of coming, it is our will and precise command that they make restitution without delay. Those however who have oppressed their subjects, demanding excessive contributions, should take care to make amends to them without creating difficulties, and so fulfil our commands that we do not have to apply a remedy by our authority.

II

1. On the supreme Trinity and the catholic faith{5}

1. We profess faithfully and devotedly that the holy Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son, not as from two principles, but as from one principle; not by two spirations, but by one single spiration. This the holy Roman church, mother and mistress of all the faithful, has till now professed, preached and taught; this she firmly holds, preaches, professes and teaches; this is the unchangeable and true belief of the orthodox fathers and doctors, Latin and Greek alike. But because some, on account of ignorance of the said indisputable truth, have fallen into various errors, we, wishing to close the way to such errors, with the approval of the sacred council, condemn and reprove all who presume to deny that the holy Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son, or rashly to assert that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son as from two principles and not as from one.

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2. On election and the power of the elected person {6}

2. {7} Where there is greater danger, there must certainly be greater foresight. We learn from the past how heavy are the losses sustained by the Roman church in a long vacancy, how perilous it is; we see this all too clearly when we wisely consider the crises undergone. Reason therefore openly challenges us, while we devote ourselves skillfully to the reform of lesser evils, certainly not to leave without appropriate remedy those of greater danger. We judge therefore that everything wisely instituted by our predecessors and especially by Pope Alexander III of happy memory, for avoiding discord in the election of the Roman pontiff, should remain altogether intact. We intend in no way to detract from this legislation, but to supply by the present constitution what experience has shown to be missing.

With the approval of the sacred council {8} , we decree that if the pope dies in a city where he was residing with his curia, the cardinals present in that city are obliged to await the absent cardinals, but for ten days only. When these days have passed, whether those absent have arrived or not, all are to assemble in the palace where the pope lived. Each is to be content with one servant only, clerical or lay, at choice. We allow however those in evident need to have two, with the same choice. In this palace all are to live in common in one room, with no partition or curtain. Apart from free entry to a private room, the conclave is to be completely locked, so that no one can enter or leave. No one may have access to the cardinals or permission to talk secretly with them, nor are they themselves to admit anyone to their presence, except those who, by consent of all the cardinals present, might be summoned only for the business of the imminent election. It is not lawful for anyone to send a messenger or a written message to the cardinals or to any one of them. Whoever acts otherwise, sending a messenger or a written message, or speaking secretly to one of the cardinals, is to incur automatic excommunication. In the conclave some suitable window is to be left open through which the necessary food may be served conveniently to the cardinals, but no entry for anyone is to be possible through this way.

If, which God forbid, within three days after the cardinals have entered the said conclave, the church has not been provided with a shepherd, they are to be content for the next five days, every day both at dinner and supper, with one dish only. If these days also pass without the election of a pope, henceforth only bread, wine and water are to be served to the cardinals until they do provide a pope. While the election is in process, the cardinals are to receive nothing from the papal treasury, nor any other revenue coming from whatever source to the church while the see is vacant. Everything during this period remains in the custody of him to whose faithfulness and care the treasury has been entrusted, to be kept by him for the disposal of the future pope. Those who have accepted something are obliged from then on to abstain from receiving any of the revenues due to them until they have made full restitution of what they have accepted in this way. The cardinals are to devote their time so carefully to hastening the election as to occupy themselves with no other business whatever unless perhaps there occurs such an urgent necessity as the defence of the states of the church or some part of them, or there be threat of such a great and evident danger that it seems to each and all the cardinals present, by general consent, that they should quickly counteract it.

Of course if one of the cardinals does not enter the conclave, which we have described above, or having entered leaves without evident cause of illness, the others, without in any way searching for him and without re-admitting him to the election, may proceed freely to elect the next pope. If in fact, owing to sudden illness, one of them leaves the conclave, the election may proceed without the need for his vote, even while the illness lasts. But if after regaining his health or even before, he wishes to return, or even if other absentees, for whom a wait of ten days should be made as we have said, come on the scene while the election is still undecided, that is, before the church has been provided with a shepherd, they are to be admitted to the election in the state in which they find it; they are to keep the rules with the others as regards enclosure, servants, food and drink and everything else.

If the Roman pontiff happens to die outside the city in which he resided with his curia, the cardinals are obliged to assemble in the city in whose territory or district the pontiff died, unless perhaps the city lies under interdict or persists in open rebellion against the Roman church. In which case they are to meet in another city, the nearest which is neither under interdict nor openly rebellious. In this city also, the same rules about waiting for absentees, living together, enclosure and everything else, in the episcopal palace or any other residence specified by the cardinals, are to be observed as above when the pope dies in the city where he resided with his curia.

Moreover, since it is not enough to make laws unless there is someone to see that they are kept, we further ordain that the lord and other rulers and officials of the city where the election of the Roman pontiff is to be held, by the power given to them by our authority and the approval of the council, are to enforce the observance of everything prescribed above in every detail, fully and inviolably without any deceit and trickery, but they may not presume to restrict the cardinals beyond what has been said. As soon as the said lord, rulers and officials hear of the supreme pontiff's death, they are to take an oath as a body, in the presence of the clergy and people specially mustered for the purpose, to observe these prescriptions. If it happens that they commit fraud in this matter or do not observe the regulations with care, of whatever pre-eminence, condition or status they may be, they lose all privileges; they are automatically subject to the bond of excommunication and are forever infamous; and they are permanently excluded from all honours, nor may they be admitted to any public office. We have decreed that over and above this they are automatically deprived of the fiefs goods and all they hold from the same Roman church or any other churches, this property returns fully and freely to the churches themselves, to be without any opposition at the disposal of the administrators of those churches. The city itself is to be not only laid under interdict but also deprived of its episcopal dignity.

Furthermore {9} , since when a disordered passion enslaves the will or some pledge compels it to one way of acting, the election is null from lack of freedom, we implore the cardinals through the tender mercy of our God', and we call them to witness through the sprinkling of his precious blood, that they consider very carefully what they are about to do. They are electing the vicar of Jesus Christ, the successor of Peter, the ruler of the universal church, the guide of the Lord's flock. They are to lay aside all the disorder of private affection, to be free from any bargain, agreement or pledge; they are not to consider any promise or understanding, to have no regard for their mutual advantage or that of their friends. They are not to look after their own interests or their individual convenience. Without any constraint on their judgment other than God, they are to seek purely and freely the public good, with the election alone in mind. They are to use every endeavour and care that is possible. Their one aim is to provide, by their service and speedily, what is so useful and necessary for the whole world, a fitting spouse for the church. Those who act otherwise are subject to the divine retribution, their fault never to be pardoned except after severe penance. We invalidate all bargains, agreements, pledges, promises and understandings, whether confirmed by oath or any other bond; we nullify all these and decree that such have no force whatever. No one is constrained in any way to observe them, nor anyone to fear that by transgressing them he is breaking faith. Rather he deserves praise, for even human law testifies that such transgressions are more acceptable to God than the keeping of the oath.

Since the faithful should rely not so much on human resource, however solicitous, than on the urgency of humble and devoted prayer, we make an addition to this decree. In all the cities and important places, as soon as the death of the pope becomes known, solemn exequies are to be celebrated for him by clergy and people. After this, every day until undoubted news is brought that the church truly has her pastor, there is to be humble and devoted prayer to the Lord, that he who makes peace in his high heaven may so unite the hearts of the cardinals in their choice that provision may be made for the church swiftly, harmoniously, unanimously and beneficially, for the salvation of souls and the advantage of the whole world. And lest this salutary decree be disregarded on pretext of ignorance, we strictly order patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, other prelates of churches, and all who have faculties to explain the word of God, that they should often gather together the clergy and people for the purpose of urging them in sermons to pray earnestly and repeatedly for a swift and happy outcome of the conclave. With the same authority they should prescribe not only frequent prayer but also, as circumstances recommend, the observance of fasting.

3 {10} That we may, as far as possible, close the way to evil practices in ecclesiastical elections, postulations and provisions, and that churches may not have long and dangerous vacancies or the provision of parsonages, dignities and other ecclesiastical benefices be delayed, we make this perpetual decree. When opponents to elections, postulations or provisions raise difficulties against the form of the election, postulation or provision, or against the persons of the electors or of the one elected or of him for whom the provision was to be made or has been made, and for these reasons make an appeal, the appellants are to express in a public document or letter of appeal every individual objection they intend to make against the form or persons. They shall do this in the presence of a qualified person or persons bearing witness to the truth on the above points, and they shall personally swear that they believe what they say to be true and can prove it. If this is not done, both the objectors and, during the time of appeal or afterwards, their adherents are to know that the power of objecting anything not expressed in these letters or documents is forbidden to them, unless there is some new evidence or there suddenly appears means of proving the former objections, or some facts of the past have newly come to the knowledge of the objectors, facts of which at the time of the appeal the appellants probably could have been, and in fact were, ignorant. They are to establish their good faith concerning this ignorance and the subsequent possibility of proof by taking an oath personally, adding in the same oath that they believe they have sufficient proof. It is our will certainly that the penalties imposed by Pope Innocent IV of happy memory on those who do not fully substantiate their objections against the form or the person, shall remain in force.

4 {11} Blind greed and criminal, dishonest ambition, seizing on certain minds, drive them to the rash attempt to usurp by ingenious fraud what they know is forbidden to them by the law. Some, indeed, are elected to the government of churches and, because the law forbids any interference in the administration of churches before the election has been confirmed, contrive to have the churches entrusted to themselves as procurators and managers. Since it is not good to give way to human trickery, we wish to take wider precautions in this general constitution. We decree that none may henceforth presume, before confirmation of his election, to conduct or accept the administration of an office to which he has been elected, or to interfere in it, under the pretext of management or procuratorship or some other newly invented disguise, in things spiritual or temporal, directly or through others, in part or in whole. We decree that all who act otherwise are by that very fact deprived of the right they would have acquired by the election.

5. {12} Not only do the laws bear witness but also experience, that effective teacher of reality, makes clear how damaging to churches is their vacancy, how dangerous it usually is to souls. Desirous, then, of counteracting the long duration of vacancies by suitable remedies, we make a perpetual decree that after there has been an election in any church, the electors are obliged to inform the elect as soon as conveniently possible and to ask his consent. The elect in his turn is to give it within a month from the day of being informed. If the elect delays beyond this, he is to know that from then on he is deprived of the right he would have acquired from his election, unless perhaps his condition is such that he cannot consent to his election without his superior's leave, on account of a prohibition or some disposition of the apostolic see {13} . The elect or his electors must then earnestly seek and gain the superior's leave as quickly as his presence or absence will permit. Otherwise, if the time has expired, even with the allowance made for the presence or absence of the superior, and permission has not been obtained, the electors are then free to proceed to another election. Furthermore, any elect must ask for confirmation of his election within three months after giving consent. If without lawful impediment he omits to do this within such a three-month period, the election is by that very fact null and void.

6. {14} We declare, with the force of a perpetual decree, that they who in an election vote knowingly for an unworthy candidate are not deprived of the power of electing, unless they have so far persisted as to make the election depend on their votes, even though in nominating an unworthy person they have deliberately acted against their consciences and may rightly fear divine retribution and a punishment, in accordance with the offence, from the apostolic see.

7. {15} We decree that nobody, after voting for someone whose election follows, or after giving consent to an election made by others, may oppose him concerning the election itself, except for reasons coming to light afterwards, or unless the elect's evil character previously hidden from the objector is now disclosed, or the existence of some other hidden vice or defect, of which in all probability he could have been ignorant, is revealed. He is however to guarantee his good faith regarding this lack of knowledge by oath.

8. {16} If after two scrutinies one part of the electors is to be found more than double the number of the other, we by this decree take away from the minority all power of imputing lack of zeal, merit or authority to the majority or their candidate. We do not however forbid such objections as would render null, in virtue of the law itself, the election of the candidate so opposed.

9. {17} The constitution of Pope Alexander IV, our predecessor of happy memory, rightly includes cases about episcopal elections, and those arising therefrom, in the category of major cases and asserts that their judicial inquiry subsequent to any appeal falls to the apostolic see. We, however, wishing to curb both the rash boldness and unbridled frequency of appeals, have considered that we should make provision by this general constitution. If someone appeals extra-judicially with an evidently frivolous motive in the aforesaid elections or in others which concern dignities higher than the episcopate, such an appeal is by no means to go before the apostolic see. When however in the business of such elections an appeal is made in writing, judicially or extra-judicially, from a credible motive which on proof ought to be considered legitimate, such business is to be brought to the apostolic see. Furthermore, it is lawful for the parties in these cases, provided there is no malice, to withdraw from such appeals before they are laid before the said see. Subordinate judges, who were competent for these cases, should on withdrawal of the appeal first of all inquire carefully whether there has been any irregularity. If they find such, they are to have no further dealings with the case itself, but shall set for the parties a suitable fixed term in which they are to present themselves with all their acts and records to the apostolic see. I

10. {18} If among other objections against the elect or nominee or candidate to be promoted in any other way to some dignity, it is said that he clearly lacks the requisite knowledge or has some other obvious personal defect, we decree that there is to be an invariable order in discussing the objections. The candidate is to be examined first of all concerning the alleged defect, the outcome deciding whether other objections are to be considered or not. If the result of the said examination shows that the objections concerning the alleged defect are devoid of truth, we exclude the objectors altogether from pursuing further the case in which they have made their objections, and we decree that they are to be punished exactly as if they had thoroughly failed to prove any of their objections.

11. {19} All those who presume to oppress clerics or any other ecclesiastical persons having the right of election in certain churches, monasteries or other pious places, because they have refused to elect the person for whom they were asked or urged to vote, or who presume to oppress their relatives or the said churches, monasteries or other places, robbing them of benefices or other property, either directly or through others, or taking revenge in other ways, are to know that they incur automatic excommunication.

12 {20} We decree by a general constitution that one and all, however high their rank, who try to usurp the royal privileges, the custody or guard, or the title of advocate or defender, in churches, monasteries and any other pious places, and presume to take possession of their property during a vacancy, lie under automatic sentence of excommunication. The clerics of the churches, the monks of the monasteries, and the other persons in the above places, who abet these offences, are automatically excommunicated in the same way. We indeed strictly forbid those clerics who do not oppose, as they ought, those who act in such a way, to receive any income from these churches or places during the time they have allowed the usurpation to happen without opposition. Those who claim these rights by the foundation of the churches or of the other places, or by reason of ancient custom, are prudently to avoid abusing their rights and take care that their agents do not abuse them, so that they appropriate nothing beyond what pertains to the fruits or revenues accruing during the vacancy, and do not allow the dilapidation of the other property of which they claim to be the guardians but preserve it in good condition.

13. The canon promulgated by Pope Alexander III, our predecessor of happy memory, decreed among other things that nobody is to be appointed parish priest until he is twenty-five and approved as to knowledge and morals; and that after his appointment, if he has not been ordained priest within the time fixed by the canons, despite being warned to this effect, he is to be removed from office and it is to be conferred on someone else. Since many neglect to observe this canon, we wish their dangerous negligence to be made good by observance of the law. We therefore decree that nobody is to be appointed parish priest unless he is suitable by knowledge, morals and age. Any appointments from now of those younger than twenty-five are to lack all validity. The person appointed is obliged to reside in the parish church of which he has become rector, in order that he may take more diligent care of the flock entrusted to him. Within a year of being appointed to his charge he is to have himself ordained to the priesthood. If within that time he has not been ordained, he is deprived of his church, even without previous warning, by authority of the present constitution. As to residence, as above described, the ordinary may grant a dispensation for a time and for a reasonable cause.

14. No one may henceforth presume to give a parish church "in commendam" to anyone under the lawful age and not ordained priest. Such a commendatory may have only one parish church and there must be an evident need or advantage for the church itself. We declare, however, that such a commendam, even when properly made, is not to last more than six months. We decree that any contrary procedure relating to commendams of parish churches is invalid by law.

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15. On the circumstances of ordination and the quality of ordinands

15. {21} We decree that those who knowingly or with affected ignorance or on any other pretext presume to ordain clerics of another diocese without permission of the ordinands' superior, are suspended for a year from conferring any orders. The penalties prescribed by law against those so ordained are to remain in full vigour. We also grant the faculty to clerics of the dioceses of bishops thus suspended, after their suspension has become public, freely to receive orders meanwhile from neighbouring bishops, even without their own bishop's leave, but in other respects canonically.

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16. On bigamists

16. {22} Putting an end to an old debate by the present declaration, we declare that bigamists are deprived of any clerical privilege and are to be handed over to the control of the secular law, any contrary custom notwithstanding. We also forbid bigamists under pain of anathema to wear the tonsure or clerical dress.

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17. On the office of ordinary judge

17. {23} If canons wish to suspend the celebration of divine worship, as is their claim from custom or otherwise in certain churches, they are obliged, before taking any steps to suspend the celebration, to express their reasons for this in a confirmation of authenticity. They are to consign this document or letter to the person against whom the suspension is directed. They are to know that if they suspend services without this formality or the reason expressed is not canonical, they shall restore all the income they have received, during the time of the suspension, from the church in which the suspension has taken place. They shall in no way receive anything owing to them for that period but make it over to the church in question. They will, moreover, be obliged to make restitution for the loss or injustice done to the person whom they intended to punish. If however their cause is judged to be canonical, the one who occasioned the suspension is to be sentenced to compensate the said canons and the church from which divine service has been withdrawn through his fault. The superior is to adjudicate the compensation and it is to be used for the benefit of divine worship. Nevertheless we utterly rebuke the detestable abuse and horrible impiety of those who treating with irreverent boldness crucifixes and images or statues of the blessed Virgin and other saints, throw them to the ground in order to emphasise the suspension of divine worship, and leave them under nettles and thorns. We forbid severely any sacrilege of this kind. We decree that those who disobey are to receive a hard retributive sentence which will so chastise the offenders as to suppress the like arrogance in others.

18. Local ordinaries must strictly compel their subjects to produce the dispensations by which they hold canonically, as they assert, several dignities or churches to which is annexed the cure of souls, or a parsonage or dignity together with another benefice to which a similar cure is annexed. These dispensations are to be shown within a time proportionate to the situation as judged by the ordinaries themselves. If without just reason no dispensation has been shown within that time, the churches, benefices, parsonages or dignities which it is now obvious are held unlawfully without dispensation, are to be conferred freely on suitable persons by those who have the right. If on the other hand the dispensation shown seems clearly sufficient, the holder is not to be troubled in any way in the possession of these benefices canonically obtained. The ordinary is however to make provision that neither the care of souls in those churches, parsonages or dignities is neglected nor the benefices themselves are defrauded of the services owing to them. If there is doubt whether the dispensation is sufficient, recourse should be had to the apostolic see, to which judgment belongs concerning its benefices. Ordinaries, moreover, in bestowing parsonages, dignities and other benefices involving the cure of souls, are to take care not to confer one on someone already holding several similar benefices, unless an obviously sufficient dispensation is shown for those already held. Even then, we wish the ordinary to confer the benefice only if it appears from the dispensation that the beneficiary may lawfully retain this parsonage, dignity or benefice together with those he already holds, or if he is prepared freely to resign those he already holds. If not, the bestowing of such parsonages, dignities and benefices is to be of no consequence whatever.

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19. On pleading

19 {24} It seems that we must counteract promptly the crafty dragging-out of lawsuits. We hope to do this effectively by giving suitable remedial directives to those who offer their services in legal matters. Since the things that have been beneficially provided by legal sanction concerning advocates seem to have fallen into disuse, we renew the same sanction by the present constitution, with some addition and modification. We decree that each and every advocate in the ecclesiastical forum, whether before the apostolic see or elsewhere, is to swear on the holy gospels that in all ecclesiastical causes and others in the same forum, of which they have assumed or will assume the defence, they will do their utmost for their clients in what they judge to be true and just. They are also to swear that at whatever part of the process they find out that the cause which they had accepted in good faith is unjust, they will cease to defend it; they will rather abandon it altogether, having nothing further to do with it, and will inviolably observe the rest of the above sanction. Proctors also are to be bound by a similar oath. Both advocates and proctors are obliged to renew this oath every year in the forum in which they have assumed office. Those who come before the apostolic see or to the court of some ecclesiastical judge, in which they have not yet taken such an oath, in order to act as advocate or proctor in some individual case, are to take a like oath, in each case, at the beginning of the litigation. Advocates and proctors who refuse to swear in the above way are forbidden to practise while their refusal persists. If they deliberately violate their oath, counsellors who have knowingly encouraged an unjust cause incur, in addition to the guilt of perjury, the divine and our malediction, from which they cannot be absolved unless they restore double the amount they accepted for such evil work as advocate, proctor or counsel. They are moreover obliged to make restitution for the loss caused to the parties wronged by their unjust ministry. Furthermore, lest insatiate greed drive some into contempt for these sound decrees, we strictly forbid an advocate to accept more than twenty tournois pounds for any case, a proctor more than twelve, as salary or even on the pretext of a reward for winning. Those who accept more are not in any way to acquire ownership of the excess, but are obliged to restitution; none of this penalty of restitution can be remitted in evasion of the present constitution. In addition, advocates who thus violate the present constitution are to be suspended from their office for three years. Proctors, on the other hand, shall be denied permission to exercise their office in a court of law.

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20. On what is done by force or because of fear

20. {25} We annul by authority of this constitution any absolution from sentence of excommunication or any recall of it, or of suspension or even of interdict, which has been extorted by force or fear. Lest boldness increase when violence goes unpunished, we decree that those who have extorted such an absolution or withdrawal by force or fear lie under sentence of excommunication.

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21. On prebends and dignities

21. {26} We have decreed that the statute of Pope Clement IV, our predecessor of happy memory, that dignities and benefices which become vacant in the Roman curia are to be conferred by nobody other than the Roman pontiff, is to be modified as follows. Those who have the conferring of these benefices and dignities may confer them validly, notwithstanding the said statute, but not till a month after the day on which the dignities and benefices have become vacant, and then only by themselves personally or, if they are at a distance, through their vicar-generals in their dioceses, to whom this charge has been canonically entrusted . 5

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22. On not alienating the property of the church

22. {27} By this well-considered decree we forbid each and every prelate to submit, subject or subordinate the churches entrusted to him, their immovable property or rights, to lay people without the consent of his chapter and the special leave of the apostolic see. It is not a question of granting the property or rights in emphyteusis or otherwise alienating them in the form and in the cases permitted by the law. What is forbidden is the establishment or recognition of these laity as superiors from whom the property and rights are held, or making them the protectors, an arrangement which is called in the vernacular of certain places "to avow", that is, the laity are appointed patrons or advocates of the churches or their property, either perpetually or for a long period. We decree that all such contracts of alienation, even when fortified by oath, penalty or any other confirmation, which are made without the above leave and consent, and any consequences of these contracts, are entirely null; no right is conferred, no cause for prescription is provided. We decree moreover that prelates who disobey are automatically suspended for three years from office and administration, and clerics who know that the prohibition has been violated but fail to give notice of it to the superior, are automatically suspended for three years from receiving the fruits of benefices they hold in the church so oppressed. The laity indeed, who have hitherto forced prelates, chapters of churches or other ecclesiastical persons to make these submissions, are to be bound by sentence of excommunication, unless after suitable admonition, having given up the submission they exacted through force or fear, they set free the churches and return the property thus surrendered to them. Those also who in future shall compel prelates or other ecclesiastical persons to make such submissions are also to be excommunicated, whatever be their condition or status. Even when contracts have been or will be made with the due leave and consent, or on the occasion of such contracts, the laity are not to transgress the limits set by the nature of the contract itself or the law on which the contract is based. Those indeed who act otherwise, unless after lawful admonition they desist from such usurpation restoring also what they have usurped, incur automatic excommunication, and henceforward the way is open, if need be, to lay their land under ecclesiastical interdict.

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23. On religious houses, that they are to be subject to the bishop

23 {28} A general council by a considered prohibition averted the excessive diversity of religious orders, lest it might lead to confusion. Afterwards, however, not only has the troublesome desire of petitioners extorted their multiplication, but also the presumptuous rashness of some has produced an almost unlimited crowd of diverse orders, especially mendicant, which have not yet merited the beginnings of approval. We therefore renew the constitution, and severely prohibit that anyone found henceforth a new order or form of religious life, or assume its habit. We perpetually forbid absolutely all the forms of religious life and the mendicant orders founded after the said council which have not merited confirmation of the apostolic see, and we suppress them in so far as they have spread. As to those orders, however, confirmed by the apostolic see and instituted after the council, whose profession, rule or constitutions forbid them to have revenues or possessions for their fitting support but whose insecure mendicancy usually provides a living through public begging, we decree that they may survive on the following terms. The professed members of these orders may continue in them if they are willing not to admit henceforth anyone to profession, nor to acquire a new house or land, nor to have power to alienate the houses or land they have, without special leave of the apostolic see. We reserve these possessions for the disposal of the apostolic see, to be used for aid to the holy Land or for the poor or to be turned to other pious uses through local ordinaries or others commissioned by the apostolic see. If the above conditions are violated, neither the reception of persons nor the acquisition of houses or land nor the alienation of these or other property is valid, and in addition excommunication is incurred. We also forbid absolutely to members of these orders, in regard to externs, the office of preaching and hearing confessions and the right of burial. Of course we do not allow the present constitution to apply to the orders of Preachers and Minors; their approval bears witness to their evident advantage to the universal church. Furthermore, we grant that the order of Carmelites and that of the Hermits of Saint Augustine, the institution of which preceded the said general council {29} , may remain as they are, until other regulations are made for them. We intend in fact to provide both for them and for the other orders, even the non-mendicants, as we shall see to be for the good of souls and for the good state of the orders. We grant also a general permission to members of orders to which this present constitution applies, to pass to the other approved orders on this condition: no order is to transfer itself wholly to another, no community is to transfer itself and its possessions wholly to another, without special permission from the apostolic see.

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24. On taxes and procurations

24 {30} The boldness of wicked people demands that we should not be satisfied with merely forbidding offences, but should inflict punishment on the offenders. The constitution of Pope Innocent IV, our predecessor of happy memory, forbade procurations to be received in the form of money, or the acceptance of gifts by pastoral visitors and their attendants. It is said that many rashly transgress this constitution. We wish it to be inviolably observed and have decreed that it should be strengthened by adding a penalty. We decree that one and all who presume, because of the procuration owing to them by reason of a visitation, to exact money or even to accept money from someone willing; or to violate the constitution in another way by accepting gifts or, without making the visitation, accepting procurations in food or anything else; are obliged to give back double of what they have received to the church from which they received it, and this within a month. If they do not, from that time patriarchs, archbishops and bishops who put off restoration of the double payment beyond the said period, are to know that entry into the church is forbidden them; and lower clergy are to know that they are suspended from office and benefice until they have made full satisfaction of this double to the burdened churches; the remission, liberality or kindness of the givers is to avail nothing.

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25. On the immunity of churches

25 {31} Holiness befits the house of the Lord; it is fitting that he whose abode has been established in peace should be worshipped in peace and with due reverence. Churches, then, should be entered humbly and devoutly; behaviour inside should be calm, pleasing to God, bringing peace to the beholders, a source not only of instruction but of mental refreshment. Those who assemble in church should extol with an act of special reverence that name with is above every name, than which no other under heaven has been given to people, in which believers must be saved, the name, that is, of Jesus Christ, who will save his people from their sins. Each should fulfil in himself that which is written for all that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow; whenever that glorious name is recalled, especially during the sacred mysteries of the mass, everyone should bow the knees of his heart, which he can do even by a bow of his head. In churches the sacred solemnities should possess the whole heart and mind; the whole attention should be given to prayer. Here where it is proper to offer heavenly desires with peace and calm, let nobody arouse rebellion, provoke clamour or be guilty of violence. The consultations of universities and of any associations whatever must cease to be held in churches, so also must public speeches and parliaments. Idle and, even more, foul and profane talk must stop; chatter in all its forms must cease. Everything, in short, that may disturb divine worship or offend the eyes of the divine majesty should be absolutely foreign to churches, lest where pardon should be asked for our sins, occasion is given for sin, or sin is found to be committed. No more business is to be conducted in churches or their cemeteries, especially they are not to have the bustle of markets and public squares. All noise of secular courts must be stilled. The laity are not to hold their trials in churches, more especially criminal cases. The church is not to be a place for lay judicial inquiries. Local ordinaries should see that all this is observed, persuade where persuasion is needed, suppress by their authority what is forbidden by this canon. They should also depute for this purpose persons in the churches who are most assiduous and suitable for the above aims. Moreover, the proceedings of secular judges, and in particular the sentences passed in these sacred places, are to lack all validity. Those indeed who impudently defy the above prohibitions, in addition to the sanctions imposed by ordinaries and their deputies, will have to fear the sternness of the divine retribution and our own until, having confessed their guilt, they have firmly resolved to avoid such conduct for the future.

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26. On usury

26. {32} Wishing to close up the abyss of usury, which devours souls and swallows up property, we order under threat of the divine malediction that the constitution of the Lateran council against usurers be inviolably observed. Since the less convenient it is for usurers to lend, the more their freedom to practise usury is curtailed, we ordain by this general constitution as follows. Neither a college, nor other community, nor an individual person, of whatever dignity, condition or status, may permit those foreigners and others not originating from their territories {33} , who practise usury or wish to do so, to rent houses for that purpose or to occupy rented houses or to live elsewhere. Rather, they must expel all such notorious usurers from their territories within three months, never to admit any such for the future. Nobody is to let houses to them for usury, nor grant them houses under any other title {34} . Those indeed who act otherwise, if they are ecclesiastical persons, patriarchs, archbishops or bishops, are to know that they incur automatic suspension; lesser individual persons, excommunication, colleges or other communities, interdict. If they remain obdurate throughout a month, their territories shall lie henceforth under ecclesiastical interdict as long as the usurers remain there. Furthermore, if they are layfolk, they are to be restrained from such transgression through their ordinaries by ecclesiastical censure, all privileges ceasing {35}

27 {36} Although notorious usurers give orders in their wills that restitution be made for their usurious gains, either in express terms or in general, ecclesiastical burial is nevertheless to be refused until full restitution has been made as far as the usurer's means allow, or until a pledge has been given of fitting restitution. This pledge is to be given to those to whom restitution is due, if they themselves or others who can receive for them are present. If they are absent, the pledge is to be given to the local ordinary or his vicar or the rector of the parish where the testator lives, in the presence of trustworthy persons from the parish (the ordinary, vicar and rector, as just mentioned, shall have permission to receive such pledge in their name by authority of the present constitution, so that these ecclesiastics have the right to action). The pledge may also be given to a public servant commissioned by the ordinary. If the sum owing from usury is openly known, we wish this sum always to be expressed in the pledge, if the amount is not clearly known, the sum is to be determined by the receiver of the pledge {37} . The receiver must make his estimate at not less than the probable amount; if he does otherwise, he is obliged to restitution for anything still owing. We decree that all religious and others who presume to grant ecclesiastical {38} burial to notorious usurers, contrary to this decree, are subject to the penalty promulgated against usurers at the Lateran council . Nobody is to assist at the wills of notorious usurers or hear their confessions or absolve them, unless they have made restitution for their usury or have given a fitting guarantee, as far as they can, as described above. The wills made in any other way by notorious usurers have no validity, but are by law null and void. {39}

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28. On wrongs and the loss caused

28. {40} The distraints which in the vernacular are called "reprisals", by which some people are burdened in place of others, have been forbidden by the civil constitution as oppressive and contrary to the laws and natural equity. In order, however, that offenders may have greater fear of breaking the law where ecclesiastical persons are concerned, in accordance with the more particular prohibition of reprisals against them, we severely forbid the granting of reprisals against ecclesiastical persons or their goods. By this present decree we also forbid the extension of such reprisals, perhaps granted universally on pretext of some custom which we would prefer to call an abuse, to these persons. Those who act otherwise, by granting distraints or reprisals against such persons or extending the grant to include them, unless they revoke such presumption within a month, incur sentence of excommunication, if they are individuals; they are to be laid under ecclesiastical interdict, if they are a community.

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29. On the sentence of excommunication

29. {41} The constitution of Pope Innocent IV, our predecessor of happy memory, forbids that those who communicate with excommunicated persons in matters carrying only a minor excommunication should be bound, without first receiving canonical admonition, by a major excommunication; the sentence of excommunication thus promulgated does not bind. In order to remove any scruple of ambiguity, we declare that the admonition is canonical only if, after all other formalities have been duly observed, it names the persons admonished. We decree also that in the course of the admonitions required for the sentence to be promulgated canonically, the judges, whether they give three admonitions or one for all three, should observe fitting intervals of some days, unless the urgency of the situation counsels otherwise.

30. {42} By the present general decree we declare that the benefit of provisional absolution does not in any way apply to cities, villages or any other places against which a general interdict has been promulgated.

31. {43} Whoever, from the fact that a sentence of excommunication, suspension or interdict has been promulgated against kings, princes, barons, nobles, bailiffs or their agents or anyone else, gives leave to someone to kill, capture or molest, in their persons or goods or in those of their relatives, those who have published such sentences, or on whose account the sentences were published, or who observe such sentences or refuse to communicate with those so excommunicated, unless they revoke in time such permission, automatically fall under sentence of excommunication. If property has been seized on the occasion of such permission, the same sentence is incurred unless the goods are returned within eight days or satisfaction is made for the loss. All who have dared to make use of the permission, or commit on their own initiative any of the above crimes for which we have forbidden permission to be given, are bound by the same sentence. Those who remain under this sentence of excommunication for two months cannot henceforth obtain absolution except through the apostolic see.

Notes

{1} non-mitred ... other omitted in W

{2} one from the realm of Scotland omitted in W

{3} tow from the realm of Sicily ... Hungary omitted in o.

{4} Furthermore ... by our authority omitted in O.

{5} const. 29 in BN

{6} To all who by God's mercy (by God's mercy omitted in V 8) will see this present letter ... (the names follow, for which see Actenstuecke zur Geschichte des deutschen Reiches ..., ed. F. Kaltenbrunner (Mitteilungen aus dem Vaticanischen Archive, I), Vienna 1869, no. 52; Kuttner, Conciliar Law ... , 62. The scrolls are signed by the bishops of the individual nations, namely Italy, France, Germany, Ireland and Britain, Spain and Portugal, Provence, and the East, and by the abbots and priors of religious orders.) greetings in the author of salvation (the same words in a different order in V 3, 5). By this writing we bear witness that we have seen and carefully examined the constitution of the most holy father (the most holy father omitted in V 1, 7-8), our lord the lord Gregory X by divine providence pope, of the following tenor V

{7} const. 14 in BN

{8} With the approval ... council omitted in V W

{9} Furthermore ... fasting i.e. to the end of the constitution is omitted in V W, which have instead: On each and all of these points we reserve for us and our successors full freedom to declare (to change added in V 3, 5, 7-8), to add or to subtract, as will seem expedient for the common good. We therefore note the holy and pious intention of the same supreme pontiff, since in the said constitution he is concerned only with pleasing God and providing for the universal church. In it (In it omitted in V 1, 4, 6, 8) the supreme pontiff is not pursuing any private interest of his own, especially since the effect of the constitution extends to the time when he will no longer be among mortals. We also note how many dangers arose from the recent prolonged vacancy of the Roman church. For these reasons we accept, approve and expressly consent to the same constitution which obviates so many dangers. In testimony of which we set our seal to the present document. Continued in V 1-7: Given at Lyons on Friday

{10} const. 2 in BN

{11} const 3. in BN

{12} const 4. in BN

{13} on account ... see omitted in W

{14} const 5. in BN

{15} const. 6 in BN

{16} const. 7 in BN

{17} const. 8 in BN

{18} const. 15 in BN

{19} const. 18 in BN 20 const. 21 in B

{21} const. 10 in BN

{22} const. 22 in BN

{23} const. 16 in BN

{24} const. 9 in BN

{25} const. 17 in BN

{26} const. 27 in BN

{27} const. 26 in BN

{28} const. 28 in BN

{29} the institution ... council] which claim to have been founded before the said council W

{30} const. 11 in BN

{31} const. 23 in BN

{32} const. 24 in BN

{33} foreigners ... territories omitted in W

{34} Nobody ... title omitted in W

{35} In addition, sentence of excommunication is incurred by all who let houses to notorious usurers for usury or who allow houses to be granted under any other title W

{36} const. 25 in BN

{37} receiver ... pledge] ordinary himself W

{38} confession or absolution or communion or added in W

{39} Nobody ... void omitted in W

{40} const. 19 in BN

{41} const. 12 in BN

{42} const. 13 in BN

{43} const. 20 in BN

Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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COUNCIL OF VIENNE (1311-1312)

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Introduction

The general council of Vienne was summoned by pope Clement V with the bull Regnans in caelis, which he had written on 12 August 1308 at Poitiers (the Roman pontiff had remained in France from the year of his election, thus beginning the period of the church's history known as the Avignon captivity). The pope was subject to forceful pressure from the European states, particularly from France. Philip IV of France, the king who had opposed Boniface VIII so bitterly, had so much power over Clement V that he seems to have been able to change the whole state of ecclesiastical affairs at will. The council of Vienne is seen as an outstanding example of this political pressure, although the pope energetically defended the liberty of the church as far as circumstances allowed and he himself had the power. The council had been summoned for 1 October 1310 at Vienne. This city did not belong to the kingdom of France, though Philip IV in 1310 had occupied nearby Lyons by force. There were no general summonses and only 231 ecclesiastics were invited; the others however could employ a procurator .

The complaint against the Templars seems to have been the first and greatest concern of the council. Thus the bull convoking the council was written at the same time as Clement V summoned the Templar order to a canonical enquiry. Through the whole of Europe cases were heard concerning the order and individual Templars. This work had not been completed by 1310 and so the pope deferred the opening of the council to 1 October 1311. Events had moved, however, in such a way that the Templars' condemnation and Philip's victory seemed very probable. This placed the authority and freedom of the council under severe constraint.

The council began at Vienne on the 16 October 1311 in the presence of 20 cardinals, 4 patriarchs, about 100 archbishops and bishops, and a number of abbots and priors. From the sermon given in the first session by Clement V, three questions were seen as of greatest importance: the case of the Templars, the business of the holy Land, and the reform of the church. Clement-himself gave an account of the allegations which had been made against the Templar order. The work of the council was carried on outside the full assembly, that is to say, through a consistory of cardinals together with the pope, and through a committee which was elected by the council fathers from their own body and which seems to have acted in place of the whole council, the full assembly merely confirmed the decrees and bulls, promulgating them in the second and third sessions. A commission of cardinals was appointed in order to probe the grievances and advice put forward by the bishops and other fathers on the subject of church reform.

The council fathers gave long and careful consideration to the case of the Templars. It is likely that they preferred the order to be allowed to defend itself against the accusations than to condemn it too easily and without sure proof. However, "all the difficult questions which were considered in the council seemed to be left doubtful or unsettled, or else to be treated". So when the case was still unresolved in January 1312, the fathers devoted themselves to the business of the holy Land and to decrees which seemed timely for the reform of ecclesiastical morals. Regarding the former, the delegates of the king of Aragon thought the city of Granada should first be attacked and occupied in order that the enemy might be enfeebled by a threat to each flank. Other fathers and ambassadors favoured an expedition to the east only. As far as we know, however, after an agreement by kings and princes that a crusade to the holy Land was opportune and necessary, and the imposition of a tithe on all ecclesiastical provinces, no decision was taken.

Meanwhile in March 1312 Philip IV held a general assembly of his kingdom in Lyons, his object being to disturb and steamroller the minds of the council fathers and of the pope himself. Secret bargains had been made between Clement V and the envoys of Philip IV from 17 to 29 February 1312; the council fathers were not consulted. By this bargaining Philip obtained the condemnation of the Templars. It is most likely he used the threat that he would bring a public action against Boniface VIII. The king of France made for Vienne on 20 March, and after two days Clement V delivered to the commission of cardinals for approval the bull by which the order of Templars was suppressed (the bull Vox in excelso). In the second session of the council, which took place on 3 April 1312, this bull was approved and the pope announced a future crusade. The Templars' property, of immense value, was entrusted to other persons by the bulls Ad providam of 2 May and Nuper in concilio of 16 May. The fate of the Templars themselves was decided by the bull Considerantes of 6 May. In the bulls Licet dudum (18 Dec. 1312), Dudum in generali concilio (31 Dec. 1312) and Licet pridem (13 Jan. 1313) Clement V gave further treatment to the question of the Templars' property.

In the third session of the council, which was held on 6 May 1312, certain constitutions were promulgated. We do not know their text or number. In Mueller's opinion, what happened was this: the constitutions, with the exception of a certain number still to be polished in form and text, were read by the council fathers; Clement V then ordered the constitutions to be corrected and arranged after the pattern of decretal collections. This text, although read in the consistory held in the castle of Monteux near Carpentras on 21 March 1314 was not promulgated, since Clement V died a month later. It was pope John XXII who, after again correcting the constitutions, finally sent them to the universities. It is difficult to decide which constitutions are the work of the council. We adopt Mueller's opinion that 38 constitutions may be counted as such, but only 20 of these have the words "with the approval of the sacred council". The texts that we publish are taken from Hefele's edition (see above p. 334, n. 17) for the bull Vox in excelso, and from the edition of the Vatican register (= Regestum) for the other bulls; for the text of the constitutions, we have used Friedberg's edition of Corpus Iuris Canonici (= Fr).

[Where there is considerable doubt that a document is the work of the council it is in smaller print]

[Bulls and ordinances of the Roman curia concerning the order of the Templars and the business of the holy Land]

[1]. Clement, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. A voice was heard from on high, of lamentation and bitter weeping, for the time is coming, indeed has come, when the Lord shall complain through his prophet: This house has aroused my anger and wrath, so that I will remove it from my sight because of the evil of its sons, for they have provoked me to anger turning their backs to me, not their faces, and setting up their idols in the house in which my name is invoked, to defile it. They have built the high places of Baal in order to consecrate their sons to idols and demons. They have sinned deeply as in the days of Gibeah. When I learnt of such deeds of horror, at the dread of such notorious scandal—for who ever heard of such infamy? who ever saw the like?—I fell down at hearing it, I was dismayed at seeing it, my heart grew embittered and darkness overwhelmed me. Hark, a voice of the people from the city! a voice from the temple! the voice of the Lord rendering recompense to his enemies. The prophet is compelled to exclaim: Give them, Lord, a barren womb and dry breasts. Their worthlessness has been revealed because of their malice. Throw them out of your house, and let their roots dry up; let them not bear fruit, and let not this house be any more a stumbling block of bitterness or a thorn to hurt.

Not slight is the fornication of this house, immolating its sons, giving them up and consecrating them to demons and not to God, to gods whom they did not know. Therefore this house will be desolate and in disgrace, cursed and uninhabited, thrown into confusion and levelled to the dust, lowly, forsaken, inaccessible, spurned by the anger of the Lord, whom it has despised; let it not be lived in but reduced to a wilderness. Let everyone be astonished at it and hiss at it all its wounds. For the Lord did not choose the people on account of the place, but the place on account of the people. Therefore the very place of the temple was made to share in the punishment of the people, as the Lord proclaimed openly to Solomon when he built the temple for him, to Solomon who was filled with wisdom like a river: But if your sons turn aside from me, not following and honouring me but going instead after strange gods and worshipping them, then I will cut them off from before me and expel them from the land which I have given to them; and the temple which I have consecrated to my name I will cast out of my sight, and it will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples. Everyone passing by it will be astonished and shall hiss, and shall say, "Why has the Lord done thus to this temple and to this house?" And they will say : "Because they forsook the Lord their God who bought and redeemed them, and followed instead Baal and other gods, worshipping and serving them. Therefore the Lord has brought all this evil upon them'".

Indeed a little while ago, about the time of our election as supreme pontiff before we came to Lyons for our coronation, and afterwards, both there and elsewhere, we received secret intimations against the master, preceptors and other brothers of the order of Knights Templar of Jerusalem and also against the order itself. These men had been posted in lands overseas for the defence of the patrimony of our lord Jesus Christ, and as special warriors of the catholic faith and outstanding defenders of the holy Land seemed to carry the chief burden of the said holy Land. For this reason the holy Roman church honoured these brothers and the order with her special support, armed them with the sign of the cross against Christ's enemies, paid them the highest tributes of her respect, and strengthened them with various exemptions and privileges; and they experienced in many and various ways her help and that of all faithful Christians with repeated gifts of property. Therefore it was against the lord Jesus Christ himself that they fell into the sin of impious apostasy, the abominable vice of idolatry, the deadly crime of the Sodomites, and various heresies. Yet it was not to be expected nor seemed credible that men so devout, who were outstanding often to the shedding of their blood for Christ and were seen repeatedly to expose their persons to the danger of death, who even more frequently gave great signs of their devotion both in divine worship and in fasting and other observances, should be so unmindful of their salvation as to commit such crimes. The order, moreover, had a good and holy beginning; it won the approval of the apostolic see. The rule, which is holy, reasonable and just, had the deserved sanction of this see. For all these reasons we were unwilling to lend our ears to insinuation and accusation against the Templars; we had been taught by our Lord's example and the words of canonical scripture.

Then came the intervention of our dear son in Christ, Philip, the illustrious king of France. The same crimes had been reported to him. He was not moved by greed. He had no intention of claiming or appropriating for himself anything from the Templars' property; rather, in his own kingdom he abandoned such claim and thereafter released entirely his hold on their goods. He was on fire with zeal for the orthodox faith, following in the well marked footsteps of his ancestors. He obtained as much information as he lawfully could. Then, in order to give us greater light on the subject, he sent us much valuable information through his envoys and letters. The scandal against the Templars themselves and their order in reference to the crimes already mentioned increased. There was even one of the knights, a man of noble blood and of no small reputation in the order, who testified secretly under oath in our presence, that at his reception the knight who received him suggested that he deny Christ, which he did, in the presence of certain other knights of the Temple, he furthermore spat on the cross held out to him by this knight who received him. He also said that he had seen the grand master, who is still alive, receive a certain knight in a chapter of the order held overseas. The reception took place in the same way, namely with the denial of Christ and the spitting on the cross, with quite two hundred brothers of the order being present. The witness also affirmed that he heard it said that this was the customary manner of receiving new members: at the suggestion of the person receiving the profession or his delegate, the person making profession denied Jesus Christ, and in abuse of Christ crucified spat upon the cross held out to him, and the two committed other unlawful acts contrary to Christian morality, as the witness himself then confessed in our presence.

We were duty-bound by our office to pay heed to the din of such grave and repeated accusations. When at last there came a general hue and cry with the clamorous denunciations of the said king and of the dukes, counts, barons, other nobles, clergy and people of the kingdom of France, reaching us both directly and through agents and officials, we heard a doleful tale: that the master, preceptors and other brothers of the order as well as the order itself had been involved in these and other crimes. This seemed to be proved by many confessions, attestations and depositions of the master, of the visitor of France, and of many preceptors and brothers of the order, in the presence of many prelates and the inquisitor of heresy. These depositions were made in the kingdom of France with our authorisation, edited as public documents and shown to us and our brothers. Besides, the rumour and clamour had grown to such insistence that the hostility against both the order itself and the individual members of it could not be ignored without grave scandal nor be tolerated without imminent danger to the faith. Since we though unworthy, represent Christ on earth, we considered that we ought, following in his footsteps, to hold an inquiry. We called to our presence many of the preceptors, priests, knights and other brothers of the order who were of no small reputation. They took an oath, they were adjured urgently by the Father, Son and holy Spirit; we demanded, in virtue of holy obedience, invoking the divine judgment with the menace of an eternal malediction, that they tell the pure and simple truth. We pointed out that they were now in a safe and suitable place where they had nothing to fear in spite of the confessions they had made before others. We wished those confessions to be without prejudice to them. In this way we made our interrogation and examined as many as seventy-two, many of our brothers being present and following the proceedings attentively. We had the confessions taken down by notary and recorded as authentic documents in our presence and that of our brothers. After some days we had these confessions read in consistory in the presence of the knights concerned. Each was read a version in his own language; they stood by their confessions, expressly and spontaneously approving them as they had been read out.

After this, intending to make a personal inquiry with the grand master, the visitor of France and the principal preceptors of the order, we commanded that the grand master, the visitor of France and the chief preceptors of Outremer, Normandy, Aquitaine and Poitou be presented to us while we were at Poitiers. Some of them, however, were ill at the time and could not ride a horse nor conveniently be brought to our presence. We wished to know the truth of the whole matter and whether their confessions and depositions, which were said to have been made in the presence of the inquisitor of heresy in the kingdom of France and witnessed by certain public notaries and many other good men, and which were produced in public and shown to us and our brothers by the inquisitor, were true. We empowered and commanded our beloved sons Berengar, cardinal, then with the title of Nereus and Achilleus, now bishop of Frascati, and Stephen, cardinal priest with the title of saint Cyriacus at the Baths, and Landulf, cardinal deacon with the title of saint Angelo, in whose prudence, experience and loyalty we have the fullest confidence, to make a careful investigation with the grand master, visitor and preceptors, concerning the truth of the accusations against them and individual persons of the order and against the order itself. If there was evidence, it was to be brought to us; the confessions and depositions were to be taken down in writing by a public notary and presented to us. The cardinals were to grant absolution from the sentence of excommunication, according to the form of the church, to the master, visitor and preceptors—a sentence incurred if the accusations were true—provided the accused humbly and devoutly requested absolution, as they ought to do.

The cardinals went to see the grand master, the visitor and the preceptors personally and explained the reason for their visit. Since these men and other Templars resident in the kingdom of France had been handed over to us because they would freely and without fear of anyone reveal the truth sincerely to the cardinals, the cardinals by our apostolic authority enjoined on them this duty of telling the truth. The master, the visitor and the preceptors of Normandy, Outremer, Aquitaine and Poitou, in the presence of the three cardinals, four notaries and many other men of good repute, took an oath on the holy gospels that they would tell the truth, plainly and fully. They deposed one by one, in the cardinals' presence, freely and spontaneously, without any compulsion or fear. They confessed among other things that they had denied Christ and spat upon the cross at their reception into the order of the Temple. Some of them added that they themselves had received many brothers using the same rite, namely with the denial of Christ and the spitting on the cross. There were even some who confessed certain other horrible crimes and immoral deeds, we say nothing more of these at present. The knights confessed also that the content of their confessions and depositions made a little while ago before the inquisitor was true. These confessions and depositions of the grand master, visitor and preceptors were edited as a public document by four notaries, the master and the others being present and also certain men of good repute. After some days, the confessions were read to the accused on the orders and in the presence of the cardinals; each knight received an account in his own language. They persisted in their confessions and approved them, expressly and spontaneously, as they had been read out to them. After these confessions and depositions, they asked from the cardinals absolution from the excommunication incurred by the above crimes; humbly and devoutly, on bended knee, with hands joined, they made their petition with many tears. Since the church never shuts her heart to the sinner who returns, the cardinals granted absolution by our authority in the customary form of the church to the master, visitor and preceptors on abjuration of their heresy. On their return to our presence, the cardinals presented to us the confessions and depositions of the master, visitor and preceptors in the form of a public document, as has been said. They also gave us a report on their dealings with these knights.

From these confessions, depositions and report we find that the master, the visitor and the preceptors of Outremer, Normandy, Aquitaine and Poitou have often committed grave offences, although some have erred less frequently than others. We considered that such dreadful crimes could not and should not go unpunished without insult to almighty God and to every Catholic. We decided on the advice of our brothers to hold an enquiry into the above crimes and transgressions. This would be carried out through the local ordinaries and other wise, trustworthy men delegated by us in the case of individual members of the order; and through certain prudent persons of our considered choice in the case of the order as a whole. After this, investigations were made both by the ordinaries and by our delegates into the allegations against individual members, and by the inquisitors appointed by us into those against the order itself, in every part of the world where the brothers of the order have usually lived. Once made and sent to us for examination, these investigations were very carefully read and examined, some by us and our brothers, cardinals of the holy Roman church others by many very learned, prudent, trustworthy and God-fearing men, zealous for and well-trained in the catholic faith, some being prelates and others not. This took place at Malaucene in the diocese of Vaison.

Later we came to Vienne where there were assembled already very many patriarchs, archbishops, selected bishops, exempt and non-exempt abbots, other prelates of churches, and procurators of absent prelates and of chapters, all present for the council we had summoned. In the first session we explained to them our reasons for calling the council. After this, because it was difficult indeed almost impossible, for the cardinals and all the prelates and procurators gathered for the council to meet in our presence in order to discuss how to proceed in the matter of the Templars, we gave orders as follows. Certain patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, exempt and non-exempt abbots, other prelates of churches, and procurators from all parts of Christendom, of every language nation and region, were concordantly chosen out of all the prelates and procurators at the council. The choice was made from those believed to be among the more skilful, discreet and apt for consultation on such an important affair and for discussing it with us and the above-mentioned cardinals. After this we had the attestations received during the inquiry read publicly in the presence of the prelates and procurators. This reading went on during several days, for as long as they wished to listen, in the place assigned for the council, namely the cathedral church. Afterwards the said attestations and the summaries made from them were considered and examined, not in a perfunctory manner but with great care, by many of our venerable brethren, by the patriarch of Aquileia, by archbishops and bishops of the present sacred council who were specially chosen and delegated for the purpose, and by those whom the whole council had chosen very carefully and earnestly.

We convoked therefore the said cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops and bishops, the exempt and non-exempt abbots, and the other prelates and procurators elected by the council to consider this affair, and we asked them, in the course of a secret consultation in our presence, how we should proceed, taking special account of the fact that certain Templars were presenting themselves in defence of their order. The greater part of the cardinals and nearly the whole council, that is those who were elected by the whole council and were representing the whole council on this question, in short the great majority, indeed four-fifths among every nation taking part, were firmly convinced, and the said prelates and procurators advised accordingly, that the order should be given an opportunity to defend itself and that it could not be condemned, on the basis of the proof provided thus far, for the heresies that had been the subject of the inquiry, without offence to God and injustice. Certain others on the contrary said that the brothers should not be allowed to make a defence of their order and that we should not give permission for such a defence, for if a defence were allowed or given there would be danger to a settlement of the affair and no small prejudice to the interests of the holy Land. There would be dispute, delay and putting off a decision, many different reasons were mentioned. Indeed although legal process against the order up to now does not permit its canonical condemnation as heretical by definitive sentence, the good name of the order has been largely taken away by the heresies attributed to it. Moreover, an almost indefinite number of individual members, among whom are the grand master the visitor of France and the chief preceptors, have been convicted of such heresies, errors and crimes through their spontaneous confessions. These confessions render the order very suspect, and the infamy and suspicion render it detestable to the holy church of God, to her prelates, to kings and other rulers, and to Catholics in general. It is also believed in all probability that from now on there will be found no good person who wishes to enter the order, and so it will be made useless to the church of God and the carrying on of the undertaking to the holy Land, for which service the knights had been destined. Furthermore, the putting off of a settlement or arrangement of this affair of the Templars, for which we had set ourselves a final decision or sentence to be promulgated in the present council, would lead in all probability to the total loss, destruction and dilapidation of the Templars' property. This has for long been given, bequeathed and granted by the faithful for the aid of the holy Land and to oppose the enemies of the Christian faith.

There were therefore two opinions: some said that sentence should immediately be pronounced, condemning the order for the alleged crimes, and others objected that from the proceedings taken up to now the sentence of condemnation against the order could not justly be passed. After long and mature deliberation, having in mind God alone and the good of the holy Land without turning aside to right or to left, we elected to proceed by way of provision and ordinance, in this way scandal will be removed, perils avoided and property saved for the help of the holy Land. We have taken into account the disgrace, suspicion, vociferous reports and other attacks mentioned above against the order, also the secret reception into the order, and the divergence of many of the brothers from the general behaviour, way of life and morals of other Christians. We have noted here especially that when new members are received, they are made to swear not to reveal the manner of their reception to anyone and not to leave the order; this creates an unfavourable presumption. We observe in addition that the above have given rise to grave scandal against the order, scandal impossible to allay as long as the order continues to exist. We note also the danger to faith and to souls, the many horrible misdeeds of so many brothers of the order, and many other just reasons and causes, moving us to the following decision.

The majority of the cardinals and of those elected by the council, a proportion of more than four-fifths, have thought it better, more expedient and advantageous for God's honour and for the preservation of the Christian faith, also for the aid of the holy Land and many other valid reasons, to suppress the order by way of ordinance and provision of the apostolic see, assigning the property to the use for which it was intended. Provision is also to be made for the members of the order who are still alive. This way has been found preferable to that of safeguarding the right of defence with the consequent postponement of judgment on the order. We observe also that in other cases the Roman church has suppressed other important orders for reasons of far less gravity than those mentioned above, with no fault on the part of the brethren. Therefore, with a sad heart, not by definitive sentence, but by apostolic provision or ordinance, we suppress, with the approval of the sacred council, the order of Templars, and its rule, habit and name, by an inviolable and perpetual decree, and we entirely forbid that anyone from now on enter the order, or receive or wear its habit, or presume to behave as a Templar. If anyone acts otherwise, he incurs automatic excommunication. Furthermore, we reserve the persons and property for our disposition and that of the apostolic see. We intend with divine grace, before the end of the present sacred council, to make this disposition to the honour of God the exaltation of the Christian faith and the welfare of the holy Land. We strictly forbid anyone, of whatever state or condition, to interfere in any way in this matter of the persons and property of the Templars. We forbid any action concerning them which would prejudice our arrangements and dispositions, or any innovation or tampering. We decree that from now on any attempt of this kind is null and void, whether it be made knowingly or in ignorance. Through this decree, however, we do not wish to derogate from any processes made or to be made concerning individual Templars by diocesan bishops and provincial councils, in conformity with what we have ordained at other times. Let nobody therefore ... If anyone ...

Given at Vienne on 22 March in the seventh year of our pontificate.

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[2]. For an everlasting record. It belongs to Christ's vicar, exercising his vigilant care from the apostolic watch-tower, to judge the changing conditions of the times, to examine the causes of the affairs which crop up and to observe the characters of the people concerned. In this way he can give due consideration to each affair and act opportunely; he can tear out the thistles of vice from the field of the Lord so that virtue may increase; and he can remove the thorns of false dealing so as to plant rather than to destroy. He transfers slips dedicated to God into the places left empty by the eradication of the harmful thistles. By thus transferring and uniting in a provident and profitable way, he brings a joy greater than the harm he has caused to the people uprooted; true justice has compassion for sorrow. By enduring the harm and replacing it profitably, he increases the growth of the virtues and rebuilds what has been destroyed with something better.

A little while ago we suppressed definitively and perpetually the order of the Knights Templar of Jerusalem because of the abominable, even unspeakable, deeds of its master, brothers and other persons of the order in all parts of the world. These men were spattered with indecent errors and crimes, with depravity- they were blemished and stained. We are silent here as to detail because the memory is so sad and unclean. With the approval of the sacred council we abolished the constitution of the order, its habit and name, not without bitterness of heart. We did this not by definitive sentence, since this would be unlawful according to the inquiries and processes carried out, but by apostolic provision or ordinance. We issued a strict prohibition that nobody might henceforth enter the order or wear its habit or presume to behave as a Templar. Anyone doing otherwise incurred automatic excommunication. We commanded, by our apostolic authority, that all the property of the order be left to the judgment and disposition of the apostolic see. We strictly forbade anyone, of whatever state or condition, to interfere in any way regarding the persons or property of the order or to act in prejudice of the direction or disposition of the apostolic see in this matter, or to alter or even to tamper; we decreed all attempts of this kind to be henceforth null and void, whether made knowingly or in ignorance.

Afterwards we took care lest the said property, which over a long period had been given, bequeathed, granted and acquired from the worshippers of Christ for the help of the holy Land and to assail the enemies of the Christian faith, should be left without management and perish as belonging to nobody or be used in ways other than those intended by the pious devotion of the faithful. There was the further danger that tardiness in our arrangements and dispositions might lead to destruction or dilapidation. We therefore held difficult, lengthy and varied consultations and discussions with our brothers, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, with patriarchs, archbishops, bishops and prelates, with certain outstanding and distinguished persons, and with the procurators at the council of the chapters, convents, churches and monasteries, and of the remaining absent prelates, in order that, through this painstaking deliberation, a wholesome and beneficial disposal of the said property might be made to the honour of God, the increase of the faith, the exaltation of the church, the help of the holy Land, and the salvation and peace of the faithful. After especially long carefully thought out, deliberate and complete consultations, for many just reasons, we and the said fathers and patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, other prelates, and the outstanding and distinguished persons, then present at the council, finally came to a conclusion. The property should become forever that of the order of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem, of the Hospital itself and of our beloved sons the master and brothers of the Hospital, in the name of the Hospital and order of these same men, who as athletes of the Lord expose themselves to the danger of death for the defence of the faith, bearing heavy and perilous losses in lands overseas.

We have observed with the fullness of sincere charity that this order of the Hospital and the Hospital itself is one of the bodies in which religious observance flourishes. Factual evidence tells us that divine worship is fervent, works of piety and mercy are practised with great earnestness, the brothers of the Hospital despise the attractions of the world and are devoted servants of the most High. As fearless warriors of Christ they are ardent in their efforts to recover the holy Land, despising all human perils. We bear in mind also that the more plentifully they are supplied with means, the more will the energy of the master and brothers of the order and Hospital grow, their ardour increase and their bravery be strengthened to repel the insults offered to our Redeemer and to crush the enemies of the faith. They will be able to carry more lightly and easily the burdens demanded in the execution of such an enterprise. They will therefore, not unworthily, be made more watchful and apply themselves with greater zeal.

In order that we may grant them increased support, we bestow on them, with the approval of the sacred council, the house itself of the Knights Templar and the other houses, churches, chapels, oratories, cities, castles, towns, lands, granges, places, possessions, jurisdictions, revenues, rights, all the other property, whether immovable, movable or self-moving, and all the members together with their rights and belongings, both beyond and on this side of the sea, in each and every part of the world, at the time when the master himself and some brothers of the order were arrested as a body in the kingdom of France, namely in October 1308. The gift is to include everything which the Templars had, held or possessed of themselves or through others, or which belonged to the said house and order of Knights Templar, or to the master and brothers of the order as also the titles, actions and rights which at the time of their arrest belonged in any way to the house, order or persons of the order of Knights Templar, or could belong to them, against whomsoever of whatever dignity, state or condition, with all the privileges, indults, immunities and liberties with which the said master and brothers of the house and order of Knights Templar, and the house and order itself, had been legitimately endowed by the apostolic see or by catholic emperors, kings and princes, or by other members of the faithful, or in any other way. All this we present, grant, unite, incorporate, apply and annex in perpetuity, by the fullness of our apostolic power, to the said order of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem and to the Hospital itself.

We except the property of the said former order of Knights Templar in the kingdoms and lands of our beloved sons in Christ, the illustrious kings of Castile, Aragon, Portugal and Majorca, outside the kingdom of France. We reserve this property, from the said gift, grant, union, application, incorporation and annexation, to the disposal and regulation of the apostolic see. We wish the prohibition made a little while ago by other proceedings of ours to remain in full force. Nobody of any state or condition may intervene in any way as regards these persons and property in prejudice to the regulation or disposition of the apostolic see. We wish that our decree concerning these persons and property in the kingdoms and lands of the above kings should remain in full force until the apostolic see makes another arrangement.

Occupiers and unlawful detainers of the property, irrespective of state, condition, eminence or dignity, even if this is pontifical, imperial or royal, unless they abandon the property within a month after it is called for by the master and brothers of the Hospital, or by any of them, or by their procurators [. . .]. The property must be fully and freely restored to the order of Hospitallers and to the said Hospital, or to the master, priors, preceptors or brothers of the said Hospital, in any regions or provinces, or to any of them individually, or to their procurator or procurators, in the name of the said order of Hospitallers, even if the priors, preceptors and brothers and their procurators or any one of them have no special mandate from the master of the Hospital, provided that the procurators hold or show a special commission from the priors and preceptors or from any one of them, in the provinces or regions in which these priors and preceptors have been delegated. The priors, preceptors and brothers are obliged to give a full reckoning to the master concerning everything: conduct, actions, receipts and negotiations. The procurators are to render a similar account to the priors and preceptors, and to each one of them, by whom they were delegated. All who have knowingly given counsel, aid or favour to the occupiers and detainers mentioned above concerning such occupation or detention, publicly or secretly, lie under excommunication. Chapters, colleges or governing bodies of churches and monasteries, and the corporations of cities, castles, towns and other places, as well as the cities, castles, towns and other places themselves which were at fault in this, and the cities, castles and places in which the detainers and occupiers hold temporal lordship, if such temporal lords place obstacles to the giving up of the property and its restoration to the master and brothers of the Hospital, in the name of the Hospital, not desisting from such conduct within a month after the property is called for, are automatically laid under interdict. They cannot be absolved from this until they offer full satisfaction. Moreover the occupiers and detainers and those who have given them counsel, aid or favour, whether individuals or the chapters, colleges or governing bodies of churches or monasteries, as also the corporations of cities, castles, lands or other places, incur, in addition to the above-mentioned penalties, automatic deprivation of everything they hold as fiefs from the Roman or other churches. These fiefs are to revert freely without opposition to the churches concerned, and the prelates or rulers of those churches may dispose of the fiefs at will, as they judge will be to the advantage of the churches. Let nobody therefore ....If anyone . . .

Given at Vienne on 2 May in the seventh year of our pontificate.

Continued in E:

We therefore commission you by our apostolic letters, that acting together or in pairs or singly, directly or through one or more others, you induct the master or priors or preceptors or brothers of the Hospital, or any individual member, or their procurator or procurators, in the name of the Hospital, into possession of the house of the Knights Templar and of their other houses, churches, chapels, oratories, cities, castles, towns, lands, granges, places, possessions, jurisdictions, revenues and rights to all their other movable, immovable and self-moving property, with all their members, rights and belongings, both on the near and far side of the sea and in every part of the world, which the order, master and brothers of the Knights Templar had, held or possessed, directly or through others, at the time of their arrest. The Hospitallers are to be inducted by our authority and defended afterwards; occupiers, detainers, administrators and conservators are to be removed. You are to ask a full account from those who have been delegated by apostolic authority and any other, including those sub-delegated, to care for the aforesaid property. The account is to comprise all the fruits, revenues, incomes, rights and accretions. The occupiers or detainers, administrators, conservators and others, unless within the prescribed time they abandon the property and revenues, and restore them freely and fully to the order of the Hospital and to the same Hospital, or to the master, prior, preceptors or brothers of the Hospital, in the regions and provinces in which the property has been, including to each of them individually, or to their procurator or procurators, in the name of the Hospital, as said above, as well as those who give help, counsel or favour to the occupiers, detainers, administrators or conservators, are to be excommunicated by you, if they are individuals; but if they are chapters, colleges, convents or corporations, as well as the cities, castles, towns and places themselves at fault in this, and those in which the detainers and occupiers have temporal dominion and are obstructive when asked to abandon the property and restore it to the master and brothers of the Hospital, in the name of the Hospital, and refuse to desist from such conduct within a month, you are to lay them under interdict. The offenders are also to be deprived of all property which they hold in fief from the Roman or any other church. You will give notice everywhere where you think it useful and have it announced by others that the excommunicated persons are to be strictly avoided until they have made suitable satisfaction and merited absolution. No exception is to be made on account of any indult from the apostolic see to the effect that they cannot be laid under interdict, suspended or excommunicated by apostolic letters which do not make an express, full and word for word declaration. You are also to suppress any other objectors, if there be such, by ecclesiastical censure, disregarding appeals. It is our will also and we decree by our apostolic authority, that with the present instruction you all and singly are given power and jurisdiction in every detail of this matter. You may from now proceed freely as if this same jurisdiction were perpetuated by citation or by any other lawful way. The jurisdiction shall be considered perpetuated as though the case were no longer undecided. Each of you may continue the part which has been left unfinished by one of your colleagues, in spite of his opposition and unhampered, notwithstanding the constitution of pope Boniface VIII, our predecessor of happy memory, as often and whenever this is suitable. Given as above.

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[3]. Clement, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for assurance in the present and for future record. The inquiries and various processes commissioned not long ago by the apostolic see through all parts of Christendom against the former order of Knights Templar and its individual members, concerning accusation of heresies, brought them into grave disrepute. In particular there was the accusation that the brothers of the former order at, and sometimes after, their reception denied Christ and spat in his dishonour on a cross held out to them, and sometimes trampled it underfoot. The master of the order, the visitor of France, the chief preceptors and many brothers of the order confessed at their trial to these heresies. The confessions cast grave suspicion on the order. In addition, the widespread disgrace, the strong suspicion, and the clamorous charges of the prelates, dukes, communes, barons and counts of the kingdom of France also gave grave scandal which could hardly be allayed without suppression of the order. There were many other just reasons mentioned in the legal process which influenced us. We therefore, with the approval of the sacred council, our heart filled with great bitterness and sorrow, suppressed and abolished the said former order of the Temple and its constitution, habit and name and we forbade its restoration. We did this, not by definitive sentence since we could not legally do this according to the inquiries and processes mentioned above, but by apostolic provision and ordinance. We reserved the persons and property of the order to the decision and disposal of the apostolic see. In doing so, however, we had no intention of derogating from the processes made or to be made concerning individual persons or brothers of the said former order by diocesan bishops and provincial councils, as we have ordained elsewhere.

Now therefore we wish to provide more suitably for individual persons or brothers. We reserved lately for our own disposition the master of the former order, the visitor of France and the chief preceptors of the holy Land, Normandy, Aquitaine, Poitou and the province of Provence, as well as brother Oliver de Penne, a knight of the said former order, whom henceforth we reserve to the disposition of the apostolic see. We have decided that all the other brothers should be left to the judgment and disposition of provincial councils, as we have indeed done until now. We wish judgment to be given by these councils in accordance with the different cases of individuals. Thus those who have been legally acquitted, or will be acquitted in the future, shall be supplied with the goods of the former order whereby they can live as becomes their state. With those who have confessed concerning the above errors, we wish the provincial councils prudently to temper justice with mercy: the situation of these men and the extent of their confessions are to be duly weighed. With regard to those who are impenitent and have relapsed, if any—which God forbid—be found among them, justice and canonical censure are to be observed. As for those who even when questioned have denied their involvement in the above errors, the councils are to observe justice and equity according to the canons. With the approval of the sacred council, we hereby cite those who have not yet been questioned and who are not held by the power or authority of the church but are perhaps fugitives, to appear in person before their diocesans within a year from today. This we assign them as a precise and final limit. They are to undergo an examination by their diocesans, receiving a just judgment from the said councils according to their deserts. Great mercy however is to be shown and observed both to these last and to those previously mentioned, except the relapsed and impenitent. They should also be provided from the property of the order with the necessities of life; all the brothers of the former order, whenever they return to the obedience of the church and as long as they persist in that obedience, shall be maintained as becomes the circumstances of their state. All of them shall be placed in houses of the former order or in monasteries of other religious, at the expense however of the former order itself according to the judgment of the said provincial councils; but many of them shall not be placed together at the same time in one house or monastery.

We order also and strictly command all those with whom and by whom the brothers of the former order are detained, to surrender them freely whenever required to do so by the metropolitans and the ordinaries of the brothers. If within the year those cited do not appear before the diocesans, as stated above, they incur automatically sentence of excommunication; and because in a case especially concerning the faith, contumacy adds strong presumption to suspicion, the contumacious who stubbornly remain excommunicate for a year are henceforth to be condemned as heretics. This citation of ours is made of set purpose and we wish the brothers to be obliged by it as if they had received a special citation personally, for as vagabonds they can in no way be found or at least not easily. In order, then, to prevent all subterfuge, we publish our edict in the present sacred council. And in order to bring this citation more assuredly to the knowledge of the brothers themselves and to the general knowledge of all, we shall have papers or parchments containing the citation and sealed with our bull hung or fastened to the doors of the principal church of Vienne. This will secure a loud and widespread publication of this citation, so that the brothers whom the citation concerns can claim no excuse that the citation has not reached them or that they were ignorant of it, since it is improbable that what is so openly made public to all can remain unknown or hidden to them. Furthermore, in order to observe greater precaution, we order the local diocesans to make public this edict of our citation, as soon as conveniently possible, in their cathedrals and in the churches at the most conspicuous places in their dioceses.

Given at Vienne on 6 May 1312 in the seventh year.

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[4]. To all the administrators and guardians of the property of the former house and order of the Knights Templar, delegated by apostolic and any other authority. Recently we held, as the Lord so disposed, a general council at Vienne. There we gave long and careful consideration to the disposal of the former house and order of the Knights Templar. We thought it more acceptable to the most High, more honourable to those who worship in the true faith, and more useful for the aid of the holy Land, to grant this property to the order of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem, rather than to give it or even attach it to a new order to be created. There were some, however, who asserted that it would be better to confer the property on an order to be newly created than to attach it to the order of the Hospital, and so we were unable to obtain the result we hoped for. At last, however, by God's favour, on 2 May of this present month, with the approval of the sacred council, we judged that the property should be granted and attached and even united to the said Hospital or order. We made an exception, for certain reasons, of the Templars' property in the kingdoms and lands of our beloved sons in Christ, the illustrious kings ....of Castile, ...of Aragon, ...of Portugal, and ....of Majorca', outside the kingdom of France. We reserved this property for our disposition and that of the apostolic see, until some other arrangement be made by us and the apostolic see for its use to aid the holy Land.

We therefore strictly command all of you, by apostolic ordinance, to restore in full, in the name of the said Hospital and order, this property with the revenue gathered from it, after all expenses have been paid, to the master and brothers of the Hospital, or to restore individual items to the said Hospital's individual priors or preceptors of the provinces or cities or dioceses or places in which the property lies, or to the procurator or procurators of one or more of them, according to the terms of your commission, within a month of being so required. For this the master, brothers, priors and preceptors, or their procurator or procurators, shall fittingly commend you, and we shall rightly acknowledge your prompt and devoted obedience.

Given at Livron in the diocese of Valence on 16 May in the seventh year.{1}

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[5].{2} Our redeemer, the only-begotten Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, loved so much the daughter of Zion, the holy Land, that he chose her as his inheritance and his own patrimony. He therefore, clothed with our flesh, honoured her with his presence and consecrated her by the shedding of his precious blood. But we mourn and bitterly lament that so noble an inheritance of our redeemer has been turned over to strangers and laid low by the frenzy of the Babylonian persecutor, trampled underfoot by the feet of the defiled. She is dishonoured by the vile grasp of the unclean Saracens, faithless enemies of the Christian name. She has been occupied and wretchedly retained, the Christian people have been savagely slaughtered. To the insult of the creator, to the outrage and sorrow of all Christendom, the name of Christ is horribly blasphemed by the filthy and detestable conduct of the enemy. This sad region therefore weeps under the lash and repeatedly laments to the vicar of Christ about this intolerable persecution. Wounded by her disgrace, she pleads with Christian princes and the catholic people. She uncovers her wounds to those from whom she awaits the work of the healer. She demands liberation from those for whose salvation the author of salvation bore within her borders the suffering of the cross. All this and more besides, which the mind cannot fully conceive nor the tongue tell, rose to our heart and roused our mind as soon as we were called by divine favour, though unworthy, to the summit of apostolic dignity. We gazed tenderly at the doleful state of the holy Land and we applied ourselves to think out remedies by which, with the aid of heaven, that Land, freed from the enemy's criminal hands, might see, after the darkness of so many tribulations, the bright times of longed-for peace

For this and other holy works acceptable to God, to be advanced by his almighty power, we convoked a general council in the city of Vienne{3}. Then, together with our brothers the cardinals of the holy Roman church, the patriarchs, archbishops, bishops and other prelates and our beloved sons in Christ the illustrious kings Philip of the Franks and Louis of Navarre, who were present at the council, as also some other eminent men and the procurators of the remaining absent prelates and of chapters, convents, churches and monasteries, assembled at the council, we held a long, complete and careful discussion on bringing aid to the holy Land. At last we resolved, with the council's approval, to succour the holy Land by a general crusade. Intending to use our apostolic power zealously to this end, and having duly weighed all we have said, we judged, with the approval of the sacred council, that a tithe should be imposed by our apostolic authority on all ecclesiastical revenues and incomes throughout the world. Only the persons and places belonging to the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem and the other military orders were to be exempted. The tithe was to be collected and paid for six years to be reckoned from 1 January last, in fixed installments, as we should find best, and to be directed to helping the holy Land and opposing the infidels and the enemies of the catholic faith.{4}

But actually we reflected of late that our letters concerning the imposition, collection and payment of the tithe had not reached you by 1 January, nor could easily do so in a short time, on account of the great distance of those parts from the Roman curia. Wishing, then, to consult your ease and convenience, we have decreed that the six years are to begin in your region on 1 October next. We therefore ask, admonish and earnestly exhort you, also commanding you strictly by apostolic ordinance in virtue of obedience, to pay without difficulty the tithe for six years beginning from 1 October. The tithe is to be paid in the customary way, namely for the first half of the first year on 1 October next, and for the second half on 1 April immediately following, and in the same way for each of the remaining five years. Each of you is to pay it in full from your ecclesiastical revenues and incomes. If you fail to pay the tithe within the above periods, each of you automatically incurs sentences similar to those pronounced for nonpayment by you or by the suitable and trustworthy persons delegated by you to collect the tithe in your cities and dioceses.

Furthermore, you are to collect the tithe from our beloved sons, the abbots, priors, deans, archdeacons, provosts, archpriests and other prelates of churches, the chapters, colleges and convents of the Cistercians, Cluniacs, Premonstratensians, of saint Benedict and saint Augustine, of the Carthusians, Grandmontines and other orders, and other non-exempt secular and regular ecclesiastical persons, in your cities and dioceses, that is, each of you in each city and diocese. The priors, preceptors, masters and other persons and the places of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem and of the other military orders are to be the only exceptions made. The tithe is to be collected by you or by other suitable and trustworthy persons delegated by you for this service in each of your cities and dioceses. It is altogether our wish and command that you should delegate such persons. We entrust to them and command them by this document to claim and collect it in full by our authority, in each of the cities and dioceses where they are delegated, from our beloved sons the abbots, priors, deans, provosts, archdeacons, archpriests and other prelates of churches, and the exempt chapters, colleges and convents of the above-mentioned orders, in your cities and dioceses. Only the priors, preceptors, masters, persons and places of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem and of the said other military orders are to be excepted.

The tithe is to be claimed and collected in full from the ecclesiastical revenues and incomes, by our authority, in the customary way according to the years and periods mentioned above. The delegates are to collect it from both the exempt and the non-exempt: each is to hand over and assign it for each period to the person among you by whom he was delegated, without delay or as soon as he conveniently can. You are to compel them by ecclesiastical censure, without any appeal, to give you an account of the money claimed and collected from the aforesaid non-exempt persons, as well as to hand over and assign the tithe claimed and collected from both the exempt and the non-exempt. Public instruments are to be drawn up and other due precautions taken concerning the handing over and assigning of the tithe. In this way, when needed, it can be established how much, from whom, when and for what period the delegates received the money and how much, when and for what period they handed over and assigned it to each of you.

The money which has been duly claimed and collected by you and your delegates from the exempt and non-exempt persons and has been handed over to you, including that which has been claimed and collected by your delegates from the said exempt persons, as mentioned above, and also the money which you will pay from your own revenues and incomes, is to be put away by each of you, together with your cathedral chapter, beneath the church or even elsewhere, as you think best, in some more becoming and safe place. Here, at your expense and that of the chapter, you will have it guarded carefully and faithfully, to be consigned by each of you to our delegates as and when shall seem good to us, for the business of the holy Land and the service of the faith.

In order that you may more easily and effectively collect this tithe, we grant by this document full and unrestricted power to each of you to constrain by ecclesiastical censure directly or through your delegates, disregarding any appeal, the abbots, priors, deans, provosts and other aforesaid non-exempt persons, in your cities and dioceses. We grant the same power to your delegates, in each city or diocese for which they have been delegated, with regard to the abbots, priors, deans, provosts and other aforesaid exempt persons. This power may also be used to constrain any opponents and rebels. In addition, we grant full and unrestricted power to you to absolve in your cities and dioceses, after satisfaction has been made, the aforesaid non-exempt persons, and to your delegates regarding the aforesaid exempt persons who, because of non-payment of the tithe in due time, are bound by sentences of excommunication, suspension or interdict; also to dispense from irregularity contracted by celebrating divine worship or taking part in it while bound by one or more of the above sentences. In order that you and your delegates may have a reward for the labours undertaken, we enjoin on you the above things in remission of your sins.

The tithe is to be paid even if the apostolic see has granted an indult to you or some of you, or to the abbots, priors and other aforesaid exempt or non-exempt persons, or to anyone else, that you are not obliged and compelled to pay, or that you cannot be laid under interdict, suspension or excommunication by apostolic letters which have not made full and express mention of this indult and its tenor word for word, or of the names of your orders, localities and persons. The same applies to any privileges, indulgences, exemptions and apostolic letters which have been granted generally or specially in any form of words by the said apostolic see to any dignities, orders, places or persons, and of which and their whole tenor there should be made in our letters word for word, special, full and express mention. Consider, besides, that in these duties you are engaged in God's business, and that you are acting in the sight of him who sees all. You will therefore be obliged to render an account to him and to us; we intend to use all diligence in this matter. You will receive due reward from both him and us. You should therefore act prudently and carefully, not only to avoid the danger of punishment and confusion, but also to gain the glory of praise and well-deserved reward.

It is our wish also that each of you oblige the persons delegated by you for collecting the tithe, to swear that they will be diligent and careful in their work and to use this formula: "I swear ....by you, lord . . ., who am delegated by the authority of the apostolic see and by the same see itself to claim, collect and receive a tithe of all ecclesiastical revenues and incomes from all exempt and non-exempt ecclesiastical persons in your city and diocese, that I will faithfully claim, collect, receive and guard this tithe which has been imposed by the apostolic see for the business of the holy Land and of the catholic faith. Only the priors, preceptors masters and other persons and places of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem and of the other military orders are excepted. I shall not give way in this to any person, of whatever dignity, status or condition, whether from entreaty, fear, gratitude, favour or any other cause. I shall restore and consign the full tithe to you at your order. I shall render a final and integral account concerning everything in detail, namely to you regarding what I have claimed, collected and received from non-exempt persons, and to the delegate or delegates of the holy see regarding exempt persons. If you lay down your office in this matter, I shall do the same according to the orders of your successor. So may God help me and these holy gospels of God."

Given at Avignon on 1 December in the eighth year.

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[6]. For future record. Not long ago, in the general council at Vienne, we transferred, with the approval of the sacred council, the property, rights, privileges, indults, immunities and liberties of the former order of the Temple to the order of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem. For the sake of greater peace and concord between prelates of churches and other clergy on the one hand, and the brothers of the order of the Hospital on the other, as also for other justifiable reasons, we suspended, in the last session of the council, all the privileges granted to the Hospital by the apostolic see, and with them as a necessary consequence the privileges of the former Temple, which should be thought of as belonging to the said Hospital and transferred to it. We excepted the privilege of exemption, if they had any. We wished these privileges to be suspended at our good pleasure. There are some, however, who assert on insufficient grounds that the suspension of these privileges of the Hospital does not extend to the privileges of the former order of the Temple. Although there is not the faintest reason for such an assertion, we wish to remove from their minds the slightest doubt that it was our intention, by the said suspension of the privileges of the order of the Hospital, to suspend the privileges of the former Temple, which have become by the transference those of the Hospital itself. We declare therefore by our apostolic authority and decree that these, like the other privileges of the Hospital, are and remain suspended.

Indeed, before the suspension, it was said in general by some of our brothers cardinals of the holy Roman church, to many of the prelates assembled at the general council, that there would be a suspension of the Hospital's privileges until everything that was still uncertain among the said prelates and other clergy, with regard to concord, lawsuits and disputes, had been completely settled. We observed, however, that if it was necessary to await the end of all these lawsuits and disputes, one little case might generate grave prejudice against the Hospitallers, and great loss might result from the continuing suspension of their privileges. We reflected that this might provide material for many misrepresentations. In the last session of the council, therefore, wishing to obviate such greater dangers, we judged it fitting to make known orally, clearly and openly, even for a third time, so that each and all might clearly understand, that we wished the said suspension of the privileges of the order of the Hospital to continue until we willed otherwise. We intend with the Lord's help to consider what is good for both sides and to make provision for both prelates and other clergy on the one hand, and the Hospitallers on the other, so that neither will have reason for complaint but both will receive due satisfaction. Let nobody therefore ...

Given at Avignon on 18 December in the eighth year.

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[7]. For an everlasting record. Not long ago, under the Lord's providence, we held a general council at Vienne, at which we suppressed the former order of the Knights Templar of Jerusalem. We granted, attached and joined the Templar possessions, with the approval of the sacred council, to the order of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem, for the help of the holy Land; with the exception, for certain reasons, of their property lying in the kingdoms and lands of our beloved sons in Christ, the illustrious kings ....of Castile, ...of Aragon, ...of Portugal and ....of Majorca, outside the kingdom of France, which we reserved for our disposal and that of the apostolic see until we made other arrangements. Then, in the same council, we made some sound provisions for furthering the cause of the holy Land and others by which quarrels, scandals and discord might be prevented, and continuous peace and concord be established, between prelates of churches and other clergy on the one hand and the brothers of the Hospital on the other. We also made provision on other points relating to the reform of the order of the Hospital.

Actually, business has pressed upon us. It is like an ocean pouring into the apostolic see. The waters of care constantly harass our heart. We have not been permitted until now, and are still not permitted, to put into execution the arrangements we desire. In order that the fruit of such sound proposals may not perish through oblivion or pressure of business, but rather may be gathered up, by the Lord's will, at the opportune time, we have had the headings of these projected decrees inserted into the present document. Their drift is as follows. We wish that the transfer of property of the former order of the Temple to the order of the Hospital may, by our provision, be of advantage to the holy Land. We also wish that quarrels, scandals and discord be prevented between prelates and other clergy on the one hand and the brothers of the order on the other; that lasting concord be established between them; and that the order and its members be reformed, if and as this seems good. We have therefore made three special provisions regarding the order of the Hospital.

The first has to do with the holy Land. We shall have an exact and careful enquiry made into the past and present possessions of the order of the Hospital and their exact annual value. We shall wish to know fully the annual value of each old and new house of the order, and how much this represents each year in terms of assistance to the holy Land. On completion of this valuation, and taking into account the necessary local expenditure, we shall oblige the order to maintain continuously in the holy Land a certain number of brothers and knights. These brothers and knights are to labour effectively and strive to win the holy Land and keep it, as far as God grants. We shall arrange and provide that very few brothers of the order remain on this side of the sea. These shall be only those required to govern the houses of the order and those who are old, sick or unfit for war. The young and the strong, who are able to fight, shall be required to go and stay overseas so that the holy Land may have its needs met. The order will thus pursue the purpose for which it was instituted, as is only right and fitting. In this way it will not reserve for itself great wealth or many persons of quality. Rather, the order will lose all occasion for pride or the prosecution of idle enterprises, since the brothers and knights who drag their feet on this side of the sea will be far fewer than before. The property remaining behind will also be heavily and more than usually burdened as a result of our above-mentioned provisions.

We cannot impose on our successors the continuation of the above policy. Yet, in order to make this course of action possible and easier for them, we shall have the annual value of each house registered exactly in the Roman curia, and also the service which it will be able to provide each year for the holy Land, and the fixed number of brothers and knights required to stay overseas. We shall arrange that the registered material be kept permanently with the papal registers under our bull. Further, that there be no lack of carefulness or caution in this matter, we shall send the registered material under our bull to all Christian kings to be permanently kept by them in order that if it should happen—though may it not—that this ordinance is not observed by the Hospitallers, the kings themselves, being informed in the above manner, may more quickly and fully know where the observance of this ordinance has ceased. As a result, they will also be moved to take care that it is observed.

Secondly, in order to establish tranquillity and peace, as was said above, between the churches with their prelates and the order of the Hospital, we shall see that all the privileges of the order are fully shown to us. And although we have no intention whatsoever of taking away its exemption, if the order has such, or of granting exemption, if the order has none, we shall altogether take away any privileges, if such there be, which are odious or provide matter for quarrels, discord or scandals. If we happen to find areas of uncertainty which it is not advisable to remove, we shall clarify. In addition, we shall delegate in each province two of its prelates and one of our clerics or another cleric to provide more fully for concord, giving them full and unrestricted powers, so that simply and easily, and without the din of a court of law, they may hear and settle or make peace between the parties in all disputes and cases that have arisen or might arise for any reason between the aforesaid order and the churches and any ecclesiastics with regard to churches, tithes, first-fruits, procurations and any property or rights whatsoever. This is to include questions concerning the property and rights of the former order of the Temple. The parties may be summoned or not as they wish; charges may be laid or not, as they please. Before or after the delegates' decision there can be no appeal. Whatever they do or decide shall altogether be regarded as done or decided by us.

We shall also grant to them the power of regulating the procurations owed by the order to the bishops in different places so that, when and as seems good to them, they are converted into an annual payment as money to be paid by the order to the bishops. The bishops, on receiving such payments, are bound to visit at their own expense, at a time suitable for them, the places making them. If this regulation does not seem useful, the bishops will receive on visitation the procurations owed to them by the churches of the order, if these are able to pay them. If a church cannot pay the full procuration, the above delegates will make an estimate of the amount payable to the bishop as the procuration for that church. We shall also ordain that all churches which have annexed to them the cure of souls and belonged to the order of the Hospital on account of any right of the Temple, or even on account of any other rights which belong or shall belong to the Hospital, shall be subject in all spiritual matters to their diocesans, notwithstanding any privilege of exemption. Indeed, in order that everything decreed above may be fulfilled more quickly and without evasion on the part of the order, and that our good will may appear to everyone, we suspend entirely from now all the privileges for long granted by the apostolic see to the order, except for the privilege of exemption, if possessed, and we wish them to remain suspended at our pleasure.

Thirdly, concerning the order of the Hospital itself, we shall be making decrees regarding its regulation and reform. We shall be seeing and examining carefully the rules, statutes, form of government and progress of the order itself and of its members. We shall approve and confirm what is good. We shall clarify doubtful points that we find in need of revision in the order itself and in its personnel, both head and members. We shall restore the norm of truth, justice and regular observance with the equilibrium of reason and equity, to the advantage and welfare of the order and for the help of the holy Land. In this way the order itself will be preserved from decay and kept in a healthy and prosperous condition.

The prelates of France, after the above intentions had been explained to them, petitioned that we should take away the privilege of exemption, if the order of the Hospital possessed it, or at least suspend such exemption, just as we have decreed the suspension of the order's other privileges. These prelates also declared that, as long as the unlettered and simple brothers of the order remain under the care of their simple priests, and the prelates themselves are unacquainted with the brothers' deeds and consciences, they can be in grave danger of losing their souls through having the privilege of exemption, if they do in fact possess it. Our reply is that because of shortness of time we are unable here to formulate a full and determinate decree. As soon as we can conveniently do so we shall with the Lord's help decree and provide in this matter. Also, as these prelates earnestly petitioned us, it is our will and decree that just as individual catholic kings shall receive in writing the valuation of the order's revenues and the other relevant information, so each province ought to have and shall have the same document.

Also, in accordance with the petition of these prelates, we decree and determine that the compositions pending or made within the last ten years, which were extorted from churches and ecclesiastics through fear of the order of the Hospital and the order of the former Temple, do not disadvantage or harm the said churches and ecclesiastics in any way, and that if two prelates and a non-prelate delegated by us cannot reach agreement, then whatever is decided by one of the prelates and the non-prelate, or decreed by them by way of composition or agreement, shall have effect and full validity. Also, we wish to be as gracious as possible to the said prelates. Therefore we shall allow the two prelates delegated by us to raise in ready money the procurations of their dioceses while absent, and we shall have the non-prelate provided for in money from the property of the former order of the Temple. We shall also decree in accordance with the petition of the prelates of France, that Hospitallers who publicly receive excommunicated persons or those under interdict or notorious usurers for ecclesiastical burial, or for solemnizing their marriages or having them solemnized or permitting them to be solemnized in their churches against the law, or for administering the sacraments to outside parishioners or permitting this in their churches, incur automatic excommunication. And we strictly forbid the Hospitallers to trouble anyone unduly by use of apostolic letters. We shall also decree, in accordance with the petition of the same prelates, against the building of new churches or chapels, the erecting of bell-towers and the making of cemeteries; we shall provide adequate laws on these subjects to be observed by the Hospitallers.

Given at Avignon on 31 December in the eighth year of our pontificate {5}

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[8]. For an everlasting record. Some time ago, in the general council held at Vienne under the Lord's inspiration, we suppressed the former order of the Temple for certain good reasons as explained in the letter of suppression. After long and careful deliberations with our brothers and the whole council, we bestowed on the order of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem, on the Hospital itself and on our beloved sons, the master and brothers of the Hospital, in the name of the Hospital and of the order of these men, who as the Lord's athletes expose themselves unfailingly to the danger of death in defence of the faith and have borne and still bear heavy loss overseas, the house of the Knights Templar and their other houses, churches, chapels, oratories, cities, castles, towns, lands, granges and all their other movable, immovable and self-moving property, together with all the members and rights and all that belongs to them, beyond and on this side of the sea and in all parts of the world, which the former order and its master and brothers had and comprised at the time when the master himself and some of the brothers were arrested as a body in the kingdom of France, namely in October 1308.

The property includes that which the Templars had of themselves or through others, and anything belonging to them in any way, with all their rights, privileges, indults, immunities, liberties, honours and charges. We donated and united all this forever to the Hospital and incorporated it into the Hospital, with the approval of the sacred council and from the fullness of our apostolic power, for the help of the holy Land. However, whatever rights belonged to kings, princes, prelates, barons, nobles and any other Catholics, before the arrest of the master of the former order of the Temple and of some other brothers, were to remain. We excepted from the said donation, union and incorporation the property of the former order of the Temple in the kingdoms and lands of our beloved sons in Christ, the illustrious kings ... of Castile, ... of Aragon, ... of Portugal, and ... of Majorca, lying outside the kingdom of France, which we reserved with good reason for the disposal of the apostolic see.

In the letter of donation, union and incorporation, however, through the carelessness, neglect or engagements of the scribe or secretary, mention was omitted of the non-violation of the rights of kings, princes, prelates and other persons concerned. Lest therefore any doubt arises in the future from such an omission concerning these charges and rights, and any prejudice be generated against the said kings, princes, prelates, barons, nobles and other persons, we, who desire that everyone retains his rights unimpaired, wishing to provide a suitable remedy in the matter for the said kings, princes, prelates, barons, nobles and any other Catholics, declare that we have made the above donation, union and incorporation to the order of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem, and to the Hospital itself and its master and brothers, in the name of the said Hospital and order, in the way expressed above. We determine and decree of our certain knowledge that, without violation of the property of the former order of the Temple donated to the order of the Hospital, together with all its privileges, indults, immunities, liberties, rights, honours and charges, for the help of the holy Land, nevertheless whatever rights belonged to kings, princes, prelates, barons, nobles and any other Catholics, at the time of the said arrest of the master and some brothers of the Temple, remain intact, unimpaired and exactly as they would be in everything as if they had been distinctly and expressly mentioned in the said letter of donation, union and incorporation. Let nobody therefore ....

Given at Avignon on 13 January in the eighth year.{6}

Decrees

[1]. Adhering firmly to the foundation of the catholic faith, other than which, as the Apostle testifies, no one can lay, we openly profess with holy mother church that the only begotten Son of God, subsisting eternally together with the Father in everything in which God the Father exists, assumed in time in the womb of a virgin the parts of our nature united together, from which he himself true God became true man: namely the human, passible body and the intellectual or rational soul truly of itself and essentially informing the body. And that in this assumed nature the Word of God willed for the salvation of all not only to be nailed to the cross and to die on it, but also, having already breathed forth his spirit, permitted his side to be pierced by a lance, so that from the out-flowing water and blood there might be formed the one, immaculate and holy virginal mother church, the bride of Christ, as from the side of the first man in his sleep Eve was fashioned as his wife, in this way, to the determinate figure of the first and old Adam, who according to the Apostle is a type of the one who was to come, the truth might correspond in our last Adam, that is to say in Christ. This, we say, is the truth, fortified by the witness of that huge eagle which the prophet Ezechiel saw flying over the other gospel animals, namely blessed John the apostle and evangelist, who relating the event and order of this sacrament, said in his gospel : But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth—that you also may believe.

We, therefore, directing our apostolic attention, to which alone it belongs to define these things, to such splendid testimony and to the common opinion of the holy fathers and doctors, declare with the approval of the sacred council that the said apostle and evangelist, John, observed the right order of events in saying that when Christ was already dead one of the soldiers opened his side with a spear. Moreover, with the approval of the said council, we reject as erroneous and contrary to the truth of the catholic faith every doctrine or proposition rashly asserting that the substance of the rational or intellectual soul is not of itself and essentially the form of the human body, or casting doubt on this matter. In order that all may know the truth of the faith in its purity and all error may be excluded, we define that anyone who presumes henceforth to assert defend or hold stubbornly that the rational or intellectual soul is not the form of the human body of itself and essentially, is to be considered a heretic.

All are faithfully to profess that there is one baptism which regenerates all those baptized in Christ, just as there is one God and one faith'. We believe that when baptism is administered in water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit, it is a perfect means of salvation for both adults and children. Yet because, as regards the effect of baptism in children, we find that certain theologians have held contrary opinions, some saying that by baptism guilt is indeed remitted in infants but grace is not conferred, others on the contrary asserting that both guilt is remitted and the virtues and sanctifying grace are infused with regard to habit though for the time being not with regard to use, we, considering the general efficacy of Christ's death, which through baptism is applied in like manner to all the baptised, choose, with the approval of the sacred council, the second opinion, which says that sanctifying grace and the virtues are conferred in baptism on both infants and adults, as more probable and more in harmony with the words of the saints and of modern doctors of theology.

[2]. Abbots and other religious holding any major ecclesiastical office may not, when it is a question of priories or other places subject to them, bring an action against anyone on the authority of letters of the apostolic see or its legates, except in such places and before such persons as is permitted to the priors and other persons in charge of the priories and other places. Nor is anything else of this kind permissible in the case of places belonging to the table maintenance of these abbots and other religious, except when these places have special officials in charge of them. If anyone presumes to molest someone in contravention of the above, he is to be condemned by the judge of the case to pay the expenses and for any damage. Any process contrary to this decree is null and void.

[3]. Although the chief official of a bishop, or a religious obtaining the office of conventual prior (even though that office is not customarily elective), may be delegated by the apostolic see or its legate, nevertheless we do not wish this to be observed in the cases of an official-forane or of a religious who is the claustal prior of his monastery.

[4]. Since prelates of religious orders occasionally neglect to fill vacant priories, churches, offices or other benefices pertaining to their disposition within the time prescribed by the Lateran council, the local diocesan bishops shall supply for this negligence by their own authority in the case of the non-exempt, and by apostolic authority in the case of the exempt. Those which have customarily been governed by the secular clergy shall be conferred on secular clerics, those which have usually been entrusted to or conferred on only religious shall be conferred on the religious of the monasteries whose prelates were negligent. The diocesan bishops, by the same authority, shall in no way permit the said prelates to apply such priories, churches, offices or benefices to their table maintenance, to impose new payments or to increase the old ones any new ones imposed or old ones increased shall be paid back. By the said priories, churches, offices and benefices we mean those that are not for the table maintenance of their prelates and customarily have their own priors, administrators or rectors, even though these priors and administrators can be freely recalled, if necessary, to the cloister.

In this matter we have decided to uphold the constitution of our predecessor pope Boniface VIII, which prohibits the property of vacant benefices to be appropriated by prelates or anyone else, as well as that other constitution of the same Boniface which forbids any religious to have several priories or churches with the cure of souls, even though the cure is exercised by someone other than himself and there is no danger to souls for the priories.

[5]. So that those who are obliged to divine office in cathedrals or secular collegiate churches, or will be so obliged in the future, may be more readily moved to receive sacred orders, we decree that nobody henceforth may have in such churches a voice in the chapter, even though this is freely granted to him by the others, unless he has received at least the subdiaconate. Moreover, those who now hold peacefully dignities, parsonages, offices or prebends to which certain orders are annexed, or will hold them in future, shall have no voice in the chapter unless, having no just impediment, they receive the corresponding orders within a year. They shall receive only half the payment made to those who assist at certain hours, all customs and statutes to the contrary notwithstanding. The penalties, moreover, which are decreed by law against those refusing to be promoted to orders, are to remain in force.

[6]. We wish to check, in the cases mentioned below, the expensive prolongation of lawsuits which, as experience teaches us, arises sometimes from over-precise observance of judicial order. We therefore decree that in cases concerning elections, postulations, or provisions, concerning dignities, parsonages, offices, canonries, prebends or any other church benefices, concerning tithes, even when those obliged to pay them have been admonished and can be corrected by ecclesiastical censure, and concerning matrimony or usury and anything connected with it, that a simple, easy process shall be valid without the noise and rhetoric of a court of justice. We wish this decree to apply not only to future business but also to the present, and even to cases awaiting appeal.

[7]. Although it is generally forbidden by the sacred canons for a bishop to exercise jurisdiction in a diocese other than his own, we nevertheless make an exception for bishops who have been driven from their sees by the insolence of the ungodly and do not dare, from fear of their persecutors, to reside in their cities and dioceses or in any part of them, nor to exercise their jurisdiction there directly or through others. Lest the wrong done to their churches by their expulsions remains unpunished, we have considered it necessary to permit that in other dioceses, from cities or other prominent places near their churches, where they will be able to reside securely and to exercise freely their jurisdiction they may freely proceed against their expellers and their counsellors and supporters, as justice shall advise. (The cities and places must be such as are untroubled by these expellers and their counsellors and supporters. They are to be cited personally or to the bishop's house, if this can be done safely; if not, they are to be cited publicly in the cathedral church of the place or of their domicile.) If however the bishops have not dared to cite their expellers or their counsellors or supporters in this way, or if these have maliciously frustrated their being cited, it is lawful for the bishops to cite the expellers, counsellors and supporters, or to have them cited, on Sundays and festivals when the people assemble for divine worship, so that the accused may be presumed in all probability to have learned of the citation. This shall take place publicly in the churches of the cities or other prominent places, and then the bishops shall proceed against their persecutors, if they refuse to appear in the bishops' presence within a suitable fixed time, just as if the citation had been made legally elsewhere. We grant also to those bishops, lest justice suffer, authority to exercise full jurisdiction over their subjects from the other dioceses in which they have to stay, provided that they cannot or dare not do this, either directly or through someone else, in their own dioceses. The subjects, however, excluding the expellers or their counsellors and supporters, should not have to travel more than two days' journey from the boundary of their diocese. It is our will also that the bishops first seek permission from the diocesans of their places of exile; if they are not able to obtain this, they may nevertheless proceed as we have said. Of course if the said bishops have asserted that they did not dare to cite the expellers or their counsellors and supporters, personally or to the bishop's house, or publicly in their cathedral church, as has been said, or that they maliciously prevented the citation, or that the bishops cannot or dare not exercise jurisdiction in their dioceses either directly or through someone else against these persecutors, then we wish these assertions to be reliable, strictly enjoining the bishops, under threat of the divine judgment, that they do not assert or invent anything false or deceptive. The neighbouring bishops, when asked by the exiled bishops, should give notice or have notice given throughout their dioceses of the verdicts and the legal processes which the exiled bishops have judged necessary. No prejudice shall arise from the passage of time, or for any other reason, to the local ordinaries or to anyone else having jurisdiction in these places where the expelled bishops also exercise jurisdiction.

[8]. We strictly command local ordinaries to admonish by name three times clerics who publicly and personally engage in the butcher's trade or conduct taverns, that they cease to do so within a reasonable time to be fixed by the ordinary and never resume such trades. If after admonition they do not leave off or if they resume them at any time, then as long as they persist in the above ways of life those who are married shall automatically lose all clerical privileges, and those who are unmarried shall automatically lose their clerical privileges relating to things, and if the latter go about in every way as laymen they shall also lose automatically their personal privileges as clerics. As for other clerics who apply themselves publicly to secular commerce and trade or any occupation inconsistent with the clerical state, or who carry arms, the ordinaries are to be diligent in observing the canons, so that these clerics may be restrained from such misconduct and they themselves may not be guilty of reprehensible negligence.

[9]. Since he who abandons the dress proper to his order, and puts on other clothes and wears them in public, without a good reason, renders himself unworthy of the privileges of that order, we ordain by the present constitution that any cleric wearing striped or variegated clothes in public, without a good reason, is automatically suspended, if he is beneficed, from receiving the revenues of his benefices for a period of six months. If however he does not have a benefice but is in sacred orders below the priesthood, he becomes automatically disqualified for the same period from obtaining an ecclesiastical benefice. The same penalty applies to other clerics having the tonsure yet wearing such clothes in public. He who holds a dignity, a parsonage or another benefice to which the cure of souls is annexed, as also any other priests and religious, whose outward garb should reveal their inner integrity, who without reasonable cause wear such clothing in public, or appear thus with a woolen band or linen cap on their heads, are, if beneficed, automatically suspended for a year from receiving the revenues of their benefices. Such other priests and religious are also disqualified for the same period from obtaining any ecclesiastical benefices. These and any other clerics who wear a gown or tabard which is furred to the edge and so short that the lower garment is clearly seen, if they are secular clergy or religious with administrative posts, are obliged to give the gown to the poor within a month. The other religious who do not have administrative posts are obliged within the same period to consign the gown to their superiors, to be used for some pious purpose. If this is not done, the above penalties, of suspension in the case of the beneficed clergy and of disqualification in the case of the rest, are incurred for the above period of time. To this penalty we add that clerics, especially those with benefices, may not wear in public chequered, red or green boots.

[10]. The following decretal, published a little while ago by our predecessor pope Boniface VIII, was revoked by our predecessor pope Benedict XI. Since, as results have proved, the revocation did not bring with it the peace hoped for by its author, but rather stimulated the discord which it was designed to allay, we annul it altogether and renew, with the insistence and approval of the sacred council, the said decretal published by Boniface which runs as follows.

"Boniface, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record.

"Having been placed by the divine clemency on the chair of pastoral preeminence, burdened though we are by the many arduous affairs which flow like a torrent from all directions into the Roman curia, summoned by many cares distracted by many proposals, we nevertheless aim ardently and devote ourselves with ever-active solicitude so that, to the glory of the divine name, the exaltation of the catholic faith and the profit of faithful souls, after the thorn-bushes of disagreement have been rooted out and the intricacies of quarrels removed, the tranquility of peace may thrive with the ardour of charity, and unity of heart and mind may grow and persist, between the bishops charged with the care and rule of the Lord's flock and other persons in the clerical state. We know, and experience teaches us, that only in time of peace is the author of peace duly worshipped, nor are we ignorant that dissensions and scandals prepare the way to wicked acts, stir up rancour and hatred, and give boldness to evil living. For a long time past there has existed between prelates and rectors or priests and clerics of parish churches throughout the different provinces of the world on the one hand, and the friars Preacher and Minor on the other, grave and dangerous discord, produced by that enemy of peace, the sower of cockle, in the matters of preaching to the faithful, hearing their confessions, enjoining penances, and burying the dead who choose to be buried in the churches or lands of the friars.

"As an affectionate father rightly suffers with his children, we carefully considered and turned over in our mind the great danger and loss that such discord brings, and how detestable it is in the sight of the divine majesty. We therefore intend with all the energy of fatherly care to eradicate and remove it wholly, so that with the Lord's favour it may never revive in the future. We desire greatly that this business, so close to our heart, may be beneficially and speedily completed by apostolic sagacity. After careful deliberation with our brothers, we decree and ordain, with the advice of our brothers and by our apostolic authority, to the honour of God and the exaltation of the catholic faith and for the peaceful condition of the aforesaid parties and the salvation of the souls of the faithful, that the friars of the said orders may freely preach and explain the word of God to the clergy and the people in their churches and other places as also in public places, except at that hour only when the local prelates wish to preach or have someone to give a special sermon in their presence; at this hour they shall not preach, except the prelates decide otherwise and give special permission. In institutes of general studies, where it is customary to give a special sermon to the clergy on certain days, at funerals, and on special feasts of the friars, they are at liberty to preach, unless perhaps during the hour when it is customary to preach to the clergy in the above places the bishop or a higher prelate should summon the clergy in general to his presence, or for some urgent reason should assemble them. In parish churches, however, the said friars may not preach or explain God's word, unless invited or called to do so by the priests of the parishes, and with their good will and assent, or having asked and obtained permission, unless the bishop or higher prelate should through them commission a friar to preach.

"By the same authority we also decree and ordain that in each city and diocese in which the friars have houses, or in neighbouring cities and dioceses where they have no houses, the masters and priors provincial of the Preachers or their vicars, and the ministers general and provincial and the guardians of the Minors, should gather in the presence of the prelates of those places either personally or through friars whom they judge will be suitable delegates, and humbly request that friars chosen for the purpose may freely hear the confessions of those of the prelates' subjects who wish to confess to them, may impose salutary penances as they shall think right in God's eyes, and may grant absolution to them, with the leave, favour and good will of the prelates. The masters, priors, provincials and ministers of the orders are then to choose diligently sufficient persons who are suitable, of approved life, discreet, modest and skilled for such a salutary ministry and office. These they are to present or have presented to the prelates that by their leave, favour and good will, they may hear the confessions of those wishing to confess to them in the prelates' cities and dioceses, impose salutary penances and grant absolution, as has been said above. They are by no means to hear confessions outside the cities and dioceses for which they were appointed. We want them to be appointed for cities and dioceses, not for provinces. The number of persons to be chosen for this ministry ought to be in proportion to that which the number of clergy and people demands.

"If the prelates grant the permission requested for hearing confessions, the said masters, ministers and others shall receive it with thanks, and the persons chosen should carry out the duties entrusted to them. If the prelates do not accept one of the friars presented to them, another may and should be presented in his place. But if the prelates issue a general refusal to the friars chosen, we graciously grant, from the fullness of our apostolic power, that they may freely and lawfully hear the confessions of those wishing to confess to them and impose salutary penances, and then impart absolution. By this permission, however, we by no means intend to give more ample power to such friars than is granted by law to the parish clergy, unless perhaps the prelates of the churches think that such power should be given to them.

"To this decree and regulation of ours we add that the friars of the said orders may provide free burial everywhere in their churches and cemeteries, that is they may receive for burial all who have chosen these places for their burial. Yet, lest parish churches and their clergy, whose office it is to administer the sacraments and to whom it belongs by law to preach God's word and to hear the confessions of the faithful, should be denied their due and necessary benefits, since the labourer deserves his wages, we decree and ordain by the same apostolic authority, that the friars are obliged to give the parish clergy a fourth part of all the income from funerals and from everything left to them, expressly or not, for whatever definite purpose, even from such bequests of which a fourth or canonical part is not claimed by custom or by law, and also a fourth part of bequests made at the death or at the point of death of the giver, whether directly or through a third party. We set and also limit this amount to the fourth part by our apostolic authority. The friars are to see to it that bequests are not left to others from whom this fourth part is not owed, to the advantage or interest of the friars themselves, nor go in this way as gifts to these others; and that they do not arrange for that which would be given at death or in illness to the friars, to be given to themselves while the donors are healthy. We intend to prevent anything of this kind by binding the friars' consciences, so that if, which God forbid, any deceit or fraud has been practised by the friars themselves, contrary to their obligation to the said priests, rectors and pastors, a strict account will be demanded at the last judgment. The rectors of parishes, pastors and prelates may not, however, exact more than this portion, nor are the friars obliged to pay more, nor may they be compelled by anyone to do so.

"In order that everything may go forward evenly and peacefully with the Lord's favour, we revoke, void, annul and invalidate completely all the privileges, favours and indults granted orally or in writing, in any form or expression of words, by ourself or our predecessors as Roman pontiffs to any of the said orders, and also customs, agreements and contracts, in so far as these are contrary to the above provisions or any one of them. We declare all such privileges to be null and void. Furthermore, by this present decree, we earnestly ask and exhort, indeed we strictly command, all prelates of churches, of whatever pre-eminence, status or dignity, and the parish priests, pastors and rectors, out of their reverence for God and the apostolic see, to show friendliness to these orders and their members, not being difficult, severe, hard or austere to the friars, but rather gracious, favourable and kind, showing them a spirit of holy generosity. They should accept the friars as suitable fellow-workers in the office of preaching and explaining God's word and in everything else mentioned above, admitting them with ready kindness and affection to a share in their labours, so as to increase their reward of eternal happiness and the fruitful harvest of souls. Nor let them be unaware that if perhaps they act otherwise, the kindness of the apostolic see, which honours these orders and their members with great favour and holds them in its heart, will with good reason be roused against them, nor can it tolerate with good will such behaviour without applying a suitable remedy. The indignation, moreover, of the heavenly king, the just rewarder, whom the friars serve with all earnestness, will not be lacking."

[11]. There are religious who presume to usurp by cunning fraud, or under a feigned title, tithes on newly tilled land or other tithes owing to churches, to which they have no legal claim, or who do not permit or even forbid tithes to be paid to the churches on animals belonging to their familiars and shepherds or others whose animals intermingle with their flocks, or on animals which they buy in many places and then hand over to the keeping of sellers or others, thus defrauding the churches, or on land the cultivation of which they have entrusted to others. If such religious, after claim has been made by those whom it concerns, do not desist within a month from the above practices, or if they do not make fitting satisfaction to the defrauded churches within two months, they are and remain suspended from their offices, administrative posts and benefices until they have desisted and made satisfaction, as stated above. If these religious have no administrative posts or benefices, they incur, in place of suspension, the sentence of excommunication, from which they cannot receive absolution before making due satisfaction, notwithstanding privileges to the contrary. We do not wish, however, this decree to apply where animals are held by oblates of the religious, provided that these oblates have given themselves and their possessions to the religious.

[12]. If a tithe on the benefices of anyone be granted for a time, the tithe can and should be raised in accordance with the customary valuing of the tithe in the regions in which the grant is made, and in the money generally current. We do not wish the chalices of churches, books and other equipment destined for divine worship to be taken or received as security or distraint by the collectors, raisers or exactors of the tithe, nor are such objects to be distrained or seized in any way.

[13]. In order that those who profess poverty in any order may persevere more readily in the vocation to which they have been called, and that those who have gone over to a non-mendicant order may apply themselves to live there more peacefully the more the ambition which produces discord and division is checked, we decree, with the approval of the sacred council, that any mendicants, who even with apostolic authority shall go over to non-mendicant orders in the future or have hitherto done so, even though they now hold the office of prior or obedientiary or other offices, or have any care or government of souls in the non-mendicant order, shall have no voice or place in the chapter, even though this be granted freely to them by the others. They may not continue to hold the office of prior or obedientiary or other offices previously held, even as vicar or minister or deputy, nor may they have the care or government of souls either directly or on behalf of others. All actions contrary to this decree shall be automatically null and void, notwithstanding any privilege whatsoever. We do not however wish this constitution to extend to those mendicant orders which the apostolic see has allowed to continue on condition that they admit no more persons to profession, and to which it has granted a general permission for passing to other approved orders.

[14]. That nothing unbecoming or corrupt find its way into that field of the Lord, namely the sacred order of the black monks, or anything grow into a ruinous crop, but rather that the flowers of honour and integrity may there produce much fruit, we decree as follows.

We forbid the monks all excess or irregularity with regard to clothes, food, drink, bedding and horses. We decree that the upper garment next to their habit should be black, brown or white, according to the custom of the region in which they live. The quality of the cloth should not exceed monastic moderation, nor should they seek what is expensive and fine, but what is practical. The garment itself should be round and not slit, neither too long nor too short; it should have broad sleeves extending to the hands, not sewn or buttoned in any way. The monks should be content with an almuce of black cloth or fur in place of a hood together with the hood of the habit which they wear, or by arrangement of the abbot they may wear unpretentious hoods which are open over the shoulders. They should not wear silk in place of fur. They may use large summer shoes or high boots for their footwear. None shall presume to wear an ornate belt, knife or spurs, or ride a horse with the saddle highly ornamented with nails or sumptuous in any other way, or with a decorative iron bridle.

In communities in which there are twelve monks or more, the abbot, prior or other superior may wear within the monastery walls a frock of the cloth customarily used for the frocks and cowls of the monastery; other monks in monasteries where frocks are customarily worn should use them also. In other monasteries, however, and in houses and priories where there is a smaller community, they should wear cowls which are closed and of becoming appearance. When the abbots, priors or other superiors and other monks set foot outside the monastery, they should wear a frock or a cowl or a closed cloak; if they wear the cloak, they should wear underneath it a cowl or, if they prefer, a scapular. When they put on albs or sacred vestments in order to minister at the divine offices, or when they are engaged in work, they may wear the scapular. Lest any uncertainty arises from the different meanings in different regions of the world of the words cowl and frock, we declare that by cowl we understand a long and full habit without sleeves, and by frock we understand a habit with long full sleeves.

At least once every month, both inside and outside the monastery, each and all of the monks must go to confession, and on the first Sunday of each month they should receive communion in the monastery, except for some reason which they should make known to the abbot, prior or confessor in the monastery; they should abide by his decision. When the rule is read in chapter, it is to be explained in the vernacular by him who presides, or by someone else appointed by him, for the sake of the younger monks. The novices shall have a competent instructor in the divine offices and in regular observance.

All shall always abstain from hunting and fowling. They shall not be present at them, nor presume to have hunting-dogs or birds of prey in their keeping or in that of others, nor permit familiars living with them to keep them, unless the monastery has woods, game preserves or warrens, or has the right to hunt on property belonging to others, in which there might be rabbits or other wild animals. They are then permitted to keep such dogs and birds, as long as they do not keep the hunting-dogs in the monastery or the houses in which they live or within the cloister, and the monks themselves do not appear at the hunt.

If someone rashly violates the above regulations, he shall be subject to the regular discipline. If he presumes to wear unlaced high shoes, or a hood not open as aforesaid, he is also suspended from conferring benefices for a year, if he is an abbot or a prior who does not have an abbot above him; if anyone else, he is suspended for a year from administrative office, if he holds any. If he has no administrative office, he is automatically disqualified for a year from holding such office or an ecclesiastical benefice. If any are deliberately present at rowdy hunting or fowling or occupied in other ways with dogs and birds, they incur automatic suspension and disqualification, according to the above distinction of persons, for two years. If the abbot or prior has been suspended from conferring benefices, this devolves, with the counsel and assent of the community or its greater part, on the claustral prior.

Some monks, as we hear, throw off the sweet yoke of regular observance and leave their monasteries, feigning that they cannot securely remain there, or under some other pretext, to wander about the courts of princes. Unless these monks' superiors grant them the pension or subsidy which they ask for, the monks conspire against their superiors, betray them or otherwise oppress them, bring about their capture and imprisonment, have their own monasteries burned, and occasionally even presume to seize in whole or in great part the property of the monastery. We wish to counter such unprincipled audacity. We forbid, by this perpetual edict, that monks and canons regular who are not administrators should presume, without special leave of their superiors, to betake themselves to the courts of princes. If, in order to do harm to their superiors or monasteries, they presume to go to such courts, we determine that they incur automatic excommunication. We nevertheless strictly enjoin on their superiors to restrain them with all diligence from visiting the said courts and from any wandering about; they are to correct severely those who do not obey. We decree that monks who keep arms inside their monastery, without leave of their abbot, incur the same sentence.

Following in the footsteps of our predecessors, we forbid by a perpetual edict that monks presume to live alone in houses and priories of which they have charge. If the incomes of such priories and houses do not suffice for the support of two, then, unless the abbots make them sufficient, let the local ordinaries, with the advice and consent of the abbots, unite these houses and priories with neighbouring places belonging to the monasteries, or with offices of the monasteries, or with one another, as will be most convenient. The monks of the places which will be united to others are first to be recalled to their monastery, and due provision is to be made, from the incomes of the said places, for the clergy who are to serve there. Furthermore, conventual priories cannot be conferred or entrusted to anyone under twenty-five, and non-conventual priories having the care of souls, even if that care is exercised by secular priests, to anyone under twenty. Those who hold priories of either kind are to have themselves ordained priest within a year from the time of their collation or commission and taking possession, or before the age of twenty-five if they are entrusted with or collated to non-conventual priories when they are under that age. If they have not done this, and are without reasonable excuse, they are deprived of the said priories, even without previous admonition, and the priories may not be conferred on them again that time. Nobody may be given or entrusted with a priory or an administrative post unless he has previously made profession in a monastic order. Those appointed to priories or administrative posts outside the monastery are not permitted to remain in the monastery and are obliged to reside where they hold office, notwithstanding any contrary custom, unless they are excused for a time from this residence for some reasonable cause, such as studies. In order to promote divine worship, we decree that every monk, at the command of his abbot, should have himself raised to all the sacred orders, unless there is some lawful excuse. Further, in order that the monks may not be deprived of the opportunity to make progress in knowledge, there should be in each monastery which has sufficient means a suitable master to instruct them carefully in the primary branches of knowledge.

All the foregoing, and those things which our predecessor pope Innocent III of happy memory decreed for greater religious observance in the monastic state, regarding clothing, poverty, silence, the eating of meat, the triennial chapter, and anything else, we approve, renew and expressly wish and decree to be strictly observed.

[15]. Considering that where discipline is despised, religion suffers shipwreck, we have thought it especially necessary to provide that such contempt produces nothing discordant in those who have dedicated themselves to Christ by vow, staining the good name of religious life and offending the divine majesty. We therefore, with the approval of this sacred council, have judged it wise to decree that every convent of nuns should be visited each year by their ordinary as follows: exempt convents subject to the apostolic see alone, by the authority of that see; non-exempt convents by the ordinary's authority, and other exempt convents, by the authority to whom they are subject. The visitors are to be very careful that the nuns—some of whom, to our sorrow, we have heard are transgressors—do not wear silk, various furs or sandals; do not wear their hair long in a horn-shaped style, nor make use of striped and multicoloured caps, do not attend dances and the banquets of seculars, do not go walking through the streets and towns by day or night; and do not lead a luxurious life in other ways. They shall carefully withdraw the nuns from the excesses and allurements of this world and persuade them to devote themselves in their convents to the cultivation of the virtues which is due to the Lord. We order the visitors to compel the nuns to observe all this by suitable measures, notwithstanding exemptions and privileges of any kind, without prejudice however to these exemptions in other respects. We also decree that anyone chosen for the office of abbess in those convents where it is customary for abbesses to be blessed, should receive that blessing within a year from the time of her confirmation in office. If she does not, unless there be reasonable cause, she has completely lost her right, and provision is to be made canonically for the monastery to be provided with an abbess by those to whom this belongs. We also order, by our apostolic authority, that those women who are commonly called secular canonesses and who lead a life like that of secular canons, making no renunciation of private property and no profession, should be visited by the local ordinaries, who are to visit the non-exempt on their own authority and the exempt on the authority of the apostolic see. By this, however, we are not intending to approve the status, rule or order of secular canonesses. We command the visitors, in making their visitation, to be content with two notaries and two persons from their own church and four other men of undoubted honour and maturity. Those who presume to hinder the visitors in their task or any part of it, unless they repent on being admonished, incur automatic excommunication, notwithstanding any privileges, statutes and customs to the contrary. '

[16]. The women commonly known as Beguines, since they promise obedience to nobody, nor renounce possessions, nor profess any approved rule are not religious at all, although they wear the special dress of Beguines and attach themselves to certain religious to whom they have a special attraction. We have heard from trustworthy sources that there are some Beguines who seem to be led by a particular insanity. They argue and preach on the holy Trinity and the divine essence, and express opinions contrary to the catholic faith with regard to the articles of faith and the sacraments of the church. These Beguines thus ensnare many simple people, leading them into various errors. They generate numerous other dangers to souls under the cloak of sanctity. We have frequently received unfavourable reports of their teaching and justly regard them with suspicion. With the approval of the sacred council, we perpetually forbid their mode of life and remove it completely from the church of God. We expressly enjoin on these and other women, under pain of excommunication to be incurred automatically, that they no longer follow this way of life under any form, even if they adopted it long ago, or take it up anew. We strictly forbid, under the same penalty, the religious mentioned above, who are said to have favoured these women and persuaded them to adopt the Beguinage way of life, to give in any way counsel, help or favour to women already following this way of life or taking it up anew; no privilege is to avail against the above. Of course we in no way intend by the foregoing to forbid any faithful women, whether they promise chastity or not, from living uprightly in their hospices, wishing to live a life of penance and serving the Lord of hosts in a spirit of humility. This they may do, as the Lord inspires them.

[17]. It happens now and then that those in charge of hospices, leper-houses almshouses or hospitals disregard the care of such places and fail to loosen the hold of those who have usurped the goods, possessions and rights of these places. They indeed permit them to slip and be lost completely and the buildings to fall into ruin. They have no care that these places were founded and endowed by the faithful so that the poor and lepers might find a home and be supported by the revenues. They have the barbarity to refuse this charity, criminally turning the revenues to their own use, even though that which has been given by the faithful for a certain purpose should, except by authority of the apostolic see, be applied to that purpose and no other. Detesting such neglect and abuse, we decree, with the approval of the sacred council, that they to whom the duty belongs by right or by statute laid down at the foundation of these places, or by lawful custom, or by privilege of the apostolic see, should strive to reform these places in all that has been referred to above. They are to restore what has been seized, lost and alienated. They should compel the persons in charge to receive the poor people and maintain them in accordance with the resources and revenues of the places. If they are remiss in this, we enjoin on the local ordinaries, even if the institutions enjoy the privilege of exemption, to fulfil each and all of the foregoing, either directly or through others, and to compel the nonexempt rectors by their own authority and the exempt and otherwise privileged rectors by the authority of the apostolic see. Those who object, of whatever state or condition they may be, and those who give them counsel, help or favour, are to be checked by ecclesiastical censure and other legal remedies. By this, however, we do not impair the validity of exemptions or privileges in relation to other matters.

In order that the above may be more readily observed, none of these places shall be conferred as benefices on secular clerics, even though this may have been observed as a custom (which we utterly condemn), unless it was otherwise determined at the foundation or unless the post is to be filled by election. But let these institutions be governed by prudent suitable men of good repute, who have the knowledge, good will and ability to rule the institutions, to take care of their property and defend their rights to advantage, to distribute their revenues faithfully for the use of needy persons, and who are not likely to divert the property to other uses. We lay these responsibilities on the consciences of those entrusted with these places, calling on the witness of the divine judgment. Those who are entrusted with the government or administration of such places shall also take an oath, after the manner of guardians, and make inventories of the property belonging to the place, and give an account each year of their administration to the ordinaries or others to whom these places are subject, or to their representatives. If anyone attempts to act otherwise, we decree that the appointment, provision or arrangement is null and void.

We do not wish, however, the foregoing to apply to the hospices of military or religious orders. For these hospices we order those in charge of them, in virtue of holy obedience, to provide in them for the poor in accordance with the institutes and ancient observances of their orders, and to show themselves duly hospitable. They shall be compelled to do this by strict disciplinary measures of their superiors, notwithstanding any statute or custom. Furthermore, our intention is that, if there are hospices which have had from old times an altar or altars and a cemetery, with priests who celebrate divine services and administer the sacraments to the poor, or if the parish priests have been accustomed to do this, these ancient customs are to be retained.

[18]. We wish the constitution to be observed which forbids that anyone even at the presentation of exempt religious, be admitted to some church, contrary custom notwithstanding, unless a portion of the revenues of that church has been assigned to him in the presence of the diocesan bishop, wherewith he may be able to meet his obligations to the bishop and have a suitable means of livelihood. We are therefore taking care, with the approval of the sacred council, to explain the constitution and to add certain considerations. Thus we strictly forbid, adjuring the divine judgment, diocesan bishops to admit anyone presented by any ecclesiastical person having the right of presentation to some church, unless within a certain suitable period, set beforehand by the bishop for the presenter, the one presented is assigned, in the bishop's presence, a suitable portion of the revenues. If the one presenting neglects to assign this within the period, we decree, lest this neglect harm the presentee, that the bishop should then admit him, unless there is some other canonical obstacle, and the power of assigning is to devolve on the bishop as a penalty against the presenter. We admonish however the diocesan bishops, adjuring the divine judgment, and we lay it on their consciences, that they act justly in assigning this portion, nor are they to be knowingly swayed by hatred or favour or in any other way to assign more or less than what is due. Of course in the churches of priories or of other places, regular as well as secular, in which religious or others, to whom the revenues belong, have been accustomed to carry the burdens mentioned above the above instructions are not to be observed; but the said religious and others are obliged to undertake all the burdens which would lie upon the permanent priests or vicars if the portion had been assigned to them, to treat the priests and vicars correctly, and to provide them with adequate and fitting sustenance. We wish the diocesan bishops to compel the religious and others by ecclesiastical censure to full observance of all this, including the assignation of a just portion by the bishop if the religious and others fail to do this themselves, notwithstanding any exemptions, privileges, customs or statutes, which we wish to be of no avail to the religious and others with regard to the above.

[19]. Since it is only reasonable that those who enjoy advantages should not refuse the burdens connected with them, we decree by the following inviolable constitution that any religious who have in any way obtained monasteries or churches, should take care to pay the procurations of legates of the apostolic see and the obligations to bishops and others which were in force before they took possession, unless they are excused by privilege of the apostolic see, exemption or other lawful cause. We do not wish, however, that such privileges or exemptions should be extended to monasteries or churches which they may happen to acquire in the future.

[20]. We have heard with sorrow that prelates visiting the monasteries of the Cistercian order, although charitably received and courteously served with all that is needful, are nevertheless not content with the food prescribed by the monastic rule. Contrary to the privileges of the said order they demand meat and if it is not served to them, they obtain it by force. Although they receive suitable alms in these monasteries, the prelates procure more for themselves against the will of the religious, sometimes even in places where neither custom nor law provide a title to procurations. They demand and extort money for their horses to be shoed, even when this is unnecessary, and their cooks demand and extort money by reason of their office; nor do they observe the arrangements made between the prelates and the monks concerning procurations.

In receiving the procurations they are so oppressive that in one short hour they consume what would last the community for a long time. They have with them, while they are receiving the procurations, their hunting-dogs, falcons and hawks. Unless their demands are met, the doors of monasteries or churches are often violently broken and the ornaments of the church are carried off. Without any privilege from the apostolic see they receive several procurations in one day occasionally paid in money, even without making a visitation; and on the occasion of these procurations they often demand from the monks what these are not obliged to pay them, laying on the monks an intolerable burden. There are also some prelates who impose on exempt and other religious the greater part of procurations due to nuncios of the apostolic see and other extraordinary burdens, in order to free themselves and secular priests, without any consultation with the religious about dividing the load. In many other ways the said prelates oppress exempt monasteries and churches which are subject to these monasteries in both civil and canon law, in receiving their procurations and in imposing unaccustomed burdens.

We wish therefore to provide a suitable remedy for this state of affairs. We decree, with the approval of the sacred council, that if the bishops come to the said monasteries not for visitation but for hospitality, they should receive graciously the refreshment offered in charity to them. But if the bishops come to these monasteries and receive the procurations due to them by common law custom, privilege or any other law, they may if they wish be served with meat on days when it is permitted, in the houses of the monasteries if these are available, but outside the monastic precincts, notwithstanding any privilege to the contrary; if the houses are not available, they may be served within the monastic precincts but not inside the religious door, as it is called. Nor do we consider it unbecoming if the fragments which are collected from the tables of the bishops and the members of their households are collected up and given by the bishops' almoners to the poor of the area. The prelates are carefully to refrain from all the other oppressions mentioned above, if they wish to avoid the indignation of God and of the apostolic see.

[21]. By the present constitution we order local ordinaries, when the matter becomes known to them, to publish or have published by their subjects the sentences of excommunication and interdict pronounced by law against those who, either on their own initiative or at the command of others, exact or extort tolls or imposts, to the danger of their own souls and the disadvantage of those they oppress, from churches or ecclesiastical persons for goods that are their own, which they are not carrying or having carried or sending for the purposes of trade. They shall continue to publish such sentences until restitution is made for the exactions and fitting satisfaction is given.

[22]. We are gravely disturbed that, owing to the negligence of some rectors, their subjects fear no punishment and so are encouraged in bad behaviour. Many ministers of churches have cast aside clerical modesty. They ought to offer to God a sacrifice of praise, the fruit of their lips, in purity of conscience and devotion of mind. Instead they presume to say or chant the canonical hours in a hurried manner, omitting parts, mingling with them conversation which is mostly vain, profane and unbecoming. They come late to choir, or often leave the church without good reason before the end of the office, occasionally carrying birds or having them carried and bringing hunting-dogs with them. As if regardless of their clerical obligations, they presume to celebrate or be present at office, even though tonsured and vested, with an utter lack of devotion. There are some, both clergy and laity, especially on the vigil of certain feasts when they ought to be in church persevering in prayer, who are not afraid to hold licentious dances in the cemeteries of the churches and occasionally to sing ballads and perpetrate many excesses. From this sometimes there follows the violation of churches and cemeteries, disgraceful conduct and various crimes; and the liturgical office is greatly disturbed, to the offence of the divine majesty and the scandal of the people nearby. In many churches also the vessels, vestments and other articles necessary for divine worship are, considering the churches' means, unworthy.

We do not wish these transgressions to increase and become a bad example to others. We therefore, with the approval of the sacred council, forbid these practices. We decree that those whose duty it is—namely the local ordinaries for the non-exempt and the superiors for the exempt and otherwise privileged-must exercise watchful, care to get rid of all negligence and carelessness, to reform the above-mentioned things and to correct each of them. Also, the day and night office is to be devoutly chanted at the proper hours in cathedrals and in regular and collegiate churches, and in other churches it is to be fittingly and duly celebrated, if ordinaries and superiors wish to avoid the indignation of God and of the apostolic see. They are to curb, if they have jurisdiction, those who oppose correction, by ecclesiastical censure and other suitable remedies. In this and other matters which concern the worship of God and the reform of morals, and also the honourable reputation of churches and cemeteries, they are to see to it, as far as duty binds them, that the sacred canons are inviolably observed, and they shall take care to be well acquainted with these canons.'

[23]. We think it altogether right and fitting that clerics, both religious and others, who belong to the household of a cardinal of the holy Roman church or of any bishop in communion with the apostolic see, should join with them in the divine office. We therefore concede, with the approval of the sacred council, that these clerics may lawfully say the same office as the cardinal or bishop, nor are they obliged to say any other.

[24]. Among the cares lying heavily on us there is one on which we reflect constantly: how we may lead the erring into the way of truth and win them for God with the help of his grace. This is what we seek earnestly and longingly, to this we direct our mind with great zeal, to this we are alert with an ever-attentive enthusiasm. We are in no doubt that to attain our desire, the word of God should be fittingly explained and preached to great advantage. Nor are we unaware that the word of God is learned in vain and returns empty to the speaker if it is directed to the ears of those ignorant of the speaker's language. We are therefore following the example of him whom we, though unworthy, represent on earth. He wished that his apostles, going through the whole world to evangelize, should have a knowledge of every tongue. We desire earnestly that holy church should be well supplied with catholic scholars acquainted with the languages most in use by unbelievers. These scholars should know how to train unbelievers in the Christian way of life, and to make them members of the Christian body through instruction in the faith and reception of sacred baptism.

In order, then, that skill in these languages be attained by suitable instruction, we have stipulated, with the approval of the sacred council, that schools be established for the following languages wherever the Roman curia happens to reside and also at Paris, Oxford, Bologna and Salamanca: that is, we decree that in each of these places there should be catholic scholars with adequate knowledge of Hebrew, Arabic and Chaldaic. There are to be two experts for each language in each place. They shall direct the schools, make faithful translations of books from these languages into Latin, and teach others those languages with all earnestness, passing on a skilful use of the language, so that after such instruction these others may, God inspiring, produce the harvest hoped for, propagating the saving faith among the heathen peoples. The salaries and expenses of these lecturers in the Roman curia will be provided by the apostolic see, those at Paris by the king of France, and those at Oxford, Bologna and Salamanca by the prelates, monasteries, chapters, convents, exempt and nonexempt colleges, and rectors of churches, of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, of Italy, and of Spain respectively. The burden of contributing shall be imposed on each in accordance with the needs of the faculties, notwithstanding any contrary privileges and exemptions, which however we do not wish to be impaired in other respects.

[25]. It is an insult to the holy name and a disgrace to the Christian faith that in certain parts of the world subject to Christian princes where Saracens live, sometimes apart, sometimes intermingled with Christians, the Saracen priests commonly called Zabazala, in their temples or mosques, in which the Saracens meet to adore the infidel Mahomet, loudly invoke and extol his name each day at certain hours from a high place, in the hearing of both Christians and Saracens and there make public declarations in his honour. There is a place, moreover, where once was buried a certain Saracen whom other Saracens venerate as a saint. A great number of Saracens flock there quite openly from far and near. This brings disrepute on our faith and gives great scandal to the faithful. These practices cannot be tolerated any further without displeasing the divine majesty. We therefore, with the sacred council's approval, strictly forbid such practices henceforth in Christian lands. We enjoin on catholic princes, one and all, who hold sovereignty over the said Saracens and in whose territory these practices occur, and we lay on them a pressing obligation under the divine judgment that, as true Catholics and zealous for the Christian faith, they give consideration to the disgrace heaped on both them and other Christians. They are to remove this offence altogether from their territories and take care that their subjects remove it, so that they may thereby attain the reward of eternal happiness. They are to forbid expressly the public invocation of the sacrilegious name of Mahomet. They shall also forbid anyone in their dominions to attempt in future the said pilgrimage or in any way give countenance to it. Those who presume to act otherwise are to be so chastised by the princes for their irreverence, that others may be deterred from such boldness.

[26]. The apostolic see has received many complaints that some inquisitors, appointed by it to suppress heresy, have overstepped the limits of the power given to them. They occasionally so enlarge their authority that what has been wisely provided by the apostolic see for the growth of the faith, oppresses the innocent under pretext of piety and results in harm to the faithful. The work of the inquisition will be the more successful the more solemnly, diligently and cautiously its investigations are prosecuted. We decree therefore, for the glory of God and the increase of the faith, that this work will be done by both diocesan bishops and by inquisitors appointed by the apostolic see. All worldly affection hatred and fear shall be put aside, as also any seeking of temporal advantage. We decree that the bishops and the inquisitors may act independently of one another. They may summon, arrest or hold for sake-keeping, even securing those arrested hand and foot if it seems necessary. For this we hold them responsible. They may also inquire about those concerning whom inquiry seems right before God and just. The bishop, however, without the inquisitor, or the inquisitor without the diocesan bishop or his officer or the delegate of the chapter when the see is vacant, may not commit to harsh or close imprisonment, which seems more like punishment than custody, or subject anyone to torture or pronounce sentence on anyone, if they can have access to each other within eight days after seeking it; any contravention of this has no legal validity. If nevertheless the bishop, or the delegate of the chapter when the see is vacant, cannot or will not personally meet the inquisitor, or if the inquisitor cannot or will not personally meet either of the other two, the matter may be entrusted to their proxies or settled by counsel and consent through letters.

In regard to the custody of prisons for heretics, commonly called walls in certain regions, we have realized that much deceit has been practised of late, and we wish to obviate this. We decree that any such prison or wall, which we wish for the future to be for the joint use of bishop and inquisitor, shall have two principal guards, discreet, diligent and trustworthy, one to be appointed and provided for by the bishop, the other by the inquisitor. Each of these guards may have a loyal and trustworthy assistant. For each room of the prison there will be two different keys, one held by each guard. He may entrust or sub-delegate his key to his assistant for the purpose of ministering to the prisoners. Furthermore, the guards, before they assume office, shall, in the presence of both the bishop, or the chapter while the see is vacant, and the inquisitor, or their substitutes, take an oath on the holy gospels, which they shall touch, that they will use all diligence and care in their duty of guarding those placed or to be placed in their custody on account of the crime of heresy; that one guard shall say nothing in secret to a prisoner out of hearing of the other guard; that they will administer faithfully and without any deduction the provisions which the prisoners receive from the administration and those that they may be offered by relatives, friends or other trustworthy persons, unless there is an order to the contrary from the bishop and the inquisitor or their deputies, and that in this matter there will be no fraud. The assistants of the guards shall take the same oath in the presence of the same persons before exercising their office. And since it often happens that bishops have their own prisons, not shared with inquisitors, we wish and strictly command that the guards appointed by the bishop, or by the chapter while the see is vacant, and their assistants, shall take a similar oath before the inquisitors or their substitutes. Notaries of the inquisition shall also swear in the presence of the bishop and the inquisitor or their substitutes, to exercise the office of notary faithfully. The same shall hold good of other persons necessary for the carrying out of this duty.

While it is a grave offence not to work for the extermination of heresy when this monstrous infection requires action, it is also a grave offence and deserving of severe punishment to impute maliciously such wickedness to the innocent. We therefore order bishops, inquisitors and their substitutes, in virtue of holy obedience and under threat of eternal damnation, that they proceed discreetly and promptly against those suspected of heresy, while not imputing maliciously or deceitfully such a disgraceful crime to an innocent person, or accusing him of hindering them in the execution of their office. If they fail, because of hatred, favour, affection, money or temporal advantage, to proceed against someone when they ought, against justice and their conscience, then the bishop or superior is suspended from office for three years and others incur automatic excommunication, in addition to other punishments imposed in accordance with the gravity of the offence. The same penalties apply if they presume for the same reasons to disturb someone with the imputation that he is a heretic or has hindered them in their duties. They shall obtain absolution from this excommunication only from the Roman pontiff, except at the hour of death, and then after making satisfaction. No privilege shall avail in this matter. We wish of course, with the approval of the sacred council, that any other rulings made by our predecessors concerning the office of the inquisition and not in conflict with the above are to remain in full force.

[27]. We do not wish the splendour of the faith to be obscured, as it were by a dark shadow, by the indiscreet and wicked acts of any inquisitors of heresy. We therefore decree, with the approval of this sacred council, that nobody below the age of forty may be entrusted with the office of inquisitor. We enjoin very strictly on all commissaries of inquisitors or of bishops or, in vacant sees, of chapters that they do not, under pretext of the office of the inquisition, extort money by any unlawful means from anyone, or knowingly attempt to apply the property of churches, on account of the offences of clerics, even to the treasury of a church. If the commissaries disobey, we place them automatically under sentence of excommunication. They cannot be absolved, except at the moment of death, until they have made full satisfaction to those from whom they have extorted the money; all privileges, pacts and remissions are of no avail. Notaries and officials of the inquisition, as also the brethren and associates of the inquisitors and commissaries, who have secret knowledge that the inquisitors and commissaries have committed such extortions, if they wish to avoid the indignation of God and of the apostolic see as well as offence to both, shall strive to correct the culprits severely in secret. If they have such knowledge as to be able to offer proof if need be, they should earnestly report the matter to the relevant superiors of the inquisitors and commissaries, and these superiors are obliged to remove from office those found guilty and then duly to punish or correct them in other ways. Superiors of inquisitors who fail to do this are to be informed of this decree by the local ordinaries, whom we strictly order in virtue of holy obedience to make known these affairs to the apostolic see. Furthermore, we strictly forbid the inquisitors themselves to abuse in any way the concession to carry arms, or to have any but the necessary officials for accomplishing the duties of their office.

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[28]. We entertain in our heart a deep longing that the catholic faith prosper in our time and that the perverseness of heresy be rooted out of Christian soil. We have therefore heard with great displeasure that an abominable sect of wicked men, commonly called Beghards, and of faithless women, commonly called Beguines, has sprung up in the realm of Germany. This sect, planted by the sower of evil deeds, holds and asserts in its sacrilegious and perverse doctrine the following errors.

1. First, that a person in this present life can acquire a degree of perfection which renders him utterly impeccable and unable to make further progress in grace. For, as they say, if someone could always make further progress, he could become more perfect than Christ.

2. Secondly, that it is not necessary to fast or pray after gaining this degree of perfection, for then the sensitive appetite has been so perfectly subjected to the spirit and to reason that one may freely grant the body whatever pleases it.

3. Thirdly, that those who have reached the said degree of perfection and spirit of liberty, are not subject to human obedience nor obliged to any commandments of the church, for, as they say, where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

4. Fourthly, that a person can gain in this life final beatitude in every degree of perfection that he will obtain in the life of the blessed.

5. Fifthly, that any intellectual nature in itself is naturally blessed, and that the soul does not need the light of glory to elevate it to see God and enjoy him blissfully.

6. Sixthly, that the practice of the virtues belongs to the state of imperfection and the perfect soul is free from virtues.

7. Seventhly, that to kiss a woman is a mortal sin since nature does not incline one to it, but the act of intercourse is not a sin, especially in time of temptation, since it is an inclination of nature.

8. Eighthly, that at the elevation of the body of Jesus Christ, they ought not to rise or show reverence to it; it would be an imperfection for them to come down from the purity and height of their contemplation so far as to think about the ministry or sacrament of the eucharist, or about the passion of Christ as man.

With the counterfeit appearance of sanctity they say and do other things also that offend the eyes of the divine majesty' and constitute a grave danger to souls. Since the duty of the office committed to us obliges us to exstirpate from the catholic church this detestable sect and the above execrable errors, lest they be further propagated and corrupt the hearts of the faithful, we condemn and utterly reject, with the approval of the sacred council, the sect itself and the errors described above, and we strictly forbid anyone henceforth to hold, approve or defend the errors. We decree that those who act otherwise are to be punished with canonical censure. The diocesans and the inquisitors of heresy for the regions where these Beghards and Beguines live, are to exercise their office with special care concerning them, making inquiries about their life and behaviour and about their beliefs in relation to the articles of faith and the sacraments of the church. They are to impose due punishment on those whom they find guilty, unless there is voluntary abjuration of the above errors and repentance with fitting satisfaction.

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[29]. Serious suggestions have been made to us that communities in certain places, to the divine displeasure and injury of the neighbour, in violation of both divine and human law, approve of usury. By their statutes, sometimes confirmed by oath, they not only grant that usury may be demanded and paid, but deliberately compel debtors to pay it. By these statutes they impose heavy burdens on those claiming the return of usurious payments, employing also various pretexts and ingenious frauds to hinder the return. We, therefore, wishing to get rid of these pernicious practices, decree with the approval of the sacred council that all the magistrates, captains, rulers, consuls, judges, counsellors or any other officials of these communities who presume in the future to make, write or dictate such statutes, or knowingly decide that usury be paid or, if paid, that it be not fully and freely restored when claimed, incur the sentence of excommunication. They shall also incur the same sentence unless within three months they delete from the books of their communities, if they have the power, statutes of this kind hitherto published, or if they presume to observe in any way these statutes or customs. Furthermore, since money-lenders for the most part enter into usurious contracts so frequently with secrecy and guile that they can be convicted only with difficulty, we decree that they be compelled by ecclesiastical censure to open their account books, when there is question of usury. If indeed someone has fallen into the error of presuming to affirm pertinaciously that the practice of usury is not sinful, we decree that he is to be punished as a heretic; and we strictly enjoin on local ordinaries and inquisitors of heresy to proceed against those they find suspect of such error as they would against those suspected of heresy.

[30]. Complaints, loud, frequent and incessant come to us from certain religious that very many prelates—bishops, their superiors and others-unjustly disturb in many ways the peace of the religious. Some of them seize and imprison exempt religious when the law does not permit this. Some, by threat of severe penalties, hinder those who owe tithes or revenues to exempt religious from paying and prevent people from hearing their masses. They suspend, interdict and excommunicate without reasonable cause the millers of the religious, their cooks, servants, vassals, and members of household, and anyone who has any relation with them, occasionally also seizing unlawfully their goods. They in no way submit to the appeals which the said exempt religious sometimes make with good reason, because of the foregoing or other oppressions. They now and then seize the appellants on the occasion of these appeals, or they have them seized and thrown into prison.

There are some prelates, moreover, who without lawful cause do not permit chaplains to celebrate nor to administer the sacraments to the parishioners in churches belonging fully and lawfully to the exempt religious. There are even some prelates who with indiscreet haste unjustly suspend, excommunicate, seize and imprison exempt abbots, monks and lay-brothers, as also clerics legally subject to them, and lay under interdict their churches and houses, if they do not obey even in matters where there is no obligation. In addition, the prelates exceed all measure in claiming charitable aid from the exempt religious themselves and from those subject to them. Contrary to law they make demands which are unjust and unusual. They lay new taxes and unfair burdens on parish churches in which exempt religious have the right of patronage. They do not permit legal actions and decisions justly made in favour of the exempt religious, by delegates of the apostolic see or by conservators, to be made public or to be put into execution by their subjects. They restrain public notaries from drawing up instruments, judges from administering justice, and lawyers from giving counsel or aid in the suits or legal business of the exempt religious.

The prelates also refuse to admit to orders or benefices those presented by exempt religious who have the right of presentation, unless the presenters profess obedience in the greeting of the letter of presentation. Furthermore, these prelates, when the churches for which monasteries have the right of patronage become vacant, turn away the suitable persons presented to them and appoint people who are incompetent and unworthy. Certain prelates confer churches, which have the cure of souls and belong to the table maintenance of abbots, and the revenues of which they sometimes hand over for a rent to secular clerics, on their own clergy at the death of those secular clerics, even though the churches because of this are not truly vacant. Some prelates appropriate unjustly for themselves the rights of monks in churches belonging to monasteries, and so regulate the disposal of the revenues that not enough remains for the livelihood of the rectors.

Some prelates, armed and with standards hoisted, destroy the mills and other property of exempt religious, disregarding all justice, even when the religious have been in possession from time immemorial. Prelates also often send their relatives and nephews to the monasteries in their cities and dioceses, occasionally with their animals and herdsmen, with the demand that they be provided for. Often also prelates compel abbots and priors of monasteries to grant the possessions of their monasteries or priories to their kindred and nephews either perpetually or for a period; these grants or pensions we wish to be of no consequence in law. They also compel the abbots and priors to present to them for vacant churches in which the monks have the right of patronage, and occasionally to receive into their order, their friends, kindred and nephews. Frequently also they permit and tacitly consent to the seizure, in the prelates' temporal domains, of movable and immovable property of the monasteries in cases not permitted by law, by the prelates' soldiers, vassals and secular officials. They also outrage in various other ways both the clerical and lay persons of the monasteries.

Besides, the prelates occasionally deprive unjustly of their benefices abbots, priors and others, so that if they can take the revenues of the benefices in the first year, under pretext of a privilege which they claim to have, then they may be able to receive the first year's revenues of vacant benefices for a certain time. Not content with this, they seize unlawfully horses, cattle, treasure and other property of monasteries and vacant benefices which should be reserved for posterity. Some prelates sell for a time to knights and other powerful persons the revenues and incomes of their dignities, in order to oppress the neighbouring exempt religious more heavily by means of these people. Some even destroy monasteries without just cause. Others often seize houses, hospitals and other property of the monasteries, both movable and immovable, and retain what they have seized. Many times also, without just cause, they prevent exempt religious from repairing their houses. Certain prelates enact statutes derogatory to the privileges of the exempt religious. And in general, very many prelates unjustly inflict grave injury and loss on religious, especially on those who are exempt and have privileges: on their persons, property and rights, both spiritual and temporal.

Since however there is for both regulars and seculars, for superiors and subjects, for exempt and non-exempt, one universal church, outside of which there is no salvation, for all of whom there is one Lord, one faith and one baptism, it is right that all who are of the same body should be of one will, and as brethren bound to one another by the bond of charity. It is right therefore that both prelates and others, exempt and non-exempt, should be content with their rights and abstain from inflicting injury or loss on one another. We therefore strictly command, by the present decree, all prelates of churches that they desist altogether from the oppression described above, and see to it that their subjects do likewise. They are to treat religious men, whether exempt or having privileges or non-exempt, both mendicant and non-mendicant, with charity, and they are to encourage them. They are to respect their rights and privileges as inviolable. And since what is specially forbidden is feared more than what is forbidden merely in general, we forbid most strictly that prelates presume to hinder in any way abbots, priors and other religious from going to their general or provincial chapters.

[31]. Religious who presume to administer the sacrament of extreme unction or the eucharist to clerics or lay people or to solemnise marriages, without the special leave of the parish priest, or to absolve those excommunicated by canon law, except in cases expressed in law or granted to them by privilege of the apostolic see, or those excommunicated by sentences promulgated by provincial or synodal statutes, or (to use their own words) to absolve anyone from punishment and guilt, incur automatic excommunication. They are to be absolved only by the apostolic see. The local ordinaries are to announce publicly that they are excommunicated, once this is established, until notified of their absolution. The religious can make no valid appeal in this matter to any exemption or privilege. We also strictly forbid religious, in virtue of holy obedience and under threat of eternal malediction, to disparage prelates in their sermons or to draw the laity away from their churches, to publish false indulgences, to restrain testators, when present at the making of their wills, from making due restitutions or legacies to their mother churches, or to bring about that money legacies, or money owed or perhaps unjustly taken, should come or be bequeathed to themselves or to other individuals of their order, or to their houses, to the detriment of other people. Nor are they to absolve anyone in cases reserved to the apostolic see or to the local ordinaries. They are not to annoy unreasonably ecclesiastical persons who prosecute justice against them, especially before judges delegated by us, nor are they to bring them to court in more than one place, especially if these places are distant.

Those who presume to act contrary to this decree are subject for two months to the penalties usually imposed by their rule or statutes on those who commit grave crimes or faults. Dispensation shall not be granted without manifest necessity. Their superiors, besides, unless after these excesses they make full satisfaction within a month to the churches or ecclesiastical persons harmed or offended, after being required to do so, incur automatic suspension until they have made due satisfaction, notwithstanding statutes or privileges of whatever tenor. Of course the religious who have been granted permission by the apostolic see to administer the sacraments to members of their household or to the poor in their hospices, are not affected by this decree.

[32]. With the approval of the sacred council, we grant by this present constitution to an archbishop passing through, or perhaps turning aside, to exempt localities of his diocese to have the cross carried openly before him, to bless the people, to hear the divine offices there privately or publicly, also to celebrate them in pontificals and to have them celebrated in his presence without pontificals, notwithstanding any contrary privilege. In like manner we grant to a bishop that in exempt localities of his diocese he may bless the people, hear the divine offices and celebrate them there, as also have them celebrated in his presence. Under pretext of this concession, however, the archbishop or bishop may exercise no other jurisdiction in the exempt or privileged localities. He is not to annoy the exempt or privileged persons, there should be no cause for complaint and nothing prejudicial to the exemption or privileges of the religious. The archbishop or bishop does not acquire by this decree any other right.

[33]. If anyone at the instigation of the devil has committed the sacrilege of wrongfully and rashly striking a bishop, or of seizing or banishing him, or has ordered these things to be done, or approved them when done by others, or been an accomplice, or given advice or shown favour, or knowingly defended the guilty, and has not incurred excommunication by canons already published, he is excommunicated by this our present constitution, notwithstanding any custom to the contrary. Indeed, with the approval of the sacred council, we consider such a custom to be a corruption, and the culprit may be absolved by the supreme pontiff only, except at the moment of death. In addition, he shall lose all fiefs, leases, offices and benefices, whether spiritual or temporal, which he holds from the church over which the offended bishop presides. All these shall revert freely to that church. The offender's descendants in the male line to the second generation shall be disqualified, without hope of dispensation, from holding ecclesiastical benefices in the city and diocese of the bishop. The offender's estates also, when within one diocese, shall lie under interdict until he has made due satisfaction. The place where the captured bishop is detained shall likewise be under interdict for as long as he remains detained. If the criminal's estates include two or more dioceses, then the diocese of his principal domicile and the diocese where the crime was committed, if the land is his, and two other dioceses which belong to his territory and are nearest to the place of the crime, shall he under the same interdict.

Since his confusion will increase the more his offence is known, his excommunication will be announced in public, with the ringing of bells and candles burning, until he has made due satisfaction, in all the places where the crime was committed, as also in the churches of the neighbouring cities and dioceses, on all Sundays and feast days. And when he is to receive absolution, let him be well prepared to undergo the punishment imposed and, with the help of God, to perform the penance enjoined on him. The city, moreover, that has committed any of the crimes described above against its bishop, shall be placed under the above-mentioned interdict until it has made satisfaction. The authorities, counsellors, bailiffs, magistrates, advocates, consuls, governors and officials of any description who are at fault in this affair, are likewise subject to excommunication from which they can be absolved only in the manner stated above. All these instructions shall be observed all the more strictly in dealing with those who kill bishops, since they should be punished more severely than the offenders already mentioned and merit greater indignation.

Let nobody be surprised that we do not inflict heavier punishment on those who perpetrate the above crimes. Alas! shameful to relate, these crimes are of frequent occurrence, and for the many men of violence an example is needed. The punishment of the offender ought to be in proportion to the dignity of the person wronged. Bishops are called most holy, are Christ's ambassadors, spiritual fathers, our brothers and fellow bishops, the acknowledged pillars of the church. The punishment, then, ought to be heavy, proportionate to the guilt of one who violates the dignity of such an eminent person. However, we wish to mitigate the severity of the punishment for the present, being prepared to impose other penalties if we see that the offenders' insolence demands such action. If of course anyone involved in the above cases has been absolved at the moment of death from excommunication, he shall incur automatically the same sentence if after recovery he does not, as soon as conveniently possible, present himself before the Roman pontiff in order to receive humbly his commands, as justice shall advise. Although this has been fully enough provided for elsewhere in the law, we thought it well to make this addition, lest someone from ignorance of the law should busy himself to find excuses.

[34]. Many serious complaints have reached us that some who hold temporal power do not hesitate to capture ecclesiastics frequently and detain them with sacrilegious audacity until they resign their benefices, nor to prevent those summoned to the apostolic see by someone or by law from going there, for the most part seizing them as they depart. In view of the great offence to our honour and that of the apostolic see, as also to the peace and welfare of ecclesiastical persons, not to speak of the damnable scandal, we, with the approval of the sacred council, decree that, in addition to the penalty attached by the canon to such deeds, those who bring them about, if prelates, are suspended for three years from receiving the revenues of their churches. If they are lower clergy, they are automatically deprived of their benefices. Those who have brought about their own capture by the secular power—this, we have heard, sometimes occurs—as a pretext for not obeying a summons to the apostolic see, are to incur the same penalty. Resignations of benefices extorted in the above manner, although accepted and ratified by the prelates of those who resign, have no validity whatever. We enjoin on local ordinaries that, after learning that subjects of theirs have incurred these penalties, they do not delay in publishing them and, as far as it concerns them, they put the penalties into execution.

[35]. Desiring to restrain those whom the rewards of virtue do not induce to observe the law, by the addition of new penalties and by fear of those to be added, we decree that transgressors of the constitution which forbids mendicant religious to acquire houses or places of any kind, or to exchange those already acquired or transfer them to others under any title of alienation, are automatically subject to excommunication.

The same sentence of excommunication is incurred by those religious who presume in their sermons or otherwise to restrain their hearers from due payment of tithes to churches. And since it is not enough to abstain from evil unless good is done, we enjoin on all religious, invoking the divine judgment and under threat of eternal malediction, that whenever they preach to the people on the first, fourth and last Sundays of Lent, and on the feasts of the Ascension of the Lord, Pentecost, the Birthday of blessed John the Baptist, the Assumption and the Birthday of the most blessed virgin Mary, the mother of God, they take care to exhort their hearers expressly, if required by the rectors or vicars of the churches or those taking their place, and also to inform the consciences of their penitents in confession, that they have the obligation to pay tithes. If the religious knowingly evade this duty in their sermons on the above-mentioned days, they are to receive a severe rebuke from their superiors. We also strictly command the superiors, in virtue of holy obedience, to enact laws in accordance with which they may so severely punish transgressors that their punishment may be an example for others. The constitution of our predecessor of happy memory pope Gregory IX, dealing with this matter, is to remain in full force. Those who knowingly have neglected to inform the consciences of penitents with regard to payment of these tithes, are automatically to remain suspended from preaching until they inform the consciences of their penitents, if they can conveniently do this. They are to incur automatic excommunication if they presume to preach without atoning for their neglect as above. We do not however wish this to apply to the religious of monasteries, or the rectors of churches, who are in receipt of tithes.

Rash violators of the constitution which forbids religious and secular clerics to induce anyone to vow, swear, pledge or otherwise promise that they will choose a burial place beside their churches or, having made this choice, that they will not alter it, incur automatically the same sentence of excommunication (the penalty in the said constitution is to remain in force); they are not to be absolved except by the apostolic see, except at the moment of death, notwithstanding any privileges or statutes of whatever tenor.

[36]. Grave complaint has been made to us by prelates that certain nobles and temporal lords, when their territory has been laid under ecclesiastical interdict, have masses and other divine offices celebrated publicly and solemnly not only in the chapels of their houses, but also in collegiate churches and other churches of prominent places. They invite and, what is worse, sometimes compel now these, now those, to celebrate the offices. Not content with these excesses, they have people summoned, even those under interdict, by the ringing of bells and by the public crier, to hear these masses. Some of the lords and nobles are not afraid to order people, for the most part their own subjects, although they are publicly under excommunication and interdict, not to leave the churches while mass is being celebrated, even though the celebrants urge their departure. It therefore happens frequently that mass is left unfinished to the offence of God and the scandal of clergy and people. In order, then, that excesses so grave may not be imitated because the transgressors are left unpunished, we excommunicate, with the approval of the sacred council, all those who shall presume to compel anyone in any way in places under interdict to celebrate the divine offices, or to summon people in the above way to hear them, especially those under excommunication or interdict. The same penalty is imposed on those who forbid persons publicly excommunicated or under interdict to leave the church during mass when warned to do so by the celebrant, also on those publicly excommunicated and those under interdict who presume to remain in church when named by the celebrant and warned that they must leave. The excommunications can be remitted only by the apostolic see.

[37]. The friars Minor receive into their churches to hear the divine offices in time of interdict brothers and sisters of the third order, instituted by blessed Francis; they are called continent or of penance. Since this practice generates scandal in the minds of others who are excluded, thus debasing ecclesiastical censure and weakening the force of an interdict, we strictly forbid the friars Minor to admit henceforth in any way to their churches for the divine offices in time of interdict any of the above-mentioned persons, even if they or the friars have privileges of any kind in this matter; we in no way favour such privileges. If the friars infringe this decree, they lie under automatic excommunication, from which they can only be absolved by the Roman pontiff or, if they have made satisfaction, by the local bishops, whom we wish to act in this matter by our authority.

[38]. I came out of paradise, I said: I will water my garden of plants. Thus speaks the heavenly cultivator, who is truly the source of wisdom, God's Word, begotten by the Father from eternity, yet remaining in the Father. In these last days, made flesh in the womb of a virgin by the operation of the holy Spirit, he went forth to the arduous work of redeeming the human race, giving himself to humanity as the model of a heavenly life. But because so often people, overcome by the anxieties of this mortal life, turned their mental gaze away from such a model, our true Solomon has made in the realm of the church militant, among other gardens, a garden of delight, far from the stormy waves of the world, in which people might devote themselves with greater peace and security to contemplating and imitating the works of the exemplar, and he himself entered this world that he might refresh it with the fertile waters of his spiritual grace and teaching.

This garden is the holy religion of the friars Minor which, enclosed within the firm walls of regular observance, is content with God alone and is constantly enriched with fresh shoots, her sons. Entering this garden, the beloved Son of God gathers the myrrh and spices of mortification and penance which by their marvellous fragrance diffuse to everyone the perfume of an attractive sanctity. This is that form and rule of the heavenly life sketched by that eminent confessor of Christ, saint Francis, who taught his sons its observance by both word and example. The observers of that holy rule, men of zeal and devotion, as both pupils and true sons of so great a father, aspired and still ardently aspire to observe that rule faithfully in all its purity and fullness. They perceived certain particulars of which the interpretation was doubtful, and they prudently had recourse to the apostolic see for clarification. Receiving assurance from that see, to which their very rule proclaims allegiance, they were able to serve the Lord, free from all doubt, in the fullness of charity. Several Roman pontiffs, our predecessors, rightfully heeded their pious and just requests; they defined doubtful points, promulgating certain interpretations and making some concessions, as they thought good for the consciences of the friars and the purity of religious observance. But because there are devout consciences which very often fear sin where it does not exist, and dread any turning in the way of God, the previous clarifications have not fully quietened the consciences of all the friars. There are still some points belonging to their rule and state of life where doubts arise, as many have often told us in public and private consistories. For this reason the friars themselves have humbly entreated us to clarify opportunely the doubts which have arisen and those which may arise in the future, thus applying a remedy by the kindness of the apostolic see.

We have from a tender age had a warm devotion to those who profess this rule and to the whole order. Now that, though unworthy, we bear the office of universal pastor, we are the more roused to cherish them and to honour them more kindly and attentively, the more often we consider and reflect on the plentiful harvest reaped continually from their exemplary lives and wholesome teaching for the good of the universal church. Moved by the pious intentions of the petitioners, we have directed our efforts to carry out diligently what they ask. We have had a careful examination made of these doubts by several archbishops, bishops, masters in theology and other learned, prudent and discreet men.

At the beginning of the rule it is said: "The rule and life of the friars Minor is this, to observe the gospel of our lord Jesus Christ, by living in obedience without property and in chastity"2. Also, further down: "Having completed a year of probation, let them be received to obedience, promising always to observe this life and rule"3. Also, towards the end of the rule: "Let us observe poverty, humility and the gospel of our lord Jesus Christ, which we have firmly promised"4. There was uncertainty whether the friars of the order were obliged to all the precepts and counsels of the gospel by profession of their rule. Some said they were obliged to all. Others, however, asserted that they were obliged to three only, namely "to live in obedience, in chastity and without property", and to what was stated as obligatory in the rule. With regard to this article we follow in the footsteps of our predecessors and, giving this article further clarification, we answer the doubt as follows. Since every determinate vow must have a defined object, he who vows to follow the rule cannot be considered obliged by his vow to those evangelical counsels which are not mentioned in the rule. And indeed this is shown to have been the intention of blessed Francis the founder, from the fact that he laid down certain counsels in the rule but omitted others. For if by those words, "The rule and life of the friars Minor is this" etc. he had intended to oblige them to all the evangelical counsels, it would have been superfluous and futile to include some of them and not others.

However, since the nature of a restrictive term demands the exclusion of everything foreign to it but includes everything belonging to it, we declare that the friars are bound by the profession of their rule not only to those three vows simply and solely, but also to everything related to them expressed in the rule itself. For if the friars were obliged to observe the three vows precisely and no more, in their promise to observe the rule by living in "obedience, chastity and without property", and not also to observe everything contained in the rule that is relevant to those vows, then the words "I promise to observe always this rule" would be useless, as implying no obligation. We must not think, however, that blessed Francis intended to impose on those who profess this rule the same obligation regarding everything in the rule relating to the three vows, or anything else contained in the rule. Rather, he made a clear distinction: in some matters his words imply that transgression is a mortal sin, in others not, since he applies to some the word "precept" or its equivalent, while elsewhere he is content to use other expressions.

Besides those things laid down in the rule expressly in words of precept or exhortation or admonition, there are some things in the imperative mood in either a negative or an affirmative form. Concerning these, there has been up to now some doubt as to whether they are of precept. This doubt is not made less but rather increased by the declaration of our predecessor pope Nicholas III' of happy memory, that the friars are obliged by rule to those evangelical counsels which the rule expresses in form of precept or prohibition or equivalent words and, in addition, to the observance of everything that the rule imposes in words of obligation. The friars therefore begged that we would, for their peace of conscience, graciously define which of these matters should be considered equivalent to precepts and obligatory. We therefore, delighted by their sincerity of conscience, observing that in matters affecting salvation the safer path is to be taken in order to avoid grave remorse of conscience, say that, although the friars are not obliged to observe everything expressed by the rule in the imperative mood in the way that they are obliged to observe matters which are explicitly or equivalently of precept, it is right for them, if they are to observe the rule strictly in its purity, to acknowledge that they are bound to observe in this way the injunctions noted below.

In order to summarise these things which appear equivalent to precepts, in virtue of the words or at least of the subject-matter, or of both, we declare the following to be of obligation for the friars, as expressed in the rule: not having more tunics than one "with a hood, and one without a hood"2, not wearing shoes, and not riding a horse except in case of necessity; that the friars "wear cheap clothes"5; that they fast "from the feast of all saints to Christmas"6 and on Fridays; that "clerics recite the divine office according to the rite of the holy Roman church"7; that ministers and guardians take great care "of the needs of the sick and of the friars' clothing"8, that, "if a friar falls ill, the other friars are to wait on him"9; that "the friars are not to preach in the diocese of a bishop when he has forbidden them this"; that "nobody ventures at all to preach to the people unless he has been examined, approved and appointed for this by the minister general" or by others having authority according to the aforesaid declaration; that "friars who know that they cannot observe the rule in detail, may and should have recourse to their ministers"3; and everything laid down in the rule regarding the form of the habit of both novices and professed friars, the manner of reception, and profession, except for the habit of novices with regard to those admitting them (here the rule which says "according to God it may seem otherwise"4 may be followed). The order generally has judged, holds and has held from of old that wherever in the rule there occurs the words "they shall be bound", there is a precept and the friars ought to act as bound by precept.

The confessor of Christ, when prescribing the practice of the friars and their ministers in relation to the reception of those entering the order, said in the rule: "The friars and their ministers shall take care not to be solicitous about their temporal goods, but leave them free to do with them whatever the Lord inspires them to do; the ministers may have leave, however, to send them to some God-fearing men, if counsel be needed, who may advise them how to give their goods to the poor"5. Many of the friars were uncertain, and still are, whether they may receive anything from those who enter, if it is given; whether they may without fault persuade them to give to individuals and friaries; and whether the ministers themselves or the friars ought to give advice concerning the disposal of property, when there are other suitable advisers to whom the entrants can be sent. We observe attentively that saint Francis intended to banish from his disciples, whose rule he had based on a very strict poverty, all affection for the temporal goods of those entering the order, especially in using the above words in order that, on the part of the friars, reception into the order might appear holy and pure. They should be seen to have no eye to their temporal goods, but only to deliver the novices up to the divine service. We say that both ministers and friars ought to abstain from persuasion to give them the property, and also from advice as to its distribution. They should send those who seek counsel to God-fearing men of another state, not to friars. In this way all will see them truly as zealous and perfect observers of their father's sound tradition. Since however the rule itself wishes those entering to be free to do as the Lord inspires concerning their property, it does not seem unlawful for the friars to receive something, in view of their needs and in accordance with the aforesaid declaration, if the entrant freely wishes to give it, as he would to other poor people by way of alms. The friars however do well to take care, in accepting such offerings, that they do not create an unfavourable impression by the amount they receive.

The rule says that "those who have promised obedience should have one tunic with a hood, and another without a hood, those who wish to have it"; also, that "all the friars should wear cheap clothes"' . We have declared that the said words are equivalent to precepts. In order to express this more clearly, however, we say that it is not lawful to have more tunics, except when this is necessary in accordance with the rule, as our said predecessor has more fully explained. As for the poverty of the clothes, both of the habit and of the inner clothing, it is to be judged in relation to the customs and observances of the country, as to the colour of the cloth and the price. There cannot be one standard for every region. We think that this poverty in dress should be entrusted to the judgment of the ministers and guardians; they must form their own consciences, but see to it that poverty in dress is maintained. In the same way we leave it to the judgment of the ministers and guardians as to when the friars have need to wear shoes.

The rule refers to two periods: "from the feast of all saints until Christmas", and especially in Lent, when the friars are obliged to fast. We find inserted in the rule: "at other times they are not obliged to fast, with the exception of Fridays"3. From these statements some have concluded that the friars are not obliged to observe any other fasts except from propriety. We declare that they are not obliged to fast at other times except at the times established by the church. For it is not probable that either he who instituted the rule or he who confirmed it intended to dispense the friars from observing the fasting days to which the general law of the church obliges other Christians.

When St Francis, wishing his friars to be completely detached from money, commanded "firmly all the friars not to accept money in any manner, either directly or through some other person"4, this same predecessor of ours, in his interpretation, defined the cases and the ways in which the friars cannot and ought not to be called receivers of money against the rule and sincerity of their order. We declare that the friars must take the greatest care that they have no recourse to those who give money or their agents in ways other than those defined by our said predecessor, lest they deservedly be called transgressors of the precept and rule. For when there is a general prohibition, anything not expressly granted is understood to be refused. For this reason, all collection of money and acceptance of offerings in church or elsewhere, boxes for storing offerings or gifts of money, and any other recourse to money or those who have it which is not allowed by the said declaration, is, we say, completely and absolutely forbidden. Recourse to special friends is expressly allowed in only two cases, according to the rule. These are "the needs of the sick and the clothing of the friars"'. Our said predecessor kindly and wisely extended this permission, in view of their needy life, to other wants of the friars which can occur or even be pressing when there are no alms. The friars however are to observe that for no other reasons except the above or those of a similar kind, may they have recourse to such friends, either on the road or elsewhere, whether their friends themselves give the money or their representatives, messengers or trustees, whatever name they are given, even if the ways granted by the above declaration are entirely observed.

The confessor of Christ wished above all that those who professed his rule should be completely detached from love and desire of earthly things, and in particular from money and its use, as is proved by his constantly repeating in the rule the prohibition of accepting money. When, therefore, the friars need, for the reasons mentioned above, to have recourse to those who have money, destined for their needs, whether they are their principal benefactors or their envoys, these friars should so behave in the eyes of all as to show that they are completely unconcerned as regards money, as indeed it does not belong to them. Therefore such actions as to order that the money be spent and in what way, to exact an account, to ask for the return of the money in any way, to put it away or have it put away, and to carry a money-box or its key, are unlawful for the friars. These actions belong properly to the owners who gave the money and to their agents.

When the saint expressed the manner of the friars' poverty in the rule, he said: "The friars should make nothing their own, neither house nor land nor anything, but go confidently to seek alms as pilgrims and strangers serving the Lord in poverty and humility"2. This is also the renunciation defined by certain of our predecessors as Roman pontiffs, to be understood both specifically and in general. These pontiffs have therefore accepted for themselves and for the Roman church the absolute ownership of everything granted, offered or given to the friars, leaving them simply the right of use. Yet we have been asked to examine certain practices that are said to go on in the order and seem repugnant to the vow of poverty and the sincerity of the order.

The following are the practices which we believe are in need of remedy. The friars not only allow themselves to inherit, but even bring this about. They sometimes accept annual revenues so high that the friaries concerned can live completely on them. When their affairs, even of a temporal kind, are debated in the courts, they assist the advocates and procurators; in order to encourage them, they present themselves in person. They accept the office of executor of wills and carry it out. They sometimes meddle with settlements involving usury or unjust acquisition and the restitution to be made. Sometimes they have not only extensive gardens but also large vineyards, from which they collect great quantities of vegetables and wine to sell. At the time of harvest they collect so much corn and wine by begging or buying, storing them in their cellars and granaries, that they can live off them without begging for the rest of the year. They build churches or other edifices, or have them built, of such size, style and costliness that they seem to be the abodes of the wealthy not of the poor. The friars in very many places have so many church ornaments and so obviously precious ones as to surpass in this the great cathedrals. They also accept indiscriminately horses and arms offered to them at funerals.

Yet the community of friars, and in particular the rulers of the order, asserted that the above abuses, or most of them, did not exist in the order and any friars found guilty in such matters are punished rigorously. Moreover, very strict laws were passed long ago in the order to prevent such abuses. Wishing, therefore, to provide for the consciences of the friars and to remove, as far as we can, all doubt from their hearts, we give the following replies.

For a way of life to be authentic, outward actions must correspond to the interior attitude of mind. The friars, therefore, who have torn themselves away from temporal possessions by so great a renunciation, must abstain from all that is or may seem to be contrary to that renunciation. Now, heirs acquire not only use of their inheritance but, in time, ownership also, and the friars cannot acquire anything for themselves in particular or for their order in general. We therefore declare that the absoluteness of their vow renders the friars altogether incapable of such inheritance, which of its nature extends both to money and to other movable and immovable goods. Nor may they allow themselves to be left or accept as a legacy the value of such inheritance, or a great part of it, so that it could be presumed that this was done by deceit; indeed, we absolutely forbid this.

Since annual revenues are considered by law as immovable goods, and are contrary to poverty and mendicancy, there is no doubt that the friars may not accept or have revenues of any kind, given their state of life, just as they may not have possessions or even their use, since this use is not granted to them.

Further, not only what is known to be evil, but also everything which has the appearance of evil, should be specially avoided by perfect men. Now, to be present in court and urge their case, when the law is concerned with matters of advantage to them, leads people to believe from external appearances that the friars present are seeking something as their own. In no way, therefore, ought the friars who profess this rule and vow, to meddle in legal processes in such courts. By abstention they will be thought well of by outsiders, and they will live up to the purity of their vow and avoid scandal to their neighbour. Indeed, the friars are to be complete strangers not only to the acceptance, possession, ownership or use of money, but even to any handling of it, as our said predecessor has repeatedly and clearly said in his interpretation of the rule. Also, the members of this order cannot go to law for any temporal thing. The friars may therefore not lend themselves to such legal processes, but rather consider them forbidden by the purity of their state, because these activities cannot be concluded without litigation and the management or administration of money. Nevertheless they do not act in a manner contrary to their state if they give advice for the execution of these affairs, since this advice does not confer upon them any jurisdiction or legal authority or administration with regard to temporal goods.

Certainly it is not only lawful but very reasonable that the friars who devote themselves to the spiritual works of prayer and study should have gardens and open spaces for recollection and recreation, and sometimes in order to provide a bodily distraction after their spiritual labours, as also to cultivate vegetables for their needs. To keep gardens, however, in order to cultivate vegetables and other garden produce for sale, and vines likewise, is inconsistent with the rule and purity of their order. Our said predecessor has declared and also ordained that if, for this kind of use, someone were to leave a field or a vineyard or something of this nature to the friars, they should refrain absolutely from accepting it, since to have such things in order to receive the price of the produce in season is similar to having an income.

Again, saint Francis has shown, both by the example of his life and by the words of his rule, that he wishes his brothers and sons, relying on divine providence, to cast their burden on the Lord, who feeds the birds of the air, which neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns. It is not likely, then, that he would have wished them to have granaries or wine-cellars, when they hope to live by daily begging. And for that reason they should not lay by provisions from some slight fear, but only when it is very probable from experience that they will not otherwise find the necessities of life. We therefore consider that the decision should be left to the consciences of the ministers and guardians, both as a body and separately in their offices and guardianships, acting with the advice and consent of the guardian and two discreet older priests from a house of the order in the area.

The saint wished to establish his friars in the greatest poverty and humility, both in inclination and in fact, as practically the whole rule proclaims. It is only right, then, that they should in no way build, or allow to be built, churches or edifices of any kind which, in relation to the numbers of friars living there, might be considered excessive in number or in size. We therefore wish that, everywhere in the order, the friars should be satisfied with buildings which are modest and humble, lest outward appearances, which strike the eye, should contradict the great poverty promised by the heart.

Although church ornaments and vessels are ordained to the honour of God's name, for which purpose God created everything, yet he who discerns what is secret looks chiefly at the heart of those who serve him, not at their hands. He does not wish to be served through things which jar with the professed life-style of his servants. The friars should therefore be content with vessels and church ornaments which are seemly in appearance and sufficient in size and number. Excess, costliness or over-elaboration in these or in anything else does not become the friars' profession or state of life. Everything which smacks of treasure and abundance detracts, in the eyes of people, from the profession of such great poverty. We therefore wish and command the friars to observe what we have said.

As for the presents of horses and arms, we decree that everywhere and in everything the aforesaid declaration concerning alms of money be observed.

From the above matters, however, there has arisen among the friars an uneasy question, namely, whether their rule obliges them to a strict and meagre use of things. Some of the friars believe and say that, just as they are vowed to a very strict renunciation of ownership, they are also enjoined the greatest restraint in the use of things. Other friars on the contrary assert that by their profession they are not obliged to any restrained use that is not expressed in the rule; they are however obliged to a temperate use, in the same way as other Christians and even more fittingly. Wishing, then, to give peace to the friars' consciences and to put an end to these disputes, we declare that the friars Minor in professing their rule are obliged specially to the strict and restrained use expressed in the rule. To say, however, as some are said to assert, that it is heretical to hold that a restricted use of things is or is not included in the vow of evangelical poverty, this we judge to be presumptuous and rash.

Finally, when the rule states by whom and where the minister general should be elected, it makes no mention at all of the election or appointment of provincial ministers. There can arise some uncertainty among the friars on this point. We wish them to be able to go forward with clarity and security in all they do. We therefore declare, decree and ordain in this constitution of perpetual validity, that when a province is to be provided with a minister, his election belongs to the provincial chapter. It shall hold the election the day after assembling. The confirmation of the election belongs to the minister general. If this election is made by ballot, and the votes are divided in such a way that several ballots are made without agreement, then the choice made by the numerical majority of the chapter (leaving aside considerations of zeal or merit), notwithstanding objections of any kind from the other side, is to be confirmed or invalidated by the minister general. Having first given careful consideration to the matter, in accordance with his office, he shall take counsel with discreet members of the order, so that a decision is made which is pleasing to God. If the minister general invalidates the election, the provincial chapter shall vote again. If the chapter does not elect its minister on the day mentioned, the minister general shall freely provide a provincial minister. There are, however, certain provinces—Ireland, Greece and Rome—which are said to have had until now, for just reasons, another way of providing the provincial minister. In these cases, if the minister general and the general chapter judge, with good reason, that the provincial minister should be appointed by the minister general, with the advice of good religious of the order, rather than by the election of the provincial chapter, this shall be done without dispute for the provinces of Ireland, Rome and Greece when the previous provincial minister dies or is relieved of office on this side of the sea; there shall be no deceit, partiality or fraud, the burden resting on the consciences of those who decide the appointment. As for the dismissal of provincial ministers, we wish the order to retain the procedure which has been customary up to now. For the rest, if the friars are without a minister general, his duties shall be carried out by the vicar of the order until there is a new minister general. Further, if there be any attempted violation of this decree concerning the provincial minister, such action shall be automatically null and void.

Let nobody therefore ... If anyone however ...'

Notes

1. 16 May 1312, from Regestum 7952

2. The introductory address given in Regestum 9983 is omitted here because many other introductory addresses are known of (see Regestum VIII, pp. 416-420). Regestum gives two versions of the letter. The one used here as the base text (Regestum 9983) is addressed to each and all of the bishops. The other is addressed to king Philip of France (= P), see Regestum 8986 (19 Dec. 1312).

3. P adds: Indeed our beloved son in Christ, Philip the illustrious king of the Franks, who together with our beloved son in Christ, Louis the illustrious king of Navarre, was present at the council, showed himself to be the most Christian of princes. He had the cause of the holy Land very much at heart. He burned with zeal of faith and devotion to rescue the holy Land from the hands of the impious and to right the wrongs there of him who underwent disgrace and shame for the sake of our redemption. He so directed and still directs the desires of his heart, that he undertook in the council the business of the general crusade ordained by us intending therefore to take for a certain time the sign of the life-giving cross, with the deliberate purpose of sailing personally with his forces to the aid of the holy Land.

4. But actually we ....holy gospels of God"] And at last, commending in the Lord this purpose of the king, so acceptable to God, we thought it fitting and most proper that we and the church ought to assist such a glorious prince in proceeding with this great enterprise. We observed especially that because the cities and other places once held by the faithful had been laid waste by the wild rage of the enemy, there was no place left to admit the champions of the faith. The enterprise would be more costly than formerly when some of the king's ancestors and other Christian princes had sailed to the aid of the holy Land; then the cities and places were prosperous and could produce and admit catholic warriors. We therefore judged that the tithe for six years, namely that on the ecclesiastical revenues and incomes of France, which used to be paid in times past in that kingdom, should be granted to the king to help him in his enterprise, so that he might use it for the aid of the holy Land. We therefore ask, admonish and exhort earnestly all our venerable brothers, the archbishops and bishops, our beloved chosen sons, the abbots, priors, deans, provosts, archdeacons, archpriests and other prelates of churches, the chapters, colleges and convents of the Cistercians, Cluniacs, Premonstratensians, of saints Benedict and Augustine, of the Carthusians, Grandmontines and other orders, and other secular and regular ecclesiastical persons, exempt and non-exempt, in the kingdom of France, with the exception only of the persons and places belonging to the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem and of the other military orders, by our other letters, and also enjoining on them strictly by apostolic ordinance and in virtue of obedience, to pay the tithe, each and all of them, out of reverence for God, the apostolic see and us, for six years, which we wish to be reckoned from the next feast of blessed Mary Magdalen. We enjoin further on each archbishop and bishop to claim and collect from each and all of the abbots, priors, deans, provosts, archdeacons, archpriests and other prelates of churches, the chapters, colleges and convents, and other non-exempt secular and regular ecclesiastical persons, in their cities and dioceses, except for the persons and places of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem and of the other military orders. The collection is to be made directly or through other persons appointed by them in each city and diocese, from the ecclesiastical revenues and incomes, in the usual manner for the periods stated below, namely for half of the first year on the next feast of blessed Mary Magdalen and for the remaining half on the coming feast of the purification of the blessed virgin Mary, and so on for the remaining five years. The tithe should be collected without difficulties being made and by our authority. We empower and command, by our aforesaid letters, the persons delegated by the archbishops and bishops to make this collection, to claim and collect this tithe by our authority from the abbots, priors, deans, provosts, archdeacons, archpriests and other prelates of churches, the chapters, colleges and convents, and other exempt secular and regular ecclesiastical persons, with the exception of the persons and places of the Hospital of saint John of Jerusalem and the other military orders. The tithe is to be collected for the years and periods mentioned above. The archbishops and bishops, as also their delegates, are to take care to transfer to you, our deputies, their own tithe and that of others as collected by themselves or their delegates for each of the six years. You are to assign the collection to the king of France or his delegate or delegates for the purpose of the crusade. In order that you may more easily and effectively collect and assign this tithe, we grant you by the present document free and unrestricted power, in virtue of our authority, to compel the archbishops and bishops and their delegates, disregarding any appeal, to the fulfilment and collection of this tithe and its assignation, as prescribed. We also grant you the same full power in imparting absolution to those archbishops and bishops bound by sentences of excommunication, suspension or interdict for not paying the tithe in due time, after they have made satisfaction, and of dispensing with those bound by such sentences who have contracted irregularity by celebrating or taking part in divine worship. P

5. 31 December; from Regestum 9984

6. 13 January 1313; from Regestum 8973

Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE
Under Pope John XXIII

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Introduction 1

[This is the introduction given by Tanner in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils]

This council was summoned by John XXIII, the Pisan pope [1], with the support of Emperor Sigismund. It began on 5 November 1414 in the cathedral of Constance, with many bishops from all parts of Europe. Business in the council was transacted in a way that was largely new for an ecumenical council, namely votes were cast not by Individual persons but by nations.

The council, from the very beginning, proposed the following three topics:

1. To bring unity back to the church and to make an end to the schism which had divided the church since 1378 and which the council held at Pisa in 1409 had not healed but rather aggravated when it elected Alexander V as a third pope. When the council of Constance opened, Christians owed obedience to three different popes: some owed obedience to Gregory XII of the Roman party others to Benedict XIII of the Avignon party, and others to John XXIII, who had been elected after the death of Alexander V. John XXIII and Benedict XIII were deposed by the council, Gregory XII voluntarily resigned. Then Martin V was elected pope on 11 November 1417 and he was regarded as the legitimate pontiff by the church as a whole.

2. To eradicate heresies, especially those spread by John Wyclif in Britain and by John Hus and Jerome of Prague in Bohemia.

3. To reform the corrupt morals of the church. This, however, was only partly accomplished in the final sessions of the council.

With regard to the ecumenical nature of the sessions, there is dispute about those before the election of Martin V and also about the significance and force of the approval which he gave to the matters transacted by the council. The decrees notably those of sessions 3-5 and the decree Frequens (session 39), appear to proceed from the council's teaching. Objection has been made to them on the grounds of the primacy of the Roman pontiff. There is no doubt, however, that in enacting these decrees there was solicitude and care to choose the true and sure way ahead in order to heal the schism, and this could only be done by the authority of a council.

The acts of the council of Constance were first published by Jerome of Croaria at Hagenau in 1500 (Acta scitu dignissima docteque concinnata Constantiensis concilii celebratissimi = Asd), from the epitome of the acts which the council of Basel had ordered to be compiled and publicly accepted in 1442. This edition of the Basel epitome was followed by all general collections of the councils (including Editio Romana, IV 127-300, even though it ignores the council of Basel). These collections, down to Mansi (27, 529-1240), added various appendices. H. von der Hardt, in his great collection of the sources of the council of Constance, made an edition of the acts and decrees of the council according to the earliest trustworthy documents (Magnum oecumenicum Constantiense concilium, in six tomes, Frankfurt-Leipzig 1696-1700; tome IV, Corpus actorum et decretorum magni Constantiensis concilii de Ecclesiae reformatione, unione ac fide = Hardt). We have followed von der Hardt's edition throughout and have noted only the principle variants provided by Asd. We indicate only, and do not print, the decrees pertaining to the internal administration of the council and of the church and to judicial acts.

Second Introduction

I have given the conventional session numbers for "the" Council of Constance so as to make cross referencing with other editions easier. However it is very misleading to do so. One should not speak of "the" Council of Constance, but of the councils of Constance. There was a council of bishops [and others] beginning 16 November 1414 which styled itself ecumenical, but which the true pope of the day did not recognize as such. There was another council [even if its members were those of the first] which he convoked, by proxy, on 4 July 1415 and did recognized as ecumenical. The ratification of "the" council by Martin the fifth, given in a footnote to session 45, was a ratification of everything determined "in a conciliar way ... by this present council of Constance", i.e. of the one convoked on 4 July 1415. The intent of the words "in a conciliar way" is, one my reading, to distinguish the true [ecumenical] council from the false one.

The matter is crucial to the possibility of the catholic doctrine of the infallibility of ecumenical councils, since the teachings of Vatican 1 on papal primacy are inconsistent with those of the first [non-ecumenical] Council of Constance [in particular the famous session 5, Haec Sancta, which taught conciliarism], but not with those of the second [ecumenical] one

Crucial to my claim is the question of who the true pope was and when a genuinely ecumenical council came into existence. I shall quote from Phillip Hughes (the footnotes here included are from Hughes' text) :

"Just five weeks after Baldassare Cossa so meekly accepted the council's sentence, the fathers met to receive the solemn abdication of Gregory XII. He was in fact, and to the end he claimed to be in law, the canonically elected representative of the line that went back to Urban VI, the last pope to be acknowledged as pope by Catholics everywhere [2]. The abdication was arranged and executed with a care to safeguard all that Gregory claimed to be; and this merits—and indeed, requires—much more detailed consideration than it usually receives. [3]

Gregory XII sent to Constance as his representatives his protector Carlo Malatesta, the Lord of Rimini, and the Dominican cardinal, John Domenici—to Constance indeed, but not to the General Council assembled there by the authority, and in the name, of John XXIII. The envoys' commission was to the emperor Sigismund, presiding over the various bishops and prelates whom his zeal to restore peace to the Church had brought together. To these envoys—and to Malatesta in the first place—Gregory gave authority to convoke as a General Council—to convoke and not to recognise—these assembled bishops and prelates ; [4] and by a second bull [5] he empowered Malatesta to resign to this General Council in his name.

The emperor, the bishops and prelates consented and accepted the role Gregory assigned. And so, on July 4, 1415. Sigismund, clad in the royal robes, left the throne he had occupied in the previous sessions for a throne placed before the altar, as for the president of the assembly. Gregory's two legates sat by his side facing the bishops. The bull was read commissioning Malatesta and Domenici to convoke the council and to authorise whatever it should do for the restoration of unity and the extirpation of the schism—with Gregory's explicit condition that there should be no mention of Baldassare Cossa, [6] with his reminder that from his very election he had pledged himself to resign if by so doing he could truly advance the good work of unity, and his assertion that the papal dignity is truly his as the canonically elected successor of Urban VI.

Malatesta then delegated his fellow envoy, the cardinal John Domenici, to pronounce the formal operative words of convocation [7] ; and the assembly—but in its own way—accepted to be thus convoked, authorised and confirmed in the name "of that lord who in his own obedience is called Gregory XII" [8]. The council next declared that all canonical censures imposed by reason of the schism were lifted, and the bull was read by which Gregory authorised Malatesta to make the act of abdication [9] and promised to consider as ratum gratum et firmum, and forever irrevocable, whatever Malatesta, as his proxy, should perform. The envoy asked the council whether they would prefer the resignation immediately, or that it should be delayed until Peter de Luna's decision was known. The council preferred the present moment. It ratified all Gregory XII's acts, received his cardinals as cardinals, promised that his officers should keep their posts and declared that if Gregory was barred from re-election as pope, this was only for the peace of the Church, and not from any personal unworthiness. Then the great renunciation was made [10], " .... renuncio et cedo .... et resigno .... in hac sacrosancta synodo et universali concilio, sanctam Romanam et universalem eccleciam repraesentante" and the council accepted it [11], but again as made "on the part of that lord who in his own obedience was called Gregory XII". The Te Deum was sung and a new summons drawn up calling upon Peter de Luna to yield to the council's authority.

The work of Pisa was now almost undone, and by this council which, in origin, was a continuation of Pisa. It had suppressed the Pisan pope whom Pisa, with biting words, had rejected as a schismatic and no pope."

Phillip Hughes A History of the Church, p289-291

Session of 1414

Session 1—16 November 1414

On the matters to be treated in the council, in which order and by which officials [12]

John, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for future record. Wishing to carry out those things which were decreed at the council of Pisa [13] by our predecessor of happy memory, pope [14] Alexander V, regarding the summoning of a new general council, we earlier convoked this present council by letters of ours, the contents of which we have ordered to be inserted here:

John, bishop ... [15]

We have therefore come together with our venerable brothers, cardinals of the holy Roman church, and our court to this city of Constance at the appointed time. Being present here by the grace of God, we now wish, with the advice of this sacred synod, to attend to the peace, exaltation and reform of the church and to the quiet of the Christian people.

In such an arduous matter it is not right to rely on one's own strength, but rather trust should be placed in the help of God. Therefore, in order to begin with divine worship, we decreed, with the approval of this sacred council, that a special mass for this purpose should be said today. This mass has now been duly celebrated, by the grace of God. We now decree that such a mass shall be celebrated collegially in this and every other collegiate church of this city whether secular or regular, once a week, namely each Friday, for the duration of this sacred council. Moreover, in order that the faithful may devote themselves to this holy celebration most fervently, whereby they will feel themselves refreshed by a more abundant gift of grace, we relax, mercifully in the Lord, the following amounts of enjoined penance to each and every one of them who is truly penitent and has confessed: for each mass, one year to the celebrating priest and forty days to those present at it. Furthermore, we exhort our venerable brothers, cardinals of the holy Roman church, as well as patriarchs, archbishops and bishops, and our beloved chosen sons, abbots and others in the priesthood, devoutly to celebrate this mass once every week, in order that the aforesaid divine aid may be implored; and we grant the same indulgences to the celebrant and to those present at the mass. We exhort in the Lord, moreover, each and all who glory in the name of Christ, in order that the desired outcome to so great a matter may be obtained, to give themselves diligently to prayer, fasting, almsgiving and other pious works, so that God may be placated by our and their humility, and so deign to grant a happy outcome to this sacred gathering.

Considering, moreover, that a council should specially treat of those matters which concern the catholic faith, according to the praiseworthy practices of the early councils, and aware that such things demand diligence, sufficient time and study, on account of their difficulty, we therefore exhort all those who are well versed in the sacred scriptures to ponder and to treat, both within themselves and with others, about those things which seem to them useful and opportune in this matter. Let them bring such things to our notice and to that of this sacred synod, as soon as they conveniently can, so that at a suitable time there may be decided what things, it seems, should be held and what repudiated for the profit and increase of the same catholic faith.

Let them especially ponder on the various errors which are said to have sprouted in certain places at various times, especially on those which are said to have arisen from a certain John called Wyclif.

We exhort, moreover, all Catholics assembled here and others who will come to this sacred synod that they should seek to think on, to follow up and to bring to us, and to this same sacred synod, those matters by which the body of Catholics may be led, if God is willing, to a proper reformation and to the desired peace. For it is our intention and will that all who are assembled for this purpose may say, consult about and do, with complete freedom, each and all of the things that they think pertain to the above.

In order, however, that a rule may be observed in the procedure of this sacred synod with regard to what things are to be said and decided, the action to be taken and the regulating of customs, we think that recourse should be had to the practices of the ancient fathers, which are best learned from a canon of the council of Toledo, the contents of which we have decided to insert here [16] :

Nobody should shout at or in any way disturb the Lord's priests when they sit in the place of blessing. Nobody should cause disturbance by telling idle stories or jokes or, what is even worse, by stubborn disputes. As the apostle says, if anyone thinks himself religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, then his religion is vain. For, justice loses its reverence when the silence of the court is disturbed by a crowd of turbulent people. As the prophet says, the reverence due to justice shall be silence. Therefore whatever is being debated by the participants, or is being proposed by persons making an accusation, should be stated in quiet tones so that the hearers' senses are not disturbed by contentious voices and they do not weaken the authority of the court by their tumult. Whoever thinks that the aforesaid things should not be observed while the council is meeting, and disturbs it with noise or dissensions or jests, contrary to the things forbidden here, shall leave the assembly, dishonourably stripped of the right to attend, according to the precept of the divine law (whereby it is commanded: drive out the scoffer, and strife will go out with him), and he shall be under sentence of excommunication for three days.

Since it may happen that some of the participants will not be in their rightful seats, we decree, with this sacred council's approval, that no prejudice shall arise to any church or person as a result of this seating arrangement.

Since certain ministers and officials are required in order that this council may proceed, we therefore depute, with this sacred council's approval, those named below, namely our beloved sons... [17]

Sessions of 1415

Session 2—2 March 1415

John XXIII publicly offers to resign the papacy

Session 3—26 March 1415

Decrees on the integrity and authority of the council, after the pope s flight [18]

For the honour, praise and glory of the most holy Trinity, Father and Son and holy Spirit, and to obtain on earth, for people of good will, the peace that was divinely promised in God's church, this holy synod, called the sacred general council of Constance, duly assembled here in the holy Spirit for the purpose of bringing union and reform to the said church in its head and members, discerns declares, defines and ordains as follows.

First, that this synod was and is rightly and properly summoned to this city of Constance, and likewise has been rightly and properly begun and held.

Next, that this sacred council has not been dissolved by the departure of our lord pope from Constance, or even by the departure of other prelates or any other persons, but continues in its integrity and authority, even if decrees to the contrary have been made or shall be made in the future.

Next, that this sacred council should not and may not be dissolved until the present schism has been entirely removed and until the church has been reformed in faith and morals, in head and members.

Next, that this sacred council may not be transferred to another place, except for a reasonable cause, which is to be debated and decided on by this sacred council.

Next, that prelates and other persons who should be present at this council may not depart from this place before it has ended, except for a reasonable cause which is to be examined by persons who have been, or will be, deputed by this sacred council. When the reason has been examined and approved, they may depart with the permission of the person or persons in authority. When the individual departs, he is bound to give his power to others who stay, under penalty of the law, as well as to others appointed by this sacred council, and those who act to the contrary are to be prosecuted.

Session 4—30 March 1415

Decrees of the council on its authority and integrity, in the abbreviated form read out by cardinal Zabarella

In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father and Son and holy Spirit Amen. This holy synod of Constance, which is a general council, for the eradication of the present schism and for bringing unity and reform to God's church in head and members, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit to the praise of almighty God, ordains, defines, decrees, discerns and declares as follows, in order that this union and reform of God's church may be obtained the more easily, securely, fruitfully and freely.

First, that this synod, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, constituting a general council, representing the catholic church militant, has power immediately from Christ, and that everyone of whatever state or dignity, even papal, is bound to obey it in those matters which pertain to the faith and the eradication of the said schism. [19]

Next, that our most holy lord pope John XXIII may not move or transfer the Roman curia and its public offices, or its or their officials, from this city to another place, nor directly or indirectly compel the persons of the said offices to follow him, without the deliberation and consent of the same holy synod; this refers to those officials or offices by whose absence the council would probably be dissolved or harmed. If he has acted to the contrary in the past, or shall in the future, or if he has in the past, is now or shall in the future fulminate any processes or mandates or ecclesiastical censures or any other penalties against the said officials or any other adherents of this council, to the effect that they should follow him then all is null and void and in no way are the said processes, censures and penalties to be obeyed, inasmuch as they are null and void, and they are invalid. The said officials are rather to exercise their offices in the said city of Constance, and to carry them out freely as before, as long as this holy synod is being held in the said city.

Next, that all translations of prelates, and depositions of the same, or of any other beneficed persons, revocations of commendams and gifts, admonitions, ecclesiastical censures, processes, sentences, acts and whatever has been or will be done or accomplished by our aforesaid lord and his officials or commissaries, from the time of his departure, to the injury of the council or its adherents, against the supporters or participants of this sacred council, or to the prejudice of them or any one of them, in whatever way they may have been or shall be made or done, against the will of the persons concerned, are in virtue of the law itself null, quashed, invalid and void, and of no effect or moment, and the council by its authority quashes, invalidates and annuls them.

[Next, it was declared and decided that three persons should be chosen from each nation who know both the reasons of those wishing to depart and the punishments that ought to be inflicted on those departing without permission. [20]]

Next, that for the sake of unity new cardinals should not be created. Moreover, lest for reasons of deceit or fraud some persons may be said to have been made cardinals recently, this sacred council declares that those persons are not to be regarded as cardinals who were not publicly recognised and held to be such at the time of our lord pope's departure from the city of Constance.

Session 5—6 April 1415

The famous Haec Sancta decree contradicting Vatican 1 on papal primacy/infallibility.

[Decrees of the council, concerning its authority and integrity, which had been abbreviated by cardinal Zabarella at the preceding session, against the wishes of the nations, and which are now restored, repeated and confirmed by a public decree]

In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father and Son and holy Spirit. Amen. This holy synod of Constance, which is a general council, for the eradication of the present schism and for bringing unity and reform to God's church in head and members, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit to the praise of almighty God, ordains, defines, decrees, discerns and declares as follows, in order that this union and reform of God's church may be obtained the more easily, securely, fruitfully and freely.

First it declares that, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, constituting a general council and representing the catholic church militant, it has power immediately from Christ; and that everyone of whatever state or dignity, even papal, is bound to obey it in those matters which pertain to the faith, the eradication of the said schism and the general reform of the said church of God in head and members.

Next, it declares that anyone of whatever condition, state or dignity, even papal, who contumaciously refuses to obey the past or future mandates, statutes, ordinances or precepts of this sacred council or of any other legitimately assembled general council, regarding the aforesaid things or matters pertaining to them, shall be subjected to well-deserved penance, unless he repents, and shall be duly punished, even by having recourse, if necessary, to other supports of the law.

Next, the said holy synod defines and ordains that the lord pope John XXIII may not move or transfer the Roman curia and its public offices, or its or their officials, from the city of Constance to another place, nor directly or indirectly compel the said officials to follow him, without the deliberation and consent of the same holy synod. If he has acted to the contrary in the past, or shall in the future, or if he has in the past, is now or shall in the future fulminate any processes or mandates or ecclesiastical censures or any other penalties, against the said officials or any other adherents of this sacred council, to the effect that they should follow him, then all is null and void and in no way are the said processes, censures and penalties to be obeyed, inasmuch as they are null and void. The said officials are rather to exercise their offices in the said city of Constance, and to carry them out freely as before, as long as this holy synod h being held in the said City.

Next, that all translations of prelates, or depositions of the same, or of any other beneficed persons, officials and administrators, revocations of commendams and gifts, admonitions, ecclesiastical censures, processes, sentences and whatever has been or will be done or accomplished by the aforesaid lord pope John or his officials or commissaries, since the beginning of this council, to the injury of the said council or its adherents, against the supporters or participants of this sacred council, or to the prejudice of them or of any one of them, in whatever way they may have been or shall be made or done, against the will of the persons concerned, are by this very fact, on the authority of this sacred council, null, quashed, invalid and void, and of no effect or moment, and the council by its authority quashes, invalidates and annuls them.

Next, it declares that the lord pope John XXIII and all the prelates and other persons summoned to this sacred council, and other participants in the same synod, have enjoyed and do now enjoy full freedom, as has been apparent in the said sacred council, and the opposite has not been brought to the notice of the said summoned persons or of the said council. The said sacred council testifies to this before God and people. [21]

Session 6—17 April 1415

[At this session there were, among other minor deliberations, decrees about admitting the office of proctor in the matter of pope John XXIII's renunciation of the papacy and about the citing of Jerome of Prague.]

Session 7—2 May 1415

[At this session it was decreed that pope John should be publicly summoned and that the summons of Jerome of Prague, now charged with contumacy, should be repeated.]

Session 8—4 May 1415

This most holy synod of Constance, which is a general council and represents the catholic church and is legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, for the eradication of the present schism and the elimination of the errors and heresies which are sprouting beneath its shade and for the reform of the church, make this perpetual record of its acts.

Sentence condemning various articles of John Wyclif

We learn from the writings and deeds of the holy fathers that the catholic faith without which (as the Apostle says) it is impossible to please God , has often been attacked by false followers of the same faith, or rather by perverse assailants, and by those who, desirous of the world's glory, are led on by proud curiosity to know more than they should; and that it has been defended against such persons by the church's faithful spiritual knights armed with the shield of faith. Indeed these kinds of wars were prefigured in the physical wars of the Israelite people against idolatrous nations. Therefore in these spiritual wars the holy catholic church, illuminated in the truth of faith by the rays of light from above and remaining ever spotless through the Lord's providence and with the help of the patronage of the saints, has triumphed most gloriously over the darkness of error as over profligate enemies. In our times, however, that old and jealous foe has stirred up new conflicts so that the approved ones of this age may be made manifest. Their leader and prince was that pseudo-Christian John Wyclif. He stubbornly asserted and taught many articles against the Christian religion and the Catholic faith while he was alive. We have decided that forty-five of the articles should be set out on this page as follows.

1. The material substance of bread, and similarly the material substance of wine, remain in the sacrament of the altar.

2. The accidents of bread do not remain without their subject in the said sacrament.

3. Christ is not identically and really present in the said sacrament in his own bodily persona.

4. If a bishop or a priest is in mortal sin, he does not ordain or confect or consecrate or baptise.

5. That Christ instituted the mass has no basis in the gospel.

6. God ought to obey the devil.

7. If a person is duly contrite, all exterior confession is superfluous and useless for him.

8. If a pope is foreknown as damned and is evil, and is therefore a limb of the devil, he does not have authority over the faithful given to him by anyone, except perhaps by the emperor.

9. Nobody should be considered as pope after Urban VI. Rather, people should live like the Greeks, under their own laws.

10. It is against sacred scripture for ecclesiastics to have possessions.

11. No prelate should excommunicate anyone unless he first knows that the person has been excommunicated by God; he who does so thereby becomes a heretic and an excommunicated person.

12. A prelate excommunicating a cleric who has appealed to the king or the king's council is thereby a traitor to the king and the kingdom.

13. Those who stop preaching or hearing the word of God on account of an excommunication issued by men are themselves excommunicated and will be regarded as traitors of Christ on the day of judgment.

14. It is lawful for any deacon or priest to preach the word of God without authorisation from the apostolic see or from a catholic bishop.

15. Nobody is a civil lord or a prelate or a bishop while he is in mortal sin.

16. Secular lords can confiscate temporal goods from the church at their discretion when those who possess them are sinning habitually, that is to say sinning from habit and not just in particular acts.

17. The people can correct sinful lords at their discretion.

18. Tithes are purely alms, and parishioners can withhold them at will on account of their prelates' sins.

19. Special prayers applied by prelates or religious to a particular person avail him or her no more than general prayers, if other things are equal.

20. Whoever gives alms to friars is thereby excommunicated.

21. Whoever enters any religious order whatsoever, whether it be of the possessioners or the mendicants, makes himself less apt and suitable for the observance of God's commands.

22. Saints who have founded religious orders have sinned in so doing.

23. Members of religious orders are not members of the Christian religion.

24. Friars are bound to obtain their food by manual work and not by begging. [22]

25. All are simoniacs who bind themselves to pray for people who help them in temporal matters.

26. The prayer of someone foreknown as damned profits nobody.

27. All things happen from absolute necessity.

28. Confirming the young, ordaining clerics and consecrating places have been reserved to the pope and bishops because of their greed for temporal gain and honour.

29. Universities, places of study, colleges, degrees and academic exercises in these institutions were introduced by a vain pagan spirit and benefit the church as little as does the devil.

30. Excommunication by a pope or any prelate is not to be feared since it is a censure of antichrist.

31. Those who found religious houses sin, and those who enter them belong to the devil.

32. It is against Christ's command to enrich the clergy.

33. Pope Silvester and the emperor Constantine erred in endowing the church.

34. All the members of mendicant orders are heretics, and those who give them alms are excommunicated.

35. Those who enter a religious or other order thereby become incapable of observing God's commands, and consequently of reaching the kingdom of heaven, unless they leave them.

36. The pope with all his clerics who have property are heretics, for the very reason that they have property; and so are all who abet them, namely all secular lords and other laity.

37. The Roman church is Satan's synagogue; and the pope is not the immediate and proximate vicar of Christ and the apostles.

38. The decretal letters are apocryphal and seduce people from Christ's faith, and clerics who study them are fools.

39. The emperor and secular lords were seduced by the devil to endow the church with temporal goods.

40. The election of a pope by the cardinals was introduced by the devil.

41. It is not necessary for salvation to believe that the Roman church is supreme among the other churches. [23]

42. It is ridiculous to believe in the indulgences of popes and bishops.

43. Oaths taken to confirm civil commerce and contracts between people are unlawful.

44. Augustine, Benedict and Bernard are damned, unless they repented of having owned property and of having founded and entered religious orders; and thus they are all heretics from the pope down to the lowest religious.

45. All religious orders alike were introduced by the devil.

Condemnation of Wyclif's books

This same John Wyclif wrote books called by him Dialogus and Trialogus and many other treatises, works and pamphlets in which he included and taught the above and many other damnable articles. He issued the books for public reading, in order to publish his perverse doctrine, and from them have followed many scandals, losses and dangers to souls in various regions, especially in the kingdoms of England and Bohemia. Masters and doctors of the universities and houses of study at Oxford and Prague, opposing with God's strength these articles and books, later refuted the above articles in scholastic form. They were condemned, moreover, by the most reverend fathers who were then the archbishops and bishops of Canterbury, York and Prague, legates of the apostolic see in the kingdoms of England and of Bohemia. The said archbishop of Prague, commissary of the apostolic see in this matter, also judicially decreed that the books of the same John Wyclif were to be burnt and he forbade the reading of those that survived.

After these things had again been brought to the notice of the apostolic see and a general council, the Roman pontiff condemned the said books, treatises and pamphlets at the lately held council of Rome [24], ordering them to be publicly burnt and strictly forbidding anyone called a Christian to dare to read, expound, hold or make any use of any one or more of the said books, volumes, treatises and pamphlets, or even to cite them publicly or privately, except in order to refute them. In order that this dangerous and most foul doctrine might be eliminated from the church's midst, he ordered, by his apostolic authority and under pain of ecclesiastical censure, that all such books, treatises, volumes and pamphlets should be diligently sought out by the local ordinaries and should then be publicly burnt; and he added that if necessary those who do not obey should be proceeded against as if they were promoters of heresy.

This sacred synod has had the aforesaid forty-five articles examined and frequently considered by many most reverend fathers, cardinals of the Roman church, bishops, abbots, masters of theology, doctors in both laws and many notable persons. After the articles had been examined it was found, as indeed is the case, that some of them, indeed many, were and are notoriously heretical and have already been condemned by holy fathers, others are not catholic but erroneous, others scandalous and blasphemous, some offensive to the ears of the devout and some rash and seditious. It was also found that his books contain many other similar articles and introduce into God's church teaching that is unsound and hostile to faith and morals. This holy synod, therefore, in the name of our lord Jesus Christ, in ratifying and approving the sentences of the aforesaid archbishops and of the council of Rome, repudiates and condemns for ever, by this decree, the aforesaid articles and each one of them in particular, and the books of John Wyclif called by him Dialogus and Trialogus, and the same author's other books, volumes, treatises and pamphlets (no matter what name these may go under, and for which purpose this description is to be regarded as an adequate listing of them). It forbids the reading, teaching, expounding and citing of the said books or of any one of them in particular, unless it is for the purpose of refuting them. It forbids each and every Catholic henceforth, under pain of anathema, to preach, teach or affirm in public the said articles or any one of them in particular, or to teach, approve or hold the said books, or to refer to them in any way, unless this is done, as has been said, for the purpose of refuting them. It orders, moreover, that the aforesaid books, treatises, volumes and pamphlets are to be burnt in public, in accordance with the decree of the synod of Rome, as stated above. This holy synod orders local ordinaries to attend with vigilance to the execution and due observance of these things, insofar as each one is responsible, in accordance with the law and canonical sanctions.

Condemnation of 260 other articles of Wyclif [25]

When the doctors and masters of the university of Oxford examined the aforesaid written works, they found 260 articles in addition to the 45 articles that have been mentioned. Some of them coincide in meaning with the 45 articles, even if not in the forms of words used. Some of them, as has been said, were and are heretical, some seditious, some erroneous, others rash, some scandalous, others unsound, and almost all of them contrary to good morals and the catholic truth. They were therefore condemned by the said university in correct and scholastic form. This most holy synod, therefore, after deliberating as mentioned above, repudiates and condemns the said articles and each one of them in particular; and it forbids, commands and decrees in the same way as for the other 45 articles. We order the contents of these 260 articles to be included below [26].

The council pronounces John Wyclif a heretic, condemns his memory and orders his bones to be exhumed

Furthermore, a process was begun, on the authority or by decree of the Roman council, and at the command of the church and of the apostolic see, after a due interval of time, for the condemnation of the said Wyclif and his memory. Invitations and proclamations were issued summoning those who wished to defend him and his memory, if any still existed. However, nobody appeared who was willing to defend him or his memory. Witnesses were examined by commissaries appointed by the reigning lord pope John and by this sacred council, regarding the said Wyclif's final impenitence and obstinacy. Legal proof was thus provided, in accordance with all due observances, as the order of law demands in a matter of this kind, regarding his impenitence and final obstinacy. This was proved by clear indications from legitimate witnesses. This holy synod, therefore, at the instance of the procurator-fiscal and since a decree was issued to the effect that sentence should be heard on this day, declares, defines and decrees that the said John Wyclif was a notorious and obstinate heretic who died in heresy, and it anathematises him and condemns his memory. It decrees and orders that his body and bones are to be exhumed, if they can be identified among the corpses of the faithful, and to be scattered far from a burial place of the church, in accordance with canonical and lawful sanctions.

Session 9—13 May 1415

[Pope John is publicly summoned for the second time and an inquiry against him is decreed.]

Session 10—14 May 1415

[John XXIII is summoned for the third time, he is accused of contumacy and is suspended from the papacy.]

Session 11—25 May 1415

[Pope John XXIII is publicly charged and forty-four articles against him are produced.]

Session 12—29 May 1415

Decree stating that the process for electing a pope, if the see happens to be vacant, may not begin without the council's express consent [27]

This most holy general synod of Constance, representing the catholic church, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, for the eradication of the present schism and errors, for bringing about the reform of the church in head and members, and in order that the unity of the church may be obtained more easily, quickly and freely, pronounces, determines, decrees and ordains that if it happens that the apostolic see becomes vacant, by whatever means this may happen, then the process of electing the next supreme pontiff may not begin without the deliberation and consent of this sacred general council. If the contrary is done then it is by this very fact, by the authority of the said sacred council, null and void. Nobody may accept anyone elected to the papacy in defiance of this decree, nor in any way adhere to or obey him as pope, under pain of eternal damnation and of becoming a supporter of the said schism. Those who make the election in such a case, as well as the person elected, if he consents, and those who adhere to him, are to be punished in the forms prescribed by this sacred council. The said holy synod, moreover, for the good of the church's unity, suspends all positive laws, even those promulgated in general councils, and their statutes, ordinances, customs and privileges, by whomsoever they may have been granted, and penalties promulgated against any persons, insofar as these may in any way impede the effect of this decree.

Sentence deposing pope John XXIII

In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father and Son and holy Spirit Amen. This most holy general synod of Constance, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, having invoked Christ's name and holding God alone before its eyes, having seen the articles drawn up and presented in this case against the lord pope John XXIII, the proofs brought forward, his spontaneous submission and the whole process of the case, and having deliberated maturely on them, pronounces, decrees and declares by this definitive sentence which it commits to writing: that the departure of the aforesaid lord pope John XXIII from this city of Constance and from this sacred general council, secretly and at a suspicious hour of the night, in disguised and indecent dress, was and is unlawful, notoriously scandalous to God's church and to this council, disturbing and damaging for the church's peace and unity, supportive of this long-standing schism, and at variance with the vow, promise and oath made by the said lord pope John to God, to the church and to this sacred council; that the said lord pope John has been and is a notorious simoniac, a notorious destroyer of the goods and rights not only of the Roman church but also of other churches and of many pious places, and an evil administrator and dispenser of the church's spiritualities and temporalities; that he has notoriously scandalised God's church and the Christian people by his detestable and dishonest life and morals, both before his promotion to the papacy and afterwards until the present time, that by the above he has scandalised and is scandalising in a notorious fashion God's church and the Christian people; that after due and charitable warnings, frequently reiterated to him, he obstinately persevered in the aforesaid evils and thereby rendered himself notoriously incorrigible; and that on account of the above and other crimes drawn from and contained in the said process against him, he should be deprived of and deposed from, as an unworthy, useless and damnable person, the papacy and all its spiritual and temporal administration. The said holy synod does now remove, deprive and depose him. It declares each and every Christian, of whatever state, dignity or condition, to be absolved from obedience, fidelity and oaths to him. It forbids all Christians henceforth to recognise him as pope, now that as mentioned he has been deposed from the papacy, or to call him pope, or to adhere to or in any way to obey him as pope. The said holy synod, moreover, from certain knowledge and its fullness of power, supplies for all and singular defects that may have occurred in the above-mentioned procedures or in any one of them. It condemns the said person, by this same sentence, to stay and remain in a good and suitable place, in the name of this sacred general council, in the safe custody of the most serene prince lord Sigismund, king of the Romans and of Hungary, etc., and most devoted advocate and defender of the universal church, as long as it seems to the said general council to be for the good of the unity of God's church that he should be so condemned. The said council reserves the right to declare and inflict other punishments that should be imposed for the said crimes and faults in accordance with canonical sanctions, according as the rigour of justice or the counsel of mercy may advise.

Decree to the effect that none of the three contenders for the papacy may be re-elected as pope

The said holy synod decrees, determines and ordains for the good of unity in God's church that neither the lord Baldassare de Cossa, recently John XXIII, nor Angelo Correr nor Peter de Luna, called Gregory XII and Benedict XIII by their respective obediences, shall ever be re-elected as pope. If the contrary happens, it is by this very fact null and void. Nobody, of whatever dignity or pre-eminence even if he be emperor, king, cardinal or pontiff, may ever adhere to or obey them or any one of them, contrary to this decree, under pain of eternal damnation and of being a supporter of the said schism. Let those who presume to the contrary, if there are any in the future, also be firmly proceeded against in other ways, even by invoking the secular arm. [28]

Session 13—15 June 1415

Condemnation of communion under both kinds, recently revived among the Bohemians by Jakoubek of Stribro

In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father and Son and holy Spirit, Amen. Certain people, in some parts of the world, have rashly dared to assert that the Christian people ought to receive the holy sacrament of the eucharist under the forms of both bread and wine. They communicate the laity everywhere not only under the form of bread but also under that of wine, and they stubbornly assert that they should communicate even after a meal, or else without the need of a fast, contrary to the church's custom which has been laudably and sensibly approved, from the church's head downwards, but which they damnably try to repudiate as sacrilegious. Therefore this present general council of Constance, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, wishing to provide for the safety of the faithful against this error, after long deliberation by many persons learned in divine and human law, declares, decrees and defines that, although Christ instituted this venerable sacrament after a meal and ministered it to his apostles under the forms of both bread and wine, nevertheless and notwithstanding this, the praiseworthy authority of the sacred canons and the approved custom of the church have and do retain that this sacrament ought not to be celebrated after a meal nor received by the faithful without fasting, except in cases of sickness or some other necessity as permitted by law or by the church. Moreover, just as this custom was sensibly introduced in order to avoid various dangers and scandals, so with similar or even greater reason was it possible to introduce and sensibly observe the custom that, although this sacrament was received by the faithful under both kinds in the early church, nevertheless later it was received under both kinds only by those confecting it, and by the laity only under the form of bread. For it should be very firmly believed, and in no way doubted, that the whole body and blood of Christ are truly contained under both the form of bread and the form of wine. Therefore, since this custom was introduced for good reasons by the church and holy fathers, and has been observed for a very long time, it should be held as a law which nobody may repudiate or alter at will without the church's permission. To say that the observance of this custom or law is sacrilegious or illicit must be regarded as erroneous. Those who stubbornly assert the opposite of the aforesaid are to be confined as heretics and severely punished by the local bishops or their officials or the inquisitors of heresy in the kingdoms or provinces in which anything is attempted or presumed against this decree, according to the canonical and legitimate sanctions that have been wisely established in favour of the catholic faith against heretics and their supporters.

That no priest, under pain of excommunication, may communicate the people under the forms of both bread and wine

This holy synod also decrees and declares, regarding this matter, that instructions are to be sent to the most reverend fathers and lords in Christ, patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, and their vicars in spirituals, wherever they may be, in which they are to be commissioned and ordered on the authority of this sacred council and under pain of excommunication, to punish effectively those who err against this decree. They may receive back into the church's fold those who have gone astray by communicating the people under the forms of both bread and wine, and have taught this, provided they repent and after a salutary penance, in accordance with the measure of their fault, has been enjoined upon them. They are to repress as heretics, however, by means of the church's censures and even if necessary by calling in the help of the secular arm, those of them whose hearts have become hardened and who are unwilling to return to penance.

From this point on the council becomes a duly convened ecumenical council, all previous sessions being ultra-vires.

Session 14—4 July 1415 [29]

Uniting of the followers of pope Gregory XII and of the former pope John XXIII, now that both men have abdicated

In order that the reunion of the church may be possible and that a beginning may be made which is fitting and pleasing to God, since the most important part of any matter is its beginning, and in order that the two obediences—namely the one claiming that the lord John XXIII was formerly pope and the other claiming that the lord Gregory XII is pope—may be united together under Christ as head, this most holy general synod of Constance, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit and representing the catholic church, accepts in all matters the convoking, authorising, approving and confirming that is now being made in the name of the lord who is called Gregory XII by those obedient to him, insofar as it seems to pertain to him to do this, since the certainty obtained by taking a precaution harms nobody and benefits all, and it decrees and declares that the aforesaid two obediences are joined and united in the one body of our lord Jesus Christ and of this sacred universal general council, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit.

Decree stating that the election of the Roman pontiff is to be made in the manner and form to be laid down by the sacred council, and that the council shall not be dissolved until the election of the next Roman pontiff has been made

The most holy general synod of Constance, etc., enacts, pronounces, ordains and decrees, in order that God's holy church may be provided for better, more genuinely and more securely, that the next election of the future Roman pontiff is to be made in the manner, form, place, time and way that shall be decided upon by the sacred council; that the same council can and may henceforth declare fit, accept and designate, in the manner and form that then seems suitable, any persons for the purposes of this election, whether by active or by passive voice, of whatever state or obedience they are or may have been, and any other ecclesiastical acts and all other suitable things, notwithstanding any proceedings, penalties or sentences; and that the sacred council shall not be dissolved until the said election has been held. The said holy synod therefore exhorts and requires the most victorious prince lord Sigismund, king of the Romans and of Hungary, as the church's devoted advocate and as the sacred council's defender and protector, to direct all his efforts to this end and to promise on his royal word that he wishes to do this and to order letters of his majesty to be made out for this purpose.

The council approves Gregory XII's resignation

The most holy general synod of Constance, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal catholic church, accepts, approves and commends, in the name of the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit, the cession renunciation and resignation made on behalf of the lord who was called Gregory XII in his obedience, by the magnificent and powerful lord Charles Malatesta. here present, his irrevocable procurator for this business, of the right, title and possession that he had, or may have had, in regard to the papacy. [30]

Session 15—6 July 1415

Sentence condemning 260 articles Wyclif [31]

The books and pamphlets of John Wyclif, of cursed memory, were carefully examined by the doctors and masters of Oxford university. They collected 260 unacceptable articles from these books and pamphlets and condemned them in scholastic form. This most holy general synod of Constance, representing the catholic church, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit for the purpose of extirpating schism, errors and heresies, has had all these articles examined many times by many most reverend fathers, cardinals of the Roman church, bishops, abbots, masters of theology, doctors of both laws, and very many other notable persons from various universities. It was found that some, indeed many, of the articles thus examined were and are notoriously heretical and have already been condemned by holy fathers, some are offensive to the ears of the devout and some are rash and seditious. This holy synod, therefore, in the name of our lord Jesus Christ, repudiates and condemns, by this perpetual decree, the aforesaid articles and each one of them in particular; and it forbids each and every Catholic henceforth, under pain of anathema, to preach, teach, or hold the said articles or any one of them. The said holy synod orders local ordinaries and inquisitors of heresy to be vigilant in carrying out these things and duly observing them, insofar as each one is responsible, in accordance with the law and canonical sanctions. Let anyone who rashly violates the aforesaid decrees and sentences of this sacred council be punished, after due warning, by the local ordinaries on the authority of this sacred council, notwithstanding any privilege. [32]

Articles of John Wyclif selected from the 260

1. Just as Christ is God and man at the same time, so the consecrated host is at the same time the body of Christ and true bread. For it is Christ's body at least in figure and true bread in nature; or, which comes to the same thing, it is true bread naturally and Christ's body figuratively.

2. Since heretical falsehood about the consecrated host is the most important point in individual heresies, I therefore declare to modern heretics, in order that this falsehood may be eradicated from the church, that they cannot explain or understand an accident without a subject. And therefore all these heretical sects belong to the number of those who ignore the fourth chapter of John: We worship what we know.

3. I boldly foretell to all these sects and their accomplices that even by the time Christ and all the church triumphant come at the final judgment riding at the trumpet blast of the angel Gabriel, they shall still not have proved to the faithful that the sacrament is an accident without a subject.

4. Just as John was Elias in a figurative sense and not in person, so the bread on the altar is Christ's body in a figurative sense. And the words, This is my body, are unambiguously figurative, just like the statement "John is Elias".

5. The fruit of this madness whereby it is pretended that there can be an accident without a subject is to blaspheme against God, to scandalise the saints and to deceive the church by means of false doctrines about accidents.

6. Those who claim that the children of the faithful dying without sacramental baptism will not be saved, are stupid and presumptuous in saying this.

7. The slight and short confirmation by bishops, with whatever extra solemnised rites, was introduced at the devil's suggestion so that the people might be deluded in the church's faith and the solemnity and necessity of bishops might be believed in the more.

8. As for the oil with which bishops anoint boys and the linen cloth which goes around the head, it seems that this is a trivial rite which is unfounded in scripture; and that this confirmation, which was introduced after the apostles, blasphemes against God.

9. Oral confession to a priest, introduced by Innocent [33], is not as necessary to people as he claimed. For if anyone offends his brother in thought, word or deed, then it suffices to repent in thought, word or deed.

10. It is a grave and unsupported practice for a priest to hear the confessions of the people in the way that the Latins use.

11. In these words, You are clean, but not all are, the devil has laid a snare of the unfaithful ones in order to catch the Christian's foot. For he introduced private confession, which cannot be justified, and after the person's malice has been revealed to the confessor, as he decreed in the law, it is not revealed to the people.

12. It is a probable conjecture that a person who lives rightly is a deacon or a priest. For just as I infer that this person is John, so I recognise by a probable conjecture that this person, by his holy life, has been placed by God in such an office or state.

13. The probable evidence for such a state is to be taken from proof provided by the person's deeds and not from the testimony of the person ordaining him. For God can place someone in such a state without the need of an instrument of this kind, no matter whether the instrument is worthy or unworthy. There is no more probable evidence than the person's life. Therefore if there is present a holy life and catholic doctrine, this suffices for the church militant. (Error at the beginning and at the end.)

14. The bad life of a prelate means that his subjects do not receive orders and the other sacraments. They can receive them from such persons, however, when there is urgent need, if they devoutly beseech God to supply on behalf of his diabolical ministers the actions and purpose of the office to which they have bound themselves by oath.

15. People of former times would copulate with each other out of desire for temporal gain or for mutual help or to relieve concupiscence, even when they had no hope of offspring; for they were truly copulating as married persons. [34]

16. The words, I will take you as wife, are more suitable for the marriage contract than, I take you as wife. And the first words ought not to be annulled by the second words about the present, when someone contracts with one wife in the words referring to the future and afterwards with another wife in those referring to the present.

17. The pope, who falsely calls himself the servant of God's servants, has no status in the work of the gospel but only in the work of the world. If he has any rank, it is in the order of demons, of those who serve God rather in a blameworthy way.

18. The pope does not dispense from simony or from a rash vow, since he is the chief simoniac who rashly vows to preserve, to his damnation, his status here on the way. (Error at the end.)

19. That the pope is supreme pontiff is ridiculous. Christ approved such a dignity neither in Peter nor in anyone else.

20. The pope is antichrist made manifest. Not only this particular person but also the multitude of popes, from the time of the endowment of the church, of cardinals, of bishops and of their other accomplices, make up the composite, monstrous person of antichrist. This is not altered by the fact that Gregory and other popes, who did many good and fruitful things in their lives, finally repented.

21. Peter and Clement, together with the other helpers in the faith, were not popes but God's helpers in the work of building up the church of our lord Jesus Christ.

22. To say that papal pre-eminence originated with the faith of the gospel is as false as to say that every error arose from the original truth.

23. There are twelve procurators and disciples of antichrist: the pope, cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, officials, deans, monks, canons with their two-peaked hats, the recently introduced pseudo-friars, and pardoners.

24. It is clear that whoever is the humbler, of greater service to the church, and the more fervent in Christ's love towards his church, is the greater in the church militant and to be reckoned the most immediate vicar of Christ.

25. Whoever holds any of God's goods unjustly, is taking the things of others by rapine, theft or robbery.

26. Neither the depositions of witnesses, nor a judge's sentence, nor physical possession, nor inheritance, nor an exchange between persons, nor a gift, nor all such things taken together, confer dominion or a right to anything upon a person without grace. (An error, if it is understood as referring to sanctifying grace.)

27. Unless the interior law of charity is present, nobody has more or less authority or righteousness on account of charters or bulls. We ought not to lend or give anything to a sinner so long as we know that he is such, for thus we would be assisting a traitor of our God.

28. Just as a prince or a lord does not keep the title of his office while he is in mortal sin, except in name and equivocally, so it is with a pope, bishop or priest while he has fallen into mortal sin.

29. Everyone habitually in mortal sin lacks dominion of any kind and the licit use of an action, even if it be good in its kind.

30. It is known from the principles of the faith that a person in mortal sin, sins mortally in every action.

31. In order to have true secular dominion, the lord must be in a state of righteousness. Therefore nobody in mortal sin is lord of anything.

32. All modern religious necessarily become marked as hypocrites. For their profession demands that they fast, act and clothe themselves in a particular way, and thus they observe everything differently from other people.

33. All private religion as such savours of imperfection and sin whereby a person is indisposed to serve God freely.

34. A private religious order or rule savours of a blasphemous and arrogant presumption towards God. And the religious of such orders dare to exalt themselves above the apostles by the hypocrisy of defending their religion.

35. Christ does not teach in scripture about any kind of religious order in antichrist's chapter. Therefore it is not his good pleasure that there should be such orders. The chapter is composed, however, of the following twelve types: the pope, cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, officials, deans, monks, canons, friars of the four orders, and pardoners.

36. I infer as evident from the faith and works of the four sects—which are the caesarean clergy, the various monks, the various canons, and the friars-that nobody belonging to them is a member of Christ in the catalogue of the saints, unless he forsakes in the end the sect which he stupidly embraced.

37. Paul was once a Pharisee but abandoned the sect for the better sect of Christ, with his permission. This is the reason why cloistered persons, of whatever sect or rule, or by whatever stupid vow they may be bound, ought freely to cast off these chains, at Christ's command, and freely join the sect of Christ.

38. It is sufficient for the laity that at some times they give tithes of their produce to God's servants. In this way they are always giving to the church, even if not always to the caesarean clergy deputed by the pope or by his dependents.

39. The powers that are claimed by the pope and the other four new sects are pretended and were diabolically introduced in order to seduce subjects; such as excommunications by caesarean prelates, citations, imprisoning, and the sale of money rents.

40. Many simple priests surpass prelates in such power. Indeed, it appears to the faithful that greatness of spiritual power belongs more to a son who imitates Christ in his way of life than to a prelate who has been elected by cardinals and similar apostates.

41. The people may withhold tithes, offerings and other private alms from unworthy disciples of Christ, since God's law requires this. The curse or censure imposed by antichrist's disciples is not to be feared but rather is to be received with joy. The lord pope and bishops and all religious or simple clerics, with titles to perpetual possession, ought to renounce them into the hands of the secular arm. If they stubbornly refuse, they ought to be compelled to do so by the secular lords.

42. There is no greater heretic or antichrist than the cleric who teaches that it is lawful for priests and Levites of the law of grace to be endowed with temporal possessions. The clerics who teach this are heretics or blasphemers if ever there were any.

43. Temporal lords not only can take away goods of fortune from a church that is habitually sinning, nor is it only lawful for them to do so, but indeed they are obliged to do so under pain of eternal damnation.

44. God does not approve that anyone be judged or condemned by civil law.

45. If an objection is made against those who oppose endowments for the church, by pointing to Benedict, Gregory and Bernard, who possessed few temporal goods in poverty, it may be said in reply that they repented at the end. If you object further that I merely pretend that these saints finally repented of their falling away from God's law in this way, then you may teach that they are saints and I will teach that they repented at the end.

46. If we ought to believe in sacred scripture and in reason, it is clear that Christ's disciples do not have the authority to exact temporal goods by means of censures, and those who attempt this are sons of Eli and of Belial.

47. Each essence has one suppositum, following which another suppositum, equal to the first, is produced. This is the most perfect immanent action possible to nature.

48. Each essence, whether corporeal or incorporeal, is common to three supposita; and the properties, the accidents and the operations inhere in common in all of them.

49. God cannot annihilate anything, nor increase or diminish the world, but he can create souls up to a certain number, and not beyond it.

50. It is impossible for two corporeal substances to be co-extensive, the one continuously at rest in a place and the other continuously penetrating the body of Christ at rest.

51. Any continuous mathematical line is composed of two, three or four contiguous points, or of only a simply finite number of points; and time is, was and will be composed of contiguous instants. It is not possible that time and a line, if they exist, are composed of in this way. (The first part is a philosophical error, the last part is an error with regard to God's power.)

52. It must be supposed that one corporeal substance was formed at its beginning as composed of indivisibles, and that it occupies every possible place.

53. Every person is God.

54. Every creature is God.

55. Every being is everywhere, since every being is God.

56. All things that happen, happen from absolute necessity.

57. A baptised child foreknown as damned will necessarily live long enough to sin in the holy Spirit, wherefore it will merit to be condemned for ever. Thus no fire can burn the child until that time or instant.

58. I assert as a matter of faith that everything that will happen, will happen of necessity. Thus if Paul is foreknown as damned, he cannot truly repent; that is, he cannot cancel the sin of final impenitence by contrition, or be under the obligation not to have the sin.

Sentence against John Hus

The most holy general council of Constance, divinely assembled and representing the Catholic church, for an everlasting record. Since a bad tree is wont to bear bad fruit, as truth itself testifies, so it is that John Wyclif, of cursed memory, by his deadly teaching, like a poisonous root, has brought forth many noxious sons, not in Christ Jesus through the gospel, as once the holy fathers brought forth faithful sons, but rather contrary to the saving faith of Christ, and he has left these sons as successors to his perverse teaching. This holy synod of Constance is compelled to act against these men as against spurious and illegitimate sons, and to cut away their errors from the Lord's field as if they were harmful briars, by means of vigilant care and the knife of ecclesiastical authority, lest they spread as a cancer to destroy others. Although, therefore, it was decreed at the sacred general council recently held at Rome [35] that the teaching of John Wyclif, of cursed memory, should be condemned and the books of his containing this teaching should be burnt as heretical; although his teaching was in fact condemned and his books burnt as containing false and dangerous doctrine; and although a decree of this kind was approved by the authority of this present sacred council [36] ; nevertheless a certain John Hus, here present in person at this sacred council, who is a disciple not of Christ but rather of the heresiarch John Wyclif, boldly and rashly contravening the condemnation and the decree after their enactment, has taught, asserted and preached many errors and heresies of John Wyclif which have been condemned both by God's church and by other reverend fathers in Christ, lord archbishops and bishops of various kingdoms, and masters in theology at many places of study. He has done this especially by publicly resisting in the schools and in sermons, together with his accomplices, the condemnation in scholastic form of the said articles of John Wyclif which has been made many times at the university of Prague, and he has declared the said John Wyclif to be a catholic man and an evangelical doctor, thus supporting his teaching, before a multitude of clergy and people. He has asserted and published certain articles listed below and many others, which are condemned and which are, as is well known, contained in the books and pamphlets of the said John Hus. Full information has been obtained about the aforesaid matters, and there has been careful deliberation by the most reverend fathers in Christ, lord cardinals of the holy Roman church, patriarchs archbishops, bishops and other prelates and doctors of holy scripture and of both laws, in large numbers. This most holy synod of Constance therefore declares and defines that the articles listed below, which have been found on examination, by many masters in sacred scripture, to be contained in his books and pamphlets written in his own hand, and which the same John Hus at a public hearing, before the fathers and prelates of this sacred council, has confessed to be contained in his books and pamphlets, are not catholic and should not be taught to be such but rather many of them are erroneous, others scandalous, others offensive to the ears of the devout, many of them are rash and seditious, and some of them are notoriously heretical and have long ago been rejected and condemned by holy fathers and by general councils, and it strictly forbids them to be preached, taught or in any way approved. Moreover, since the articles listed below are explicitly contained in his books or treatises, namely in the book entitled De ecclesia and in his other pamphlets, this most holy synod therefore reproves and condemns the aforesaid books and his teaching, as well as the other treatises and pamphlets written by him in Latin or in Czech, or translated by one or more other persons into any other language, and it decrees and determines that they should be publicly and solemnly burnt in the presence of the clergy and people in the city of Constance and elsewhere. On account of the above, moreover, all his teaching is and shall be deservedly suspect regarding the faith and is to be avoided by all of Christ's faithful. In order that this pernicious teaching may be eliminated from the midst of the church, this holy synod also orders that local ordinaries make careful inquiry about treatises and pamphlets of this kind, using the church's censures and even if necessary the punishment due for supporting heresy, and that they be publicly burnt when they have been found. This same holy synod decrees that local ordinaries and inquisitors of heresy are to proceed against any who violate or defy this sentence and decree as if they were persons suspected of heresy.

Sentence of degradation against J. Hus

Moreover, the acts and deliberations of the inquiry into heresy against the aforesaid John Hus have been examined. There was first a faithful and full account made by the commissioners deputed for the case and by other masters of theology and doctors of both laws, concerning the acts and deliberations and the depositions of very many trustworthy witnesses. These depositions were openly and publicly read out to the said John Hus before the fathers and prelates of this sacred council. It is very clearly established from the depositions of these witnesses that the said John has taught many evil, scandalous and seditious things, and dangerous heresies, and has publicly preached them during many years. This most holy synod of Constance, invoking Christ's name and having God alone before its eyes, therefore pronounces, decrees and defines by this definitive sentence, which is here written down, that the said John Hus was and is a true and manifest heretic and has taught and publicly preached, to the great offence of the divine Majesty, to the scandal of the universal church and to the detriment of the catholic faith, errors and heresies that have long ago been condemned by God's church and many things that are scandalous, offensive to the ears of the devout, rash and seditious, and that he has even despised the keys of the church and ecclesiastical censures. He has persisted in these things for many years with a hardened heart. He has greatly scandalised Christ's faithful by his obstinacy since, bypassing the church's intermediaries, he has made appeal directly to our lord Jesus Christ, as to the supreme judge, in which he has introduced many false, harmful and scandalous things to the contempt of the apostolic see, ecclesiastical censures and the keys. This holy synod therefore pronounces the said John Hus, on account of the aforesaid and many other matters, to have been a heretic and it judges him to be considered and condemned as a heretic, and it hereby condemns him. It rejects the said appeal of his as harmful and scandalous and offensive to the church's jurisdiction. It declares that the said John Hus seduced the Christian people, especially in the kingdom of Bohemia, in his public sermons and in his writings; and that he was not a true preacher of Christ's gospel to the same Christian people, according to the exposition of the holy doctors, but rather was a seducer. Since this most holy synod has learnt from what it has seen and heard, that the said John Hus is obstinate and incorrigible and as such does not desire to return to the bosom of holy mother the church, and is unwilling to abjure the heresies and errors which he has publicly defended and preached, this holy synod of Constance therefore declares and decrees that the same John Hus is to be deposed and degraded from the order of the priesthood and from the other orders held by him. It charges the reverend fathers in Christ, the archbishop of Milan and the bishops of Feltre Asti, Alessandria, Bangor and Lavour with duly carrying out the degradation in the presence of this most holy synod, in accordance with the procedure required by law.

Sentence condemning J. Hus to the stake

This holy synod of Constance, seeing that God's church has nothing more that it can do, relinquishes John Hus to the judgment of the secular authority and decrees that he is to be relinquished to the secular court.

Condemned articles of J. Hus

1. There is only one holy universal church, which is the total number of those predestined to salvation. It therefore follows that the universal holy church is only one, inasmuch as there is only one number of all those who are predestined to salvation.

2. Paul was never a member of the devil, even though he did certain acts which are similar to the acts of the church's enemies.

3. Those foreknown as damned are not parts of the church, for no part of the church can finally fall away from it, since the predestinating love that binds the church together does not fail.

4. The two natures, the divinity and the humanity, are one Christ.

5. A person foreknown to damnation is never part of the holy church, even if he is in a state of grace according to present justice; a person predestined to salvation always remains a member of the church, even though he may fall away for a time from adventitious grace, for he keeps the grace of predestination.

6. The church is an article of faith in the following sense: to regard it as the convocation of those predestined to salvation, whether or not it be in a state of grace according to present justice.

7. Peter neither was nor is the head of the holy catholic church.

8. Priests who live in vice in any way pollute the power of the priesthood, and like unfaithful sons are untrustworthy in their thinking about the church's seven sacraments, about the keys, offices, censures, customs, ceremonies and sacred things of the church, about the veneration of relics, and about indulgences and orders.

9. The papal dignity originated with the emperor, and the primacy and institution of the pope emanated from imperial power.

10. Nobody would reasonably assert of himself or of another, without revelation, that he was the head of a particular holy church; nor is the Roman pontiff the head of the Roman church.

11. It is not necessary to believe that any particular Roman pontiff is the head of any particular holy church, unless God has predestined him to salvation.

12. Nobody holds the place of Christ or of Peter unless he follows his way of life, since there is no other discipleship that is more appropriate nor is there another way to receive delegated power from God, since there is required for this office of vicar a similar way of life as well as the authority of the one instituting.

13. The pope is not the manifest and true successor of the prince of the apostles, Peter, if he lives in a way contrary to Peter's. If he seeks avarice, he is the vicar of Judas Iscariot. Likewise, cardinals are not the manifest and true successors of the college of Christ's other apostles unless they live after the manner of the apostles, keeping the commandments and counsels of our lord Jesus Christ.

14. Doctors who state that anybody subjected to ecclesiastical censure, if he refuses to be corrected, should be handed over to the judgment of the secular authority, are undoubtedly following in this the chief priests, the scribes and the pharisees who handed over to the secular authority Christ himself, since he was unwilling to obey them in all things, saying, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death; these gave him to the civil judge, so that such men are even greater murderers than Pilate.

15. Ecclesiastical obedience was invented by the church's priests, without the express authority of scripture.

16. The immediate division of human actions is between those that are virtuous and those that are wicked. Therefore, if a man is wicked and does something, he acts wickedly; if he is virtuous and does something, he acts virtuously. For just as wickedness, which is called crime or mortal sin, infects all the acts of a wicked man, so virtue gives life to all the acts of a virtuous man.

17. A priest of Christ who lives according to his law, knows scripture and has a desire to edify the people, ought to preach, notwithstanding a pretended excommunication. And further on: if the pope or any superior orders a priest so disposed not to preach, the subordinate ought not to obey.

18. Whoever enters the priesthood receives a binding duty to preach; and this mandate ought to be carried out, notwithstanding a pretended excommunication.

19. By the church's censures of excommunication, suspension and interdict the clergy subdue the laity, for the sake of their own exaltation, multiply avarice protect wickedness and prepare the way for antichrist. The clear sign of this is the fact that these censures come from antichrist. In the legal proceedings of the clergy they are called fulminations, which are the principal means whereby the clergy proceed against those who uncover antichrist's wickedness, which the clergy has for the most part usurped for itself.

20. If the pope is wicked, and especially if he is foreknown to damnation, then he is a devil like Judas the apostle, a thief and a son of perdition and is not the head of the holy church militant since he is not even a member of it.

21. The grace of predestination is the bond whereby the body of the church and each of its members is indissolubly joined with the head.

22. The pope or a prelate who is wicked and foreknown to damnation is a pastor only in an equivocal sense, and truly is a thief and a robber.

23. The pope ought not to be called "most holy" even by reason of his office, for otherwise even a king ought to be called "most holy" by reason of his office and executioners and heralds ought to be called "holy", indeed even the devil would be called "holy" since he is an official of God.

24. If a pope lives contrary to Christ, even if he has risen through a right and legitimate election according to the established human constitution, he would have risen by a way other than through Christ, even granted that he entered upon office by an election that had been made principally by God. For, Judas Iscariot was rightly and legitimately elected to be an apostle by Jesus Christ who is God, yet he climbed into the sheepfold by another way.

25. The condemnation of the forty-five articles of John Wyclif, decreed by the doctors, is irrational and unjust and badly done and the reason alleged by them is feigned, namely that none of them is catholic but each one is either heretical or erroneous or scandalous.

26. The viva voce agreement upon some person, made according to human custom by the electors or by the greater part of them, does not mean by itself that the person has been legitimately elected or that by this very fact he is the true and manifest successor or vicar of the apostle Peter or of another apostle in an ecclesiastical office. For, it is to the works of the one elected that we should look irrespective of whether the manner of the election was good or bad. For, the more plentifully a person acts meritoriously towards building up the church, the more copiously does he thereby have power from God for this.

27. There is not the least proof that there must be one head ruling the church in spiritual matters who always lives with the church militant.

28. Christ would govern his church better by his true disciples scattered throughout the world, without these monstrous heads.

29. The apostles and faithful priests of the Lord strenuously governed the church in matters necessary for salvation before the office of pope was introduced, and they would continue to do this until the day of judgment if—which is very possible—there is no pope.

30. Nobody is a civil lord, a prelate or a bishop while he is in mortal sin.

Sentence condemning John Petit's proposition, "Any tyrant"-

This most holy synod wishes to proceed with special care to the eradication of errors and heresies which are growing in various parts of the world, as is its duty and the purpose for which it has assembled. It has recently learnt that various propositions have been taught that are erroneous both in the faith and as regards good morals, are scandalous in many ways and threaten to subvert the constitution and order of every state. Among these propositions this one has been reported: Any tyrant can and ought to be killed, licitly and meritoriously, by any of his vassals or subjects, even by means of plots and blandishments or flattery, notwithstanding any oath taken, or treaty made with the tyrant, and without waiting for a sentence or a command from any judge. This holy synod, wishing to oppose this error and to eradicate it completely, declares, decrees and defines, after mature deliberation, that this doctrine is erroneous in the faith and with regard to morals, and it rejects and condemns the doctrine as heretical, scandalous and seditious and as leading the way through perjury to frauds, deceptions, lies and betrayals. It declares, decrees and defines, moreover, that those who stubbornly assert this very pernicious doctrine are heretics and are to be punished as such according to canonical and legitimate sanctions. [37]

Session 16—11 July 1415

[Deliberation about the council's legates due to depart with the emperor Sigismund for Spain; minor deliberations about the conduct of the council's business.]

Session 17—15 July 1415

[The emperor's imminent departure from the council is treated of; the council offers prayers for his success.]

Session 18—17 August 1415

[Decrees about various matters to be decided by the council: power is given to judges to make decisions, and for pairs of them to hear cases; that bulls of the council are to be obeyed; that forgers of conciliar bulls are to be punished in the same way as forgers of apostolic letters; that letters are to be despatched regarding the graces granted by the former pope John, except expectative and exceptional graces; ambassadors to Italy are appointed.]

Session 19—23 September 1415

[Jerome of Prague finally abjures his faith publicly and solemnly. There is promulgated at this session an Ordinance between the friars Minor of the strict observance and others of the common life, to put an end to the discords which have arisen in certain provinces; another Ordinance by which cases of heresy are committed to certain judges. It is also decreed that, notwithstanding safe conducts of emperors and kings and others, a competent judge can inquire into heresy; that the lord vice-chancellor shall expedite the Caroline constitution [38] under a bull of the council; that those with benefices who are attending the council shall receive the fruits of their benefices in their absence, that the letters regarding provisions to patriarchal, metropolitan and other churches, which were granted by the former pope John before his suspension, shall be despatched.]

Session 20—21 November 1415

[A warning is decreed against the duke of Austria, on behalf of the bishop of Trent.]

Sessions of 1416

Session 21—30 May 1416

Sentence condemning Jerome of Prague

In the name of the Lord, Amen. Christ our God and saviour, the true vine whose Father is the vine-dresser, said when teaching his disciples and other followers in these matters: If anyone does not abide in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch and shall wither. This holy synod of Constance is following the teaching and carrying out the commands of this sovereign teacher and master in this case of inquiry into heresy which was started by the same holy synod. It notes the public talk and loud outcry against the said master Jerome of Prague, master of arts, layman. From the acts and proceedings of the case it is evident that the said Jerome has held, asserted and taught various heretical and erroneous articles, which were long ago condemned by holy fathers, some of which are blasphemous, others scandalous and others offensive to the ears of the devout as well as rash and seditious. They were long ago asserted, preached and taught by John Wyclif and John Hus, of cursed memory, and were included in various of their books and pamphlets. These articles, doctrines and books of the aforesaid John Wyclif and John Hus, as well as the memory of Wyclif, and finally the person of Hus, were condemned and damned by this same holy synod and its sentence of heresy. The said Jerome later, during the course of this inquiry, in this holy synod, approved and consented to this sentence of condemnation and acknowledged and professed the true, catholic and apostolic faith. He anathematised all heresy, especially that for which he had been defamed-and he confessed himself defamed—and which John Wyclif and John Hus had taught and held in the past in their works, sermons and pamphlets, and on account of which the said Wyclif and Hus, together with their dogmas and errors, had been condemned as heretical by this same holy synod, and their teaching likewise condemned. He professed acceptance of every condemnation of the aforesaid things and swore that he would remain in the truth of the faith, and that if he ever dared to think or preach anything to the contrary then he wished to submit to the severity of canon law and to be bound to eternal punishment. He offered and gave this profession of his, written in his own hand to this holy synod. Many days after his profession and abjuration, however, like a dog returning to its vomit, he asked for a public hearing to be granted to him in this same holy synod, in order that he might vomit forth in public the deadly poison which lay hidden within his breast. The hearing was granted to him and he asserted, said and professed in effect, at a public assembly of the same synod, that he had wrongly consented to the aforesaid sentence condemning the said Wyclif and John Hus and that he had lied in approving the sentence. He did not fear to state that he had lied. Indeed, he revoked now and for eternity his confession, approval and profession regarding the condemnation of the two men. He asserted that he had never read any heresy or error in the books of the said Wyclif and John Hus, even though it was clearly proved, before his profession to the sentence on the two men, that he had carefully studied, read and taught their books and it is clear that many errors and heresies are contained in them. The said Jerome professed, however, that he held and believed what the church holds and believes regarding the sacrament of the altar and the transubstantiation of the bread into the body of Christ, saying that he believed in Augustine and the other doctors of the church more than in Wyclif and Hus. It is evident from the above that the said Jerome adhered to the condemned Wyclif and Hus and their errors, and that he was and is a supporter of them. This holy synod has therefore decreed and now declares that the said Jerome is to be cast away as a branch that is rotten, withered and separated from the vine; and it pronounces, declares and condemns him as a heretic who has relapsed into heresy and as an excommunicated and anathematised person.

Session 22—15 October 1416

[The treaty of Narbonne, between the king of Aragon, the emperor and the envoys of the council, is confirmed [39] : the king of Aragon withdraws obedience from Benedict XIII and recognises the council of Constance through his envoys.]

Session 23—5 November 1416

[Beginning of the process against Peter de Luna, called Benedict XIII in his obedience.]

Session 24—28 November 1416

[A citation against Peter de Luna, called Benedict XIII in his obedience, is decreed.]

Session 25—14 December 1416

[The envoys of the Spanish count of Foix are united with the council in accordance with the terms of the treaty of Narbonne.]

Session 26—24 December 1416

[The envoys of the king of Navarre are united with the council in accordance with the terms of the treaty of Narbonne.]

Sessions of 1417

Session 27—20 February 1417

[The dispute between Frederick, duke of Austria, and the bishop of Trent is discussed: a report is made on the carrying out of the warning decreed in session 20.]

Session 28—3 March 1417

The Trent dispute is concluded: Frederick, duke of Austria, is condemned.

I The articles of Narbonne concerning the unity of the church, which were agreed between the emperor Sigismund and the envoys of the council of Constance on the one side, and the envoys of the kings and princes of Benedict XIII's obedience on the other side, were published by the council in a general assembly on 13 December 1415 (see Hardt 4,584). They are printed in Hardt 2, 542-554.

Session 29—8 March 1417

[Peter de Luna is accused of contumacy.]

Session 30—10 March 1417

[The process against Peter de Luna continues.]

Session 31—31 March 1417

[A warning is decreed against Philip, count of Vertus, at the request of the bishop of Asti. Other minor deliberations take place.]

Session 32—1 April 1417

[Peter de Luna is again accused of contumacy and an inquiry about him is established.]

Session 33—12 May 1417

[The process against Peter de Luna, who is deemed contumacious, continues.]

Session 34—5 June 1417

[Everything is made ready for the condemnation of Peter de Luna.]

Session 35—18 June 1417

[The envoys of the king of Castile are united with the council in accordance with the terms of the treaty of Narbonne.]

Session 36—22 July 1417

[It is decreed that Peter de Luna is to be cited to hear the council's sentence.]

Session 37—26 July 1417

Definitive sentence whereby Peter de Luna, pope Benedict XIII, is divested of the papacy and deprived of the faith

May this judgment come forth from the face of him who sits on the throne, and from his mouth proceeds a double-edged sword, whose scales are just and weights are true, who will come to judge the living and the dead, our lord Jesus Christ, Amen. The Lord is just and loves just deeds, his face looks on righteousness. But the Lord looks on those who do evil so as to cut off their remembrance from the earth. Let there perish, says the holy prophet, the memory of him who did not remember to show mercy and who persecuted the poor and needy. How much more should there perish the memory of Peter de Luna, called by some Benedict XIII, who persecuted and disturbed all people and the universal church? For, how greatly he has sinned against God's church and the entire Christian people, fostering, nourishing and continuing the schism and division of God's church How ardent and frequent have been the devout and humble prayers, exhortations and requests of kings, princes and prelates with which he has been warned in charity, in accordance with the teaching of the gospel, to bring peace to the church, to heal its wounds and to reconstitute its divided parts into one structure and one body, as he had sworn to do, and as for a long time it was within his power to do ! He was unwilling, however, to listen to their charitable admonitions. How many were the persons afterwards sent to attest to him! Because he did not listen at all even to these, it has been necessary, in accordance with the aforesaid evangelical teaching of Christ, to say to the church, since he has not listened even to her, that he should be treated as a heathen and a publican. All these things have been clearly proved by the articles coming from the inquiry into faith and the schism held before this present synod, regarding the above and other matters brought against him, as well as by their truth and notoriety. The proceedings have been correct and canonical, all the acts have been correctly and carefully examined and there has been mature deliberation. Therefore this same holy general synod, representing the universal church and sitting as a tribunal in the aforesaid inquiry, pronounces, decrees and declares by this definitive sentence written here, that the same Peter de Luna, called Benedict XIII as has been said, has been and is a perjurer, a cause of scandal to the universal church, a promoter and breeder of the ancient schism, that long established fission and division in God's holy church, an obstructer of the peace and unity of the said church, a schismatic disturber and a heretic, a deviator from the faith, a persistent violator of the article of the faith One holy catholic church, incorrigible, notorious and manifest in his scandal to God's church, and that he has rendered himself unworthy of every title, rank, honour and dignity, rejected and cut off by God, deprived by the law itself of every right in any way belonging to him in the papacy or pertaining to the Roman pontiff and the Roman church, and cut off from the catholic church like a withered member. This same holy synod, moreover, as a precautionary measure, since according to himself he actually holds the papacy, deprives, deposes and casts out the said Peter from the papacy and from being the supreme pontiff of the Roman church and from every title, rank, honour, dignity, benefice and office whatsoever. It forbids him to act henceforth as the pope or as the supreme and Roman pontiff. It absolves and declares to be absolved all Christ's faithful from obedience to him, and from every duty of obedience to him and from oaths and obligations in any way made to him. It forbids each and every one of Christ's faithful to obey, respond to or attend to, as if he were pope, the said Peter de Luna, who is a notorious, declared and deposed schismatic and incorrigible heretic, or to sustain or harbour him in any way contrary to the aforesaid, or to offer him help, advice or good will. This is forbidden under pain of the offender being counted as a promoter of schism and heresy and of being deprived of all benefices, dignities and ecclesiastical or secular honours, and under other penalties of the law, even if the dignity is that of a bishop, a patriarch, a cardinal, a king or the emperor. If they act contrary to this prohibition, they are by this very fact deprived of these things, on the authority of this decree and sentence, and they incur the other penalties of the law. This holy synod, moreover, declares and decrees that all and singular prohibitions and all processes, sentences, constitutions, censures and any other things whatsoever that were issued by him and might impede the aforesaid, are without effect; and it invalidates, revokes and annuls them; saving always the other penalties which the law decrees for the above cases.

Session 38—28 July 1417

[Decree about the right to vote of the deputies of the kings of Castile and Aragon, concerning which agreement had not been reached among the said deputies in the previous session; decrees about other lesser matters.]

Session 39—9 October 1417

On general councils

The frequent holding of general councils is a pre-eminent means of cultivating the Lord's patrimony. It roots out the briars, thorns and thistles of heresies, errors and schisms, corrects deviations, reforms what is deformed and produces a richly fertile crop for the Lord's vineyard. Neglect of councils, on the other hand, spreads and fosters the aforesaid evils. This conclusion is brought before our eyes by the memory of past times and reflection on the present situation. For this reason we establish, enact, decree and ordain, by a perpetual edict, that general councils shall be held henceforth in the following way. The first shall follow in five years immediately after the end of this council, the second in seven years immediately after the end of the next council, and thereafter they are to be held every ten years for ever. They are to be held in places which the supreme pontiff is bound to nominate and assign within a month before the end of each preceding council, with the approval and consent of the council, or which, in his default, the council itself is bound to nominate. Thus, by a certain continuity, there will always be either a council in existence or one expected within a given time. If perchance emergencies arise, the time may be shortened by the supreme pontiff, acting on the advice of his brothers, the cardinals of the Roman church, but it may never be prolonged. Moreover, he may not change the place assigned for the next council without evident necessity. If an emergency arises whereby it seems necessary to change the place—for example in the case of a siege, war, disease or the like—then the supreme pontiff may, with the consent and written endorsement of his aforesaid brothers or of two-thirds of them, substitute another place which is suitable and fairly near to the place previously assigned. It must, however, be within the same nation unless the same or a similar impediment exists throughout the nation. In the latter case he may summon the council to another suitable place which is nearby but within another nation, and the prelates and other persons who are customarily summoned to a council will be obliged to come to it as if it had been the place originally assigned. The supreme pontiff is bound to announce and publish the change of place or the shortening of time in a legal and solemn form within a year before the date assigned, so that the aforesaid persons may be able to meet and hold the council at the appointed time.

Provision to guard against future schisms

If it happens—though may it not!—that a schism arises in the future in such a way that two or more persons claim to be supreme pontiffs, then the date of the council, if it is more than a year off, is to be brought forward to one year ahead; calculating this from the day on which two or more of them publicly assumed the insignia of their pontificates or on which they began to govern. All prelates and others who are bound to attend a council shall assemble at the council without the need for any summons, under pain of the law's sanctions and of other penalties which may be imposed by the council, and let the emperor and other kings and princes attend either in person or through official deputies, as if they had been besought, through the bowels of the mercy of our lord Jesus Christ, to put out a common fire. Each of those claiming to be the Roman pontiff is bound to announce and proclaim the council as taking place at the end of the year, as mentioned, in the previously assigned place; he is bound to do this within a month after the day on which he came to know that one or more other persons had assumed the insignia of the papacy or was administering the papacy; and this is under pain of eternal damnation, of the automatic loss of any rights that he had acquired in the papacy, and of being disqualified both actively and passively from all dignities. He is also bound to make the council known by letter to his rival claimant or claimants, challenging him or them to a judicial process, as well as to all prelates and princes, insofar as this is possible. He shall go in person to the place of the council at the appointed time, under pain of the aforesaid penalties, and shall not depart until the question of the schism has been fully settled by the council. None of the contenders for the papacy, moreover shall preside as pope at the council. Indeed, in order that the church may rejoice more freely and quickly in one undisputed pastor, all the contenders for the papacy are suspended by law as soon as the council has begun, on the authority of this holy synod, from all administration; and let not obedience be given in any way by anyone to them, or to any one of them until the question has been settled by the council.

If it happens in the future that the election of a Roman pontiff is brought about through fear, which would weigh upon even a steadfast man, or through pressure, then we declare that it is of no effect or moment and cannot be ratified or approved by subsequent consent even if the state of fear ceases. The cardinals, however, may not proceed to another election until a council has reached a decision about the election, unless the person elected resigns or dies. If they do proceed to this second election, then it is null by law and both those making the second election and the person elected, if he embarks upon his reign as pope, are deprived by law of every dignity, honour and rank—even cardinalatial or pontifical—and are thereafter ineligible for the same, even the papacy itself; and nobody may in any way obey as pope the second person elected, under pain of being a fosterer of schism. In such a case the council is to provide for the election of a pope. It is lawful, however, and indeed all the electors are bound, or at least the greater part of them, to move to a safe locality and to make a statement about the said fear. The statement is to be made in a prominent place before public notaries and important persons as well as before a multitude of the people. They are to do this as quickly as they can without danger to their persons, even if there is a threat of danger to all their goods. They shall state in their allegation the nature and extent of the fear and shall solemnly swear that the allegation is true that they believe they can prove it and that they are not making it out of malice or calumny. Such an allegation of fear cannot be delayed in any way until after the next council.

After they have moved and have alleged the fear in the above form, they are bound to summon the person elected to a council. If a council is not due for more than a year after their summons, then its date shall be brought forward by the law itself to only a year ahead, in the way explained above. The elected person is bound under pain of the aforesaid penalties, and the cardinals under pain of automatically losing the cardinalate and all their benefices, to announce and proclaim the council within a month after the summons, in the way mentioned above, and to make it known as soon as possible. The cardinals and other electors are bound to come in person to the place of the council, at a suitable time, and to remain there until the end of the affair.

The other prelates are bound to answer the cardinals' summons, as mentioned above, if the person elected fails to issue a summons. The latter will not preside at the council since he will have been suspended by law from all government of the papacy from the time the council begins, and he is not to be obeyed by anyone in any matter under pain of the offender becoming a promoter of schism. If the aforesaid emergencies arise within a year before the beginning of a council-namely that more than one person claim to be pope or that someone has been elected through fear or pressure—then those who claim to be pope, or the one elected through fear or pressure, as well as the cardinals, are deemed by law as having been summoned to the council. They are bound, moreover, to appear in person at the council, to explain their case and to await the council's judgment. But if some emergency happens during the above occurrences whereby it is necessary to change the place of the council—for example a siege or war or disease or some such—then nevertheless all the aforesaid persons, as well as all prelates and others who are obliged to attend a council, are bound to assemble at a neighbouring place suitable for the council, as has been said above. Moreover, the greater part of the prelates who have moved to a particular place within a month may specify it as the place of the council to which they and others are bound to come, just as if it had been the place first assigned. The council, after it has thus been summoned and has assembled and become acquainted with the cause of the schism, shall bring a suit of contumacy against the electors or those claiming to be pope or the cardinals, if perchance they fail to come. It shall then pronounce judgment and shall punish, even beyond the aforesaid penalties and in such a way that the fierceness of the punishment acts as an example to others, those who are to blame—no matter of what state or rank or pre-eminence, whether ecclesiastical or secular, they may be—in starting or fostering the schism, in their administering or obeying, in their supporting those who governed or in making an election against the aforesaid prohibition, or who lied m their allegations of fear.

The disturbance caused by fear or pressure at a papal election corrodes and divides, in a lamentable way, the whole of Christianity. In order that it may be assiduously avoided, we have decided to decree, in addition to what has been said above, that if anyone brings to bear or causes, or procures to be brought about, fear or pressure or violence of this kind upon the electors in a papal election, or upon any one of them, or has the matter ratified after it has been done, or advises or acts in support of it, or knowingly receives or defends someone who has done this, or is negligent in enforcing the penalties mentioned below—no matter of what state or rank or pre-eminence the offender may be, even if it be imperial or regal or pontifical, or any other ecclesiastical or secular dignity he may hold—then he automatically incurs the penalties contained in pope Boniface VIII's constitution which begins Felicis, and he shall be effectively punished by them.

Any city—even if it be Rome itself, though may it not be!—or any other corporation that gives aid, counsel or support to someone who does these things, or that does not have such an offender punished within a month, insofar as the enormity of the crime demands and there exists the possibility of inflicting the punishment, shall automatically be subject to ecclesiastical interdict. Furthermore the city, apart from the one mentioned above, shall be deprived of the episcopal dignity, notwithstanding any privileges to the contrary. We wish, moreover, that this decree be solemnly published at the end of every general council and that it be read out and publicly announced before the start of a conclave, wherever and whenever the election of a Roman pontiff is about to take place.

On the profession to be made by the pope

Since the Roman pontiff exercises such great power among mortals, it is right that he be bound all the more by the incontrovertible bonds of the faith and by the rites that are to be observed regarding the church's sacraments. We therefore decree and ordain, in order that the fullness of the faith may shine in a future Roman pontiff with singular splendour from the earliest moments of his becoming pope, that henceforth whoever is to be elected Roman pontiff shall make the following confession and profession in public, in front of his electors, before his election is published.

In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father and Son and holy Spirit. Amen. In the year of our Lord's nativity one thousand etc., I, N., elected pope, with both heart and mouth confess and profess to almighty God, whose church I undertake with his assistance to govern, and to blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, that as long as I am in this fragile life I will firmly believe and hold the catholic faith, according to the traditions of the apostles, of the general councils and of other holy fathers, especially of the eight holy universal councils-namely the first at Nicaea, the second at Constantinople, the third at Ephesus, the fourth at Chalcedon, the fifth and sixth at Constantinople, the seventh at Nicaea and the eighth at Constantinople—as well as of the general councils at the Lateran, Lyons and Vienne, and I will preserve this faith unchanged to the last dot and will confirm, defend and preach it to the point of death and the shedding of my blood, and likewise I will follow and observe in every way the rite handed down of the ecclesiastical sacraments of the Catholic church. This my profession and confession, written at my orders by a notary of the holy Roman church, I have signed below with my own hand. I sincerely offer it on this altar N. to you, almighty God, with a pure mind and a devout conscience, in the presence of the following. Made etc.

That prelates may not be translated without their consent

When prelates are translated, there is commonly both spiritual and temporal loss and damage of a grave nature for the churches from which they are transferred. The prelates, moreover, sometimes do not maintain the rights and liberties of their churches as carefully as they otherwise might, out of fear of being translated. The importunity of certain people who seek their own good, not that of Jesus Christ, may mean that the Roman pontiff is deceived in such a matter, as one ignorant of the facts, and so is easily led astray. We therefore determine and ordain, by this present decree, that henceforth bishops and superiors ought not to be translated unwillingly without a grave and reasonable cause which, after the person in question has been summoned, is to be inquired into and decided upon with the advice of the cardinals of the holy Roman church, or the greater part of them, and with their written endorsement. Lesser prelates, such as abbots and others with perpetual benefices, ought not to be changed, moved or deposed without a just and reasonable cause that has been inquired into.

We add, moreover, that for abbots to be changed the written endorsement of the cardinals is necessary—just as it is necessary for bishops, as has been said—saving, however, the constitutions and privileges of any churches, monasteries and orders.

On spoils and procurations

Papal reservations as well as the exacting and receiving of procurations which are due to ordinaries and other lesser prelates, by reason of a visitation, and of spoils on deceased prelates and other clerics, are seriously detrimental to churches, monasteries and other benefices and to churchmen. We therefore declare, by this present edict, that it is reasonable and in the public interest that reservations made by the pope, as well as exactions and collections of this kind made by collectors and others appointed or to be appointed by apostolic authority, are henceforth in no way to occur or to be attempted. Indeed, procurations of this kind, as well as spoils and the goods of any prelates found at their deaths, even if they are cardinals or members of the papal household or officials or any other clerics whatsoever, in the Roman curia or outside it, no matter where or when they die, are to belong to and to be received by, fully and freely, those persons to whom they would and ought to belong with the ending of the aforesaid reservations, mandates and exactions. We forbid the exaction of such spoils on prelates even inferior ones and others, which are outside and contrary to the form of common law. However, the constitution of pope Boniface VIII of happy memory, beginning Praesenti, which was published with this specially in mind, is to remain in force.

Session 40—30 October 1417

Reforms to be made by the pope together with the council before it is dissolved

The most holy synod of Constance [40] declares and decrees that the future supreme Roman pontiff, who by God's grace is to be elected very soon, together with this sacred council or those to be deputed by the individual nations, is bound to reform the church in its head and in the Roman curia, according to justice and the good government of the church, before this council is dissolved, under the topics contained in the following articles, which were at various times put forward by the nations by way of reforms.

1. First, the number, quality and nationality of the lord cardinals.

2. Next, reservations of the apostolic see.

3. Next, annates, common services and petty services.

4. Next, collations to benefices and expectative graces.

5. Next, the cases that are, or are not, to be heard at the Roman curia.

6. Next, appeals to the Roman curia.

7. Next, the offices of chancery and penitentiary.

8. Next, exemptions and incorporations made at the time of the schism.

9. Next, commendams.

10. Next, confirmation of elections. [41]

11. Next, intercalary fruits.

12. Next, not alienating goods of the Roman church and of other churches.

13. Next, for what reasons and how a pope can be corrected or deposed.

14. Next, the eradication of simony.

15. Next, dispensations.

16. Next, revenues of the pope and the cardinals.

17. Next, indulgences.

18. Next, tithes.

With this addition, that when the nations have deputed their representatives as mentioned above, the others may freely return to their own countries with the pope's permission.

That the election of the Roman pontiff may be begun, notwithstanding the absence of Peter de Luna's cardinals

The most holy general synod of Constance notes what was previously agreed upon at Narbonne concerning the church's unity and the admission to this synod of the cardinals of the obedience of Peter de Luna, called Benedict XIII in his obedience. It notes, too, that after the notorious expulsion of the said Peter de Luna, the aforesaid cardinals who had been summoned before the expulsion according to the terms of the agreement, did not come within three months and more after the aforesaid expulsion. The synod therefore decrees and declares that, notwithstanding their absence, it will proceed to the election of the Roman pontiff on the authority of the said synod and according to what has been decided by the same synod. It declares, however, that if they arrive before the election of the future supreme pontiff has been completed, and if they adhere to the council, they are to be admitted to the aforesaid election together with the other cardinals, according to the directives of the law and what shall be decided by the council.

On the manner and form of electing the pope

For the praise, glory and honour of almighty God and for the peace and unity of the universal church and of the whole Christian people. The election of the future Roman and supreme pontiff is soon to be held. We wish that it may be confirmed with greater authority and by the assent of many persons and that, mindful as we are of the state of the church, no doubts or scruples may later remain in people's minds regarding the said election but rather that a secure, true full and perfect union of the faithful may result from it. Therefore this most holy general synod of Constance, mindful of the common good and with the special and express consent and the united wish of the cardinals of the holy Roman church present at the same synod, and of the college of cardinals and of all the nations at this present council, declares, ordains and decrees that, for this time only, at the election of the Roman and supreme pontiff, there shall be added to the cardinals six prelates or other honourable churchmen in holy orders, from each of the nations currently present and named at the same synod, who are to be chosen by each of the said nations within ten days. This same holy synod gives power to all these people, insofar as it is necessary, to elect the Roman pontiff according to the form here laid down. That is to say, the person is to be regarded as the Roman pontiff by the universal church without exception who is elected and admitted by two-thirds of the cardinals present at the conclave and by two-thirds of those from each nation who are to be and have been added to the cardinals. Moreover, the election is not valid nor is the person elected to be regarded as supreme pontiff unless two-thirds of the cardinals present at the conclave, and two-thirds of those from each nation who should be and have been added to the same cardinals, agree to elect him as Roman pontiff. The synod also declares, ordains and decrees that the votes of any persons cast at the election are null unless, as has been said, two-thirds of the cardinals, and two-thirds of those from each nation who should be and have been added to them, agree, directly or by way of addition, upon one person. This must be added, moreover, that the prelates and other persons who should be and have been added to the cardinals for the election, are bound to observe all and singular apostolic constitutions, even penal ones, which have been promulgated regarding the election of the Roman pontiff, just as the cardinals themselves are bound to observe them, and they are bound to their observance. The said electors, both cardinals and others, are also bound to swear, before they proceed to the election, that in attending to the business of the election, they will proceed with pure and sincere minds—since it is a question of creating the vicar Jesus Christ, the successor of the blessed Peter, the governor of the universal church and the leader of the Lord's flock—and that they firmly believe it will benefit the public good of the universal church if they entirely prescind from all affection for persons of any particular nation, or other inordinate affections, as well as from hatred and graces or favours bestowed, in order that by their ministry a beneficial and suitable pastor may be provided for the universal church. This same holy synod, mindful of this notorious vacancy in the Roman church, fixes and assigns the next ten days for all and singular cardinals of the holy Roman church, whether present here or absent, and the other electors mentioned above, to enter into the conclave which is to be held in this city of Constance, in the commune's principal building which has already been allocated for this purpose. The synod ordains, declares and decrees that within these next ten days the aforesaid electors, both cardinals and others mentioned above, must enter into the conclave for the purpose of holding the election and of doing and carrying out all the other matters according as the laws ordain and decree in all things, besides those mentioned above regarding the cardinals and other electors, concerning the election of a Roman pontiff. The same holy synod wishes all these laws to remain in force after the above matters have been observed. For this time, however, it approves, ordains, establishes and decrees this particular form and manner of election. The same holy synod, in order to remove all scruples, makes and declares fit for actively and passively carrying out all legitimate acts at the same synod, insofar as this is necessary, all those who are present at the same synod as well as those who will come and adhere to it, always saving the other decrees of this same sacred council, and it will supply for any defects, if perchance any shall occur in the above, notwithstanding any apostolic constitutions, even those published in general councils, and other constitutions to the contrary.

Session 41—8 November 1417

[Everything is prepared for the start of the conclave to elect a pope. On 11 November cardinal Oddo Colonna is elected pontiff as Martin V.]

Session 42—28 December 1417

[In this session a bull of Martin V was approved regarding Baldassare Cossa, formerly pope, who was earlier deprived of his see and imprisoned by the council but who is now to be set free]

Sessions of 1418

Session 43—23 March 1418 [42]

Certain statutes promulgated on the reform of the church

On exemptions

Martin, bishop and servant of the servants of God. We note that from the time of the death of pope Gregory XI, our predecessor of happy memory, some Roman pontiffs, or those who claimed to be and were reputed as such in their various obediences, either of their own will or on account of the importunity of petitioners, have granted exemption from the jurisdiction of their ordinaries to certain churches, monasteries, chapters, convents, priories, benefices, places and persons, which were in no way exempt in the time of the said Gregory, to the great detriment of the ordinaries in question. We wish to avoid damage of this kind. We therefore revoke, with the approval of this sacred council, all exemptions that were first granted after the said Gregory XI's death, by any persons whomsoever claiming to be Roman pontiffs, even if perchance we ourselves with full knowledge approved or renewed the exemptions, without the party in question being heard, to any cathedral churches, monasteries (even those that were exempt but were later made subject to a monastery of a different order or tradition), chapters, convents, prelacies, benefices, places and persons whatsoever, if they had enjoyed no exemption before they were exempted in this way, but were simply subject to ordinary jurisdiction, and had no beginning before that time. We except, however, exemptions that were made or granted either by way of confirmation, increase or addition, or concerning which the matter was ordained by the competent authority, after the interested parties had presented themselves and been heard, or to which the ordinaries consented, to a whole order or to churches, monasteries, chapters, convents, benefices and places founded after the aforesaid time by way of or on condition of exemption or with a new foundation in mind, or to universities and colleges of scholars. We also revoke, with the approval of this sacred council, all perpetual exemptions granted by the pope through inferior persons. We revoke them even if unresolved suits about them are pending, and we end these suits. We return the churches, monasteries and other aforesaid places to the former jurisdiction of their ordinaries. We do not wish to prejudice by this in any way other exemptions held or granted before the death of the said Gregory. In future, however, we do not intend to grant exemptions unless the case has been examined and the interested parties have been summoned.

On unions and incorporations

Martin, etc. It is not possible to give a certain rule about unions and incorporations made or granted after Gregory XI's death. We shall therefore revoke them, with due regard to justice, even though the authority of the apostolic see may have been involved, on the plea of the interested parties, unless they were made for good and true reasons or unless the interested persons themselves have obtained benefices united in this way.

On intercalary fruits

Martin, etc. Next, we leave the fruits and revenues coming from churches, monasteries and benefices during a vacancy to be disposed of in accordance with the law and customs or privileges. We forbid them to be applied to us or to the apostolic camera.

On simoniacs

Martin, etc. Many constitutions have been issued in the past against the evil of simony, but they have not been able to eradicate the disease. We wish to attend carefully to this matter in the future according as we are able to. We therefore declare, with the approval of this sacred council, that persons ordained in a simoniacal fashion are automatically suspended from exercising their orders. Simoniacal elections, postulations, confirmations and provisions that are henceforth made to or in respect of any churches, monasteries, dignities, parsonages, offices or ecclesiastical benefices are rendered null by the law itself and nobody acquires any rights through them. Those who have been thus promoted, confirmed or provided may not receive their fruits but are bound to restore them as though they had received things that had been unjustly taken. We decree, moreover, that both those who give and those who receive money in this matter of simony automatically incur the sentence of excommunication, even though their rank be pontifical or cardinalatial.

On dispensations

Martin, etc. Since benefices are granted by reason of the duties attached to them, we consider it absurd that those who obtain benefices refuse or neglect to carry out their duties. We therefore revoke, with the approval of this sacred council, all dispensations, granted by any persons whomsoever claiming to be Roman pontiffs, to any persons elected to, confirmed in or provided to churches, monasteries, conventual priories, deaneries, archdeaconries or any other benefices for which a particular order ought to be bestowed, or to which one is attached, whereby the persons in question are dispensed from receiving the episcopal consecration or the abbatial blessing or the other orders that ought to be bestowed or are attached. This does not include, however, the dispensations granted according to the form of Boniface VIII's constitution beginning Cum ex eo We decree that within six months from the publication of this our constitution, for those who are presently holding such appointments, and within the time laid down by the law for those who will hold them in the future, the persons concerned are to have themselves consecrated or blessed or promoted to some other required order. Otherwise they are deprived by the law itself of the said churches, monasteries, dignities, parsonages, offices and benefices. These may then be freely conferred on other persons or provision may be made for them. However, other published constitutions on this matter are to remain in force.

On tithes and other dues

Martin, etc. We command and order the strict observance of the laws which forbid tithes and other dues to be imposed on churches and ecclesiastics by persons lower than the pope. For ourselves, moreover, we shall in no way impose them generally on the whole clergy unless there is a grave and serious reason and an advantage for the universal church in doing so, and then with the advice, consent and written endorsement of our brothers, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, and the prelates whose advice can conveniently be obtained. This should not happen especially in any kingdom or province where the prelates in question, or the majority of them, have not been consulted or have not consented. In this way they may only be levied by ecclesiastics acting on the authority of the apostolic see.

On the life and probity of clerics

Martin, etc. Among the various faults of clerics and prelates this one has especially taken root, namely that many of them despise an appearance of ecclesiastical decency in their dress and delight in what is unbecoming. They seek to conform to the laity and they exhibit outwardly in their dress whatever they are thinking in their minds. Therefore, with the approval of this sacred council, we renew and order the careful observance of all the laws currently in force regarding the clothing, tonsure and habits of clerics, as to both shape and colour, and their hair-styles and the style and uprightness of their lives. These laws have been heeded far too little by both the secular and the regular clergy. Especially we order to be utterly abolished, with the same council's approval, the abuse whereby in certain regions some clerics and churchmen, both secular and regular, and even (which we deplore still more) prelates of churches, wear long gloves that are unnecessarily large and sumptuous, extending to their elbows, and clothes with slits at the back and sides, with furs covering the edges even of the slit parts. Moreover, they are not afraid to attend the divine offices in churches—even in the churches in which they are beneficed—in such clothes together with their surplices and other garments worn for worship and the church's services. We condemn this unbecoming way of dressing for all churchmen and we forbid the wearing of such garments. Those who do otherwise are to be punished as transgressors of the canons. We decree in particular that if any beneficed person, or any holder of an office in a church, dares to attend the divine office in such clothing, then he shall know that he is suspended from receiving his ecclesiastical incomes for one month for each such occasion, and the fruits of these incomes are to be applied to the fabric of the church in question.

Martin, etc. We decree and declare with the approval of this sacred council, that the demands of this same sacred council. regarding the articles contained in the reform decree promulgated on Saturday 30 October [43] of last year, have been and are met by the various decrees, statutes and ordinances, both those which have been read out in this present session and those upon which agreement has been reached with the individual nations of the council. [44] We wish these decrees, statutes and ordinances to be deposited in our chancellery and that letters in public form, under the seal of our vice-chancellor, be drawn up and handed over to those who wish to have them.

Session 44—19 April 1418

Decree on the place of the next council

Martin, etc. We wish and desire to put into effect a decree of this general council [45] which lays down, among other things, that general councils must always be held in the place which the supreme pontiff, with the consent and approval of the council, is bound to depute and assign, within the month before the end of this council, as the place for the next council after the end of the present one. With the consent and approval of this present council, we therefore, by this present decree, depute and assign the city of Pavia for this purpose, and we ordain and decree that prelates and others who ought to be summoned to general councils are obliged to go to Pavia at the aforesaid time. Let nobody therefore ... If anyone however .... Given and enacted at Constance, in the place of this public session ....

Session 45—22 April 1418[46]

Sentence dissolving the council, and the granting of indulgences

Martin, etc. We dissolve the council, as the sacred council itself requires, for reasons that are certain, reasonable and just. We give permission, with the council's approval, to each and every person at the council to return home. Furthermore, on the authority of almighty God and of his blessed apostles Peter and Paul and on our authority, we grant to each and every person who has taken part in this sacred council and its business a full absolution of all his sins, once in his life, provided he takes advantage of the absolution in the correct form within two months of his hearing about it. We grant the same at the hour of death. This is to be understood as applying to both lords and members of their households; provided that they fast on each Friday for a year from the day they come to know of this indulgence, in the case of those who seek the absolution for while they are alive, and for another year in the case of those who seek it for the hour of death, unless they are legitimately prevented from doing so, in which case they should perform other pious works. After the second year, they ought to fast on Fridays until the end of their lives or to perform other pious works. Let nobody therefore .... If anyone however ....

Given and enacted at Constance in the place of this public session ...

Notes

[1] This footnote is not from Tanner. This council was occasioned by The Schism begun when the cardinals who had elected Urban VI pope on 8th April 1378 and who had all repeatedly recognised him subsequently, decided in view of his offensive zeal for reform to claim that the pressure they had been under during his election had invalidated it. In September 1378 they elected Robert of Genoa [anti] pope Clement VII. Urban VI excommunicated them all and appointed a new college of cardinals. There then continued two lines of popes with supporting cardinals. Fed up with this bipartite division of Christendom the "council" of Pisa in 1409 made it tripartite beginning another line

The legitimate line ran : Urban VI, Boniface IX, Innocent VII, Gregory XII.

The first line of antipopes ran :Clement VII, Benedict XIII.

The second line of antipopes ran : Alexander V, who was succeeded by antipope John XXIII.

It should be remembered that those assembled at Constance did not constitute an ecumenical council until the bull of Gregory XII was proclaimed on 4 July 1415 in what in Tanner is called "Session 14".

[2] i.e. for the few weeks of 1378 that intervened between his election and his electors' repudiation of the election.

[3] The documentation can be found in Mansi, vol. XXVII, cols. 730-46.

[4] Terrenas Affectiones, March 13, 1415, Mansi, XXXII, col. 733.

[5] Cum ad laudem of same date; ib. col. 733-4.

[6] Remota tamen omnino dicti Balthassaris praesidentia et praesentia; Mansi, col. 733. The powers granted in the commission are stated to have reference to " congregationem ipsam, in quantum per dictam serenitatem regiam, et non Balthassarem, sese nuncupari facientem Joannem XXIII vocatum ...." Gregory XII nowhere speaks of John XXIII's "obedience".

[7] The schedule, Quia sanctissimus dominus noster: which begins by describing the assembly .... celebris fama huius sanctae congregationis pro generali concilio Constantiensi .... congregatae: the vital words are given Ego Joannes .... istud sacrum concilium generale Convoco et omnia per ipsum agenda auctorizo et confirmo: Mansi, ib. col. 734.

[8] Mansi, ib., col. 735.

[9] Divina gratia dirigente dated from Rimini, March 10, 1415; Mansi, ib. col. 737.

[10] The schedule, Ego Carolus de Malatestes, Mansi, ib., col. 744

[11] "Admittit, approbat et collaudet ", ib., col. 745.

[12] This document of John XXIII was read and approved by the council at this first session.

[13] A "council" not recognized by the legitimate pope, the council of Pisa (1409), session 22 (Mansi 26, 1155).

[14] really antipope Alexander V

[15] Here was read John's "Bull" Ad pacem et exaltationem ecclesiae dated 9 December 1413.

[16] The 11th council of Toledo (675), canon 1 (Mansi 11, 137; Bruns 1, 308), ch. 3 C. V q. 4 (Fr 1, 548).

[17] Here follow the appointments of the council's ministers and officials

[18] John XXIII had fled from Constance on 20 March 1415

[19] and the general reform of God's church in head and members adds Asd. These words are not found even in the reliable codices of the Basle epitome (see Hardt IV, prologue 15 ff.)

[20] This paragraph is in Asd, but in fact the matter was only proposed, not decided upon (see Hardt, IV 90).

[21] The following were also approved at this session : a proposition concerning matters about Hus and Wyclif to be treated at the next session; a decree about writing letters to kings and princes in the name of the council, about the pope's flight and about the continuing integrity of the council; a decree to the effect that pope John should be brought back by the emperor to the council of Constance.

[22] Regarding this article, the reasons for the condemnation are included in the acts as follows: The first part is scandalous and presumptuous inasmuch as it speaks in general terms and without distinctions; the second part is erroneous inasmuch as it asserts that begging is not permitted to friars.

[23] Regarding this article, the acts include the following reasons for the condemnation: It is an error if one understands by the Roman church the universal church or a general council, or inasmuch as it would deny the primacy of the supreme pontiff over the other individual churches.

[24] In 1412 (Mansi, 27, 505-508)

[25] This condemnation is not in Asd

[26] These 260 articles condemned by the university of Oxford in 1411 (see J. A. Robson, Wyclif and the Oxford Schools, Cambridge 1961, 244-246) are not to be found in any versions of the council's acts. Indeed, the French nation said that it knew nothing about them, and for this reason the same topic was taken up again in the 15th session (see Hardt 4, 156 and 191; Finke II 34, 40 and 362. H-L wrongly affirms [7, 226] that this decree was passed in the 9th session. See the 15th session below.

[27] In Hardt this decree follows the sentencing of pope John to be removed and deposed; H-L (7, 248 n.), on the other hand, correctly affirms that it preceded the sentence, as the heading of the decree shows.

[28] There follows a separate decree on electing four judges for summoning absent prelates.

[29] Tanner curiously says "At this session pope Gregory XII, through his legate Charles Malatesta, approved the council of Constance and solemnly renounced the papacy." The actual word used was convoco. See my introduction (2).

[30] The following decrees were also promulgated at this session for the purpose of confirming Gregory XII's resignation and of uniting the followers of the two obediences: Legal proceedings in the two obediences, arising from the schism, are declared ended. Decree stating that the process for electing the Roman pontiff, when the see is vacant, may not begin without the council's consent (this decree accords with the decrees promulgated in the earlier session). The council ratifies all that Gregory XII did, canonically and according to reason, within his actual obedience. The decree that Gregory XII may not be re-elected was not made on the grounds of incapacity on the part of the said lord Gregory. The council reserves to itself, and declares that it will indeed see to, the resolution of problems where two or more persons from different obediences hold the same title. The council accepts and admits as cardinals the lord Gregory and his cardinals. That the lord Gregory's officials shall retain their offices. That nobody may depart from the council without the council's permission. That the emperor Sigismund is to attend to the council's safety. Decree stating that the council requires Peter de Luna (Benedict XIII) to resign .

[31] The whole of this sentence condemning John Wyclif, together with the articles selected from the 260, is not in Asd; but the articles are published also in H-L 7, 308-313.

[32] See above, session 8 (p. 415). In Hardt (4, 400 and 408) this second condemnation of John Wyclif is not clearly distinguished from the condemnation of John Hus which follows immediately in the same session.

[33] Innocent III; see Lateran council IV, constitution 21 (see above, p. 245)

[34] but they were not copulating as married persons, Mansi

[35] Held in 1412 (Mansi 27, 505-508

[36] Session 8 [before the council became ecumenical]

[37] In this session various matters were also agreed upon concerning the ordering and protecting of the council's work: Decree on silence; Constitution of the council against those who plunder or despoil persons coming to or returning from the council.

[38] The Caroline Constitution on ecclesiastical liberty, promulgated by the emperor Charles IV in 1377, was published by Hardt among the acts of the council (4, 523-525). On the confirmation discussed at this session and afterwards promulgated, see Hardt 4, 562-583

[39] The articles of Narbonne concerning the unity of the church, which were agreed between the emperor Sigismund and the envoys of the council of Constance on the one side, and the envoys of the kings and princes of Benedict XIII's obedience on the other side, were published by the council in a general assembly on 13 December 145 (see Hardt 4, 584). They are printed in Hardt 2, 542-554

[40] The most holy general synod of Constance, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church Asd.

[41] This article comes fifth in the changed order in Asd.

[42] On 22 February 1418 Martin V's bull Inter cunctas was promulgated against the followers of John Wyclif and John Hus. It was addressed to all archbishops, bishops and inquisitors. Included in it were the 45 articles of Wyclif condemned in the 8th session and the 30 articles of Hus condemned in the 15th session. All suspects were to answer 39 questions, which were enumerated in the bull, on these articles (see Hardt 4, 1518-1531; H-L 7, 507-529; D 657-689).

[43] Session 40

[44] Those agreed upon in the council by Martin V—with the Spanish, French, German and English nations—have also been published in Raccolta di concordati su matene ecclesiastiche tra la S. Sede e le autorita civili, edited by A. Mercati, I Roma 1954, 144-168 (see H-L 7, 535-565).

[45] Session 39

[46] At the beginning of this session the Poles petitioned for a solemn confirmation of the condemnation as heretical of John Falckenberg's doctrine on tyrannicide. This doctrine had already been condemned by the individual nations but not by the council. Pope Martin's reply was as follows: The aforesaid lord our pope said, in answer to these proposals, protestations, requests and suggestions, after silence had been imposed on all (since some were saying much and causing a disturbance), and by way of replying to the aforesaid points, that he wished to hold and inviolably observe, and never to contravene in any way, each and every thing that had been determined, concluded and decreed in a conciliar way, in matters of faith, by this present sacred general council of Constance. The pope approves the things done thus in a conciliar way, and he ratifies all things about matters of the faith that were done in the council in a conciliar way and not otherwise or in some other way (Hardt 4, 1557).

Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF FLORENCE (1438-1445)

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Council of Basel

Introduction

Basel had been designated as the place for this ecumenical council by the abortive council of Pavia — Siena (1423-1424). It was opened on 25 July 1431 by the papal legate, who had been appointed by Pope Martin V in two bulls dated 1 February 1431, Dum onus universalis gregis and Nuper siquidem cupientes shortly before the pope's death on 20 February 1431. A great part of the council's work in the early years was taken up with its quarrel with Pope Eugenius IV, who was accused of wishing to dissolve or transfer the council. The prospect of re-union with the eastern church provided an opportunity to transfer the council to another city. This move was supported by the council fathers loyal to the pope, who however were in a minority, and in the 25th session they voted for the city of Ferrara. There the council was re-opened on 8 January 1438, Pope Eugenius IV later attending in person. Some historians doubt the ecumenicity of the first 25 sessions at Basel. All agree that the sessions held at Basel after the 25th session until the final one on 25 April 1449 cannot be regarded as sessions of an ecumenical council.

The Greek bishops and theologians attended the council of Ferrara from 9 April 1438. The council was transferred to Florence on 10 January 1439. There, in the session on 6 July 1439, the decree of union with the Greek church was approved. Subsequently decrees of union with the Armenian and Coptic churches were approved. Finally the council was transferred to Rome on 24 February 1443. There other decrees of union with the Bosnians, the Syrians and finally with the Chaldeans and Maronites of Cyprus, were approved. The last session of the council was held on 7 August 1445.

The decisions taken at Basel have the form of conciliar decrees. Those taken at Ferrara, Florence and Rome are almost always in the form of bulls, since the pope was presiding in person; in these cases the decree mentions the council's approval and contains the words "in a solemnly celebrated general session of the synod".

Almost all the decrees of re-union were of little effect. Nevertheless it is significant that the church's unity was discussed in a council attended by some eastern bishops and theologians, and that there was agreement on the principal dogmatic and disciplinary questions which had divided the two churches for many centuries.

The acts of the council of Basel were first published by S. Brant in Basel in 1499, with the title Decreta concilii Basileensis (= Dc). This collection was subsequently published by Z. Ferreri at Milan in 1511, and by J. Petit at Paris in 1512. Almost all later conciliar collections included the acts and decrees of the council of Basel, from Merlin to Mansi's Amplissima collectio (= Msi). A brief history of these collections was written in 1906 by H. Herre in his work entitled, Handschriften und Drucke Baseler Konzilsakten, in Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Sigmund, Part IV/1, 1431-1432, 10/1, Goettingen 1957, XCVI-CI. Another edition of the decrees of Basel is contained in John of Segovia's diary, which is to be found in Monumenta conciliorum generalium saeculi XV (= Mxv), II Vienna 1873. Editio Romana, however, omits the council of Basel (see Labbe-Cossart XIII, n. 7; S. Kuttner, L 'Edition romaine des conciles generaux, Rome 1940).

For Basel, we have followed the edition of Msi 29 (1788) 1-227. We have noted the principal variants in Dc and Mxv. We have omitted some decrees pertaining to internal matters of the council, to the quarrel with Eugenius IV and to administration; we have always noted the titles of these decrees in footnotes. The decrees of Ferrara, Florence and Rome were first published by P. Crabbe (1538, 2, 754V-826). H. Justinianus subsequently published a more careful edition, Acta sacri oecumenici concilii Florentini, Rome 1638, which was followed by later collections until Msi 31 supplement (1901) (see V. Laurent L'edition princeps des actes du Concile de Florence, Orient. Christ. Per.21 (1955) 165-189, and J. Gill, ibid. 22 (1956) 223-225). The decrees are also to be found in Monumenta conc. gen. saec. XV, III-IV Vienna 1886-1935. We have followed the critical edition published by the Pontifical Oriental Institute, Concilium Florentinum. Documenta et Scriptores (= CF), Rome 1940-, and we have included the principal variants noted in it.

As regards the English translation, the following points should be noted where the original text is given in two languages, namely Latin and another. Where a Greek text is given (pp. 520-528), this is of equal authority with the parallel Latin version, and in the English translation the few significant discrepancies between the two texts have been noted. In the cases of Armenian and Arabic texts (pp. 534-559 and 567-583), these were translations from the Latin, which was the authoritative text, and therefore the English translation is from the Latin alone (the differences from the Latin in the Armenian and Arabic texts are numerous and complex). For these points, see J. Gill, The Council of Florence, Cambridge 1959, pp. 290-296, 308 and 326.

(See Council of Basel)

Session 1—8 January 1438

[Declaration of cardinal Nicholas Albergati, president of the council]

We, Nicholas, legate of the apostolic see, announce that we preside on behalf of our most holy lord pope Eugenius IV in this sacred synod which was translated from Basel to the city of Ferrara and is already legitimately assembled, and that the continuation of this translated synod has been effected today 8 January, and that the synod is and ought to be continued from today onwards for all the purposes for which the synod of Basel was convened, including being the ecumenical council at which the union of the western and the eastern church is treated and with God's help achieved.

Session 2—10 January 1438

[On the legitimate continuation of the council of Ferrara, against the assembly at Basel]

For the praise of almighty God, the exaltation of the catholic faith and the peace, tranquillity and unity of the whole Christian people. This holy universal synod, through the grace of God authorized by the most blessed lord pope Eugenius IV, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit in this city of Ferrara, represents the universal church. Its president, on behalf and in the name of the said most holy lord Eugenius, is the most reverend father and lord in Christ lord Nicholas, cardinal-priest of the holy Roman church of the title of holy Cross in Jerusalem, legate of the apostolic see. It adheres to the firm foundation of him who said to the prince of the apostles: You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church. It is eager to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, so that we might be one body and one spirit, just as we were called in the one hope of our calling. It records that much was done in days past both at the former council of Basel and after its translation by some staying on there without any authority, and also by the said most blessed pope lord Eugenius, especially in respect of the business of the most holy union of the western and the eastern church, namely the following: the decree of the nineteenth session of the former council of Basel beginning As a dutiful mother, to which the most holy lord Eugenius gave his assent by his letter; also an agreed proposal on the choice of a place to which the council of Basel should be translated which was agreed upon and confirmed by all the fathers in common and which led to the decree of the twenty-fifth session of the former council, which begins This holy synod from its outset etc. and which the pope himself, urged on by the envoys of the Greeks, accepted and confirmed by his letter given in a general consistory at Bologna and published in the presence of these envoys, also the letter of the same most blessed Eugenius dated 18 September last, issued in a general consistory at Bologna and solemnly read out at the beginning of the continuation of this synod, by which the pope with the counsel and consent of the most reverend cardinals of the holy Roman church and with the approval of the prelates then in the curia, transferred the council to this city of Ferrara; also the letter of the declaration of the same, dated 30 December, immediately following the said translation; all of which this holy synod has ordered to be registered verbatim in its acts as a permanent record, as is contained in these same acts.

All these facts and many more have been duly pondered and maturely discussed in various meetings. This holy synod declares that the aforesaid translation and declaration were and are legitimate, just and reasonable, and were and are made from urgent necessity so as to remove an obstacle to the most holy union of the western and the eastern church, to prevent a schism already threatening in God's church, and for the manifest benefit of the whole Christian commonwealth, and that therefore this holy synod was legitimately assembled and established in the holy Spirit in this city of Ferrara for all the purposes for which the said former council of Basel was instituted at its beginning, and especially to be the future ecumenical council for the aforesaid most holy union; and that it ought to continue and to proceed to all the aforesaid matters. This holy synod therefore praises, accepts and approves the translation and the consequent declaration, as mentioned above. It exhorts in the Lord and requires of each and all of the present and future members of the holy synod to apply themselves to the above things with earnest care and serious study. By the generosity of him who has begun in us a good work, may everything be directed and done for his glory and the salvation of the whole Christian people.

This holy synod further declares that, since the well known necessity of the above reasons demanded and impelled the said most holy lord Eugenius to that translation, the matter in no way falls within the decrees of the eighth, the eleventh or any other session of the former council of Basel.

It decrees that the assembly at Basel, and every other assembly which may perchance convene there or elsewhere under the name of a general council, rather is and ought to be considered a spurious gathering and conventicle, and can in no way exist with the authority of a general council.

It quashes, invalidates and annuls, and declares to be invalid, quashed, null and of no force or moment, each and all of the things done in the city of Basel in the name of a general council after the said translation, and whatever may be attempted there or elsewhere in the future in the name of a general council.

But if in the matter of the Bohemians something useful has been achieved by the said people assembled at Basel after the said translation, it intends to approve that and supply for defects.

In order that each and all of the members of the holy synod may be kept safe from every annoyance and may serve God in good works without anxiety, free from all fear, harassment and injury, this holy synod absolves, frees and dispenses, and declares to be absolved and freed, and the oaths to be dispensed from, each and all of those who, under whatsoever plea or cause, bound themselves to the former synod of Basel by oaths, with obligations and commitments, whereby their full and free right to obey this present holy synod and to promote its honour and good might be impeded and they might have scruples of some kind.

This holy synod also ordains and decrees that nobody of whatsoever rank or dignity, by any ordinary or delegated jurisdiction for any cause or occasion, except by the jurisdiction of the apostolic see, shall dare to disturb, harass or molest, in their dignities, offices, administrations, privileges, honours, benefices and other goods, each and all of those, both seculars and religious, including members of mendicant orders, who are or shall be at this present synod, or who follow the Roman curia and will soon be at this synod on account of the move of the most holy lord Eugenius with his curia to this city, which has been announced by the posting up of notices in accordance with the ancient custom of the curia.

But if, under any pretext, directly or indirectly, any should presume to molest any of the said persons in their dignities, offices, administrations, honours, privileges, benefices or other goods, or to prevent them from freely enjoying their jurisdiction, fruits and emoluments as they did before, or to confer on others their dignities, offices, administrations, honours and benefices, on the plea of some deprivation, this holy synod intends that each and all of them, even if they are cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops or persons with some other dignity, or chapters, colleges, convents or universities, shall incur automatically and without the need for a previous warning sentences of excommunication, suspension and interdict, absolution from which is reserved to the Roman pontiff alone, except at the hour of death.

Moreover the synod decrees that those who do not repent within three days after making these conferrals or placing these obstacles, by fully restoring those whose dignities, offices, administrations, honours and benefices they conferred, or whom they impeded in other ways, as stated above, to all their churches and benefices as they held them before, whether they held them by title, in commendam or in administration; and also each and all of those who presume to accept collation to the aforesaid dignities, offices, administrations, honours and benefices, even if they were made motu proprio, or to take possession of them in person or through others, or to hold such action as valid; all these persons are automatically deprived by law, if they previously had any claim in them, of all their other benefices, whether they held them by title, in commendam or in administration, and they are rendered perpetually disqualified from them and all other benefices, and they can be restored and habilitated only by the Roman pontiff.

This holy synod, moreover, warns and requires each and all of those who are obliged by law or custom to take part in general councils, to come as soon as possible to this present synod at Ferrara, which will continue, as noted above, for the speedy attainment of the aforesaid purposes.

Session 3—15 February 1438

[Ecclesiastical penalties against members of the Basel synod]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. The duties of the pastoral office over which we preside by divine mercy, despite our lack of merit, demand that we repress by opportune remedies the nefarious excesses of evil-minded persons, especially those who, unless prevented, strive to force the peaceful state of the church into various dangerous storms and disturbances and who endeavour to overturn the barque of Peter, and that we inflict due retribution for their excesses, lest boasting of their malice they give occasion to others to commit mischief. For it is a crime to be slack in punishing crimes that harm many people, as canonical regulations state.

Thus, the former council of Basel debated the choice of a place for the future ecumenical council. Those on whom the power of choosing the place devolved, passed a decree which was accepted by the ambassadors of our most dear son in Christ John, emperor of the Greeks, and of our venerable brother Joseph, patriarch of Constantinople. Some persons chose Avignon or another place, but the said ambassadors protested that most assuredly they did not want to go there, declaring as certain that the said emperor and patriarch would by no means go to the said sacred council unless we attended in person. Those who asked for Avignon, afraid that the Greeks certainly would not come to them, dared to concoct a certain decree or notorious pamphlet, which they call a monition, against us, even though it is null and indeed leads to serious scandal and a split in the church, disrupting this holy work of union with the Greeks.

In order to preserve the unity of the church and to promote the said union with the Greeks, we, for just, necessary and pressing reasons, with the advice and assent of our venerable brothers the cardinals of the holy Roman church, and with the advice and approval of very many of our venerable brothers the archbishops, bishops, beloved chosen sons and abbots who were present at the apostolic see, translated the said council of Basel, by our apostolic authority and in a fixed manner and form, to the city of Ferrara, which is suitable for the Greeks and for us, so that those at Basel might duly recoil from their scandalous actions, as is contained at greater length in the letter composed for the occasion' . But they, spurning every avenue of peace, persevering in their obstinate purpose, scorning the letter of the said translation and everything contained in it, and piling evil upon evil, not only rejected our reasonable translation made for the said most just and urgent reasons, as stated above, but even dared with renewed obstinacy to warn us to withdraw the said translation within a fixed time and under pain of suspension. Yet this would have been nothing less than to force us to abandon the prosecution of such a holy work so much desired by all Christians.

When we realized this, with grief of heart, since we saw that everything tended to the destruction of the holy task of union and to an open split in the church, as was said above, we declared that the translation had been made by us from necessity, that the conditions attached to it had been regularized, and that the council at Ferrara ought to begin and legitimately continue, as is stated more fully in another letter of ours .

To open this council at Ferrara we sent our beloved son Nicholas, cardinal-priest of the holy Roman church of the title of holy Cross, legate of us and the apostolic see.

This council at Ferrara, legitimately assembled and with many prelates, solemnly declared in a public session that the said translation and declaration were and are legitimate, just and reasonable, and were made from urgent necessity so as to remove an obstacle to the said most holy union between the western and the eastern church and to avoid an impending split in God's church for the evident benefit of the whole Christian commonwealth, as is crystal clear from the decree made about it.

Meanwhile, informed that the aforesaid emperor, patriarch and Greeks were approaching the shores of Italy, under God's guidance we came to this council at Ferrara with the firm intention and purpose of effectively pursuing, with God's help, not only the work of holy union but also the objectives for which the council of Basel had assembled.

In view of all this, our beloved son Julian, cardinal-priest of the title of St Sabina, legate of the apostolic see, strongly urged the aforesaid people at Basel to withdraw from such flagrant scandals. But because of their obstinacy of mind he was without effect. Then, seeing them ready to precipitate still worse scandals in God's church, he departed so as not to appear to approve their impiety. They, for their part, paid no attention to this. Ignorant of how to direct their steps in the way of peace and justice, although they were already aware that the Greeks were utterly unwilling to come to them and were approaching the shores of Italy, they persevered in their hardness of heart. Since they could in no other way prevent and disrupt the union with the Greeks, for which they should have been labouring with us with all their strength and mind and assisting us, they added bad to worse and went to such a pitch of rashness and insolence that, even though many of the envoys of kings and princes who were at Basel execrated so wicked a deed and protested against it, they dared to declare with sacrilegious arrogance that we were suspended from the administration of the papacy and to proceed to various other things, albeit everything was null.

So we, conscious that their excesses are so notorious that they cannot be hidden by any subterfuge, and that error that is not resisted appears to be approved and throws wide open to delinquents a door that no longer guards against their intrusions, and unable without grave offence to our lord Jesus Christ and his holy church to tolerate further so many grievous excesses which are seen especially to impede, disrupt and utterly destroy the holy and most desired union with the Greeks, we decree against the aforesaid remnant at Basel, in virtue of the most High and with the approval of this holy council, the steps that should be taken with justice.

Hence we decree and declare, after mature deliberation with this holy synod and with its approval, that each and all of those meeting in Basel, in spite of the aforesaid translation and declaration, under the pretended name of a council which more accurately should be called a conventicle, and daring to perpetrate such scandalous and nefarious deeds, whether they are cardinals, patriarchs archbishops, bishops or abbots or of some other ecclesiastical or secular dignity, have already incurred the penalties instanced in our said letter of translation, namely excommunication, privation of dignities and disqualification from benefices and offices in the future.

We also decree and declare to be null and void and of no force or moment, whatever has been attempted by them in the name of a council or otherwise since the day of the translation made by us, or shall be attempted in the future, in respect of the aforesaid matters or against those who follow our curia or are at this sacred council at Ferrara.

We also command, with the approval of this council, under the same penalties and censures and in virtue of their oath by which they are bound to the holy apostolic see, each and all of the cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, elected persons, abbots and all others of whatsoever condition, status or rank who are meeting in the said city of Basel under the pretext of a council, really and effectively to leave the said city within thirty days of the date of this decree. We also order the mayor of the citizens, the councillors and the magistrates ruling the city of Basel and the governors and other officials, whatever name they go under, to expel the aforesaid persons who have not left the city within the said thirty days and really and effectively to eject them.

If they fail to do this within the said thirty days, we decree that each and all of the said rulers and officials automatically incur sentence of excommunication, and the people and the city automatically incur sentence of ecclesiastical interdict; we specially reserve to ourself absolution from the sentences of excommunication, except at the hour of death, and the lifting of the interdict. We order and command, in virtue of holy obedience and under pain of excommunication, each and all of those to whom this notice shall come that, if the aforesaid persons meeting in Basel and the citizens are obstinately disobedient towards us, nobody should approach the city of Basel after the said thirty days and they should deny them all commerce and all articles needed for human use.

Merchants of all kinds, who have gone to Basel on account of the former council, shall depart under the same pain of excommunication. If there are some who ignore these orders of ours, daring perhaps to convey goods after the time-limit to those at Basel persisting in contumacy, since it is written that the righteous plundered the ungodly, such persons may be despoiled without penalty by any of the faithful and their goods shall be ceded to the first takers.

However, because the church never closes its bosom to returning sons, if the said people meeting in Basel, or some of them, repent and depart from the said city within the said interval of thirty days from the date of this present decree, then with the approval of this sacred council we remit and fully cancel the aforesaid penalties as for obedient sons and we wish, decree and order that they and their consequences are to be regarded as without force from the date of their imposition, and we supply with the council's approval for all defects, if perhaps there are any in respect of solemnity of the law or of omission. Let nobody therefore ... If anyone however ...

Session 4—29 April 1438

[Eugenius IV and the fathers of the council at Ferrara declare the council at Ferrara to be legitimate and ecumenical]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. It befits us to render thanks to almighty God who, mindful of his past mercies, always bestows on his church even richer growth and, although he allows her to be tossed on occasions by the waves of trials and tribulations, yet never permits her to be submerged but keeps her safe amid the mountainous waters, so that by his mercy she emerges from the various vicissitudes even stronger than before. For behold, the western and eastern peoples, who have been separated for long, hasten to enter into a pact of harmony and unity; and those who were justly distressed at the long dissension that kept them apart, at last after many centuries, under the impulse of him from whom every good gift comes, meet together in person in this place out of desire for holy union.

We are aware that it is our duty and the duty of the whole church to strain every nerve to ensure that these happy initiatives make progress and have issue through our common care, so that we may deserve to be and to be called co-operators with God.

Finally, our most dear son John Palacologus, emperor of the Romans, together with our venerable brother Joseph, patriarch of Constantinople, the apocrisiaries of the other patriarchal sees and a great multitude of archbishops, ecclesiastics and nobles arrived at their last port, Venice, on 8 February last. There, the said emperor expressly declared, as he had often done before, that for good reasons he could not go to Basel to celebrate the ecumenical or universal council, and he intimated this by a letter to those assembled at Basel. He exhorted and required all of them to go to Ferrara, which had been chosen for the council, to carry through the pious task of this holy union.

We have always had this holy union close to our heart and have sought with all our strength to bring it about. Therefore we intend to carry out with care, as is our duty, the decree of the council of Basel, to which the Greeks agreed, as well as the choice of a place for the ecumenical council, which was made at the council of Basel and which was later confirmed by us at Bologna at the urging of the envoys of the said emperor and patriarch, and any other things pertaining to this work of holy union.

Therefore we decree and declare, in every way and form as best we can, with the assent of the said emperor and patriarch and of all those in the present synod, that there exists a holy universal or ecumenical synod in this city of Ferrara, which is free and safe for all; and therefore it should be deemed and called such a synod by all, in which this holy business of union will be conducted without any quarrelsome contention but with all charity and, as we hope, will be brought by divine favour to a happy conclusion together with the other holy tasks for which the synod is known to have been instituted.

Session 5—10 January 1439

[Decree translating the council of Ferrara to Florence]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. It is fitting that the site of an ecumenical council, in which men chosen from the whole Christian world meet together, should be such that in it, among other human necessities, there should be the most important of all, namely healthy air. Otherwise, because of the pest-laden contagion of infected air which all people naturally fear and flee, those present at the council may be forced to depart with nothing accomplished and the absent will refuse to attend. Assuredly it is right that those who come together at synods to treat of difficult questions should be free from every anxiety and fear, so that they may be able in greater peace and freedom to give their attention to the matters of public concern.

We would, indeed, have preferred that the universal council which we initiated in this city should continue here, and that the union of the eastern and western churches should be brought to its happy and desired conclusion in this city, where we initiated it. When the plague afflicted this city last autumn, pressure was exerted by some for the transferal of the synod to a non-infected locality. Nothing was done, however, because it was hoped that the plague would cease with the advent of winter, as it usually does.

Since in fact the plague continues from day to day and it is feared that it will gain strength when spring and summer come, all judge and advise that a move must be made without delay to some non-infected place. For this and several other good reasons, with the agreement of our dear son John Palaeologus, emperor of the Romans, and of our venerable brother Joseph, patriarch of Constantinople, and with the approval of the council:

In the name of the Trinity, Father, Son and holy Spirit, with the full securities and safe-conducts which we gave to all at the beginning of the sacred council, we transfer and declare to be transferred as from now this ecumenical or universal synod from this city of Ferrara to the city of Florence, which is manifestly free for all, safe, peaceful and tranquil, and enjoying healthy air, and which, situated as it is between the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic seas, is excellently situated for easy access for both easterners and westerners. Let nobody therefore . .. If anyone however . . .

Session 6—6 July 1439

[Definition of the holy ecumenical synod of Florence]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. With the agreement of our most dear son John Palaeologus, illustrious emperor of the

Romans, of the deputies of our venerable brothers the patriarchs and of other representatives of the eastern church, to the following.

Let the heavens be glad and let the earth rejoice. For, the wall that divided the western and the eastern church has been removed, peace and harmony have returned, since the corner-stone, Christ, who made both one, has joined both sides with a very strong bond of love and peace, uniting and holding them together in a covenant of everlasting unity. After a long haze of grief and a dark and unlovely gloom of long-enduring strife, the radiance of hoped-for union has illuminated all.

Let mother church also rejoice. For she now beholds her sons hitherto in disagreement returned to unity and peace, and she who hitherto wept at their separation now gives thanks to God with inexpressible joy at their truly marvellous harmony. Let all the faithful throughout the world, and those who go by the name of Christian, be glad with mother catholic church. For behold, western and eastern fathers after a very long period of disagreement and discord, submitting themselves to the perils of sea and land and having endured labours of all kinds, came together in this holy ecumenical council, joyful and eager in their desire for this most holy union and to restore intact the ancient love. In no way have they been frustrated in their intent. After a long and very toilsome investigation, at last by the clemency of the holy Spirit they have achieved this greatly desired and most holy union. Who, then, can adequately thank God for his gracious gifts?' Who would not stand amazed at the riches of such great divine mercy? Would not even an iron breast be softened by this immensity of heavenly condescension?

These truly are works of God, not devices of human frailty. Hence they are to be accepted with extraordinary veneration and to be furthered with praises to God. To you praise, to you glory, to you thanks, O Christ, source of mercies, who have bestowed so much good on your spouse the catholic church and have manifested your miracles of mercy in our generation, so that all should proclaim your wonders. Great indeed and divine is the gift that God has bestowed on us. We have seen with our eyes what many before greatly desired yet could not behold.

For when Latins and Greeks came together in this holy synod, they all strove that, among other things, the article about the procession of the holy Spirit should be discussed with the utmost care and assiduous investigation. Texts were produced from divine scriptures and many authorities of eastern and western holy doctors, some saying the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, others saying the procession is from the Father through the Son. All were aiming at the same meaning in different words. The Greeks asserted that when they claim that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, they do not intend to exclude the Son; but because it seemed to them that the Latins assert that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son as from two principles and two spirations, they refrained from saying that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. The Latins asserted that they say the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son not with the intention of excluding the Father from being the source and principle of all deity, that is of the Son and of the holy Spirit, nor to imply that the Son does not receive from the Father, because the holy Spirit proceeds from the Son, nor that they posit two principles or two spirations; but they assert that there is only one principle and a single spiration of the holy Spirit, as they have asserted hitherto. Since, then, one and the same meaning resulted from all this, they unanimously agreed and consented to the following holy and God-pleasing union, in the same sense and with one mind.

In the name of the holy Trinity, Father, Son and holy Spirit, we define, with the approval of this holy universal council of Florence, that the following truth of faith shall be believed and accepted by all Christians and thus shall all profess it: that the holy Spirit is eternally from the Father and the Son, and has his essence and his subsistent being from the Father together with the Son, and proceeds from both eternally as from one principle and a single spiration. We declare that when holy doctors and fathers say that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son, this bears the sense that thereby also the Son should be signified, according to the Greeks indeed as cause, and according to the Latins as principle of the subsistence of the holy Spirit, just like the Father.

And since the Father gave to his only-begotten Son in begetting him everything the Father has, except to be the Father, so the Son has eternally from the Father, by whom he was eternally begotten, this also, namely that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Son.

We define also that the explanation of those words "and from the Son" was licitly and reasonably added to the creed for the sake of declaring the truth and from imminent need.

Also, the body of Christ is truly confected in both unleavened and leavened wheat bread, and priests should confect the body of Christ in either, that is, each priest according to the custom of his western or eastern church. Also, if truly penitent people die in the love of God before they have made satisfaction for acts and omissions by worthy fruits of repentance, their souls are cleansed after death by cleansing pains; and the suffrages of the living faithful avail them in giving relief from such pains, that is, sacrifices of masses, prayers, almsgiving and other acts of devotion which have been customarily performed by some of the faithful for others of the faithful in accordance with the church's ordinances.

Also, the souls of those who have incurred no stain of sin whatsoever after baptism, as well as souls who after incurring the stain of sin have been cleansed whether in their bodies or outside their bodies, as was stated above, are straightaway received into heaven and clearly behold the triune God as he is, yet one person more perfectly than another according to the difference of their merits. But the souls of those who depart this life in actual mortal sin, or in original sin alone, go down straightaway to hell to be punished, but with unequal pains. We also define that the holy apostolic see and the Roman pontiff holds the primacy over the whole world and the Roman pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter prince of the apostles, and that he is the true vicar of Christ, the head of the whole church and the father and teacher of all Christians, and to him was committed in blessed Peter the full power of tending, ruling and governing the whole church, as is contained also in the acts of ecumenical councils and in the sacred canons.

Also, renewing the order of the other patriarchs which has been handed down in the canons, the patriarch of Constantinople should be second after the most holy Roman pontiff, third should be the patriarch of Alexandria, fourth the patriarch of Antioch, and fifth the patriarch of Jerusalem, without prejudice to all their privileges and rights.

Session 7—4 September 1439

[Decree of the council of Florence against the synod at Basel]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. Moses, the man of God, was zealous for the well-being of the people entrusted to him. He feared that God's wrath would be roused against them if they followed Korah, Dathan and Abiram in their seditious schism. Therefore he said to the whole people, at the Lord's command: depart from the tents of these wicked men and touch nothing of theirs, lest you be involved in their sins. For he had perceived, under the Lord's inspiration, that those seditious and schismatic men would incur a grievous retribution, as was demonstrated afterwards when even the earth could not bear with them but by God's just judgment swallowed them up, so that they fell alive into hell.

Similarly we too to whom, though unworthy, the lord Jesus Christ has deigned to entrust his people, as we hear of the abominable crime that certain wicked men dwelling in Basel have plotted in these days so as to breach the unity of holy church, and since we fear that they may seduce some of the unwary by their deceits and inject them with their poisons, are forced to proclaim in like words to the people of our lord Jesus Christ entrusted to us, depart from the tents of these wicked men, particularly since the Christian people is far more numerous than the Jewish people of those days, the church is holier than the synagogue, and the vicar of Christ is superior in authority and status even to Moses.

This impiety of those at Basel we began to foresee long ago, when we observed the council of Basel already lapsing into tyranny; when many, including those of lower status, were forced to go to it and to stay at the whim of that faction of agitators; when the votes and decisions of some of them were being extorted by various tricks and others were being suborned by lies and deceits, as they abandoned almost everything to conspiracies, cabals, monopolies and cliques, and from a long-standing rivalry with the papacy sought to prolong the duration of the council; when, finally, innumerable novelties, irregularities, deformities and ills were perpetrated, to which there concurred even clerics in lower orders, the ignorant and inexperienced, vagabonds, quarrelers, fugitives, apostates, condemned criminals, escapees from prison, those in rebellion against us and their own superiors, and other such human monsters, who brought with them every stain of corruption from those teachers of evil-doing.

We directed our attention also to that most holy work of union with the eastern church, which seemed to us to be greatly endangered by the deceit of certain factious persons, and we wished to provide as best we could for so many evils. For these and other just and necessary reasons which are stated in full in the decree of translation, with the advice of our venerable brothers the cardinals of the holy Roman church, and with the approval of very many venerable brothers and sons, archbishops, bishops, elected persons, abbots and other prelates of churches, masters and doctors, we transferred the aforesaid council of Basel to this city of Ferrara, where we established with the Lord's help an ecumenical council of the western and the eastern church.

Afterwards, when the plague came and continued unabated, under the inspiration of grace and with the approval of the same holy council, we transferred the council to this city of Florence. Here the most gracious and merciful God showed his wonders. For, the most disastrous schism, which had endured in God's church for almost five hundred years to the immense harm of the whole of Christianity, and for the elimination of which very many of our predecessors as Roman pontiffs and many kings and princes and other Christians in past times had laboured very hard, at last, after public and private discussions in both places and many other labours, was removed and the most holy union of the Greeks and the Latins was happily achieved, as is described more fully in the decree about this which was drawn up and solemnly promulgated.

Returning fervent thanks for this to the eternal God and sharing our joy with all the faithful, we offered to God a sacrifice of jubilation and praise. For we saw that not just one nation like the Hebrew people was being summoned to the promised land, but peoples of many races, nations and tongues were hastening to the one utterance and merit of the divine truth. Through this, great hope is forthcoming that the sun of justice, rising in the east, will spread the beams of its light to pierce the darkness of many other races, even of infidels, and the salvation of the Lord may reach to the ends of the earth.

Already indeed, by God's providence, we have excellent pledges of this. For almighty God has granted that, by our means, representatives of the Armenians with full powers have recently come from most distant northern parts to us and the apostolic see and to this holy council. They regard and venerate us as no other than blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, they recognize the holy see as mother and mistress of all the faithful, and they profess that they have come to the holy see and to the aforesaid council for spiritual food and the truth of sound doctrine. For this too we have given many thanks to our God.

But the mind recoils from recording what troubles, attacks and persecutions we have suffered in the course of this divine undertaking until now, not indeed from Turks or Saracens but from those who call themselves Christians. Blessed Jerome reports that from the time of Hadrian until the reign of Constantine there was set up and worshipped by the pagans at the place of the Lord's resurrection an image of Jupiter and on the rock of the crucifixion a marble statue of Venus, since the authors of persecution thought that they could take away from us our faith in the resurrection and the cross if they polluted the holy places with their idols.

Much the same has happened in these days against us and the church of God, at the hands of those desperate men at Basel, except that what was then done by pagans ignorant of the true God is now the work of men who have known him and hated him Their pride, then, according to the prophet, is ever rising, all the more dangerously in that it is under the cloak of reform, which in truth they have always abhorred, that they spread their poisons.

In the first place, those who were the authors of all the scandals in Basel have failed in their promises to the Greeks. For they knew from the envoys of the Greeks and the eastern church that our most dear son in Christ John Palaeologus, illustrious emperor of the Romans, and Joseph, patriarch of Constantinople of happy memory, and the other prelates and persons of the eastern church wished to proceed to the place which had been legally chosen for the ecumenical council by our legates and presidents and other notable persons present there, whose right it was to choose the site in accordance with the agreement which had been approved by the common consent of the council after serious disagreements among its members. Whereupon we, for our part, confirmed the choice of place in a general consistory at Bologna and we sent to Constantinople, at great labour and expense, the galleys and other things necessary for this holy work of union.

When they learnt of this, they dared to decree against us and the aforesaid cardinals a detestable admonition or citation, so as to block the holy work, [and to send it to the aforesaid emperor and patriarch of Constantinople, so that they and all others] might be deterred from coming. Yet they knew full well that there was no chance of them going to any place other than the one which had been chosen for the site, as stated above.

Then, when they realized that the aforesaid emperor and patriarch and others were already on their way to us for this work of holy union, they tried to lay another wicked snare to catch this divine project. That is, they produced against us a sacrilegious sentence of suspension from the administration of the papacy. Finally, those leaders of scandal, very few in number, most of them of the lowest rank and reputation, in their intense hatred of true peace, piling iniquity on top of iniquity lest they should enter into the justice of the Lord, when they saw that the grace of the holy Spirit was working in us towards union with the Greeks, swerving away from the straight line into paths of error, held a so-called session on 16 May last asserting that they were obeying certain decrees, although these were passed at Constance by only one of the three obediences after the flight of John XXIII, as he was called in that one obedience, at a time of schism.

Alleging obedience to those decrees, they proclaimed three propositions which they term truths of the faith, seemingly to make heretics of us and all princes and prelates and other faithful and devout adherents of the apostolic see. The propositions are the following.

"The truth about the authority of a general council, representing the universal church, over a pope and anyone else whatsoever, declared by the general councils of Constance and this one of Basel, is a truth of the catholic faith. The truth that a pope cannot by any authority, without its consent, dissolve a general council representing the universal church, legitimately assembled for the reasons given in the above-mentioned truth or for any of them, or prorogue it to another time or transfer it from place to place, is a truth of the catholic faith. Anyone who persists in opposing the aforesaid truths is to be considered a heretic."

In this, those utterly pernicious men, masking their malice with the rosy colour of a truth of the faith, gave to the council of Constance an evil and mischievous meaning completely opposed to its true teaching, imitating in this the teaching of other schismatics and heretics who always amass for their support fabricated errors and impious dogmas drawn from their perverse interpretation of the divine scriptures and the holy fathers.

Finally, completely perverting their mind and turning away their eyes from looking to heaven or remembering righteous judgments, after the manner of Dioscorus and the infamous synod of Ephesus, they proceeded to a declaratory sentence of deprivation, as they claimed, from the dignity and office of the supreme apostolate, a poisonous and execrable pronouncement involving an unforgivable crime. Here we will take the tenor of that sentence, abhorrent to every pious mind, as sufficiently expressed. They omitted nothing, as far as was in their power, that might overthrow this incomparable good of union.

O miserable and degenerate sons! O wicked and adulterous generation! What could be more cruel than this impiety and iniquity? Can anything more detestable, more dreadful and more mad be imagined? Earlier on they were the ones who said that nothing better, nothing more glorious and fruitful had ever been seen or heard of in the Christian people, from the very birth of the church, than this most holy union, and that to further it there should be no contention about the place, but rather to achieve it the wealth of this world as well as body and soul should be hazarded, proclaiming this aloud to the whole world and urging the Christian people to it, as their decrees and letters fully state. But now they persecute exactly this as furiously and as impiously as they can, so that the devils of the entire world seem to have flocked together to that conventicle of brigands at Basel.

So far almighty God has not allowed their iniquity and its lying inconsistencies to prevail. But seeing that they are striving with all their strength to bring it to success, even to the point of setting up the abomination of desolation in God's church, we can in no way pretend to ignore these things without most serious offence to God and imminent danger of confusion and abomination in God's church. In keeping with our pastoral office, at the urging of many who are fired with zeal for God, we wish to put a stop to such evils and, as far as we can, to take appropriate and salutary measures to eliminate from God's church this execrable impiety and most destructive pestilence.

Following in the steps of our predecessors who, as Pope Nicholas of holy memory writes, were accustomed to annul councils which had been conducted improperly, even those of universal pontiffs, as occurred at the second universal synod at Ephesus, inasmuch as the blessed pope Leo summoned it but later established the council of Chalcedon.

We renew by our apostolic authority, with the approval of this holy council of Florence, the solemn and salutary decree against those sacrilegious men, which was issued by us in the sacred general council of Ferrara on 15 February. By that decree we declared among other things, with the approval of the said sacred council of Ferrara, that each and every person at Basel who, in the name of a pretended council which we called more accurately a conventicle, dared to perpetrate those scandalous and wicked deeds in contravention of our translation and declaration, whether they are cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, abbots or of some other ecclesiastical or secular dignity, has incurred the penalties of excommunication, privation of dignities, benefices and offices and disqualification for the future, which are instanced in our letter of translation.

Now we decree and declare again that all the things done or attempted by those impious men presently in Basel, which were mentioned in our said decree of Ferrara, and each and all of the things done, performed or attempted by the same men since then, especially in the two so-called sessions or rather conspiracies which have just been mentioned, and whatever may have followed from these things or from any of them, or may follow in the future, as coming from impious men who have no authority and have been rejected and reprobated by God, were and are null, quashed, invalid, presumptuous and of no effect, force or moment.

With the approval of the sacred council we condemn and reject, and we proclaim as condemned and rejected, those propositions quoted above as understood in the perverse sense of the men at Basel, which they demonstrate by their deeds, as contrary to the sound sense of sacred scripture, the holy fathers and the council of Constance itself; and likewise the aforesaid so-called sentence of declaration or deprivation, with all its present and future consequences, as impious and scandalous and tending to open schism in God's church and to the confusion of all ecclesiastical order and Christian government. Also, we decree and declare that all of the aforesaid persons have been and are schismatics and heretics, And that as such they are assuredly to be punished with suitable penalties over and above the penalties imposed at the aforesaid council of Ferrara, together with all their supporters and abettors, of whatever ecclesiastical or secular status, condition or rank they may be, even cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops or abbots or those of any other dignity, so that they may receive their deserts with the aforesaid Korah, Dathan and Abiram Let nobody therefore ... If anyone however ...

Session 8—22 November 1439

[Bull of union with the Armenians]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. All people everywhere who go by the name of Christian: Exult in God our helper, rejoice in the God of Jacob. Behold the Lord once again, mindful of his mercy had deigned to remove from his church another stumbling block which has endured for more than nine centuries. He who makes peace in the heavens and is peace on earth for people of good will, has granted in his inexpressible mercy that most desired union with the Armenians. Blessed be the God and Father of our lord Jesus Christ, the father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation. For the most merciful Lord, seeing his church buffeted about by strong whirlwinds, some times at the hands of those who are outside, at other times at the hands of those within, deigns in many ways every day to console and strengthen her so that she may be able to breathe freely in the midst of her troubles and to rise more robust to resist.

Some time ago God established that great union with the Greeks, who include many races and tongues spread far and wide. Today God has confirmed in the same bond of faith and charity with the apostolic see this union with the Armenians, who are a very numerous people spread over the north and east. These indeed are such great and wondrous benefactions of divine providence that the human mind cannot render worthy thanks for either of them, still less for both together. Who would not be overwhelmed with admiration at the achievement in this council, within so short a time, of two such brilliant feats which have been longed for over centuries ? Truly this is the Lord's doing and it is wonderful in our eyes. For how could human prudence or diligence have brought to completion such great exploits as these are, unless the favour of God had given them their beginning and end? Let us, then, together and with all our hearts bless the Lord who alone does great wonders, let us sing with the spirit, let us sing with our minds and our mouths and let us give thanks in deeds, as far as human weakness allows, for such great gifts. Let us pray and beseech that, as the Greeks and the Armenians have been made one with the Roman church, so also may other nations be, especially those signed with the seal of Christ, and that finally the whole Christian people, after all hatreds and wars have been extinguished, may rest and rejoice together in mutual peace and brotherly love. Rightly we hold that the Armenians deserve great praise. As soon as they were invited by us to this synod, in their eagerness for ecclesiastical unity, at the cost of many labours and much toil and perils at sea, they sent to us and this council from very distant parts, their notable, dedicated and learned envoys with sufficient powers to accept, namely whatever the holy Spirit should inspire this holy synod to achieve.

We, for our part, with all our attention as befits our pastoral office and desiring to bring this holy work to a successful conclusion, frequently conversed with their envoys about this holy union. To avoid even the slightest delay in this holy project, we nominated from every rank of this sacred council experts in divine and human law to treat of the matter with the envoys with all care, study and diligence, closely inquiring of them about their faith in respect of the unity of the divine essence and the Trinity of divine persons, also about the humanity of our lord Jesus Christ, the seven sacraments of the church and other points concerning the orthodox faith and the rites of the universal church.

So, after many debates, conferences and disputations, after a thorough examination of the written authorities which were produced from fathers and doctors of the church, and after discussion of the questions at issue, at length, so that in future there could be no doubt about the truth of the faith of the Armenians and that they should think in every way like the apostolic see and that the union should be stable and lasting with no cause for hesitation whatsoever we judged it advantageous, with the approval of this sacred council of Florence and the agreement of the said envoys, to give in this decree a summary of the truth of the orthodox faith that the Roman church professes about the above.

In the first place, then, we give them the holy creed issued by the hundred and fifty bishops in the ecumenical council of Constantinople, with the added phrase and the Son, which for the sake of declaring the truth and from urgent necessity was licitly and reasonably added to that creed, which runs as follows: I believe . . . I We decree that this holy creed should be sung or read within the mass at least on Sundays and greater feasts, as is the Latin custom, in all Armenian churches.

In the second place, we give them the definition of the fourth council of Chalcedon about two natures in the one person of Christ, which was later renewed in the fifth and sixth universal councils. It runs as follows: This wise and saving creed ... Thirdly, the definition about the two wills and two principles of action of Christ promulgated in the above-mentioned sixth council, the tenor of which is This pious and orthodox creed, and the rest which follows in the above-mentioned definition of the council of Chalcedon until the end, after which it continues thus: And we proclaim

Fourth, apart from the three synods of Nicaea, Constantinople and the first of Ephesus, the Armenians have accepted no other later universal synods nor the most blessed Leo, bishop of this holy see, by whose authority the council of Chalcedon met. For they claim that it was proposed to them that both the synod of Chalcedon and the said Leo had made the definition in accordance with the condemned heresy of Nestorius. So we instructed them and declared that such a suggestion was false and that the synod of Chalcedon and blessed Leo holily and rightly defined the truth of two natures in the one person of Christ, described above, against the impious tenets of Nestorius and Eutyches. We commanded that for the future they should hold and venerate the most blessed Leo, who was a veritable pillar of the faith and replete with all sanctity and doctrine, as a saint deservedly inscribed in the calendar of the saints; and that they should reverence and respect, like the rest of the faithful, not only the three above-mentioned synods but also all other universal synods legitimately celebrated by the authority of the Roman pontiff.

Fifthly, for the easier instruction of the Armenians of today and in the future we reduce the truth about the sacraments of the church to the following brief scheme. There are seven sacraments of the new Law, namely baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders and matrimony, which differ greatly from the sacraments of the old Law. The latter were not causes of grace, but only prefigured the grace to be given through the passion of Christ; whereas the former, ours, both contain grace and bestow it on those who worthily receive them. The first five of these are directed to the spiritual perfection of each person in himself, the last two to the regulation and increase of the whole church.

For, by baptism we are reborn spiritually; by confirmation we grow in grace and are strengthened in faith. Once reborn and strengthened, we are nourished by the food of the divine eucharist. But if through sin we incur an illness of the soul, we are cured spiritually by penance. Spiritually also and bodily as suits the soul, by extreme unction. By orders the church is governed and spiritually multiplied; by matrimony it grows bodily.

All these sacraments are made up of three elements: namely, things as the matter, words as the form, and the person of the minister who confers the sacrament with the intention of doing what the church does. If any of these is lacking, the sacrament is not effected.

Three of the sacraments, namely baptism, confirmation and orders, imprint indelibly on the soul a character, that is a kind of stamp which distinguishes it from the rest. Hence they are not repeated in the same person. The other four, however, do not imprint a character and can be repeated.

Holy baptism holds the first place among all the sacraments, for it is the gate of the spiritual life; through it we become members of Christ and of the body of the church. Since death came into the world through one person, unless we are born again of water and the spirit, we cannot, as Truth says, enter the kingdom of heaven. The matter of this sacrament is true and natural water, either hot or cold. The form is: I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit. But we do not deny that true baptism is conferred by the following words: May this servant of Christ be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit; or, This person is baptized by my hands in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit. Since the holy Trinity is the principle cause from which baptism has its power and the minister is the instrumental cause who exteriorly bestows the sacrament, the sacrament is conferred if the action is performed by the minister with the invocation of the holy Trinity. The minister of this sacrament is a priest, who is empowered to baptize in virtue of his office. But in case of necessity not only a priest or a deacon, but even a lay man or a woman, even a pagan and a heretic, can baptize provided he or she uses the form of the church and intends to do what the church does. The effect of this sacrament is the remission of all original and actual guilt, also of all penalty that is owed for that guilt. Hence no satisfaction for past sins is to be imposed on the baptized, but those who die before they incur any guilt go straight to the kingdom of heaven and the vision of God.

The second sacrament is confirmation. Its matter is chrism made from oil and balsam blessed by a bishop, the oil symbolizing the gleaming brightness of conscience and balsam symbolizing the odour of a good reputation. The form is: I sign you with the sign of the cross and I confirm you with the chrism of salvation in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit. The ordinary minister is a bishop. Whereas a simple priest can use other unctions, only a bishop ought to confer this one, because it is said only of the apostles, whose place is held by bishops, that they gave the holy Spirit by the imposition of hands, as this text from the Acts of the Apostles shows: Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the holy Spirit; for it had not yet come down upon any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the holy Spirit'. In place of this imposition of hands confirmation is given in the church. We read that sometimes for a reasonable and really urgent cause, by dispensation of the apostolic see, a simple priest has conferred this sacrament of confirmation with chrism prepared by a bishop. The effect of this sacrament is that a Christian should boldly confess the name of Christ, since the holy Spirit is given in this sacrament for strengthening just as he was given to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. Therefore the candidate is enjoined on the forehead, which is the seat of shame, not to shrink from confessing the name of Christ and especially his cross, which is a stumbling block for Jews and a folly for gentiles, according to the Apostle, and for this reason he is signed with the sign of the cross. The third is the sacrament of the eucharist. Its matter is wheat bread and wine from the vine, to which a very little water is added before the consecration. Water is added thus because it is believed, in accordance with the testimony of holy fathers and doctors of the church manifested long ago in disputation, that the Lord himself instituted this sacrament in wine mixed with water, and because it befits the representation of the Lord's passion. For the blessed pope Alexander, fifth after blessed Peter, says: "In the oblations of the sacraments which are offered to the Lord within the solemnities of masses, only bread and wine mixed with water are to be offered in sacrifice. There should not be offered in the chalice of the Lord either wine only or water only but both mixed together, because both blood and water are said to have flowed from Christ's side'; also because it is fitting to signify the effect of this sacrament, which is the union of the Christian people with Christ. For, water signifies the people according to those words of the Apocalypse: many waters, many peoples. And Pope Julius, second after blessed Silvester, said: The chalice of the Lord, by a precept of the canons, should be offered mixed of wine and water, because we see that the people is understood in the water and the blood of Christ is manifested in the wine; hence when wine and water are mingled in the chalice, the people are made one with Christ and the mass of the faithful are linked and joined together with him in whom they believe. Since, therefore, both the holy Roman church taught by the most blessed apostles Peter and Paul and the other churches of Latins and Greeks, in which the lights of all sanctity and doctrine have shone brightly, have behaved in this way from the very beginning of the growing church and still do so, it seems very unfitting that any other region should differ from this universal and reasonable observance. We decree, therefore, that the Armenians should conform themselves with the whole Christian world and that their priests shall mix a little water with the wine in the oblation of the chalice, as has been said. The form of this sacrament are the words of the Saviour with which he effected this sacrament. A priest speaking in the person of Christ effects this sacrament. For, in virtue of those words, the substance of bread is changed into the body of Christ and the substance of wine into his blood. In such wise, however, that the whole Christ is contained both under the form of bread and under the form of wine, under any part of the consecrated host as well as after division of the consecrated wine, there is the whole Christ. The effect of this sacrament, which is produced in the soul of one who receives it worthily, is the union of him or her with Christ. Since by grace a person is incorporated in Christ and is united with his members, the consequence is that grace is increased by this sacrament in those who receive it worthily, and that every effect that material food and drink produce for corporal life — sustaining, increasing, repairing and delighting — this sacrament works for spiritual life. For in it, as Pope Urban said, we recall the gracious memory of our Saviour, we are withdrawn from evil, we are strengthened in good and we receive an increase of virtues and graces.

The fourth sacrament is penance. Its matter is the acts of the penitent, which are threefold. The first is contrition of heart, which includes sorrow for sin committed, with the resolve not to sin again. The second is oral confession, which implies integral confession to the priest of all sins that are remembered. The third is satisfaction for sins in accordance with the judgment of the priest which is ordinarily done by prayer, fasting and almsgiving. The form of this sacrament are the words of absolution which the priest pronounces when he says: I absolve you. The minister of this sacrament is a priest with authority to absolve, which is either ordinary or by commission of a superior.

The fifth sacrament is extreme unction. Its matter is olive oil blessed by a priest. This sacrament should not be given to the sick unless death is expected. The person is to be anointed on the following places: on the eyes for sight, on the ears for hearing, on the nostrils for smell, on the mouth for taste or speech, on the hands for touch, on the feet for walking, on the loins for the pleasure that abides there. The form of this sacrament is: Through this anointing and his most pious mercy may the Lord pardon you whatever you have done wrong by sight, and similarly for the other members. The minister of the sacrament is a priest. Its effect is to cure the mind and, in so far as it helps the soul, also the body. Blessed James the apostle said of this sacrament: Any one of you who is sick should send for the elders of the church, and they shall pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick person and the Lord will raise him up again: and if he is in sins, they will be forgiven him.

The sixth is the sacrament of orders. Its matter is the object by whose handing over the order is conferred. So the priesthood is bestowed by the handing over of a chalice with wine and a paten with bread; the diaconate by the giving of the book of the gospels; the subdiaconate by the handing over of an empty chalice with an empty paten on it; and similarly for the other orders by allotting things connected with their ministry. The form for a priest is: Receive the power of offering sacrifice in the church for the living and the dead, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit. The forms for the other orders are contained in full in the Roman pontifical. The ordinary minister of this sacrament is a bishop. The effect is an increase of grace to make the person a suitable minister of Christ.

The seventh is the sacrament of matrimony, which is a sign of the union of Christ and the church according to the words of the apostle: This sacrament is a great one, but I speak in Christ and in the church. The efficient cause of matrimony is usually mutual consent expressed in words about the present. A threefold good is attributed to matrimony. The first is the procreation and bringing up of children for the worship of God. The second is the mutual faithfulness of the spouses towards each other. The third is the indissolubility of marriage, since it signifies the indivisible union of Christ and the church. Although separation of bed is lawful on account of fornication, it is not lawful to contract another marriage, since the bond of a legitimately contracted marriage is perpetual.

Sixthly, we offer to the envoys that compendious rule of the faith composed by most blessed Athanasius, which is as follows:

Whoever wills to be saved, before all things it is necessary that he holds the catholic faith. Unless a person keeps this faith whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish eternally. The catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in the Trinity, and the Trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son and of the holy Spirit is one, the glory equal, and the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the holy Spirit. The Father uncreated the Son uncreated and the holy Spirit uncreated. The Father infinite, the Son infinite and the holy Spirit infinite. The Father eternal, the Son eternal and the holy Spirit eternal. Yet they are not three eternals, but one eternal. As also they are not three uncreateds nor three infinites, but one uncreated and one infinite. Likewise the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty and the holy Spirit is almighty. Yet they are not three almighties, but one almighty. Likewise the Father is God, the Son is God and the holy Spirit is God. Yet they are not three gods, but one God. Likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord and the holy Spirit is Lord. Yet they are not three lords, but one Lord. For just as we are compelled by the Christian truth to acknowledge each person by himself to be God and Lord, so we are forbidden by the catholic religion to say there are three gods or three lords. The Father is made by none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is from the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten. The holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son; not made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three fathers; one Son, not three sons; one holy Spirit, not three holy spirits. And in this Trinity nothing is before or after, nothing is greater or less; but the whole three persons are co-eternal together and co-equal. So that in all things, as has been said above, the unity in Trinity and the Trinity in unity is to be worshipped. Whoever, therefore, wishes to be saved, let him think thus of the Trinity.

It is also necessary for salvation to believe faithfully the incarnation of our lord Jesus Christ. The right faith, therefore, is that we believe and confess that our lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, is God and man. God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the ages; and man, of the substance of his mother, born in the world. Perfect God, perfect man, subsisting of a rational soul and human flesh. Equal to the Father according to his Godhead, less than the Father according to his humanity. Although he is God and man, he is not two, but one Christ. One, however, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by the taking of humanity into God. One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For as a reasoning soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ. He suffered for our salvation and descended into hell. On the third day he rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty. Thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. At his coming all shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give an account of their own deeds. Those who have done good shall go into eternal life, but those who have done evil shall go into eternal fire.

This is the catholic faith. Unless a person believes it faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.

Seventhly, the decree of union concluded with the Greeks, which was promulgated earlier in this sacred ecumenical council of Florence and which is as follows: Let the heavens be glad . . . '

Eighthly, there was discussion with the Armenians about, among other things, the days on which the following feasts should be kept: the annunciation of the blessed virgin Mary, the birth of blessed John the Baptist and, in consequence, the birth and the circumcision of our lord Jesus Christ and his presentation in the temple (or the purification of the blessed virgin Mary). The truth was made quite clear by the testimonies of fathers and by the custom of the Roman church and all other churches among Latins and Greeks. Therefore, lest the rites of Christians be at variance in such great celebrations, whence a threat to charity could arise, we decree that, as something consonant with truth and reason, the Armenians too should solemnly celebrate, according to the observance of the rest of the world, the following feasts on the following days: the annunciation of the blessed virgin Mary on 25 March, the birth of blessed John the Baptist on 24 June, the birth of our Saviour on 25 December, his circumcision on 1 January, the epiphany on 6 January, and the presentation of our Lord in the temple (or the purification of the mother of God) on 2 February.

After all these matters had been explained, the aforesaid Armenians, in their own name and in the name of their patriarch and of all Armenians, with all devotion and obedience accept, admit and embrace this salutary synodal decree with all its chapters, declarations, definitions, traditions, precepts and statutes and all the doctrine contained in it, and also whatever the holy apostolic see and the Roman church holds and teaches. They also accept with reverence all those doctors and holy fathers approved by the Roman church. Indeed, they hold as reprobated and condemned whatever persons and things the Roman church reprobates and condemns. They promise that as true sons of obedience, in the name as above, they will faithfully obey the ordinances and commands of the apostolic see.

When the aforesaid decree had been solemnly read out in our and the holy synod's presence, straightaway our beloved son Narses, an Armenian, in the name of the said envoys, publicly recited the following in Armenian and thereupon our beloved son Basil of the order of friars Minor, the interpreter between us and the Armenians, publicly read it out in Latin as follows.

Most blessed father and most holy synod. Recently the whole of this holy decree, which has now been read out in Latin in your presence, was clearly explained and interpreted to us word by word in our language. It was and is completely acceptable to us. To disclose our understanding more fully, however, we repeat its contents in summary.

The following is contained in it. First, you give to our people of the Armenians the holy creed of Constantinople, with the added phrase and the Son, to be sung or read within the mass in our churches at least on Sundays and greater feasts. Secondly, the definition of the fourth universal council of Chalcedon about two natures in the one person of Christ. Thirdly, the definition about the two wills and principles of action of Christ which was promulgated in the sixth universal council.

Fourthly, you declare that the synod of Chalcedon and most blessed pope Leo rightly defined the truth about two natures in the one person of Christ against the impious doctrines of Nestorius and Eutyches. You order that we should venerate most blessed Leo as holy and a pillar of the faith and that we should reverently accept not only the synods of Nicaea, Constantinople and the first of Ephesus, but also all other synods legitimately celebrated . . authority of the Roman pontiff.

Fifthly, a short scheme of the seven sacraments of the church, namely baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders and matrimony indicating the matter, the form and the minister of each; and that while the chalice is being offered in the sacrifice of the altar a little water should be mixed with the wine.

Sixthly, a compendious rule of the faith of most blessed Athanasius, which begins: Whoever wills to be saved etc.

Seventhly, the decree of union concluded with the Greeks, which was promulgated earlier in this sacred council, recording how the holy Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son, and that the phrase and the Son was licitly and reasonably added to the creed of Constantinople. Also that the body of the Lord is effected in leavened or unleavened wheat bread; and what is to be believed about the pains of purgatory and hell, about the life of the blessed and about suffrages offered for the dead. In addition, about the plenitude of power of the apostolic see given by Christ to blessed Peter and his successors, , ... about the order of the patriarchal sees.

Eighthly, you decree that the following feasts should be kept on the following days, in accordance with the custom of the universal church: the annunciation of the blessed virgin Mary on 25 March, the birth of blessed John the Baptist on 24 June, the birth of our Saviour on 25 December, his circumcision on I January, the epiphany on 6 January, and the presentation of the Lord in the temple (or the purification of blessed Mary) on 2 February.

Therefore we envoys, in our own name and in the name of our reverend patriarch and of all Armenians, with all devotion and obedience accept, admit and embrace, just as your holiness affirms in the decree, this most salutary synodal decree with all its chapters, declarations, definitions, traditions, precepts and statutes and all the doctrine contained in it, and also whatever the holy apostolic see and the Roman church holds and teaches. We accept with reverence all those doctors and holy fathers approved by the Roman church. Indeed we hold as reprobated and condemned whatever persons and things the Roman church reprobates and condemns. We promise that as true sons of obedience, in the name of the above, we will faithfully obey the ordinances and commands of this apostolic see.

Session 9—23 March 1440

[Monition of the council of Florence against the antipope Felix V]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. Many examples of holy fathers of the old and the new Testament warn us that we should not pass over in silence or leave completely unpunished specially grave crimes which lead to the scandal and public division of the people entrusted to us. For if we delay to pursue and avenge what is grievously offensive to God, we thereby provoke the divine patience to wrath. For, there are sins for which it is a sin to be slack about their retribution. It is indeed right and eminently reasonable, in the opinion of holy fathers, that those who despise divine commands and disobey paternal enactments should be corrected with really severe penalties, so that others may fear to commit the same faults and that all may rejoice in fraternal harmony and take note of the example of severity and probity. For if — though may it never be — we are negligent about ecclesiastical vigilance and activity, idleness ruins discipline and the souls of the faithful will suffer great harm. Therefore, rotting flesh should be cut away and mangy sheep driven out

He cannot have God as his father If he does not hold the unity of the church i he who does not agree with the body of the church and the whole brotherhood, cannot agree with anyone. Since Christ suffered for the church and since the church is the body of Christ, without doubt the person who divides the church is convicted of lacerating the body of Christ. Hence the avenging will of the Lord went forth against schismatics like Korah, Dathan and Abiram, who were swallowed up together by an opening in the ground for instigating schism against Moses, the man of God, and others were consumed by fire from heaven; idolatry indeed was punished by the sword; and the burning of the book was requited by the slaughter of war and imprisonment in exile.

Finally, how indivisible is the sacrament of unity! How bereft of hope, and how punished by God's indignation with the direst loss, are those who produce schism and, abandoning the true spouse of the church, set up a pseudo-bishop! Divine scripture declares this in the book of Kings, which says that when ten tribes had separated themselves from the tribe of Judah and Benjamin and abandoned their king, setting up for themselves another king: the Lord was indignant with all the descendants of Israel and gave them over to destruction till he cast them away from his face. It says that the Lord was indignant and gave over to destruction those who split off from unity and set up for themselves another king. Indeed, so great was the wrath of God against those who had brought about a schism that even when the man of God had been sent to Jeroboam to reprove his sins and to predict a future vengeance, the man of God was forbidden to eat bread with them or to drink water and when he did not obey this order of the Lord and dined, straightaway the divine retribution struck him and he was killed by a lion on his return journey. Hence, as blessed Jerome declares, nobody should doubt that the crime of schism is very wicked since it is avenged so severely.

In days gone by, in the holy general council of Constance, that chronic and disastrous schism, which had cruelly and daily afflicted God's church and the Christian religion with great loss of souls, not only of individual persons but also in entire cities and provinces, was at last settled by the ineffable mercy of God and the unbounded labours and hardships of many kings and princes, both ecclesiastical and secular, many universities and others of Christ's faithful, and at great expense. With the election of lord Martin of happy memory and, after his death, the undisputed, genuine, unanimous and canonical elevation of your holiness to the summit of the apostolate, the universal church seemed to be enjoying a greatly desired peace. But behold! Again we are compelled with copious tears to say with Jeremiah the prophet: we looked for peace, but behold disturbance. And again with Isaiah: we looked for light, but behold darkness. Some sons of perdition and disciples of iniquity, who were few in numbers and of little authority, tried at Basel with all their strength, guile and cunning, even after the translation of the former council which had been made canonically and legitimately by your holiness for just, evident, urgent and necessary reasons, to prevent the most holy union with the Greeks and the whole eastern church, which was ardently desired by the whole Christian people.

For after the said authors of the scandals who remained in Basel had failed to fulfil their promise to the Greeks, when they learnt from the envoys of the Greeks and the eastern church that the most serene prince lord John Palaeologus, emperor of the Romans, and Joseph, patriarch of Constantinople of happy memory, with many other prelates and men of the eastern church were about to come to the place chosen for the ecumenical council, and that your holiness had despatched many prelates and envoys with galleys at great expense and outlay, they dared to decree, with a view to preventing the arrival of the said emperor and Greeks, a detestable monition against your holiness and my most reverend lords, the lord cardinals of the holy Roman church.

Afterwards, when they learnt that the said emperor and patriarch and other easterners were coming, they issued against your holiness a kind of sacrilegious decree of suspension from the administration of the papacy.

Despite these and other wicked attempts and sacrilegious acts, on account of the constant solicitude displayed by you and this sacred council and after great labours and many disputations, at last the divine mercy granted that the above-mentioned schism of the Greeks and the eastern church, which had lasted for almost five hundred years to the great harm of the whole Christian people, should be removed from the midst of the church and that the most desired union of the western and the eastern church, which was hardly thought possible, should follow with the utmost harmony from your and this sacred council's holy work. This ought to be greatly admired and venerated with the highest praise and the joy of exultation, as all the rest of the Christian religion had done, and thanks should be returned to the most High for so admirable a gift. But they became more hard-hearted and obstinate, preferring even at the cost of ruining the whole Christian world to fan into flames the conflagration, which they had already begun, of their aforesaid most wicked monster. They adopted an attitude of opposition and, prodigal of their good name and enemies to their own honour, they strove to their utmost with pestilential daring to rend the unity of the holy Roman and universal church and the seamless robe of Christ', and with serpent-like bites to lacerate the womb of the pious and holy mother herself.

The leader and prince of these men and the architect of the whole nefarious deed was that first-born son of Satan, the most unfortunate Amadeus, once duke and prince of Savoy. He meditated this scheme for long. Several years ago, as is widely said, he was seduced by the trickery, soothsayings and phantoms of certain unfortunate men and women of low reputation (commonly called wizards or witches or Waldensians and said to be very numerous in his country), who had forsaken their Saviour to turn backwards to Satan and be deceived by demonic illusions, to have himself raised up to be a monstrous head in God's church. He adopted the cloak of a hermit, or rather of a most false hypocrite, so that in sheep's clothing, like a lamb he might assume the ferocity of a wolf. Eventually he joined the people at Basel. By force, fraud, bribery, promises and threats he prevailed on the majority of those at Basel, who were subject to his sway and tyranny, to proclaim him as an idol and Beelzebub, the prince of these new demons, in opposition to your holiness, the true vicar of Christ and the undoubted successor of Peter in God's church.

Thus that most ill-starred Amadeus, a man of insatiable and unheard of greed, whom avarice (which, according to the Apostle, is the service of idols) has always blinded, was set up as an idol and like a statue of Nebuchadnezzar in God's church by that most wicked synagogue, those offscourings of forsaken men, that shameful cesspool of all Christianity, from among whom certain heinous men, or rather demons hiding under the form of men, had been deputed as electors or rather as profaners. He himself, agitated by the furies of his own crimes and sinking into the depth of all evils, said after the manner of Lucifer: I will set my throne in the north and I shall be like the most High. He grasped with avid and detestable greed at the above-mentioned election, or rather profanation made of him, which he had earlier sought with intense fever of mind and anguish of heart. He did not shrink from adopting and wearing papal robes, ornaments and insignia, from behaving, holding himself and acting as Roman and supreme pontiff, and from having himself venerated as such by the people. Further, he was not afraid to write and despatch to many parts of the world letters which were sealed with a leaden seal after the manner of the Roman pontiffs. By these letters, in which he calls himself Felix even though he is the most unhappy of mortals, he tries to spread the poisons of his faction among the people of Christ.

What complaint or accusation am I to make first, most blessed father and most holy synod? With what force of speech, grief of mind or outpouring of words am I to deplore so great a crime? What rich discourse could suitably bewail or express this most foul deed? Assuredly no account can equal the grossness of the act, for the magnitude of so heinous a crime transcends the power of speech.

But, as I see it, most blessed father and most reverend and reverend fathers, now is the hour not for lament but for remedy.

For behold, holy mother church was basking in true unity and peace, in the person of your holiness her undoubted spouse, when the fountain of tears was opened. To you, her spouse, and to you most reverend and reverend fathers, who share in solicitude and have been summoned to this sacred and ecumenical council, she is forced to cry and shout with many sighs and sobs: Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my fiends'. For my bowels are full of bitterness. For the foxes destroy the vineyard of the God of hosts, and the impious rend the seamless robe of Christ. Let God therefore arise, let all his enemies be scattered. And you, most blessed father, since all these things are so manifest, public and notorious that they cannot be hidden by any evasion or defended by excuses, arise in the power of the most High, together with this sacred council, and judge the cause of your spouse and be mindful of your sons. Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty one. Set out, proceed prosperously and reign, and say with the psalmist: I will pursue my enemies and crush them, and I shall not return until I consume them. I shall consume and crush them and they will not rise; they will fall at my feet. For it is wrong that so wicked a deed and so detestable a precedent should be allowed to pass by disguised, lest perhaps unpunished daring and malice find an imitator, but rather let the example of punished transgressions deter others from offending.

Therefore your holiness and this sacred synod, following the example of Moses the man of God, must say to the whole Christian people: Depart from the tents of these impious men. Follow also the example of blessed pope Leo, your predecessor, who moved the second council of Ephesus and Dioscorus with his supporters to Chalcedon, where he instituted a synod which condemned them, and of your other predecessors as supreme pontiff, who continuously rising up in God's church have eliminated heresies and schisms, with their instigators, followers and supporters, from the church of God and the communion of the faithful, which is the most sacred body of Christ, and have afflicted them with many other condign penalties at the demand of justice.

With the approval and help of this sacred ecumenical council, avenge with condign penalties this new frenzy which has become inflamed to your injury and that of the holy Roman church, your spouse, and to the notorious scandal of the whole Christian people. By the authority of almighty God and of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul and by your own authority, remove and separate from God's holy church, by a perpetual anathema, the aforesaid wicked perpetrators of this prodigious crime and their unfortunate heresiarch and veritable antichrist in God's church together with all their supporters, adherents and followers and especially his execrable electors or rather profaners.

May he and all the aforesaid be cast out like an antichrist and an invader and a destroyer of the whole of Christianity. Let no appeal in this matter ever be allowed to him or to them. Let them and their posterity and successors be deprived without appeal of every ecclesiastical or secular rank and dignity whatsoever. Let all of them be condemned by a perpetual anathema and excommunication and may they be counted among the wicked who will not rise at the judgment. May they feel the anger of God against them. May they feel the rage of saints Peter and Paul, whose church they dare to throw into confusion, both in this life and in the next. May their dwelling be a desolation, let no one dwell in their tents. May their children be orphans and their wives be widows. May the world fight against them and all the elements be opposed to them, so that they may be cast out, destroyed and eliminated by all and so that, as they grovel in permanent penury, death may deservedly be their refuge and life their punishment. May the merits of all the saints cast them into confusion and display open vengeance on them in their lifetime. May they receive a deserved fate with Korah, Dathan and Abiram. Finally, unless they repent from their hearts, perform deeds worthy of repentance and make worthy satisfaction to your holiness and the universal church for the enormity of their sins, may they be thrust with the wicked into the everlasting darkness, doomed by the just judgment of God to eternal torments.

May the grace of almighty God protect all of us and all Christ's faithful who execrate with merited blasphemies the aforesaid heresiarchs and their abominable idol and antichrist, who acknowledge you as Christ's vicar and spouse of his most worthy church, and who venerate you with devout reverence and constant faith and obedience. By the authority of blessed Peter and Paul and your authority, may we and they be absolved from all bonds of sins, be filled with all blessings on our pilgrimage and finally be led by his ineffable mercy to eternal joys. Amen.

For our part, as soon as we were aware from the reports of trustworthy people that so great an impiety had been committed, we were afflicted with grief and sadness, as was to be expected, both for the great scandal to the church and for the ruin of the souls of its perpetrators, especially Amadeus that antichrist whom we used to embrace in the depths of charity and whose prayers and wishes we always strove to meet in so far as we could in God. Already for some time we had it in mind to provide salutary remedies, in accordance with our pastoral office, against an abomination of this sort. Now, however, challenged publicly before the church to confront these evils, we propose to rise to the defence of the church and tackle this great crime more quickly and more urgently. Therefore, in order that so enormous and execrable a deed may, with the help of God whose cause is at stake, be destroyed from its very roots, we are applying, in conjunction with this holy council and with the least possible delay, a remedy in accordance with the holy canons.

We are aware that the above petition of the promoter and the procurator is just and in conformity with both divine and human law, and although the aforesaid crimes and excesses are so very public and notorious that nothing can conceal them and no further information is required; Nevertheless, for greater precaution and certainly about the above, we commissioned, with the approval of this sacred council, some noteworthy persons from every rank in the council to seek information about the above and to refer their findings to us and the sacred council. Those so commissioned fulfilled their task of investigation with the care demanded by a schismatical depravity of this kind and faithfully reported to us and the sacred council in a synodal congregation what they had found out by the interrogation of trustworthy persons. In such public, manifest and notorious matters, action could have been taken against the said infamous and scandalous men without waiting further, by means of severe penalties in accordance with canonical sanctions. Nevertheless we and this holy synod, imitating the mercy of God who desires not the death of the sinner but rather that he be converted and live, have decided to show all possible mercy and to act, in so far as we can, in such a way that the proposed mildness may recall them to heart and lead them to recoil from the above-mentioned excesses, and so that when at last they return to the bosom of the church like the prodigal son, we may receive them with kindness and embrace them with fatherly love.

Therefore, through the tender mercy of our God and by the shedding of the precious blood of our lord Jesus Christ, in whom and by whom the redemption of the human race and the foundation of holy mother church were effected, from the depths of our hearts we exhort, beg and beseech the antichrist Amadeus and the aforesaid electors, or rather profaners, and whoever else believes in, adheres to, receives or in any way supports him, straightaway to stop violating the church's unity for which the Saviour prayed so earnestly to the Father, and to cease from rending and lacerating the fraternal charity and peace which the same Redeemer, as he was about to leave this world, repeatedly and so insistently commended to his disciples and without which neither prayers nor fasts nor alms are acceptable to God, and utterly to desist as quickly as possible from the aforesaid destructive and scandalous excesses, and so to find with us and this sacred council, if they really obey as they are bound to do, the affection of a father in respect of everything.

However, so that fear of penalties and harshness of discipline may force them if perchance love of justice and virtue does not withdraw them from sin, with the approval of this sacred council we demand and warn the antichrist Amadeus and the aforesaid electors, or rather profaners, and believers, adherents, receivers and supporters, and we strictly enjoin and order him and them in virtue of holy obedience and under the penalties of anathema, heresy, schism and treason which have been inflicted in any ways against such persons, whether by men or by the law:

That within fifty days immediately following the publication of this letter, the antichrist Amadeus should cease from acting any more and designating himself as the Roman pontiff and should not, in so far as he can, allow himself to be held and called such by others, and should not dare hereafter in any way to use papal insignia and other things belonging in any way to the Roman pontiff; And that the aforesaid electors, or rather profaners, and believers, adherents, receivers and supporters should no longer, either in person or through others, directly or indirectly or under any pretext, aid, believe in, adhere to or support the said Amadeus in this crime of schism.

Rather, both Amadeus himself and the aforesaid electors, believers, adherents and supporters should hold, recognize and reverence us as the true Roman pontiff and vicar of Christ and legitimate successor of Peter, and should reverently obey and maintain us as father and pastor of their souls, and should take care legitimately to notify us and this sacred council about these matters within the appointed interval of time, so that no scruple of doubt may remain about their genuine obedience.

If Amadeus and the said electors, believers, adherents, receivers and supporters shall act otherwise — though may it not be so — and do not effectively fulfil each and all of the aforesaid points within the appointed time, we wish and decree that from then as from now they automatically incur the stated penalties.

Moreover, on the fifteenth day after the aforesaid interval of time, if it is not a feast, otherwise on the following non-feast day, the aforesaid supporters all together or singly shall appear in person before us and the aforesaid council where we shall then be, to be seen and heard individually and even by name. Thus we now cite them for that day, to be declared schismatics, blasphemers and as heretics, to be punished as traitors, and to have incurred the aforesaid censures and penalties, and others to be inflicted, according as it shall seem good and justice shall persuade:

Notifying the same people and any of them individually, whether or not they come, that if they shall not have shown that they have obeyed, we shall proceed with justice to declaring the aforesaid penalties, notwithstanding their contumacy or absence, with the intention of proceeding further to aggravation and re-aggravation, as the rigour of justice shall demand and their merits require. In order that this monition and citation of ours may be brought to the attention of the authors of their monition and citation and of other interested persons, we shall have sheets of paper or membranes of parchment containing it affixed to the doors or gates of the church of St Mary Novella in Florence, of our palace situated near that church and of the cathedral church of Florence. These will make known this monition as if by a sonorous town-crying and a public notice, in order that after such notification these people may not be able to pretend that it did not reach them or that they were ignorant of it, since it is unlikely that what is made known so obviously to all should remain unknown or hidden to them.

We wish and we decree by our apostolic authority that this our monition promulgated on the said doors and gates shall have as much value and be as immutable and as binding on the said warned people, notwithstanding any contrary constitution, as if it had been intimated and disclosed to each and all of the warned people in person and in their presence.

Finally, lest the aforesaid warned and cited persons allege as a cloak of excuse that the council and the Roman curia, the common fatherland of all, is an unsafe place for them and that, because of the above-mentioned things or other enmities or other reasons, danger threatens them in their coming, staying and returning, we reassure them by this present letter and we require and exhort by the same letter all patriarchs, archbishops, bishops and other prelates of churches and monasteries, clerics and ecclesiastical persons as well as dukes, marquises, princes, rulers, captains and any other officials and their lieutenants, as also the communities and corporations of cities, castles, towns, vills and other places, and we strictly command the patriarchs, archbishops, bishops and other prelates and our other subjects that they are not to inflict any injury or harm on the aforesaid warned persons and their goods and property nor, to the best of their power, to allow such to be inflicted by others. Let nobody therefore . . . If anyone however . . .

Session 10—27 May 1440

[Eugenius IV exhorts the members of the synod at Basel to desist from their opposition]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. In the opinion of holy fathers, public sinners ought to be publicly censured so that others may stand in fear. Accordingly, we and this sacred council of Florence recently censured and denounced in public before the church, in synodal form, the authors and abettors of the pestilential sin of schism against the holy apostolic see and the holy Roman church, the mother and mistress of all Christians, which was perpetrated by Amadeus, once duke of Savoy, and his accomplices. It would have been in conformity with the sacred canons to have passed a sentence of due severity straightaway on those notoriously sacrilegious persons. However, desiring their conversion and salvation rather than their punishment, we begged, warned and required of them, with all the charity and mildness we could, to reflect and to recoil from such great iniquity, promising them pardon and favour and a father's affection. But if they refused to heed these dutiful admonitions, we decreed that they should be punished with penalties proportionate to so great an outrage, as is contained in the monition promulgated against them, which is as follows.

Session 11—4 February 1442

[Bull of union with the Copts]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. Sing praises to the Lord for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the holy one of Israel. To sing and to exult in the Lord certainly befits the church of God for his great magnificence and the glory of his name, which the most merciful God has deigned to bring about on this very day. It is right, indeed, to praise and bless with all our hearts our Saviour, who daily builds up his holy church with new additions. His benefactions to his Christian people are at all times many and great and manifest more clearly than the light of day his immense love for us. Yet if we look more closely at the benefactions which the divine mercy has deigned to effect in most recent times, we shall assuredly be able to judge that in these days of ours the gifts of his love have been more in number and greater in kind than in many past ages.

For in less than three years our lord Jesus Christ by his indefatigable kindness, to the common and lasting joy of the whole of Christianity, has generously effected in this holy ecumenical synod the most salutary union of three great nations. Hence it has come about that nearly the whole of the east that adores the glorious name of Christ and no small part of the north, after prolonged discord with the holy Roman church, have come together in the same bond of faith and love. For first the Greeks and those subject to the four patriarchal sees, which cover many races and nations and tongues, then the Armenians, who are a race of many peoples, and today indeed the Jacobites, who are a great people in Egypt, have been united with the holy apostolic see.

Nothing is more pleasing to our Saviour, the lord Jesus Christ, than mutual love among people and nothing can give more glory to his name and advantage to the church than that Christians, with all discord between them banished, should come together in the same purity of faith. Deservedly all of us ought to sing for joy and to exult in the Lord; we whom the divine clemency has made worthy to see in our days such great splendour of the Christian faith. With the greatest readiness we therefore announce these marvellous facts to the whole Christian world, so that just as we are filled with unspeakable joy for the glory of God and the exaltation of the church, we may make others participate in this great happiness. Thus all of us with one voice may magnify and glorify God and may return abundant and daily thanks, as is fitting, to his majesty for so many and so great marvellous benefits bestowed on his holy church in this age. He who diligently does the work of God not only awaits merit and reward in heaven but also deserves generous glory and praise among people. Therefore we consider that our venerable brother John, patriarch of the Jacobites, whose zeal for this holy union is immense, should deservedly be praised and extolled by us and the whole church and deserves, together with his whole race, the general approval of all Christians. Moved by us, through our envoy and our letter, to send an embassy to us and this sacred synod and to unite himself and his people in the same faith with the Roman church, he sent to us and this synod the beloved son Andrew, an Egyptian, endowed in no mean degree with faith and morals and abbot of the monastery of St Anthony in Egypt, in which St Anthony himself is said to have lived and died. The patriarch, fired with great zeal, ordered and commissioned him reverently to accept, in the name of the patriarch and his Jacobites, the doctrine of the faith that the Roman church holds and preaches, and afterwards to bring this doctrine to the patriarch and the Jacobites so that they might acknowledge and formally approve it and preach it in their lands.

We, therefore, to whom the Lord gave the task of feeding Christ's sheep', had abbot Andrew carefully examined by some outstanding men of this sacred council on the articles of the faith, the sacraments of the church and certain other matters pertaining to salvation. At length, after an exposition of the catholic faith to the abbot, as far as this seemed to be necessary, and his humble acceptance of it, we have delivered in the name of the Lord in this solemn session, with the approval of this sacred ecumenical council of Florence, the following true and necessary doctrine.

First, then, the holy Roman church, founded on the words of our Lord and Saviour, firmly believes, professes and preaches one true God, almighty, immutable and eternal, Father, Son and holy Spirit; one in essence, three in persons; unbegotten Father, Son begotten from the Father, holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son; the Father is not the Son or the holy Spirit, the Son is not the Father or the holy Spirit, the holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son; the Father is only the Father, the Son is only the Son, the holy Spirit is only the holy Spirit. The Father alone from his substance begot the Son; the Son alone is begotten of the Father alone; the holy Spirit alone proceeds at once from the Father and the Son. These three persons are one God not three gods, because there is one substance of the three, one essence, one nature, one Godhead, one immensity, one eternity, and everything is one where the difference of a relation does not prevent this. Because of this unity the Father is whole in the Son, whole in the holy Spirit; the Son is whole in the Father, whole in the holy Spirit; the holy Spirit is whole in the Father, whole in the Son. No one of them precedes another in eternity or excels in greatness or surpasses in power. The existence of the Son from the Father is certainly eternal and without beginning, and the procession of the holy Spirit from the Father and the Son is eternal and without beginning. Whatever the Father is or has, he has not from another but from himself and is principle without principle. Whatever the Son is or has, he has from the Father and is principle from principle. Whatever the holy Spirit is or has, he has from the Father together with the Son. But the Father and the Son are not two principles of the holy Spirit, but one principle, just as the Father and the Son and the holy Spirit are not three principles of creation but one principle. Therefore it condemns, reproves, anathematizes and declares to be outside the body of Christ, which is the church, whoever holds opposing or contrary views. Hence it condemns Sabellius, who confused the persons and altogether removed their real distinction. It condemns the Arians, the Eunomians and the Macedonians who say that only the Father is true God and place the Son and the holy Spirit in the order of creatures. It also condemns any others who make degrees or inequalities in the Trinity.

Most firmly it believes, professes and preaches that the one true God, Father, Son and holy Spirit, is the creator of all things that are, visible and invisible, who, when he willed it, made from his own goodness all creatures, both spiritual and corporeal, good indeed because they are made by the supreme good, but mutable because they are made from nothing, and it asserts that there is no nature of evil because every nature, in so far as it is a nature, is good. It professes that one and the same God is the author of the old and the new Testament — that is, the law and the prophets, and the gospel — since the saints of both testaments spoke under the inspiration of the same Spirit. It accepts and venerates their books, whose titles are as follows.

Five books of Moses, namely Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Joshua, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, two of Paralipomenon, Esdras, Nehemiah, Tobit, Judith, Esther, Job, Psalms of David, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch, Ezechiel, Daniel; the twelve minor prophets, namely Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; two books of the Maccabees; the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; fourteen letters of Paul, to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, two to the Thessalonians, to the Colossians, two to Timothy, to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews; two letters of Peter, three of John, one of James, one of Jude; Acts of the Apostles; Apocalypse of John.

Hence it anathematizes the madness of the Manichees who posited two first principles, one of visible things, the other of invisible things, and said that one was the God of the new Testament, the other of the old Testament. It firmly believes, professes and preaches that one person of the Trinity, true God, Son of God begotten by the Father, consubstantial and coeternal with the Father, in the fullness of time which the inscrutable depth of divine counsel determined, for the salvation of the human race, took a real and complete human nature from the immaculate womb of the virgin Mary, and joined it to himself in a personal union of such great unity that whatever is of God there, is not separated from man, and whatever is human is not divided from the Godhead, and he is one and the same undivided, each nature perduring in its properties, God and man, Son of God and son of man, equal to the Father according to his divinity, less than the Father according to his humanity, immortal and eternal through the nature of the Godhead, passible and temporal from the condition of assumed humanity. It firmly believes, professes and preaches that the Son of God was truly born of the virgin in his assumed humanity, truly suffered, truly died and was buried, truly rose from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father and will come at the end of time to judge the living and the dead. It anathematizes, execrates and condemns every heresy that is tainted with the contrary. First it condemns Ebion, Cerinthus, Marcion, Paul of Samosata, Photinus and all similar blasphemers who, failing to see the personal union of the humanity with the Word, denied that our lord Jesus Christ was true God and professed him to be simply a man who by a greater participation in divine grace, which he had received through the merit of his holier life, should be called a divine man.

It anathematizes also Manes and his followers who, imagining that the Son of God took to himself not a real body but a phantasmal one completely rejected the truth of the humanity in Christ, Valentinus, who declared that the Son of God took nothing from his virgin mother but that he assumed a heavenly body and passed through the virgin's womb like water flowing down an aqueduct; Arius, who by his assertion that the body taken from the virgin had no soul, wanted the Deity to take the place of the soul; and Apollinarius who, realizing that if the soul informing the body were denied there would be no true humanity in Christ, posited only a sensitive soul and held that the deity of the Word took the place of the rational soul. It anathematizes also Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius, who asserted that the humanity was united to the Son of God through grace, and hence that there are two persons in Christ just as they profess there are two natures, since they could not understand that the union of the humanity to the Word was hypostatic and therefore they denied that he had received the subsistence of the Word. For according to this blasphemy the Word was not made flesh but the Word dwelt in flesh through grace, that is, the Son of God did not become man but rather the Son of God dwelt in a man. It also anathematizes, execrates and condemns the archimandrite Eutyches who, when he understood that the blasphemy of Nestorius excluded the truth of the incarnation, and that it was therefore necessary for the humanity to be so united to the Word of God that there should be one and the same person of the divinity and the humanity; and also because, granted the plurality of natures, he could not grasp the unity of the person, since he posited one person in Christ of divinity and humanity; so he affirmed that there was one nature, suggesting that before the union there was a duality of natures which passed into a single nature in the act of assumption, thereby conceding a great blasphemy and impiety that either the humanity was converted into the divinity or the divinity into the humanity. It also anathematizes, execrates and condemns Macarius of Antioch and all others of similar views who, although they are orthodox on the duality of natures and the unity of person, yet have gone enormously wrong on Christ's principles of action by declaring that of the two natures in Christ, there was only one principle of action and one will. The holy Roman church anathematizes all of these and their heresies and affirms that in Christ there are two wills and two principles of action.

It firmly believes, professes and preaches that never was anyone, conceived by a man and a woman, liberated from the devil's dominion except by faith in our lord Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and humanity, who was conceived without sin, was born and died. He alone by his death overthrew the enemy of the human race, canceling our sins, and unlocked the entrance to the heavenly kingdom, which the first man by his sin had locked against himself and all his posterity. All the holy sacrifices sacraments and ceremonies of the old Testament had prefigured that he would come at some time.

It firmly believes, professes and teaches that the legal prescriptions of the old Testament or the Mosaic law, which are divided into ceremonies, holy sacrifices and sacraments, because they were instituted to signify something in the future, although they were adequate for the divine cult of that age, once our lord Jesus Christ who was signified by them had come, came to an end and the sacraments of the new Testament had their beginning. Whoever, after the passion, places his hope in the legal prescriptions and submits himself to them as necessary for salvation and as if faith in Christ without them could not save, sins mortally. It does not deny that from Christ's passion until the promulgation of the gospel they could have been retained, provided they were in no way believed to be necessary for salvation. But it asserts that after the promulgation of the gospel they cannot be observed without loss of eternal salvation. Therefore it denounces all who after that time observe circumcision, the sabbath and other legal prescriptions as strangers to the faith of Christ and unable to share in eternal salvation, unless they recoil at some time from these errors. Therefore it strictly orders all who glory in the name of Christian, not to practise circumcision either before or after baptism, since whether or not they place their hope in it, it cannot possibly be observed without loss of eternal salvation.

With regard to children, since the danger of death is often present and the only remedy available to them is the sacrament of baptism by which they are snatched away from the dominion of the devil and adopted as children of God, it admonishes that sacred baptism is not to be deferred for forty or eighty days or any other period of time in accordance with the usage of some people, but it should be conferred as soon as it conveniently can; and if there is imminent danger of death, the child should be baptized straightaway without any delay, even by a lay man or a woman in the form of the church, if there is no priest, as is contained more fully in the decree on the Armenians.

It firmly believes, professes and teaches that every creature of God is good and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because according to the word of the Lord not what goes into the mouth defiles a person, and because the difference in the Mosaic law between clean and unclean foods belongs to ceremonial practices, which have passed away and lost their efficacy with the coming of the gospel. It also declares that the apostolic prohibition, to abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled, was suited to that time when a single church was rising from Jews and gentiles, who previously lived with different ceremonies and customs. This was so that the gentiles should have some observances in common with Jews, and occasion would be offered of coming together in one worship and faith of God and a cause of dissension might be removed, since by ancient custom blood and strangled things seemed abominable to Jews, and gentiles could be thought to be returning to idolatry if they ate sacrificial food. In places, however, where the Christian religion has been promulgated to such an extent that no Jew is to be met with and all have joined the church, uniformly practising the same rites and ceremonies of the gospel and believing that to the clean all things are clean, since the cause of that apostolic prohibition has ceased, so its effect has ceased. It condemns, then, no kind of food that human society accepts and nobody at all neither man nor woman, should make a distinction between animals, no matter how they died; although for the health of the body, for the practice of virtue or for the sake of regular and ecclesiastical discipline many things that are not proscribed can and should be omitted, as the apostle says all things are lawful, but not all are helpful.

It firmly believes, professes and preaches that all those who are outside the catholic church, not only pagans but also Jews or heretics and schismatics, cannot share in eternal life and will go into the everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels, unless they are joined to the catholic church before the end of their lives; that the unity of the ecclesiastical body is of such importance that only for those who abide in it do the church's sacraments contribute to salvation and do fasts, almsgiving and other works of piety and practices of the Christian militia produce eternal rewards; and that nobody can be saved, no matter how much he has given away in alms and even if he has shed his blood in the name of Christ, unless he has persevered in the bosom and the unity of the catholic church.

It embraces, approves and accepts the holy synod of 318 fathers at Nicaea, which was convened in the time of our predecessor most blessed Silvester and the great and most pious emperor Constantine. In it the impious Arian heresy and its author was condemned and there was defined that the Son of God is consubstantial and coeternal with the Father. It also embraces, approves and accepts the holy synod of 150 fathers at Constantinople, which was convoked in the time of our predecessor most blessed Damasus and the elder Theodosius and which anathematized the impious error of Macedonius, who asserted that the holy Spirit is not God but a creature. Those whom they condemn, it condemns; what they approve, it approves; and in every respect it wants what was defined there to remain unchanged and inviolate.

It also embraces, approves and accepts the first holy synod of 200 fathers at Ephesus, which is third in the order of universal synods and was convoked under our predecessor most blessed Celestine and the younger Theodosius. In it the blasphemy of the impious Nestorius was condemned, and there was defined that the person of our lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is one and that the blessed ever-virgin Mary should be preached by the whole church not only as Christ-bearer but also as God-bearer, that is as mother of God as well as mother of the man.

But it condemns, anathematizes and rejects the impious second synod of Ephesus, which was convened under our predecessor most blessed Leo and the aforesaid emperor. In it Dioscorus, bishop of Alexandria, defender of the heresiarch Eutyches and impious persecutor of holy Flavian, bishop of Constantinople, with cunning and threat led the execrable synod to an approval of the Eutychian impiety.

It also embraces, approves and accepts the holy synod of 630 fathers at Chalcedon, which is fourth in the order of universal synods and was held in the time of our predecessor most blessed Leo and the emperor Marcian. In it the Eutychian heresy and its author Eutyches and its defender Dioscorus were condemned, and there was defined that our lord Jesus Christ is true God and true man and that in the one and same person the divine and human natures remain entire, inviolate, incorrupt, unconfused and distinct, the humanity doing what befits man, the divinity what befits God. Those whom they condemn, it condemns; those whom they approve, it approves.

It also embraces, approves and accepts the fifth holy synod, the second of Constantinople, which was held in the time of our predecessor most blessed Vigilius and the emperor Justinian. In it the definition of the sacred council of Chalcedon about the two natures and the one person of Christ was renewed and many errors of Origen and his followers, especially about the penitence and liberation of demons and other condemned beings, were refuted and condemned.

It also embraces, approves and accepts the third holy synod of 150 fathers at Constantinople, which is sixth in the order of universal synods and was convened in the time of our predecessor most blessed Agatho and the emperor Constantine IV. In it the heresy of Macarius of Antioch and his adherents was condemned, and there was defined that in our lord Jesus Christ there are two perfect and complete natures and two principles of action and also two wills, although there is one and the same person to whom the actions of each of the two natures belong, the divinity doing what is of God, the humanity doing what is human.

It also embraces, approves and accepts all other universal synods which were legitimately summoned, celebrated and confirmed by the authority of a Roman pontiff, and especially this holy synod of Florence, in which, among other things, most holy unions with the Greeks and the Armenians have been achieved and many most salutary definitions in respect of each of these unions have been issued, as is contained in full in the decrees previously promulgated, which are as follows: Let the heavens be glad . . . 1; Exult in God . 2

However, since no explanation was given in the aforesaid decree of the Armenians in respect of the form of words which the holy Roman church, relying on the teaching and authority of the apostles Peter and Paul, has always been wont to use in the consecration of the Lord's body and blood, we concluded that it should be inserted in this present text. It uses this form of words in the consecration of the Lord's body: For this is my body. And of his blood: For this is the chalice of my blood, of the new and everlasting covenant, which will be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins .

Whether the wheat bread, in which the sacrament is confected, has been baked on the same day or earlier is of no importance whatever. For, provided the substance of bread remains, there should be no doubt at all that after the aforesaid words of consecration of the body have been pronounced by a priest with the intention of consecrating, immediately it is changed in substance into the true body of Christ.

It is asserted that some people reject fourth marriages as condemned. Lest sin is attributed where it does not exist, since the apostle says that a wife on her husband's death is free from his law and free in the Lord to marry whom she wishes, and since no distinction is made between the deaths of the first, second and third husbands, we declare that not only second and third marriages but also fourth and further ones may lawfully be contracted, provided there is no canonical impediment. We say, however, that they would be more commendable if thereafter they abstain from marriage and persevere in chastity because we consider that, just as virginity is to be preferred in praise and merit to widowhood, so chaste widowhood is preferable to marriage.

After all these explanations the aforesaid abbot Andrew, in the name of the aforesaid patriarch and of himself and of all the Jacobites, receives and accepts with all devotion and reverence this most salutary synodal decree with all its chapters, declarations, definitions traditions, precepts and statutes and all the doctrine contained therein, and also whatever the holy apostolic see and the Roman church holds and teaches. He also reverently accepts those doctors and holy fathers whom the Roman church approves, and he holds as rejected and condemned whatever persons and things the Roman church rejects and condemns, promising as a son of true obedience, in the name of the above persons, faithfully and always to obey the regulations and commands of the said apostolic see.

Session 12—14 October 1443

[Eugenius IV convokes the Lateran council, that is, the continuation of the council of Florence]

Eugenius. Convocation of the Lateran council. For an everlasting record. By the infinite clemency and pity of the redeemer of the human race, our God and lord Jesus Christ, by whose ineffable providence the whole body of the church is sanctified and ruled and through whose aid — which surpasses our merits and exceeds what we recognise ourselves as worthy either to seek or to solicit — gifts and favours of his mercy daily come to us, we have returned to bountiful Rome, the see of most blessed Peter, to the holy of holies, the Lateran of the patriarchs. With great trust we are embracing and earnestly pursuing the things which seem to be promoted and revealed by divine rather than by human wisdom. Hence it is that because of various just, reasonable and necessary causes which then moved our mind, by apostolic authority and the plenitude of power and with the approval of the council, we transferred the holy ecumenical council of Florence, over which we were then presiding, to this bountiful city of Rome and the Lateran basilica, to be re-established and continued on the first day following the fifteenth day after our arrival, as is contained in more detail in the letter composed for that purpose, whose text is word for word as follows:

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record The compassionate and merciful Lord ordained that his only-begotten Son should assume a human nature and should so join it to himself in a single person that not only would fallen nature be repaired by virtue of that ineffable union, but also by his embrace as spouse and by the kiss of his mouth his bride the holy church would be brought forth, her members would be joined together by a solid bond of love, and the Christian people would acquire peace in harmony, salvation in a unity of spirit, and glory in the bond of charity.

In so far as it is granted to us by the mercy of our lord and saviour Jesus Christ, whose place we though unworthy take on earth, we, following in his footsteps, ardently desire and intensely pursue the salvation, unity and peace of the Christian people. Therefore we are intent, with a deserved watchfulness, on the conservation of this holy ecumenical council. In it, by the marvellous kindness and mercy of the same Saviour, very many most noteworthy works have been achieved for his praise and glory, the increase of the catholic faith, the unity of the Christian people and the exaltation of the holy apostolic see and the Roman church. For in our own days we have seen Greeks, Armenians, Jacobites and other almost innumerable peoples, some of whom have been separated from the rite and the holy teaching of the Roman church for almost five hundred or even seven hundred years, joined with us in this sacred council, by God's mercy, under one divine law of truth and embracing us with due reverence as the true vicar of Christ, the successor of Peter and the shepherd of the universal church.

There are no limits to the kindness of our Saviour, who works for the unity of the Christian people and his mystical body, for which he prayed: I wish, Father, that they may be one even as we are one. Indeed we are experiencing his kindness particularly in these times. For his infinite mercy has granted that we are now awaiting the arrival of envoys, furnished with full power to accept in this holy council the doctrine of the orthodox faith from which their peoples have gone astray in many points, from our most dear son in Christ Zar'a Ya'qob, king of Ethiopia, commonly called Prester John, to whom very many kings and almost innumerable peoples are subject and who is impelled, as we trust, by divine inspiration. To foster and hasten such a holy and divine proposal, which is so necessary for the whole of Christianity, we have sent our own nuncios and envoys, who are full of zeal for this holy task and have considerable influence with the said most powerful king.

Many more works have been proposed to us for the praise of God and the increase of the faith and the Christian people. We wish to give careful attention to them. Frightened by neither the heavy expenses nor the many labours, we put our trust in the power of him whose inspiration motivates us. Let us hope, moreover, that in the course of time many other desirable and salutary fruits will accrue to the catholic faith and the church of Christ, especially if this holy synod is held in a place of greater importance and in a royal and sacerdotal city. To the genial city of Rome, which is particularly our city and which, as is right, we want to participate and help in these salutary and divine tasks, we have turned our attention, a city which we consider to be abounding in all spiritual and temporal goods and more holy and outstanding than all other cities for carrying out these holy tasks and bringing them to a religious and happy conclusion. For in it our Saviour in his eternal providence settled the apostolic see in blessed Peter, prince of all the apostles, and on his right in fellowship the wondrous foresight of the same Saviour added the blessed apostle Paul. They are two bulwarks of the faith through whom the gospel shone in Rome; they are true fathers and true pastors; they are those who suffered on one day for merit, in one place for grace, under one persecutor for equal virtue, and made this city sacerdotal and royal and the capital of the world, as being the holy seat of Peter, and consecrated it to the lord Christ with the glorious blood of martyrdom. "For the Roman church founded all, whether the eminence of a patriarch or the seats of metropolitan primacy or of bishoprics or the dignities of churches of whatever rank; he alone, who entrusted to blessed Peter, the key-bearer of eternal life, the rights of the heavenly as well as of the earthly kingdom, founded the Roman church and straightaway set it on the rock of nascent faith." Since, then, the city of Rome has been ennobled and distinguished by so many and so great divine gifts and is resplendent with so much authority and also draws the faithful to itself from all sides by the relics and sanctity of apostles, martyrs and confessors; since Christian nations and peoples even in the furthest parts of the world flock to the said city and are seen to desire greatly that we return to our see, which has been divinely constituted for Roman pontiffs, in order that a greater veneration and devotion may grow in the Christian people towards both us, through the authority of the said see, and the said see, through our presence and authority, and since we are informed that, on account of our residence in Rome, subjects and faithful of ours and of the Roman church, whose peace and tranquillity we are bound to procure and preserve with special zeal, will enjoy much greater peace and unity and that in this way, with God's blessing, we shall be more expeditious and effective in pursuing works of peace and harmony and in arranging and confirming, as we ardently desire, peace and unity among other catholic kings and princes and peoples; Therefore to Rome, which is a suitable and safe place fulfilling all human needs as regards fertility of the soil and sea transport; under the influence of the above-mentioned necessary causes and many other just and reasonable ones which direct our mind to the praise and glory of almighty God, the extirpation of heresies and errors, the reform of morals, the peace, salvation and increase of the Christian people and the prosecution of other holy works, under the Lord's leadership, for which the said council was originally convened;

In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son and holy Spirit, with the approval of the said general council given on 5 January last, in a general congregation under our presidency, by apostolic authority and by this present letter, we translate as from now this holy ecumenical council of Florence, and by the same authority and the same letter we have decreed and declared it to be translated to the Lateran basilica, which is the first and proper seat of the supreme pontiff and the vicar of Jesus Christ, to be resumed, continued and prosecuted on the day following the fifteenth day after our entry into bountiful Rome. In addition, by an inviolable constitution and decree we ordain that each and all of the securities and safe-conducts, which we granted at the beginning of this sacred council and which we are extending anew and prolonging, are to be considered as included in this present letter and as having the same force and effect as if they had been mentioned word for word in this our synodal constitution and had been inserted and denoted in it. Let nobody therefore . . . If anyone however . . .

Now that the appointed day has come and all the reasons for which it had then seemed necessary to resume the council are recognised to be more than ever necessary, with the said necessary reasons and many other just and reasonable ones impelling us, for the praise and glory of almighty God, the extirpation of heresies and errors, the reform of morals, the peace, salvation and increase of the Christian people, and the completion of other holy works, under the Lord's leadership, for which the aforesaid council was originally convened;

In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son and holy Spirit, by the same authority and power, with the same approval and by this present letter; We resume, continue and carry forward the aforesaid ecumenical council of Florence, which was translated as above, and we decree and declare by this present letter that this continuation, resumption and prosecution is taking place in this council hall of the sacred Lateran patriarchate. We warn and require each and all of those who are bound by law or custom to take part in general councils that they should come as quickly as possible to this present holy ecumenical Lateran council, as referred to above, which is continuing for the attainment of the above-mentioned ends. In addition, we ordain again by this constitution and decree that each and all of the securities and safe-conducts, which we granted at the beginning of the sacred ecumenical council of Ferrara and which we are extending anew and prolonging, are to be considered as included in this present letter and as having the same force and effect as if they had been mentioned word for word in this our synodal constitution and had been inserted and denoted in

Let nobody therefore . . . if anyone however . . .

Session 13—30 November 1444

[Bull of union with the Syrians]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. In these our days the ineffable clemency of divine mercy bestows on his holy church many and marvellous gifts which are much greater than we could have asked for or envisaged. Hence we see that the orthodox faith is expanded, new peoples daily return to the obedience of the apostolic see and reasons for joy and exaltation are daily being multiplied for us and all Christ's faithful, in such wise that we are deservedly incited time and again to say in jubilation with the prophet to the faithful peoples: Come, let us exult in the Lord, let us hail the God who saves us, for the Lord is great and most worthy of praise in the city of our God, on his holy mountain. It is true that in the catholic church, which is the city of God on the holy mountain and is founded on the authority of the apostolic see and Peter, God, whose omnipotence and wisdom knows no limits, has always worked great and inscrutable deeds. But the singular and special gift which the ineffable providence of its founder bestowed on it is that the orthodox faith, which alone gives life to and sanctifies the human race, should abide for ever on that holy mountain in a unique and unchangeable profession of faith and that dissents, which arise against the church from the variety of earthly opinions and separate people off from the firmness of that rock, should return to that mountain and be exterminated and eradicated. Whence it comes about that the peoples and nations thronging to its bosom agree with it in one truth of faith. Assuredly it is not from our merit that the immensity of divine goodness has granted us to behold these great sublime and marvellous gifts of God. His benevolence and condescension alone have granted that after the union of the Greeks in the sacred ecumenical council of Florence, who were seen to differ from the Roman church in some articles, and after the return of the Armenians and the Jacobites, who were entangled in various opinions, they should at last, having abandoned all dissent, come together into the one right way of truth. Behold now again with the Lord's help other nations have gathered from afar, inhabitants of Mesopotamia between the Tigris and the Euphrates, whose thinking about the procession of the holy Spirit and some other articles had gone astray.

Great, then, for us and for all Christ's faithful is the reason for rejoicing. For with the Lord's approval the most illustrious profession of the Roman church about the truth of the faith, which has always been pure from all stain of error shines with new beams also in the east beyond the bounds of the Euphrates inasmuch as it has drawn our venerable brother Abdala, archbishop of Edessa and legate of our venerable brother Ignatius, patriarch of the Syrians, and of his whole nation, to us here in bountiful Rome and to this sacred ecumenical Lateran council and has bidden him humbly and devoutly to petition that we give to them the rule of faith which the holy Roman church professes. Among all the preoccupations of the holy apostolic see, we hold, as we have always done, our first and chiefest care to be the defence of the faith, the extermination of heresies and the propagation of the orthodox faith. Therefore we selected some of our venerable brethren, cardinals of the holy Roman church, who in turn co-opted from this sacred council some masters in holy scripture, to confer with the aforesaid archbishop about the difficulties, doubts and errors of that nation, to examine him in person and to open to him the rule of catholic truth, and finally to instruct and inform him fully about the integrity of the faith of the Roman church.

They found him orthodox on all points of faith and practice except three articles: namely, the procession of the holy Spirit, the two natures in Jesus Christ our saviour, the two wills and principles of action in him. They laid before him the truth of the orthodox faith, opened up the meaning of the sacred scriptures, adduced the testimonies of holy doctors and added telling and pertinent reasons.

When the archbishop had understood the doctrine on these points, he affirmed that all his doubts had been completely answered. He professed that he thought he fully understood the truth of the faith as regards both the procession of the holy Spirit and the two natures, two wills and two principles of action in our lord Jesus Christ. Moreover he declared that he would accept, in the name of the aforesaid patriarch and of the whole nation and of himself, the whole faith and all the teaching which we, with the approval of this sacred council, would propose to him.

For this reason we were filled with exultation in Christ and poured out immense gratitude to our God, since we are seeing our desire for the salvation of that nation fulfilled.

After careful discussion with our brethren and the sacred council, we decided, with the approval of the same council, to propose and assign to the said archbishop, who will accept it in the name of the above persons, the faith and doctrine which the holy Roman mother church holds.

This, then, is the faith which the holy Roman mother church has always held, preached and taught and which she now holds, preaches, professes and teaches. This is the faith, as regards those three articles, which we decree that the said archbishop Abdala, on behalf and in the name of the said patriarch of the Syrians and of all that nation and of himself, shall accept and shall keep for ever. First, that the holy Spirit is eternally from the Father and the Son, and has his essence and his subsistent being from the Father together with the Son, and proceeds from both eternally as from one principle and a single spiration.

Also it holds, professes and teaches that one and the same Son of God and of man, our lord Jesus Christ, is perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity; true God and true man, of a rational soul and a body; consubstantial with the Father as regards his divinity, consubstantial with us as regards his humanity; like us in all respects except for sin; begotten before the ages from the Father, and in the last days the same born according to his humanity for us and our salvation from Mary the virgin mother of God; one and the same Christ true only-begotten Son of God, acknowledged in two natures which undergo no confusion, no change, no division, no separation; at no point was the difference between the natures taken away through the union, but rather the property of both natures is preserved and comes together into a single person and a single subsistent being; he is not parted or divided into two persons, but is one and the same Son of God and of man, our lord Jesus Christ.

Also it believes, professes and teaches in the one lord Jesus Christ two natural principles of action which undergo no division, no change, no separation, no confusion, in accordance with the teaching of the holy fathers; and two natural wills one divine, the other human, not in opposition, but his human will subject to his divine and all powerful will. For in the same way that his most holy animate flesh was made divine, not destroyed, but remained in its own limit and category, so his human will was made divine, not destroyed, but rather was preserved and perfected.

We decree that the said archbishop Abdala ought, in the name of the above persons, to accept this faith, to hold it in his heart and to profess it with his mouth. Further we ordain and decree that he ought to receive and embrace, in the name of the above persons, whatever has been defined and established at various times by the holy Roman church, especially the decrees on the Greeks, the Armenians and the Jacobites, which were issued in the sacred ecumenical council of Florence and which, since Archbishop Abdala has carefully read them translated into Arabic and praised them, we have given to him, in the name of the above persons, for a wider and more complete instruction on everything; that whatever doctors and holy fathers the holy Roman church approves and accepts, he should, in the name of the above persons, approve and accept; and that whatever persons and other things she condemns and rejects, he should, in the name of the above persons, hold as condemned and rejected; promising on oath as a true son of obedience, in the name of the above persons, always devoutly and faithfully to obey the regulations and orders of the said apostolic see. If anyone however . . . Let nobody therefore . . .

Session 14—7 August 1445

[Bull of union with the Chaldeans and the Maronites of Cyprus]

Eugenius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. Blessed be the God and Father of our lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all consolation, who daily promotes with many great favours, and accompanies with happy results far beyond our deserts, our aims and pious desires, whereby in fulfilment of our pastoral duties we long for and foster with many works, in so far as this allowed us from on high, the salvation of the Christian people.

Indeed, after the union of the eastern church with the western church in the ecumenical council of Florence, and after the return of the Armenians, the Jacobites and the people of Mesopotamia, we despatched our venerable brother Andrew, archbishop of Kalocsa, to eastern lands and the island of Cyprus. He was to confirm in the faith which had been accepted the Greeks, Armenians and Jacobites living there, by his sermons and his expositions and explanations of the decrees issued for their union and return. He was also to try to bring back to the truth of the faith, using our warnings and exhortations, whoever else he might find there to be strangers to the truth of faith in other sects, whether they are followers of Nestorius or of Macarius.

He pursued this task with vigour, thanks to the wisdom and other virtues with which the Lord, the giver of graces, has enriched him. He finally eliminated from their hearts, after many discussions, first all the impurity of Nestorius, who asserted that Christ is only a man and that the blessed Virgin is the mother of Christ but not of God, then that of the most impious Macarius of Antioch who, although he confessed that Christ is true God and man, asserted that there is in him only the divine will and principle of action, thereby diminishing his humanity.

With divine assistance he converted to the truth of the orthodox faith our venerable brothers Timothy, metropolitan of the Chaldeans, who have been called Nestorians in Cyprus until now because they used to follow Nestorius, and Elias, bishop of the Maronites, who with his nation in the same realm was infected with the teachings of Macarius, together with a whole multitude of peoples and clerics subject to him in the island of Cyprus. To these prelates and all their subjects there, he delivered the faith and doctrine that the holy church has always cherished and observed. The said prelates, moreover, accepted this faith and doctrine with much veneration in a great public assembly of different peoples living in that realm, which was held in the metropolitan church of St Sophia.

After that, the Chaldeans sent to us the aforesaid metropolitan Timothy, and Bishop Elias of the Maronites sent an envoy, to make to us a solemn profession of the faith of the Roman church, which by the providence of the Lord and the aid of blessed Peter and the apostle has always remained immaculate . Timothy, the metropolitan, reverently and devoutly professed this faith and doctrine to us, in this sacred general congregation of the ecumenical Lateran council, first in his own Chaldean tongue, which was interpreted in Greek and then translated from Greek into Latin, as follows: I, Timothy, archbishop of Tarsus and metropolitan of the Chaldeans who are in Cyprus, on behalf of myself and all my peoples in Cyprus, profess, vow and promise to almighty God, Father and Son and holy Spirit, and then to you, most holy and blessed father pope Eugenius IV, to this holy apostolic see and to this holy and venerable congregation, that henceforth I will always remain under the obedience of you and your successors and of the holy Roman church as under the unique mother and head of all other churches. Also, in future I will always hold and profess that the holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, as the holy Roman church teaches and holds. Also, in future I will always hold and approve two natures, two wills, one hypostasis and two principles of action in Christ.

Also, in future I will always confess and approve all seven sacraments of the Roman church, just as she holds, teaches and preaches.

Also, in future I will never add oil in the sacred eucharist.

Also, in future I will always hold, confess, preach and teach whatever the holy Roman church holds, confesses, teaches and preaches and I reject, anathematize and condemn whatever she rejects, anathematizes and condemns; in future I will always reject, anathematize and condemn especially the impieties and blasphemies of the most wicked heresiarch Nestorius and every other heresy raising its head against this holy catholic and apostolic church.

This is the faith, holy father, that I vow and promise to hold and observe and to see that it is held and observed by all my subjects. I engage myself and solemnly promise to deprive of all his goods and benefices, to excommunicate and to denounce as heretical and condemned, whoever rejects it and raises himself up against it and, if he is obstinate, to degrade him and to hand him over to the secular arm.

Then our beloved son in Christ Isaac, envoy of our venerable brother Elias, bishop of the Maronites, on his behalf and in his name, rejecting the heresy of Macarius about one will in Christ, made with great veneration a profession that was similar in all details.

For the devotion of these professions and for the salvation of so many souls we offer immense thanks to God and our lord Jesus Christ, who is in our times so greatly enlarging the faith and bestowing benefits on so many Christian peoples. We receive and approve these professions; we receive into the bosom of holy mother church the metropolitan and the bishop in Cyprus and their subjects; and while they remain in the aforesaid faith, obedience and devotion, we honour them with the following favours and privileges.

First, nobody shall in future dare to call the said metropolitan of the Chaldeans and the said bishop of the Maronites, or their clerics and peoples or any individual among them, heretics, or to call Chaldeans, Nestorians. If anyone despises this ordinance, we order him to be excommunicated until such time as he offers a worthy satisfaction or has been punished, in the judgment of the ordinary, by some other temporal penalty.

Also, the said metropolitan and bishop and their successors are forthwith to be preferred in each and every honour to bishops who are separated from the communion of the holy Roman church.

Also, in future they can lay censures on their subjects, and those whom they rightly excommunicate in future shall be held by all as excommunicated, and those whom they absolve shall be held by all as absolved.

Also, the said prelates and priests and their clerics can freely celebrate divine services in the churches of Catholics, and Catholics can freely celebrate them in their churches.

Also, in future the said prelates and clerics and their lay men and women, who have accepted this union and faith, can choose to be buried in the churches of Catholics, to contract marriages with Catholics, but in the rite of Latin Catholics, and to enjoy and utilize all benefits, immunities and liberties which other Catholics, both lay and clerical, possess and enjoy in the said realm. Let nobody therefore . . . If anyone however . . .

COUNCIL OF BASEL (1431-1445)

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Session 1—14 December 1431

The holy synod of Basel, representing the universal church, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit under the presidency of the most reverend father in Christ lord Julian, cardinal deacon of St Angelo of the holy Roman church, legate of the apostolic see, for the glory of almighty God, the exaltation of the catholic faith and the progress of the Christian religion, laying its foundation on the cornerstone Christ Jesus, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, calls to mind that the holy general synod of Constance, celebrated in the holy Spirit, esteeming it salutary and beneficial that general councils should be frequent in the holy church of God, established this by its decree as follows: The frequent holding of general councils . . . 2 Hence for the execution of that decree, the city of Pavia in Italy was chosen for the general council to be held at the end of the five years immediately following. At the decreed time that council was indeed inaugurated in the said city of Pavia and thence it was translated for certain reasons to the city of Siena. In that general council which was begun in Pavia and was held in the city of Siena, this city of Basel was chosen and duly assigned for the next future general council to be held after the seven-year period from the end of the council of Siena, as is stated in the public instrument then composed about this succession.

[Establishment of the holy council of Basel]

The most reverend lord legate in his desire to fulfil the apostolic commission since at the time when the beginning of the council was imminent he was immersed in the expedition against the pestilential heresy of the Hussites for the sake of the faith, had his vicegerents despatched to this city and thereafter with all possible speed came himself to this city, in order that, with the help of God's grace, he might fulfil in this general council the office of legate laid upon him, as our most holy lord Eugenius IV, pope by divine providence, had by a series of letters of his holiness enjoined on him. In this city, during more than three months, he held several congregations with prelates and others who had arrived in the city for the said general council, and he had discussions about the establishment and holding of the council. Finally it was decreed that the present solemn session should be held, in which, firstly, since from the above it is manifest that this city is the place deputed for the general council and the date for it to be held is already past, and the authority of the most holy apostolic see is not lacking, it decrees, defines and declares that in this city and place the general council is canonically fixed and founded, and that all, both prelates and others who by right or custom are obliged to attend general councils, are bound to come to its celebration.

[Purpose of the council of Basel]

Seeing that all things direct their actions more immediately and intensely the more knowledge they have of their destined purpose, so this holy synod, after intense meditation and thought on the needs of the Christian religion and after mature and ordered deliberation, decrees that, with the help of God from whom all good things comet, it will pursue with all its zeal and attention these three ends. First that, with the banishment of the darkness of all heresies from the bounds of the Christian people, the light of catholic truth, by the generosity of Christ the true light, may be resplendent. Secondly that, after due thought and with the help of the author of peace, the Christian people, freed from the madness of wars by which — with the sower of weeds doing his work — it is affected and divided in various parts of the world, may be brought back to a peaceful and tranquil state. Thirdly, as the vine of Christ has already almost run wild on account of the multitude of thistles and thorns of vices crowding in upon it, to cut them back through the endeavour of necessary cultivation, with the work from on high of the evangelical husbandman, so that it may flourish again and produce with happy abundance the fruits of virtue and esteem. Since such great benefits as these cannot be hoped for without a generous flow of heavenly grace, it earnestly exhorts in the Lord all Christ's faithful that for the happy achievement of the aforesaid they should urge the divine majesty with devout prayers, fasts and almsgiving that the good and merciful God, placated by such humble submission, may deign with his accustomed goodness to grant to this sacred council the desired completion of all these things, imposing this on them unto the remission of their sins.

Session 2—15 February 1432

The holy general synod of Basel, representing the church militant, for an everlasting record. To the praise of almighty God and the glory and honour of the blessed and undivided Trinity, for the extirpation of heresies and errors, for the reformation of morals in head and members of the church of God, and for the pacification of kings and kingdoms and other Christians in discord among themselves through the instigation of the author of discords, the synod, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, decrees, establishes, defines, declares and ordains as follows.

[Decree that the council of Basel is legitimately begun]

First, that the same sacred synod of Basel, by the decrees and ordinances of the sacred general councils of Constance and of Siena, and by the action of apostolic authority, was and is duly and legitimately begun and assembled in this place of Basel. And lest anyone should doubt about the power of the same sacred synod of Basel, this same synod in this present session ordains and decrees that two declarations from the decrees of the synod of Constance are to be inserted among its other decrees already issued or to be issued. The text of the first of these declarations is as follows, First it declares . . . 1; that of the other is this, Next it declares . . . I Therefore, presupposing also some other decrees of the council of Constance, especially the one beginning The frequent, which were read out in a former session of this sacred synod of Basel, the said synod of Basel decrees and declares that, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, for the extirpation of heresies and a general reformation of morals in the church in head and members, and also for procuring peace among Christians, as is stated above, no one of whatever authority, even if he is distinguished by the dignity of the papacy, could or should have in the past, or can or ought to now or in the future, dissolve or transfer the said synod of Basel to another locality or prorogue it to another date without the deliberation and consent of the same synod of Basel.

Session 3—29 April 1432

[Impossibility of the dissolution of the council is decreed]

This holy council, considering that the aforesaid dissolution of the council was enacted contrary to the decrees of the council of Constance, and that it leads to a serious danger of subversion of the faith as well as disturbance and harm for the state of the church and scandal for the whole Christian people, decreed that the dissolution could not be made. Since, therefore, the dissolution is no obstacle at all, the prosecution of what has been praiseworthily set in motion for the stability of the faith and the salvation of the Christian people should, with the grace of the holy Spirit, be proceeded with. But since the aforesaid bishop of Lausanne and the dean of Utrecht, on their return, did not bring back from the most holy lord pope the desired reply, although the said most holy lord pope had been entreated, appealed to, required, requested and with every insistence very often implored not only by the aforesaid messengers in the name of the council but also by the most serene lord Sigismund, king of the Romans and loyal supporter of the church, so this holy synod, relying on the decrees of the sacred council of Constance, whose words are these, That the holy synod . . . ' decreed in this solemn session to make its demands to the most holy lord pope and also to the most reverend lord cardinals in the way and style as follows.

This holy synod, therefore, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, beseeches the aforesaid most blessed lord pope Eugenius with all reverence and insistence and through the tender mercy of Jesus Christ entreats, requires implores and warns him to revoke in fact the alleged dissolution as in fact it was issued, and in the same way as he made the dissolution to send and publish over the different parts of the world the revocation, and completely to desist from every obstacle against the said council: indeed more, to favour and assist the council, as is his duty, and to offer it every support and opportune help, and to come in person within three months — an interval which it assigns and determines as a peremptory limit — if his physical state so allows. But if it does not, in his place and stead he should nominate some person or persons and send them with plenary power for each and every question in this council up to its very end through each and all of its acts gradually and successively. Otherwise, if his holiness should fail to do this, which is a thing that in no way is to be expected of the vicar of Christ, the holy synod will see to it that provision is made for the necessities of the church as shall seem just and as the holy Spirit shall dictate, and will proceed in accordance with what befits both divine and human law.

In the same way it beseeches, requires, implores and warns the aforesaid most reverend lord cardinals, who as the chief hinges of the church of God should apply their minds with great fervour to these things, that they should bring earnest pressure to bear on the lord pope about the aforesaid things, and should favour, aid and help this sacred council in every opportune way. And since their presence, in view of their authority, great prudence and practical experience, is highly expedient for this sacred council, it requires and warns and cites the lord cardinals and each of them in particular that, canonical impediment ceasing, they shall come to the said council within three months from the notification by this present decree, which interval it precisely and peremptorily assigns and determines for the triple canonical monition. Otherwise, since failure to come to the sacred general council so as to aid the church in its great necessities will without doubt be judged as contributing to the danger of a serious challenge to the catholic faith and to the harm of the whole church, this holy council at the expiry of the stated interval will take proceedings against those who have failed to come, since their contumacy demands this, according as the order of divine as well as human law shall dictate and allow, and will take steps, with the help of the most High, to provide for the necessities of the church. In the aforesaid however, the said synod has no intention of including the most reverend lord cardinal of holy Cross as long as he is engaged in negotiations for peace between the kingdoms of France and England; but in respect of the most reverend lord cardinals of Plasencia and of Foix, as they are commonly called, and the cardinal of St Eustathius, since they are in nearer localities, it limits the above-mentioned interval to two months.

Further the holy synod orders all lord patriarchs, archbishops, bishops and other prelates of churches, and clerics, notaries and ecclesiastical personages, as also other faithful of Christ, of every status, dignity, grade and condition, and it requires and requests all princes and lords, even if they possess imperial, regal, ducal or any other authority, who shall have been requested regarding the above, that in virtue of holy obedience, under threat of the divine judgment and under pain of excommunication, they should report, intimate and notify all and each of the aforesaid things to the said most holy lord pope and to the most reverend lord cardinals, and should have them reported, intimated and notified to these people in person, if they have safe and convenient access to them. Where personal access is not possible, this is to be done by affixing notices drawn up by a public notary, if this can be done safely, to their residences and also on the door of the apostolic palace and on the churches of St John Lateran, St Peter's and St Mary Maggiore; or failing that, on the chief churches of the cities of Sutri Viterbo and Siena, or three other neighbouring cities, as it shall seem better. This holy synod decrees that these places are suitable for the execution of all the aforementioned.

Yet this holy synod, desiring to meeting future eventualities and to avoid all waste of time, since delay in these matters is fraught with danger, ordains and decrees that a decree of admonition and citation of this kind, after it has been read out in this solemn session and published, shall be affixed to the doors of the cathedral church of Basel so that, should it happen that its intimation cannot be effected in any of the ways outlined above, in that case, as by a public edict, for four months to be calculated from this day, the publication, monition and citation shall be considered as performed in respect of all its effects, so that all its effects are obtained and it binds those to whom it is directed as if it had been insinuated and presented in person, the above peremptory force and threats being considered here as inserted.

Further, this holy council declares and insists that, despite the aforesaid delays, since a legal summons has already been issued by the decrees of the council of Constance, and since the urgency of the situation suggests the following, as does also the nature of what is to be accomplished in the continuation of the council and of the things to be done in it, it means to proceed in an orderly, due and mature manner, and for that reason not to be remiss in any way in the process. Lastly, this holy synod decrees citations for all prelates and others who are obliged to come to a general council, and each and all generals of orders and also inquisitors of heresy, with the delay of a fixed term or terms as it shall seem good to the deputies, with penalties and censures and suitable conditions.

Session 4—20 June 1432

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church. By this decree we indicate to all that to each and every priest, baron, noble, soldier and citizen and every other man of whatever status, condition or rank from the kingdom of Bohemia and the marquisate of Moravia, from Prague and the cities and other places of the same, and to all other ecclesiastical and secular persons who, male or female, will be sent with them to the general council of Basel and are about to set out, to all these persons under whatever name they are listed or can be called, within however the number of two hundred persons, by the force of this present decree we grant and give our fullest and perfect safe-conduct and we bestow a most genuine security for their coming to this city of Basel and their abiding, staying and resting here, and for their treating with us on affairs suitably committed to them and their arranging, concluding and ending them. We allow them to perform the divine offices in their lodgings without any obstacle on our part; so that also, on account of their presence, neither on their journey nor in any other place of their journey, in coming, remaining or returning, nor in the city itself of Basel, will cessation from divine offices be imposed in any way in the form of an interdict.

Further, they will be allowed freely to propose and explain in the general council or synod of Basel, by word of mouth or in writing, the four articles on whose clarity they insist; to prove, support and recommend them with quotations from the sacred scriptures and the blessed doctors and, if need be, to reply to the objections of the general synod or to argue about them with one or several from the council or to discuss them in a charitable way without any impediment; with reproach, abuse and taunt being totally excluded, observing the form and the ways specified and mutually agreed between our envoys and the messengers of the aforesaid kingdom and marquisate in the city of Eger; and specifically that in the case of the four articles proposed by them, the divine law, the apostolic practice of Christ and of the primitive church, and the councils and doctors truly founding themselves on the same, will be accepted in the council of Basel as the most true and impartial judge. Whether these discussions are or are not brought to a conclusion, whenever by the order or permission of their superiors they, or any one of them, shall choose to return home, then straightaway, without any refusal, condition or delay, they may return freely and safely at their pleasure, with their goods, honour and persons intact, but with the knowledge of the deputies of the council so that suitable provision may be made, without guile or fraud, for their safety.

Moreover, in this safe-conduct of theirs we wish all clauses to be included and contained, and to be held as included, which are necessary and opportune for full, efficacious and sufficient safety in coming, staying and returning; we express these things clearly in order to secure and keep the good of peace. If any one or several of them, whether coming on their journey to us in Basel or while staying here or on their return, shall commit (may it not be so) some heinous crime by which the benefit of security conceded to them could be annulled and quashed, we wish, admit and concede that those arrested in a deed of such sort shall straightaway be punished only by their own people, not by others, by an adequate censure and a sufficient penalty to be approved and praised by us, with the form, conditions and ways of their security remaining completely unimpaired. Similarly if any of ours, whether on their way to us in Basel or while staying here or returning, shall commit (may it not be so) some heinous crime through which the benefit of the security conceded to them could be annulled or quashed, we wish that those arrested in a crime of this sort shall straightaway be punished only by us and our people, not by others, by an adequate censure and a sufficient penalty to be approved and praised by the lord ambassadors and envoys, with the present form, conditions and ways of the security remaining completely unimpaired.

We wish also that it be allowed to each and every ambassador as often as it is opportune or necessary, to leave the city of Basel in order to take the air and to return to it, and freely to send and despatch their messengers to any place for the arrangement of necessary affairs and to receive a messenger or messengers as often as it suits them, in such a way that they are accompanied by the deputies of the council who will provide for their safety. Further, neither in discussions, public sermons or other conferences can we or may our side, in prejudice, derogation or depreciation of the case of the four articles, employ or procure in the locality of the city of Basel any terms that tend to disorder. These safe-conducts and assurances are to remain in force from the moment when, and for as long as, they are received into the care of our protection, to be brought to Basel, and in all the period of their staying here: and again on the conclusion of a sufficient hearing, an interval of twenty days having been set in advance, when they shall request it, or after the hearing the council shall decide, we shall, with God's help and without any guile or fraud, let them return from Basel to Tuschkau, Tachov or Engelsberg, to whichever of these places they prefer to go.

Also for all of Christ's faithful, especially for the most holy lord the Roman pontiff, the most serene prince the lord Sigismund, king of the Romans etc. , the venerable lord cardinals, archbishops and bishops and lord abbots, prelates and clerics as well as for the most illustrious princes, kings, dukes, marquises, counts, barons and noble soldiers, universities, and communities of cities, castles and towns, and their councillors, magistrates, officials and others of whatever condition and status, whether ecclesiastical or secular, under whatever name they go, and for the subjects of all the aforesaid and every part of them, we promise in good faith and guarantee that all of us and every one of the aforesaid persons will observe and guard the prescribed security and the form of their safe-conduct in all its conditions, points and clauses elaborated above, inviolably and unbroken in good faith and with pure heart. Further, we promise that we neither wish nor ought on any alleged occasion, covertly or overtly, to employ any authority, power, law, statute or privilege of laws or canons or of any councils whatever, especially of Constance and Siena, in whatever form of words they may be expressed, to any prejudice of the safe-conduct or assurance and the public hearing which we have granted to them. But if we or anyone of us, of whatever condition or status or pre-eminence, shall violate in any detail or clause the form and way of the above assurance and safe-conduct (which, however, may the Almighty deign to avert), and a suitable penalty shall not have followed straightaway, to be fittingly approved and praised by their judgment, let them hold us, as indeed they can, to have incurred all penalties which by divine and human law or by custom violators of such safe-conducts incur, without any excuse or any challenge from this side .

[If the apostolic see becomes vacant while the council is in progress, the election may not be held outside the council]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, bears in mind that it pertains to the duty of providence to foresee the future with clear-sighted consideration and to take wholesome steps against what could bring harm to the common good. The synod is intent upon the extirpation of heresies, peace among the people of Christ and the reformation of morals, with the grace of the holy Spirit, as is really necessary in view of the present situation. It has summoned the venerable fathers in Christ, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, to this sacred council, convinced that their presence at it is fruitful in many ways in view of their authority, wisdom and knowledge of affairs. If, then, as obedient sons they are coming to the council when the apostolic see falls vacant elsewhere, such a situation would redound to the benefit of the church but the obedient cardinals would be serving the council to their own disadvantage, whereas everyone knows that obedience should bring with it not disadvantage but an increase of benefit and honour. Lest disobedience may seem to be to the advantage of some who fail to come, this holy synod, with purposeful anticipation and for the above and other reasons which can and should motivate a prudent mind establishes, decrees and defines that, in the event of a vacancy of the apostolic see while this sacred council is in progress, the election of the supreme pontiff shall be held in the place of this sacred council, and it forbids it to be held elsewhere. The synod also decrees that any attempt against this by any authority whatsoever, be it even papal, notwithstanding any constitutions issued or to be issued or anything else acting to the contrary, even if there should be special mention in so many words or a confirmation on oath, which the synod rejects with full knowledge, is null and void and of no force or importance by law; and that those who attempt such things shall be disqualified in both active and passive voice with respect to the election of a Roman pontiff and for every other dignity, and deprived perpetually of all dignities which they hold, and shall automatically incur the mark of infamy as well as sentence of excommunication. If any such pretended election should be attempted, then both the one allegedly elected and his supporters as well as those who treat him as elected incur in the same way the above-mentioned penalties. The said synod reserves to itself, except at the moment of death, absolution of everyone who in any way shall incur the said sentences or any one of them. It declares that the present decree shall bind and come into force after forty days following its publication.

Session 5—9 August 1432

[In this session there were approved rules about the organization of the council: On cases and the procurator of the faith; Judges are deputed for the general examination of cases; That members of the council may not be brought to trial outside the place of this council; Officials are appointed.]

Session 6—6 September 1432

[This session was devoted to reading: Petition of the promoters of the council against the pope and the cardinals.]

Session 7—6 November 1432

[Interval for a papal election]

The most holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Earlier this holy synod issued a decree about the election of a Roman pontiff if a vacancy of the apostolic see occurs during this sacred council. It is entitled, It pertains to the duty of providence . . . , and is to be found in full in the fourth session. However, a doubt about that decree has occurred to some, namely that the interval of ten days which the constitution of the council of Lyons fixed for the cardinals of the holy Roman church to enter the conclave, might elapse and be too restricted at least by the time that notification of the vacancy reaches this council. For, the interval would seems to be too rigid and too short for many of the cardinals who may be away in localities distant from this council. Moreover this holy synod wishes to eliminate all grounds for doubt and to provide carefully for what is conducive to the peace and unity of God's holy church, and with all modesty and due maturity to proceed with what is known in this matter, as in all things to promote the exaltation of the catholic faith and the general reformation and peace of the Christian people, for which the council is legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit. It therefore decrees that in the case of a vacancy of the apostolic see in the lifetime of this present council, nothing shall be done for the election of a Roman pontiff before the expiry of sixty days from the day of the vacancy.

Session 8—18 December 1432

[Decree that there ought to be only one council]

The most holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Just as there is only one holy catholic church, as Christ her spouse says, My dove, my perfect one, is only one, and as an article of the faith declares, since unity does not tolerate division, so there can be only one general council representing the holy catholic church. Since, therefore, by decrees of the sacred general councils of Constance and of Siena and by the approval of two Roman pontiffs, namely Martin V and Eugenius IV of happy memory, a general council was instituted and established in this city of Basel and assembled legitimately in the holy Spirit, it is clear that during this council another general council cannot exist elsewhere. Whoever therefore, during the lifetime of this sacred council shall presume to raise and hold another assembly with the title of a general council, is convicted of raising and holding a conventicle of schismatics and not a council of the catholic church. Therefore this holy council warns and exhorts all Christ's faithful, of whatever status or rank they may be, even if papal, imperial or regal, under the adjuration of the divine judgment which holy scripture relates in the case of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, authors of schism, and it strictly commands and forbids them in virtue of holy obedience and under the penalties laid down by the law, not to hold or summon, during this sacred council, another assembly with the title of a general council, which in reality would not be a council, nor to go to or to take part in or in any way to have recourse to it as if it were a general council, even under the pretext of any promise or oath, nor to hold or esteem it to be or even to call it a general council, even if it claims to have been summoned or shall try in the future to be summoned. If any ecclesiastical person, even a cardinal of the holy Roman church, or anyone else of whatever status, rank or condition he may be, shall dare to go to or stay in Bologna or any place with a pretended general council, during this present council, he shall automatically incur sentence of excommunication and deprivation of all benefices, dignities and offices and disqualification from them; and the dignities, offices and benefices of such persons may be freely disposed of by those to whom this pertains by law.

Session 9—22 January 1433

[This session was entirely taken up with the solemn reception of the emperor Sigismund.]

Session 10—19 February 1433

[This session was almost entirely taken up with reading: Accusation of contumacy of the pope.]

Session 11—27 April 1433

[For the permanent validity of the authority of general councils]

The holy general council of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Since the frequent holding of general councils, as a principal means of cultivating the Lord's field affects the universal church, every effort should be made that all obstacles that could impede so holy an institution are removed with great care. Hence this holy synod, obeying the decree of the council of Constance beginning The frequent, and anxious that no scandals such as unhappily have occurred in our day should spring up again in the future, to the detriment of the church, establishes and decrees that the Roman pontiff, who ought to be the first in working in the Lord's vineyard and in drawing others to work by his example, should take part in general councils in person or by a legate or legates a latere who is or are to be chosen in consultation with and with the consent — which is not to be just by word of mouth — of two-thirds of the cardinals. Also, all ecclesiastical persons who by law or custom ought to attend general councils are bound henceforward to come in person without further summons to general councils, both by force of the constitution The frequent and by the authority of this sacred council of Basel or of some other future council legitimately assembled, unless they are prevented by a legitimate impediment, in which case they are bound to send suitable persons with a sufficient mandate. If the Roman pontiff or other above-mentioned persons fail to do this, or in any way take means to impede change, prorogue or dissolve the council, and shall not have repented with real satisfaction within four months, thereafter the pope will be automatically suspended from the papal administration and the other persons from the administration of their dignities; the papal administration will devolve by law upon the sacred council. If they persist with hardened hearts under the aforesaid penalties for a further two months after the said four months, then the general council shall proceed against both the Roman pontiff and the above-mentioned persons up to and including the penalty of deprivation.

[That everybody is free to come to the council]

This holy synod decrees that, notwithstanding any prohibition, even from the Roman pontiff, there is freedom for absolutely all persons, of whatsoever status or condition they may be, even if they are cardinals of the Roman church, to go to general councils; and that the Roman pontiff is bound to grant permission to those who wish to go to general councils, especially to the aforesaid cardinals, if they request it.

[The council explains the phrase about prorogation of the council, and annuls attempts to the contrary, including future attempts]

This holy synod also declares that those words "it may never be prorogued", contained in the said decree, are to be understood so prohibitively that it cannot be prorogued even by a pope, and that a council actually assembled cannot be dissolved or moved from place to place by a Roman pontiff without the express consent of the council itself, and it quashes, voids and annuls anything that may be attempted in the future against this or even in disparagement or obstruction of this general council or of the persons, prelates and supporters of it, by deprivation, translation and ecclesiastical censures or in any other way.

[That the council may not be dissolved or moved without the express consent of two-thirds of each deputation, etc.]

For certain reasonable causes it decrees that the present council of Basel cannot be dissolved or moved from place to place by anybody, even by the pope, unless there is obtained the express consent of two-thirds of each deputation, after a scrutiny of the votes of individual members, and then the approval of two-thirds of the general congregation, after a similar scrutiny of the votes of individual members, and finally a declaration is to be made in a public session. It prays through the tender mercy of Jesus Christ, and by the sprinkling of his precious blood it adjures all members of this sacred council, both present and future, that in no way they give their consent to a dissolution or allow a change of place, except for just and manifest reasons, before the reform in head and members has been completed, in so far as this can reasonably be achieved.

[That the place of the council should be chosen a month before the dissolution, and the phrase "in ten years" is clarified]

In accordance with the ordinance of the council of Constance, it wishes that the place of the future council should be chosen at least a month before the date of the dissolution. It also declares, as a precaution, that the phrase "in ten years" which is used in the said constitution should be understood in this way, namely that the ten years should be completely finished, and when it is fully completed the authorization to hold a general council begins. If it happens for any reason that those who are obliged to attend general councils do not come at the beginning, it declares that the said authorization to hold the council does not thereby cease, but that it should be held as soon as it conveniently can. But so that it cannot be deferred for a long time, this council decrees that for twenty days before the end of the said ten years, or of some other interval if perhaps this should reasonably be determined by the council, the Roman pontiff in person or through his legate or legates, and the archbishop in whose province or diocese the council is to be held and all the prelates who are within four days' journey of the place of the forthcoming council, provided there is no canonical impediment, in person or, if that cannot be, through suitable men constituted as proxies for this purpose, are obliged to present themselves so as to negotiate about the disposition of the place and other preliminaries of the council. On the day appointed for the opening of the council, those present shall celebrate a solemn mass of the holy Spirit, and the council shall be considered constituted and begun from that day. However, on account of the many necessities that can occur for those coming to a council, this holy synod exhorts those who shall be present not to bring difficult questions to a conclusion until after a reasonable wait for those absent and a fitting interval of time, rather, with divine fear as a guide, let everything proceed with due gravity, as the great mass of business of the universal church demands and requires. In those cases in which, according to the decree of Constance, the pope may, with the consent of the cardinals of the holy Roman church, change the place of a future council, it determines that, should the pope fail to do this, the college of cardinals may supply for the defect, on condition however that two-thirds of the cardinals agree, keeping, , nevertheless to the procedure contained in the said decree The frequent. The said cardinals shall swear by God and their consciences that they are making the change of place, if indeed they decide this, for the clear reasons that are mentioned in the decree The frequent.

[That the electors of a pope before entering the conclave shall swear that, if one of them is elected, he will observe the said decrees]

So that the aforesaid may be put into execution the more easily, the holy synod determines that the electors of a Roman pontiff are bound, before entering the conclave, to swear to God and to promise the church that, should one of them be chosen as pope, he will observe the above decrees, statutes and ordinances, and to the best of his ability will endeavour to fulfil them really and effectively adding that whoever in future years shall be chosen as Roman pontiff must swear, among the other things which he must profess according to the decree of the council of Constance beginning Since the Roman pontiff, effective observance of the present decree. Later, in his first public consistory, he is bound to make again the same profession and let him also profess that, if he violates what is contained in this decree or commits a notorious crime which scandalizes the church, he will subject himself to the judgment of a general council. Both he and the college of cardinals shall insert this profession in the letters which they customarily send throughout the world on the accession of a new pope.

[That this decree should be published in synods]

So that nobody may plead ignorance of this wholesome and necessary decree, the holy synod orders, in virtue of holy obedience, all metropolitan bishops to have this decree read and published in provincial and synodal councils, and superiors of religious to have it read and published in their general chapters. 2

Session 12—13 July 1433

[Decree on elections and confirmations of bishops and prelates]

Just as in building a house the architect's chief concern is to lay such a foundation that the edifice built on it will endure immovable, so in the general reformation of the church the principal preoccupation of this holy synod is that the pastors set over the church may be such that, like pillars and bases, they will firmly uphold the church by the strength of their doctrine and merits. The office enjoined on prelates manifestly shows how great care should be taken in their election, for they are appointed for the government of souls for which our lord Jesus Christ died and shed his precious blood. Therefore the sacred canons promulgated under the Spirit of God, providentially established that each church and college or convent should elect a prelate for itself. Adhering to these prescriptions this holy synod, assembled in the same Spirit, establishes and defines that a general reservation of all metropolitan, cathedral, collegiate and monastic churches and elective dignities ought not to be made or used by the Roman pontiff in the future, always with the exception of reservations contained in the body of law and those which may arise in territories mediately or immediately subject to the Roman church by reason of direct or beneficial dominion. Rather, provision should duly be made for the aforesaid metropolitan, cathedral, monastic and collegiate churches and elective dignities, when they are vacant, by canonical elections and confirmations in conformity with the dispositions of the common law, without thereby derogating from statutes, privileges and reasonably customs, all postulations in the disposition of the common law remaining intact. This holy synod also decrees that it will be in conformity with reason and beneficial for the common good that the Roman pontiff should attempt nothing contrary to this salutary decree, except for an important, reasonable and manifest cause, which is to be specified expressly in an apostolic letter. So that this salutary decree may be more strictly adhered to, the same holy synod wishes that, among other things that the Roman pontiff shall profess on assuming office, he shall swear to observe inviolably this decree.

Since prelates should be such as is described above, those with the right of electing them should be very careful that they make a worthy election in the presence of God and of the people, and let them be most solicitous to elect such persons as can fill so great an office. Let them remember that if they act in so important an affair either fraudulently or carelessly or without regard for the fear of God, they will be the authors and cause of evil pastors and will therefore share in the penalties which the evil pastors themselves will suffer in the severe judgment of God. Since the endeavour of human fragility can effect nothing without the help of almighty God, from whom every good endowment and every perfect gift comes down, those in whose hands lies the election of a pontiff or an abbot shall meet in church on the day of the election in order to hear with great devotion a mass of the holy Spirit, whom they will humbly petition to deign to inspire them to elect a worthy pastor. The more devoutly they approach the act of election, the more readily they will merit that grace, so let them confess and reverently receive the sacrament of the eucharist. When they have entered the place of the election of any prelate who is to be chosen through election, they shall swear in the hands of the president of the chapter, and the president in the hands of his immediate subordinate, in these words: I, N. , swear and promise to almighty God and to such and such a saint (according to the dedication of the church) to elect the person who I believe will be the more useful to the church in spiritual and temporal things, and not to give a vote to anyone who I think is procuring the election for himself by the promise or gift of some temporal thing, or by making a request in person or through another, or in any other way directly or indirectly. He who appoints a procurator to elect a certain person shall take the same oath and shall confess and communicate; so also shall a procurator with a general mandate for election in matters in which by common law he can be appointed a procurator in the business of such an election. The oath shall be taken also by those who may have made an agreement about the election of a future prelate, and they too are obliged to confess and to communicate. If they do not do so, for that occasion they shall be deprived by law of the power of electing. Thereupon let them elect to the said prelacy a man of lawful age, of serious character and adequate education, already in sacred orders and suitable in other respects in accordance with canonical regulations.

If the election is made in another way and of a different kind of person than the above or by the wickedness of simony, the election shall be invalid and null by law. Those electing simoniacally shall be automatically subject to perpetual deprivation of the right of electing, besides other penalties. Others shall be subject to canonical penalties. Those elected simoniacally and those who take part in such a simoniacal election, as well as the electors and those confirmed shall automatically incur the penalty of excommunication in horror of so great a crime. Moreover, those so elected and confirmed cannot be absolved from such guilt and excommunication unless they freely resign the churches and dignities which they had disgracefully obtained, and they are rendered perpetually disqualified from acquiring them again. In order to remove every root of ambition this holy synod implores through the tender mercy of Jesus Christ and most earnestly exhorts kings and princes, communities and others of whatever rank or dignity, ecclesiastical or secular, not to write letters to electors or to provide petitions for someone who will get such petitions or letters for himself or for another, and much less to resort to threats or pressure or anything else whereby the process of election would be rendered less free. Similarly, in virtue of holy obedience, it is enjoined on electors not to elect anyone on the strength of such letters, petitions, threats or pressure.

When the election has been completed and presented to the person who has the right of confirmation, if a co-elected person or an objector to the election shows himself, he should be summoned by name to discuss the matter of the disputed election. Usually a public announcement should be made in the church in which the election was held, in accordance with the constitution of Boniface VIII of happy memory. Whether or not a co-elected person or an objector appears, the confirmer should proceed in virtue of his office, as is done in the business of the inquisition, using diligence in the due examination and discussion of the form of the election, of the merits of the one elected and of all the circumstances. The confirmation or the annulment of the election should be done in a judicial manner. So that the whole process may be clean and without blemish or even a suspicion of it, the confirmer should altogether refrain, personally as well as through others, from presuming to demand anything at all or even to receive free offerings in return for the confirmation or under the pretext of homage, subvention, gratitude or any other excuse of supposed custom or privilege. For notaries and scribes in such cases, let a moderate fee be levied which is proportionate to the work of writing and not to the value of the prelacy. If the said confirmers shall confirm elections in contravention of the above regulations or in respect of unsuitable persons or involving simony, such confirmations are automatically null. This is to be the case for the occasion, for those who confirm persons other than as stated above: but for the stain of simony, if they have incurred it, they automatically incur sentence of excommunication, from which they cannot be absolved except by the Roman pontiff', except at the point of death.

This holy synod exhorts the supreme pontiff, since he should be the mirror and standard of all sanctity and purity, not to demand or accept anything at all for confirming elections referred to him. Otherwise, if he scandalizes the church by notorious and repeated contraventions, he will be delated to a future council. However, for the burdens which he must carry for the government of the universal church, and for the sustenance of the cardinals of the holy Roman church and of other necessary officials, this holy council will make due and suitable provision before its dissolution. If it does not make any provision in this way, then those churches and benefices which hitherto paid a certain tax on the entry into office of a new prelate, shall be obliged thenceforward to pay in parts half of this tax for the year after their peaceful possession; this provision shall continue until the sustenance of the said pope and cardinals is otherwise provided for. By these ordinances the same synod does not intend any prejudice to the holy Roman and universal church or to any other church.

Session 13—11 September 1433

[In this session there was read out, Accusation of contumacy of the pope made by the promoters of the sacred council; the time-limit already intimated to Eugenius IV for him to come to Basel and to abrogate his decree dissolving the council was deferred; finally a new Decree for the protection of members was approved.]

Session 14—7 November 1433

[In this session there was made, Another deferral, for ninety days, of the monition to the pope, to which were added two proposals, one regarding the revoking of the suspension of the council. the other regarding Eugenius IV's assent to the council.]

Session 15—26 November 1433

[On provincial and synodal councils]

The holy general council of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Already this holy synod has promulgated a most salutary decree on the stability and authority of general councils, the frequent holding of which is a principal means of cultivating the Lord's field. Indeed, since there is no doubt that episcopal synods and provincial councils form part of this same cultivation, inasmuch as the ancient canons decreed that they should be frequent, so this holy synod, desiring that ancient and praiseworthy customs should be observed in our age, establishes and commands that an episcopal synod should be held yearly in every diocese after the octave of Easter, or on another day according to diocesan custom, at least once a year where custom does not prescribe two, by the diocesan in person unless he is prevented by a canonical impediment, in which case by a vicar who is fitted for the task. This synod should last at least two or three days, or as the bishops deem to be necessary.

On the first day, when the diocesan and all those who are obliged to be present at the synod have assembled, during or after the celebration of mass, the diocesan or another in his name shall expound the word of God, exhorting all to strive after good behaviour and refrain from vice, and to strive after what pertains to ecclesiastical discipline and each one's duties, and especially that those who have the care of souls should instruct the people subject to them in doctrine and with salutary exhortations on Sundays and feast-days. Then there should be read out the provincial and synodal statutes and, among other things, a comprehensive treatise on how the sacraments should be administered and other useful points for the instruction of priests. Then the diocesan himself should diligently inquire into the life and morals of his subjects and check with suitable correction the evil of simony, usurious contracts, concubinage, fornication and all other faults and excesses. He should revoke alienations of ecclesiastical property forbidden by law, and he should correct and reform abuses of clerics and other subjects who have failed in respect of the divine office and the wearing of proper dress. Since many scandals often arise because Pope Boniface VIII's constitution Periculoso on the enclosure of nuns is not observed, the diocesan should insist that this enclosure be strictly observed in accordance with that constitution; also that all religious subject to the diocesan should inviolably observe the rules and constitutions of their orders, especially that all ownership is renounced by them. Also let nothing be demanded simoniacally at their reception into a religious order. A chief care of the bishop at the synod should be to make inquiry and to apply proper remedies lest any teaching that is heretical, erroneous, scandalous or offensive to pious ears, or fortune-telling, divinations incantations, superstitions or any diabolic inventions, infiltrate into his diocese. Let there be appointed synodal witnesses, who should be serious, prudent and honest men, filled with zeal for God's law, in a number proportionate to the area of the diocese, or others with their powers if none are appointed for this, who may be removed by the diocesan if they seem to him to be unsuitable and he may appoint others (as he thinks fit). They shall be obliged to take an oath in the hands of the diocesan himself or of his vicar, as is stated in the canon Episcopus in synodo; they shall travel round the diocese for a year and shall refer what they have seen to be in need of correction and reform to those whose duty it is to correct and reform. If these matters are not corrected and reformed, they shall refer them to a subsequent synod, when proper remedies should be applied. Besides what the diocesan hears from the synodal witnesses or others exercising their office, he should himself inquire assiduously about the faults of his subjects and so confront the guilty with the discipline of needed correction that it may serve as an example to others inclined to do evil.

Also, in every province within two years of the end of a general council, and thereafter at least once in every three years, a provincial council should be held in a safe place. It should be attended by both the archbishop and all his suffragans and others who are obliged to take part in such provincial councils, after a due summons has been issued to them. If a bishop is prevented by a canonical impediment, he should designate his procurator, not only to excuse and justify his absence, but also to participate in the council in his name and to report back what the council decides. Otherwise the bishop is automatically suspended from receiving half the fruits of his church for one year: these should be effectively diverted to the fabric of his church by someone deputed in the council itself. Others who fail to attend are to be punished at the decision of the council and other penalties of the law are to remain in force. Provincial councils are not to be held while a general council is sitting and for six months beforehand. At the beginning of a provincial council the metropolitan or someone in his name during the celebration of mass or afterwards, shall deliver an exhortation calling to mind the things that pertain to the ecclesiastical state and especially the episcopal office and warning all the participants that, as the prophet says, if any soul is lost by their fault his blood will be required by the Lord at their hands. In particular, there should be a strict warning that orders and benefices should be conferred, without any simony, on worthy and deserving persons whose lives are sufficiently well known. Above all, the greatest care and mature inquiry should be used when entrusting the care of souls. Ecclesiastical property on no account should be used for illegal purposes, but for the glory of God and the conservation of churches and, following the holy canons, with a primary concern for the poor and needy, mindful that at the tribunal of the eternal judge they will have to give an account of all of it to the very last farthing. In these councils there should be, according to the regulations of the law, a careful investigation into the correction of faults, the reform of the morals of subjects and especially the conduct of bishops in conferring benefices, confirming elections, administering orders, deputing confessors, preaching to the people, punishing the faults of their subjects and observing episcopal synods, and in any other points respecting the episcopal office and the jurisdiction and administration of bishops in spiritual and temporal matters, especially whether they keep their hands clean of the stain of simony, in order that all those who are found to have transgressed in the aforesaid matters may be corrected and punished by the council. A similar careful inquiry should be instituted about the metropolitan himself in all these respects, and the council should explain clearly to him his faults and defects, admonishing and imploring him that since he is called and ought to be the father of others, he should altogether desist from such failings. Even so, the council should send straightaway to the Roman pontiff, or to another of his superiors if he has one, a written account of the investigation made about him, so that he may receive punishment and fitting reform from the Roman pontiff or other superior. Besides, if there are discords, quarrels and feuds among some which could disturb the peace and tranquillity of the province, the holy council should strive to pacify them and seek watchfully, as would a dutiful father, for peace and agreement among its sons. If discords of this sort arise between kingdoms, provinces and principalities, the holy bishops of God should straightaway arrange the simultaneous convocation of provincial councils and, in combining their respective counsel and help, strive to banish whatever promotes discord; they should not cease from this out of love or hatred for anyone, but raising the eyes of their minds to God alone and the salvation of their people and putting aside all half-heartedness, they should be intent on the sacred work of peace.

Moreover, in a provincial synod that immediately precedes a forthcoming general council, thought should be given to all that is likely to be dealt with in that general council, to the glory of God and the good of the province and the salvation of the Christian people. Let a suitable number of people be elected at it to go in the name of the whole province to the next general council; let them be provided for by a grant or in some other way, according to the law and the judgment of the provincial council; in such a way, however, that those wishing to go to the council or their clergy, in addition to those deputed as above, shall in no way be disadvantaged thereby. Also, let there be read out in each provincial council those things which the canonical regulations order to be read out in them, so that they may be observed inviolably and transgressors may be duly punished. If metropolitans and diocesans fail to celebrate provincial and episcopal synods at the aforesaid time, after the cessation of any legal impediment, they shall lose half of all fruits and revenues accruing to them by reason of their churches, and these shall be applied immediately to the fabric of their churches. If they persist in such neglect for three consecutive months, they shall automatically be suspended from their offices and benefices. After these intervals of time have elapsed, with the aforesaid penalties, the senior bishop in the province of the metropolitan, or the person in orders who is highest in dignity below a bishop, unless by custom or privilege it pertains to another, is obliged to supply for this failure to hold the said provincial and episcopal synods. Moreover, this holy synod bids all superiors of religious communities and orders of all kinds, who are responsible for holding chapters, to hold them at the appointed times, under the aforesaid penalties, and to see that they are held; and let them aim in them, in accordance with canonical sanctions and the constitutions of the orders, at a true reform of the individual communities and orders, so that thereafter regular observance may duly flourish in all monasteries in accordance with their rules and constitutions, and in particular that the three fundamental vows of profession may be strictly observed. By the aforesaid, however, the holy synod does not mean to derogate in any way from anyone's rights.

Session 16—5 February 1434

[This session declares the adherence of Pope Eugenius to the council, with the usual ceremonies; Eugenius's bull Dudum sacrum, and three other bulls abrogated by that bull, are incorporated into the acts.]

Session 17—26 April 1434

[On the admission of the presidents into the council in the name of the lord pope Eugenius IV]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, admits the beloved sons of the church Nicholas, priest of the title of holy Cross in Jerusalem, and Julian, deacon of St Angelo, cardinals of the holy Roman church, the venerable John, archbishop of Taranto, and Peter, bishop of Padua, and the beloved son of the church Louis, abbot of St Justina of Padua, as presidents in this sacred council in the name, stead and place of the most holy lord pope Eugenius IV, to have the fullest authority and effect throughout, but only on the following conditions: they are to be without any coercive jurisdiction, and the way of proceeding hitherto observed in this council is to remain unchanged, especially what is contained in the ordinances of this sacred council beginning, First, there shall be four deputations, as there are, among which all from the council shall be distributed equally as far as is possible, etc. It also ordains that apart from on a Friday, which is the ordinary day for a general congregation, another general congregation cannot be called unless at least three of the deputations agree to this beforehand. And then the presidents should be informed, or one of them, so that they may announce the programme. If they do not, one of the promoters of the council or someone from the deputations shall announce the programme. All from the council shall come to the congregation. On the other occasions, if the three deputations do not agree, nobody shall come to that congregation; and whatever is done there shall be null and void. The same with regard to a session. When what has been agreed upon by the deputations has been read out in the general congregation, the first of the presidents there present, even if another or others of them are absent, shall conclude the matter in accordance with the ordinances of the sacred council. If he or another of the presidents then presiding refuses to do this, the next prelate in the order of seating shall conclude the matter. If he is unwilling, let another in succession do it. If it happens that none of the presidents comes to a congregation or a session of the general council, then the first prelate, as indicated above, shall fulfil the office of president for that day. Also, all the acts of this sacred council shall be made and despatched under the name and seal of this council, as has been done until now.

Session 18—26 June 1434

[On the renewal of the decree of the council of Constance about the authority and power of general councils]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. It is well known that it redounds to the great benefit of the catholic church that its authority, which was earlier declared in the sacred council of Constance and to which all are obliged to submit, should be manifested frequently and the attention of all should be drawn to it. Just as councils of the past were accustomed to renew the salutary institutions and declarations of previous synods, so this holy synod too renews that necessary declaration on the authority of general councils, which was promulgated in the said council of Constance in the words that follow: First it declares . . . and Next it declares ,

Session 19—7 September 1434

[On the agreement between the council and the Greeks about union]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. As a dutiful mother is ever anxious about the health of her children and is uneasy until any dissension among them has been quietened, so and to a much greater extent holy mother church, which regenerates its children to eternal life, is wont to strive with every effort that all who go by the name of Christian may put aside all quarrelling and may guard in fraternal charity the unity of the faith, without which there can be no salvation. It has therefore been a primary care of this holy synod from the beginning of its meeting to put an end to the recent discord of the Bohemians and the ancient discord of the Greeks, and to bind them to us in the same permanent bond of faith and charity. We invited in all charity to this sacred council, through our letters and envoys, first the Bohemians, since they are nearer, and then the Greeks, so that the holy union might be achieved. Although many from the beginning thought that the Bohemian affair was not only difficult but almost impossible and judged our labours to be a waste of time and useless, nevertheless our lord Jesus Christ, to whom nothing is impossible, has so safely directed the business until now that the invitation to the Bohemians has been of much greater benefit to holy church than the many powerful armies which frequently invaded their country.

This fills us with greater hope to pursue the union with the Greeks with all confidence and perseverance. We approach this task the more willingly because we perceive the Greeks to be very inclined to this union. For as soon as the most serene emperor of the Greeks and the patriarch of Constantinople were approached by our envoys, straightaway they appointed to this holy synod three outstanding men from those who seem to be of great authority among them — the first of whom was indeed a blood-relative of the emperor — with a sufficient commission from the emperor himself signed by his own hand and with a golden seal, and furnished with letters of the patriarch. Both in a general congregation and in the presence of our commissaries they expressed the most fervent desire of the emperor, the patriarch and the whole eastern church for this union. They urge and daily stimulate us in a wonderful way to pursue this holy work, strongly and persistently affirming two things: that union is only possible in a universal synod in which both the western church and the eastern church meet, and that union will assuredly follow if matters proceed in that synod in the way that is agreed below. We were filled with joy and gladness when we heard this. For what happier and more glorious thing could ever happen to the catholic church than that so many eastern peoples, who seem to be about equal in number to those of our faith, should be joined with us in the unity of faith ? What could be more useful and fruitful to the Christian people, since the beginning of the church, than for an inveterate and destructive schism to be completely eradicated ? Moreover, we trust that with God's help another benefit will accrue to the Christian commonwealth; because from this union, once it is established, there is hope that very many from the abominable sect of Mahomet will be converted to the catholic faith. What, then, should not be attempted and done by Christ's faithful for so holy and salutary an objective? What Catholic is not in duty bound to risk not only the passing substance of this world but even his body and soul for such an advance of the Christian name and the orthodox faith? Wherefore, we venerable cardinals of the holy Roman church, presidents of the apostolic see, casting all our thought on God, who alone does great wonders, deputed the patriarch of Antioch and a suitable number of archbishops, bishops, abbots, masters and doctors to treat of this question with the ambassadors of the Greeks and to look for a way to reach a solution. After these men had frequently met and discussed among themselves and with the envoys, they reached the conclusions given below. These conclusions, in accordance with the custom of this council, were seriously debated by the deputations and ratified by a general congregation. Their contents, together with the chrysobull of the lord emperor, are as follows.

[Agreement of the deputies of the sacred council with the ambassadors of the Greeks]

The ambassadors of the most serene lord emperor of the Greeks and of the lord patriarch of Constantinople, namely the lord Demetrius protonostiarius Palaeologus Metotides, the venerable Isidore abbot of the monastery of St Demetrius, and the lord John Dissipatus of the household of the same emperor, meeting together with the lord deputies of the sacred council, first declared that if the western church would agree that this synod should be held in Constantinople, the eastern church would meet there at its own expense and there would be no need for the western church to pay any expenses to eastern prelates. Indeed, the lord emperor himself would, within his limits, provide for Latin prelates on their way to Constantinople. But if it was preferred that the prelates of the eastern church should come to Latin territories for the said synod, then for legitimate reasons the western church would have to meet the expenses of the eastern church. Since the said lord deputies for many reasons believed that this union would be more conveniently arranged in the city of Basel, where in fact the council was sitting, they frequently and urgently pressed the lord envoys that this place should be chosen for the holy union and offered to pay the necessary expenses for this. The envoys replied that since the instructions given to them by the emperor and the patriarch contained limitations on certain places, they would not choose the city of Basel because it was not mentioned in the instructions. The deputies of the sacred council, aware of the holy and perfect intention of the council not to spare any labour and expenditure for the honour of God and the advance of the catholic faith, judged it inexpedient to miss so great a good merely on a question of place. So they agreed, subject to the council's consent, to one of the places named below with the condition, which is detailed later, that one or more persons should be sent to the lord emperor, the patriarch and others to persuade them by cogent reasons to agree to the city of Basel. The nominated places are these: Calabria, Ancona or another maritime territory; Bologna, Milan or another Italian city; and outside Italy, Buda in Hungary, Vienna in Austria or in the last place, Savoy.

The lord deputies agreed with the lord ambassadors in what follows, subject to the council's consent. First, the ambassadors promised that the emperor of the Greeks, the patriarch of Constantinople, the other three patriarchs and the archbishops, bishops and other ecclesiastics who can conveniently come, will come to the synod. Likewise, representatives will come from all the kingdoms and territories subject to the churches of the Greeks, with full power and authority which shall be confirmed by oath and suitable documents by both the secular authorities and the prelates. Also, the sacred council shall send one or more ambassadors with eight thousand ducats for the holding of a congregation of the prelates of the eastern church in Constantinople. The eight thousand ducats will be paid out by the ambassadors of the sacred council, as it shall seem good to the lord emperor or to the ambassadors themselves; but in such a way that, if the said prelates refuse to come to Constantinople or, having come to Constantinople, refuse to go to the synod, then the emperor shall be bound to restore to the said ambassadors whatever they may have expended on this matter.

Also, that the western church shall pay the expenses of four large galleys, of which two shall be from Constantinople and two from elsewhere, to convey to our port at the appropriate time the emperor, the patriarchs and the prelates of the eastern church with their suites, to the number of seven hundred persons, and to return them to Constantinople. The western church shall pay the expenses for this in the following way. For the expenses of the emperor and of seven hundred persons from Constantinople to our last port, it will give the emperor fifteen thousand ducats. From the said last port to the place of the said council, and thereafter as long as they remain at the synod and until their return to Constantinople, it will give to the emperor with the said seven hundred persons fair expenses. Also that within the ten months after next November, the sacred council shall be obliged to send two large galleys and two lighter ones to Constantinople with three hundred crossbowmen. On these galleys shall travel the ambassadors of the sacred council and the lord Demetrius protonostiarius Palaeologus, chief of the lord emperor's ambassadors. These ambassadors of the sacred council will have with them fifteen thousand ducats to be given to the lord emperor for the expenses that he and the patriarchs, prelates and others who are coming, to the number of seven hundred persons, shall incur between Constantinople and the last port at which they shall put in, as mentioned above. Also, the said ambassadors of the sacred council who are to travel on the galleys will arrange that ten thousand ducats are at hand to be expended, if necessary, on the defence of the city of Constantinople against any danger that the Turks might cause the city during the lord emperor's absence; this money will be expended by someone deputed by the said ambassadors of the sacred council in proportion to the necessity. Also, the said ambassadors of the sacred council will pay the cost of two light galleys and three hundred crossbowmen for the defence of the city of Constantinople in the lord emperor's absence, and shall ensure that the crews of the said galleys and the crossbowmen take an oath in the hands of the emperor that they will serve him faithfully. Their captains shall be appointed by the emperor. Also, that the said ambassadors shall have for the expenses of the two large galleys what is usually expended in arming such galleys.

Also, the ambassadors of the sacred council who are to go with the said galleys to Constantinople, shall name to the lord emperor the port at which they should finally land and the place, from among those listed above, where the said universal synod shall be held. They will, however, strive with all their might that the city of Basel be chosen, as is to be hoped. Also, this sacred council of Basel will remain meanwhile at Basel, and shall not be dissolved as long as there is no legitimate impediment; but if a legitimate impediment arises, which may God avert, it may transfer itself for its continuation to another city, in accordance with the decree The frequent . If the lord emperor is not satisfied with this place, then within one month after he has landed at the said last port, the sacred council will transfer itself to one of the said places nominated by the same council, as was said above.

Also that, in any event, all the above shall be fulfilled by both parties; and all the above shall be effected in a really stable way and with the greatest force and security that is possible for the sacred council, namely by a decree and under a seal. Also, when all the aforesaid matters have been concluded and agreed and, as was said, fully confirmed, the supreme pontiff should give his express consent by his patent bulls. Everything above is to be understood in good faith, without fraud or deceit and without legitimate or manifest impediment. If all the clauses are fulfilled, the said ambassadors of the Greeks shall state and promise that assuredly the above persons will come even if there should be war and threats to their city, and in confirmation of all this they will deliver to the sacred council a chrysobull of the said emperor, and on behalf of the said emperor they and the others shall take an oath, in writing and signed, in pledge of their firm and true belief that the universal holy synod ought to take place with God's help, unless there intervenes the death of the emperor or some obvious and real obstacle that cannot be escaped or avoided.

Lastly, the ambassadors of the Greeks were requested to explain the meaning of some terms contained in their instructions. First, what they understand by "universal synod". They replied that the pope and the patriarchs ought to be present at the synod either in person or through their procurators; similarly other prelates ought to be present either in person or through representatives; and they promised, as is stated above, that the lord emperor of the Greeks and the patriarch of Constantinople will participate in person. "Free and inviolate", that is each may freely declare his judgment without any obstacle or violence. "Without contention", that is without quarrelsome and ill-tempered contention; but debates and discussions which are necessary, peaceful, honest and charitable are not excluded. "Apostolic and canonical", to explain how these words and the way of proceeding in the synod are to be understood, they refer themselves to what the universal synod itself shall declare and arrange. Also that the emperor of the Greeks and their church shall have due honour, that is to say, what it had when the present schism began, always saving the rights, honours, privileges and dignities of the supreme pontiff and the Roman church and the emperor of the Romans. If any doubt arises, let it be referred to the decision of the said universal council. There follows the text of the chrysobull of the said emperor translated from Greek into Latin, Whereas there were sent . . . 1; and the letter of the lord patriarch of Constantinople with a leaden seal translated from Greek into Latin, which is as follows, Joseph by the grace of God archbishop of Constantinople . . . we receive the letter of your reverence . . . 2

By the authority of the universal church, therefore, this holy synod by this present decree approves, ratifies, confirms, determines and decrees the above clauses and agreements, and it promises to observe each and all of them and to keep them intact, as is said above. As they lead to an increase of the orthodox faith and the benefit of the catholic church and the whole Christian people, they should be most welcome and acceptable to all who love the faith of Christ. Since, as has been said above, the Greeks for a variety of reasons request that the most holy lord pope Eugenius IV should expressly consent to these clauses and agreements, lest on this account so great a good should be let slip, this holy synod implores and begs Eugenius in all charity, and through the tender mercy of Jesus Christ it requests and demands with all possible insistence, that he expresses his assent, for the benefit of the faith and of ecclesiastical unity, to the aforesaid clauses and agreements, which have already been approved and ratified by a synodal decree, by his bulls in the customary style of the Roman curia.

[Decree on Jews and neophytes]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. This holy synod following in the footsteps of our saviour Jesus Christ, desires in deepest charity that all may acknowledge the truth of the gospel and thereafter abide in it faithfully. By these salutary instructions it desires to provide measures whereby Jews and other infidels may be converted to the orthodox faith and converts may remain steadfastly in it. It therefore decrees that all diocesan bishops should depute persons well trained in scripture, several times a year, in the places where Jews and other infidels live, to preach and expound the truth of the catholic faith in such a way that the infidels who hear it can recognise their errors. They should compel infidels of both sexes who have reached the age of discretion, to attend these sermons under pain both of being excluded from business dealings with the faithful and of other apposite penalties. But the bishops and the preachers should behave towards them with such charity as to gain them for Christ not only by the manifestation of the truth but also by other kindnesses. The synod decrees that Christians of whatever rank or status who in any way impede the attendance of Jews at these sermons, or who forbid it, automatically incur the stigma of being supporters of unbelief.

Since this preaching will be more fruitful in proportion to the linguistic skill of the preachers, we decree that there must be faithful observance of the constitution of the council of Vienne, which ordered the provision in certain universities of teachers of the Hebrew, Arabic, Greek and Chaldean languages. So that this may be more adhered to, we wish that the rectors of these universities should add to what they swear to on taking office, that they will endeavour to observe the said constitution. It should be clearly laid down, at the councils of the provinces in which these universities are situated, that the teachers of the said languages are to be adequately recompensed.

Furthermore, renewing the sacred canons, we command both diocesan bishops and secular powers to prohibit in every way Jews and other infidels from having Christians, male or female, in their households and service, or as nurses of their children; and Christians from joining with them in festivities, marriages, banquets or baths, or in much conversation, and from taking them as doctors or agents of marriages or officially appointed mediators of other contracts. They should not be given other public offices, or admitted to any academic degrees, or allowed to have on lease lands or other ecclesiastical rents. They are to be forbidden to buy ecclesiastical books, chalices, crosses and other ornaments of churches under pain of the loss of the object, or to accept them in pledge under pain of the loss of the money that they lent. They are to be compelled, under severe penalties, to wear some garment whereby they can be clearly distinguished from Christians. In order to prevent too much intercourse, they should be made to dwell in areas, in the cities and towns, which are apart from the dwellings of Christians and as far distant as possible from churches. On Sundays and other solemn festivals they should not dare to have their shops open or to work in public.

[About those who desire conversion to the faith]

If any of them wishes to be converted to the catholic faith, all his goods, both movable and immovable, shall remain intact and unharmed in his possession. But if his goods were acquired by usury or illicit dealings, and the persons to whom restitution ought to be made are known, it is absolutely necessary that this restitution be made, since the sin is not forgiven unless the illegal object is restored. However, if these persons are no longer an issue because the church has turned the goods to pious uses, this holy synod, acting for the universal church, grants in favour of the baptism received that the goods should remain with the church as a pious use, and it forbids both ecclesiastics and secular persons, under pain of divine anathema, to cause or allow to be caused any vexation on this count under any pretext whatsoever, but they should regard it as a great gain to have won such persons for Christ. Moreover since, as it is written, if anyone has this world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him ?, this holy synod through the tender mercy of God exhorts all, both ecclesiastics and secular persons, to stretch out helping hands to such converts if they are poor or in need at the time of their conversion. Bishops should exhort Christians to aid these converts and should themselves support them from the income of churches, as far as they can, and from what passes through their hands for the benefit of the poor, and they should defend them with fatherly solicitude from detraction and invective.

Since by the grace of baptism converts have been made fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, and since regeneration in the spirit is of far greater worth than birth in the flesh, we determine by this edict that they should enjoy these privileges, liberties and immunities, of the cities and localities in which they are regenerated by holy baptism, which others obtain merely by reason of birth and origin. Let the priests who baptise them and those who receive them from the sacred font carefully instruct them, both before and after their baptism, in the articles of the faith and the precepts of the new law and the ceremonies of the catholic church. Both they and the bishops should strive that, at least for a long time, they do not mingle much with Jews or infidels lest, as occurs with convalescents from illness, a small occasion may make them fall back into their former perdition. Since experience shows that social communication between converts renders them weaker in our faith, and has been found to damage much their salvation, this holy synod exhorts local ordinaries to exercise care and zeal that they are married to born-Christians, in so far as this seems to promote an increase of the faith. Converts should be forbidden, under pain of severe penalties, to bury the dead according to the Jewish custom or to observe in any way the sabbath and other solemnities and rites of their old sect. Rather, they should frequent our churches and sermons, like other Catholics, and conform themselves in everything to Christian customs. Those who show contempt for the above should be delated to the diocesan bishops or inquisitors of heresy by their parish priests, or by others who are entrusted by law or ancient custom with inquiring into such matters, or by anyone else at all. Let them be so punished, with the aid of the secular arm if need be, as to give an example to others.

There should be careful inquiry into all these things in provincial councils and synods, and an opportune remedy should be applied not only to negligent bishops and priests but also to converts and infidels who scorn the above. If anyone, of whatever rank or status, shall encourage or defend such converts against being compelled to observe the Christian rite or anything else mentioned above, he shall incur the penalties promulgated against abettors of heretics. If converts fail to correct themselves after a canonical warning, and as Judaizers are found to have returned to their vomit, let proceedings be taken against them as against perfidious heretics in conformity with the enactments of the sacred canons. If there have been granted to Jews or infidels, or perhaps shall be granted to them in the future, any indults or privileges by any ecclesiastics or secular persons, of whatever status or dignity, even papal or imperial, which tend in any way to the detriment of the catholic faith, the Christian name or anything mentioned above, this holy synod decrees them quashed and annulled; the apostolic and synodal decrees and constitutions enacted about the above remaining in force. In order that the memory of this holy constitution may be perpetually retained and that nobody may be able to claim ignorance of it, the holy synod orders that it should be promulgated at least once a year during divine service in all cathedral and college churches and other holy places where the faithful gather in large numbers.

Session 20—22 January 1435

[Decree on concubinaries]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. We are inclined to grant requests for authentic statutes and decrees in proportion to the likelihood that they will be observed. For this reason we ordered to be extracted from our acts and recorded in this present document, at the request of the beloved sons of the church N. and N. , who assert that they need texts of this kind for judicial and extra-judicial purposes, the texts of the constitutions transcribed below, which we issued some time ago and promulgated in the cathedral church of Basel on 22 January 1435 and incorporated into our acts. They are as follows.

Any cleric of whatsoever status, condition, religious order or dignity, even if it be episcopal or some other pre-eminence, who, after receiving notice of this constitution, as he may be presumed to have done, for two months after its publication in cathedral churches, which bishops are bound to arrange, after the constitution has come to his notice, still persists as a public concubinary, shall automatically be suspended for three months from the fruits of all his benefices. These fruits shall be consigned by his superior to the fabric or some other evident need of the churches from which the fruits come. His superior is bound to admonish him, as soon as he is aware that he is a public concubinary, to dismiss his concubine within a very short time. If he does not dismiss her, or having dismissed her takes her again or another woman, this holy synod orders his superior to deprive him of all his benefices. These public concubinaries moreover, shall be disqualified from receiving any goods, dignities, benefices or offices until such time as, after dismissing their concubines and an evident emendation of their lives, they shall have received a dispensation from their superiors. Those who receive a dispensation and then return to public concubinage, as to their vomit, shall be totally debarred from the above without any hope of another dispensation. If those who are responsible for correcting such people fail to punish them, as stated above, their superiors shall punish properly both them for their neglect and the others for their concubinage. Severe measures must be taken also in provincial and synodal councils against both those who neglect to punish and those who are reputed offenders, even by suspension from the conferment of benefices or some other adequate penalty. Those who are found by provincial councils or their superiors to deserve deprivation for public concubinage, but who can be deprived only by the supreme pontiff, should be referred immediately to the supreme pontiff together with the process of inquiry. The same diligence and inquiry should be employed by general and provincial chapters in respect of their subjects: and other penalties established against them and other non-public concubinaries are to remain in force. By "public" is meant not only someone whose concubinage is made notorious by a judicial sentence or a legal confession or by a notoriety that no subterfuge can conceal, but also anyone who keeps a woman suspected of incontinence and of ill repute and who, after being admonished by his superior, does not dismiss her.

Because in some regions there are persons with ecclesiastical jurisdiction who are not ashamed to accept bribes from concubinaries for allowing them to wallow in their filth, this holy synod commands, under pain of eternal malediction, that henceforth they shall not tolerate or dissemble such conduct in any way by agreement, composition or promise; otherwise, in addition to the aforesaid penalty for negligence, they shall be strictly obliged and compelled to give to pious causes double what they have received in this way. Prelates should take every care to segregate from their subjects concubines and women of doubtful repute, even by recourse to the secular arm if need be, and they should not allow children born of such concubinage to live with their fathers. This holy synod also orders that this constitution is to be published in the aforesaid synods and chapters, and that stern warning should be given to subjects to dismiss their concubines. It also enjoins on all secular men, even if they are of royal rank, not to interpose any obstacle whatever under any excuse to prelates who proceed, in virtue of their office, against their subjects for concubinage. Moreover, since fornication of every kind is forbidden by divine law and is to be avoided under pain of mortal sin, this holy synod warns all lay people, both married and single, to abstain from concubinage. That man is most blameworthy who has a wife but goes to another woman. If a single man cannot abstain, let him marry, as the apostle advises. Let those responsible strive with all their strength, by salutary advice and canonical sanctions, for the observance of this divine precept.

[Excommunicates are not to be shunned unless specifically named]

To avoid scandals and many dangers and to relieve timorous consciences, this holy synod decrees that henceforth nobody shall be obliged to abstain from communion with anyone in the administration and reception of sacraments or in any other sacred or profane matters, or to shun someone or to observe an ecclesiastical interdict, on the ground of any ecclesiastical sentence, censure, suspension or prohibition that has been promulgated in general by a person or by the law, unless the sentence, prohibition, suspension or censure was specifically or expressly promulgated or pronounced by a judge against a specified person, college, university, church or place, or if it is clear that someone has incurred a sentence of excommunication with such notoriety that it cannot be concealed or in any way excused in law. For the synod wishes such persons to be avoided in accordance with canonical sanctions. By this, however, it does not intend any relief or favour to those so excommunicated, suspended, interdicted or prohibited.

[Interdicts are not to be imposed lightly]

Since an undiscriminating promulgation of interdicts has led to many scandals, this holy synod determines that no city, town, castle, vill or place may be laid under an ecclesiastical interdict except by reason or through the fault of the places themselves or of their lord, governors or officials. Such places cannot be laid under an interdict by any ordinary or delegated authority by reason or through the fault of any other private person, unless the person has been previously excommunicated and denounced, or publicly named in a church, and the lords or governors or officials of the places, though requested by the authority of a judge, have not effectively evicted the excommunicated person within two days or made him give satisfaction. If he is evicted after two days, or retires or gives satisfaction, divine services may be resumed straightaway. This applies also to dependencies of the place.

So that lawsuits may be brought to a speedier end, a second appeal is hereby forbidden if it is a question of the same complaint or if the appeal is made from the same interlocutory sentence which does not have the force of a final judgment. Anyone who makes a frivolous or unjust appeal before the final judgment shall be condemned by the appeal judge to pay to the party appealed against the sum of fifteen gold florins of the treasury, in addition to the expenses, damages and interest.

Session 21—9 June 1435

[On annates]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. In the name of the holy Spirit the paraclete, this holy synod decrees that in future, both in the Roman curia and elsewhere, for the confirmation of elections, admission of postulations and provision of presentations and for collations, dispositions, elections, postulations, presentations, even if made by layfolk, institutions, installations and investitures, in respect of cathedral and metropolitan churches, monasteries, dignities, benefices and any ecclesiastical offices whatsoever, and for sacred orders, blessings and pallia, nothing whatsoever is to be exacted, either before or after, for sealing the bull of the letters, or for common annates, minor services, first fruits or dues, or under any other title or name, or on the pretext of any custom, privilege or statute, or for any other reason or occasion, directly or indirectly. Only the writers abbreviators and registrars of the letters or minutes shall receive a suitable salary for their work. If anyone dares to contravene this sacred canon by demanding, giving or promising anything, he shall incur the penalty inflicted on simoniacs and shall acquire no right or title to the dignities or benefices thus obtained. Obligations, promises, censures and mandates, and whatever is done to the prejudice of this most salutary decree, are to be deemed null and void. Even if, which God forbid, the Roman pontiff, who beyond all others should carry out and observe the canons of universal councils, should scandalize the church by acting contrary to this sanction, he should be delated to a general council. Others are to be punished by their own superiors with a fitting penalty, proportionate to their offence, in accordance with canonical sanctions.

[About those in peaceful possession]

Whoever has been in possession for the last three years, not through violence but with a specious title, peacefully and without a lawsuit, of a prelacy, dignity, benefice or office, or shall have possession of them in the future, cannot be disturbed afterwards in his claim or possession by anyone, even by reason of a newly enacted law, except in the case of warfare or some other legitimate impediment, which he must protest and intimate in accordance with the council of Vienne. A lawsuit in this case is to be understood as regards future controversies, if the proceedings have reached the execution of the citation, the exhibition of his right in the judgment and the observance of all the terms. Ordinaries, however, should make careful inquiry to see that nobody possesses a benefice without a title. If they find such a person, they shall declare that the right does not belong to him, and they shall give the right either to him, if they think fit, unless he is an intruded person or violent or undeserving in some other way, or to some other suitable person.

[How the divine office is to be celebrated in church]

A person who is about to make a request to a secular prince takes pains to compose himself and his words by decent dress, becoming gesture, regulated speech and close attention of mind. How much more careful ought he to be in all these things when he is about to pray to almighty God in a sacred place! The holy synod therefore decrees that in all cathedral and collegiate churches, at suitable times and at the sound of a bell, the divine praises shall be reverently celebrated by everyone through all the hours, not hurriedly but gravely and slowly and with reasonable pauses, especially in the middle of each verse of the psalms, and with a suitable distinction between solemn and ferial offices. Those who recite the canonical hours shall enter the church wearing an ankle-length gown and a clean surplice reaching below the middle of the shin-bone or a cloak, according to the different seasons and regions, and covering their heads not with a cowl but with an amice or a biretta. Having arrived in the choir, they shall behave with such gravity as the place and the duty demand, not gossiping or talking among themselves or with others, nor reading letters or other writings. They have gathered there to sing, so they should not keep their mouths shut rather all of them, especially those with more important functions, should sing to God eagerly in psalms, hymns and canticles. When "Glory be to the Father and, to the Son and to the holy Spirit" is being recited, all shall rise. Whenever mention is made of the glorious name of Jesus, at which every knee should bow in heaven, on earth and under the earth, they shall bow their heads. Nobody should read or say the office there privately during the public chanting of the hours in common, for not only does this take away due honour from the choir but also it distracts the singers. To ensure that these things and whatever else concerns the performance of the divine office and the discipline of the choir are duly observed, the dean, or the person whose duty it is, shall carefully keep watch, looking round, to see if there is anything not in order. Transgressors shall be punished with the penalty of that hour in which the offence was committed, or even more severely, as the gravity of the fault demands.

[The times at which each one should be in choir]

Whoever is not present at matins before the end of the psalm Come let us exult at the other hours before the end of the first psalm, and at mass before the last Lord have mercy, until the end, except in cases of necessity and then only with the permission of the president of the choir, is to be considered absent from that hour, saving however any stricter regulations of churches in this regard. The same is to be observed with regard to those who do not remain in processions from the start until the finish. To ensure observance of this, someone, who shall be under oath to act honestly and to spare none, should be deputed with the duty of noting individuals who are absent at the appointed times. This holy synod also orders that in churches in which stipends are not allotted for individual hours, a deduction should be made from the gross revenues of delinquents so that their emoluments are more or less proportionate to their labours, thus destroying the abuses whereby anybody present at only one hour gets a full day's stipend and presidents or deans or other officials, from the mere fact of being officials, receive the daily stipends even when absent for purposes other than those of their church.

[How the canonical hours should be recited outside choir]

This holy synod admonishes all holders of benefices, or those in holy orders, since they are bound to the canonical hours, if they wish their prayers to be acceptable to God, to recite the day and night offices, not in a mumble or between their teeth, nor swallowing or abbreviating their words, nor intermingling conversation and laughter, but, whether they are alone or with others, reverently and distinctly and in such a place as will not diminish devotion, for which they ought to dispose and prepare themselves, as the scripture says: Before prayer prepare your soul, and do not be like someone who tempts God.

[About those who wander about the church during services]

Any holder of a benefice in a church, especially of a major one, if he is seen wandering around inside or outside the church during the divine services, strolling or chatting with others, shall automatically forfeit his attendance not only for that hour but also for the whole day. If after being corrected once he does not stop, let him be deprived of his stipends for a month, or, if he is obstinate, let him be subjected to a heavier penalty so that in the end he is forced to desist. Also, noisy comings and goings in the church should not be allowed to impede or disturb the divine service. Regulars who err in these matters in conventual churches should be punished with a heavy penalty at the judgment of their superior.

[About a notice-board hanging in the choir]

So that everything may be well ordered in the house of God and that each person may know what he has to do, let there be affixed a notice-board permanently hanging in the choir, with information on it of the duties of each canon or other benefice-holder as regards reading or singing at the individual hours during the week or a longer time. Anyone who fails to do in person or by proxy what is prescribed there, shall forfeit for each hour the stipend of one day.

[On those who at mass do not complete the creed, or sing songs, or say mass in too low a voice or without a server]

There are abuses in some churches whereby the "I believe in one God", which is the symbol and profession of our faith, is not sung to the end, or the preface or the Lord's prayer is omitted, or secular songs are sung in the church, or masses (including private ones) are said without a server, or the secret prayers are said in so low a voice that they cannot be heard by the people nearby. These abuses are to stop and we decree that any transgressors shall be duly punished by their superiors.

[About those who pledge divine worship]

We abolish also that abuse, so manifestly incompatible with divine worship, whereby some canons of churches, having contracted debts, bind themselves to their creditors in such a way that, if they do not pay their debts by a fixed time there will be a cessation of divine services. We declare this obligation null even if it has been confirmed by oath. We decree that those who make these illicit agreements shall automatically lose for three months their revenues, which shall be applied to their church They shall receive no emoluments from their church until they resume the divine services.

[On holding chapters at the same time as the principal mass]

This holy synod forbids chapters and other meetings of canons to be held, or chapter business to be transacted, at the same time as the principal mass, especially on solemn feasts, unless an urgent and manifest necessity suddenly occurs. Whoever summons the chapter for that time shall be suspended from receiving his daily stipends for a week, and the canons shall forego their stipends for that hour.

[On not performing spectacles in churches]

In some churches, during certain celebrations of the year, there are carried on various scandalous practices. Some people with mitre, crozier and pontifical vestments give blessings after the manner of bishops. Others are robed like kings and dukes; in some regions this is called the feast of fools or innocents, or of children. Some put on masked and theatrical comedies, others organize dances for men and women, attracting people to amusement and buffoonery. Others prepare meals and banquets there. This holy synod detests these abuses. It forbids ordinaries as well as deans and rectors of churches, under pain of being deprived of all ecclesiastical revenues for three months, to allow these and similar frivolities, or even markets and fairs, in churches, which ought to be houses of prayer, or even in cemeteries. They are to punish transgressors by ecclesiastical censures and other remedies of the law. The holy synod decrees that all customs, statutes and privileges which do not accord with these decrees, unless they add greater penalties, are null.

Session 22—15 October 1435

[On the condemnation of the book of friar Augustine of Rome, archbishop of Nazareth]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. The main reason, among other pious aims, why this holy synod assembled was to preserve the truth of the catholic faith and to eradicate errors and heresies. Therefore the chief goal of our activity is, as soon as we learn of the spread of something that can harm the purity of the Christian faith or in any way obscures the brilliance of the light in the minds of the faithful, to eradicate it completely and carefully to clear the Lord's field of noxious weeds and brambles. This holy synod therefore condemns and censures a certain book by master Augustine, commonly called "of Rome", archbishop of Nazareth. Its first treatise is entitled, "On the sacrament of the unity of Jesus Christ and the church, or on the whole Christ"; the second, "On Christ the head and his glorious sovereignty", another, "On the charity of Christ towards the elect and his infinite love". The holy synod condemns and censures the book as containing teaching that is unsound and erroneous in the faith, as well as its defenders.

The holy synod especially condemns and censures, in the book, the assertion which is scandalous, erroneous in the faith and offensive to the ears of the pious faithful, namely: Christ sins daily and has sinned daily from his very beginning, even though he avers that he does not understand this as of Christ our saviour, head of the church, but as referring to his members, which together with Christ the head form the one Christ, as he asserts. Also, the propositions, and ones similar to them, which the synod declares are contained in the articles condemned at the sacred council of Constance, namely the following. Not all the justified faithful are members of Christ, but only the elect, who finally will reign with Christ for ever. The members of Christ, from whom the church is constituted, are taken according to the ineffable foreknowledge of God; and the church is constituted only from those who are called according to his purpose of election. To be a member of Christ, it is not enough to be united with him in the bond of charity, some other union is needed. Also the following. The human nature in Christ is really Christ. The human nature in Christ is the person of Christ. The intimate cause that determines the human nature in Christ is not really distinguished from the nature that is determined. The human nature in Christ is without doubt the person of the Word; and the Word in Christ, once the nature has been assumed, is really the person who assumes. The human nature assumed by the Word in a personal union is truly God, natural and proper. Christ according to his created will loves the human nature united to the person of the Word as much as he loves the divine nature. Just as two persons in God are equally lovable, so the two natures in Christ, the human and the divine, are equally lovable on account of the common person. The soul of Christ sees God as clearly and intensely as God sees himself.

These propositions and others springing from the same root, which are to be found in the said book, this holy synod condemns and censures as erroneous in the faith. Lest it come to pass that any of the faithful fall into error on account of such teaching, the synod strictly forbids anyone to teach, preach, defend or approve the teaching of the said book, especially the aforesaid condemned and censured propositions, and its supporting treatises. It decrees that transgressors shall be punished as heretics and with other canonical penalties. By these measures the synod intends to detract in nothing from the sayings and writings of the holy doctors who discourse on these matters. On the contrary, it accepts and embraces them according to their true understanding as commonly expounded and declared by these doctors and other catholic teachers in the theological schools. Nor does the synod intend by this judgment to prejudice the person of the said author since, though duly summoned, he gave reasons for being absent, and in some of his writings and elsewhere he has submitted his teaching to the church's judgment. Further, this holy synod orders all archbishops, bishops, chancellors of universities and inquisitors of heresy, who are responsible in this matter, to ensure that nobody has the said book and supporting treatises or presumes to keep them with him, rather he shall consign them to these authorities, so that they may deal with them in accordance with the law: otherwise let such persons be proceeded against with canonical censures.

Session 23—26 March 1436

[On the election of the supreme pontiff]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Since a good shepherd is the salvation of his flock, it is the duty of this sacred synod to strive, with all the diligence that human law can contrive, that the Roman pontiff, who is first in the Lord's flock and the supreme shepherd, should be and continue to be such as to provide for the salvation of all souls and the benefit of the whole Christian world and to fulfil worthily so great an office. Therefore it renews the constitutions about the election of Roman pontiffs which sacred councils and supreme pontiffs have issued and it adds to them some further salutary norms. It decrees that whenever the apostolic see falls vacant, all the cardinals of the holy Roman church who are present in the place where the election of the supreme pontiff is to be held, shall meet together on the tenth day after the see becomes vacant in some chapel or place near the conclave. From there they shall process behind a cross, two by two, devoutly singing the Veni creator Spiritus, and enter the place of the conclave, each taking with him not more than two necessary attendants. In view of the ceremonies, two clerics may also be admitted, at least one of whom shall be a notary. The chamberlain together with the deputies for the custody of the conclave shall ensure that nobody, apart from the aforesaid persons, enters the conclave. After the cardinals have entered and the doors have been closed, the chamberlain shall enter with the deputies and carefully examine the cells of all the cardinals. He shall remove any food and edibles found there, except medicines of the sick and infirm. He shall ensure a careful guard whenever he leaves and closes the door, and each day he shall closely inspect the food being brought in for the cardinals and allow only what seems necessary for moderate refreshment, without prejudice to the decrees passed in the fourth and seventh sessions of this sacred council.

On the next day all the cardinals, in the presence of all those in the conclave, shall hear a mass of the holy Spirit and receive the eucharist. Before the voting begins, they shall swear before the holy gospels in these words: I, N. , cardinal of . . . , swear and promise to almighty God, Father, Son and holy Spirit, and to blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, that I shall elect as pontiff the person who I think will be beneficial to the universal church in both spiritual and temporal matters and suitable for so great a dignity; I shall not give my vote to anyone who I have reason to think is directly or indirectly aiming at getting himself elected, by his promising or giving some temporal thing or by asking in person or through another or in any other way whatsoever; and I shall not make obeisance to anyone elected as pontiff before he takes the oath prescribed by this council of Basel; so help me God, to whom on the day of tremendous judgment I shall have to give an account of this oath and all my deeds After this each cardinal shall submit a ballot-card, on which he shall nominate a maximum of three persons. If he nominates more than one person, the second and third persons shall be from outside the college of cardinals. There shall not be more than one ballot on any day and it shall be held immediately after the mass. When the ballot-cards have been read, they shall be burnt straightaway unless two-thirds of the votes are for the same person. No approach shall be made to anyone until six ballots have been completed. During this time let the cardinals reflect and seriously ponder how much merit or loss to themselves, how much fruit or damage to the Christian people, how much good or evil, they will be causing by their choice of a pontiff. There is nothing, indeed, by which they can more merit the grace or the wrath of our lord Jesus Christ than when they are setting his vicar over his sheep, which he loved so much as to suffer the torments of the cross and to die for them.

[On the profession of the supreme pontiff]

The holy synod decrees that the person elected as pope is obliged to express his consent to the election in the manner stated below. It is fitting that this consent should be made to the cardinals, if the person elected is present in the curia, or to one of the cardinals or someone mandated by them if he is not present there, in the presence of a notary and at least ten persons. After he has been informed of the election, he is bound to act within a day of the demand. If he does not do so, his election is annulled and the cardinals must proceed in the Lord's name to another election. But if he expresses his consent, as stated above, the cardinals shall straightaway make due obeisance to him as supreme pontiff. Once the obeisance has been made by the cardinals, nobody has any right to challenge his pontificate.

[Form of consent]

In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son and holy Spirit. I, N. , elected pope, with both heart and mouth confess and profess to almighty God, whose church I undertake with his assistance to govern, and to blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, that as long as I am in this fragile life I will firmly believe and hold the catholic faith, according to the tradition of the apostles, of general councils and of other holy fathers, especially of the eight holy universal councils — namely the first at Nicaea, the second at Constantinople, the third which was the first at Ephesus, the fourth at Chalcedon, the fifth and sixth at Constantinople, the seventh at Nicaea and the eighth at Constantinople — as well as of the general councils at the Lateran, Lyons, Vienne, Constance and Basel, and to preserve intact this faith unchanged to the last dot, and to defend and preach it to the point of death and the shedding of my blood, and likewise to follow and observe in every way the rite handed down of the ecclesiastical sacraments of the church. I promise also to labour faithfully for the defence of the catholic faith, the extirpation of heresies and errors, the reform of morals and the peace of the Christian people. I swear also to continue with the holding of general councils and the confirmation of elections in accordance with the decrees of the holy council of Basel. I have signed this profession with my own hand; I offer it on the altar with a sincere mind to you almighty God, to whom on the day of tremendous judgment I shall have to give an account of this and all my deeds; and I will repeat it at the first public consistory.

'So that this salutary institution may not fade from the supreme pontiff's memory with the passage of time, every year on the anniversary of his election or of his coronation, the first cardinal present shall, during mass, publicly and in a loud voice address the supreme pontiff thus: Most holy father, may your holiness heed and carefully ponder the promise which you made to God on the day of your election. He shall then read out the promise and shall continue as follows: May your holiness, therefore, for the honour of God, for the salvation of your soul and for the good of the universal church, strive to observe to your utmost all these things in good faith and without guile or fraud. Recall whose place it is that you hold on earth, namely of him who laid down his life for his sheep, who thrice asked the blessed Peter if he loved him, before he entrusted his sheep to him', and who, as the just judge whom nothing secret escapes, will exact from you an account of everything to the very last farthing. Remember what blessed Peter and his successors as pontiffs did: they thought only of the honour of God, the spread of the faith, the public good of the church and the salvation and benefit of the faithful; finally, imitating their master and Lord they did not hesitate to lay down their lives for the sheep entrusted to them. Do not lay up for yourself or your kinsfolk treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves and robbers break in, but lay up for yourself treasure in heaven. Do not be an acceptor of persons or of blood-ties or of homeland or of nation. All people are children of God and have been equally entrusted to your care and safe-keeping. Say after the example of Christ: Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother. In distributing dignities and benefices put before yourself neither the flesh nor gifts nor anything temporal at all, but solely God and the virtues and merits of people. Exercise ecclesiastical discipline in correcting faults, mindful of what grace Phinehas merited and what punishment Eli, the one for avenging injuries to God, the other for pretending not to know them. Defend, help and support the poor and needy. Show a fatherly charity to all.

After the solemnities of his coronation, and each year after the anniversary of his election, the supreme pontiff shall carefully discuss with his brethren, for at least eight consecutive days, how he shall carry out his solemn promises to God. In the first place, therefore, he should examine where in the world the Christian religion is being persecuted by Turks, Saracens, Tartars and other infidels; where heresy or schism or any form of superstition flourishes, in which provinces there has been a decline in morals and observance of the divine precepts and in the right way of living, in both ecclesiastical and secular matters, where ecclesiastical liberty is infringed; among which kings, princes and peoples enmity, wars and fears of war are rife; and like a dutiful father he should strive with his brethren carefully to provide remedies.

When these affairs of an universal character have been settled, let him deal with those nearer at hand. Let him begin by reforming and ordering in an exemplary way his house, his household and the Roman curia, where and in so far as this is necessary, so that from the visible reform of the church which is the head of all others, lesser churches may draw purity of morals and no occasion may be given for calumny and malicious talk. Making diligent inquiry in person and through others about both important and lesser persons, he should allow no delay or pretence in correcting whatever is found in need of reform, remembering that the sin is twofold, the one being committed, the other and far more serious being its consequences. For whatever is done there is easily made into an example. That is why, if the head is sick, disease enters into the rest of the body. The papal household and court should be a kind of clear mirror, so that all who look at it form themselves and live according to its example. Thereafter let him banish and eradicate any traces of simony, filthy concubinage or whatever may offend God or scandalize people. He should take care that officials do not exercise their offices badly or oppress anybody or extort anything by threats or illegal means, and that those in charge of the officials do not let their excesses go unpunished. They should not tolerate clothes and colours which are forbidden by the sacred canons. Let him instruct the Roman clergy, who are chiefly and immediately subject to him, in all ecclesiastical decorum, admonishing them that God's approval depends not on the parade and splendour of clothes but on humility, docility, purity of mind, simplicity of heart, holiness of behaviour and the other virtues which commend their possessor to God and to people. Let him enact reforms especially so that the divine services may be observed in the churches of Rome with all seemly devotion and discipline. He should also instruct the people of Rome, which is his own parish, and direct them in the way of salvation. He should bid the cardinals to visit and reform their titular churches and parishes as befits their office. He should appoint some prelate of great learning and of proven and exemplary life as his vicar in the city, to take his place in the episcopal care of the clergy and people, and he should often inquire about whether he is fulfilling his task.

Next, let him reflect carefully with the same brethren on the good and wholesome administration of the temporalities of the Roman church and let him ensure that the provinces, cities, towns, castles and lands subject to the Roman church are justly and peacefully ruled with such moderation that the difference between government by ecclesiastics and by secular princes is like that between a father and a master. He should not aim at gain, but cherishing all with paternal charity he should esteem them not as subjects but as sons and daughters. Since he has charge of their spiritual and temporal well-being, he must watch to get rid of all factions and seditious groups — especially of Guelphs and Ghibellines and other similar parties — which breed destruction to both souls and bodies. He must strive, employing spiritual and temporal penalties of all possible kinds, to remove all causes of dissension and to keep people united for the defence of the church. To govern the provinces and chief cities, he should appoint cardinals or prelates of untarnished reputation who will seek not financial gain but justice and peace for their subjects. Their legation shall last for two, or at most three, years. When their legation has ended, since it is right that each one should give an account of his stewardship, one or more outstanding men shall be appointed to review their administration and to hear the complaints and petitions of the inhabitants and to render justice; these shall refer what they cannot easily effect to the pope, and he shall strive to find out what the former have done and to punish any illegal actions, so that their successors may learn from their example to avoid illegalities. Officials should be allotted a suitable salary on which they can live honestly, to prevent them turning their hand to what is illicit.

The supreme pontiff should often inquire how his legates, governors and commissars, as well as deputies and feudatories of the Roman church, rule their subjects and whether they oppress them with new taxes and exactions. He should not tolerate any austere measure or unjust burden being laid on his subjects' necks. For it would be wicked to allow those whom the pope should rule as a father to be treated tyrannically by others. He should ensure that statutes and ancient constitutions by which provinces and districts have been well governed in the past are kept intact. But if any have subsequently been issued unreasonably or from envy or partiality, they should be cancelled or altered when the reasons for doing so have been understood. Within a year from the day of his election, the Roman pontiff shall summon spokesmen and proctors of the provinces and chief cities of the Roman church and shall question them closely, with fatherly affection, about the following: the state and condition of their territories, how they were governed in the time of his predecessor, whether they are being oppressed by any unjust burden, and what should be done for their good government. Then let him apply to them as to sons remedies which will provide for their benefit and security and for the common good. He should not shrink from repeating this at least every two years. Among the other things that feudatories, captains, governors, senators, castellans and other high officials of Rome and of the lands of the church customarily swear to, there should be added at the time of their installation an oath that, when the papacy is vacant, they will hold their cities, lands, places, citadels, castles and peoples at the command of the cardinals, in the name of the Roman church, and that they will freely and without opposition hand them over to the same. Lest the supreme pontiff may seem to be influenced by carnal affection rather than by right reason, and to avoid the scandals that sad experience shows often arise, in future he shall not make or allow to be made anyone related to him by blood or affinity to the third degree inclusive a duke, marquis, count, feudatory, emphyteutic tenant, deputy, governor, official or castellan of any province, city, town, castle, fortress or place of the Roman church, nor give them any jurisdiction or power over them, nor appoint them captains or leaders of men under arms. The cardinals must never agree with a supreme pontiff attempting to act otherwise, and his successor as pontiff shall withdraw and revoke anything done in this way.

In accordance with the constitution of Pope Nicholas IV, the holy synod decrees that half of all fruits, revenues, proceeds, fines, penalties and taxes deriving from all the lands and places subject to the Roman church belongs to the cardinals of the holy Roman church, and that the institution and dismissal of all rulers and governors and guardians, howsoever they may be called, who are in charge of the aforesaid lands and places, and also of the collectors of the said fruits, should be made with the advice and agreement of the cardinals. The holy synod therefore admonishes the cardinals to protect the lands and subjects of the Roman church from harm and oppression and, mindful of their peace, safety and good government, to recommend them, if need be, to the supreme pontiff. While it is true that the supreme pontiff and the cardinals should give careful attention to all the territories of the Roman church, nevertheless the city of Rome should be at the centre of their concern. For there the holy bodies of blessed Peter and Paul and of innumerable martyrs and saints of Christ repose; there is the seat of the Roman pontiff, from which he and the Roman empire take their name; thither all Christians flock for the sake of devotion. They should feel for it a special love and affection, as being peculiarly their daughter and principal parish, so that it should be governed in peace, tranquillity and justice and should suffer no damage to its churches, walls and roads and the security of its streets. Hence this holy synod decrees that from the sum total of the income and proceeds of the city, an adequate portion shall be set aside for the preservation of the churches, walls, roads and bridges and the security of the streets in the city itself and the district; this money is to be administered by men of proven reputation who are to be chosen on the advice of the cardinals.

The supreme pontiff calls himself the servant of the servants of God; let him prove it in deeds. As long as people from all parts have recourse to him as to a common father, he should give them all easy access. Let him set aside at least one day in the week for a public audience, when he shall listen with patience and kindness to all, especially the poor and oppressed, and shall grant their prayers as much as he can with God's help, and shall assist all with kind advice and help as each one has need and as a father does for his children. If he is prevented by some bodily need, he shall entrust this task to some cardinal or other noteworthy person who will report everything to him, and he shall order all officials of the curia, especially the vice-chancellor, the penitentiary and the chamberlain, to expedite business for the poor with speed and free of charge, bearing in mind the apostolic charity of Peter and Paul, who pledged themselves to remember the poor . He should attend a public mass on Sundays and feast-days, and after it for a while he should give audience to the needy. He should hold a public consistory each week, or at least twice a month, to treat of the business of cathedral churches, monasteries, princes and universities and other important affairs. But he should refer lawsuits and lesser matters to the vice-chancellor. He should keep himself free of lawsuits and lesser business as far as he can, so as to be freer to attend to major issues. Since the cardinals of the holy Roman church are considered to be part of the body of the Roman pontiff, it is extremely expedient for the common good that, following ancient custom, serious and difficult questions should hereafter be settled on their advice and direction after mature deliberation, especially the following: decisions on matters of faith; canonizations of saints, erections, suppressions, divisions, subjections or unions of cathedral churches and monasteries; promotions of cardinals; confirmations and provisions relating to cathedral churches and monasteries; deprivations and translations of abbots, bishops and superiors; laws and constitutions; legations a latere or commissions or envoys and nuncios functioning with the authority of legates a latere; foundations of new religious orders; new exemptions for churches, monasteries and chapels, or the revocation of those already granted without prejudice to the decree of the holy council of Constance about not transferring prelates against their will.

[On the number and qualities of cardinals]

Since the cardinals of the holy Roman church assist the supreme pontiff in directing the Christian commonweal, it is essential that such persons be appointed as may be, like their name, real hinges on which the doors of the universal church move and are upheld. The sacred synod therefore decrees that henceforth their number shall be so adjusted that it is not a burden to the church which now, owing to the malice of the times, is afflicted by many serious inconveniences) or cheapened by being too large. They should be chosen from all the regions of Christianity, as far as this is convenient and possible, so that information on new things in the church may be more easily available for mature consideration. They should not exceed twenty-four in number, including the present cardinals. Not more than a third of them at any given time shall be from one nation, not more than one from any city or diocese. None shall be chosen from that nation which now has more than a third of them, until its share has been reduced to a third. They should be men outstanding in knowledge, good conduct and practical experience, at least thirty years old, and masters, doctors or licentiates who have been examined in divine or human law. At least a third or a quarter of them should be masters or licentiates in holy scripture. A very few of them may be sons, brothers or nephews of kings or great princes; for them an appropriate education will suffice, on account of their experience and maturity of behaviour.

Nephews of the Roman pontiff, related to him through his brother or sister, or of any living cardinal shall not be made cardinals; nor shall bastards or the physically handicapped or those stained by a reputation of crime or infamy. There can, however, be added to the aforesaid twenty-four cardinals, on account of some great necessity or benefit for the church, two others who are outstanding in their sanctity of life and excellence of virtues, even if they do not possess the above-mentioned degrees, and some distinguished men from the Greeks, when they are united to the Roman church. The election of cardinals shall not be made by oral votes alone, rather only those shall be chosen who, after a genuine and publicized ballot, obtain the collegial agreement, signed with their own hands, of the majority of the cardinals. For this purpose let an apostolic letter be drawn up with the signatures of the cardinals. The decree of this sacred council beginning Also since the multiplication of cardinals, etc., which was published in the fourth session, is to remain in force. When cardinals receive the insignia of their dignity, whose meaning is readiness to shed their blood if necessary for the good of the church, they shall take the following oath in a public consistory, if they are in the curia, or publicly in the hands of some bishop commissioned for this purpose by an apostolic letter containing the oath, if they are not in the curia.

I,N., recently chosen as a cardinal of the holy Roman church, from this hour henceforward will be faithful to blessed Peter, to the universal and Roman church and to the supreme pontiff and his canonically elected successors. I will labour faithfully for the defence of the catholic faith, the eradication of heresies errors and schisms, the reform of morals and the peace of the Christian people. I will not consent to alienations of property or goods of the Roman church or of other churches or of any benefices, except in cases allowed by law, and I will strive to the best of my ability for the restoration of those alienated from the Roman church. I will give neither advice nor my signature to the supreme pontiff except for what is according to God and my conscience. I will faithfully carry out whatever I am commissioned to do by the apostolic see. I will maintain divine worship in the church of my title and will preserve its goods: so help me God.

For the preservation of the titular churches of the cardinals, some of which have sadly deteriorated both in divine worship and in their buildings, to the shame of the apostolic see and of the cardinals themselves, this holy synod decrees that from the revenues and incomes of the territories of the Roman church — half of which belongs to the cardinals in accordance with the constitution of Pope Nicholas, as was said above — a tenth of what each cardinal receives shall be applied each year to his titular church. Moreover, each cardinal shall leave to his titular church, either in his lifetime or at his death, enough for the upkeep of one person. If he fails to do so, regarding both this and the said tenth, all his goods shall be sequestrated until due satisfaction has been made. We place the burden of carrying this out on the first cardinal of the order in which he died. Each cardinal present in the curia should make an annual visitation of his titular church in person; each one not present should make it through a suitable deputy. He should also inquire carefully concerning the clergy and the people of his dependent churches, and make useful provision with regard to the divine worship and the goods of these churches as well as the life and conduct of the clergy and parishioners, about whom, since they are his sheep, he will have to render an account at the severe judgment of God. As regards the time of the visitation and other things, let him observe what is laid down in our decree on synodal councils.

Although both the dignity itself and the cardinal's own promise urge him to toil at the holy tasks just mentioned, yet results will be greater if the tasks are spread among individuals. Therefore cardinal-bishops shall inquire about what regions are infected with new or old heresies, errors and superstitions; cardinal-priests shall inquire about where conduct, observance of the divine commandments and ecclesiastical discipline are lax; cardinal-deacons shall inquire about which kings, princes and peoples are troubled by actual or possible wars. Like busy bees, both with the supreme pontiff and among themselves, they should promote these holy works with diligence and in detail, striving to provide a remedy where this is needed. The supreme pontiff for his part, as the common father and pastor of all, should have investigations made everywhere not only when requested to do so but also on his own initiative and he should apply salutary medicines, as best he can, for all the illnesses of his children. If the cardinals ever notice that a pope is negligent or remiss or acting in a way unbefitting his state, though may this never happen, with filial reverence and charity they shall beg him as their father to live up to his pastoral office, his good name and his duty. First, let one or some of them warn him that if he does not desist they will delate him to the next general council, and if he does not amend they shall all do this as a college together with some notable prelates. For the well-being of the supreme pontiff and the common good they should not fear the hostility of the supreme pontiff himself or anything else, provided they act with reverence and charity. Much more so, if it comes to the pope's notice that some cardinal is acting wrongly and reprehensibly, he should correct him, always with paternal charity and according to evangelical teaching. Thus, acting in charity towards each other, one to another, a father to his sons and sons to their father, let them direct the church with exemplary and salutary government.

Let the cardinals both publicly and privately treat with kindness and respect prelates and all others, especially distinguished persons who come to the Roman curia, and let them present their business to the supreme pontiff freely and graciously. Since the cardinals assist him who is the common father of all, it is very unseemly for them to become acceptors of persons or advocates. Hence this holy synod forbids them to exercise any favouritism as collateral judges, even if they take their origin from a favoured region. Neither should they be biased protectors or defenders of princes or communities or others against anyone, whether paid or unpaid, but putting aside all sentiment let them assist the pope in pacifying quarrels with harmony and justice. The holy synod urges and commends them to promote the just business of princes and anybody else, especially religious and the poor, without charge and without seeking reward, as an act of charity. Let them preserve with readiness and kindness the gravity and modesty that befits their dignity. Let them maintain towards all people godliness which, according to the Apostle, is profitable in every way. Although they should not neglect their kinsfolk, especially if they are deserving and poor, they should not load them with a mass of goods and benefices to the scandal of others. Let them beware of pouring out on flesh and blood, beyond the bounds of necessity, goods coming from the churches. If the pontiff notices such strutting among the great, he should reprimand and object, as is fitting, and he will be blameworthy if he fails to correct, in keeping with his office, whatever needs correction.

The household, table, furniture and horses of both pope and cardinals should not be open to blame as regards quantity, state, display or any other excess. The house and its contents should be on a moderate scale, a model of frugality and not a source of scandal. Both the supreme pontiff and the cardinals, as well as other bishops, should strive to observe the constitution of blessed Gregory which was published at a general synod and which this holy synod now renews the sense of which is as follows: Though the life of a pastor should be an example to disciples, the clergy for the most part do not know the private life-style of their pontiff, even though secular youths know it; we therefore declare by this present decree that certain clerics and even monks should be selected to minister in the pontifical chamber, so that he who is in the seat of government may have witnesses who will observe his true private behaviour and will draw an example of progress from this regular sight.

Let them also pay attention to the words of Pope Paschal: "Let bishops spend their time in reading and prayer and always have with them priests and deacons and other clerics of good reputation, so that, following the Apostle and the instructions of holy fathers, they may be found without blame."3 It does not profit the commonweal for cases other than those concerning elections to cathedral churches or monasteries, or princes or universities or similar matters, to be assigned by the pope or the chancery to cardinals, since they should devote themselves to the greater problems of the universal church. Lesser cases, therefore, should be sent to the court of the Rota, which was instituted for this purpose. Neither the pope nor cardinals should in future send their officials to prelates who have been confirmed or provided, as it were to accept gifts, lest they allow others to do what is unfitting for themselves to do. Something that has happened in the past — namely a sum of money or something else is subtracted from the goods of a dead cardinal, as a charge for the ring given to him on the assignment of his titular church — is not to occur in the future, since the labours of cardinals for the commonweal merit rather obsequies from public funds, if they are poor.

[On elections]

Already this holy synod, with its abolition of the general reservation of all elective churches and dignities, has wisely decreed that provision should be made for them by canonical elections and confirmations. It wishes also to forbid special and particular reservations of elective churches and dignities, whereby free elections and confirmations can be prevented; and to ensure that the Roman pontiff will attempt nothing against this decree, except for an important, persuasive and clear reason, which should be expressed in detail in an apostolic letter. However, much has been done against the intention of this decree and without the required reason, resulting in serious scandals already and the likelihood of even more serious ones in the future. This holy synod wishes to prevent this and does not want the purpose of the decree, which was to remove every obstacle to canonical elections and confirmations, to be deprived of its effect. It therefore decrees that elections should assuredly be held in the said churches without any impediment or obstacle and that, after they have been examined in accordance with common law and the dispositions of our decree, they shall be confirmed. However, if perhaps on occasion it should happen that an election is made which in other respects is canonical but which, it is feared, will lead to trouble for the church or the country or the common good, the supreme pontiff, when the election is referred to him for confirmation, if he is convinced that there exists such a most pressing reason, after mature discussion and then with the signed votes of the cardinals of the Roman church or the majority of them declaring that the reason is true and sufficient, may reject the election and refer it back to the chapter or convent for them to institute another election, from which such consequences are not to be feared, within the legal time or otherwise according to the distance of the place.

[On reservations]

The numerous reservations of churches and benefices hitherto made by supreme pontiffs have turned out to be burdensome to churches. Therefore this holy synod abolishes all of them both general and special or particular — for all churches and benefices whatsoever that were customarily provided for by an election or a collation or some other disposition — which were introduced either by the additional canons Ad regimen and Execrabilis or by rules of the chancery or by other apostolic constitutions, and it decrees that never again shall they exist, with the exception only of reservations expressly contained in the corpus of law and those which occur in the lands mediately or immediately subject to the Roman church by reason of direct or beneficial dominion.

[On Clementine "Letters"]3

Although apostolic and other letters may state that someone has renounced, or been deprived of, a dignity, benefice or right, or has done something for which a right of his has been taken away, nevertheless letters of this sort should not prejudice him, even though they are based on the status or the intention of the person making the statement, unless proof is forthcoming from witnesses or other legitimate documents.

Session 24—14 April 1436

[About business with the Greeks and about indulgences, etc.]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Our ambassadors to the most serene emperor of the Romans and the most reverend lord patriarch of Constantinople, who were sent to Constantinople on behalf and in the name of this holy synod, for various reasons promised to present the terms which were concluded and signed by the two sides on another occasion in this holy synod regarding the manner of holding a universal and ecumenical council of both churches, and to exhibit them with effect, under the customary leaden seal of this holy synod, with the present date and containing the following text word for word. This holy synod, unwilling to omit anything that might help the union of Christ's churches, accepts, approves, ratifies and confirms by this present decree the said promise of its ambassadors and includes in this document the said terms word for word as was promised by the said ambassadors, as follows.

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Among the various works necessary for the whole Christian people for which this holy council was assembled, the union of the western and eastern churches of Christ is the chief and greatest. Rightly, therefore, from the very start of its proceedings, this holy synod has made every effort to achieve this. For, as quickly as possible it sent its ambassadors with letters to the most serene emperor of the Greeks and the most reverend patriarch of Constantinople, to exhort them with all charity and insistence that they should send some persons with full authority to treat with us on the way to achieve the said holy union. As soon as they were asked, they appointed to this holy synod three outstanding men from those who seem to be of great authority among them — the first of whom was indeed a blood-relative of the emperor — with a sufficient commission from the emperor himself signed by his own hand and with a golden seal, and furnished with letters of the patriarch. Both in a general congregation and in the presence of our commissaries they expressed the most fervent desire of the emperor, the patriarch and the whole eastern church for this union. They urge and daily stimulate us in a wonderful way to pursue this holy work, strongly and persistently affirming two things: that union is only possible in a universal synod in which both the western church and the eastern church meet, and that it is to be hoped that this union will follow if matters proceed in that synod in the way that is agreed below. We were filled with joy and gladness when we heard this. Therefore we venerable cardinals of the holy Roman church, presidents of the apostolic see, casting all our thoughts on God, who alone does great wonders, deputed the patriarch of Antioch and a suitable number of archbishops, bishops, abbots, masters and doctors to treat of this question with the ambassadors of the Greeks and to look for a way to reach a solution. After these men had frequently met and discussed among themselves and with the ambassadors, they reached the conclusions given below. These conclusions, in accordance with the custom of this council, were seriously debated by the deputations and ratified by a general congregation. Their contents, together with the chrysobull of the lord emperor, are as follows: The ambassadors of the most serene lord emperor, etc., which is given at length in the council's decree which is included above. But because the period of time mentioned above, within which the aforesaid things should have been fulfilled, has elapsed, not through the fault of either party but because of various intervening negotiations, this holy synod therefore accepts the period of time agreed by the most serene emperor of the Greeks and the most reverend patriarch of Constantinople on the one side, and by the ambassadors of this sacred council on the other, namely the year beginning this coming month of May, so that for the whole of this May until the following year each of the two parties is prepared to carry out the aforesaid points, and each accepts and promises that it will fulfil for its part, within the said time, whatever is included in the above-mentioned terms.

[Safe-conduct for the Greeks given by the sacred council of Basel to the lord emperor of the Greeks and the patriarch of Constantinople]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church. In our western region and the obedience of the Roman church, a universal and ecumenical synod is to be held, under God's inspiration, at which both the western church and the eastern church will meet in accordance with the agreement reached at this holy synod and later ratified in Constantinople. In order that the sincerity of our intention towards the eastern church may be manifest to all, and that all possible suspicion as regards the security and freedom of those coming to it may be removed, this holy synod of Basel by this present decree, in the name and on behalf of the entire western church and of all in that church of every status, including those of imperial, regal or pontifical rank or of any lower spiritual or secular dignity, authority or office, decrees, gives and concedes a full and free safe-conduct to the most serene emperor of the Greeks, the most reverend patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, and others up to the number of seven hundred persons, whether of imperial, regal, archiepiscopal or any other rank, dignity or condition, who are coming or shall come to the aforesaid universal and ecumenical council in the west. This holy synod, by this decree, receives and has received into its safe-keeping each and all of the said people, as regards their persons, honours and everything else, in the kingdoms, provinces, lordships, territories, communities, cities, castles, towns, vills and places of our obedience of the western church in which they shall stay or through which they shall pass. It promises and concedes to each and all of them, by this present synodal edict, free and safe permission to approach and enter the city or place in which the said holy universal council will be held; to stay, remain, reside and dwell there with all the immunities, liberties and securities which those of the obedience of the western church dwelling there will have; of debating, arguing and alleging rights and authorities and of saying, doing and treating of, freely and without hindrance from anyone, anything else that may seem to them useful and apt for the union of the churches of Christ.

They may at will go out and return from the said town or place safely, freely and without restraint, once or often or as many times as any of them may wish, singly or together, with or without their goods and money, with every real or personal obstacle ceasing and being put aside, even if the said union does not come about, though may that not be so. In the latter case and in every other outcome, the most serene emperor, the lord patriarchs and other aforesaid persons shall be taken back to Constantinople, at our expense and in our galleys, without any delay or obstacle, with the same honours, good will and friendship with which they were brought to the said universal council, whether or not union resulted from the council.

All this is notwithstanding any differences, disagreements or dissensions about the aforesaid matters, or any of them in particular, which exist at present or could arise in the future between the said western and eastern churches, that is, between the Roman church and those subject and attached to it, and the aforesaid most serene emperor and others attached to the church of Constantinople; notwithstanding any judgments, decrees, condemnations, laws or decretals of any kind that have been or shall be made or issued; notwithstanding any crimes, excesses, faults or sins that may be committed by any of the aforesaid persons; and notwithstanding anything else, even if it is something for which a special mention in this decree is necessary. If one or some of ours should harm one or more of them, though may it not happen, or should molest them in their persons, honour, property or anything else, the miscreant shall be sentenced by us or ours to make adequate and reasonable satisfaction to the injured party. And conversely, if any of them harms any of ours, he shall be sentenced by them to make adequate and reasonable satisfaction to the injured party, in accordance with the customs of both parties. As regards other crimes, excesses and faults, each party will institute proceedings and pass judgment on its own members.

This holy synod exhorts all Christ's faithful and furthermore commands, by the authority of the universal church and in virtue of the holy Spirit and of holy obedience, all prelates, kings, dukes, princes, officials, communities and other individuals, of whatever status, condition or dignity, who are members of our western church, to observe inviolably each and all of the above things and, far as they can, to have them observed; and to honour and treat with favour and reverence, and to have so honoured and treated, both individually and together, the most serene emperor, the patriarch and each and all of the other aforesaid persons on their way to and from the said council. If any doubt arises about the safe-conduct and its contents, it shall be decided by a declaration of the universal synod which is to be held. This holy synod, for its part, wishes the safe-conduct to remain in force until the most serene emperor, the patriarch and other aforesaid persons with their nobles and suites to the number of seven hundred persons, as was stated, and with their goods and chattels, have returned to Constantinople. If anyone attempts to act in any way contrary to the aforesaid or any part of it, let him know that he will incur the indignation of almighty God and of the said holy synod.

Session 25—7 May 1437

[On the places for the future ecumenical council for the Greeks]

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. Recently this holy synod among the various tasks for which the inscrutable providence of the divine majesty has deigned, by the invocation of the holy Spirit the paraclete, to bring it together and to employ it in the cultivation of the Lord's field, turning its mind like a watchful farmer and clearly perceiving how deplorable and abiding has been the division in God's church over the profession of the same faith by the eastern and western churches, conceived high hope and confidence in the most merciful goodness of him with whom nothing is impossible, and who generously and without restraint gives to all who duly ask him, to bring about the unity of the catholic faith between these churches. It decided, therefore, to apply the resources of its diligence more fully, grudging no labour or expense, because it was convinced that thence would follow the greater praise and glory of almighty God, a more fruitful salvation of souls and a greater increase of the faith. Desirous of undertaking this most salutary project of union, with the help of the grace of the holy Spirit it invited and exhorted to come to the project, through various envoys and letters, the most serene emperor of the Romans, the venerable patriarch of Constantinople, the other prelates and the rest of the Greek people.

The emperor, the patriarch and others of the Greeks received these exhortations with eagerness, their hearts inclined and influenced by the grace of the most High. Sincerely zealous to embark on this project of union, they decided to send to this holy synod their solemn envoys and spokesmen, who were furnished with an adequate mandate with the golden seal and signature of the emperor and the leaden seal of the patriarch, devoutly expressing their most fervent desire for this unity of faith. This holy synod concluded with them, in various preliminary meetings and deliberations about the execution of this salutary task of union, certain mutually agreed decrees and terms highly useful and necessary for this purpose, which were recorded above and were promulgated in a session of this holy synod in the cathedral of Basel. Thereafter this holy synod wished to implement these decrees and terms by all necessary and suitable means, and therefore to proceed to choosing a place for the coming ecumenical council, to which the aforesaid emperor, the patriarch and others of the Greeks could and should come. After many propositions about these and other topics relevant to this holy matter had been considered by the various deputations of this holy synod, and after the votes of their members on these points had been counted, finally in a general congregation summoned for this purpose in the said cathedral, as is customary, in which the votes of the individuals were again counted, it was found that more than two-thirds of them had voted for Basel, Avignon or Savoy. After they had invoked the grace of the holy Spirit and celebrated a mass, they agreed that due and earnest pressure should be exerted on the emperor, the patriarch and other aforesaid Greeks, with the many good reasons being put before them, so that they might agree to Basel as the place for the ecumenical council, and that if they rejected Basel, it should be held at Avignon. If Avignon proved impossible, it should be held in Savoy.

Therefore, in order that each and all of the aforesaid points might be brought to fruition, with all the solemnity normally employed in this sacred council of Basel in expediting matters of importance, while the fathers are seated in the cathedral of Basel after the mass, this holy synod decrees, wishes, ordains and declares that the future ecumenical council ought to be held at the due and agreed time in the city of Basel or, if that is rejected, in the city of Avignon or otherwise in Savoy, in accordance with the above-mentioned agreement; and that the emperor, the patriarch and other aforesaid Greeks, as detailed in the said terms and decrees, and all other persons of whatever rank, status, dignity or pre-eminence who ought by right or custom to take part in general councils, including those of episcopal rank, are bound and obliged to come to and take part in that ecumenical council, especially so that this salutary work might be completed. This holy synod wishes, declares and decrees this nomination and choice to be firm, fixed and unchangeable. Any modification, ordinance, disposition, nomination or choice to the contrary that may be made by this holy council or by one or more other persons, whatever their authority, even if it be papal, is utterly invalid; and this holy synod from its certain knowledge as from now quashes, revokes and annuls any such measures, and denounces them as quashed, null and of no effect, and it wishes them to be of no effect and holds them so now, in so far as they impede or oppose in whole or in part the said choice. Also this holy synod from its certain knowledge supplies for any defect that may exist in the aforesaid things or in any of them in particular. Furthermore, since this very difficult undertaking, which will bear great fruit in God's church, as well as the transport and maintenance of the aforesaid Greeks, cannot be accomplished without heavy expenses, it is right and fitting that all of Christ's faithful, especially ecclesiastics, should contribute generously from the substance of the patrimony of our lord Jesus Christ entrusted to them, for the conclusion of so happy a venture. This holy synod therefore imposes on each and every ecclesiastical person, both exempt and non-exempt under whatever form or words, even the order of St John of Jerusalem, of whatever status, dignity, rank, order or condition, even if they are cardinals or bishops, a tenth of all their ecclesiastical fruits and revenues — only daily distributions being excepted — from their churches, monasteries, dignities, offices and other ecclesiastical benefices. This tenth has already been imposed and agreed upon in a general congregation of this holy synod, and this holy synod now decrees and declares that it is to be imposed, and by this decree it imposes it. Furthermore, the said holy synod decrees, wishes, ordains and declares that the venerable bishops John of Luebeck, Luis of Viseu, Delfino of Parma and Louis of Lausanne, envoys of this holy synod, have full power for bringing the Greeks to the place of the ecumenical council, and for the majority of them then present to choose and nominate the Latin port which is most suitable and nearest to the places chosen and nominated above, and to which the said Greeks ought to direct themselves. The synod concedes this power to them by this present decree in accordance with the form of the other letters granted to them in this affair. Finally the same holy synod wishes, ordains and decrees, for the due and desired execution of the aforesaid points and what follows from them, and for the fuller security of the said envoys and of the council, that, at the request of these envoys or of their agents, any other suitable, useful and necessary letters shall be granted, drawn up and despatched in due and correct form by the synod's chancery under the synod's seal.

The holy general synod of Basel, legitimately assembled in the holy Spirit, representing the universal church, for an everlasting record. This holy synod from its outset, in order that those things might be accomplished which general councils are instituted to achieve with the assistance of the holy Spirit, devoted very great care to promoting union between the western and eastern peoples so that, as the church of God has suffered innumerable disasters from the long-standing dissension, the greatest profit might ensue from fraternal union. Therefore it sent envoys to Constantinople for the promotion of this holy work. They returned with the ambassadors of the most serene emperor of the Romans and of the venerable patriarch of Constantinople. After many meetings and mature deliberation on this subject, certain terms were agreed between this sacred council and those ambassadors and were confirmed by a decree in a public session. By these terms this holy synod bound itself to send envoys with certain sums of money, two large and two smaller galleys and three hundred crossbowmen within a fixed time, and to nominate through these envoys one of the places mentioned in the decree for the ecumenical council, where the emperor and the patriarch with seven hundred persons would meet with us to bring about this holy union.

However, since the time-limit for accomplishing the above is imminent, this holy synod, desirous of fulfilling its promises completely and of bringing to its desired goal this holy endeavour which is the most salutary of all works in these times, came to the following conclusion in its discussions and then in a general congregation: namely, that Florence or Udine in Friuli should be put into the council's hands, or else that there should be chosen for the ecumenical council some other safe place which is mentioned in the decree and is convenient for the pope and the Greeks, that is to say whichever of the aforesaid places shall be quickest to collect and send the galleys, the sums of money and other requisites with the necessary securities. The port would be Venice, Ravenna or Rimini; whichever of them the emperor and the patriarch of Constantinople prefer. Also, so that the clergy are not burdened uselessly, the tenth shall not be decreed or exacted until the Greeks have arrived at one of the above-mentioned ports. Also, that the sacred council should remain in this city during the whole time covered by the decree. Also, that the legates and presidents of the apostolic see, after they have summoned such fathers as shall seem good to them, shall choose the envoys for accompanying the Greeks and for carrying out the aforesaid things; these envoys ought to urge forcibly the choice of this city of Basel. Therefore, in order that each and all of the above may attain due effect, with the assistance of divine grace, in this public and solemn session this holy synod wishes, decrees and declares that the aforesaid decision is definite and valid, to be adhered to and to be implemented. It quashes, voids and annuls, and declares to be quashed, void and null, whatever has been or shall be done, or may be attempted, by any person or persons contrary to the above or its consequences or whatever could in any way impede their execution. And it wishes that the aforesaid apostolic legates and presidents shall compose in due form and under the seal of the council suitable letters for the execution of the above, and shall expedite whatever else may be necessary and appropriate for this holy enterprise.

Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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FIFTH LATERAN COUNCIL

Sessions I - XII (1512-1517)

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Introduction

This council was summoned by pope Julius II by the bull Sacrosanctae Romanae Ecclesiae, issued at Rome on 18 July 1511, after several schismatic cardinals, officially supported by Louis XII, king of France, had assembled a quasi-council at Pisa. Twice postponed, the council held its first session in full solemnity at Rome in the Lateran residence on 10 May 1512, at which session an elaborate address on the evils of the church was made by Giles of Viterbo, general of the order of Augustinian hermits.

There were twelve sessions. The first five of them, held during Julius II's pontificate, dealt primarily with the condemnation and rejection of the quasi-council of Pisa, and with the revoking and annulment of the French "Pragmatic Sanction". After the election of pope Leo X in March 1513, the council had three objectives: first, achieving a general peace between Christian rulers; second, church reform; and third, the defence of the faith and the rooting out of heresy. The seven sessions after Leo's election gave approval to a number of constitutions, among which are to be noted the condemnation of the teaching of the philosopher Pomponazzi (session 8), and the approval of the agreement completed outside the council between pope Leo X and king Francis I of France (session 11).

All the decrees of this council, at which the pope presided in person, are in the form of bulls. At the beginning of them are added the words "with the approval of the sacred council", and at the end "in public session solemnly held in the Lateran basilica". The fathers confirmed all the decrees by their votes. If anyone wished to reject a proposal, he made his dissenting opinion known verbally, or briefly in writing. The result was that the matters proposed, after various debates, were sometimes altered.

The decisions on the reform of the curia produced almost no effect because of the timidity and inadequacy of the recommendations, especially since the papacy showed slight inclination to carry the matter through. On the other hand, the council totally suppressed the Pisan schism. It is clear that bishops were never present in great numbers at the council, and that prelates who lived outside Italy were notably absent to such an extent that there has been frequent dispute about whether the council was ecumenical.

The decrees and other acts of the council were first published in Rome shortly after the council ended, namely on 31 July 1521 by cardinal Antonio del Monte, acting on the orders of pope Leo X. The title of this edition is: SA. Lateranense concilium novissimum sub Iulio II et Leone X celebratum (= Lc). It was subsequently used in various conciliar collections from Cr2 3 (1551) 3-192 to Msi 32 (1802) 649-1002. We have followed this edition of 1521 and have taken the headings of the constitutions from the summary which precedes it.

Session 1

10 May 1512

[The bull convoking the council, Sacrosancta Romanae Ecclesiae, and the bulls postponing it, Inscrutabilis and Romanus pontifex, are read out1{Msi 32, 681-690}. Masses are ordered to be celebrated, and prayers to be offered, to beg God's assistance; various arrangements are to be observed in the council and decrees are set out; advocates, procurators, notaries, guards and vote-scrutineers are chosen; assigners of places, and the location of places in their due order, are established.]

Session 2

17 May 1512

[The quasi-council of Pisa is condemned, and everything done at it is declared null and void. The Lateran council and whatever has been rightly done at it are confirmed]

Julius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. We intend, with the help of the most High, to proceed with the holding of this sacred Lateran council which has now begun for the praise of God, the peace of the whole church, the union of the faithful the overthrow of heresies and schisms, the reform of morals, and the campaign against the dangerous enemies of the faith, so that the mouths of all schismatics and enemies of peace, those howling dogs, may be silenced and Christians may be able to keep themselves unstained from such pernicious and poisonous contagion.

Accordingly, in this second session lawfully assembled in the holy Spirit, after mature deliberation held by us with our venerable brothers, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, by the advice and unanimous consent of the same brothers from sure knowledge and by the fullness of apostolic power, we confirm approve and renew, with the approval of the sacred council, the rejections condemnations, revocations, quashings, invalidations and annulments of the summoning, convoking and public utterances of that schismatical assembly, the vaunted quasi-council of Pisa, with its aim of rending and hampering the union of the aforesaid church, and of the citations, warnings, decrees, pardons, sentences, acts, legacies, creations, obediences, withdrawals, enjoined censures and applications issuing from it, and of the transfer of the said quasi-council to the cities of Milan or Vercellae or any other place, and of each and all of the acts and decisions of the said quasi-council, that have been expressed in our various letters completed and issued in due order, especially those issued under the dates of 18 July in the eighth year of our pontificate, and of 3 December and 13 April in the ninth year of our pontificate. Likewise we confirm, approve and renew with the approval of the sacred council, the letters themselves along with their decrees, declarations, prohibitions, commands, exhortations, warnings, applications of ecclesiastical interdicts, and other sentences, censures and penalties, whether by canonical sanctions or by our own act, especially those in the letter summoning this sacred universal council, and each and all of the other clauses contained in the said letters, the meanings of which we wish to be considered as expressed as if they were inserted herein word for word, even though, as being definite and valid, they require no other confirmation or approval for a more extensive guarantee and demonstration of the truth. We wish, decree and ordain that they be observed without alteration, and we make good each and all of the defects in them, should there be any.

We condemn and reject the aforesaid quasi-council and its transfer, and each and every thing done by it, and also those taking part in it or giving support, approval or consent, directly or indirectly, to whatever extent and in whatever manner, from the day of the summoning of the quasi-council until the present day, whether the things have already been done or are to be done in the future, even if they are or have been such that special, specific, definite and separate mention should be made about them, since we consider their meaning and characteristics as clearly expressed. We condemn and reject it like other counterfeit councils which diverge from the truth and whose acts have been condemned and rejected by the law and sacred canons. We proclaim these things to be null, void and empty, as indeed they are, to be or to have been of no force or Importance; and, so far as is necessary, we declare them void, invalid and null, and we wish them to be considered as void, invalid and null.

We decree and declare, with the approval of this same sacred council, that this sacred ecumenical council, justly, reasonably, and for true and lawful purposes duly and rightly summoned, has begun to be celebrated, and that each and every thing which has been and shall be done and executed in it, will be just, reasonable, settled and valid, and that it possesses and holds the same strength, power, authority and stability which other general councils approved by the sacred canons, especially the Lateran council, possess and hold.

Moreover, in the arrangement of the seasons, as the summer heats approach, in order to take account of the convenience and health of the prelates, and so that those may be awaited who live beyond the mountains and across the sea and who have hitherto been unable to come to this sacred council, and for other just and reasonable causes known to and approved by the said sacred council, we are summoning the third session of this same council to take place on 3 November next, with the said council likewise giving approval. And to each and every prelate and to others present at the same council, we grant and concede the freedom and permission to withdraw from the Roman curia and to stay wherever they wish, so long as they are present at the aforesaid Lateran council on the said 3 November, any clearly legitimate hindrance having been removed, subject to the infliction of the penalties indicated in the letter summoning the council and in canonical punishments against those failing to attend to councils, the said sacred council also approving. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...2{2 At this session, on account of the arrival of the bishop of Gurk, representative of the most serene emperor, a postponement of the third session was made until 3 November.}

Session 3

3 December 1512

[Each and all of the measures sponsored by the schismatic cardinals are rejected]

Julius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. To the praise and glory of him whose works are perfect, we are continuing the sacred council of the Lateran, lawfully assembled by favour of the holy Spirit, in this third session. We had summoned this session on another occasion, during the second session, for the third day of the following November. Later, by the advice and unanimous agreement of our venerable brothers, cardinals of the holy Roman church, for reasons then stated and for other lawful causes, we postponed it and summoned it to be held today, with the same sacred council giving approval to both the postponement and the summons for the said reasons which were known to it. This was after the happy and favourable adherence to, and union with, this most holy Lateran council on the part of our most dear son in Christ, Maximilian, ever revered emperor-elect of the Romans

We condemn, reject and detest, with the approval of this same sacred council, each and every thing done by those sons of damnation, Bernard Carvajal, Guillaume Briconnet, Rene de Prie, and Frederick of San Severino, formerly cardinals, and their supporters, adherents, accomplices and disciples—who are schismatics and heretics and have worked madly to their own and others' ruin, aiming to split asunder the unity of holy mother church at the quasi-council held at Pisa, Milan, Lyons and elsewhere—whatever the things were in number and kind that have been enacted, carried out, done, written, published or ordained up to the present day, including the imposition of taxes carried out by them throughout the kingdom of France, or shall be done in the future. Even though they are indeed null, useless and void and have already been condemned and rejected by us with the approval of the aforesaid sacred council, we nevertheless retain this present condemnation and rejection for the sake of greater precaution. We wish the meaning and characteristics of the things done, or to be done, to be considered as expressed herein word for word and not just by general clauses. We decree and declare them to be and to have been null, without purpose and void, of no force, efficacy, effect or importance.

We renew our letter dated 13 August 1512, at St Peter's, Rome, in the ninth year of our pontificate, by which, on the advice of the Dominicans, on account of the support, favours, sustenance and help notoriously provided to schismatics and heretics in the promotion of the said condemned and rejected quasi-council of Pisa, by the king of France and not a few other prelates, officials, nobles and barons of the kingdom of France, we placed under ecclesiastical interdict the kingdom of France and particularly Lyons, excepting the duchy of Brittany, and we forbade the customary fairs of Lyons to be held in that city and we transferred them to the city of Geneva. We also renew the decrees, declarations, prohibitions and every clause contained in the letter, the said sacred council likewise having full information about them and giving its approval. As stated, we subject the aforesaid kingdom and its cities, lands, towns and any other territories to this interdict, and we transfer the fairs from Lyons to the said city of Geneva.

In order that this sacred Lateran council may be brought to a fruitful and beneficial conclusion, and that the many other serious matters due for treatment and discussion in the council may proceed to the praise of almighty God and the exaltation of the universal church, we declare, with the full approval of the said sacred council, that the fourth session of the continuing celebration of the council shall be held on the tenth day of the present month of December. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

Session 4

10 December 1512

[The Pragmatic is revoked and the acts of the quasi-council of Pisa regarding the same are annulled] {Before this constitution, in the same session, there was also read out: A warning against the Pragmatic and its supporters}

Julius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. Giving close attention by paternal and earnest consideration to the safety of the flock entrusted to us from above, to the reform of morals and the defence of the church's liberty, and to the peace and development of the catholic faith, we approve and renew, with the approval of this holy council, for the praise and glory of almighty God and the undivided Trinity, the letter recently issued by us, of which the same council is aware, by which we made a general reform of the Roman curia's officials and of their imposts. We ordered the letter to be made public by certain persons, who were afterwards designated, for the benefit of the faithful, and in accordance with our wishes. We now order it to be made public in detail by the said designated persons together with other prelates from various nations who are present in the aforesaid council and are to be appointed. Everything that can pervert human judgment is to cease, as is right and fitting. We order, moreover, that the declarations are to be referred to us in other sessions of this sacred council and are to be approved by the same council, in order that they may be duly carried out.

Moreover, for considerable periods of time there has been great disparagement of the apostolic see and of the head, the liberty and the authority of the holy Roman universal church, as well as a limitation of the sacred canons, by a number of prelates of the French nation and by noble laymen and others supporting them, especially under pretext of a certain sanction which they call the Pragmatic{2 This Pragmatic Sanction had been promulgated by king Charles VII of France at Bourges on 7 July 1438, with the aim of removing abuses in the church, see DThC 12/2 (1935) 2780-2786, DDrC 7 (1958) 109-113, and NCE 11 (1967) 662-663}. We do not wish to endure further a thing so pernicious and offensive to God, a clear cheapening of and damage to the said church. For it is only in those regions that the sanction, carried out by those lacking all lawful power for that end and without the authority of popes or legitimate general councils, has been introduced and observed by way of an abuse. It must be rightly, along with its contents, be declared null and void and be repealed. Louis XI, king of France, of distinguished memory, repealed this sanction, as is clearly contained in his letters patent already made. Therefore, with the approval of the same council, we commit to the meetings of our venerable brothers, cardinals of the aforesaid church, and of other prelates, which are to be held in the upper room of the Lateran, insofar as this is necessary, the business of the declaration and abrogation which we are to make, as well as the report that is to be made to us and the same sacred council concerning the matters discussed in the first and other sessions, insofar as this can conveniently be done. We determine and decree that the prelates of France, chapters of churches and monasteries, and laymen favouring them, of whatever rank they may be, even royal, who approve or falsely use the said sanction, together with each and every other person thinking, either individually or in a group, that this sanction is to his advantage, be warned and cited, within a definite adequate term to be established, by a public edict—which is to be fixed on the doors of the churches of Milan, Asti and Pavia, since a safe approach to France is not available—that they are to appear before us and the aforesaid council and declare the reasons why the said sanction and its corrupting effect and misuse in matters concerning the authority, dignity and unity of the Roman church and the apostolic see, and the violation of sacred canons and of ecclesiastical freedom, ought not to be declared and judged null and void and be abrogated, and why those so warned and cited should not be restrained and held as if they had been warned and cited in person. Moreover, with regard to each and all provisions and collations of ecclesiastical benefices, confirmations of elections and petitions, grants of concessions, mandates and indults, of whatever kind, concerning both favours and matters of justice or both together, of whatever sense they may be—which things we wish to be regarded as clearly stated in the present letter—which were made by the synagogue or quasi-council of Pisa and its schismatic adherents, lacking all authority and merit, though they are indeed null and void, yet, for greater caution, we decree, with the approval of the said sacred council, that they are null and of no effect, force or importance; and that each individual, of whatever rank, status, grade, nobility, order or condition, to whom they were granted, or to whose convenience, advantage or honour they pertain, are to give up their fruits, incomes and profits, or to arrange for this to be done, and they are bound to restore both these things and their benefices and to give up the other aforesaid concessions, and that unless they have really and completely given up the benefices themselves and the other things granted to them, within two months from the date of this present letter, they are automatically deprived of the other ecclesiastical benefices which they hold by lawful title. Moreover, we apply whatever has been or shall be obtained in the way of fruits, rents and profits of this kind, and money-taxes imposed by the said quasi-council, to the campaign which is to be conducted against the infidels.

In order that the declaration of reform, and of the nullity of the said sanction, as well as other business may be carried out in due season, and so that the prelates who are still to come to this sacred council (we have received news that some have already set out on their journey to attend) may be able to arrive without inconvenience, we declare, with the approval of the council, that the fifth session shall be held on 16 February, which will be Wednesday after the first Sunday of the coming Lent. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

Session 5

16 February 1513

[Bull renewing and confirming the Constitution against not committing the evil of simony when electing the Roman pontiff]

Julius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. The supreme maker of things, the creator of heaven and earth, has willed by his ineffable providence that the Roman pontiff preside over the Christian people in the chair of pastoral supremacy, so that he may govern the holy, Roman, universal church in sincerity of heart and deeds and may strive after the progress of all the faithful. We therefore regard it as suitable and salutary that, in the election of the said pontiff, in order that the faithful may look upon him as a mirror of purity and honesty, all stain and every trace of simony shall be absent, that men shall be raised up for this burdensome office who, having embarked in the appropriate manner and order in a due, right and canonical way, may undertake the steering of the barque of Peter and may be, once established in so lofty a dignity, a support for right and good people and a terror for evil people; that by their example, the rest of the faithful may receive instruction on good behaviour and be directed in the way of salvation, that the things which have been determined and established by us for this, in accordance with the magnitude and seriousness of the case, may be approved and renewed by the sacred general council; and that the things so approved and renewed may be communicated, so that the more frequently they are upheld by the said authority, the more strongly they shall endure and the more resolutely they shall be observed and defended against the manifold attacks of the devil. Formerly, indeed, for great and urgent reasons, as a result of important and mature discussion and deliberation with men of great learning and authority, including cardinals of the Roman church, excellent and very experienced persons, a document on the following lines was issued by us.

Inserted constitution

Julius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, for an everlasting record. From a consideration that the detestable crime of simony is forbidden by both divine and human law, particularly in spiritual matters, and that it is especially heinous and destructive for the whole church in the election of the Roman pontiff, the vicar of our lord Jesus Christ, we therefore, placed by God in charge of the government of the same universal church, despite being of little merit, desire, so far as we are able with God's help, to take effective measures for the future with regard to the aforesaid things, as we are bound to, in accordance with the necessity of such an important matter and the greatness of the danger. With the advice and unanimous consent of our brothers, cardinals of the holy Roman church, by means of this our constitution which will have permanent validity, we establish, ordain, decree and define, by apostolic authority and the fullness of our power, that if it happens (which may God avert in his mercy and goodness towards all), after God has released us or our successors from the government of the universal church, that by the efforts of the enemy of the human race and following the urge of ambition or greed, the election of the Roman pontiff is made or effected by the person who is elected, or by one or several members of the college of cardinals, giving their votes in a manner that in any way involves simony being committed—by the gift, promise or receipt of money, goods of any sort, castles, offices, benefices, promises or obligations—by the person elected or by one or several other persons, in any manner or form whatsoever, even if the election resulted in a majority of two-thirds or in the unanimous choice of all the cardinals, or even in a spontaneous agreement on the part of all, without a scrutiny being made, then not only is this election or choice itself null, and does not bestow on the person elected or chosen in this fashion any right of either spiritual or temporal administration, but also there can be alleged and presented, against the person elected or chosen in this manner, by any one of the cardinals who has taken part in the election, the charge of simony, as a true and unquestionable heresy, so that the one elected is not regarded by anyone as the Roman pontiff.

A further consequence is that the person elected in this manner is automatically deprived, without the need of any other declaration, of his cardinal's rank and of all other honours whatsoever as well as of cathedral churches, even metropolitan and patriarchical ones, monasteries, dignities and all other benefices and pensions of whatever kind which he was then holding by title or in commendam or otherwise; and that the elected person is to be regarded as, and is in fact, not a follower of the apostles but an apostate and, like Simon, a magician and a heresiarch, and perpetually debarred from each and all of the above-mentioned things. A simoniacal election of this kind is never at any time to be made valid by a subsequent enthronement or the passage of time, or even by the act of adoration or obedience of all the cardinals. It shall be lawful for each and all of the cardinals, even those who consented to the simoniacal election or promotion, even after the enthronement and adoration or obedience, as well as for all the clergy and the Roman people, together with those serving as prefects, castellans, captains and other officials at the Castel Sant' Angelo in Rome and any other strongholds of the Roman church, notwithstanding any submission or oath or pledge given, to withdraw without penalty and at any time from obedience and loyalty to the person so elected even if he has been enthroned (while they themselves, notwithstanding this, remain fully committed to the faith of the Roman church and to obedience towards a future Roman pontiff entering office in accordance with the canons) and to avoid him as a magician, a heathen, a publican and a heresiarch. To discomfort him still further, if he uses the pretext of the election to interfere in the government of the universal church, the cardinals who wish to oppose the aforesaid election can ask for the help of the secular arm against him.

Those who break off obedience to him are not to be subject to any penalties and censures for the said separation, as though they were tearing the Lord's garment. However, the cardinals who elected him by simoniacal means are to be dealt with without further declaration as deprived of their orders as well as of their titles and honour as cardinals and of any patriarchal, archiepiscopal, episcopal or other prelacies, dignities and benefices which at that time they held by title or in commendam, or in which or to which they now have some claim, unless they totally and effectively abandon him and unite themselves without pretence or trickery to the other cardinals who did not consent to this simony, within eight days after they receive the request from the other cardinals, in person if this shall be possible or otherwise by a public announcement. Then, if they have joined themselves in full union with the said other cardinals, they shall immediately stand reintegrated, restored, rehabilitated and re-established in their former state, honours and dignities, even of the cardinalate, and in the churches and benefices which they had charge of or held, and shall stand absolved from the stain of simony and from any ecclesiastical censures and penalties.

Intermediaries, brokers and bankers, whether clerical or lay, of whatever rank, quality or order they may have been, even patriarchal or archiepiscopal or episcopal, or enjoying other secular, worldly or ecclesiastical status, including spokesmen or envoys of any kings and princes, who had part in this simoniacal election, are by that very fact deprived of all their churches, benefices, prelacies and fiefs, and any other honours and possessions. They are debarred from anything of that kind and from making or benefiting from a will, and their property, like that of those condemned for treason, is immediately confiscated and allotted to the treasury of the apostolic see. if the aforesaid criminals are ecclesiastics or otherwise subjects of the Roman church. If they are not subjects of the Roman church, their goods and fiefs in regions under secular control are immediately allotted to the treasury of the secular ruler in whose territory the property is located; in such a way, however, that if within three months from the day on which it was known that they had committed simony, or had part in it, the rulers have not in fact allotted the said goods to their own treasury, then the goods are from that date considered as allotted to the treasury of the Roman church, and are immediately so considered without the need for any further pronouncement to the same effect.

Also not binding and invalid, and ineffectual for taking action, are promises and pledges or solemn engagements made at any time for that purpose, even if prior to the election in question and even if made in any way through persons other than the cardinals, with some strange solemnity and form, including those made under oath or conditionally or dependent upon the outcome, or in the form of agreed bonds under whatever inducement, whether it be a deposit, loan, exchange, acknowledged receipt, gift, pledge, sale, exchange or any other kind of contract, even in the fuller form of the apostolic camera. Nobody can be bound or under pressure by the strength of these in a court of justice or elsewhere, and all may lawfully withdraw from them without penalty or any fear or stigma of perjury.

Moreover, cardinals who have been involved in such a simoniacal election, and have abandoned the person thus elected, may join with the other cardinals, even those who consented to the simoniacal election but later joined with the cardinals who did not commit the said simony, if the latter are willing to join with them. If these cardinals are not willing, they may freely and canonically proceed without them in another place to the election of another pope without waiting for another formal declaration to the effect that the election was simoniacal, though there always remains in force our same current constitution. They may announce and call together a general council in a suitable place as they shall judge expedient, notwithstanding constitutions and apostolic orders, especially that of pope Alexander III, of happy memory, which begins Licet de evitanda discordia, and those of other Roman pontiffs, our predecessors, including those issued in general councils, and any other things to the contrary that Impose restraint.

Finally, each and every one of the cardinals of the holy Roman church in office at the time, and their sacred college, are under pain of immediate excommunication, which they automatically incur and from which they cannot be absolved except by the canonically elected Roman pontiff, except when in immediate danger of death, not to dare, during a vacancy in the apostolic see, to contravene the aforesaid, or to legislate, dispose or ordain or to act or attempt anything in any way, under whatever alleged pretext or excuse, contrary to the aforesaid things or to any one of them. From this moment we decree it to be invalid and worthless if there should happen to be, by anyone knowingly or unknowingly, even by us, an attack on these or any one of the foregoing regulations. So that the meaning of this our present constitution, decree, statute, regulation and limitation may be brought to the notice of everyone, it is our will that our present letter be affixed to the doors of the basilica of the prince of the apostles and of the chancellery and in a corner of the Campo dei Fiori, and that no other formality for the publication of this letter be required or expected, but the aforesaid public display suffices for its solemn publication and perpetual force. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however.. Given at Rome at St Peter's on 14 January 1505/6, in the third year of our pontificate.

[...] As we ponder how heavy is the burden and how damaging the loss to the vicars of Christ on earth that counterfeit elections would be, and how great the hurt they could bring to the Christian religion, especially in these very difficult times when the whole Christian religion is being disturbed in a variety of ways, we wish to set obstacles to the tricks and traps of Satan and to human presumption and ambition, so far as it is permitted to us, so that the aforesaid letter shall be better observed the more clearly it is established that it has been approved and renewed by the mature and healthy discussion of the said sacred council, by which it has been decreed and ordained, though it does not need any other approval for its permanence and validity. For a more ample safeguard, and to remove all excuse for guile and malice on the part of evil thinkers and those striving to overthrow so sound a constitution, with a view to the letter being observed with greater determination and being more difficult to remove, to the extent that it is defended by the approval of so many of the fathers, we therefore, with the approval of this Lateran council and with the authority and fullness of power stated above, confirm and renew the said letter together with every statute, regulation, decree, definition, penalty, restraint, and all the other and individual clauses contained in it; we order it to be maintained and observed without change or breach and to preserve the authority of an unchanging firmness; and we decree and declare that cardinals, mediators, spokesmen, envoys and others listed in the said letter are and shall be bound to the observance of the said letter and of each and every point expressed in it, under pain of the censures and penalties and other things contained in it, in accordance with its meaning and form; notwithstanding apostolic constitutions and ordinances, as well as all those things which we wished not to prevent in the said letter, and other things of any kind to the contrary. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...{1 At this session other measures against the Pragmatic Sanction were also recorded, especially Julius II's constitution Inter alia (Msi 32, 772-773).}

Session 6

27 April 1513

[Safe-conduct for those who wish and ought to come to the council, for their coming, residence, exchange of views and return journey]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. By the supreme ordinance of the omnipotent who governs the things of heaven and of earth by his providence, we preside over his holy and universal church, though we are unworthy. Instructed by the saving and most holy teaching of the doctor of the gentiles, we direct our chief attention, among the many anxieties from which we unceasingly suffer distress, towards those things in particular by means of which unending unity and unsullied charity may abide in the church; the flock committed to us may go forward along the right courses towards the way of salvation, and the name of Christians and the sign of the most sacred cross, in which the faithful have been saved, may be more widely spread, after the infidels have been expelled with the help of God's right hand.

Indeed, after the holding of five sessions of the sacred general Lateran council, pope Julius II of happy memory, our predecessor, by the advice and agreement of our venerable brothers the cardinals of the holy Roman church, of whose number we then were, in a praiseworthy and lawful manner and for sound reasons, guided by the holy Spirit, summoned the sixth session of the council to take place on the eleventh day of this month. But after he had been taken from our midst, we postponed the sixth session until today, with the advice and consent of our said brothers, for reasons which were then expressed and for other reasons influencing the attitude of us and of our said brothers. But since there had always been an inner determination within us, while we were of lesser rank, to see the general council being celebrated (as a principal means of cultivating the Lord's field), now that we have been raised to the highest point of the apostolate, considering that a duty which results from the office of pastoral care enjoined on us has coincided with our honourable and beneficial wish, we have undertaken this matter with a more earnest desire and complete readiness of mind. Consequently, with the approval of the same sacred Lateran council we approve the postponement which we made and the council itself, until the aims for which it was summoned have been completed, in particular that a general and settled peace may be arranged between Christian princes and rulers after the violence of wars has been stilled and armed conflict set aside. We intend to apply and direct all our efforts to this peace, with untiring care and leaving nothing untried for so salutary a good. We declare that it is and shall be our unchangeable attitude and intention that, after those things which affect the praise of God and the exaltation of the aforesaid church and the harmony of Christ's faithful have been achieved, the holy and necessary campaign against the enemies of the catholic faith may be carried out and may achieve (with the favour of the most High) a triumphant outcome.

In order, however, that those who ought to attend so very useful a council may not be held back in any way from coming, we hereby grant and concede, with the approval of the said sacred council, to each and every one of those summoned to the council by the said Julius, our predecessor, or who ought to take part, by right or custom, in the meetings of general councils, especially those of the French nation, and to those schismatics and others who are coming to the said Lateran council by common or special right, on account of a declaration or apostolic letter of our predecessors or of the apostolic see (except, of course, those under prohibition), and to the attendants and associates of those who come, of whatever status, rank, condition or nobility they may be, ecclesiastical or secular, for themselves and all their belongings, a free, guaranteed and fully comprehensive safe-conduct, for coming by land or sea through the states, territories and places that are subject to the said Roman church, to this Lateran council in Rome, and of residing in the city and freely exchanging views, and of leaving it as often as they wish, with complete, unrestricted and total security and with a true and unchallengeable papal guarantee, notwithstanding any impositions of ecclesiastical or secular censures and penalties which may have been promulgated in general against them, for whatever reasons, by law or by the aforesaid see, under any forms of words or clauses, and which they may in general have incurred. By our letters we shall encourage, warn, and request each and every Christian king, prince and ruler that, out of reverence for almighty God and the apostolic see, they are not to molest or cause to be molested directly or indirectly, in any way in their persons or goods, those on their way to this sacred Lateran council, but they are to allow them to come in freedom, security and peace.

In addition, for the carrying out of the celebration of this council, we declare that the seventh session shall be held on 23 May next. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

Session 7

17 June 1513

The constitution Meditatio cordis nostri1 {Msi 32, 815-818}, postponing the eighth session to 16 November, is read out and approved.

Session 8

19 December 1513

[Condemnation of every proposition contrary to the truth of the enlightened Christian faith]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. The burden of apostolic government ever drives us on so that, for the weaknesses of souls requiring to be healed, of which the almighty Creator from on high has willed us to have the care, and for those ills in particular which are now seen to be pressing most urgently on the faithful, we may exercise, like the Samaritan in the gospel, the task of healing with oil and wine, lest that rebuke of Jeremiah may be cast at us: Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there? Consequently, since in our days (which we endure with sorrow) the sower of cockle, the ancient enemy of the human race, has dared to scatter and multiply in the Lord's field some extremely pernicious errors, which have always been rejected by the faithful, especially on the nature of the rational soul, with the claim that it is mortal, or only one among all human beings, and since some, playing the philosopher without due care, assert that this proposition is true at least according to philosophy, it is our desire to apply suitable remedies against this infection and, with the approval of the sacred council, we condemn and reject all those who insist that the intellectual soul is mortal, or that it is only one among all human beings, and those who suggest doubts on this topic. For the soul not only truly exists of itself and essentially as the form of the human body, as is said in the canon of our predecessor of happy memory, pope Clement V, promulgated in the general council of Vienne, but it is also immortal; and further, for the enormous number of bodies into which it is infused individually, it can and ought to be and is multiplied. This is clearly established from the gospel when the Lord says, They cannot kill the soul; and in another place, Whoever hates his life in this world, will keep it for eternal life and when he promises eternal rewards and eternal punishments to those who will be judged according to the merits of their life; otherwise, the incarnation and other mysteries of Christ would be of no benefit to us, nor would resurrection be something to look forward to, and the saints and the just would be (as the Apostle says) the most miserable of all people.

And since truth cannot contradict truth, we define that every statement contrary to the enlightened truth of the faith is totally false and we strictly forbid teaching otherwise to be permitted. We decree that all those who cling to erroneous statements of this kind, thus sowing heresies which are wholly condemned, should be avoided in every way and punished as detestable and odious heretics and infidels who are undermining the catholic faith. Moreover we strictly enjoin on each and every philosopher who teaches publicly in the universities or elsewhere, that when they explain or address to their audience the principles or conclusions of philosophers, where these are known to deviate from the true faith—as in the assertion of the soul's mortality or of there being only one soul or of the eternity of the world and other topics of this kind—they are obliged to devote their every effort to clarify for their listeners the truth of the Christian religion, to teach it by convincing arguments, so far as this is possible, and to apply themselves to the full extent of their energies to refuting and disposing of the philosophers' opposing arguments, since all the solutions are available.

But it does not suffice occasionally to clip the roots of the brambles, if the ground is not dug deeply so as to check them beginning again to multiply, and if there are not removed their seeds and root causes from which they grow so easily. That is why, since the prolonged study of human philosophy—which God has made empty and foolish, as the Apostle says, when that study lacks the flavouring of divine wisdom and the light of revealed truth—sometimes leads to error rather than to the discovery of the truth, we ordain and rule by this salutary constitution, in order to suppress all occasions of falling into error with respect to the matters referred to above, that from this time onwards none of those in sacred orders, whether religious or seculars or others so committed, when they follow courses in universities or other public institutions, may devote themselves to the study of philosophy or poetry for longer than five years after the study of grammar and dialectic, without their giving some time to the study of theology or pontifical law. Once these five years are past, if someone wishes to sweat over such studies, he may do so only if at the same time, or in some other way, he actively devotes himself to theology or the sacred canons; so that the Lord's priests may find the means, in these holy and useful occupations, for cleansing and healing the infected sources of philosophy and poetry.

We command, in virtue of holy obedience, that these canons are to be published each year, at the beginning of the course, by the local ordinaries and rectors of universities where institutes of general studies flourish. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

[On arranging peace between Christian princes and on bringing back the Bohemians who reject the faith]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. We are continuing the sacred Lateran council for the praise of the almighty and undivided Trinity and for the glory of him whose place we represent on earth, who develops peace and harmony in his high heavens, and who, on his departure from this world, left peace as a lawful inheritance to his disciples. For, in the previous seventh session, the council was confronting, among other matters, the threatening and very obvious danger from the infidels and the spilling of Christian blood, which even then was being poured out because of our blatant faults. The quarrels between Christian kings and princes and peoples must also be removed. and we were being compelled to seek with all our strength for peace between them. This was the reason for having to arrange one of the more important meetings of the said council: so that peace should follow and be maintained as unbroken and leading to its due fulfilment, especially in these times when the power of the infidels is recognised to have grown to a remarkable extent. Therefore, with the approval of the same council, we have arranged and decided to send to the aforesaid kings, princes and rulers alert legates and envoys of peace, who are outstanding in learning, experience and goodness, with a view to negotiating and arranging peace. And, in order that these men may lay aside their arms, we have called upon their spokesmen who are present at the council, insofar as we were able to do with God's help, to devote all their energy and strength, out of reverence for the apostolic see and the union of the faithful, to giving notice of these matters to their kings, princes and rulers. These are invited, in our name, to negotiate and listen with good will and honour to the apostolic legates themselves, and to act in favour of our just and holy desires which are to be set before them by these messengers.

We were persuading ourself that they will do this, in order that our legates may be able to take up the task of the embassy as quickly as possible and manfully complete the undertaking, and so that, by the favour of the Father of lights (from whom comes every best gift) peace can be negotiated and arranged and, once this has been settled, the holy and necessary expedition against the frenzy of the infidels, panting to have their fill of Christian blood, can take place and be brought to a favourable conclusion for the safety and peace of the whole of Christianity. After this we were hoping from the depths of our heart, because of our pastoral office, for peace and union within the whole Christian people and in particular among the same kings, rulers and princes from whose discord it was feared that prolonged and serious damage could daily affect the Christian state. A hope began to rise that the Christian state would be cared for in a useful and salutary way by this peace and unity, because of the authority of these men. We dispatched our messengers and letters to the aforesaid kings, princes and rulers—at that time in disunion with each other—for them to be exhorted, requested and warned. We omitted nothing (so far as lay in our power) to arrange and produce by our every effort that, once discord and disagreement of any kind had been removed, they would wish eventually to return, in complete agreement, grace and love, to universal peace, harmony and union. In this way, further losses would not be inflicted on Christians from the hands of the savage ruler of the Turks or from other infidels, but there would be a rallying of forces to crush the terrible fury and the boastful endeavours of those peoples.

In that situation, as we strive with all thought, care, effort and zeal for everything to be brought to the desired end, and with confidence in the gift of God, we have decreed that legates with a special mission from us—who will be cardinals of the holy Roman church and who are soon to be named by us, on the advice of our brothers, in our secret consistory—shall be appointed and sent with authority and with the necessary and appropriate faculties, as messengers of peace, for the arranging, negotiating and settling of this universal peace among Christians, for the embarking upon an expedition against the infidels, with the approval of this sacred council, and for inducing the said kings, out of generosity of soul befitting their rank and out of devotion towards the catholic faith, to move with ready and eager minds towards the holy tasks of both peace and the expedition, for the total and perfect protection, defence and safety of the entire Christian state.

In addition, since very great offence is given to God from the prolonged and manifold heresy of the Bohemians, and scandal is caused to the Christian people, the charge of bringing back these people to the light and harmony of the true faith has been wholly entrusted by us for the immediate future to our dear son, Thomas of Esztergom, cardinal-priest of the title of St Martin in the Hills, as legate of ourself and the apostolic see to Hungary and Bohemia. We exhort these people in the Lord not to neglect to dispatch some of their spokesmen, with an adequate mandate, either to us and this sacred Lateran council or to the same Thomas, cardinal-legate, who will be nearer to them. The purpose will be to exchange views with regard to an appropriate remedy by which they may recognise the errors to which they have long been in thrall and may be led back, with God's guidance, to the true practice of religion and into the bosom of holy mother church. With the approval of the sacred council, by the tenor of the present letter, we grant and bestow on them, by the faith of a pontiff, a public guarantee and a free safe-conduct as to their coming, going, remaining for as long as the negotiation of the aforesaid matters shall last, and afterwards for departing and returning to their own territories; and we shall consent to their wishes so far as we can under God.

So that this sacred Lateran council may be brought to the completion of the fruitful benefit desired, since many other serious subjects remain to be discussed and debated for the praise of God and the triumph of his church, we declare with the approval of the sacred council, that the ninth session of the continuing celebration of this sacred Lateran council shall be held on 5 April 1514, in the first year of our pontificate, which will be Wednesday after Passion Sunday. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

[Bull on reform]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. Placed by the gift of divine grace at the supreme point of the apostolic hierarchy, we thought nothing was more in keeping with our official duty than to survey, with zeal and care, everything which could pertain to the protection, soundness and extension of the catholic flock entrusted to us. To this purpose we have applied all the force of our activity and the strength of our mind and talent. Our predecessor of happy memory, pope Julius II, since he was concerned about the well-being of the faithful and anxious to protect it, had summoned the ecumenical Lateran council for many other reasons indeed, but also because a constant complaint was being pressed concerning the officials of the Roman curia. For these reasons there were appointed a number of committees composed of his venerable brothers, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, of whose number we were then, and also of prelates, to investigate carefully into these complaints. In order that those attached to the curia and others approaching it for favours would not in the meantime be tormented by the excessive burden of expenses and that, at the same time, the ill-repute by which the said officials were deeply disturbed might be appeased by a speedy remedy, he issued a bull of reform by which they were bound anew, under a heavy penalty, to keep the legal terms of their offices. Because death intervened, he was unable to legislate in particular about the excesses or to complete the council.

We, as the successor of the concern no less than of the office, right at the beginning of our pontificate, did not delay to resume the synod, to promote peace between Christian princes and no less, since it is our intention to complete a universal reform, to strengthen by new aids what was first provided by our predecessor concerning the curial offices, and to follow this through with the expanded committees. For no more pressing anxiety weighs on us than that the thorns and brambles be pulled up from the Lord's field, and if there is anything hindering its cultivation, it is to be removed root and branch. Therefore, after a careful report had been received from the committees, with notice of what was being side-tracked by which persons, we restored to the norm whatever had deviated either from a sound and praiseworthy custom or from a long-standing institution. We gathered these together into one bull of reform published on this matter with the approval of the sacred council;{This bull Pastoralis officii was published on 13 Dec. 1513, but it was never submitted to a vote of the fathers} and we appointed to execute it those who would insist on the decisions being kept. With the approval of this sacred council, we order this to be observed without alteration and without deceit by the officials themselves as well as by others, according as it affects each, under penalty of immediate excommunication from which they can only be absolved by the Roman pontiff (except in immediate danger of death), in such a way that, in addition to this and other penalties stated in detail in the bull, those acting against it are automatically suspended for six months from the office in which they committed the fault. And if they have failed for a second time in the same office, they are deprived for ever because they have contaminated the office itself. After they have been brought back to good conduct by means of our constitution, and the general damage has been checked and removed, we shall proceed to the remaining stages of the reform.

If the Almighty in his mercy allows us to settle peace among the Christian leaders, we shall press on not only to destroy completely the bad seeds, but also to expand the territories of Christ, and, supported by these achievements, we shall go forward, with God favouring his own purposes, to the most holy expedition against the infidels, the desire for which is deeply fixed in our heart.

Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

Session 9

5 May 1514

[The pope urges Christian rulers to make peace among themselves so that an expedition against the enemies of the Christian faith may be possible]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. After we had been called by divine dispensation to the care and rule of the universal church, even though we are unworthy of so great a responsibility, we began from the highest point of the apostolate, as from the top of Mount Sion, to turn our immediate gaze and direct our mind to the things that seem to be of primary importance for the salvation, peace and extension of the church itself. When we focused all our care, thought and zeal in this direction, like an experienced and watchful shepherd, we found nothing more serious or dangerous to the Christian state and more opposed to our holy desire than the fierce madness of armed conflicts. For, as a result of them, Italy has been almost wiped out by internecine slaughter, cities and territories have been disfigured, partly overturned and partly levelled, provinces and kingdoms have been stricken, and people cease not to act with madness and to welter in Christian blood. Hence we have judged that nothing should be given more importance, consideration and attention than the quelling of these wars and the re-ordering of ecclesiastical discipline in accordance with resources and circumstances, so that with God appeased by a change of life, after quarrels have been set aside, we may be able to bring together and gather into one the Lord's flock entrusted to our care, and to encourage and arouse this flock more readily, in a union of peace and harmony, as by a very strong binding force, against the common enemies of the Christian faith who are now threatening it.

This our intense desire for this campaign against the evil and implacable enemies of the cross of Christ is indeed so implanted in our heart that we determined to continue and follow up the sacred Lateran council—which was summoned and begun by our predecessor of happy memory, Julius II, and interrupted by his death—for that special reason, as is clear from all the different sessions held by us in the same council. Thus, with the Christian princes or their spokesmen assembled at the same council, and prelates from different parts of the world coming to it, once peace between these Christian princes had been settled and (as is right) the noxious brambles of heresies had been first uprooted from the Lord's field, then the things necessary for the campaign against the same enemies, and what concerns the glory and triumph of the orthodox faith, and various other matters, could be happily decided upon by the timely advice and agreement of all.

Although many distinguished men, outstanding in every branch of learning, came from different parts of Europe to this council, which had been solemnly summoned and duly proclaimed, many also, legitimately hindered, sent their instructions in official form. However, because of the difficulties from wars and circumstances as a result of which many territories have been blocked by hostile arms for a long time, the resources and large numbers which we desired could not be assembled. Moreover, that we have not as yet sent the specially appointed legates to kings and princes to promote union and peace between the same rulers—something that perhaps seems necessary to many and that we too think is especially opportune—cannot be attributed to us. The reason, of course, why we refrained from doing so is this: nearly all the princes made it known by letters and messages to us, that the sending of legates was not at all necessary or expedient. Nevertheless, we sent men of discretion and proved loyalty, endowed with the rank of bishop, as our envoys to those very princes who were undertaking serious armed activity among themselves and, as far as could be guessed, rather bitter wars. It has come about, especially by the action of these envoys, that truces have been agreed between some of the princes and the rest are thought to be on the point of giving their consent. Therefore we shall not put off sending the special legates, as we decided in the last session, whenever this is necessary and profitable for the setting up of a stable and lasting peace among them, and as we previously proposed. In the meantime, we shall not cease to act and reflect on what is relevant to the situation, with the spokesmen of the same princes who are negotiating with us, and to press on and exhort them and their princes to this action by means of our envoys and letters.

Oh that the almighty and merciful God would assist from on high our plans for peace and our constant thoughts, would regard the faithful people with more benevolent and favourable eyes and, for the sake of common safety and peace and for the suppression of the haughty madness of the wicked enemies of the Christian name, would give a propitious hearing to their devout prayers ! By our apostolic authority, we enjoin on each and every primate, patriarch and archbishop, on chapters of cathedral and collegiate churches, both secular and those belonging to any of the religious orders, on colleges and convents, on leaders of peoples, deans, rectors of churches and others who have charge of souls, and on preachers, alms-collectors and those who expound the word of God to the people, and we order in virtue of holy obedience, that within the celebration of masses, during the time that the word of God is being set before the people or outside that time, and in prayers which they will say in chapter or as convents, or at some other time in any kind of gathering, they are to keep the following special collects for the peace of Christians and for the confounding of the infidels respectively: O God, from whom holy desires, and, O God, in whose hands are all power and authority over kingdoms, look to the help of Christians. And they are no less to enjoin on members of their dioceses and on any other persons of either sex, whether ecclesiastical or secular, over whom they have authority by reason of a prelature or any other ecclesiastical position of authority, and to encourage in the Lord those to whom God's word is proposed on their own or another's responsibility, that they should pour forth in private devout prayers to God himself and to his most glorious mother, in the Lord's prayer and the Hail Mary, for the peace of Christians (as mentioned above) and for the complete destruction of the infidels.

Further, whoever of those mentioned above think that, by influence or favour with secular princes of any rank, distinction or dignity, or with their advisers, associates, attendants or officials, or with the magistrates, rectors and lieutenants of cities, towns, universities or any secular institutions, or with other persons of either sex, ecclesiastical or secular, they can take steps towards a universal or particular peace between princes, rulers and Christian peoples, and towards the campaign against the infidels, let them use strong encouragement and lead them on to this peace and the campaign. By the tender mercy of our God and the merit of the passion of his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, we exhort all of them with all possible emotion of our heart, and we counsel them by the authority of the pastoral office which we exercise, to lay aside private and public enmities and to turn to embracing the endeavour for peace and deciding on the aforesaid campaign.

We strictly forbid each and every prelate, prince or individual, whether ecclesiastical or secular, of whatever state, rank, dignity, pre-eminence or condition they may be, under threat of the divine judgment, to presume to introduce in any way, directly or indirectly, openly or secretly, any obstacle to the said peace which is to be negotiated by us or by our agents, whether legates or envoys of the apostolic see endowed (as said before) with the episcopal rank, for the defence of the Christian state of the faithful. Those who, in working towards this peace, think that there is involved something of a private or a public nature that is of importance to their princes, cities or states, the care for whom or which pertains to them because of some office or public function should, as far as it will be possible in the Lord, with due moderation and calm take control of the matter inasmuch as it involves support and goodwill towards the coming peace. Indeed, those who wish to rouse the faithful by Christ's spiritual gifts, when these are duly contrite and absolved, and to pour out devout prayers for obtaining peace and for deciding on the expedition, so that the said peace and the campaign against the said enemies of the Christian faith may be brought about and be secured from God himself, will devote worthwhile and well-considered efforts as often as they do this. These prayers, offered with devotion, should take place in masses, sermons and other divine services, in collegial, conventual and other public or communal prayers, and among princes, advisers, officials, governors and other persons named above who seem to have some influence in making or arranging the peace and in deciding (as said before) on the campaign against the enemies of the unconquered cross.

Trusting in the mercy of God and the authority of his blessed apostles Peter and Paul, we grant remission of one hundred days of imposed penances to those who, individually and in private, offer prayers to obtain the foregoing from God; seven times each day if they do it so often or, if fewer, as often as they shall do it; until the universal peace—which is receiving our constant attention - between princes and peoples at present in armed dispute has been established, and the campaign against the infidels has been decreed with our approval. We lay an obligation on our venerable brothers, primates, patriarchs, archbishops and bishops, to whom the present letter or copies of it, accurately printed either in Rome or elsewhere, shall come under official seals, to have it published with all possible speed in their provinces and dioceses, and to give firm instructions for its due execution.

In the meantime, with the approval of the sacred council, we have decreed, as we proposed and desired with all our heart, the ecclesiastical reform of our curia and of our venerable brothers, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, and of others dwelling in Rome, and many other necessary things, which will be contained in our other letters due for publication in this same session. It was Julius, our predecessor, who summoned to this council all those who were accustomed to attend councils. He gave them a comprehensive safe-conduct so that they could make the journey and arrive safely and unharmed. However, many prelates who ought to have come have so far not arrived, perhaps because of the obstacles already stated. In our desire to go ahead with the more serious business due in the next session, we appeal to in the Lord, and we ask and counsel by the tender mercy of the same, prelates, kings, dukes, marquises, counts and others who usually come or send someone to a general council, but who have not yet provided spokesmen or legitimate instructions, to decide with all possible speed either to come in person or to send chosen and competent envoys, with valid instructions, to this sacred Lateran council which is so beneficial to the Christian state.

With regard to those venerable brethren, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, abbots and prelates - especially those bound under oath to visit the place of the apostles Peter and Paul at certain fixed times, and to attend in person general councils which have been summoned, including those under that obligation at the time of their promotion—whose obstinacy as being non-attenders at various sessions became a matter of frequent accusation by the sponsor of the same council, there is to be found in solemn form both a petition for proceedings against them and a statement of the censures and penalties incurred. This is notwithstanding any privileges, concessions and indults that were granted confirmed or renewed by us or our said predecessors in favour of them and their churches, monasteries and benefices. These we annul and invalidate through our certain knowledge and fullness of power, considering them to be fully stated here. We impose in virtue of holy obedience, and we strictly command under the penalties of excommunication and perjury and others derived from law or custom, and in particular from the letter which summoned and proclaimed the said Lateran council and was promulgated by our predecessor, Julius himself that they must attend in person the said Lateran council and remain in Rome until it has reached its conclusion and been terminated by our authority, unless they are prevented by some legitimate excuse. And if (as we said) they have somehow been prevented, they are to send their suitably qualified representatives with a full mandate on the matters that will have to be treated, dealt with and advised upon.

In order to remove completely all excuse and leave no pretext of any impediment to anyone who is obliged to attend, in addition to the public guarantee which was clearly granted at the summoning of this council to all coming to it we give, concede and grant, acting on the advice and power mentioned above with the same council's approval, to each and all who have been accustomed to be present at the meetings of general councils and are coming to the present Lateran council, as well as to members of their personal staff, of whatever status rank, order and condition or nobility they may be, ecclesiastical and secular, a free, safe and secure safe-conduct and, by apostolic authority in the meaning of the present letter, full protection in all its aspects, for themselves and for all their possessions of any kind as they pass through cities, territories and places, by sea and land, which are subject to the said Roman church, for the journey to the Lateran council in Rome, for remaining in the city of freedom, for exchanging views according to their opinions, for departing therefrom as often as they may wish and also after four months from the conclusion and dispersal of the said council; and we promise to give readily other safe-conducts and guarantees to those desiring to have them. Each and all of these visitors we shall deal with and welcome with kindness and charity.

Under the threat of the divine majesty and of our displeasure, and of the penalties against those impeding the holding of councils, particularly the said Lateran council, which are contained and set down in law or in the letter of the aforesaid summons of our predecessor, we are instructing each and all secular princes, of whatever exalted rank they may be, including imperial, royal, queenly, ducal or any other, the governors of cities, and citizens governing or ruling their states, to grant to the prelates and others coming to the said Lateran council a free permission and licence, a safe-conduct for coming and returning, and a free and unharmed transit through the dominions, lands and property of theirs through which the said persons must pass together with their equipment, possessions and horses; all exceptions and excuses being completely set aside and without force.

In addition we order and command, under pain of our displeasure and of other penalties which can be inflicted at our will, each and all of our people who bear arms, both infantry and cavalry, their commanders and captains, the castellans of our fortresses, the legates, governors, rulers, lieutenants, authorities, officials and vassals of the cities and territories that are subject to the said Roman church, and any others of whatever rank, status, condition or distinction they may be, to give permission, and to be responsible for the giving of permission, to those coming to the Lateran council, to pass through in freedom, safety and security, to stay, and to return, so that such a holy, praiseworthy and very necessary council may not be frustrated for any reason or pretext, and that those coming to it may be able to live in peace and calm and without restraint and to say and develop under the same conditions the things which concern the honour of almighty God and the standing of the whole church. This we enjoin notwithstanding any constitutions, apostolic ordinances, imperial laws or municipal statutes and customs (even those reinforced by oath and apostolic confirmation or by any other authority) which could modify in any respect or impede in any way the said safe-conduct and guarantee, even if the constitutions etc. were of such a kind that an individual, precise, clear and distinct form of speech, or some other clearly stated expression, should be employed regarding them, and not just general clauses which only imply the matter, for we consider the significance of all the above things to be clearly stated by the present letter, as if they had been included word for word. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

[Bull on reform of the curia]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. It is eminently fitting for the Roman pontiff to carry out the duty of a provident shepherd, in order to care for and keep safe the Lord's flock entrusted to him by God, since, by the will of the supreme ordinance by which the things of heaven and of earth are arranged by ineffable providence, he acts on the lofty throne of St Peter as vicar on earth of Christ, the only-begotten Son of God. When we notice, out of solicitude for our said pastoral office, that church discipline and the pattern of a sound and upright life are worsening, disappearing and going further astray from the right path throughout almost all the ranks of Christ's faithful, with a disregard for law and with exemption from punishment, as a result of the troubles of the times and the malice of human beings, it must be feared that, unless checked by a well-guided improvement, there will be a daily falling into a variety of faults under the security of sin and soon, with the appearance of public scandals, a complete breakdown. We desire, then, as far as it is permitted to us from on high, to check the evils from becoming too strong, to restore a great many things to their earlier observance of the sacred canons, to create with God's help an improvement in keeping with the established practice of the holy fathers, and to give—with the approval of the sacred Lateran council initiated for that reason, among others, by our predecessor of happy memory, pope Julius II, and continued by us—healthy guidance to all these matters.

In order to make a start, we take up the points which for the present seem more appropriate and which, having often been neglected during particular generations, have brought great loss to the Christian religion and produced very great scandals in the church of God. We have therefore decided to begin with preferment to ecclesiastical dignities. Our predecessor of devout memory, pope Alexander III, also in a Lateran council, decreed that age, a serious character and knowledge of letters are to be carefully examined in the preferment of individuals to bishoprics and abbacies. Moreover, nothing impedes the church of God more than when unworthy prelates are accepted for the government of churches. Therefore, in the preferment of prelates, the Roman pontiffs must give much attention to the matter, especially because they will have to give an account to God at the last judgment about those given preferment by them to churches and monasteries. Consequently, we rule and establish that henceforward, in accordance with the constitution of the aforesaid Alexander III, for vacant churches and monasteries of patriarchal, metropolitan and cathedral status, the person provided is to be of mature age, learning and serious character, as said above, and the provision is not to be made at someone's urging, by means of recommendation, direction or enforcement, or in any other way, unless it has seemed right to act differently on the grounds of advantage to the churches, prudence, nobility, uprightness, experience, lengthy contact with the curia (together with adequate learning), or service to the apostolic see. We wish the same to be observed regarding the persons elected and chosen in elections and choices that have customarily been admitted by the apostolic see. But if the question arises of providing for churches and monasteries of this kind with persons of less than thirty years of age, there can be no dispensation for them to be in charge of churches before their twenty-seventh year of age or of monasteries before their twenty-second year.

Indeed, so that suitable persons may be advanced with greater exactness and care, we rule that the cardinal to whom the reporting on an election, appointment or provision to a church or monastery has been entrusted, ought, before he gives an account in the sacred consistory (as the custom is) of his carrying out of such an examination or report assigned to him, to make his report known to one of the older cardinals of each grade, personally in the actual consistory, or, if there was no consistory on the day appointed for him to give his account, then by means of his secretary or some other member of his personal staff, and the three older cardinals in question are bound to communicate the report as soon as possible to the other cardinals of their grade. The said cardinal making the report shall personally examine the business of the election, administration, appointment or promotion in summary and extra-judicial fashion. If any have spoken against it, he is obliged to call, after the objectors have been summoned, competent, responsible and trustworthy witnesses and, if it should be necessary or appropriate, others by virtue of office. He is bound to bring with him to the consistory, on the day the report has to be made, the stages and decisions of the report together with the statements of the witnesses, and he shall not give his report in any form until the person to be promoted, if he is at the curia, shall have first visited the majority of the cardinals in order that they may be able to learn at first hand, insofar as it is relevant to his character, what they shall soon learn from the report of their colleague. Moreover, the person promoted is obliged, by longstanding practice and laudable custom, to visit as soon as possible the same cardinals who are then in the curia. This practice and praiseworthy custom, indeed, we renew and command to be kept without change.

Since it is right to maintain episcopal dignity unharmed, and for it to be protected from indiscriminate exposure to the attacks of wicked persons and to the false charges of accusers, we decree that no bishop or abbot may be deprived of his rank when anyone urges a charge or presses demands (unless the opportunity for a legitimate defence is afforded to him), even if the charges have been widely known and, after the parties have been attentively heard, the case has been fully proved; nor may any prelate be transferred against his will, except for other just and efficacious reasons and causes, in accordance with the terms and decree of the council of Constance.

Also, as a result of commendams for monasteries, the monasteries themselves (as experience, a practical mistress, has quite often taught) are seriously damaged in spiritual and temporal matters because their buildings fall into decay, partly through the negligence of the commendatories and partly through greed or lack of interest, divine worship is gradually reduced, and matter for contempt is generally offered especially to secular persons, not without a lessening of the standing of the apostolic see, from which commendams of this kind originate. In order that sounder measures may be taken to secure these monasteries from damage, we will and decree that when vacancies occur through the death of the abbot in charge, they cannot be given in commendam to anyone by any agreement unless it seems right to us to decide otherwise, in accordance with the actual circumstances and with the advice of our brothers, so as to protect the authority of the apostolic see and to oppose the evil designs of those attacking it.

But let such monasteries be provided with competent persons, in keeping with the above-mentioned constitution, so that suitable abbots will have charge of them (as is fitting). Such monasteries may be given in commendam, when the original commendam no longer exists on account of the resignation or death of the commendatory, only to cardinals and to qualified and well-deserving persons; and in such a way that the commendatories of the monasteries, whatever their dignity, honour and high rank may be, even if they enjoy the status and dignity of a cardinal, are obliged, if they have meals in private, apart from the common table, to assign a quarter of their board for the renewal of the fabric, or for the purchase or repair of furnishings, clothing and adornment, or for the maintenance or sustenance of the poor, as the greater need demands or suggests. If, however, they share board completely, a third part of all the resources of the said monastery committed to the commendatory must be assigned, after all other imposts have been deducted, to the above-mentioned burdens and to the sustenance of the monks. Moreover, letters which are drawn up regarding such commendams to monasteries ought to contain a clause specifically stating this. If they are drawn up in some other form, they are of no worth or value.

Since it is fitting for such churches to be provided for without any loss of revenues, in such a way that both the honour of those in charge and the need of the churches and buildings are considered, we decree and rule that pensions may never be reserved from the incomes of these churches except on account of a resignation or for some other reason which has been considered credible and honourable in our secret consistory. We also rule that henceforth parochial churches, major and principal dignities and other ecclesiastical benefices whose rents, revenues and produce by ordinary reckoning do not amount to an annual value of two hundred golden ducats of the treasury, and also hospitals, leperhouses and hostels of any importance which have been set up for the use and provisioning of the poor, shall not be given in commendam to cardinals of the holy Roman church, or conferred on them by any other title, unless they have become vacant by the death of a member of their household. In the latter case they can be given in commendam to cardinals, but these are bound to dispose of them within six months for the benefit of such persons as are suitable and in good relations with them. We do not wish, however, to prejudge the cardinals further with respect to benefices to which they may have a reserve claim.

We also ordain that members of churches, monasteries or military orders may not be detached or separated from their head—which is absurd—without legitimate and reasonable cause. Perpetual unions, apart from cases permitted by law or on some reasonable grounds, are not permitted at all. Dispensations for more than two incompatible benefices are not to be granted, except for great and pressing reasons or to qualified persons according to the form of common law. We set a limit of two years on persons of whatever rank who obtain more than four parish churches and their perpetual vicarages, or major and principal dignities, even if by way of union or commendam for life. They are bound to release the rest, only four being retained in the meantime. Such benefices, due for release, can be resigned into the hands of the ordinaries so that they may be provided with persons nominated by them; notwithstanding any reservations, even those of a general nature or resulting from the quality of the persons resigning. Once the period of two years is past, all the benefices that have not been disposed of may be reckoned as vacant and may freely be applied for as vacant. Those who hold on to them incur the penalties of the constitution Execrabilis of our memorable predecessor, pope John XXII. We also rule that special reservations of any benefice are in no way to be granted at the urging of anyone.

On cardinals

Since the cardinals of the holy Roman church take precedence in honour and dignity over all the other members of the church after the sovereign pontiff, it is proper and right that they be distinguished beyond all others by the purity of their life and the excellence of their virtues. On that account, we not only exhort and advise them but also decree and order that henceforth each of the cardinals following the teaching of the Apostle, so live a sober, chaste and godly life that he shines out before people as one who abstains not merely from evil but from every appearance of evil. In the first place, let him honour God by his works. Let all of them be vigilant, constant at the divine office and the celebration of masses, and maintain their chapels in a worthy place, as they were wont to do.

Their house and establishment, table and furniture, should not attract blame by display or splendour or superfluous equipment or in any other way, so as to avoid any fostering of sin or excess, but, as is right, let them deserve to be called mirrors of moderation and frugality. Therefore, let them find satisfaction in what contributes to priestly modesty; let them act with kindness and respect both in public and in private, towards prelates and other distinguished persons who come to the Roman curia; and let them undertake with grace and generosity the business committed to them by ourself and our successors.

Moreover, let them not employ bishops or prelates in demeaning tasks in their houses, so that those who have been appointed to give direction to others and who have been clad in a sacred character, will not lower themselves to menial chores and generally bring about a lack of respect for the pastoral office. Consequently, let them treat them with honour as brothers, and as befits their state of life, those whom they have or will have in their houses. Since the cardinals assist the Roman pontiff, the common father of all Christians, it is very improper for them to be patrons of or special pleaders for individuals. We have therefore decided, lest they adopt partiality of any kind, that they are not to set up as promoters or defenders of princes or communities or of any other persons against anyone, except to the extent that justice and equity demands and the dignity and rank of such people requires. Rather, separated from all private interest, let them be available and engage with all diligence in calming and settling any disputes. Let them promote with due piety the maintenance of the just business of princes and all other persons, especially the poor and religious, and let them offer help in accordance with their resources and their official responsibility to those who are oppressed and unjustly burdened.

They are to visit at least once a year—in person if they have been present in the curia, and by a suitable deputy if they have been absent—the places of their titular basilica. They are, with due care, to keep themselves informed about the clergy and people of the churches subject to their basilica; they are to keep under review the divine worship and the properties of the said churches; above all, let them examine with care the lives of the clergy and their parishioners, and with a father's affection encourage one and all to live an upright and honourable life. For the development of divine worship and the salvation of his own soul, each cardinal should give to his basilica during his lifetime, or bequeath at the time of his death, a sufficient amount for the suitable sustenance there of one priest; or, if the basilica needs repairs or some other form of aid, let him leave or donate as much as he may in conscience decide. It is entirely unfitting to pass over persons related to them by blood or by marriage, especially if they are deserving and need help. To come to their assistance is just and praiseworthy. But we do not consider that it is appropriate to heap on them a great number of benefices or church revenues, with the result that an uncontrolled generosity in these matters may bring wrong to others and may cause scandal. Consequently we have determined that they are not to squander thoughtlessly the goods of the churches, but are to apply them in works of devotion and piety, for which great and rich returns have been assigned and ordained by the holy fathers.

It is also our wish that they take care, without making any excuse, of the churches entrusted to them in commendam, whether these be cathedrals, abbeys, priories, or any other ecclesiastical benefices that they take measures, with all personal effect, to see that the cathedrals are duly served by the appointment of worthy and competent vicars or suffragans, according to what has been customary, with an appropriate and adequate salary; and that they provide for the other churches and monasteries held by them in commendam with the right number of clerics or chaplains, whether religious or monks, for the adequate and praiseworthy service of God. Let them also maintain in proper condition the buildings, properties and rights of any kind, and repair what has crumbled, in accordance with the duty of good prelates and commendatories. We also judge that the said cardinals are to use great discretion and careful foresight with regard to the number of their personal attendants and horses lest by having a greater number than their resources, situation and dignity permit, they can be accused of the vice of over-display and extravagance. Let them not be accounted greedy and squalid on the grounds that they enjoy great and plentiful revenues and yet offer sustenance to very few; for the house of a cardinal ought to be an open lodging, a harbour and refuge for upright and learned persons, especially men, for nobles who are now poor and for honourable persons. Hence let them be prudent about the manner and quantity of what has to be kept, and carefully check the character of their personal attendants, lest they themselves incur from the vices of others the shameful stain of dishonour and provide real opportunities for contradictions and false accusations.

Since very special provision must be made that our deeds be approved not only before God, whom we ought to please in the first place, but also before people so that we can offer to others an example to be imitated, we ordain that every cardinal show himself an excellent ruler and overseer of his house and personal staff, with regard to both what is open for all to see and what lies hidden within. Therefore let each of them have the priests and deacons clad in respectable garments, and make careful provision that no one in his household who holds a benefice of any type, or is in holy orders, wears multi-coloured clothes or a garment that has little connection with ecclesiastical status. Those in the priesthood, therefore, ought to wear clothes of colours which are not forbidden to clerics by law and are of at least ankle length. Those who hold high office in cathedrals, canons of the said cathedrals those holding the chief posts in colleges, and chaplains of cardinals when celebrating masses, are obliged to wear a head-covering in public. Shield-bearers are permitted garments somewhat shorter than ankle-length. Grooms, because they are generally moving about and perform a somewhat burdensome service, can use shorter and more suitable garments, even if they happen to be clerics, so long as they are not ordained priests; but in such a way that they do not cast aside decency and they so conduct themselves that their behaviour is in keeping with their position in the church. Other clerics are to do everything with due proportion and restraint. Both clerics holding benefices and those in holy orders are not to pay special attention to their hair and beards, nor to possess mules or horses with trappings and ornaments of velvet or silk, but for articles of this kind let them use ordinary cloth or leather.

If anyone of the aforesaid staff acts otherwise, or wears such forbidden garments after three months from the announcement of the present regulations, despite being given a legitimate warning, he incurs excommunication. If he has not corrected himself within a further three months, he is understood to be suspended from receiving the fruits of the benefices which he holds. And if he remains fixed in this obstinacy for another six months, after a similar legal warning, he is to be deprived of all the benefices which he holds, and he is to be considered as so deprived. The benefices thus made vacant may be freely sought from the apostolic see. We wish each and every one of these arrangements to apply to the households of ourself and any future Roman pontiffs, and likewise to all other beneficed clerics or persons in holy orders, even those in the curia. There is one single exception: the said attendants of ourself and future Roman pontiffs may wear red garments, in keeping with what is proper and usual for the papal dignity.

Since the care of the most important business is the special concern of cardinals, it is for them to use their ability to know which regions have been infected by heresies, errors and superstitions opposed to the true orthodox faith; where the ecclesiastical discipline of the Lord's commandments is lacking; and which kings and princes or peoples are being troubled, or fear to be troubled, by wars. Cardinals shall apply themselves to obtain information on these and similar matters and make a report to us or the current Roman pontiff so that, by earnest effort, opportune and saving remedies for such evils and afflictions can be thought out. Since by frequent, almost daily, experience it is known that many evils quite often occur to provinces and cities on account of the absence of their own officially appointed legates, and various scandals are springing up which are not without disadvantages to the apostolic see, we decree and ordain that cardinals who are in charge of provinces or cities, under the title of legates, may not administer them through lieutenants or officials, but they are obliged to be present in person for the greater part of the time, and to rule and govern them with all vigilance. Those who now hold the title of legate, or will hold it for a time, are obliged to go to their provinces—within three months from the date of the present proclamation if the provinces are in Italy, and within five months if they are outside Italy—and to reside there for the greater part of the time, unless, by a command from us or our successors, they are held back in the Roman curia for some business of greater moment or are sent to other places as needs demand. In the latter cases, let them have in the said provinces and cities vice-legates, auditors, lieutenants and the other usual officials with due arrangements and salaries. Anyone who does not observe each and all of the above regulations is to be deprived of all the emoluments of his post as legate. These regulations were formulated and established long ago with this object: that the ready presence of the legates would be beneficial to the peoples; not that, being free from toils and cares, under cover of being the legate, they would fix their attention only on profit.

Since the duty of a cardinal is primarily concerned with regular assistance to the Roman pontiff and the business matters of the apostolic see, we have decided that all cardinals shall reside at the Roman curia, and those who are absent are to return within six months if they are in Italy, or within a year from the day of promulgation of this present constitution if they are outside Italy. If they do not they are to lose the fruits of their benefices and the emoluments of all their offices; and they lose completely, as long as they arc absent, all privileges granted in general and in particular to cardinals. Those cardinals are excepted, however, who happen to be absent by reason of a duty imposed by the apostolic see, or of a command or permission from the Roman pontiff, or from reasonable fear or any other motive which justifiably excuses, or for health reasons. Moreover, the privileges, indults and immunities granted to the said cardinals and contained or declared in our bull under the date of our coronation1{Bull Licat Romani pontificis,9 April 1513; see Regesta Leonis X no. 14} remain in full force. We have also decided that the funeral expenses of cardinals, when all costs are included, ought not to exceed the total of 1,500 florins, unless the previous arrangement of the executors—after just grounds and reasons have been set out—has reckoned that more should be spent. The funeral rites and formal mourning are to be on the first and ninth days; within the octave, however, masses may be celebrated as usual.

Out of reverence towards the apostolic see, for the advantage and honour of the pontiff and the cardinals, in order that the possibility of scandals which could come to light may be removed and a greater freedom of votes in the holy senate may exist, and that, as is right, it may be lawful for each cardinal to say freely and without penalty whatever he feels before God and his own conscience, we lay down that no cardinal may reveal in writing or by word or in any other way, under pain of being a perjurer and disobedient, the votes that were given in the consistory, or whatever was done or said there which could result in hatred or scandal or prejudice with regard to anyone, or whenever silence on any point beyond the foregoing has been specially and clearly enjoined by ourself or the Roman pontiff of the time. If anyone acts to the contrary he incurs, as well as the punishments stated, immediate excommunication from which, except in immediate danger of death, he can only be absolved by ourself or the Roman pontiff of the time, and with a declaration of the reason.

Reforms of the curia and of other things

Since every generation inclines to evil from its youth, and for it to grow accustomed from tender years towards good is the result of work and purpose we rule and order that those in charge of schools, and those who teach young children and youths, ought not only to instruct them in grammar, rhetoric and similar subjects but also to teach those matters which concern religion, such as God's commandments, the articles of the faith, sacred hymns and psalms, and the lives of the saints. On feast days they should limit themselves to teaching what has reference to religion and good habits, and they are obliged to instruct, encourage and compel their pupils in these matters insofar as they can. Thus, let them attend churches not only for masses, but also to listen to vespers and the divine offices, and let them encourage the hearing of instructions and sermons. Let them not teach anything to their pupils that is contrary to good morals or may lead to a lack of reverence.

To wipe out the curse of blasphemy, which has increased beyond measure towards a supreme contempt for the divine name and for the saints, we rule and ordain that whoever curses God openly and publicly and, by insulting and offensive language, has expressly blasphemed our lord Jesus Christ or the glorious virgin Mary, his mother, if he has held a public office or jurisdiction, he is to lose three months' emoluments of his said office for the first and second offence, and if he has committed the fault a third time, he is automatically deprived of his post. If he is a cleric or a priest, he is to be punished further as follows for being found guilty of such a fault: for the first time he blasphemed, he is to lose the fruits of whatever benefices he held for one year; for the second time he offended and was convicted, he is to be deprived of his benefice if he held only one, and if he held several then he is to be compelled to lose the one that his ordinary decides upon; if he is charged and convicted for a third time, he is automatically deprived of all the benefices and dignities that he holds, he is rendered incapable of holding them any longer, and they can be freely asked for and allotted to others. A lay person who blasphemes, if he is a noble, is to be fined a penalty of twenty-five ducats; for the second offence the fine is fifty ducats, which are to be applied to the fabric of the basilica of the prince of the apostles in Rome; for other offences he is to be punished as set out below; for a third fault, however, he is to lose his noble status. If he is of no rank and a plebian, he is to be cast into prison. If he has been caught committing blasphemy in public more than twice, he is to be compelled to stand for a whole day in front of the entrance of the principal church, wearing a hood signifying his infamy; but if he has fallen several times into the same fault, he is to be condemned to permanent imprisonment or to the galleys, at the decision of the appointed judge. In the forum of conscience, however, nobody guilty of blasphemy can be absolved without a heavy penance imposed by the decision of a strict confessor. We wish those who blaspheme against the other saints to be punished somewhat more lightly, at the decision of a judge who will take account of individuals.

We also decree that secular judges who have not taken action against such convicted blasphemers and have not imposed rightful penalties on them, insofar as they are able to, are to be subjected to the same penalties as if they had been involved in the said crime. But those who have exercised care and severity in their examinations and punishments, will gain for each occasion an indulgence of ten years and may keep a third of the fine imposed. Any persons who have heard the blasphemer are obliged to rebuke him sharply in words, if it should happen that this can be done without danger to themselves, and they are obliged to report the same or bring it to the knowledge of an ecclesiastical or secular judge within three days. But if several persons have at the same time heard the said blasphemer committing the fault, each one is obliged to make an accusation against him, unless perhaps they all agree that one will perform the task for all. We urge and counsel in the Lord all the said persons, in virtue of holy obedience, that they command and ensure, for the reverence and honour of the divine name, that all the foregoing are kept and very exactly carried out in their lordships and lands. Thus they will have from God himself an abundant reward for such a good and pious deed, and they too will obtain from the apostolic see an indulgence of ten years, and a third of the fine by which the blasphemer is punished, as often as they have taken the trouble to have such a crime punished. It is likewise our will that this indulgence and the remaining third of the fine imposed be granted and assigned to the person reporting the name of the blasphemer. Moreover, other penalties set down in the sacred canons against such blasphemers remain in force.

In order that clerics, especially, may live in continence and chastity according to canonical legislation, we rule that offenders be severely punished as the canons lay down. If anyone, lay or cleric, has been found guilty of a charge on account of which the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience, let him be punished by the penalties respectively imposed by the sacred canons or by civil law. Those involved in concubinage, whether they be lay or cleric, are to be punished by the penalties of the same canons. Concubinage is not to be allowed by the tolerance of superiors, or as an evil custom of a great number of sinners, which should rather be called a corruption, or under any other excuse; but let those involved be punished severely in accordance with the judgment of the law.

Moreover, for the good and peaceful government of cities and all places subject to the Roman church, we renew the constitutions published some time ago by Giles, the well-remembered bishop of Sabina, and we enjoin and command that they be kept without alteration.

So that the stain and disease of abominable simony may be driven out for ever not only from the Roman curia but also from all Christian rule, we renew the constitutions issued by our predecessors, also in sacred councils, against simoniacs of this kind, and we prescribe that they be observed unaltered. We wish the penalties they contain to be regarded as clearly stated and included herein, and the offenders to be punished by our authority.

We rule and order that anyone who holds a benefice with or without the care of souls, if he has not recited the divine office after six months from the date of his obtaining the benefice, and any legitimate impediment has come to an end may not receive the revenues of his benefices, on account of his omission and the length of time, but he is bound to spend them, as being unjustly received, on the fabric of the benefices or on alms to the poor. If he obstinately remains in such negligence beyond the said period, after a legitimate warning has been given, let him be deprived of the benefice, since it is for the sake of the office that the benefice is granted. He is to be understood as neglecting the office, so that he can be deprived of his benefice, if he fails to recite it at least twice during fifteen days. However, in addition to what has just been said, he will be obliged to offer to God an explanation for the said omission. The penalty on those holding several benefices may be repeated as often as they are proved to act contrary to these obligations.

The full disposal and administration of the revenues of cathedral and metropolitan churches, monasteries and any other ecclesiastical benefices belong exclusively to us and the Roman pontiff of the time, and to those who legally and canonically hold churches, monasteries and benefices of this kind. Secular princes ought in no way to interpose themselves in the said churches, monasteries and benefices, since all divine law also forbids it. For these reasons we rule and command that the fruits and revenues of churches, monasteries and benefices ought not to be sequestrated, held or detained in any way by any secular rulers, even if they be the emperor, kings, queens, republics or other powers, or by their officials, or by judges, even ecclesiastical ones, or by any other persons public or private, acting at the command of the said emperor, kings, queens princes, republics or powers. Those who hold such churches, monasteries and benefices ought not to be impeded—under the pretext of the restoration of the fabric (unless permission is expressly given by the Roman pontiff of the time) or of alms-giving or under any other guise or pretence—so that they cannot freely and without restriction, as before, dispose of the fruits and revenues. If there have been sequestrations, seizures or retentions, then restoration of the fruits and revenues must be made totally, freely, and without exception or delay, to the prelates to whom they pertain by right and by law. If they have been scattered and can nowhere be found, it is our will, supported by the penalty of excommunication or ecclesiastical interdict to be automatically incurred by the lands and domain of the ruler, that, after a just estimate has been made about them, the said prelates receive satisfaction through those who carried out the said sequestrations, applications or dispersals or who gave orders for them to be carried out; and further, that their goods and the goods of those subject to them, wherever these may be found, may be seized and held if, after being warned, they refuse to obey. Those who act in a contrary manner do so under pain of both the penalties mentioned above and those of deprivation of the fiefs and privileges which they have obtained for a time from us and from the Roman or other churches, and of those issued against violators and oppressors of ecclesiastical liberties, including those in extraordinary and other constitutions, even if they are unknown and perhaps not now in actual use. We renew all these penalties as stated and included herein, we decree and declare that they have perpetual force- and we will and order that sentence, judgment and interpretation are to be given according to them by all judges, even cardinals of the holy Roman church, with all power of judging and declaring otherwise being removed and taken away from them.

Since no power over ecclesiastical persons is granted to lay people by either divine or human law, we renew the constitution of pope Boniface VIII, our predecessor of happy memory, which begins Felicis, and that of pope Clement V which begins Si quis suadente, and also any other apostolic ordinance, however issued, in favour of ecclesiastical freedom and against its violators. Moreover, the penalties against those who dare to do such things, contained in the bull In coena Domini3, are to remain in force. It has similarly been forbidden in the Lateran and general councils, under penalty of excommunication, for kings, princes, dukes, counts, barons, republics and any other authorities exercising control over kingdoms, provinces, cities and territories, to impose and exact money contributions, tithes and other similar imposts on or from clerics, prelates and any other persons of the church, or even to receive them from those who freely offer them and give their consent. Those who openly or covertly provide help, favour or advice in the aforesaid matters automatically incur the penalty of immediate excommunication; and states, communities and universities which are at fault in any way on this point are by this very fact to be subject to ecclesiastical interdict. Prelates also, who have given consent to the foregoing without the clear permission of the Roman pontiff, automatically incur the penalty of excommunication and removal from office. For these reasons we decree and ordain that henceforth those who attempt such things, even if (as mentioned) they are qualified, in addition to the aforesaid penalties which we renew and wish them to incur by the very fact of their contravention, are to be regarded as incapable of all legal acts and as intestable.

Sorcery, by means of enchantments, divinations, superstitions and the invoking of demons, is prohibited by both civil laws and the sanctions of the sacred canons. We rule, decree and ordain that clerics who are found guilty of these things are to be branded with disgrace at the judgment of superiors. If they do not desist, they are to be demoted, forced into a monastery for a period of time that is to be fixed by the will of the superior, and deprived of their benefices and ecclesiastical offices. Lay men and women, however, are to be subject to excommunication and the other penalties of both civil and canon law. All false Christians and those with evil sentiments towards the faith, of whatever race or nation they may be, as well as heretics and those stained with some taint of heresy, or Judaizers, are to be totally excluded from the company of Christ's faithful and expelled from any position, especially from the Roman curia, and punished with an appropriate penalty. For these reasons we rule that proceedings are to be taken against them, with careful enquiry everywhere and particularly in the said curia, by means of judges appointed by us, and that those accused and rightly convicted of these offences are to be punished with fitting penalties; and we wish that those who have relapsed are to be dealt with without any hope of pardon or forgiveness.

Since these constitutions and ordinances which we are now establishing concern life, morals and ecclesiastical discipline, it is fitting that our own and other officials, both those in the Roman curia and those everywhere else, should be models of and bound to them, and it is our will and decision that they be held to their observance by an inviolable bond. Lest these constitutions seem at any point to detract from other censures and penalties imposed by ancient laws and constitutions against those acting otherwise, even though they have been thought out and issued as a development, we further declare that nothing whatever has been taken away from common law or from other decrees of Roman pontiffs by these regulations and ordinances. Indeed, if any parts of them have lost their force through the evil corruption of times, places and people, or through abuse, or for any other unapprovable reason, we here and now renew and confirm them and order them to be observed without alteration. We decree and declare that these our well-pondered constitutions are to be of binding force from two months after publication, and we strictly forbid anyone to presume to make glosses or commentaries or interpretations on them without special permission from us or the apostolic see. Anyone who rashly dares to oppose this, incurs the penalty of immediate excommunication by this very act. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

Session 10

4 May 1515

[On the reform of credit organisations (Montes pietatis)]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. We ought to give first place in our pastoral office, among our many anxious cares, to ensuring that what is healthy, praiseworthy, in keeping with the Christian faith, and in harmony with good customs may be not only clarified in our time but also made known to future generations, and that what could offer matter for scandal be totally cut down, wholly uprooted and nowhere permitted to spread, while at the same time permitting those seeds to be planted in the Lord's field and in the vineyard of the Lord of hosts which can spiritually feed the minds of the faithful, once the cockle has been uprooted and the wild olive cut down. Indeed, we have learnt that among some of our dear sons who were masters in theology and doctors of civil and canon law, there has recently broken out again a particular controversy, not without scandal and disquiet for ordinary people, with regard to the relief of the poor by means of loans made to them by public authorities. They are popularly called credit organisations and have been set up in many cities of Italy by the magistrates of the cities and by other Christians, to assist by this kind of loan the lack of resources among the poor lest they be swallowed up by the greed of usurers They have been praised and encouraged by holy men, preachers of God's word, and approved and confirmed also by a number of our predecessors as popes, to the effect that the said credit organisations are not out of harmony with Christian dogma, even though there is controversy and different opinions regarding the question.

Some of these masters and doctors say that the credit organisations are unlawful. After a fixed period of time has passed, they say, those attached to these organisations demand from the poor to whom they make a loan so much per pound in addition to the capital sum. For this reason they cannot avoid the crime of usury or injustice, that is to say a clearly defined evil, since our Lord, according to Luke the evangelist, has bound us by a clear command that we ought not to expect any addition to the capital sum when we grant a loan. For, that is the real meaning of usury: when, from its use, a thing which produces nothing is applied to the acquiring of gain and profit without any work, any expense or any risk. The same masters and doctors add that in these credit organisations neither commutative nor distributive justice is observed, even though contracts of this kind, if they are to be duly approved, ought not to go beyond the bounds of justice. They endeavour to prove this on the grounds that the expenses of the maintenance of these organisations, which ought to be paid by many persons (as they say), are extracted only from the poor to whom a loan is made; and at the same time certain other persons are given more than their necessary and moderate expenses (as they seem to imply), not without an appearance of evil and an encouragement to wrongdoing.

But many other masters and doctors say the opposite and, both in writing and in speech, unite in speaking in many of the schools in Italy in defence of so great a benefit and one so necessary to the state, on the grounds that nothing is being sought nor hoped for from the loan as such. Nevertheless, they argue, for the compensation of the organisations—that is, to defray the expenses of those employed and of all the things necessarily pertaining to the upkeep of the said organisations—they may lawfully ask and receive, in addition to the capital, a moderate and necessary sum from those deriving benefit from the loan, provided that no profit is made therefrom. This is in virtue of the rule of law that the person who experiences benefit ought also to meet the charge, especially when there is added the support of the apostolic authority. They point out that this opinion was approved by our predecessors of happy memory, the Roman pontiffs Paul II, Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII, Alexander VI and Julius II, as well as by saints and persons devoted to God and held in high esteem for their holiness, and has been preached in sermons about the gospel truth.

We wish to make suitable arrangements on this question (in accord with what we have received from on high). We commend the zeal for justice displayed by the former group, which desires to prevent the opening up of the chasm of usury, as well as the love of piety and truth shown by the latter group, which wishes to aid the poor, and indeed the earnestness of both sides. Since, therefore, this whole question appears to concern the peace and tranquility of the whole Christian state, we declare and define, with the approval of the sacred council, that the above-mentioned credit organisations, established by states and hitherto approved and confirmed by the authority of the apostolic see, do not introduce any kind of evil or provide any incentive to sin if they receive, in addition to the capital, a moderate sum for their expenses and by way of compensation, provided it is intended exclusively to defray the expenses of those employed and of other things pertaining (as mentioned) to the upkeep of the organisations, and provided that no profit is made therefrom. They ought not, indeed, to be condemned in any way. Rather, such a type of lending is meritorious and should be praised and approved. It certainly should not be considered as usurious; it is lawful to preach the piety and mercy of such organisations to the people, including the indulgences granted for this purpose by the holy apostolic see; and in the future, with the approval of the apostolic see, other similar credit organisations can be established. It would, however, be much more perfect and more holy if such credit organisations were completely gratuitous: that is, if those establishing them provided definite sums with which would be paid, if not the total expenses, then at least half the wages of those employed by the organisations, with the result that the debt of the poor would be lightened thereby. We therefore decree that Christ's faithful ought to be prompted, by a grant of substantial indulgences, to give aid to the poor by providing the sums of which we have spoken, in order to meet the costs of the organisations.

It is our will that all religious as well as ecclesiastical and secular persons who henceforth dare to preach or argue otherwise by word or in writing, contrary to the sense of the present declaration and sanction, incur the punishment of immediate excommunication, notwithstanding any kind of privilege, things said above, constitutions and orders of the apostolic see, and anything else to the contrary.

[Bull against exempt persons, in which are included some points regarding ecclesiastical liberty and episcopal dignity]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. Presiding over the government of the universal church (the Lord so disposing), we readily aim to secure the advantages of subjects, in conformity with the obligation of our pastoral office. In order to preserve the church's freedom, to remove scandals, to establish harmony, and to foster peace between prelates of churches and those subject to them, we apply the effort of apostolic care in proportion as experience shows that disagreement between such groups will be harmful. Thus we are glad to regulate the indults and privileges granted to the same subjects by both our predecessors and the apostolic see, at the expense of the prelates concerned, in such a way scandals do not arise from them, or material be provided to anyone for fostering ill-will, or ecclesiastical persons be somehow drawn away from the benefit of obedience as well as from perseverance in the divine service.

Recently, indeed, a trustworthy report has reached our ears that canons of patriarchal, metropolitan, cathedral and collegiate churches and other secular clerics are making too many claims, on account of which they give rise to considerable ill-report concerning themselves, have an injurious effect on others from their claims of exemption and freedom obtained from the apostolic see, evade the corrections and regulations of the ordinaries, and shun their courts and judgments. Some of them, in the hope of gaining freedom from punishment for their deviations by the privilege of exemption, do not fear to commit offences which they would certainly have never committed if they did not believe that they were protected by their exemption. The result is that, on account of the brashness of those trusting that they will obtain freedom from punishment for their offences, because of the privilege of exemption, they commit outrages on many occasions as a result of which the church is very much maligned and serious scandals arise, especially when those responsible for correcting and punishing them fail to do so. In our wish to provide the necessary remedy lest, on the above pretext, their faults remain unpunished, we rule, with the approval of the sacred council, that henceforth those to whom the correction and punishment of exempt persons has been committed by the apostolic see, are to attend carefully to these duties and diligently to carry out the obligations of the office entrusted to them. As soon as it is legally clear to them that exempt persons have been at fault, they are to punish them in such a way that they are restrained from their acts of arrogance by fear of a penalty and so that others, frightened by their example, will rightly shrink from committing similar faults.

If they are neglectful in this matter, the diocesan and other local ordinaries are to warn such persons, who have the responsibility for correcting those who are exempt, that they should punish such exempt persons who have committed faults and are guilty and should censure them within a suitable time, which is to be determined by the judgment of those giving the warning. The warning is to be given in person (if the resources and standing of the person giving it make this possible), or otherwise, if there should be no clearly recognised judge in the region of the exempt persons, they are to warn those whom they consider to be responsible for the above by means of a public edict, which is to be fixed to the doors of the cathedrals or other churches where such judges of exempt persons may happen to reside, or if there are no judges of the exempt persons there, then where the exempt persons have committed the faults. If those who have received the warning are negligent in this matter, and do not trouble or have refused to carry it out, then, so that they may be penalised for their fault, they are to be deprived of hearing the inquiry for that time and are henceforth not to be involved in any way in such inquiries. Then the diocesan and other local ordinaries can proceed, on our authority, either to an inquiry or by means of an accusation, excluding the use of torture, against such offending and criminous persons and may personally examine the witnesses. They shall see that the process itself—regarding which, by reason of the solemnity of the law, we forbid anything to be alleged or said except on account of an omitted citation (provided the offence has been correctly proved elsewhere)—is held, closed and sealed by them and quickly despatched to the apostolic see, either by themselves or by another messenger, so as to be carefully examined by the apostolic see, either by the Roman pontiff or by someone else to whom he shall commit the matter; at the expense of the offending exempt persons, including the expenses incurred in the process itself, which expenses the ordinaries can compel the persons who have been investigated and charged to pay. And those found worthy of blame, either to the extent of being condemned or on account of there being sufficient evidence to justify recourse to torture so that the truth might be extracted, are to be returned to the diocesans or ordinaries so that these may lawfully proceed further, on our authority, in the inquiry or the accusation and may terminate the case according to what is just.

Notaries of the apostolic see, whose office is known to have been instituted by pope Clement I of happy memory at the beginnings of the primitive church, for the purpose of investigating and recording the acts of saints, and who have been elevated to the office of protonotary and wear an official garment and a rochet, together with other officials who are attached to us and to the said see, when they are actually engaged in their duties, are exempt from all jurisdiction of ordinaries in both civil and criminal matters. Other notaries, however, not wearing the dress of the protonotariate, unless they have adopted it within three months after the publication of this present document, both themselves and others due to be elevated to the office in the future who do not regularly wear the official dress and a rochet, as well as other officials, our own and those of the said see, when not actually engaged in their duties, are to be subject to the jurisdiction of the said diocesans and ordinaries in both criminal and civil cases which involve sums not exceeding twenty-five golden ducats of the treasury. But in civil cases involving sums exceeding such an amount, they are to enjoy full exemption and to be totally excluded from the jurisdiction of the said diocesans and ordinaries. We also judge it worthy and appropriate that among the personal staff of cardinals of the holy Roman church, only those shall enjoy the privilege of exemption who belong to the household staff and are regular sharers of its board, or have been sent by the same cardinals to carry out their personal business, or perhaps are absent for a time from the Roman curia to refresh themselves. But for others, even when they are registered as belonging to the personal staff, the privilege of staff membership in no way entitles them to be outside the control of their diocesans and ordinaries.

By the constitution published at the council of Vienne which begins Attendentes, there was given to the aforesaid diocesans full faculties to visit once a year the convents of nuns, in their dioceses, that are immediately subject to the apostolic see. We renew this constitution and we prescribe and command that it be strictly kept, notwithstanding any exemptions and privileges. By the foregoing, moreover, the same diocesans and ordinaries are not to be prejudiced by cases in which jurisdiction over exempt persons has been granted by law. Rather, we define that henceforth exemptions granted for a time without reasonable cause, and without any citation of those involved, are of no force or value.

Since order in the church is confused if the jurisdiction of each person is not preserved, we rule and ordain, in an effort to support the jurisdiction of ordinaries (so far as we can with God's favour), to impose more quickly an end to lawsuits, and to restrict the immoderate expenses of litigants, that individual cases, spiritual, civil and mixed, involving in any way an ecclesiastical forum and concerned with benefices—provided that the actual benefices have not been under a general reservation and the incomes, rents and produce of the individual benefices do not surpass in value, by common reckoning, twenty-four golden ducats of the treasury—shall in the first instance be examined and settled outside the Roman curia and before the local ordinaries. Thus, nobody may appeal prior to a definitive sentence, nor may an appeal (if made) be in any way admitted, except from an interlocutory judgment which may have the force of a definitive sentence, or by way of a complaint which in no way concerns the main business. For, redress cannot be obtained from a definitive sentence by means of an appeal, unless one of the litigants does not dare to go to law before the ordinary because of a genuine fear of his adversary's power, or for some other acceptable and honourable reason which must be at least partially proved otherwise than by his personal oath. In these exceptional cases, the appeal can be begun, investigated and concluded in the Roman curia, even in the first instance. In other cases, the appeals and the commissions of these and other such suits, and whatever follows from them, shall henceforth be of no force or value. The judges and conservators appointed by the apostolic see, if they are not graduates in either civil or canon law, are obliged, on being asked by the parties concerned or by one of them, to take an assessor who is not under suspicion with the parties and to judge the case according to his report.

We have learnt, by many and frequent reports, that very many churches and the bishops presiding over them, on both sides of the Alps, are being troubled and disturbed in their jurisdictions, rights and lordships by esquires, princes and nobles. These, under colour of a right of patronage which they pretend to hold in ecclesiastical benefices, without the support of any apostolic privileges, or of collations or letters from the ordinaries, or even of any pretence of a title, presume to confer benefices not only on clerics but also on layfolk; to punish at their own whim priests and clerics who are at fault; to remove, purloin and usurp in an arbitrary way, either directly or by ordering others, the tithes of everything on which they are obliged by law to pay, as well as tithes belonging to cathedrals, and other things which pertain to diocesan law and jurisdiction and are the exclusive concern of bishops; to forbid such tithes and any fruits to be taken out of their cities, lands and territories; to seize and unjustly hold fiefs, possessions and lands; to induce and compel, by threats, terror and other indirect means, the granting to them of fiefs and goods of churches and the conferring of ecclesiastical benefices on persons nominated by them; and not only to permit but even expressly to command very many other losses, damages and injuries to be inflicted on the aforesaid clerics and churches and their prelates.

We take thought, then, that no power has been granted to lay people over clerics and ecclesiastics, or over property belonging to the church, and that it is right and just that laws should be made against those who refuse to observe this. We also consider how much such actions detract, with disastrous results which must be condemned, not only from the honour of ourself and the apostolic see but also from the peaceful and prosperous condition of churchmen. We desire too, to restrain from thoughtless acts of rashness, not so much by new penalties as by a renewed fear of existing ones that should be applied, those whom the rewards of virtues do not induce to observe laws. We therefore renew each and all of the constitutions hitherto issued regarding the payment of tithes; against violators and seizers of churches; against fire-raisers and pillagers of fields; against those seizing and holding cardinals of the holy Roman church, our venerable brother bishops and other persons of the church, both secular and regular, and unlawfully taking over in any way their jurisdiction and rights, or disturbing or molesting them in the exercise of their jurisdiction, or presumptuously forcing them to confer ecclesiastical benefices on persons named by them, or to dispose of them in some other way at their arbitrary choice, or to grant or otherwise sell fiefs and goods of the church in perpetual tenure, against making regulations in conflict with ecclesiastical liberty; against providing help, advice and support for the above practices. Since these acts are not merely opposed to law but are also in the highest degree insulting and contrary to ecclesiastical liberty, we therefore, in order that we may be able to give an honest account to God of the office entrusted to us, earnestly urge in the Lord, by fatherly sentiments and counsels, the emperor, kings, princes, dukes, marquises, counts, barons, and others of whatever other nobility, pre-eminence, sovereignty, power, excellence or dignity they may be, and we command them by virtue of holy obedience, to observe the foregoing constitutions and to make them inviolably observed by their subjects, notwithstanding any customs whatever to the contrary, if they wish to avoid the divine displeasure and the fitting reaction of the apostolic see. We decree that appointments made in the above-mentioned way to the said benefices are null and void, and those making use of them are rendered incapable of obtaining other ecclesiastical benefices until they have been dispensed in the matter by the apostolic see.

We have also been carefully reflecting that, after Christ's ascension into heaven, the apostles assigned bishops to each city and diocese, and the holy Roman church became established throughout the world by inviting these same bishops to a role of responsibility, and by gradually sharing the burdens by means of patriarchs, primates, archbishops and bishops; and that it has also been laid down by the sacred canons that provincial councils and episcopal synods ought to be established by such persons for the correction of morals, the settlement and limiting of controversies, and the observance of God's commandments, in order that corruptions may be corrected and those neglecting to do these things may be subjected to canonical penalties. In our desire that these canons be faithfully observed, since it is right for us to be interested in what concerns the Christian state, we place a strict obligation on the said patriarchs, primates, archbishops and bishops, in order that they may be able to render to God a worthy account of the office entrusted to them, that they order the canons, councils and synods to be observed inviolably, notwithstanding any privilege whatsoever. Besides, we order that henceforth a provincial council is to be held every three years, and we decree that even exempt persons are to attend them, notwithstanding any privilege or custom to the contrary. Those who are negligent in these matters are to know that they will incur penalties contained in the same canons.

In order that respect for the papal dignity might be preserved, it was determined by the constitution issued at the council of Vienne, which begins In plerisque that no persons, especially no religious, may be provided to cathedral churches which are deprived of temporal goods, without which spiritual things cannot exist for long, and which lack both clergy and Christian people. We renew this constitution, and we will and command that it must be observed inviolably unless we shall judge otherwise for some just reason to be approved in our secret consistory.

We decree that anything attempted against the foregoing, or any part thereof, is null and void, notwithstanding any constitution or privilege to the contrary. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

[On printing books]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. Among the anxieties resting on our shoulders we come back with constant thought to how we can bring back to the path of truth those going astray, and gain them for God (by his grace working in us). This is what we truly seek after with eagerness; to this we unremittingly direct our mind's desires; and over this we watch with anxious earnestness.

It is certainly possible to obtain without difficulty some learning by reading books. The skill of book-printing has been invented, or rather improved and perfected, with God's assistance, particularly in our time. Without doubt it has brought many benefits to men and women since, at small expense, it is possible to possess a great number of books. These permit minds to devote themselves very readily to scholarly studies. Thus there can easily result, particularly among Catholics, men competent in all kinds of languages; and we desire to see in the Roman church, in good supply, men of this type who are capable of instructing even unbelievers in the holy commandments, and of gathering them for their salvation into the body of the faithful by the teaching of the Christian faith. Complaints from many persons, however, have reached our ears and those of the apostolic see. In fact, some printers have the boldness to print and sell to the public, in different parts of the world, books—some translated into Latin from Greek, Hebrew, Arabic and Chaldean as well as some issued directly in Latin or a vernacular language—containing errors opposed to the faith as well as pernicious views contrary to the Christian religion and to the reputation of prominent persons of rank. The readers are not edified. Indeed, they lapse into very great errors not only in the realm of faith but also in that of life and morals. This has often given rise to various scandals, as experience has taught, and there is daily the fear that even greater scandals are developing.

That is why, to prevent what has been a healthy discovery for the glory of God, the advance of the faith, and the propagation of good skills, from being misused for the opposite purposes and becoming an obstacle to the salvation of Christians, we have judged that our care must be exercised over the printing of books, precisely so that thorns do not grow up with the good seed or poisons become mixed with medicines. It is our desire to provide a suitable remedy for this danger, with the approval of this sacred council, so that the business of book-printing may go ahead with greater satisfaction the more that there is employed in the future, with greater zeal and prudence, a more attentive supervision. We therefore establish and ordain that henceforth, for all future time, no one may dare to print or have printed any book or other writing of whatever kind in Rome or in any other cities and dioceses, without the book or writings having first been closely examined, at Rome by our vicar and the master of the sacred palace, in other cities and dioceses by the bishop or some other person who knows about the printing of books and writings of this kind and who has been delegated to this office by the bishop in question, and also by the inquisitor of heresy for the city or diocese where the said printing is to take place, and unless the books or writings have been approved by a warrant signed in their own hand, which must be given, under pain of excommunication, freely and without delay.

In addition to the printed books being seized and publicly burnt, payment of a hundred ducats to the fabric of the basilica of the prince of the apostles in Rome, without hope of relief, and suspension for a whole year from the possibility of engaging in printing, there is to be imposed upon anyone presuming to act otherwise the sentence of excommunication. Finally, if the offender's contumacy increases, he is to be punished with all the sanctions of the law, by his bishop or by our vicar, in such a way that others will have no incentive to try to follow his example. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

[On setting a date for those acknowledging the Pragmatic Sanction]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. Among other matters to be carried through in this sacred council, we especially desire to make known and proclaim what must be decided and announced concerning the sanction called the Pragmatic, which was issued by a number of leaders of the French nation, both clerics and laymen as well as nobles and others supporting them. This is in accordance with the wishes of our predecessor pope Julius II, of happy memory, who summoned this council. The prelates and other clergy and the aforesaid laity have been summoned on several occasions to appear before both our said predecessor, Julius, and ourself; and their obstinacy has quite often been alleged or been the subject of accusations in the said council. It was subsequently alleged on behalf of the prelates, clerics and laymen, including nobles, and their said supporters, who were legitimately summoned (as just stated) for this purpose, that there was no route which would allow them to travel in safety to the said council. In order that they may not be able to make this excuse, we have taken measures for a comprehensive safe-conduct to be granted and conveyed to them by the Genoans, through whose territory they can travel in safety to the Roman curia, so that they may be able to bring forward the views which they may wish to present in defence of this Pragmatic Sanction.

To prevent them being able to bring up some further point against what has been set out and to claim a legitimate ignorance, and in order that their obstinacy may be overcome, we once again, with the approval of the sacred council, give notice and warning, regarding a final and definitive dead-line, to the clergy and laity, including nobles, prelates and their supporters, and to colleges of clerics and of seculars, that they must lawfully assemble (putting aside every excuse and delaying action) before I October next. We are extending the dead-line, for the aforesaid reasons and in order to remove all excuses, to the said I October, by way of a final postponement; and we grant and assign this anew. Once the dead-line has passed, however, proceedings will go forward at the next session to other matters and to the conclusion of the said business, even by means of a definitive sentence, notwithstanding their obstinacy and refusal to appear. This next eleventh session we summon for these and many other useful matters. with the approval of the sacred council, for 14 December after the next feast day of St Lucy. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

Session 11

19 December 1516

[On how to preach]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. Under the protection of the supreme majesty by whose ineffable providence things in heaven and on earth are guided, as we carry out the office of watchman over the Lord's flock committed to us, insofar as this is granted to our weakness, we reflect within ourselves in great depth that, among many other important matters, the office of preaching is also our concern. Preaching is of the first importance, very necessary and of great effect and utility in the church, so long as it is being exercised rightly, from genuine charity towards God and our neighbour, and according to the precepts and examples of the holy fathers, who contributed a great deal to the church by publicly professing such things at the time of the establishment and propagation of the faith. For, our redeemer first did and taught, and by his command and example, the college of twelve apostles—the heavens alike proclaiming the glory of the true God through all the earth—led back from darkness the whole human race, which was held by the old bondage under the yoke of sin, and guided it to the light of eternal salvation. The apostles and then their successors propagated far and wide and rooted deeply the word itself through all the earth and unto the ends of the world. Therefore those who are now carrying this burden ought to remember and frequently reflect that they in turn, with respect to this office of preaching, are entering into and maintaining that succession of the author and founder of this office, Jesus Christ our most holy redeemer, of Peter and Paul, and of the other apostles and disciples of the Lord.

We have learnt from trustworthy sources that some preachers in our times (we record this with sorrow) do not attend to the fact that they are carrying out the office of those we have named, of the holy doctors of the church and of others professing sacred theology, who, ever standing by Christians and confronting false prophets striving to overturn the faith, have shown that the church militant remains unimpaired by her very nature; and that they ought to adopt only what the people who flock to their sermons will find useful, by means of reflection and practical application, for rooting out vices, praising virtues and saving the souls of the faithful. Reliable report has it, rather, that they are preaching many and various things contrary to the teachings and examples which we have mentioned, sometimes with scandal to the people. This fact influences our attitude very deeply when we reflect within ourself that these preachers, unmindful of their duty, are striving in their sermons not for the benefit of the hearers but rather for their own self-display. They flatter the idle ears of some people who seem to have already reached a state that would make true the words of the Apostle writing to Timothy: For, a time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching but, having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own liking, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths. These preachers make no attempt whatever to lead back the deceived and empty minds of such people to the path of right and truth. Indeed, they involve them in even greater errors. Without any reverence for the testimony of canon law, indeed contrary to canonical censures, twisting the sense of scripture in many places, often giving it rash and false interpretations, they preach what is false; they threaten, describe and assert to be present, totally unsupported by legitimate proofs and merely following their own private interpretation, various terrors, menaces and many other evils, which they say are about to arrive and are already growing; they very often introduce to their congregations certain futile and worthless ideas and other matters of this nature; and, what is more appalling, they dare to claim that they possess this information from the light of eternity and by the guidance and grace of the holy Spirit.

When these preachers spread this medley of fraud and error, backed by the false testimony of alleged miracles, the congregations whom they ought to be carefully instructing in the gospel message, and retaining and preserving in the true faith, are withdrawn by their sermons from the teaching and commands of the universal church. When they turn aside from the official sacred teachings, which they ought particularly to follow, they separate and move far from salvation those who listen to them. For, as a result of these and similar activities, the less educated people, as being more exposed to deceit, are very easily led into manifold errors, as they wander from the path of salvation and from obedience to the Roman church. Gregory, therefore, who was outstanding in this task, moved by the warmth of his charity, gave a strong exhortation and warning to preachers that, when about to speak, they approach the people with prudence and caution lest, caught up in the enthusiasm of their oratory, they entangle the hearts of their hearers with verbal errors as if with nooses, and while perhaps they wish to appear wise, in their delusion they foolishly tear asunder the sinews of the hoped-for virtue. For, the meaning of words is often lost when the hearts of the audience are bruised by too urgent and careless forms of speech.

Indeed, in no other way do these preachers cause greater harm and scandal to the less educated than when they preach on what should be left unspoken or when they introduce error by teaching what is false and useless. Since such things are known to be totally opposed to this holy and divinely instituted religion, as being novelties and foreign to it, it is surely just for them to be examined seriously and carefully, lest they cause scandal for the Christian people and ruin for the souls of their authors and of others. We therefore desire, in accord with the word of the prophet, Who makes harmony dwell in the house, to restore that uniformity which has lost esteem, and to preserve such as remains, insofar as we can with God's help, in the holy church of God, which by divine providence we preside over and which is indeed one, preaches and worships one God and firmly and sincerely professes one faith. We wish that those who preach the word of God to the people be such that God's church suffers no scandal from their preaching. If they are amenable to correction, let them abstain in future from these matters into which they have recently ventured. For it is clear that, in addition to the points which we have mentioned, a number of them are no longer preaching the way of the Lord in virtue and are not expounding the gospel, as is their duty, but rather invented miracles, new and false prophecies and other frivolities hardly distinguishable from old wives' tales. Such things give rise to great scandal since no account is taken of devotion and authority and of its condemnations and rejections. There are those who make attempts to impress and win support by bawling everywhere, not sparing even those who are honoured with pontifical rank and other prelates of the church, to whom they should rather be showing honour and reverence. They attack their persons and their state of life, boldly and without discrimination, and commit other acts of this kind. Our aim is that so dangerous and contagious an evil and so mortal a disease may be thoroughly wiped out and that its consequences may be so completely swept away that not even its memory remains.

We decree and ordain, with the approval of the sacred council, that nobody -whether a secular cleric or a member of any of the mendicant orders or someone with the right to preach by law or custom or privilege or otherwise—may be admitted to carry out this office unless he has first been examined with due care by his superior, which is a responsibility that we lay on the superior's conscience, and unless he is found to be fit and suitable for the task by his upright behaviour, age, doctrine, honesty, prudence and exemplary life. Wherever he goes to preach, he must provide a guarantee to the bishop and other local ordinaries concerning his examination and competence, by means of the original or other letters from the person who examined and approved him. We command all who undertake this task of preaching, or will later undertake it, to preach and expound the gospel truth and holy scripture in accordance with the exposition, interpretation and commentaries that the church or long use has approved and has accepted for teaching until now, and will accept in the future, without any addition contrary to its true meaning or in conflict with it. They are always to insist on the meanings which are in harmony with the words of sacred scripture and with the interpretations, properly and wisely understood, of the doctors mentioned above. They are in no way to presume to preach or declare a fixed time for future evils, the coming of antichrist or the precise day of judgment; for Truth says, it is not for us to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. Let it be known that those who have hitherto dared to declare such things are liars, and that because of them not a little authority has been taken away from those who preach the truth.

We are placing a restriction on each and all of the said clerics, secular and regular and others, of whatever status, rank or order, who undertake this task. In their public sermons they are not to keep on predicting some future events as based on the sacred writings, nor presume to declare that they know them from the holy Spirit or from divine revelation, nor that strange and empty predictions are matters which must be firmly asserted or held in some other way. Rather, at the command of the divine word, let them expound and proclaim the gospel to every creature, rejecting vices and commending virtues. Fostering everywhere the peace and mutual love so much commended by our Redeemer, let them not rend the seamless garment of Christ and let them refrain from any scandalous detraction of bishops, prelates and other superiors and of their state of life. Yet these they rebuke and hurt before people generally, including the laity, not only heedlessly and extravagantly but also by open and plain reproof, with the names of the evildoers sometimes being stated by them.

Finally, we decree that the constitution of pope Clement of happy memory beginning Religiosi, which we renew and approve by this present decree, must be observed by preachers without alteration, so that, preaching in these terms for the people's advantage and winning them for the Lord, they may deserve to gain interest on the talent received from him and to win his grace and glory. But if the Lord reveals to certain of them, by some inspiration, some future events in the church of God, as he promises by the prophet Amos and as the apostle Paul, the chief of preachers, says, Do not quench the Spirit, do not despise prophesying, we have no wish for them to be counted with the other group of story-tellers and liars or to be otherwise hindered. For, as Ambrose bears witness, the grace of the Spirit himself is being extinguished if fervour in those beginning to speak is quietened by contradiction. In that case, a wrong is certainly done to the holy Spirit. The matter is important inasmuch as credence must not be easily given to every spirit and, as the Apostle states, the spirits have to be tested to see whether they come from God. It is therefore our will that as from now, by common law, alleged inspirations of this kind, before they are published, or preached to the people, are to be understood as reserved for examination by the apostolic see. If it is impossible to do this without danger of delay, or some pressing need suggests other action, then, keeping the same arrangement, notice is to be given to the local ordinary so that, after he has summoned three or four knowledgeable and serious men and carefully examined the matter with them, they may grant permission if this seems to them to be appropriate. We lay the responsibility for this decision on their consciences.

If any persons dare to carry through anything contrary to any of the above, it is our will that, in addition to the punishments set down against such persons by law, they incur the penalty of excommunication from which, except at the imminent approach of death, they can be absolved only by the Roman pontiff. In order that others may not be urged on by their example to try similar acts, we decree that the office of preaching is forbidden to such persons for ever; notwithstanding constitutions, ordinances, privileges, indults and apostolic letters for religious orders and the aforesaid persons, including those mentioned in Mare magnum, even if perchance they have been approved, renewed or even granted anew by us, none of which in this matter do we wish to support at any point in their favour. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

[Bull containing agreements between the pope and the most Christian king of France, on the Pragmatic]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. In accord with the dispensation of the divine mercy by which kings reign and princes rule, established as we are despite our lack of merit in the lofty watch-tower of the apostolate and set over nations and kingdoms, we ponder how permanent force and effect may be given to the things which have been granted, carried out, established, ordained, decreed and done by our praiseworthy and prudent arrangement, in union with our venerable brothers, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, for the wholesome and peaceful government of kingdoms and for the peace and justice of peoples, especially with regard to rulers who are well-deserving of the catholic faith, the Christian state and the apostolic see. Nevertheless, we sometimes add the force of our renewed approval to such things, with the approval of the sacred council, so that these things may persist with greater steadiness in an undamaged state the more often they are strengthened by our authority as well as by the protection of a general council. We readily supply effective care for the preservation of such things in order that the kings and peoples of the kingdoms in question, full of gladness in the Lord because of such concessions, privileges, statutes and regulations, may rest together in the sweetness of peace, quiet and delight and may persevere more fervently in their accustomed devotion to the same see.

Recently, in order that the church, our spouse, might be kept in a holy union and use might be made by Christ's faithful of the sacred canons issued by Roman pontiffs and general councils, we ordained and decreed, with the unanimous advice and consent of our said brothers, the cardinals of the holy Roman church certain constitutions that had been treated with our dearly beloved son in Christ, Francis, the most Christian king of France, while we were at Bologna with our curia, and which were to take the place of the Pragmatic Sanction and the things contained in it for the sake of peace and harmony in the kingdom of France and for the general and public advantage of the kingdom. These constitutions were carefully examined by our said brothers, agreed upon with the said king on their advice, and accepted by a legitimate procurator of the king. Their contents are contained rather fully in our letter which follows, Primitiva illa ecclesia... {Msi 32, 948-963, Raccolta di concordati su materie ecclesiastiche tra la Santa Sede e le autorita civili, edited by A. Mercati. I Rome. 1954. 233-25}

The letter has been published chiefly in order that continuing charity and unbroken peace may abide in the mystical body, the church, and that any dissenting members may be re-grafted into the body in a convenient way. The letter will be better observed according as it is more clearly established that it has been approved and renewed by us, after mature and healthy consideration, with the approval of the said Lateran council. Although there is no need of another approval for the validity and reality of the same letter, however, to provide an ampler surety so that observance may be firmer and abolition more difficult, greater strength will be given to it by the approval of so many fathers. Therefore, with the approval of the sacred Lateran council, by apostolic authority and fullness of power, we approve and renew, and order to be observed and maintained in their totality and without change, the said letter together with each and every statute, ordinance, decree, explanation, agreement, compact, promise, wish, penalty, restraint and clause contained in it; especially the clause by which it was our will that if the said king of France does not approve and ratify the aforesaid letter, and each and every thing contained in it, within six months from the date of this present letter, and does not arrange for the contents to be read, published, sworn to and registered, like all other royal constitutions in his kingdom and in all other places and lordships of the said kingdom, for all future time without limit, by all the prelates and other ecclesiastical persons and courts of parlements, and if he does not convey to us, within the said six months, letters patent or authentic written documents concerning each and all of the aforesaid matters about the acceptance, reading, publication, oath and registration referred to, or does not deliver them to our nuncio attached to the king, in order to be passed on by him to us, and does not subsequently arrange for the letter to be read each year and effectively observed without alteration exactly as other binding constitutions and ordinances of the king of France have to be observed, then the letter itself and whatever follows from it are null and void and of no force or value.

We decree and declare that the enduring effect only continues in the event of the said ratification and approval, and not otherwise or in any other way, and that all who are included in the said letter, regarding the observance of the actual letter and of each and every thing set down in it, are bound and obliged by the censures and penalties and other things contained in it, in accordance with the meaning and form of the same letter. This is notwithstanding apostolic constitutions and ordinances, all those things which we did not wish to oppose in the and any other things of any kind to the contrary. Let nobody If anyone however...

[On the abrogation of the Pragmatic Sanction]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. The eternal Father, who will never abandon his flock up to the close of the age, so loved obedience, as the Apostle testifies, that to make expiation for the sin of disobedience of the first parent, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death. Moreover, when he was about to depart from the world to the Father, he established Peter and his successors as his own representatives on the firmness of a rock. It is necessary to obey them as the book of the Kings testifies, so that whoever does not obey, incurs death. As we read in another place, the person who abandons the teaching of the Roman pontiff cannot be within the church; for, on the authority of Augustine and Gregory, obedience alone is the mother and protector of all virtues, it alone possessing the reward of faith. Therefore, on the teaching of the same Peter, we ought to be careful that what has been introduced in due season and for sound reasons by our predecessors the Roman pontiffs, especially in sacred councils, for the defence of obedience of this kind, of ecclesiastical authority and freedom, and of the apostolic see, should be duly discharged by our effort, devotion and diligence and be brought to the desired conclusion. The souls of the simple, of whom we shall have to render an account to God, are to be freed from the deceits and snares of the prince of darkness. Indeed, our predecessor of happy memory, pope Julius II, summoned the sacred Lateran council for lawful reasons which were then made clear, on the advice and with the consent of his venerable brothers, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, among whom we were then numbered. Together with the same sacred Lateran council, he pondered on the fact that the corruption of the kingdom of France at Bourges, which they call the Pragmatic Sanction, had been strong in the past and was still vigorous, resulting in very great danger and scandal to souls, and a loss and cheapening of respect for the apostolic see. He therefore entrusted discussion of the Pragmatic Sanction to specifically named cardinals and to the prelates of a certain congregation.

Although the aforesaid sanction should clearly be subject to nullity on many counts, and was supporting and preserving open schism, and therefore it could have been declared to be essentially of no effect, null and invalid, without the need for any preceding formal citation, yet, from a great sense of caution, our same predecessor Julius, by a public edict—which was to be fixed to the church doors of Milan, Asti and Pavia, since there was then no safe access to France -gave warning and summoned the prelates of France, the chapters of churches and monasteries, the parlements and the layfolk supporting them and making use of the said sanction, and each and all of the rest who were thinking that there was some advantage for them in the foregoing individually or collectively, to appear before him and the said council within a fixed period, which was then clearly stated, and to declare the reasons why the aforesaid sanction, and its corruptive and abusive effect in matters touching on the authority of the Roman church and the sacred canons, and on the violation of ecclesiastical liberty should not be declared null and invalid. During the lifetime of the said Julius our predecessor, various obstacles made it impossible to implement the summons or to discuss fully the business of the abrogation, as had been his intention. After his death, however, the summons, in full lawful form, was again brought forward by the promoter of the sacred council, the procurator fiscal. Those summoned and not presenting themselves were accused of obstinacy and the request was made for matters to be taken further. At the time we, who have been brought to the highest peak of the apostolate by the favour of the divine mercy after duly considering the whole situation, gave no response to the request, for definite reasons. Later, when a variety of impediments were being alleged by the said persons who had been warned and summoned, as to why they had been unable to present themselves at the appointed time (as stated above), we postponed, several times at several sessions, with the approval of the sacred council the date fixed by the said summons and warning to later dates, which have now long gone past, so that all occasion for just excuse and complaint might be taken away from them.

Although all obstacles have been removed and all dead-lines have passed nevertheless the aforesaid persons, despite being warned and summoned, have not appeared before us and the said council, nor taken any steps to appear, in order to bring forward a reason why the said sanction should not be declared null. There is therefore no longer room for any excuse. They can justly be regarded as obstinate; as indeed, by the demands of justice, we reckoned them to be. We are therefore thinking seriously about this Pragmatic Sanction, or rather corruption, as has been stated, which was issued at the time of the schism by those who did not have the necessary power, and which is not at all in accord with the rest of the Christian state or with God's holy church. It was revoked, made void and abolished by the most Christian king of France, Louis XI, of distinguished memory. It damages and lessens the authority, liberty and dignity of the apostolic see. It completely removes the power of the Roman pontiff to provide both cardinals of the holy Roman church, who work earnestly on behalf of the universal church, and learned men, with churches, monasteries and other benefices, in accordance with the demands of their status, even though such persons are numerous in the curia and it is by their counsel that the authority and power of the apostolic see, the Roman pontiff and the whole church is kept safe and its affairs guided and promoted into a prosperous state. Thus it offers excuses to church prelates of the aforesaid faction for breaking and violating the sacred nerve of obedience to ecclesiastical discipline and for setting up opposition against us and the apostolic see, their mother, and it opens the way for them to attempt such things. Clearly it is subject to nullity and is to be supported by no prop except of a temporary nature, or rather, of a kind of tolerance. Our predecessors as Roman pontiffs, for all their high hopes expressed in their own days, may have seemed to have tolerated this corruption and abuse, not being able to confront it completely either because of the evil nature of the times or because they were providing for it in some other way. We remember, however, that almost seventy years have passed since the publication of this sanction of Bourges, and that no council has been lawfully held within this time except the present Lateran council. Since we have been placed in this council by the Lord's disposition, we therefore judge and resolve, with Augustine as our witness, that we cannot refrain or desist from the eradication and total annulment of the same vile sanction if we are to avoid disgrace to ourself and to the many fathers assembled in the present council as well as to avoid danger to our own soul and those of the above-mentioned persons using it.

Just as pope Leo I, our predecessor of holy memory, whose footsteps we readily follow insofar as we can, gave orders and brought to pass that the measures which had been rashly carried out at the second synod of Ephesus, contrary to justice and the catholic faith, were later revoked at the council of Chalcedon, for the sake of the constancy of the same faith, so we too judge that we cannot, or ought not to, withdraw from or abandon the revocation of so evil a sanction and its contents if we are to preserve our own honour, and that of the church, with a safe conscience. The fact that the sanction and its contents were published at the council of Basel and, at the instance of the same council, were received and recognised by the meeting at Bourges, ought not to influence us since all those happenings after the transfer of the same council of Basel took place—the transfer being made by pope Eugenius IV, our predecessor of happy memory—have remained the deeds of the quasi-council, or rather the conventicle, of Basel. For, especially after that transfer, it did not deserve to be called a council any more and therefore its acts could not have any force. For it is clearly established that only the contemporary Roman pontiff, as holding authority over all councils, has the full right and power to summon, transfer and dissolve councils. This we know not only from the witness of holy scripture, the statements of holy fathers and our predecessors as Roman pontiffs, and the decisions of the sacred canons, but also from the declarations of the same councils. Some of this evidence we have decided to repeat, and some to pass over in silence as being sufficiently well known.

Thus we read that the synod of Alexandria, at which Athanasius was present, wrote to Felix, bishop of Rome, that the council of Nicaea had decided that councils ought not to be celebrated without the authority of the Roman pontiff. Pope Leo I transferred the second council of Ephesus to Chalcedon. Pope Martin V authorised his presidents at the council of Siena to transfer the council with no mention being made of the council's consent. The greatest respect was shown to our predecessors as Roman pontiffs: to Celestine by the first synod of Ephesus; to the said Leo by the synod of Chalcedon; to Agatho by the sixth synod; to Hadrian by the seventh synod; and to Nicholas and Hadrian by the eighth synod, of Constantinople. These councils submitted with reverence and humility to the instructions and commands of the same pontiffs which had been composed and issued by them in the sacred councils. Moreover, pope Damasus and the other bishops assembled at Rome, writing to the bishops at Illyricum about the council at Rimini, pointed out that the number of bishops assembled at Rimini counted for nothing since it was known that the Roman pontiff, whose decrees were to be preferred before all others, had not given his consent to their meeting. It appears that pope Leo I said the same when writing to all the bishops of Sicily. It was customary for the fathers of the ancient councils humbly to ask for and obtain a warrant and approbation from the Roman pontiff in order to corroborate the matters dealt with in their councils. This is clear from the synods and their acts held at Nicaea, Ephesus, Chalcedon, the sixth synod at Constantinople, the seventh at Nicaea, the Roman synod under Symmachus and the synods in Haimar's book. We would certainly be without these recent troubles if the fathers at Bourges and Basel had followed this laudable custom, which it is known that the fathers at Constance also finally adopted.

We desire this matter to be brought to its proper conclusion. We are proceeding on the strength of the many citations issued by us and our said predecessor Julius, and of the other things mentioned above which are so notorious that they cannot be hidden by any excuses or evasions, as well as in virtue of our pastoral office. We are supplying for each and every defect, both of law and of fact, if perchance any happen to exist in the above. We judge and declare, from our certain knowledge and from the fullness of apostolic power, with the approval of the same sacred council, by the contents of the present document, that the aforesaid Pragmatic Sanction or corruption, and its approbations however issued, and each and every decree, chapter, statute, constitution or ordinance that is included, or even inserted, in any way in the same and has been published by others, as well as the customs, expressions and uses, or rather abuses, in any way resulting from it and observed until the present, have been and are of no force or value. In addition, for a more extensive safeguard, we revoke, make void, abrogate, quash, annul and condemn that same sanction or corruption of Bourges and its approval, whether expressed or tacit, as said above, as well as each and every thing of whatever nature included or even inserted in it, and we judge, declare and will them to be considered as of no effect, revoked, made void, abrogated, quashed, annulled and condemned. Moreover, since subjection to the Roman pontiff is necessary for salvation for all Christ's faithful, as we are taught by the testimony of both sacred scripture and the holy fathers, and as is declared by the constitution of pope Boniface VIII of happy memory, also our predecessor, which begins Unam sanctam, we therefore, with the approval of the present sacred council, for the salvation of the souls of the same faithful, for the supreme authority of the Roman pontiff and of this holy see, and for the unity and power of the church, his spouse, renew and give our approval to that constitution, but without prejudice to the declaration of pope Clement V of holy memory, which begins Meruit.

In virtue of holy obedience and under the penalties and censures to be declared below, we forbid each and all of Christ's faithful, both laity and secular clergy, and regulars of whatever order including mendicants, and other persons without restriction, of no matter what status, rank or condition they may be, including cardinals of the holy Roman church, patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, and any others distinguished by ecclesiastical or worldly or any other honour, and each and all other prelates, clerics, chapters, secular convents, regulars of the aforesaid orders, including abbots and priors of monasteries, dukes, counts, princes, barons, parlements, royal officials, judges, advocates, notaries and scribes, both ecclesiastical and secular, and any other regular or secular ecclesiastics in any high office, as said above, who are now or shall be living in the said kingdom of France and the Dauphine and wherever the said Pragmatic has been in force directly or indirectly, silently or openly, to presume to make use of the aforesaid Pragmatic Sanction, or rather corruption, in any way or for any reason, by keeping silence or by clear speech, directly or indirectly, or by any other excuse or clever evasion, in any judicial or extra-judicial acts, or even to appeal to it or make judgments on its terms, or to quash, by themselves or through another or others, any judicial or extra-judicial acts on the grounds of the general meaning of the said sanction or of parts of it, and they may not permit or order these things to be done by means of others. They are not to keep the aforesaid Pragmatic Sanction, or sections or decrees contained in it, in their own houses or in other public or private places. Indeed, they are to destroy it, or have it destroyed, in archives, including royal and capitular ones, and in the above-mentioned places within six months from the date of this present letter.

The penalties to be incurred, automatically and without the need for any further declaration, for each and all of the aforesaid persons, if they act to the contrary (though may they not!), are immediate major excommunication, the incapacity for all and singular legal acts of any kind, being branded as infamous, and the penalties expressed in the law of treason; in addition for the aforesaid ecclesiastical and religious persons, the loss of all patriarchal, metropolitan and other cathedral churches, of all monasteries, priories and convents, and of all secular dignities and ecclesiastical benefices, as well as the inability to hold them in the future; and in addition for secular persons, the loss of any fiefs held for any reason from the Roman or some other church, and the inability to hold them in the future. They cannot be absolved from these penalties by any faculty or by clauses contained in privileges regarding the hearing of confessions, no matter by what persons or verbal formulae they may have been granted. Except when at the point of death, they can only be absolved by the Roman pontiff acting canonically or by someone else having a faculty from him specifically for that purpose.

By the knowledge, power and statements mentioned above we expressly and specifically repeal anything to the contrary. This is notwithstanding anything mentioned above as well as constitutions, ordinances, decrees and statutes, however they may have been published and granted, and frequently renewed, repeated, confirmed and approved, as enduring in their force, by apostolic or any other authority, even conciliar authority and even by our certain knowledge and fullness of apostolic power, the tenor of all of which we regard as sufficiently expressed and included, for the purposes of the above, as if they had been inserted herein word for word; notwithstanding if the apostolic see has granted to any communities and universities, and any individual persons mentioned above, even if they are the aforesaid cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, marquises and dukes, or any others, whether individually or communally, that they cannot be interdicted, suspended, excommunicated, deprived or incapacitated by apostolic letters which do not make full and express mention, word for word, of the indult in question; and notwithstanding any other general or special privileges, indulgences and apostolic letters, of whatever tenor they may be, by means of which, because they are not expressed or included in whole in the present letter, the effect of the above might be impeded or deferred in any way, since special mention of their contents is to be regarded as included, word for word, in this our letter. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

[On religious and their privileges]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. We consider and diligently ponder the hardworking and anxious zeal, and the unending labours for the glory of the divine name, for the triumph of the catholic faith and the preservation of the church's unity, and for the training and salvation of the souls of the faithful, which are carried on by bishops and their superiors, who have been placed by the apostolic see at the head of their churches in different parts of the world, as well as by the friars of the different orders, especially the mendicant orders, who are engaged without respite or rest. So great is the satisfaction that has reached our heart, as a result of their fruitful labours in the Lord's vineyard and their opportune and praiseworthy actions, that we are devoting every effort to encourage the things which we know to contribute to the preservation of peace and quiet among them. We are conscious that the bishops have become partners in our anxiety. Ambrose bears witness that their distinction and greatness have no possible equal. We also know that religious have done much in the field of the Lord for the defence and advance of the Christian religion and that they have produced and are daily producing abundant fruit. Consequently all of the faithful are aware that the good works of these bishops and religious have enabled the true faith to make progress and to spread everywhere throughout the world.

These men have likewise not hesitated on innumerable occasions, with much dedication and competence, to destroy the schisms in God's church, to bring unity to that church and to undergo innumerable pains so that the same church might gain the quiet of peace. Therefore it is just that we direct our efforts so to unite them to one another by the bond of peace and by a fraternal unity and charity that, linked in unity of doctrine and actions, they may foster more abundant fruits in God's church. The exercise of spiritual rights, which concern the glory of God and the salvation of the souls of Christ's faithful, has been entrusted to bishops and their superiors in their respective dioceses, since they have been chosen to be sharers of our burden, as we have already said, and since dioceses with defined boundaries have been assigned to each of the bishops. We truly desire, then, that these spiritual rights be exercised by the bishops, and that the right of freely exercising them be truly, as far as possible, kept intact for them. If our predecessors as Roman pontiffs and the apostolic see have granted any such spiritual rights to the said mendicant friars to the harm of the bishops we consider that such concessions made to religious ought in future to be limited, so that the friars themselves will be supported in all charity by the said bishops rather than be troubled and disturbed. For, regulars and seculars, prelates and subjects, exempt and non-exempt, belong to the one universal church, outside of which no one at all is saved, and they all have one Lord and one faith. That is why it is fitting that, belonging to the one same body, they also have the one same will; and just as the brethren are united by the bond of mutual charity, so it is not fitting that they arouse among themselves injustice and hurt, since the Saviour says, My commandment is that you love one another as I have loved you.

We wish to preserve charity and mutual goodwill among bishops, their superiors, prelates and friars, as well as to promote divine worship and the peace and tranquillity of the universal church. We know this can be done only if each preserves as far as possible his own jurisdiction. We have therefore decided and decreed, with the approval of the sacred council, that the said bishops, their superiors and other prelates may visit the parish churches which legitimately belong to the same friars by reason of their residences, with regard to what concerns the care of the parishioners and the preservation and administration of the sacraments, without however the exceptional trouble and expense of official visitors. They may punish those responsible for the churches and failing in this matter: if they are religious, then in accordance with the rules of their order within the precincts of the religious house, if they are secular priests or friars who hold benefices of this kind, then they may freely punish them as being subject to their jurisdiction. Both prelates and secular priests who are not excommunicated may celebrate masses out of devotion in the churches of the said religious houses, if they wish to do so, and the friars themselves ought to welcome them. Friars who are invited by the same prelates to take part in solemn processions ought to agree, provided the suburban friary in question is not more than a mile away from the city.

The friars' superiors are bound to specify and present in person to the same prelates the friars whom they have chosen to hear for a time the confessions of the prelate's subjects, if the prelates ask for them to be specified and presented to them; if not, then to their vicars; with the condition that they are not bound to go to prelates who are more than two days' journey away. The friars in question may be examined by the same bishops and prelates, at least regarding the sufficiency of their learning and their other skills relative to this sacrament. If they are accepted, or if the refusal is unjust, then, in accordance with the constitution Omnis utriusque sexus, let them be considered as accepted at least as regards confession, and they can even hear the confessions of strangers. They have no power, however, to absolve layfolk and secular clergy from man imposed penalties. They may not administer the eucharist and extreme unction and the church's other sacraments to those whose confessions they have heard, including the sick and the dying, who say that their own priest has refused to give the sacraments to them, unless the refusal was made without a just reason and this is proved by the testimony of neighbours or by an investigation carried out before a pubic notary. They have no authority to administer these sacraments to persons requesting their ministrations except during a period of actual service to them. Temporary agreements and contracts between friars and prelates or curates are valid unless they are rejected by the next general or provincial chapter and the rejection is duly communicated by the chapter. Friars may not enter parishes bearing a cross in order to carry out the funerals of those who have chosen to be buried at the churches of their houses or institutions, unless the parish priest, having received due notice and a request, does not refuse, and in that case without prejudice to himself and the ordinary; or unless there is an ancient custom on this point with the friars, which is currently in force and is mutually agreed upon. Those who wish to be buried in the habit of the said friars, but who live in their own houses and not in enclosure, are free to choose a burial place for themselves in their last wills.

Friars due to be promoted to orders are to be examined by the ordinaries on grammar and their competence. Provided they answer adequately, they ought to be readily admitted by the ordinaries. They may not, however, be ordained in their churches or houses or other places by anyone except the diocesan bishop or his deputy (the latter is to be asked with due reverence), unless the bishop refuses on insufficient grounds or is absent from his diocese. They should not ask for the consecration of a church or an altar, or the blessing of a cemetery, from another bishop; and they may not arrange for the first stone of a church being built for them to be laid by a strange bishop, unless the ordinary refuses without any just reason after he has been asked two or three times with due reverence and urgency. Friars may not bless a bride and bridegroom without the consent of those in charge of the parish. In order to render to the mother church the honour due to her, friars and secular clerics may not ring the bells of their churches on Holy Saturday before those of the cathedral or mother church have been rung, even if they are supported on this point by a privilege of the apostolic see. Those acting otherwise incur a penalty of one hundred ducats. They are to publish and observe in the churches of their own houses the censures which are imposed promulgated and solemnly published by the ordinaries in the mother churches of cities as well as in the collegiate and parish churches of castles and towns, when they are asked to do this by the same ordinaries. To provide more fruitfully for the salvation of the souls of Christ's faithful of both sexes, they are obliged to advise and encourage those whose confessions they have heard for a time, no matter of what standing or status they may be, that they are bound in conscience to pay tithes, or a portion of their goods or produce, in those places where such tithes or dues are customarily paid; and they are obliged to refuse absolution to those who will not pay them. They are bound, moreover, to include this in their public preaching and exhortations to the people when they are asked to do so.

The conservators assigned for a time to the same friars by the apostolic see ought to be outstanding in learning and good reputation and of established ecclesiastical rank. They cannot oblige to appear before them anyone living more than two days' journey away, notwithstanding any privileges granted to the conservators at other times. Excommunicated persons wishing to enter a mendicant order cannot be absolved when the interests of a third party are involved, unless satisfaction has previously been made. Procurators, business agents and workers in the service of the said friars are subject to sentences of excommunication which have been promulgated, if they have given cause for them or have offered help, favour or advice to the guilty. Brothers and sisters of the third order, and those known as the cloaked ones, the girdled ones and the devotees, and others no matter how named, living in their own homes, can choose whatever place of burial they wish. They are bound, however, to receive the eucharist at Easter as well as extreme unction and the other sacraments of the church, with the exception of the sacrament of penance, from their own priest. They are obliged to undertake the tasks incumbent upon the laity, and they can be brought before lay judges in a secular court. To avoid the cheapening of ecclesiastical censures, and sentences of interdict being regarded as of little importance, members of the said third orders are in no way to be admitted to hear divine services in the churches of their orders during a period of interdict, if they have given grounds for the interdict or encouraged or supported those grounds, or if they have in any way offered help, counsel or favour to the guilty. But those living in an official group, or dwelling with the enclosed, and women who are leading a life of virginity, celibacy or chaste widowhood under an expressed vow and with a habit, ought to enjoy the privileges of the order of which they are tertiaries.

We wish and decree that each and all of the above norms are to be extended to and observed by, all other religious of other orders. In matters not mentioned above, the rights of the said bishops and friars and other religious are to be maintained. We do not wish to prejudice these rights in any way by the above statements, or to introduce anything new. This is notwithstanding apostolic constitutions and ordinances; statutes and customs of the said orders which have been strengthened by oath, apostolic confirmation or any other form of reinforcement; and privileges, indults and apostolic letters which have been granted to the same orders and are contrary to what has been set down above or to any part of it, even what was included in Mare magnum. If there is required a mention or other statement that is special, specific, clear, distinctive, word for word, and not by general clauses, regarding these things and their meaning, or if some other carefully chosen form should be used, in order that they might be abrogated, then we consider their meaning to be sufficiently expressed and included in this present letter, we expressly and specially abrogate anything to the contrary, and we decree as null and void anything that is knowingly or unknowingly attempted to the contrary in these matters by any person acting on any authority.

We warn the friars, in virtue of holy obedience, to revere bishops with fitting honour and due respect, out of the reverence owed to us and the apostolic see, since they act as deputies in place of the holy apostles. As for bishops, we urge and appeal by the tender mercy of our God that, while attending to the friars with well-disposed affection, treating them with kindness and encouraging them, they present themselves to them as in no sense difficult or hard or peevish, but rather as easy, mild, well-disposed and liberal in loving generosity, and that in all the above-mentioned matters they welcome them with ready kindness as co-workers in the Lord's vineyard and as sharers in their labours, and that they guard and defend their rights with all charity, so that both bishops and friars, whose works as burning lamps set on a hilltop ought to provide light to all Christ's faithful, may move forward from strength to strength for the glory of God, the triumph of the catholic faith and the salvation of peoples, and in consequence deserve to obtain from the Lord, the most generous recompenser of all good deeds, the reward of eternal life. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

Session 12

16 March 1517

[Against those attacking the houses of cardinals]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. Certain audacious persons disdain to show the appropriate deference to the cardinals of the holy Roman church, who are the chief pillars of the catholic church. They do not fear to lay violent hands, with impious boldness, on their possessions and properties. Their uncontrolled desire warns and induces us to strengthen, increase and extend—in accordance with the character of the times and with what we perceive in the Lord to be soundly in keeping with so distinguished an office in God's church—those measures which, by wise planning, were established by our predecessors for the safe-guarding of the high office of the said cardinals, in order that the boldness of these people may be restrained before it extends even further. Indeed, there has recently grown up in Rome a damnable abuse and lack of restraint in wrongdoing. Thus, while there is a vacancy in the apostolic see, and the election of a future Roman pontiff is actually being discussed by the cardinals in conclave, if some rumour leaks out, even if false, that one of the cardinals has been elected as pontiff, the mob attacks his house with arms and contends by force with his servant-guards, while he is still in the conclave, over the despoiling of his house. If an entry is forced by breaking down the doors or digging under the wall, the mob rushes in to plunder all the goods that are there, unless a defence is made by armed guards. Sometimes there are some who are so audacious and headstrong that they do not fear even on other occasions to attack the houses of cardinals in a hostile fashion and with arms, under the guise of general brawling, and to strike and wound while they are there, as a result of which there is considerable loss to the honour of the cardinalate, by which the most holy church militant is fully adorned as by a purple garment, contempt for the cardinals is aroused, and occasion is given for murders and other scandals.

We wish to suppress audacious tendencies of this kind by fitting punishments. We therefore renew by this letter, with the approval of the sacred council and by our apostolic authority, the published constitutions of our predecessors as Roman pontiffs, Honorius III and Boniface VIII of happy memory, against those pursuing any cardinal of the said church in a hostile manner, those assisting such persons by their presence, counsel or support, or knowingly harbouring or defending them, and those attacking their houses or dwellings, as said above, and their descendants and property. We decree that these constitutions must be observed everywhere without alteration for all future times. We also extend these same constitutions, with each and every censure and penalty contained in them, to each and every living person of whatever status, condition and distinction, who attacks with an armed band the home of any of the said cardinals, both at the time of the said conclave, even if the cardinal in question has been elected pope, and at other times and for any reasons, and who seizes anything in the house with violence like an enemy or wounds anyone of those dwelling there, and also their associates and those who have given orders for it to be done, or have given personal approval to the deed or have provided counsel and support to the attackers in the above matters and have defended them. This is notwithstanding apostolic constitutions and ordinances and other measures of whatever kind to the contrary. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

[Constitution imposing taxes and closing the council]

Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the council, for an everlasting record. We have been set over nations and kingdoms, as the prophet declared, although our merits are unequal to this. We are suitably carrying out the duty of our office when we renew again that reform of the whole church and its affairs which we have accomplished with profit; when we plan to apply suitable remedies for the unchallenged observance of the reform and to make provision for cathedrals and metropolitan churches so that they may no longer be without their pastors; and when we supervise these remedies with ever-present attention and untiring efforts, by means of which we may be able to render the Lord's flock, which has been entrusted to our care, acceptable and submissive in the sight of the divine majesty. Our aim is also to crush the Turks and other infidels standing firm in the eastern and southern regions. They treat the way of true light and salvation with complete contempt and totally unyielding blindness; they attack the life-giving cross on which our Saviour willed to accept death so that by dying he might destroy death, and by the ineffable mystery of his most holy life he might restore life; and they make themselves hateful enemies of God and most bitter persecutors of the Christian religion. Strengthened by defences not only spiritual but also temporal, we may be able, under God's guidance and favour, to oppose the bitter and frequent sallies by which, in wild rage, they move savagely amidst Christian blood.

Indeed, pope Julius II, our predecessor of happy memory, acting in union with the holy Spirit, in a laudable and legitimate manner, for sound reasons, with the advice and consent of his venerable brothers, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, of whom we were then one, summoned the sacred Lateran council. He held five sessions and summoned a sixth. He then passed from the human scene. We were then raised to the summit of the highest apostolate by the favour of the divine mercy. We had always had a heartfelt desire, even at lesser meetings, to see a general council being celebrated as a very important development in the Lord's field. We realised that an obligation had been added to our honourable and useful desire as a result of the duty of pastoral care now laid upon us. We therefore undertook this matter with a more burning commitment and a total readiness of mind. We gave approval in the said sixth session, with the advice and consent of our said brother cardinals and with the approval of the same sacred Lateran council, to the postponement of the council to a fixed date, which was then clearly stated, for reasons made clear from the situation and for others affecting our own and the minds of our said brother cardinals. The council was to continue towards the completion of the objectives for which it had been summoned; and especially that, once the terrible conflicts between Christian princes and rulers were settled and weapons of war set aside, a universal and lasting peace could be established. Leaving nothing untried, we intended to use all our efforts to bring about this peace and to conclude it, as if it were a good of supreme advantage. We also declared that it is and shall be part of our unchangeable thought and intention that, once the matters concerning the praise of God and the exaltation of the aforesaid church have been completed, the holy and most necessary expedition against the enemies of the catholic faith shall take place and a successful triumph over them be accomplished with the aid of the most High. In order that those under an obligation to attend this most useful council might not be held back in any way from coming to it, and so that they might be unable to proffer any excuse, we provided and granted, with the approval of the said Lateran council, to each and all of those summoned to the celebration of the council by our predecessor Julius, and to their attendants, a safe-conduct while they were travelling to and staying in Rome for the purposes of the said Lateran council. We urged kings and princes, out of reverence for the apostolic see, not to molest those coming here but to permit them to travel in safety.

We summoned the seventh session. We wanted nothing more than that those useful and necessary matters on account of which the said Lateran council had been summoned might be brought to their conclusion. We therefore set up three special committees of cardinals and other prelates to listen to and discuss matters of this kind and other conciliar business, and we ordered them to report to the council on what they had heard and discussed. One of the committees had the special task of establishing a universal peace between Christian kings and princes, which was one of the chief reasons for the said council coming together, and of rooting out the schism; the second had the special task of general reform, including the reform of the curia; and the third had the special task of examining and abrogating the Pragmatic Sanction and of dealing with matters concerning the true faith. Each committee carefully examined many useful and necessary topics and accurately reported to us about them. The subjects discussed and investigated by them were completed and concluded by us, with God's favour and the approval of the sacred council, in the remaining five sessions of the council which we held. We then knew beyond all doubt that God himself, the giver of gifts, had favoured our devout desires and those tending to the common good, out of his exceeding goodness and mercy, and that he had granted to us what we had planned in our own mind and for which we had greatly laboured namely that once the matters on account of which the council had been summoned had been concluded in conformity with the council's aims, the council itself could be closed and discharged.

The emperor-elect Maximilian, our dear son in Christ, in the time of our said predecessor Julius, and king Louis of France, of happy memory, in our own time, as well as other kings and princes adhered to the Lateran council, lawfully assembled in the holy Spirit, to the greatest satisfaction of everyone. The quasi-council at Pisa, which had been summoned by certain persons without the necessary authority and had been condemned by the same Julius who preceded us, was treated by them as condemned in accordance with the decision of the said Julius. The schism which had begun to grow from this was ended (although it is clear that so long as the situation continued, it brought very many injures to prelates and others of Christ's faithful at various times, as well as to other general councils held until this time). There was peace for the whole church and a resulting union. The moral habits of churchmen as well as of secular and other persons were reformed, insofar as this seemed appropriate, and several matters concerning the true faith were defined. Several other matters, after being carefully examined and debated in the three committees of cardinals and prelates mentioned above, were considered with care and skill in the said council and a final decision was reached. Finally, it was reported to us on several occasions, through the cardinals and prelates of the three committees, that no topics remained for debate and discussion by them, and that over several months nothing at all new had been brought before them by anyone. The bishops who had been invited to share with us the responsibility for the support and care of the Lord's flock, as well as other prelates, had remained in Rome rather a long time beyond the normal usage of sacred councils, with inconvenience and loss to themselves and to their churches.

Therefore there seemed to remain, of all the above things which we and the said committees so much desired to be completed in the council, only peace between kings and princes and a harmony of minds. Our attitude in favour of this, and our striving with every effort for its accomplishment, can be made abundantly clear to all who read our letters. God himself, who is the supreme light and truth of all things, knows how we never ceased to beg and implore of him, by many prayers and constant appeals, that he would deign of his mercy to influence the Christian flock—which he has entrusted to our care, despite our lack of merits—to enter upon a stable and enduring peace, now that this same flock has been roused by the warmth of mutual charity. We have earnestly urged this in the Lord, whose cause is principally in question, upon kings and princes, by means of persuasive reasons, through the nuncios whom we keep at the court of the emperor-elect Maximilian and with the aforesaid kings and princes, and through letters; especially if they wish to provide and take measures, as is right, on behalf of the Christian religion and the catholic faith, which have been brought into serious danger and risk by the recently extended power of the ruler of the Turks. We have learnt from the letters of the same nuncios, kings and princes that our appeals have been of such great power and efficacy with the said kings and princes, and have influenced their hearts and minds to such an extent, that the peace so long desired by us for the good of the whole Christian state has been almost concluded in intention, and the hope is that if anything remains it will soon be resolved (by God's favour). Our heart exults in our Lord Jesus Christ as we ponder over this in our mind and spirit. We give thanks for this to him, the giver of all graces, because he has guided these persons to the harmony we had longed for. We think that all Christ's faithful should offer to God thanks and those signs of joy which are customary on such occasions, and that God be asked that the peace achieved may endure.

It only remains, therefore, for the holy and very necessary campaign to be undertaken against the fury of the infidels thirsting for Christian blood, and for all the measures decided upon as powerful safeguards in the eleven sessions, held partly by us and partly by our predecessor Julius, to be approved and renewed and ordered to be observed unchallenged. Accordingly, after mature deliberation on these matters with our brothers and other prelates, we approve and renew by apostolic authority, with the approval of the sacred council, all and each of the acts and decisions of the said eleven sessions, and the letters published above together with all the clauses contained in them—apart from certain excepted matters which we judge should be conceded to specified persons for the sake of the peace and unity of the universal church—as well as the business carried out by the committees. We decree and order that they are to be observed without alteration for ever, and that those carrying them out are to see that they and their contents are observed, namely: in the Roman curia, the current governor of our mother city and our vicar as well as the auditor general of the apostolic camera, who have the power to oblige and compel persons subject to them; and outside the Roman curia, we depute for this purpose each and all local ordinaries. We forbid each and all of Christ's faithful, under penalty of immediate excommunication, to presume to interpret or gloss what has been produced and carried out in the present council without our permission and that of the apostolic see.

We decree, with the approval of the sacred council, that the said campaign against the infidels is to be undertaken and carried through. Zeal for the faith prompts us to this. It has been so often proposed and promised by us and our predecessor Julius in the sessions referred to, when the business of the council was being explained. On several occasions it was communicated to, and discussed with, spokesmen at our court representing kings and princes. Pope Nicholas V, our predecessor of pious memory, summoned a general expedition against the infidels after the disastrous fall of Constantinople in order to crush their fury and to avenge the wounds of Christ. Callistus III and Pius II, of happy memory our predecessors as Roman pontiffs, urged on by zeal for the faith, followed in the same path with skill and energy. During a subsequent period of three years, we imitated them by means of an authorisation from ourselves and our said brothers for imposing and exacting a tithe on the revenues of churches, monasteries and other benefices throughout the world and for doing each and every other thing that is necessary and customary in a campaign of this kind. We continually pour forth holy, humble and earnest prayers to almighty God that the campaign may have a happy outcome. We order the same to be done by all Christ's faithful of either sex. We exhort Maximilian, the emperor-elect, and kings, princes and Christian rulers, whose courage God bids us to rouse, beseeching them by the tender mercy of our God, Jesus Christ, and appealing to them by his fearful judgment to remember that they shall have to render an account of their defence and preservation—even by giving their lives—of the church itself, which has been redeemed by Christ's blood, and to rise up in strength and power for the defence of the Christian faith, as is incumbent on them as a personal and necessary duty, with all mutual hatred being set aside and quarrels and conflicts among themselves being committed to everlasting oblivion. At this time of such great need, let them offer with eagerness their ready assistance in keeping with their resources. We urge with paternal affection and ask them that, at least during the campaign, out of reverence for almighty God and for the apostolic see, they assure the unbroken observance of the peace into which they have entered, so that such an important good, which we hope and desire will be obtained with the help of the Lord's right hand, may not be impeded by some interruption from discord and dissension.

In order that prelates and others at the present council, which has lasted for nearly five years, may not be further wearied by their labours and expenses and so that they may be able to visit and bring encouragement to their churches, and for other reasonable and just causes, we bring the present council to a close and we discharge it with the Lord's blessing. With the approval of the same sacred council, we grant permission to each and all who are present at the council to return to their own countries. In order that they may be able to go back with ever increasing joy and strengthened with spiritual gifts, we impart to them and to all their attendants a plenary remission and indulgence for all their sins, once in their lifetime and again at the hour of death. Let nobody therefore... If anyone however...

Introduction and translation taken from Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session I - Celebrated under the sovereign pontiff, Paul III, on the thirteenth day of December in the year of the Lord 1545

Decree Concerning The Opening Of The Council

Does it please you, for the praise and glory of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the advance and exaltation of the Christian faith and religion, for the extirpation of heresies, for the peace and unity of the Church, for the reform of the clergy and Christian people, for the suppression and destruction of the enemies of the Christian name, to decree and declare that the holy and general Council of Trent begins and has begun?

They answered: It pleases us.

Announcement Of The Next Session

And since the solemnity of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ is near, and other festivals of the closing and opening year follow thereon, does it please you that the next ensuing session be held on the Thursday after the Epiphany, which will be the seventh of the month of January in the year of the Lord 1546?

They answered: It pleases us.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session II - Celebrated on the seventh day of January, 1546 Under Pope Paul III

Decree Concerning The Manner Of Living And Other Matters To Be Observed During The Council

The holy Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost and presided over by the same three legates of the Apostolic See, recognizing with the blessed Apostle James that every best gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights,[1] who, to those who ask of Him wisdom, giveth to all abundantly and upbraideth them not;[2] and knowing also that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,[3] has ordained and decreed that each and all of the faithful of Christ assembled in the city of Trent be exhorted, as they are hereby exhorted, to amend themselves in the evils and sins hitherto committed and to walk henceforth in the fear of the Lord; not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh,[4] to be instant in prayer,[5] to confess more often, to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist, to frequent the churches, to observe, so far as each one is able, the commandments of the Lord, and to pray daily in private for peace among the Christian princes and for unity of the Church.

The bishops, however, and all others constituted in the sacerdotal order, who are participating in the celebration of the ecumenical council in this city, are to apply themselves diligently to glorifying God, to offer up sacrifices, praises and prayers, to celebrate in accordance with their duty the sacrifice of the mass at least every Sunday, the day on which God made the light, rose from the dead, and poured forth the Holy Ghost upon the disciples;[6] making, as the same Holy Ghost commanded by the Apostle, supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings for our most holy Lord the Pope, for the Emperor, for kings and others who are placed in high stations, and for all men, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life,[7] may enjoy peace and witness an increase of the faith.

Furthermore, it exhorts that they fast at least every Friday in memory of the passion of the Lord and give alms to the poor.

Every Thursday the mass of the Holy Ghost shall be celebrated in the cathedral with the litanies and other prayers assigned for this purpose; in the other churches there shall be said on the same day at least the litanies and the prayers.

During the time that the sacred services are being performed, let there be no talking and idle conversation, but let mouth and mind be united with the celebrant.

And since it behooves bishops to be blameless, sober, chaste, ruling well their own household,[8] it exhorts also that above all things each observe sobriety at table and moderation in diet; and further, since there idle conversations are often won to arise, that the reading of the Scriptures be introduced at the tables, even at those of the bishops.[9]

Let each one instruct and charge his servants not to be contentious, given to wine, disrespectful, covetous, arrogant, blasphemous and lovers of pleasure; finally, let them shun vice and embrace virtue, and in attire, in behavior and in all their actions let them manifest decorum as becomes the servants of the servants of God.

Moreover, since it is the chief care, solicitude and intention of this holy council that the darkness of heresies, which for so many years has covered the earth, being dispelled, the light of Catholic truth may, with the aid of Jesus Christ, who is the true light,[10] shine forth in splendor and purity, and that those things that need reform may be reformed, the council exhorts all Catholics here assembled and who will be here assembled, especially those having a knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures, that by sedulous meditation they ponder diligently within themselves, by what ways and means the intention of the council can best be carried out and the desired result obtained; how the things to be condemned may be condemned more promptly and prudently and those to be approved may be approved, so that throughout the whole world all may with one voice and with the same profession of faith glorify God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.[11]

In expressing opinions when the priests of the Lord are assembled in the place of benediction, in conformity with the decree of the Synod of Toledo,[12] no one ought to be boisterous by immoderate shouting or create disturbance by stamping, nor contentious in false, vain and obstinate disputations, but let whatever is said to be so tempered with mildness that neither the hearers be offended nor the keenness of correct judgment warped by a disturbed mind.

Moreover, this holy council has ordained and decreed that if it should happen that some during the council do not sit in their proper places and also make known their mind by the word Placet, are present at the assemblies and perform any other acts whatsoever, no disadvantage shall thereby accrue to anyone, neither shall anyone thereby acquire a new right.[13]

Announcement Of The Next Session

After this the next session was announced for Thursday, the fourth day of the following February.

Notes

1. James 1:17.

2. Idem, 1:5.

3. Ps. 110:10; Prov. 1:7; 9:10; Eccles. 1:16.

4. Gal. 5:16.

5. Rom. 12:12.

6. Acts 2:1 ff.

7. Cf. 1 Tim. 2:1f.

8. Idem, 3:2ff.

9. Cf. III Synod of Toledo (589), c. 7 (c.11, D.XLIV); II Synod of Reims (813), c.17 (Hardouin IV, 1019) and infra, Sess. XXV, chap. 1 de ref.

10. John 1:9.

11. Rom. 15:6.

12. Cf. XI Synod of Toledo (675), c. 1.

13. Cf. Sess. XXV at the end.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session III - Celebrated on the fourth day of February, 1546 under Pope Paul III

Decree Concerning The Symbol Of Faith

In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

This holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same three legates of the Apostolic See presiding, considering the magnitude of the matters to be dealt with, especially those comprised under the two heads, the extirpation of heresies and the reform of morals, for which purposes it was chiefly assembled, and recognizing with the Apostle that its wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the spirits of wickedness in high places,[1] exhorts with the same Apostle each and all above all things to be strengthened in the Lord and in the might of his power, in all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith they may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one, and to take the helmet of the hope of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.[2]

Wherefore, that this pious solicitude [of the council] may begin and continue by the grace of God, it ordains and decrees that before all else a confession of faith be set forth; following herein the examples of the Fathers, who in the more outstanding councils were accustomed at the beginning of their work to use this shield against heresies, with which alone they have at times drawn unbelievers to the faith, overcome heretics and confirmed the faithful.

For this reason it has thought it well that the symbol of faith which the holy Roman Church uses as the cardinal principle wherein all who profess the faith of Christ necessarily agree and as the firm and sole foundation against which the gates of hell shall never prevail,[3] be expressed in the same words in which it is read in all the churches, which is as follows:

I believe in one God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God and born of the Father before all ages; God of God, light of light, true God of true God; begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation descended from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, he suffered and was buried; and he arose on the third day according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of the Father; and again he will come with glory to judge the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end; and in the Holy Ghost the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is adored and glorified; who spoke by the prophets; and in one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

I confess one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

Announcement Of The Next Session

The same holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same three legates of the Apostolic See presiding, understanding that many prelates in various localities are girded for their journey, and that some also are on their way here; and considering that the greater the attendance of Fathers in sanctioning and confirming all that will be decreed by the holy council, in so much greater esteem and respect will those decrees be held among all men, has ordained and decreed that the next session after the present one be held on the Thursday following the next Laetare Sunday.

In the meantime, however, the discussion and examination of those things which the council shall deem necessary to discuss and examine, shall not be deferred.

Notes

1. Eph. 6:12.

2. Ibid., 6:10, 16 f.

3. Matt. 16:18.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session IV - Celebrated on the eighth day of April, 1546 under Pope Paul III

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Decree Concerning The Canonical Scriptures

The holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same three legates of the Apostolic See presiding, keeps this constantly in view, namely, that the purity of the Gospel may be preserved in the Church after the errors have been removed.

This [Gospel], of old promised through the Prophets in the Holy Scriptures,[1] our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, promulgated first with His own mouth, and then commanded it to be preached by His Apostles to every creature[2] as the source at once of all saving truth and rules of conduct.

It also clearly perceives that these truths and rules are contained in the written books and in the unwritten traditions, which, received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the Apostles themselves,[3] the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down to us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand.

Following, then, the examples of the orthodox Fathers, it receives and venerates with a feeling of piety and reverence all the books both of the Old and New Testaments, since one God is the author of both; also the traditions, whether they relate to faith or to morals, as having been dictated either orally by Christ or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church in unbroken succession.

It has thought it proper, moreover, to insert in this decree a list of the sacred books, lest a doubt might arise in the mind of someone as to which are the books received by this council.[4]

They are the following:

Of the Old Testament, the five books of Moses, namely, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Josue, Judges, Ruth, the four books of Kings, two of Paralipomenon, the first and second of Esdras, the latter of which is called Nehemias, Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, the Davidic Psalter of 150 Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticle of Canticles, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Isaias, Jeremias, with Baruch, Ezechiel, Daniel, the twelve minor Prophets, namely, Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggeus, Zacharias, Malachias; two books of Machabees, the first and second.

Of the New Testament, the four Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; the Acts of the Apostles written by Luke the Evangelist; fourteen Epistles of Paul the Apostle, to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, two to Timothy, to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews; two of Peter the Apostle, three of John the Apostle, one of James the Apostle, one of Jude the Apostle, and the Apocalypse of John the Apostle.

If anyone does not accept as sacred and canonical the aforesaid books in their entirety and with all their parts, as they have been accustomed to be read in the Catholic Church and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate Edition, and knowingly and deliberately rejects the aforesaid traditions, let him be anathema.

Let all understand, therefore, in what order and manner the council, after having laid the foundation of the confession of faith, will proceed, and who are the chief witnesses and supports to whom it will appeal in conforming dogmas and in restoring morals in the Church.

Decree Concerning The Edition And Use Of The Sacred Books

Moreover, the same holy council considering that not a little advantage will accrue to the Church of God if it be made known which of all the Latin editions of the sacred books now in circulation is to be regarded as authentic, ordains and declares that the old Latin Vulgate Edition, which, in use for so many hundred years, has been approved by the Church, be in public lectures, disputations, sermons and expositions held as authentic, and that no one dare or presume under any pretext whatsoever to reject it.

Furthermore, to check unbridled spirits, it decrees that no one relying on his own judgment shall, in matters of faith and morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine, distorting the Holy Scriptures in accordance with his own conceptions,[5] presume to interpret them contrary to that sense which holy mother Church, to whom it belongs to judge of their true sense and interpretation,[6] has held and holds, or even contrary to the unanimous teaching of the Fathers, even though such interpretations should never at any time be published.

Those who act contrary to this shall be made known by the ordinaries and punished in accordance with the penalties prescribed by the law.

And wishing, as is proper, to impose a restraint in this matter on printers also, who, now without restraint, thinking what pleases them is permitted them, print without the permission of ecclesiastical superiors the books of the Holy Scriptures and the notes and commentaries thereon of all persons indiscriminately, often with the name of the press omitted, often also under a fictitious press-name, and what is worse, without the name of the author, and also indiscreetly have for sale such books printed elsewhere, [this council] decrees and ordains that in the future the Holy Scriptures, especially the old Vulgate Edition, be printed in the most correct manner possible, and that it shall not be lawful for anyone to print or to have printed any books whatsoever dealing with sacred doctrinal mattes without the name of the author, or in the future to sell them, or even to have them in possession, unless they have first been examined and approved by the ordinary, under penalty of anathema and fine prescribed by the last Council of the Lateran.[7]

If they be regulars they must in addition to this examination and approval obtain permission also from their own superiors after these have examined the books in accordance with their own statutes.

Those who lend or circulate them in manuscript before they have been examined and approved, shall be subject to the same penalties as the printers, and those who have them in their possession or read them, shall, unless they make known the authors, be themselves regarded as the authors.

The approbation of such books, however, shall be given in writing and shall appear authentically at the beginning of the book, whether it be written or printed, and all this, that is, both the examination and the approbation, shall be done gratuitously, so that what ought to be approved may be approved and what ought to be condemned may be condemned.

Furthermore, wishing to repress that boldness whereby the words and sentences of the Holy Scriptures are turned and twisted to all kinds of profane usages, namely, to things scurrilous, fabulous, vain, to flatteries, detractions, superstitions, godless and diabolical incantations, divinations, the casting of lots and defamatory libels, to put an end to such irreverence and contempt, and that no one may in the future dare use in any manner the words of Holy Scripture for these and similar purposes, it is commanded and enjoined that all people of this kind be restrained by the bishops as violators and profaners of the word of God, with the penalties of the law and other penalties that they may deem fit to impose.

Announcement Of The Next Session

Likewise, this holy council ordains and decrees that the next session will be held and celebrated on the Thursday after the next most sacred feast of Pentecost.

Notes

1. Jer. 31:22.

2. Matt. 28:19f.; Mark 16:15.

3. See II Thess. 2:14; c.%, D.XI.

4. For earlier lists, cf. Synod of Laodicea (end of IV cent.), c. 60, the genuineness of which canon however is contested (Hefele-Leclercq, Hist. des conciles, I, 1026); Synod of Rome (382) under Pope Damasus (Denzinger, Enchiridion, no. 84); Synod of Hippo (393), c. 36, which the III Synod of Carthage (397) made its own in c.47 (idem, no. 92); Innocent I in 405 to Exuperius, bishop of Toulouse (idem, no. 96); Eugene IV in the Council of Florence (Mansi, XXXI, 1736; Hardouin, IX, 1023f.). The Tridentine list or decree was the first infallible and effectually promulgated declaration on the Canon of the Holy Scriptures.

5. St. Jerome, Comment. on Galatians, chap. 5, vers. 19-21, PL, XXVI, 445 (c.27, C.XXIV, q.3); c.39 (par. 70) ead.

6. Quinisext Council (692), c.19 (Mansi, XI, 951; Hardouin, III, 1667).

7. Cf. the bull "Inter sollicitudines," Schroeder, Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils, p. 504.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session V - Celebrated on the seventeenth day of June, 1546 under Pope Paul III

Decree Concerning Original Sin
Decree Concerning Reform
Announcement Of The Next Session
Notes

Decree Concerning Original Sin

That our Catholic faith, without which it is impossible to please God,[1] may, after the destruction of errors, remain integral and spotless in its purity, and that the Christian people may not be carried about with every wind of doctrine,[2] since that old serpent,[3] the everlasting enemy of the human race, has, among the many evils with which the Church of God is in our times disturbed, stirred up also not only new but also old dissensions concerning original sin and its remedy, the holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same three legates of the Apostolic See presiding, wishing now to reclaim the erring and to strengthen the wavering, and following the testimonies of the Holy Scriptures, of the holy Fathers, of the most approved councils, as well as the judgment and unanimity of the Church herself, ordains, confesses and declares these things concerning original sin:

1. If anyone does not confess that the first man, Adam, when he transgressed the commandment of God in paradise, immediately lost the holiness and justice in which he had been constituted, and through the offense of that prevarication incurred the wrath and indignation of god, and thus death with which God had previously threatened him,[4] and, together with death, captivity under his power who thenceforth had the empire of death, that is to say, the devil,[5] and that the entire Adam through that offense of prevarication was changed in body and soul for the worse,[6] let him be anathema.

2. If anyone asserts that the transgression of Adam injured him alone and not his posterity,[7] and that the holiness and justice which he received from God, which he lost, he lost for himself alone and not for us also; or that he, being defiled by the sin of disobedience, has transfused only death and the pains of the body into the whole human race, but not sin also, which is the death of the soul, let him be anathema, since he contradicts the Apostle who says:
By one man sin entered into the world and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned.[8]

3. If anyone asserts that this sin of Adam, which in its origin is one, and by propagation, not by imitation, transfused into all, which is in each one as something that is his own, is taken away either by the forces of human nature or by a remedy other than the merit of the one mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ,[9] who has reconciled us to God in his own blood, made unto us justice, sanctification and redemption;[10] or if he denies that that merit of Jesus Christ is applied both to adults and to infants by the sacrament of baptism rightly administered in the form of the Church, let him be anathema; for there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved.[11]

Whence that declaration:
Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who taketh away the sins of the world;[12] and that other:
As many of you as have been baptized, have put on Christ.[13]

4. If anyone denies that infants, newly born from their mothers' wombs, are to be baptized, even though they be born of baptized parents, or says that they are indeed baptized for the remission of sins,[14] but that they derive nothing of original sin from Adam which must be expiated by the laver of regeneration for the attainment of eternal life, whence it follows that in them the form of baptism for the remission of sins is to be understood not as true but as false, let him be anathema, for what the Apostle has said, by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned,[15] is not to be understood otherwise than as the Catholic Church has everywhere and always understood it.

For in virtue of this rule of faith handed down from the apostles, even infants who could not as yet commit any sin of themselves, are for this reason truly baptized for the remission of sins, in order that in them what they contracted by generation may be washed away by regeneration.[16]

For, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.[17]

5. If anyone denies that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ which is conferred in baptism, the guilt of original sin is remitted, or says that the whole of that which belongs to the essence of sin is not taken away, but says that it is only canceled or not imputed, let him be anathema.

For in those who are born again God hates nothing, because there is no condemnation to those who are truly buried together with Christ by baptism unto death,[18] who walk not according to the flesh,[19] but, putting off the old man and putting on the new one who is created according to God,[20] are made innocent, immaculate, pure, guiltless and beloved of God, heirs indeed of God, joint heirs with Christ;[21] so that there is nothing whatever to hinder their entrance into heaven.

But this holy council perceives and confesses that in the one baptized there remains concupiscence or an inclination to sin, which, since it is left for us to wrestle with, cannot injure those who do not acquiesce but resist manfully by the grace of Jesus Christ; indeed, he who shall have striven lawfully shall be crowned.[22]

This concupiscence, which the Apostle sometimes calls sin,[23] the holy council declares the Catholic Church has never understood to be called sin in the sense that it is truly and properly sin in those born again, but in the sense that it is of sin and inclines to sin.

But if anyone is of the contrary opinion, let him be anathema.

This holy council declares, however, that it is not its intention to include in this decree, which deals with original sin, the blessed and immaculate Virgin Mary, the mother of God, but that the constitutions of Pope Sixtus IV, of happy memory, are to be observed under the penalties contained in those constitutions, which it renews.[24]

Decree Concerning Reform

CHAPTER I
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LECTURESHIPS IN HOLY SCRIPTURE AND THE LIBERAL ARTS

The same holy council, adhering to the pious decisions of the sovereign pontiffs and of approved councils,[25] and accepting and adding to them, that the heavenly treasure of the sacred books which the Holy Ghost has with the greatest liberality delivered to men may not lie neglected, has ordained and decreed that in those churches in which there exists a prebend or a benefice with an obligation attached, or other income by whatever name it may be known, set aside for instructors in sacred theology, the bishops, archbishops, primates, and other ecclesiastical superiors of those localities compel, even by a reduction of their revenues, those who hold such prebend, benefice or income, to expound and interpret the Holy Scriptures, either personally if they are competent, otherwise by a competent substitute to be chosen by the bishops, archbishops, primates, or other superiors of those places.

In the future such prebend, benefice and income shall be conferred only on competent persons and those who can themselves discharge that office; a provision made otherwise shall be null and void.

In metropolitan and cathedral churches, however, if the city be an outstanding and populous one, and also in collegiate churches that are situated in a prominent town, even though they do not belong to any diocese, provided the clergy there are numerous, where there is no prebend, benefice or income provided for this purpose, let the prebend that shall first become vacant in any manner whatever, except by resignation, and to which some other incompatible duty is not attached, be understood to be ipso facto and forever set aside and devoted to that purpose.

And should it happen that in those churches there is not any or no sufficient income,[26] let the metropolitan or the bishop himself, by assigning thereto the revenues of some simple benefice, the duties connected with it being nevertheless discharged, or by contributions of the beneficiati of his city and diocese, or otherwise, as may be most convenient, provide in such a way with the advice of the chapter that the instructions in Holy Scripture may be procured; so, however, that all other instructions, whether established by custom or any other agency, be by no means on that account omitted.

Churches whose annual revenues are scanty and where the number of clergy and people is so small that instruction in theology cannot be conveniently had therein, may have at least a master, to be chosen by the bishop with the advice of the chapter, to teach grammar gratuitously to clerics and other poor students,[27] so that afterwards they may with the help of God pass on to the study of Holy Scripture.

For this purpose let the revenues of some simple benefice be assigned to that master of grammar,[28] which he shall receive so long as he is engaged in teaching (provided, however, that that benefice be not deprived of the services due to it), or let some suitable remuneration be paid him out of the capitular or episcopal income, or finally, let the bishop himself devise some other arrangement suitable to his church and diocese, that this pious, useful and profitable provision may not under any feigned excuse be neglected.

In the monasteries of monks also, where this can be conveniently done, let there be instructions in the Holy Scriptures.[29]

If abbots prove negligent in this matter, let the bishops of the localities, as the delegates herein of the Apostolic See, compel them thereto by suitable measures.

In the convents of other regulars in which studies can conveniently flourish, let there be likewise instructions in the Holy Scriptures, which shall be assigned by the general and provincial chapters to the more worthy masters.

In the public gymnasia also where instructions so profitable and of all the most necessary have not thus far been instituted, let them be introduced by the piety and charity of the most religious princes and governments for the defense and increase of the Catholic faith and the preservation and propagation of wholesome doctrine, and where once instituted and neglected, let them be restored.

And that under the semblance of piety impiety may not be disseminated, the same holy council has decreed that no one be admitted to this office of instructor, whether such instruction be public or private, who has not been previously examined and approved by the bishop of the locality as to his life, morals and knowledge; which, however, is not to be understood of instructions in the monasteries of monks.

Moreover, those who teach Holy Scripture, as long as they teach publicly in the schools, and also the students who study in those schools, shall fully enjoy and possess in case of absence all the privileges accorded by the common law with regard to the collection of the incomes of their prebends and benefices.[30]

CHAPTER II
PREACHERS OF THE WORD OF GOD AND QUESTIONS OF ALMS

But since the preaching of the Gospel is no less necessary to the Christian commonwealth than the reading thereof, and since this is the chief duty of the bishops,[31] the same holy council has ordained and decreed that all bishops, archbishops, primates and all other prelates of the churches are bound personally, if not lawfully hindered, to preach the holy Gospel of Jesus Christ.

But if it should happen that bishops and the others mentioned above are hindered by a legitimate impediment, they shall be bound, in accordance with the provision of the general council,[32] to appoint competent persons to discharge beneficially this office of preaching.

If however anyone through contempt fails to observe this, let him be subject to severe punishment.

Archpriests, priests and all who in any manner have charge of parochial or other churches to which is attached the cura animarum, shall at least on Sundays and solemn festivals,[33] either personally or, if they are lawfully impeded, through others who are competent, feed the people committed to them with wholesome words in proportion to their own and their people's mental capacity, by teaching them those things that are necessary for all to know in order to be saved, and by impressing upon them with briefness and plainness of speech the vices that they must avoid and the virtues that they must cultivate, in order that they may escape eternal punishment and obtain the glory of heaven.

But if anyone of the above should neglect to discharge this duty, even on the plea that for some reason he is exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishop, even if the churches are said in some way to be exempt, or perhaps annexed or united to some monastery that is outside the diocese, if the churches are really within their dioceses, let not the watchful and pastoral solicitude of the bishops be wanting, lest that be fulfilled: The little ones have asked for bread, and there was none to break it unto them.[34]

Wherefore, if after having been admonished by the bishop they neglect their duty for a period of three months, let them be compelled by ecclesiastical censures or by other measures at the discretion of the bishop; and should he deem it expedient, let a fair remuneration be paid from the revenues of the benefices to another person to discharge that office, till the incumbent, having come to his senses, shall fulfil his own duty.

But if there should be found parochial churches subject to monasteries that are not in any diocese, and the abbots and regular prelates are negligent in the aforesaid matters, let them be compelled thereto by the metropolitans in whose provinces the dioceses are located, who in this matter shall act as delegates of the Apostolic See, and no custom, exemption, appeal, protest or counteraction shall impede the execution of this decree, till a competent judge, who shall proceed summarily and examine only into the truth of the fact, shall have taken the matter into consideration and given a decision.

Regulars of whatever order, unless they have been examined by their superiors regarding life, morals and knowledge and approved by them, may not without their permission preach even in the churches of their order, and they must present themselves personally with this permission before the bishops and ask from these the blessing before they begin to preach.

In churches, however, that are not of their orders they must, in addition to the permission of their superiors, have also that of the bishop, without which they may not under any circumstances preach in churches that do not belong to their orders.[35] This permission the bishops shall grant gratis.

But if, which heaven avert, a preacher should spread errors or scandals among the people, let the bishop forbid him to preach, even though he preach in his own or in the monastery of another order.

Should he preach heresies, let him proceed against him in accordance with the requirement of the law or the custom of the locality, even though that preacher should plead exemption by a general or special privilege; in which case the bishop shall proceed by Apostolic authority and as the delegate of the Apostolic See.

But let bishops be careful that a preacher be not annoyed by false accusations or calumnies, or have just cause of complaint concerning such.

Moreover, let bishops be on their guard not to permit anyone, whether of those who, being regulars in name, live outside their monasteries and the obedience of their religious institute, or secular priests, unless they are known to them and are of approved morals and doctrine, to preach in their city or diocese, even under pretext of any privilege whatsoever, till they have consulted the holy Apostolic See on the matter; from which See it is not likely that privileges of this kind are extorted by unworthy persons except by suppressing the truth or stating what is false.

Those soliciting alms, who are also commonly known as questors,[36] whatever their state, shall not in any manner presume to preach either per se or per alium, and shall, notwithstanding any privilege whatsoever, be absolutely restrained by suitable measures by the bishops and ordinaries of the localities.

Announcement Of The Next Session

This holy council also ordains and decrees that the next session be held and celebrated on the Thursday after the feast of the blessed Apostle James.

The session was afterwards prorogued to the thirteenth day of January, 1547.

Notes

1. Heb. 11:6.

2. Eph. 4:14.

3. Gen. 3:1 ff.; Apoc. 12:9; 20:2.

4. Gen. 2:17.

5. Heb. 2:14.

6. Cf. II Synod of Orange (529), c. I. Denzinger, no. 174.

7. See 1 Cor. 15:21 f.; II Synod of Orange, c.2. Ibid., no. 175.

8. Rom. 5:12.

9. See 1 Tim. 2:5.

10. See 1 Cor. 1:30.

11. Acts 4:12.

12. John 1:29.

13. Gal. 3:27.

14. Acts 2:38.

15. Rom. 5:12.

16. C.153, D.IV de cons.

17. John 3:5.

18. Rom. 6:4; C.13, D.IV de cons.

19. Rom. 8:1.

20. Eph. 4:22, 24; Col. 3:9f.

21. Rom. 8:17.

22. See II Tim. 2:5.

23. Rom. 6-8; Col. 3.

24. Cc. 1, 2, Extrav. comm., De reliq. et venerat. sanct., III, 12.

25. C.12 D.XXXVII; cc.1, 4, 5, X, De magistr., V, 5. Cf. also Sess. XXIII, chap. 18 de ref.

26. Sess. XXIV, chap. 15 de ref.

27. C.1, X, De magistr., V, 5; Sess. XXIII, chap. 18 de ref.

28. By the bull In sacrosancta of Pius IV (13 Nov., 1564) this master was bound to make a profession of faith.

29. To which Paul V by the constitution Apostolicae (1610) added instructions in Hebrew, Greek and Arabic.

30. C.5, X, De magistr., V, 5.

31. Cf. Sess. XXIV, chap. 4 de ref.; c.6, D.LXXXVIII.

32. C.15, X, De off. jud. ord., I, 31 (IV Lat., c.10).

33. Cf. Sess. XXIV, chap. cit.

34. Lam. 4:4.

35. C.13 (par. 6), X, De haeret., V, 7; Sess. XXIV, chap. 4 de ref.

36. C.14, X, De poenit. et remiss., V, 38; c.11 (par. 2), VI, De haeret., V, 2; C.2, in Clem., De poenit. et remis., V, 9. By the bull of Pius V, Etsi Dominici (1567), all indulgences which gave occasion for abuse by the questors were withdrawn.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session VI - Celebrated on the thirteenth day of January, 1547 under Pope Paul III

Decree Concerning Justification
Canons Concerning Justification
Decree Concerning Reform
Announcement Of The Next Session
Notes

Decree Concerning Justification

Introduction

Since there is being disseminated at this time, not without the loss of many souls and grievous detriment to the unity of the Church, a certain erroneous doctrine concerning justification, the holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the most reverend John Maria, Bishop of Praeneste de Monte, and Marcellus, priest of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, cardinals of the holy Roman Church and legates Apostolic a latere, presiding in the name of our most holy Father and Lord in Christ, Paul III, by the providence of God, Pope, intends, for the praise and glory of Almighty God, for the tranquillity of the Church and the salvation of souls, to expound to all the faithful of Christ the true and salutary doctrine of justification, which the Sun of justice,[1] Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith[2] taught, which the Apostles transmitted and which the Catholic Church under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost has always retained; strictly forbidding that anyone henceforth presume to believe, preach or teach otherwise than is defined and declared in the present decree.

CHAPTER I
THE IMPOTENCY OF NATURE AND OF THE LAW TO JUSTIFY MAN

The holy council declares first, that for a correct and clear understanding of the doctrine of justification, it is necessary that each one recognize and confess that since all men had lost innocence in the prevarication of Adam,[3] having become unclean,[4] and, as the Apostle says, by nature children of wrath,[5] as has been set forth in the decree on original sin,[6] they were so far the servants of sin [7] and under the power of the devil and of death, that not only the Gentiles by the force of nature, but not even the Jews by the very letter of the law of Moses, were able to be liberated or to rise therefrom, though free will, weakened as it was in its powers and downward bent,[8] was by no means extinguished in them.

CHAPTER II
THE DISPENSATION AND MYSTERY OF THE ADVENT OF CHRIST

Whence it came to pass that the heavenly Father, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort,[9] when the blessed fullness of time was come,[10] sent to men Jesus Christ, His own Son, who had both before the law and during the time of the law been announced and promised to many of the holy fathers,[11] that he might redeem the Jews who were under the law,[12] and that the Gentiles who followed not after justice[13] might attain to justice, and that all men might receive the adoption of sons.

Him has God proposed as a propitiator through faith in his blood[14] for our sins, and not for our sins only, but also for those of the whole world.[15]

CHAPTER III
WHO ARE JUSTIFIED THROUGH CHRIST

But though He died for all,[16] yet all do not receive the benefit of His death, but those only to whom the merit of His passion is communicated; because as truly as men would not be born unjust, if they were not born through propagation of the seed of Adam, since by that propagation they contract through him, when they are conceived, injustice as their own, so if they were not born again in Christ, they would never be justified, since in that new birth there is bestowed upon them, through the merit of His passion, the grace by which they are made just.

For this benefit the Apostle exhorts us always to give thanks to the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light, and hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have redemption and remission of sins.[17]

CHAPTER IV
A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE SINNER AND ITS MODE IN THE STATE OF GRACE

In which words is given a brief description of the justification of the sinner, as being a translation from that state in which man is born a child of the first Adam, to the state of grace and of the adoption of the sons of God through the second Adam, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

This translation however cannot, since promulgation of the Gospel, be effected except through the laver of regeneration or its desire, as it is written:

Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.[18]

CHAPTER V
THE NECESSITY OF PREPARATION FOR JUSTIFICATION IN ADULTS, AND WHENCE IT PROCEEDS

It is furthermore declared that in adults the beginning of that justification must proceed from the predisposing grace of God through Jesus Christ, that is, from His vocation, whereby, without any merits on their part, they are called; that they who by sin had been cut off from God, may be disposed through His quickening and helping grace to convert themselves to their own justification by freely assenting to and cooperating with that grace; so that, while God touches the heart of man through the illumination of the Holy Ghost, man himself neither does absolutely nothing while receiving that inspiration, since he can also reject it, nor yet is he able by his own free will and without the grace of God to move himself to justice in His sight.

Hence, when it is said in the sacred writings:
Turn ye to me, and I will turn to you,[19] we are reminded of our liberty; and when we reply:
Convert us, O Lord, to thee, and we shall be converted,[20] we confess that we need the grace of God.

CHAPTER VI
THE MANNER OF PREPARATION

Now, they [the adults] are disposed to that justice when, aroused and aided by divine grace, receiving faith by hearing,[21] they are moved freely toward God, believing to be true what has been divinely revealed and promised, especially that the sinner is justified by God by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;[22] and when, understanding themselves to be sinners, they, by turning themselves from the fear of divine justice, by which they are salutarily aroused, to consider the mercy of God, are raised to hope, trusting that God will be propitious to them for Christ's sake; and they begin to love Him as the fountain of all justice, and on that account are moved against sin by a certain hatred and detestation, that is, by that repentance that must be performed before baptism;[23] finally, when they resolve to receive baptism, to begin a new life and to keep the commandments of God.

Of this disposition it is written:
He that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and is a rewarder to them that seek him;[24] and, Be of good faith, son, thy sins are forgiven thee;[25] and, The fear of the Lord driveth out sin;[26] and, Do penance, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;[27] and, Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;[28] finally, Prepare your hearts unto the Lord.[29]

CHAPTER VII
IN WHAT THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE SINNER CONSISTS, AND WHAT ARE ITS CAUSES

This disposition or preparation is followed by justification itself, which is not only a remission of sins but also the sanctification and renewal of the inward man through the voluntary reception of the grace and gifts whereby an unjust man becomes just and from being an enemy becomes a friend, that he may be an heir according to hope of life everlasting.[30]

The causes of this justification are:
the final cause is the glory of God and of Christ and life everlasting; the efficient cause is the merciful God who washes and sanctifies [31] gratuitously, signing and anointing with the holy Spirit of promise, who is the pledge of our inheritance,[32] the meritorious cause is His most beloved only begotten, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were enemies,[33] for the exceeding charity wherewith he loved us,[34] merited for us justification by His most holy passion on the wood of the cross and made satisfaction for us to God the Father, the instrumental cause is the sacrament of baptism, which is the sacrament of faith,[35] without which no man was ever justified finally, the single formal cause is the justice of God, not that by which He Himself is just, but that by which He makes us just, that, namely, with which we being endowed by Him, are renewed in the spirit of our mind,[36] and not only are we reputed but we are truly called and are just, receiving justice within us, each one according to his own measure, which the Holy Ghost distributes to everyone as He wills,[37] and according to each one's disposition and cooperation.

For though no one can be just except he to whom the merits of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ are communicated, yet this takes place in that justification of the sinner, when by the merit of the most holy passion, the charity of God is poured forth by the Holy Ghost in the hearts[38] of those who are justified and inheres in them; whence man through Jesus Christ, in whom he is ingrafted, receives in that justification, together with the remission of sins, all these infused at the same time, namely, faith, hope and charity.

For faith, unless hope and charity be added to it, neither unites man perfectly with Christ nor makes him a living member of His body.[39]

For which reason it is most truly said that faith without works is dead[40] and of no profit, and in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by charity.[41]

This faith, conformably to Apostolic tradition, catechumens ask of the Church before the sacrament of baptism, when they ask for the faith that gives eternal life, which without hope and charity faith cannot give.

Whence also they hear immediately the word of Christ:
If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.[42]

Wherefore, when receiving true and Christian justice, they are commanded, immediately on being born again, to preserve it pure and spotless, as the first robe[43] given them through Christ Jesus in place of that which Adam by his disobedience lost for himself and for us, so that they may bear it before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ and may have life eternal.

CHAPTER VIII
HOW THE GRATUITOUS JUSTIFICATION OF THE SINNER BY FAITH IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD

But when the Apostle says that man is justified by faith and freely,[44] these words are to be understood in that sense in which the uninterrupted unanimity of the Catholic Church has held and expressed them, namely, that we are therefore said to be justified by faith, because faith is the beginning of human salvation, the foundation and root of all justification, without which it is impossible to please God[45] and to come to the fellowship of His sons; and we are therefore said to be justified gratuitously, because none of those things that precede justification, whether faith or works, merit the grace of justification.

For, if by grace, it is not now by works, otherwise, as the Apostle says, grace is no more grace.[46]

CHAPTER IX
AGAINST THE VAIN CONFIDENCE OF HERETICS

But though it is necessary to believe that sins neither are remitted nor ever have been remitted except gratuitously by divine mercy for Christ's sake, yet it must not be said that sins are forgiven or have been forgiven to anyone who boasts of his confidence and certainty of the remission of his sins,[47] resting on that alone, though among heretics and schismatics this vain and ungodly confidence may be and in our troubled times indeed is found and preached with untiring fury against the Catholic Church.

Moreover, it must not be maintained, that they who are truly justified must needs, without any doubt whatever, convince themselves that they are justified, and that no one is absolved from sins and justified except he that believes with certainty that he is absolved and justified,[48] and that absolution and justification are effected by this faith alone, as if he who does not believe this, doubts the promises of God and the efficacy of the death and resurrection of Christ.

For as no pious person ought to doubt the mercy of God, the merit of Christ and the virtue and efficacy of the sacraments, so each one, when he considers himself and his own weakness and indisposition, may have fear and apprehension concerning his own grace, since no one can know with the certainty of faith, which cannot be subject to error, that he has obtained the grace of God.

CHAPTER X
THE INCREASE OF THE JUSTIFICATION RECEIVED

Having, therefore, been thus justified and made the friends and domestics of God,[49] advancing from virtue to virtue,[50] they are renewed, as the Apostle says, day by day,[51] that is, mortifying the members[52] of their flesh, and presenting them as instruments of justice unto sanctification,[53] they, through the observance of the commandments of God and of the Church, faith cooperating with good works, increase in that justice received through the grace of Christ and are further justified, as it is written:
He that is just, let him be justified still;[54] and, Be not afraid to be justified even to death;[55] and again, Do you see that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only?[56]

This increase of justice holy Church asks for when she prays:
"Give unto us, O Lord, an increase of faith, hope and charity."[57]

CHAPTER XI
THE OBSERVANCE OF THE COMMANDMENTS AND THE NECESSITY AND POSSIBILITY THEREOF

But no one, however much justified, should consider himself exempt from the observance of the commandments; no one should use that rash statement, once forbidden by the Fathers under anathema, that the observance of the commandments of God is impossible for one that is justified.

For God does not command impossibilities, but by commanding admonishes thee to do what thou canst and to pray for what thou canst not, and aids thee that thou mayest be able.[58]

His commandments are not heavy,[59] and his yoke is sweet and burden light.[60]

For they who are the sons of God love Christ, but they who love Him, keep His commandments, as He Himself testifies;[61] which, indeed, with the divine help they can do.

For though during this mortal life, men, however holy and just, fall at times into at least light and daily sins, which are also called venial, they do not on that account cease to be just, for that petition of the just, forgive us our trespasses,[62] is both humble and true; for which reason the just ought to feel themselves the more obliged to walk in the way of justice, for being now freed from sin and made servants of God,[63] they are able, living soberly, justly and godly,[64] to proceed onward through Jesus Christ, by whom they have access unto this grace.[65]

For God does not forsake those who have been once justified by His grace, unless He be first forsaken by them.

Wherefore, no one ought to flatter himself with faith alone, thinking that by faith alone he is made an heir and will obtain the inheritance, even though he suffer not with christ, that he may be also glorified with him.[66]

For even Christ Himself, as the Apostle says, whereas he was the Son of God, he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and being consummated, he became to all who obey him the cause of eternal salvation.[67]

For which reason the same Apostle admonishes those justified, saying:
Know you not that they who run in the race, all run indeed, but one receiveth the prize?
So run that you may obtain.

I therefore so run, not as at an uncertainty; I so fight, not as one beating the air, but I chastise my body and bring it into subjection; lest perhaps when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway.[68]

So also the prince of the Apostles, Peter:
Labor the more, that by good works you may make sure your calling and election.

For doing these things, you shall not sin at any time.[69]

From which it is clear that they are opposed to the orthodox teaching of religion who maintain that the just man sins, venially at least, in every good work;[70] or, what is more intolerable, that he merits eternal punishment; and they also who assert that the just sin in all works, if, in order to arouse their sloth and to encourage themselves to run the race, they, in addition to this, that above all God may be glorified, have in view also the eternal reward,[71] since it is written:
I have inclined my heart to do thy justifications on account of the reward;[72] and of Moses the Apostle says; that he looked unto the reward.[73]

CHAPTER XII
RASH PRESUMPTION OF PREDESTINATION IS TO BE AVOIDED

No one, moreover, so long as he lives this mortal life, ought in regard to the sacred mystery of divine predestination, so far presume as to state with absolute certainty that he is among the number of the predestined,[74] as if it were true that the one justified either cannot sin any more, or, if he does sin, that he ought to promise himself an assured repentance.

For except by special revelation, it cannot be known whom God has chosen to Himself.

CHAPTER XIII
THE GIFT OF PERSEVERANCE

Similarly with regard to the gift of perseverance, of which it is written:

He that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved,[75] which cannot be obtained from anyone except from Him who is able to make him stand who stands,[76] that he may stand perseveringly, and to raise him who falls, let no one promise himself herein something as certain with an absolute certainty, though all ought to place and repose the firmest hope in God's help.

For God, unless men themselves fail in His grace, as he has begun a good work, so will he perfect it, working to will and to accomplish.[77]

Nevertheless, let those who think themselves to stand, take heed lest they fall,[78] and with fear and trembling work out their salvation,[79] in labors, in watchings, in almsdeeds, in prayer, in fastings and chastity.

For knowing that they are born again unto the hope of glory,[80] and not as yet unto glory, they ought to fear for the combat that yet remains with the flesh, with the world and with the devil, in which they cannot be victorious unless they be with the grace of God obedient to the Apostle who says:

We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh; for if you live according to the flesh, you shall die, but if by the spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live.[81]

CHAPTER XIV
THE FALLEN AND THEIR RESTORATION

Those who through sin have forfeited and received grace of justification, can again be justified when, moved by God, they exert themselves to obtain through the sacrament of penance the recovery, by the merits of Christ, of the grace lost.[82]

For this manner of justification is restoration for those fallen, which the holy Fathers have aptly called a second plank after the shipwreck of grace lost.[83]

For on behalf of those who fall into sins after baptism, Christ Jesus instituted the sacrament of penance when He said:

Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.[84]

Hence, it must be taught that the repentance of a Christian after his fall is very different from that at his baptism, and that it includes not only a determination to avoid sins and a hatred of them, or a contrite and humble heart,[85] but also the sacramental confession of those sins, at least in desire, to be made in its season, and sacerdotal absolution, as well as satisfaction by fasts, alms, prayers and other devout exercises of the spiritual life, not indeed for the eternal punishment, which is, together with the guilt, remitted either by the sacrament or by the desire of the sacrament, but for the temporal punishment which, as the sacred writings teach, is not always wholly remitted, as is done in baptism, to those who, ungrateful to the grace of God which they have received, have grieved the Holy Ghost [86] and have not feared to violate the temple of God.[87]

Of which repentance it is written:
Be mindful whence thou art fallen; do penance, and do the first works;[88] and again, The sorrow that is according to God worketh penance, steadfast unto salvation;[89] and again, Do penance, and bring forth fruits worthy of penance.[90]

CHAPTER XV
BY EVERY MORTAL SIN GRACE IS LOST, BUT NOT FAITH

Against the subtle wits of some also, who by pleasing speeches and good words seduce the hearts of the innocent,[91] it must be maintained that the grace of justification once received is lost not only by infidelity, whereby also faith itself is lost, but also by every other mortal sin, though in this case faith is not lost; thus defending the teaching of the divine law which excludes from the kingdom of God not only unbelievers, but also the faithful [who are] fornicators, adulterers, effeminate, liars with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, railers, extortioners,[92] and all others who commit deadly sins, from which with the help of divine grace they can refrain, and on account of which they are cut off from the grace of Christ.

CHAPTER XVI
THE FRUITS OF JUSTIFICATION, THAT IS, THE MERIT OF GOOD WORKS, AND THE NATURE OF THAT MERIT

Therefore, to men justified in this manner, whether they have preserved uninterruptedly the grace received or recovered it when lost, are to be pointed out the words of the Apostle: Abound in every good work, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.[93]

For God is not unjust, that he should forget your work, and the love which you have shown in his name;[94] and, Do not lose your confidence, which hath a great reward.[95]

Hence, to those who work well unto the end[96] and trust in God, eternal life is to be offered, both as a grace mercifully promised to the sons of God through Christ Jesus, and as a reward promised by God himself, to be faithfully given to their good works and merits.[97]

For this is the crown of justice which after his fight and course the Apostle declared was laid up for him, to be rendered to him by the just judge, and not only to him, but also to all that love his coming.[98]

For since Christ Jesus Himself, as the head into the members and the vine into the branches,[99] continually infuses strength into those justified, which strength always precedes, accompanies and follows their good works, and without which they could not in any manner be pleasing and meritorious before God, we must believe that nothing further is wanting to those justified to prevent them from being considered to have, by those very works which have been done in God, fully satisfied the divine law according to the state of this life and to have truly merited eternal life, to be obtained in its [due] time, provided they depart [this life] in grace,[100] since Christ our Savior says:

If anyone shall drink of the water that I will give him, he shall not thirst forever; but it shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into life everlasting.[101]

Thus, neither is our own justice established as our own from ourselves,[102] nor is the justice of God ignored or repudiated, for that justice which is called ours, because we are justified by its inherence in us, that same is [the justice] of God, because it is infused into us by God through the merit of Christ.

Nor must this be omitted, that although in the sacred writings so much is attributed to good works, that even he that shall give a drink of cold water to one of his least ones, Christ promises, shall not lose his reward;[103] and the Apostle testifies that, That which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory;[104] nevertheless, far be it that a Christian should either trust or glory in himself and not in the Lord,[105] whose bounty toward all men is so great that He wishes the things that are His gifts to be their merits.

And since in many things we all offend,[106] each one ought to have before his eyes not only the mercy and goodness but also the severity and judgment [of God]; neither ought anyone to judge himself, even though he be not conscious to himself of anything;[107] because the whole life of man is to be examined and judged not by the judgment of man but of God, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise from God,[108] who, as it is written, will render to every man according to his works.[109]

After this Catholic doctrine on justification, which whosoever does not faithfully and firmly accept cannot be justified, it seemed good to the holy council to add to these canons, that all may know not only what they must hold and follow, but also what to avoid and shun.

Canons Concerning Justification

Canon 1.
If anyone says that man can be justified before God by his own works, whether done by his own natural powers or through the teaching of the law,[110] without divine grace through Jesus Christ, let him be anathema.

Canon 2.
If anyone says that divine grace through Christ Jesus is given for this only, that man may be able more easily to live justly and to merit eternal life, as if by free will without grace he is able to do both, though with hardship and difficulty, let him be anathema.

Canon 3.
If anyone says that without the predisposing inspiration of the Holy Ghost[111] and without His help, man can believe, hope, love or be repentant as he ought,[112] so that the grace of justification may be bestowed upon him, let him be anathema.

Canon 4.
If anyone says that man's free will moved and aroused by God, by assenting to God's call and action, in no way cooperates toward disposing and preparing itself to obtain the grace of justification, that it cannot refuse its assent if it wishes, but that, as something inanimate, it does nothing whatever and is merely passive, let him be anathema.

Canon 5.
If anyone says that after the sin of Adam man's free will was lost and destroyed, or that it is a thing only in name, indeed a name without a reality, a fiction introduced into the Church by Satan, let him be anathema.

Canon 6.
If anyone says that it is not in man's power to make his ways evil, but that the works that are evil as well as those that are good God produces, not permissively only but also propria et per se, so that the treason of Judas is no less His own proper work than the vocation of St. Paul, let him be anathema.

Canon 7.
If anyone says that all works done before justification, in whatever manner they may be done, are truly sins, or merit the hatred of God; that the more earnestly one strives to dispose himself for grace, the more grievously he sins, let him be anathema.

Canon 8.
If anyone says that the fear of hell,[113] whereby, by grieving for sins, we flee to the mercy of God or abstain from sinning, is a sin or makes sinners worse, let him be anathema.

Canon 9.
If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone,[114] meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary that he be prepared and disposed by the action of his own will, let him be anathema.

Canon 10.
If anyone says that men are justified without the justice of Christ,[115] whereby Her merited for us, or by that justice are formally just, let him be anathema.

Canon 11.
If anyone says that men are justified either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and the charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost,[116] and remains in them, or also that the grace by which we are justified is only the good will of God, let him be anathema.

Canon 12.
If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in divine mercy,[117] which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this confidence alone that justifies us, let him be anathema.

Canon 13.
If anyone says that in order to obtain the remission of sins it is necessary for every man to believe with certainty and without any hesitation arising from his own weakness and indisposition that his sins are forgiven him, let him be anathema.

Canon 14.
If anyone says that man is absolved from his sins and justified because he firmly believes that he is absolved and justified,[118] or that no one is truly justified except him who believes himself justified, and that by this faith alone absolution and justification are effected, let him be anathema.

Canon 15.
If anyone says that a man who is born again and justified is bound ex fide to believe that he is certainly in the number of the predestined,[119] let him be anathema.

Canon 16.
If anyone says that he will for certain, with an absolute and infallible certainty, have that great gift of perseverance even to the end, unless he shall have learned this by a special revelation,[120] let him be anathema.

Canon 17.
If anyone says that the grace of justification is shared by those only who are predestined to life, but that all others who are called are called indeed but receive not grace, as if they are by divine power predestined to evil, let him be anathema.

Canon 18.
If anyone says that the commandments of God are, even for one that is justified and constituted in grace,[121] impossible to observe, let him be anathema.

Canon 19.
If anyone says that nothing besides faith is commanded in the Gospel, that other things are indifferent, neither commanded nor forbidden, but free; or that the ten commandments in no way pertain to Christians, let him be anathema.

Canon 20.
If anyone says that a man who is justified and however perfect is not bound to observe the commandments of God and the Church, but only to believe,[122] as if the Gospel were a bare and absolute promise of eternal life without the condition of observing the commandments, let him be anathema.

Canon 21.
If anyone says that Christ Jesus was given by God to men as a redeemer in whom to trust, and not also as a legislator whom to obey, let him be anathema.

Canon 22.
If anyone says that the one justified either can without the special help of God persevere in the justice received,[123] or that with that help he cannot, let him be anathema.

Canon 23.
If anyone says that a man once justified can sin no more, nor lose grace,[124] and that therefore he that falls and sins was never truly justified; or on the contrary, that he can during his whole life avoid all sins, even those that are venial, except by a special privilege from God, as the Church holds in regard to the Blessed Virgin, let him be anathema.

Canon 24.
If anyone says that the justice received is not preserved and also not increased before God through good works,[125] but that those works are merely the fruits and signs of justification obtained, but not the cause of its increase, let him be anathema.

Canon 25.
If anyone says that in every good work the just man sins at least venially,[126] or, what is more intolerable, mortally, and hence merits eternal punishment, and that he is not damned for this reason only, because God does not impute these works into damnation, let him be anathema.

Canon 26.
If anyone says that the just ought not for the good works done in God[127] to expect and hope for an eternal reward from God through His mercy and the merit of Jesus Christ, if by doing well and by keeping the divine commandments they persevere to the end,[128] let him be anathema.

Canon 27.
If anyone says that there is no mortal sin except that of unbelief,[129] or that grace once received is not lost through any other sin however grievous and enormous except by that of unbelief, let him be anathema.

Canon 28.
If anyone says that with the loss of grace through sin faith is also lost with it, or that the faith which remains is not a true faith, though it is not a living one, or that he who has faith without charity is not a Christian, let him be anathema.

Canon 29.
If anyone says that he who has fallen after baptism cannot by the grace of God rise again,[130] or that he can indeed recover again the lost justice but by faith alone without the sacrament of penance, contrary to what the holy Roman and Universal Church, instructed by Christ the Lord and His Apostles, has hitherto professed, observed and taught, let him be anathema.

Canon 30.
If anyone says that after the reception of the grace of justification the guilt is so remitted and the debt of eternal punishment so blotted out to every repentant sinner, that no debt of temporal punishment remains to be discharged either in this world[131] or in purgatory before the gates of heaven can be opened,[132] let him be anathema.

Canon 31.
If anyone says that the one justified sins when he performs good works with a view to an eternal reward,[133] let him be anathema.

Canon 32.
If anyone says that the good works of the one justified are in such manner the gifts of God that they are not also the good merits of him justified; or that the one justified by the good works that he performs by the grace of God and the merit of Jesus Christ, whose living member he is, does not truly merit an increase of grace, eternal life, and in case he dies in grace, the attainment of eternal life itself and also an increase of glory, let him be anathema.

Canon 33.
If anyone says that the Catholic doctrine of justification as set forth by the holy council in the present decree, derogates in some respect from the glory of God or the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, and does not rather illustrate the truth of our faith and no less the glory of God and of Christ Jesus, let him be anathema.

Decree Concerning Reform

CHAPTER I
IT IS PROPER THAT PRELATES RESIDE IN THEIR CHURCHES; IF THEY ACT OTHERWISE, THE PENALTIES OF THE EARLIER LAWS ARE RENEWED AGAINST THEM AND NEW ONES ARE PRESCRIBED

The same holy council, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding, wishing to restore a very much collapsed ecclesiastical discipline and to reform the depraved morals of the clergy and the Christian people, has deemed it proper to begin with those who preside over the major churches, for unblemished character in those who govern is the salvation of those governed.[134]

Trusting therefore that by the mercy of our Lord and God and the prudent vigilance of the vicar of that God on earth, it will surely come about that for the government of the churches, a burden formidable even to the shoulders of angels, those who are most worthy, whose previous life in its every stage, from their youth to their riper years, laudably spent in the services of ecclesiastical discipline, bears testimony in their favor, will be chosen in accordance with the venerable ordinances of the holy Fathers,[135] it admonishes all who under whatever name or title are set over patriarchal, primatial, metropolitan and cathedral churches, and hereby wishes that they be considered admonished, that taking heed to themselves and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed them to rule the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood,[136] that they be vigilant, as the Apostle commands, labor in all things and fulfil their ministry.[137]

Let them know, however, that they cannot fulfil this if like hirelings they desert the flocks committed to them[138] and do not attend to the guardianship of their sheep, whose blood will be required at their hands by the supreme judge;[139] since it is most certain that the shepherd's excuse will not be accepted if the wolf devours the sheep and he knows it not.

And since there are some at this time, which is greatly to be deplored, who, forgetful even of their own salvation and preferring earthly things to the things of heaven and things human to things divine, wander about at divers courts or keep themselves occupied with the care of temporal affairs, their fold forsaken and their watchfulness over the sheep committed to them neglected, it has seemed good to the holy council to renew, as by virtue of the present decree it does renew, the old canons promulgated against non-residents,[140] which on account of the disorders of the times and of men have well-nigh fallen into desuetude; and furthermore, for a more faithful residence of the same and for the reform of morals in the Church, to ordain and decree in the manner following.

If anyone, by whatever dignity, rank and pre-eminence distinguished, shall, by remaining outside of his diocese for a continuous period of six months[141] without lawful impediment or just and reasonable causes,[142] be absent from a patriarchal, primatial, metropolitan or cathedral church, under whatever title, cause, name or right committed to him, he shall incur ipsu jure the forfeiture of a fourth part of one year's revenues, to be applied by the ecclesiastical superior to the church treasury and to the poor of the locality.

If he continues to absent himself for another six months, he shall eo ipso forfeit another fourth part of the revenues, to be applied in like manner.[143]

If the contumacy proceed yet farther, that he may be subject to a severer penalty of the sacred canons, the metropolitan shall be bound to denounce the absent suffragan bishops, and the oldest resident suffragan bishop shall be bound under penalty, to be incurred ipso facto, of being forbidden entrance to the church,[144] to denounce the absent metropolitan to the Roman pontiff by letter or messenger within three months, that he, by the authority of his supreme see, may take action against the non-resident prelates, as the degree of contumacy of each may demand, and provide the churches with more useful pastors, as he shall know in the Lord to be salutary and expedient.

CHAPTER II
NO ONE HOLDING A BENEFICE THAT REQUIRES PERSONAL RESIDENCE MAY ABSENT HIMSELF EXCEPT FOR A JUST CAUSE TO BE APPROVED BY THE BISHOP, WHO SHALL THEN APPOINT A VICAR FOR THE CURA ANIMARUM, WITHDRAWING A PORTION OF THE REVENUES

Those inferior to bishops, who by title or in commendam hold any ecclesiastical benefices that by law or custom require personal residence, shall be appropriate measures be compelled by their ordinaries to reside therein, according as it seems expedient to them for the good government of the churches and the increase of divine worship, taking into account the character of places and persons, and to no one shall privileges or perpetual indults in favor of non-residence or the reception of revenues during absence be of avail;[145] temporary permissions and dispensations, however, granted solely on true and reasonable grounds and to be legally proved before the ordinary, shall remain in force; in which cases, nevertheless, it is the duty of the bishops, as delegated in this matter by the Apostolic See, to see to it that the cura animarum is in no way neglected by the appointment of competent vicars and the assignment of a suitable portion of the revenues;[146] no privilege or exemption whatever shall be of avail to anyone in this matter.

CHAPTER III
TRANSGRESSIONS OF SECULAR CLERICS AND OF REGULARS WHO LIVE OUTSIDE THEIR MONASTERIES, SHALL BE CORRECTED BY THE ORDINARY OF THE LOCALITY

The prelates of the churches shall apply themselves prudently and diligently to correct the excesses of their subjects, and no secular cleric under pretext of a personal privilege, or a regular living outside his monastery under pretext of a privilege of his order, shall, if he transgresses, be considered exempt from being visited, punished and corrected in accordance with the canonical enactments by the ordinary of the locality as delegated in this matter by the Apostolic See.[147]

CHAPTER IV
BISHOPS AND OTHER MAJOR PRELATES SHALL VISIT ALL CHURCHES AS OFTEN AS THIS IS NECESSARY; EVERYTHING THAT MIGHT HINDER THE EXECUTION OF THIS DECREE IS ABROGATED

Chapters of cathedral and of other major churches and the members thereof shall not by any exemptions, customs, judicial verdicts, oaths, agreements, which bind only the originators thereof and not also their successors, shield themselves so that they cannot even with Apostolic authority be visited, corrected and amended in accordance with the canonical statutes as often as shall be necessary by their own bishops and other major prelates, by themselves alone or with those whom they shall deem fit to accompany them.[148]

CHAPTER V
BISHOPS SHALL NEITHER EXERCISE ANY PONTIFICAL FUNCTIONS NOR ORDAIN IN ANOTHER DIOCESE

No bishop is allowed under pretext of any privilege to exercise pontifical functions in the diocese of another, except with the expressed permission of the ordinary of the place, and for those persons only who are subject to the same ordinary.[149]

If the contrary is done, the bishop is ipso jure suspended from the exercise of pontifical functions and those so ordained from the exercise of their orders.

Announcement Of The Next Session

Does it please you that the next following session be celebrated on Thursday after the first Sunday of the approaching Lent, which will be the third day of March?

They answered: It pleases us.

Notes

1. Mal. 4:2.

2. Heb. 12:2.

3. Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:22.

4. Is. 64:6.

5. Eph. 2:3.

6. Cf. Sess. V at the beginning.

7. Rom. 6:17, 20.

8. Cf. II Synod of Orange (529), c.25. Hardouin, II, 1101.

9. See II Cor. 1:3.

10. Gal. 4:4.

11. Gen. 49:10, 18.

12. Gal. 4:5.

13. Rom. 9:30.

14. Ibid., 3:25; Dist. I De poenit., passim.

15. See 1 John 2:2.

16. See II Cor. 5:15.

17. Col. 1:12-14.

18. John 3:5.

19. Zach. 1:3.

20. Lam. 5:21.

21. Rom. 10:17.

22. Ibid., 3:24.

23. Cf. Sess. XIV, chap. 4.

24. Heb. 11:6.

25. Matt. 9:2; Mark 2:5.

26. Ecclus. 1:27.

27. Acts 2:38; cc.13, 97, D.IV de cons.

28. Matt. 28:19f.

29. See 1 Kings 7:3.

30. Tit. 3:7.

31. See 1 Cor. 6:11.

32. Eph. 1:13f.

33. Rom. 5:10.

34. Eph. 2:4.

35. C.76, D.IV de cons.

36. Eph. 4:23.

37. See I Cor. 12:11.

38. Rom 5:5.

39. Cf. infra, chap. 10.

40. James 2:17, 20.

41. Gal 5:6, 6:15.

42. Matt. 19:17.

43. Luke 15:22; c.31, D.II de poenit.

44. Rom. 3:24; 5:1.

45. Heb. 11:6.

46. Rom. 11:6.

47. Cf. infra, can. 12 and 13.

48. Infra, can. 14.

49. Eph. 2:19.

50. Ps. 83:8.

51. See 2 Cor. 4:16.

52. Col. 3:5.

53. Rom. 6:13, 19.

54. Apoc. 22:11.

55. Ecclus. 18:22.

56. James 2:24.

57. Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

58. St. Augustine, De natura et gratia, c.43 (50), PL, XLIV, 271.

59. See 1 John 5:3.

60. Matt. 11:30.

61. John 14:23.

62. Matt. 6:12.

63. Rom. 6:18, 22.

64. Tit. 2:12.

65. Rom. 5:1f.

66. Ibid., 8:17.

67. Heb. 5:8f.

68. See 1 Cor. 9:24, 26f.

69. See 2 Pet. 1:10.

70. Cf. infra, can. 25.

71. Cf. infra, can. 31.

72. Ps. 118:112.

73. Heb. 11:26.

74. Cf. C.17, C.XXIV, q.3.

75. Matt. 10:22; 24:13.

76. Rom. 14:4.

77. Phil. 1:6, 2:13.

78. See 1 Cor. 10:12.

79. Phil. 2:12.

80. See 1 Pet. 1:3.

81. Rom. 8:12f.

82. Cf. infra, can. 23 and 29.

83. C.72, D.I de poenit.

84. John 20:22f.

85. Ps. 50:19.

86. Eph. 4:30.

87. See 1 Cor. 3:17.

88. Apoc. 2:5.

89. See II Cor. 7:10.

90. Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Luke 3:8.

91. Rom. 16:18.

92. See I Cor. 6:9f.; 1 Tim. 1:9f.

93. See I Cor. 15:58.

94. Heb. 6:10.

95. Heb. 10:35.

96. Matt. 10:22.

97. Rom. 6:22.

98. See II Tim. 4:8.

99. John 15:1f.

100. Apoc. 14:13.

101. John 4:13f.

102. Rom. 10:3; II Cor. 3:5.

103. Matt. 10:42; Mark 9:40.

104. See II Cor. 4:17.

105. See I Cor. 1:31; II Cor. 10:17.

106. James 3:2.

107. See I Cor. 4:3f.

108. Ibid., 4:5.

109. Matt. 16:27; Rom. 2:6; Apoc. 22:12.

110. Cf. supra, chaps. 1, 3.

111. Ibid., chap. 5.

112. Rom. 5:5.

113. Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:5.

114. Supra, chaps. 7, 8.

115. Gal. 2:16; supra, chap. 7.

116. Rom. 5:5.

117. Supra, chap. 9.

118. Supra, chap. 9.

119. Supra, chap. 12.

120. Ibid., chap. 13.

121. Ibid., chap. 11.

122. Cf. chap. cit.

123. Supra, chap. 13.

124. Ibid., chap. 14.

125. Ibid., chap. 10.

126. Ibid., chap. 11 at the end.

127. Ibid., chap. 16.

128. Matt. 24:13.

129. Supra, chap. 15.

130. Ibid., chap. 14.

131. Cf. Sess. XIV, chap. 8.

132. Cf. Sess. XXV at the beginning.

133. Supra, chap. 11 at the end.

134. C.5, D.LXI.

135. C.4, D.LIX; cc.2, 6, 8, D.LXI.

136. Acts 20:28.

137. See II Tim. 4:5.

138. John 10:12.

139. Ezech. 33:6.

140. C.20, C.VII, q.1 ff.; tit. X, De cler. non resid., III, 4 et in VI, III, 3.

141. C.11, X, De cler. non resid., III, 4.

142. Cf. Sess. XXIII, chap. 1 de ref.

143. Cf. Sess. and chap. cit.

144. Cf. Schroeder, Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils, p.353, no. 60.

145. C.15, VI, De rescript., I, 3.

146. C.34, VI, De elect., I, 6.

147. Cf. Sess. XIV, chap. 4 de ref.

148. Cf. Sess. XXIV, chap. 3 de ref. and Sess. XXV, chap. 6 de ref.

149. Cf. Sess. XIV, chaps. 2, 3 de ref. and Sess. XXIII, chap. 8 de ref.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session VII - Celebrated on the third day of March 1547, under Pope Paul III

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Decree Concerning The Sacraments

Foreword

For the completion of the salutary doctrine on justification, which was promulgated with the unanimous consent of the Fathers in the last session, it has seemed proper to deal with the most holy sacraments of the Church, through which all true justice either begins, or being begun is increased, or being lost is restored.

Wherefore, in order to destroy the errors and extirpate the heresies that in our stormy times are directed against the most holy sacraments, some of which are a revival of heresies long ago condemned by our Fathers, while others are of recent origin, all of which are exceedingly detrimental to the purity of the Catholic Church and the salvation of souls, the holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding, adhering to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, to the Apostolic traditions, and to the unanimous teaching of other councils and of the Fathers, has thought it proper to establish and enact these present canons; hoping, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to publish later those that are wanting for the completion of the work begun.

Canons On The Sacraments In General

Canon 1. If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, or that there are more or less than seven, namely, baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, penance, extreme unction, order and matrimony,[1] or that any one of these seven is not truly and intrinsically a sacrament, let him be anathema.

Canon 2. If anyone says that these sacraments of the New Law do not differ from the sacraments of the Old Law, except that the ceremonies are different and the external rites are different, let him be anathema.

Canon 3. If anyone says that these seven sacraments are so equal to each other that one is not for any reason more excellent than the other, let him be anathema.

Canon 4. If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary for salvation but are superfluous, and that without them or without the desire of them men obtain from God through faith alone the grace of justification,[2] though all are not necessary for each one, let him be anathema.

Canon 5. If anyone says that these sacraments have been instituted for the nourishment of faith alone, let him be anathema.

Canon 6. If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law do not contain the grace which they signify, or that they do not confer that grace on those who place no obstacles in its way,[3] as though they were only outward signs of grace or justice received through faith and certain marks of Christian profession, whereby among men believers are distinguished from unbelievers, let him be anathema.

Canon 7. If anyone says that grace, so far as God's part is concerned, is not impaired through the sacraments always and to all men even if they receive them rightly, but only sometimes and to some persons, let him be anathema.

Canon 8. If anyone says that by the sacraments of the New Law grace is not conferred ex opere operato, but that faith alone in the divine promise is sufficient to obtain grace, let him be anathema.

Canon 9. If anyone says that in three sacraments, namely, baptism, confirmation and order, there is not imprinted on the soul a character, that is, a certain spiritual and indelible mark, by reason of which they cannot be repeated,[4] let him be anathema.

Canon 10. If anyone says that all Christians have the power to administer the word and all the sacraments,[5] let him be anathema.

Canon 11. If anyone says that in ministers, when they effect and confer the sacraments, there is not required at least the intention of doing what the Church does,[6] let him be anathema.

Canon 12. If anyone says that a minister who is in mortal sin, though he observes all the essentials that pertain to the effecting or conferring of a sacrament,[7] neither effects nor confers a sacrament, let him be anathema.

Canon 13. If anyone says that the received and approved rites of the Catholic Church, accustomed to be used in the administration of the sacraments, may be despised or omitted by the ministers without sin and at their pleasure, or may be changed by any pastor of the churches to other new ones, let him be anathema.

Canons On Baptism

Canon 1. If anyone says that the baptism of John had the same effect as the baptism of Christ,[8] let him be anathema.

Canon 2. If anyone says that true and natural water is not necessary for baptism[9] and thus twists into some metaphor the words of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost,[10] let him be anathema.

Canon 3. If anyone says that in the Roman Church, which is the mother and mistress of all churches, there is not the true doctrine concerning the sacrament of baptism,[11] let him be anathema.

Canon 4. If anyone says that the baptism which is given by heretics in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, with the intention of doing what the Church does, is not true baptism,[12] let him be anathema.

Canon 5. If anyone says that baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation,[13] let him be anathema.

Canon 6. If anyone says that one baptized cannot, even if he wishes, lose grace, however much he may sin, unless he is unwilling to believe, let him be anathema.

Canon 7. If anyone says that those baptized are by baptism made debtors only to faith alone, but not to the observance of the whole law of Christ, let him be anathema.

Canon 8. If anyone says that those baptized are free from all the precepts of holy Church, whether written or unwritten, so that they are not bound to observe them unless they should wish to submit to them of their own accord, let him be anathema.

Canon 9. If anyone says that the remembrance of the baptism received is to be so impressed on men that they may understand that all the vows made after baptism are void in virtue of the promise already made in that baptism, as if by those vows they detracted from the faith which they professed and from the baptism itself, let him be anathema.

Canon 10. If anyone says that by the sole remembrance and the faith of the baptism received, all sins committed after baptism are either remitted or made venial, let him be anathema.

Canon 11. If anyone says that baptism, truly and rightly administered, must be repeated in the one converted to repentance after having denied the faith of Christ among the infidels, let him be anathema.

Canon 12. If anyone says that no one is to be baptized except at that age at which Christ was baptized, or when on the point of death, let him be anathema.

Canon 13. If anyone says that children, because they have not the act of believing, are not after having received baptism to be numbered among the faithful, and that for this reason are to be rebaptized when they have reached the years of discretion;[14] or that it is better that the baptism of such be omitted than that, while not believing by their own act, they should be baptized in the faith of the Church alone, let him be anathema.

Canon 14. If anyone says that those who have been thus baptized when children are, when they have grown up, to be questioned whether they will ratify what their sponsors promised in their name when they were baptized, and in case they answer in the negative, are to be left to their own will; neither are they to be compelled in the meantime to a Christian life by any penalty other than exclusion from the reception of the Eucharist and the other sacraments, until they repent, let him be anathema.

Canons On Confirmation

Canon 1. If anyone says that the confirmation of those baptized is an empty ceremony and not a true and proper sacrament; or that of old it was nothing more than a sort of instruction, whereby those approaching adolescence gave an account of their faith to the Church, let him be anathema.

Canon 2. If anyone says that those who ascribe any power to the holy charism of confirmation, offer insults to the Holy Ghost, let him be anathema.

Canon 3. If anyone says that the ordinary minister of holy confirmation is not the bishop alone,[15] but any simple priest, let him be anathema.

Decree Concerning Reform

The same holy council, the same legates presiding therein, intending to continue, to the praise of God and the increase of the Christian religion, the work begun concerning residence and reform, has thought it well to decree as follows, saving always and in all things the authority of the Apostolic See.

CHAPTER I
THE COMPETENCY REQUIRED TO CONDUCT CATHEDRAL CHURCHES

No one shall be chosen to govern cathedral churches unless he is born of lawful wedlock, is of mature age, is known for his integrity of morals, and possesses the required knowledge,[16] in accordance with the constitution of Alexander III, which begins, "Cum in cunctis," promulgated in the Lateran Council.[17]

CHAPTER II
THOSE HOLDING SEVERAL CATHEDRAL CHURCHES ARE COMMANDED TO RESIGN IN A SPECIFIED MANNER AND TIME ALL BUT ONE

No one, by whatever dignity, rank or pre-eminence distinguished, shall presume, in contravention to the sacred canons,[18] to accept and to hold at the same time several metropolitan or cathedral churches, either by title or in commendam or under any other name, since he must be considered exceedingly fortunate who succeeds in ruling one church well, fruitfully and with due interest in the salvation of the souls committed to him.

But those who now hold several churches contrary to the tenor of the present decree, shall be bound, retaining the one which they prefer, to resign the rest within six months if they are subject to free disposal by the Apostolic See, in other cases within a year; otherwise those churches, with the sole exception of the one last obtained, shall be eo ipso considered vacant.

CHAPTER III
BENEFICES ARE TO BE CONFERRED ONLY ON COMPETENT PERSONS

Inferior ecclesiastical benefices, especially those to which is attached the cura animarum, shall be conferred on worthy and competent persons and on such as can reside in the place and exercise personally the care of souls, in accordance with the constitution of Alexander III in the Lateran Council, which begins, "Quia nonnulli,"[19] and that of Gregory X, published in the General Council of Lyons, which begins, "Licet canon."[20]

A collation or provision made otherwise is absolutely null, and let the collating bishop know that he will incur the penalties of the constitution of the general council, which begins, "Grave nimis."[21]

CHAPTER IV
THE HOLDER OF SEVERAL BENEFICES CONTRARY TO THE CANONS SHALL BE DEPRIVED OF THEM

Whoever shall in the future presume to accept and to hold at the same time several charges or otherwise incompatible ecclesiastical benefices,[22] whether by way of union for life or by way of perpetual commendam or under any other name or title whatsoever, in contravention of the provision of the sacred canons and especially of the constitution of Innocent III, which begins, "De multa,"[23] shall be ipso jure deprived of those benefices in accordance with the provisions of that constitution and also by virtue of the present canon.

CHAPTER V
HOLDERS OF SEVERAL BENEFICES TO WHICH IS ANNEXED THE CURA ANIMARUM MUST EXHIBIT THEIR DISPENSATIONS TO THE ORDINARY, WHO SHALL PROVIDE THE CHURCHES WITH A VICAR, ASSIGNING A SUITABLE PORTION OF THE REVENUES

Local ordinaries shall strictly compel all who hold several charges or otherwise incompatible ecclesiastical benefices to exhibit their dispensations, and adopt other procedures in accordance with the constitution of Gregory X, published in the General Council of Lyons, beginning with "Ordinarii,"[24] which this holy council believes ought to be renewed and does renew; adding, moreover, that the ordinaries are by all means to provide, even by deputing competent vicars and assigning a suitable portion of the revenues, that the cura animarum be in no way neglected and that those benefices be by no means defrauded of the services due them; appeals, privileges and exemptions whatsoever, even with the appointment of special judges and their inhibitions, being of no avail to anyone in the aforesaid matter.

CHAPTER VI
WHAT UNIONS OF BENEFICES SHALL BE CONSIDERED VALID

Perpetual unions,[25] made within forty years, may be investigated by the ordinaries as delegates of the Apostolic See, and such as have been obtained through deceit or deception shall be declared null.

Those however must be presumed to have been obtained surreptitiously which, having been granted within the aforesaid period, have not yet been carried into effect in whole or in part; those also which shall henceforth be made at the instance of any person, unless it is certain that they have been made for lawful and otherwise reasonable causes, which must be verified before the local ordinary, those persons being summoned whose interests are concerned; hence, unless the Apostolic See shall have declared otherwise, they shall be absolutely devoid of force.

CHAPTER VII
UNITED ECCLESIASTICAL BENEFICES MUST BE VISITED; THE CURA ANIMARUM THERETO IS TO BE EXERCISED ALSO BY PERPETUAL VICARS, WITH WHOSE APPOINTMENT A PORTION IS TO BE ASSIGNED EVEN FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Ecclesiastical benefices having the cura animarum, which are found to have been always united or annexed to cathedral, collegiate or other churches, or to monasteries, benefices, colleges or to pious places of whatever sort,[26] shall be visited every year by the local ordinaries, who shall zealously see to it that the cura animarum is exercised in a praiseworthy manner by competent vicars, also perpetual, unless the ordinaries shall deem it expedient for the good government of the churches to provide otherwise, who shall be appointed to the same by the ordinaries with a portion consisting of a third part of the revenues,[27] or of a greater or less proportion, at the discretion of the ordinaries, also assigned for the specific purpose; appeals, privileges and exemptions, also with the appointment of special judges and their inhibitions, being of no avail to anyone in the aforesaid matter.

CHAPTER VIII
CHURCHES SHALL BE REPAIRED; THE CURA ANIMARUM DILIGENTLY DISCHARGED

The local ordinaries shall be bound to visit every year with Apostolic authority all churches in whatsoever manner exempt, and to provide by suitable legal remedies that those that need repair be repaired, and that they be not in any way defrauded of the cura animarum if such be annexed to them or of other services due them;[28] appeals, privileges, customs, even though immemorial, appointment of judges and their inhibitions, being absolutely excluded.

CHAPTER IX
THE RITE OF CONSECRATION IS NOT TO BE DELAYED

Those promoted to major churches shall receive the rite of consecration within the time prescribed by law,[29] and any delays granted extending beyond a period of six months, shall be of no avail to anyone.

CHAPTER X
WHEN A SEE IS VACANT, CHAPTERS SHALL NOT GRANT RELEASES TO ANYONE UNLESS HE BE PRESSED FOR TIME BECAUSE OF A BENEFICE OBTAINED OR ABOUT TO BE OBTAINED; VARIOUS PENALTIES AGAINST THOSE WHO ACT OTHERWISE

It shall not be lawful for chapters of churches, when a see is vacant, to grant, either by a provision of the common law or by virtue of a privilege or custom, permission to be ordained or dimissory letters or "reverends," as some call them, within a year from the day of the vacancy, to anyone who is not pressed for time by reason of an ecclesiastical benefice obtained or about to be obtained.[30]

Otherwise, the contravening chapter shall be subject to ecclesiastical interdict, and those so ordained, if they are in minor orders, shall enjoy no clerical privilege, especially in criminal causes, while those in major orders shall be ipso jure suspended from the exercise thereof during the pleasure of the next prelate.

CHAPTER XI
AUTHORITY FOR PROMOTION WITHOUT A JUST CAUSE SHALL NOT AVAIL ANYONE

Authority for promotion by anyone shall be of no avail except to those who have a legitimate reason why they cannot be ordained by their own bishops, which must be expressed in writing; and then they shall not be ordained except by the bishop who resides in his own diocese,[31] or by one who exercises the pontifical functions for him, and after a careful examination.

CHAPTER XII
PERMISSION GRANTED FOR NON-PROMOTION SHALL NOT EXCEED ONE YEAR

Permission granted for not being promoted shall be good for one year only, except in the cases provided by law.[32]

CHAPTER XIII
WITH CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS, PERSONS, BY WHOMSOEVER PRESENTED, SHALL NOT BE APPOINTED WITHOUT BEING FIRST EXAMINED AND APPROVED BY THE ORDINARY

Those presented, elected or nominated by any ecclesiastical persons whatsoever, even by nuncios of the Apostolic See, shall not be appointed to, confirmed in or admitted to any ecclesiastical benefice,[33] even under the pretext of some privilege or immemorial custom, unless they shall have been first examined and found competent by the local ordinaries.

And no one shall by recourse to an appeal be able to escape from being bound to undergo that examination.

Those, however, are excepted who are presented, elected or nominated by universities or by colleges for general studies.[34]

CHAPTER XIV
THE CIVIL CAUSES OF EXEMPT PERSONS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN COGNIZANCE OF BY BISHOPS

In the causes of exempt persons the constitution of Innocent IV, beginning with "Volentes," published in the General Council of Lyons,[35] shall be observed, which this holy council has thought ought to be renewed and does renew; adding moreover, that in civil causes relative to wages and to persons in distress, secular clerics and regulars living outside their monasteries, howsoever exempt, even though they have a special judge deputed by the Apostolic See, and in other causes if they have no such judge, may be brought before the local ordinaries as delegated in this matter by that See and be constrained and compelled by law to pay what they owe; no privileges, exemptions, appointment of conservators and their inhibitions, being of any avail whatever against the aforesaid.

CHAPTER XV
ORDINARIES SHALL SEE TO IT THAT ALL HOSPITALS, EVEN THOSE EXEMPT, ARE FAITHFULLY MANAGED BY THEIR ADMINISTRATORS

Ordinaries shall take care that all hospitals are faithfully and diligently managed by their administrators, by whatsoever name known and in whatsoever manner exempt,[36] observing the form of the constitution of the Council of Vienne, which begins, "Quia contingit,"[37] which this holy council has thought ought to be renewed and does renew together with the restrictions therein contained.

Announcement Of The Next Session

This holy council has also ordained and decreed that the next session be held and celebrated on Thursday, the fifth day after the coming Sunday in Albis, which will be the twenty-first of April of the present year, 1547.

Bull Authorizing The Transfer Of The Council

Paul, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our venerable brother John Maria, Bishop of Praeneste, and our beloved sons, Marcellus, priest of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, and Reginald of St. Mary in Cosmedin, deacon, cardinals, our legates a latere and of the Apostolic See, health and apostolic benediction.

We, by the providence of God, presiding over the government of the universal Church, though with merits unequal thereto, consider it a part of our office that when something of more than ordinary importance must be decided concerning the Christian commonwealth, it be done not only at an opportune time but also in a place at once convenient and suitable.

Wherefore, when we lately, with the advice and consent of our venerable brethren, the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, on hearing that peace had been made between our most dear sons in Christ, Charles, ever august Emperor of the Romans, and Francis, the most Christian King of the French, raised and removed the suspension of the celebration of the holy, ecumenical and general council, which we had on another occasion, for reasons then stated, convoked with the same advice and consent in the city of Trent, and which was, for certain other reasons at that time also stated, suspended upon the same advice and consent to another more opportune and suitable time to be made known by us, being ourselves unable, because at that time lawfully hindered, to proceed personally to the aforesaid city and to be present at the council, we, by the same advice, appointed and deputed you as legates a latere on our behalf and on that of the Apostolic See in that council, and we sent you to that city as angels of peace, as is set forth more fully in our various letters dealing with this matter.

Wishing now to provide opportunely that so holy a work as the celebration of this council may not through the inconvenience of the place or in any other manner be hindered or unduly delayed, we, by our own action and certain knowledge, with the plenitude of Apostolic authority and with the same advice and consent, grant to you all together or to two of you, in case the other should be detained by a lawful impediment or perchance be absent therefrom, by the tenor of these presents with Apostolic authority, full and unrestricted power and authority to transfer and change, whenever you shall deem it expedient, the aforesaid council from the city of Trent to any other more convenient, suitable and safer city which you shall judge appropriate; also to prohibit, even by ecclesiastical censures and penalties, the prelates and other members of that council to proceed therein to any further measures in the said city of Trent; further, to continue, hold and celebrate the same council in the other city to which it shall have been transferred and changed, and to summon to it the prelates and other members of the Council of Trent, even under penalty of perjury and other penalties named in the letters of the convocation of that council; also to preside and proceed in the council thus translated and changed in the name and by the authority aforesaid, and to perform, regulate, ordain and execute the other things mentioned above and the things necessary and suitable to it, in accordance with the contents and tenor of previous letters addressed to you on another occasion; declaring that we will hold as ratified and pleasing whatsoever shall be done, regulated and ordained by you in the aforesaid matters, and will, with God's help, see to it that it be inviolately observed; Apostolic constitutions and ordinances and other things whatsoever to the contrary notwithstanding.

Therefore, let no one infringe this letter of our authorization or with foolhardy boldness go contrary to it.

But if anyone shall presume to attempt this, let him know that he will incur the indignation of Almighty God and of the blessed Peter and Paul, His Apostles.

Given at Rome at St. Peter's in the year of the Lord's incarnation 1547, on the twenty-fifth of February, in the eleventh year of our pontificate.

Fab. Bishop of Spol.
B. Motta.

Notes

1. Eugene IV in decr. ad Armenos (Denzinger, no. 695); Pius IV in the bull Injunctam nobis (idem, no. 996).

2. Cf. Sess. VI, chap. 7 and can. 9.

3. Eugene IV in the decr. cited.

4. Ibid.

5. Cf. Sess. XIV, Penance, chap. 6, and Extr. Unct., chap. 3.

6. Eugene IV in the decr. cited.

7. Cf. c.98, C.I, q.1; cc. 39, 149, D.IV de cons.

8. Cf. c. 135, D.IV de cons.

9. Cf. c.5, X, De bapt., III, 42.

10. John 3:5.

11. C.9, X, De haeret., V, 7.

12. Cc. 97, 98, C.I, q. 1.

13. John 3:5.

14. Cf. c.139, D.IV de cons.

15. Cf. Sess. XXIII, chap. 4.

16. Cf. Sess. XXII, chap. 2 de ref.

17. C.7, X, De elect., I, 6.

18. C.2, D.LXX; c.3, C.X, q.3; cc. 1, 2, C.XXI, q.1; cc.5, 13, 28, X, De praeb., III, 5; c.32, VI, De praeb., III, 4.

19. C.3, X, De cler. non resid., III, 4.

20. C.14, VI, De elect., I, 16.

21. C.29, X, De praeb., III, 5.

22. Cf. Sess. XXIV, chap. 17 de ref.

23. C.28, X, De praeb., III, 5.

24. C.3, VI, De off. ord., I, 16.

25. Cf. Sess. XIV, chap. 9 de ref.; Sess. XXIV, chap. 13 de ref; Sess. XXV, chap. 9 de ref.

26. Cf. Sess. XIV, chap. 9 de ref.

27. Cf. supra, chap. 5 and Sess. XXV, chap. 16 de ref.

28. Cc.10-12, C.X, q.1; Sess. XXI, chap. 8 de ref. and Sess XXIV, chap. 9 de ref.

29. C.2, D.LXXV; c.1, D.C.

30. C.3, VI, De temp ord., I, 9; cf. Sess. XXIII, chap. 10 de ref.

31. Cf. Sess. VI, chap. 5 de ref. and Sess. XIV, chap. 2 de ref.

32. Cc. 14, 34, VI, De elect., I, 6.

33. Cf. Sess. XXV, chap. 9 de ref.

34. Cf. Sess. XXIV, chap. 18 de ref.

35. C.1, VI, De privil., V, 7.

36. Cf. Sess. XXV, chap. 8 de ref.

37. C.2, De relig. dom. in Clem., III, 11.

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Session VIII - Celebrated on the eleventh day of March, 1547 under Pope Paul III

Decree Concerning The Translation Of The Council

Does it please you to decree and declare that from the foregoing and other reports regarding that disease, it is so clearly and manifestly certain that the prelates cannot without danger to their lives remain in this city, and that therefore they cannot and ought not to be detained in it against their will? And considering, moreover, the withdrawal of many prelates since the last session, and the protests made in the general congregations by many other prelates wishing by all means to depart from here through fear of the disease, who cannot justly be detained and by whose departure the council would either be dissolved or, from the small number of prelates, its beneficial progress hindered; and considering also the imminent danger to life and the other manifestly true and legitimate reasons alleged in the congregations by some of the Fathers, does it please you likewise to decree and declare that for the preservation and prosecution of the council, and for the safety of the lives of the prelates, this council be transferred for a time to the city of Bologna as a place more suitable, more healthy and better adapted, and that the translation have effect from this day forth, that the session already announced for the twenty-first of April ought to be celebrated and be celebrated there on the day appointed; and that further matters be proceeded with in succession, till it shall seem expedient to our most holy Lord and to the holy council, with the advice of the most invincible Emperor, the most Christian King, and with the other Christian kings and princes, that this council may and ought to be brought back to this or to some other place?

They answered: It pleases us.

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Decree Concerning The Prorogation Of The Session

This holy, ecumenical and general council, which lately was assembled in the city of Trent and is now lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost in Bologna, the same most reverend Lords, John Maria de Monte, Bishop of Praeneste, and Marcellus, priest of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, cardinals of the holy Roman Church and legates Apostolic a latere, presiding in the name of our most holy Father and Lord in Christ, Paul III, by the providence of God, Pope, considering that on the eleventh day of the month of March of the present year, in a general and public session celebrated in the city of Trent and in the accustomed place, all formalities being observed in the accustomed manner, for reasons then pressing, urgent and legitimate, and also with the authority of the holy Apostolic See, which was granted specially to the same most reverend presidents, ordained and decreed that the council was to be transferred, as it has transferred it, from that place to this city, and likewise that the session announced there for this twenty-first day of April in order that decrees with regard to the sacraments and reform, with which it had intended to deal, might be enacted and promulgated, ought to be celebrated in this city of Bologna; and considering that some of the Fathers who have been accustomed to be present at this council being engaged in their own churches during these higher festival days of the great week [of Lent] and of the paschal solemnity, and some also, detained by other hindrances, have not yet arrived here, but who nevertheless, it is to be hoped, will shortly be present, and that for this reason it has happened that the matters regarding the sacraments and reform could not be examined and discussed in an assembly of prelates as numerous as the holy council desired; therefore, that everything may be done with mature deliberation, with due dignity and earnestness, it has decided and does decide that it is good, beneficial and expedient that the aforesaid session, which, as has been said, was to have been celebrated on this day, be deferred and prorogued, as it is now deferred and prorogued, for expediting the aforesaid matter, to the Thursday within the approaching octave of Pentecost; which day it has deemed and deems to be most convenient for the business to be transacted and most suitable especially for the Fathers who are absent; adding, however, that this holy council may and can, even in private congregation, limit and abridge that term at its will and pleasure, as it shall deem expedient for the business of the council.

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TENTH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session X - Council of Trent celebrated at Bologna on the second day of June, 1547 under Pope Paul III

Decree Concerning The Prorogation Of The Session

Although this holy, ecumenical and general council has decreed that the session which was to have been celebrated in this illustrious city of Bologna on the twenty-first of the month of April last on the subject of the sacraments and reform, in accordance with the decree promulgated in public session in the city of Trent on the eleventh of March, should be deferred and prorugued to this present day for certain reasons, especially on account of the absence of some of the Fathers, who it was hoped would in a short time be present; wishing, however, even yet to deal kindly with those who have not come, the same holy council, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same cardinals of the holy Roman Church and legates of the Apostolic See presiding, ordains and decrees that that session which it had decreed to celebrate on this the second day of the month of June of the present year 1547, be deferred and prorogued, as it does defer and prorogue it, to the Thursday after the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which will be the fifteenth of the next month of September, for the disposition of the aforesaid and other matters; so, however, that the continuance of the discussion and examination of those things that relate to dogmas and reform shall not in the meantime be suspended, and that the holy council may and can freely, at its will and pleasure, even in private congregation, abridge and prorogue that term.

On the fourteenth day of September, 1547, in a general congregation held at Bologna, the session which was to have been held on the following day, was prorogued at the good pleasure of the holy council.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Under the Supreme Pontiff, Julius III, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, for a perpetual remembrance hereof

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Bull of the Resumption of the Council of Trent

In order to put an end to the religious dissensions which for a long time have prevailed in Germany to the disturbance and scandal of the entire Christian world, it appears good, opportune and expedient to us, as also to our most dearly beloved son in Christ, Charles, ever august Emperor of the Romans, who has made this known to us by his letters and ambassadors, to bring back to the city of Trent the holy ecumenical and general council convoked by our predecessor, Pope Paul III, of happy memory, and begun, conducted and continued by us, who then enjoyed the honor of the cardinalate and, conjointly with two other cardinals of the holy Roman Church, presided in the name of our predecessor in the council, in which several public and solemn sessions were held and several decrees promulgated on the subjects of faith and reform, and also many other things relating to both subjects were examined and discussed. We, therefore, to whom, as reigning sovereign pontiff, it belongs to convoke and direct general councils, that we may, to the praise and glory of Almighty God, procure the peace of the Church and the increase of the Christian faith and of the orthodox religion, and may, as far as we are able, consider with paternal solicitude the tranquillity of Germany, a province which in times past was second to none in Christendom in cultivating true religion and the teaching of the holy councils and the holy Fathers, and in exhibiting due obedience and reverence to the supreme pontiffs, the vicars on earth of Christ our Redeemer, hoping that by the grace and bounty of God it will come about that all Christian kings and princes will approve, favor and aid our just and pious wishes in this matter, by the bowels of the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, exhort, command and admonish our venerable brethren the patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, our beloved sons the abbots and each and all of the others who by right, custom or privilege ought to be present at general councils, and whom our predecessor in his letters of convocation and in any others made and published with regard to this matter wished to be present at the council, to convene and assemble in the same city of Trent, since the lawful impediment no longer exists, and to apply themselves without delay to the continuation and prosecution of the council on the next first of May, which day we, after mature deliberation, of our own certain knowledge, with the plenitude of Apostolic authority, and with the advice and consent of our venerable brethren, the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, appoint and set aside for the resumption and continuation of the council in the state in which it now is. We shall make it our special care that our legates will be in the city at the same time, through whom, if on account of our age, state of health and the demands of the Apostolic See we shall be unable to be present personally, we shall under the guidance of the Holy Ghost preside over the Council; any translation and suspension of the council and any other things whatsoever to the contrary notwithstanding, and especially those things which it was the will of our predecessor should not create any obstacles, as expressed in his letters aforesaid, which, with each and all of restrictions and decrees therein contained, we wish and decree to remain in force, and so far as there is need we hereby renew them; declaring, moreover, null and void whatever may be attempted knowingly or unknowingly by any person or by any authority to the contrary. Let no one, therefore, infringe this our letter of exhortation, or with foolhardy boldness go contrary to it. But if anyone shall presume to attempt this, let him know that he will incur the indignation of Almighty God and of His blessed Apostles Peter and Paul. Given at Rome at St. Peter's in the year 1550 of our Lord's incarnation, on the fourteenth of December, in the first year of our pontificate.

M. Cardinal Crescen. Rom. Amasaeus.

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session XI - Which is the first celebrated under the Supreme Pontiff, Julius III, on the first day of May, 1551

Decree Concerning The Resumption Of The Council

Does it please you, for the praise and glory of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, for the increase and exaltation of the Christian faith and religion, that the holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent be, in accordance with the form and tenor of the letters of our most holy Lord, resumed, and that further matters be proceeded with?

They answered: It pleases us.

Announcement of the Next Session

Does it please you that the next session be held and celebrated on the following first of September?

They answered: It pleases us.

Taken from "The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent" Translated by Rev. H.J. Schroeder, O.P., published by Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., P. O. Box 424, Rockford, IL 61105, 1-800-437-5876.

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TWELFTH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Which is the second under the Supreme Pontiff, Julius III, celebrated on the first day of September, 1551

DECREE CONCERNING THE PROROGATION OF THE SESSION

The holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates and nuncios of the holy Apostolic See presiding, which had in the last session decreed that the following one was to be celebrated today and further matters to be proceeded with, yet by reason of the absence of the illustrious German nation, whose interests are chiefly to be considered, and also on account of the small attendance of the other Fathers, has hitherto delayed to proceed, now rejoicing in the Lord and giving due thanks to Almighty God for the recent arrival of our venerable brethren and sons in Christ, the Archbishops of Mainz and Trier, electoral princes of the Holy Roman Empire, and of many bishops of that country and of other provinces, and entertaining a firm hope that many other prelates both of Germany and of other nations, moved by the requirement of their office and by this example, will arrive in a few days, announces the next session for the fortieth day, which will be the eleventh of next October, to continue the council from the point where it now is; and since in the preceding sessions decrees were enacted concerning the seven sacraments of the New Law in general and baptism and confirmation in particular, it ordains and decrees that it will treat and discuss the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist, and also, as regards reform, of the other matters which pertain to the easier and more convenient residence of prelates. It also admonishes and exhorts all the Fathers that, after the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, they in the meantime give themselves to fasting and prayer so far as human weakness will permit, so that God, who be praised forever, being at length appeased, may vouchsafe to bring back the hearts of men to the acknowledgment of His true faith, to the unity of holy mother Church and to the rule of righteous living.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session XIII - The third under the Supreme Pontiff, Julius III, celebrated on the eleventh day of October, 1551

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Decree Concerning the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist

The holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legate and nuncios of the holy Apostolic See presiding, though convened, not without the special guidance and direction of the Holy Ghost, for the purpose of setting forth the true and ancient doctrine concerning faith and the sacraments, and of applying a remedy to all the heresies and the other most grievous troubles by which the Church of God is now miserably disturbed and rent into many and various parts, yet, even from the outset, has especially desired that it might pull up by the roots the cockles[1] of execrable errors and schisms which the enemy has in these our troubled times disseminated regarding the doctrine, use and worship of the Sacred Eucharist, which our Savior left in His Church as a symbol of that unity and charity with which He wished all Christians to be mutually bound and united. Wherefore, this holy council, stating that sound and genuine doctrine of the venerable and divine sacrament of the Eucharist, which the Catholic Church, instructed by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and by His Apostles, and taught by the Holy Ghost who always brings to her mind all truth,[2] has held and will preserve even to the end of the world, forbids all the faithful of Christ to presume henceforth to believe, teach or preach with regard to the most Holy Eucharist otherwise than is explained and defined in this present decree.

CHAPTER I
THE REAL PRESENCE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

First of all, the holy council teaches and openly and plainly professes that after the consecration of bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is truly, really and substantially contained in the august sacrament of the Holy Eucharist under the appearance of those sensible things. For there is no repugnance in this that our Savior sits always at the right hand of the Father in heaven[3] according to the natural mode of existing, and yet is in many other places sacramentally present to us in His own substance by a manner of existence which, though we can scarcely express in words, yet with our understanding illumined by faith, we can conceive and ought most firmly to believe is possible to God.[4] For thus all our forefathers, as many as were in the true Church of Christ and who treated of this most holy sacrament, have most openly professed that our Redeemer instituted this wonderful sacrament at the last supper, when, after blessing the bread and wine, He testified in clear and definite words that He gives them His own body and His own blood. Since these words, recorded by the holy Evangelists[5] and afterwards repeated by St. Paul,[6] embody that proper and clearest meaning in which they were understood by the Fathers, it is a most contemptible action on the part of some contentious and wicked men to twist them into fictitious and imaginary tropes by which the truth of the flesh and blood of Christ is denied, contrary to the universal sense of the Church, which, as the pillar and ground of truth,[7] recognizing with a mind ever grateful and unforgetting this most excellent favor of Christ, has detested as satanical these untruths devised by impious men.

CHAPTER II
THE REASON FOR THE INSTITUTION OF THIS MOST HOLY SACRAMENT

Therefore, our Savior, when about to depart from this world to the Father, instituted this sacrament, in which He poured forth, as it were, the riches of His divine love towards men, making a remembrance of his wonderful works,[8] and commanded us in the participation of it to reverence His memory and to show forth his death until he comes[9] to judge the world. But He wished that this sacrament should be received as the spiritual food of souls,[10] whereby they may be nourished and strengthened, living by the life of Him who said: He that eateth me, the same also shall live by me,[11] and as an antidote whereby we may be freed from daily faults and be preserved from mortal sins.

He wished it furthermore to be a pledge of our future glory and everlasting happiness, and thus be a symbol of that one body of which He is the head[12] and to which He wished us to be united as members by the closest bond of faith, hope and charity, that we might all speak the same thing and there might be no schisms among us.[13]

CHAPTER III
THE EXCELLENCE OF THE MOST HOLY EUCHARIST OVER THE OTHER SACRAMENTS

The most Holy Eucharist has indeed this in common with the other sacraments, that it is a symbol of a sacred thing and a visible form of an invisible grace;[14] but there is found in it this excellent and peculiar characteristic, that the other sacraments then first have the power of sanctifying when one uses them, while in the Eucharist there is the Author Himself of sanctity before it is used. For the Apostles had not yet received the Eucharist from the hands of the Lord, when He Himself told them that what He was giving them is His own body.[15] This has always been the belief of the Church of God, that immediately after the consecration the true body and the true blood of our Lord, together with His soul and divinity exist under the form of bread and wine, the body under the form of bread and the blood under the form of wine <ex vi verborum;>[16] but the same body also under the form of wine and the same blood under the form of bread and the soul under both, in virtue of that natural connection and concomitance whereby the parts of Christ the Lord, who hath now risen from the dead, to die <no more>,[17] are mutually united;[18] also the divinity on account of its admirable hypostatic union with His body and soul. Wherefore, it is very true that as much is contained under either form as under both.[19] For Christ is whole and entire under the form of bread and under any part of that form; likewise the whole Christ is present under the form of wine and under all its parts.

CHAPTER IV
TRANSUBSTANTIATION

But since Christ our Redeemer declared that to be truly His own body which He offered under the form of bread,[20] it has, therefore, always been a firm belief in the Church of God, and this holy council now declares it anew, that by the consecration of the bread and wine a change is brought about of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His blood.[21] This change the holy Catholic Church properly and appropriately calls transubstantiation.

CHAPTER V
THE WORSHIP AND VENERATION TO BE SHOWN TO THIS MOST HOLY SACRAMENT

There is, therefore, no room for doubt that all the faithful of Christ may, in accordance with a custom always received in the Catholic Church, give to this most holy sacrament in veneration the worship of <latria>, which is due to the true God.[22] Neither is it to be less adored for the reason that it was instituted by Christ the Lord in order to be received.[23] For we believe that in it the same God is present of whom the eternal Father, when introducing Him into the world, says: And let all the angels of God adore him;[24] whom the Magi, falling down, adored;[25] who, finally, as the Scriptures testify, was adored by the Apostles in Galilee.[26]

The holy council declares, moreover, that the custom that this sublime and venerable sacrament be celebrated with special veneration and solemnity every year on a fixed festival day,[27] and that it be borne reverently and with honor in processions through the streets and public places,[28] was very piously and religiously introduced into the Church of God. For it is most reasonable that some days be set aside as holy on which all Christians may with special and unusual demonstration testify that their minds are grateful to and mindful of their common Lord and Redeemer for so ineffable and truly divine a favor whereby the victory and triumph of His death are shown forth. And thus indeed did it behoove the victorious truth to celebrate a triumph over falsehood and heresy, that in the sight of so much splendor and in the midst of so great joy of the universal Church, her enemies may either vanish weakened and broken, or, overcome with shame and confounded, may at length repent.

CHAPTER VI
THE RESERVATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST AND TAKING IT TO THE SICK

The custom of reserving the Holy Eucharist in a sacred place is so ancient[29] that even the period of the Nicene Council recognized that usage.[30] Moreover, the practice of carrying the Sacred Eucharist to the sick and of carefully reserving it for this purpose in churches, besides being exceedingly reasonable and appropriate, is also found enjoined in numerous councils[31] and is a very ancient observance of the Catholic Church.

Wherefore, this holy council decrees that this salutary and necessary custom be by all means retained.

CHAPTER VII
THE PREPARATION TO BE EMPLOYED THAT ONE MAY RECEIVE THE SACRED EUCHARIST WORTHILY

If it is unbecoming for anyone to approach any of the sacred functions except in a spirit of piety, assuredly, the more the holiness and divinity of this heavenly sacrament are understood by a Christian, the more diligently ought he to give heed lest he receive it without great reverence and holiness, especially when we read those terrifying words of the Apostle: <He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.>[32] Wherefore, he who would communicate, must recall to mind his precept: <Let a man prove himself.>[33] Now, ecclesiastical usage declares that such an examination is necessary in order that no one conscious to himself of mortal sin, however contrite he may feel, ought to receive the Sacred Eucharist without previous sacramental confession.[34] This the holy council has decreed to be invariably observed by all Christians, even by those priests on whom it may be incumbent by their office to celebrate, provided the opportunity of a confessor is not wanting to them. But if in an urgent necessity a priest should celebrate without previous confession, let him confess as soon as possible.

CHAPTER VIII
ON THE USE OF THIS ADMIRABLE SACRAMENT

As to the use of this holy sacrament, our Fathers have rightly and wisely distinguished three ways of receiving it. They have taught that some receive it sacramentally only, as sinners; others spiritually only, namely, those who eating in desire the heavenly bread set before them, are by a lively <faith which worketh by charity>[35] made sensible of its fruit and usefulness; while the third class receives it both sacramentally and spiritually,[36] and these are they who so prove and prepare themselves beforehand that they approach this divine table clothed with the wedding garment.[37] As regards the reception of the sacrament, it has always been the custom in the Church of God that laics receive communion from priests, but that priests when celebrating communicate themselves,[38] which custom ought with justice and reason to be retained as coming down from Apostolic tradition.[39] Finally, the holy council with paternal affection admonishes, exhorts, prays and beseeches through the bowels of the mercy of our God, that each and all who bear the Christian name will now at last agree and be of one mind in this sign of unity, in this bond of charity, in this symbol of concord, and that, mindful of so great a majesty and such boundless love of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave His own beloved soul as the price of our salvation and His own flesh to eat,[40] they may believe and venerate these sacred mysteries of His body and blood with such constancy and firmness of faith, with such devotion of mind, with such piety and worship, that they may be able to receive frequently that super-substantial bread and that it may truly be to them the life of the soul and the perpetual health of their mind; that being invigorated by its strength, they may be able after the journey of this miserable pilgrimage to arrive in their heavenly country, there to eat, without any veil, the same bread of angels[41] which they now eat under sacred veils.

But since it is not enough to declare the truth unless errors be exposed and repudiated, it has seemed good to the holy council to subjoin these canons, so that, the Catholic doctrine being already known, all may understand also what are the heresies which they ought to guard against and avoid.

Canons on the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist

Canon 1. If anyone denies that in the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist are contained truly, really and substantially the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ,[42] but says that He is in it only as in a sign, or figure or force, let him be anathema.

Canon 2. If anyone says that in the sacred and, holy sacrament of the Eucharist the substance of the bread and wine remains conjointly with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and denies that wonderful and singular change of the whole substance of the bread into the body and the whole substance of the wine into the blood, the appearances only of bread and wine remaining, which change the Catholic Church most aptly calls transubstantiation,[43] let him be anathema.

Canon 3. If anyone denies that in the venerable sacrament of the Eucharist the whole Christ is contained under each form and under every part of each form when separated,[44] let him be anathema.

Canon 4. If anyone says that after the consecration is completed, the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are not in the admirable sacrament of the Eucharist,[45] but are there only <in usu>, while being taken and not before or after, and that in the hosts or consecrated particles which are reserved or which remain after communion, the true body of the Lord does not remain, let him be anathema.

Canon 5. If anyone says that the principal fruit of the most Holy Eucharist is the remission of sins, or that other effects do not result from it,[46] let him be anathema.

Canon 6. If anyone says that in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is not to be adored with the worship of <latria>,[47] also outwardly manifested, and is consequently neither to be venerated with a special festive solemnity, nor to be solemnly borne about in procession according to the laudable and universal rite and custom of holy Church, or is not to be set publicly before the people to be adored and that the adorers thereof are idolaters, let him be anathema.

Canon 7. If anyone says that it is not lawful that the Holy Eucharist be reserved in a sacred place, but immediately after consecration must necessarily be distributed among those present,[48] or that it is not lawful that it be carried with honor to the sick, let him be anathema.

Canon 8. If anyone says that Christ received in the Eucharist is received spiritually only and not also sacramentally and really,[49] let him be anathema.

Canon 9. If anyone denies that each and all of Christ's faithful of both sexes are bound, when they have reached the years of discretion, to communicate every year at least at Easter,[50] in accordance with the precept of holy mother Church, let him be anathema.

Canon 10. If anyone says that it is not lawful for the priest celebrating to communicate himself,[51] let him be anathema.

Canon 11. If anyone says that faith alone is a sufficient preparation for receiving the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist,[52] let him be anathema. And lest so great a sacrament be received unworthily and hence unto death and condemnation, this holy council ordains and declares that sacramental confession, when a confessor can be had, must necessarily be made beforehand by those whose conscience is burdened with mortal sin, however contrite they may consider themselves. Moreover, if anyone shall presume to teach, preach or obstinately assert, or in public disputation defend the contrary, he shall be <eo ipso> excommunicated.

Decree Concerning Reform

CHAPTER I
BISHOPS SHALL APPLY THEMSELVES WITH PRUDENCE TO REFORM THE MORALS OF THEIR SUBJECTS; FROM THE CORRECTION OF THE BISHOPS THERE SHALL BE NO APPEAL

The same holy Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legate and nuncios of the Apostolic See presiding, having in mind to decide some things that relate to the jurisdiction of bishops, in order that, as was announced in the last session, they may the more willingly reside in the churches committed to them the more easily and conveniently they may be able to rule and keep in uprightness of life and of morals those subject to them, deems it appropriate in the first place to admonish them to bear in mind that they are shepherds and not oppressors and that they ought so to preside over those subject to them as not to lord it over them,[53] but to love them as children and brethren and to strive by exhortation and admonition to deter them from what is unlawful, that they may not be obliged, should they transgress, to coerce them by due punishments. In regard to those, however, who should happen to sin through human frailty, that command of the Apostle is to be observed, that they reprove, entreat, rebuke them in all kindness and patience,[54] since benevolence toward those to be corrected often effects more than severity, exhortation more than threat, and charity more than force.[55] But if on account of the gravity of the offense there is need of the rod, then is rigor to be tempered with gentleness, judgment with mercy, and severity with clemency, that discipline, so salutary and necessary for the people, may be preserved without harshness and they who are chastised may be corrected, or, if they are unwilling to repent, that others may by the wholesome example of their punishment be deterred from vices, since it is the duty of a shepherd, at once diligent and kind, to apply first of all mild anodynes to the disorders of his sheep, and afterwards, if the gravity of the disorder should demand it, to proceed to sharper and severer remedies; but if even these prove ineffective in removing the disorders, then he is to liberate the other sheep at least from the danger of contagion.[56] Since, therefore, those guilty of crimes, for the most part to avoid punishment and to evade the judgments of their bishops, pretend to have complaints and grievances and under the subterfuge of an appeal, impede the process of the judge, [this council] in order to prevent a remedy which was instituted for the protection of the innocent from being abused and utilized for the defense of wickedness,[57] and that their cunning and tergiversation may be thwarted, has ordained and decreed: That in causes relative to visitation and correction, or to competency and incompetency, as also in criminal causes there shall before the definitive sentence be no appeal from the bishop or his vicar-general in spiritual matters by reason of an interlocutory judgment or any other grievance whatsoever; nor shall the bishop or his vicar be bound to take notice of an appeal of this kind since it is frivolous, but he may proceed to further measures notwithstanding that appeal or any inhibition emanating from the judge of appeal, as also every written statement and custom, even immemorial, to the contrary, unless a grievance of this kind cannot be repaired by the definitive sentence or there is no appeal from it,[58] in which cases the statutes of the ancient canons shall remain unimpaired.

CHAPTER II
WHEN AN APPEAL FROM! THE BISHOP IN CRIMINAL CAUSES IS TO BE COMMITTED TO THE METROPOLITAN OR TO ONE OF THE NEAREST BISHOPS

An appeal in criminal causes from the sentence of the bishop or his vicar-general in spiritual matters, where there is room for appeal, shall, if it happens to be a case assigned by Apostolic authority locally, be committed to the metropolitan, or also to his vicar-general in spiritual matters; or if he be for some reason suspected, or be distant more than two legal days' journey, or if it be from him that the appeal is made,[59] the case shall be assigned to one of the nearest bishops or their vicars, but not to inferior judges.

CHAPTER III
THE ACTS OF THE FIRST INSTANCE SHALL WITHIN THIRTY DAYS BE GIVEN GRATUITOUSLY TO THE ACCUSED APPELLANT

The accused who in a criminal cause appeals from the bishop or his vicar-general in spiritual matters, shall by all means produce before the judge to whom he has appealed, the acts of the first instance, and the judge, unless he has seen them, shall not proceed to his absolution. He from whom the appeal has been made shall, on demand of the appellant, furnish those acts gratuitously within thirty days; otherwise the case of an appeal of this kind shall be terminated without them according as justice may demand.

CHAPTER IV
IN WHAT MANNER CLERICS ARE ON ACCOUNT OF GRAVE CRIMES TO BE DEGRADED FROM SACRED ORDERS

Since ecclesiastics are sometimes guilty of crimes so grave that on account of their shocking wickedness they have to be deposed from sacred orders and handed over to the secular court, in which, according to the sacred canons, a certain number of bishops is required,[60] and if it should be difficult to assemble them all the due execution of the law would be retarded, whereas even when they are able to be present their residence would be interrupted; therefore, it is ordained and decreed that it shall be lawful for a bishop by himself or by his vicar general in spiritual matters, even without the presence of other bishops, to proceed against a cleric, even if constituted in the priesthood, both in regard to his condemnation and to his verbal deposition, and he may by himself proceed also to actual and solemn degradation from ecclesiastical orders and grades, in the cases in which the presence of a specified number of other bishops is required by the canons after convoking and being assisted in this by a like number of abbots who have the right of using the miter and crosier by Apostolic privilege, if they can be found in the city or diocese and can conveniently be present; otherwise he may be assisted by other persons constituted in ecclesiastical dignity, who are outstanding by reason of their age and recommendable by their knowledge of law.

CHAPTER V
THE BISHOP MAY TAKE SUMMARY COGNIZANCE OF FAVORS RELATIVE EITHER TO THE ABSOLUTION FROM CRIME OR THE REMISSION OF PUNISHMENT

And since it sometimes happens that under false pleas, which however appear probable enough, certain persons fraudulently obtain favors of the kind, whereby the punishments imposed on them by the just severity of their bishops are either wholly remitted or mitigated; and since it is a thing not to be tolerated that a lie, which is so exceedingly displeasing to God, should not only go unpunished, but should even obtain for him who tells it the pardon of another crime; it is therefore ordained and decreed as follows: a bishop residing in his own church may <per se ipsum>, as the delegate of the Apostolic See, and without judicial process, take cognizance of the cheating and stealing of a favor obtained under false pretenses for the absolution of any public crime or delinquency, concerning which he himself had instituted an inquiry, or for the remission of a punishment to which he has himself condemned the criminal; and he shall not admit that favor after it shall have been lawfully established that it was obtained by the statement of what is false or by the suppression of what is true.[61]

CHAPTER VI
A BISHOP MAY NOT BE PERSONALLY CITED EXCEPT IN A CASE INVOLVING DEPOSITION OR DEPRIVATION

Since the subjects of a bishop, even though they may have been justly corrected, do nevertheless often bear toward him a violent hatred and, as if they had suffered some wrong at his hands, bring false accusations against him in order that they may annoy him by any means in their power,[62] the fear of which annoyance chiefly renders him more backward in inquiring into and punishing their delinquencies; therefore, in order that he may not be compelled to his own great disadvantage and that of his church to abandon the flock entrusted to him, and not without detriment to the episcopal dignity to wander from place to place, it is ordained and decreed: a bishop, even though he be proceeded against ex officio, or by way of inquiry or denunciation or accusation or in any other way, shall not be cited or warned to appear in person except for a cause for which he may be deposed from or deprived of his office.[63]

CHAPTER VII
QUALIFICATIONS OF WITNESSES AGAINST A BISHOP

In the matter of examination or information in a criminal cause or in an otherwise grave cause against a bishop, no witnesses shall be accepted unless their testimony is confirmed and they are of good life, of good esteem and reputation; and if they shall have made any deposition through hatred, rashness or self-interest, they shall be subject to severe penalties.

CHAPTER VIII
GRAVE EPISCOPAL CAUSES SHALL BE TAKEN COGNIZANCE OF BY THE SUPREME PONTIFF

Causes of bishops, when by reason of the nature of the crime charged against them they have to appear [in person], shall be taken before the supreme pontiff and be decided by him.[64]

Decree

Postponing the Definition of four Articles concerning the Sacrament of the Eucharist and granting Letters of Safe-conduct to the Protestants

The same holy council, desiring to root up from the field of the Lord all errors which have like thorns sprung up relative to this most holy sacrament, and to provide for the salvation of all the faithful, having devoutly offered daily prayers to Almighty God, among other articles pertaining to this sacrament which have been considered with the most careful examination of the Catholic truth, after many and most thorough discussions according to the importance of the matters have been held and the views also of the most eminent theologians have been ascertained, has also considered the following: Whether it is necessary to salvation and prescribed by divine law that all the faithful of Christ receive that venerable sacrament under both species; then, whether he receives less who communicates under one than he who communicates under both; further, whether holy mother Church errs when she permits the laity and priests when not celebrating to communicate under the form of bread only; finally, whether children also must communicate. But since those of the glorious province of Germany, who call themselves Protestants, desire to be heard by the holy council in regard to these articles before they are defined, and for this reason have asked of it a pledge that they may be permitted to come here in safety, sojourn in this city, speak and express freely their views before the council and then depart when they please, this holy council, though it has for many months looked forward with great eagerness to their arrival, nevertheless, like an affectionate mother that groans and labors, desiring and laboring tirelessly to the end that among those who bear the Christian name there may be no schisms, but that as all acknowledge the same God and Redeemer, so also may they confess the same, believe the same, know the same, trusting in the mercy of God and hoping that they may be brought back to the most holy and salutary union of one faith, hope and charity, willingly yielding to them in this matter, has, so far as it concerns [the council], given and granted, in accordance with their request, assurance of safety and good faith, which they call a safe-conduct, the tenor of which will be set forth below, and for their sake it has postponed the definition of those articles to the second session, which, that they may conveniently be present thereat, it has announced for the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, which is the twenty-fifth day of the month of January of the following year. It was furthermore decided that in the same session the sacrifice of the mass will be treated of because of the close connection between the two subjects; meanwhile it will discuss the sacraments of penance and extreme unction in the next session. This it has decided to be held on the feast of St. Catherine, virgin and martyr, which will be the twenty-fifth of November, and at the same time, in both sessions, the matter of reform will be continued.

Safe-Conduct Granted To Protestants

The holy and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legate and nuncios of the holy Apostolic See presiding, grants, so far as it pertains to the council itself, to each and all persons throughout the whole of Germany, whether ecclesiastics or seculars, of whatever rank, station, condition and circumstances they may be, who may wish to come to this ecumenical and general council, security and full protection, which they call a safe-conduct, with each and all of the necessary and suitable clauses and decisions, even though they ought to be expressed specifically and not in general terms, and it is its wish that they be understood as so expressed, so that they may and shall enjoy full liberty to confer, make proposals and discuss those things that are to be discussed in the council; to come freely and safely to the ecumenical council, to remain and sojourn there and to propose therein, in writing as well as orally, as many articles as may seem good to them, to deliberate with the Fathers or with those who may have been chosen by the council and without any abuse and contumely dispute with them; they may also depart whenever they please. It has moreover seemed expedient to the holy council, that if for their greater liberty and safety they wish that certain judges be deputed on their behalf in regard to crimes that either have been committed or may be committed by them, they may themselves choose such as are favorably disposed toward them, even though the crimes should be of a grave nature or even savor of heresy.

Notes

1 Matt. 13:30.

2 Luke 12:12; John 14:26; 16:13.

3 Cf. Sess. III, the Symbol.

4 Matt. 19:26; Luke 18:27.

5 Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14: 22-24; Luke 22:19 f.

6 See I Cor. 11:24f.

7 See I Tim. 3:15.

8 Ps. 110:4.

9 Luke 22:19; I Cor. 11:24-26.

10 Matt. 26: 26 f.

11 John 6: 58

12 See 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23.

13 See I Cor. 1:10.

14 C. 32, D.II de cons.

15 Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:22.

16 Cf. <infra>, can T.

17 Rom. 6:9.

18 Cc. 58, 71, 78, D. II de cons.

19 Cf. <infra>, can. 3 and Sess. XXI, chap. 3.

20 Luke 22: 19; John 6:48 ff.; 1 Cor. 11: 24.

21 Cf. c. 55, D. II de cons.; <infra>, can. 3.

22 Cf. infra, can. 6.

23 Matt. 26: 26.

24 Heb. 1:6.

25 Matt. 2:11.

26 Ibid., 28: 17- Luke 24:52.

27 Cf. c. un. in Clem. De reliq. et venerat. sanct., III, 16.

28 Cf. infra, can. 6.

29 C. 93, D. II de cons.; c. 6, C.XXVI, q. 6; c. 10, X, De celebr. miss., III, 41; <infra,> can. 7.

30 Cf. I Council of Nicaea (325), C. 13.

31 Cf. c. 63, D.L and c. I, X, De custod. eucharist., III, 44.

32 See 1 Cor. 11:29.

33 Ibid., 11:28.

34 Cf. <infra>, can. II.

35 Gal. 5:6.

36 Cf. <infra>, can. 8.

37 Matt. 22:11.

38 Cf. c. I l, D. II de cons. and <infra>, can. 10.

39 Heb. 5:3; 7:27.

40 John 6:56 ff.

41 Ps. 77:25.

42 Cf. <supra>, chap. 3.

43 Ibid., chap. 4.

44 Ibid., chap. 3 and Sess. XXI, chap. 3.

45 <Supra>, chap. 3.

46 Ibid., chap. 2.

47 <Supra>, chap. 5.

48 Ibid., chap. 6.

49 Ibid., chap. 8.

50 Sess. XIV, Penance, can. 8.

51 <Supra>, chap. 8.

52 Ibid., chap. 7.

53 See I Pet. 5:2 f.; c. 1-9, D.XLV.

54 See II Tim. 4:2. 55 C. 6, D.XLV.

56 CC. 16, 17, C.XXIV, q. 3.

57 C. 3, X, De appell., II, 28.

58 Ibid., C. 59.

59 C.II, VI, De rescript, I, 3.

60 C. 2, C.III, q. 8; cc. I, 4-7, C.XV, q. 7.

61 CC. 20, 22, X, De rescript, I, 3.

62 C 21, C. II, q. 7.

63 Cf. Sess. XXIV, chap. 5 de ref.

64 C. 7, C.VI, q. 4; Sess. XXIV, chap. cit.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session XIV - The fourth under the Supreme Pontiff, Julius III, celebrated on the twenty-fifth day of November, 1551

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The Most Holy Sacraments Of Penance And Extreme Unction

Though the holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legate and nuncios of the holy Apostolic See presiding, has in the decree on justification,[1] by reason of a certain necessity induced by the affinity of the subjects, given much consideration to the sacrament of penance, yet so great is in our days the number of errors relative to this sacrament, that it will be of no little general benefit to give to it a more exact and complete definition, in which all errors having under the guidance of the Holy Ghost been pointed out and refuted, Catholic truth may be made clear and resplendent, which [truth] this holy council now sets before all Christians to be observed for all time.

CHAPTER I
THE NECESSITY AND INSTITUTION OF THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

If in all those regenerated such gratitude were given to God that they constantly safeguarded the justice received in baptism by His bounty and grace, there would have been no need for another sacrament besides that of baptism to be instituted for the remission of sins.[2] But since God, rich in mercy,[3] knoweth our frame,[4] He has a remedy of life even to those who may after baptism have delivered themselves up to the servitude of sin and the power of the devil, namely, the sacrament of penance, by which the benefit of Christ's death is applied to those who have fallen after baptism. Penance was indeed necessary at all times for all men who had stained themselves by mortal sin,[5] even for those who desired to be cleansed by the sacrament of baptism, in order to obtain grace and justice; so that their wickedness being renounced and amended, they might with a hatred of sin and a sincere sorrow of heart detest so great an offense against God. Wherefore the Prophet says: Be converted and do penance for all your iniquities, and iniquity shall not be your ruin.[6] The Lord also said: Except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish;[7] and Peter the Prince of the Apostles, recommending penance to sinners about to receive baptism, said: <Do penance and be baptized every one of you.>[8] Moreover, neither before the coming of Christ was penance a sacrament nor is it such since His coming to anyone before baptism. But the Lord then especially instituted the sacrament of penance when, after being risen from the dead, He breathed upon His disciples, and said: <Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.>[9] The consensus of all the Fathers has always acknowledged that by this action so sublime and words so clear the power of forgiving and retaining sins was given to the Apostles and their lawful successors for reconciling the faithful who have fallen after baptism, and the Catholic Church with good reason repudiated and condemned as heretics the Novatians, who of old stubbornly denied that power of forgiving.[10] Therefore, this holy council, approving and receiving that perfectly true meaning of the above words of the Lord, condemns the grotesque interpretations of those who, contrary to the institution of this sacrament, wrongly contort those words to refer to the power of preaching the word of God and of making known the Gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER II
THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND THAT OF BAPTISM

Besides, it is clear that this sacrament is in many respects different from baptism.[11] For apart from the fact that in matter and form, which constitute the essence of a sacrament, it differs very widely, it is beyond question that the minister of baptism need not be a judge, since the Church exercises judgment on no one who has not entered it through the gate of baptism. <For what have I to do, says St. Paul, to judge them that are without?>[12] It is otherwise with regard to those who are of the household of the faith, whom Christ the Lord has once by the laver of baptism made members of His own body.[13] For these, if they should afterward have defiled themselves by some crime, He wished not to have cleansed by the repetition of baptism, since that is in no manner lawful in the Catholic Church, but to be placed as culprits before this tribunal that by the sentence of the priests they may be absolved, not only once but as often as, repentant of the sins committed, they should turn themselves thereto. Moreover, the fruit of baptism is one thing, that of penance another. For by baptism <we put on Christ>[14] and are made in Him an entirely new creature, receiving a full and complete remission of all sins; to which newness and integrity, however, we are by no means able to arrive by the sacrament of penance without many tears and labors on our part, divine justice demanding this, so that penance has rightly been called by the holy Fathers a laborious kind of baptism. This sacrament of penance is for those who have fallen after baptism necessary for salvation, as baptism is for those who have not yet been regenerated.

CHAPTER III
THE PARTS AND FRUITS OF THIS SACRAMENT

The holy council teaches furthermore, that the form of the sacrament of penance, in which its efficacy chiefly consists, are those words of the minister: I absolve thee, etc., to which are indeed laudably added certain prayers according to the custom of holy Church, which, however, do not by any means belong to the essence of the form nor are they necessary for the administration of the sacrament. But the acts of the penitent himself, namely, contrition,[15] confession and satisfaction, constitute the matter of this sacrament, which acts, inasmuch as they are by God's institution required in the penitent for the integrity of the sacrament and for the full and complete remission of sins, are for this reason called the parts of penance. But that which is signified and produced by this sacrament is, so far as its force and efficacy are concerned, reconciliation with God, which sometimes, in persons who are pious and who receive this sacrament with devotion, is wont to be followed by peace and serenity of conscience with an exceedingly great consolation of spirit. The holy council, while declaring these things regarding the parts and effect of this sacrament, at the same time condemns the opinions of those who maintain that faith and the terrors that agitate conscience are parts of penance.

CHAPTER IV
CONTRITION

Contrition, which holds the first place among the aforesaid acts of the penitent, is a sorrow of mind and a detestation for sin committed with the purpose of not sinning in the future.[16] This feeling of contrition was at all times necessary for obtaining the forgiveness of sins and thus indeed It prepares one who has fallen after baptism for the remission of sins, if it is united with confidence in the divine mercy and with the desire to perform the other things that are required to receive this sacrament in the proper manner. The holy council declares therefore, that this contrition implies not only an abstention from sin and the resolution and beginning of a new life, but also a hatred of the old,[17] according to the statement: <Cast away from you all your transgressions by which you have transgressed, and make to yourselves a new heart and a mew spirit.>[18] And certainly he who has pondered those lamentations of the saints: <To thee only have I sinned, and have done evil before thee;[19] have labored in my groanings, every night I will wash my bed;[20] I will recount to thee all my years in the bitterness of my soul,>[21] and others of this kind, will easily understand that they issued from an overwhelming hatred of their past life and from a profound detestation of sins. The council teaches furthermore, that though it happens sometimes that this contrition is perfect through charity and reconciles man to God before this sacrament is actually received, this reconciliation, nevertheless, is not to be ascribed to the contrition itself without a desire of the sacrament, which desire is included in it. As to imperfect contrition, which is called attrition, since it commonly arises either from the consideration of the heinousness of sin or from the fear of hell and of punishment, the council declares that if it renounces the desire to sin and hopes for pardon, it not only does not make one a hypocrite and a greater sinner, but is even a gift of God and an impulse of the Holy Ghost, not indeed as already dwelling in the penitent, but only moving him, with which assistance the penitent prepares a way for himself unto justice.

And though without the sacrament of penance it cannot per se lead the sinner to justification, it does, however, dispose him to obtain the grace of God in the sacrament of penance. For, struck salutarily by this fear, the Ninivites, moved by the dreadful preaching of Jonas, did penance and obtained mercy from the Lord.[22] Falsely therefore do some accuse Catholic writers, as if they maintain that the sacrament of penance confers grace without any pious exertion on the part of those receiving it, something that the Church of God has never taught or ever accepted. Falsely also do they assert that contrition is extorted and forced, and not free and voluntary.

CHAPTER V
CONFESSION

From the institution of the sacrament of penance as already explained, the universal Church has always understood that the complete confession of sins was also instituted by the Lord and is by divine law necessary for all who have fallen after baptism;[23] because our Lord Jesus Christ, when about to ascend from earth to heaven, left behind Him priests, His own vicars,[24] as rulers and judges,[25] to whom all the mortal sins into which the faithful of Christ may have fallen should be brought in order that they may, in virtue of the power of the keys, pronounce the sentence of remission or retention of sins. For it is evident that priests could not have exercised this judgment without a knowledge of the matter, nor could they have observed justice in imposing penalties, had the faithful declared their sins in general only and not specifically and one by one.

From which it is clear that all mortal sins of which they have knowledge after a diligent self-examination, must be enumerated by the penitents in confession,[26] even though they are most secret and have been committed only against the two last precepts of the Decalogue;[27] which sins sometimes injure the soul more grievously and are more dangerous than those that are committed openly. Venial sins, on the other hand, by which we are not excluded from the grace of God and into which we fall more frequently,[28] though they may be rightly and profitably and without any presumption declared in confession, as the practice of pious people evinces, may, nevertheless, be omitted without guilt and can be expiated by many other remedies. But since all mortal sins, even those of thought, make men <children of wrath>[29] and enemies of God, it is necessary to seek pardon of all of them from God by an open and humble confession. While therefore the faithful of Christ strive to confess all sins that come to their memory, they no doubt lay all of them before the divine mercy for forgiveness; while those who do otherwise and knowingly conceal certain ones, lay nothing before the divine goodness to be forgiven through the priest; for if one sick be ashamed to make known his wound to the physician, the latter does not remedy what he does not know. It is evident furthermore, that those circumstances that change the species of the sin are also to be explained in confession, for without them the sins themselves are neither integrally set forth by the penitent nor are they known to the judges, and it would be impossible for them to estimate rightly the grievousness of the crimes and to impose the punishment due to the penitents on account of them. Hence it is unreasonable to teach that these circumstances have been devised by idle men, or that one circumstance only is to be confessed, namely, to have sinned against another. It is also malicious to say that confession, commanded to be made in this manner, is impossible, or to call it a torture of consciences; for it is known that in the Church nothing else is required of penitents than that each one, after he has diligently examined himself and searched all the folds and corners of his conscience, confess those sins by which he remembers to have mortally offended his Lord and God; while the other sins of which he has after diligent thought no recollection, are understood to be in a general way included in the same confession; for which sins we confidently say with the Prophet: <From my secret sins cleanse me, O Lord.>[30] But the difficulty of such a confession and the shame of disclosing the sins might indeed appear a burdensome matter, if it were not lightened by so many and so great advantages and consolations, which are most certainly bestowed by absolution upon all who approach this sacrament worthily. Moreover, as regards the manner of confessing secretly to a priest alone, although Christ has not forbidden that one may in expiation for his crimes and for his own humiliation, for an example to others as well as for the edification of the Church thus scandalized, confess his offenses publicly, yet this is not commanded by divine precept; nor would it be very prudent to enjoin by human law that offenses, especially secret ones, should be divulged by a public confession. Wherefore, since secret sacramental confession, which holy Church has used from the beginning and still uses, has always been recommended by the most holy and most ancient Fathers with great and unanimous agreement, the empty calumny of those who do not fear to teach that it is foreign to the divine command, is of human origin and owes its existence to the Fathers assembled in the Lateran Council,[31] is convincingly disproved. For the Church did not through the Lateran Council decree that the faithful of Christ should confess, a thing that she recognized as of divine law and necessary, but that the precept of confession should be complied with by each and all at least once a year when they have attained the age of discretion. Hence this salutary custom of confessing during that sacred and most acceptable period of Lent is now observed in the whole Church to the great benefit of the souls of the faithful, which custom this holy council completely endorses and sanctions as pious and worthy of retention.

CHAPTER VI
THE MINISTER OF THIS SACRAMENT AND ABSOLUTION

With regard to the minister of this sacrament, the holy council declares false and absolutely foreign to the truth of the Gospel all doctrines which perniciously extend the ministry of the keys to all other men besides bishops and priests,[32] in the belief that those words of the Lord: <Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven;>[33] and, <Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained,>[34] were, contrary to the institution of this sacrament, addressed indifferently and indiscriminately to all the faithful of Christ in such manner that everyone has the power of forgiving sins, public ones by way of rebuke, if the one rebuked complies, and secret ones by way of a voluntary confession made to anyone.[35] It [the council] teaches furthermore that even priests who are in mortal sin exercise, through the power of the Holy Ghost conferred in ordination,[36] as ministers of Christ the office of forgiving sins, and that the opinion of those is erroneous who maintain that bad priests do not possess this power. But although the absolution of the priest is the dispensation of another's bounty, yet it is not a bare ministry only, either of proclaiming the Gospel or of declaring that sins are forgiven, but it is after the manner of a judicial act,[37] by which sentence is pronounced by him as by a judge. The penitent, therefore, ought not so flatter himself on his own faith as to think that even though he have no contrition and there be wanting on the part of the priest the intention to act earnestly and absolve effectively, he is nevertheless really and in the sight of God absolved by reason of faith alone. For faith without penance effects no remission of sins, and he would be most negligent of his salvation who, knowing that a priest absolved him jokingly, would not diligently seek another who would act earnestly.

CHAPTER VII
THE RESERVATION OF CASES

Wherefore, since the nature of a judgment requires that sentence be imposed only on subjects, the Church of God has always maintained and this council confirms it as most true, that the absolution which a priest pronounces upon one over whom he has neither ordinary nor delegated jurisdiction ought to be invalid.[38] To our most holy Fathers it seemed to be a matter of great importance to the discipline of the Christian people, that certain more atrocious and grave crimes should be absolved not by all but only by the highest priests;[39] whence the sovereign pontiffs in virtue of the supreme authority given to them in the universal Church could with right reserve to their own exclusive judgment certain more grave cases of crimes.[40] And since all things that are from God are well ordered,[41] it is not to be doubted that the same may be lawfully done by all bishops, each in his own diocese,[42] unto edification however, not unto destruction, in virtue of the authority over their subjects that is given to them above other priests inferior in rank, especially in regard to those crimes that carry with them the censure of excommunication. That this reservation of crimes have effect not only in external administration but also in God's sight is in accord with divine authority. But that no one may on this account perish, it has always been very piously observed in the same Church of God that there be no reservation in <articulo mortis>,[43] and that all priests, therefore, may in that case absolve all penitents from all sins and censures; and since outside of this single instance priests have no power in reserved cases, let them strive to persuade penitents to do this one thing, betake themselves to superiors and lawful judges for the benefit of absolution.

CHAPTER VIII
THE NECESSITY AND FRUIT OF SATISFACTION

Finally, in regard to satisfaction, which, of all the parts of penance, just as it is that which has at all times been recommended to the Christian people by our Fathers, so it is the one which chiefly in our age is under the high-sounding pretext of piety assailed by those who <have an appearance of piety, but have denied the power thereof>,[44] the holy council declares that it is absolutely false and contrary to the word of God, that the guilt is never remitted by the Lord without the entire punishment being remitted also.[45] For clear and outstanding examples are found in the sacred writings,[46] by which, besides divine tradition, this error is refuted in the plainest manner. Indeed the nature of divine justice seems to demand that those who through ignorance have sinned before baptism be received into grace in one manner, and in another those who, after having been liberated from the servitude of sin and of the devil, and after having received the gift of the Holy Ghost, have not feared knowingly to violate the temple of God[47] and to grieve the Holy Spirit.[48] And it is in keeping with divine clemency that sins be not thus pardoned us without any satisfaction, lest seizing the occasion and considering sins as trivial and offering insult and affront to the Holy Spirit,[49] we should fall into graver ones, <treasuring up to ourselves wrath against the day of wrath.>[50] For without doubt, these satisfactions greatly restrain from sin, check as it were with a bit, and make penitents more cautious and vigilant in the future; they also remove remnants of sin, and by acts of the opposite virtues destroy habits acquired by evil living. Neither was there ever in the Church of God any way held more certain to ward off impending chastisement by the Lord than that men perform with true sorrow of mind these works of penance.[51] Add to this, that while we by making satisfaction suffer for our sins. we are made conformable to Christ Jesus who satisfied for our sins,[52] from whom is all our sufficiency,[53] having thence also a most certain pledge, that <if we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified with him.>[54] Neither is this satisfaction which we discharge for our sins so our own as not to be through Christ Jesus; for we who can do nothing of ourselves as of ourselves, can do all things with the cooperation of Him who strengthens us.[55] Thus man has not wherein to glory, but all our glorying is in Christ,[56] in whom we live,[57] in whom we merit, in whom we make satisfaction, <bringing forth fruits worthy of penance,>[58] which have their efficacy from Him, by Him are offered to the Father, and through Him are accepted by the Father. The priests of the Lord must therefore, so far as reason and prudence suggest, impose salutary and suitable satisfactions, in keeping with the nature of the crimes and the ability of the penitents; otherwise, if they should connive at sins and deal too leniently with penitents, imposing certain very light works for very grave offenses, they might become partakers in the sins of others. But let them bear in mind that the satisfaction they impose be not only for the protection of a new life and a remedy against infirmity, but also for the atonement and punishment of past sins; for the early Fathers also believed and taught that the keys of the priests were bestowed not to loose only but also to bind.[59] It was not their understanding, moreover, that the sacrament of penance is a tribunal of wrath or of punishments, as no Catholic ever understood that through our satisfactions the efficacy of the merit and satisfaction of our Lord Jesus Christ is either obscured or in any way diminished;[60] but since the innovators wish to understand it so, they teach, in order to destroy the efficacy and use of satisfaction, that a new life is the best penance.

CHAPTER IX
THE WORKS OF SATISFACTION

It [the council] teaches furthermore that the liberality of the divine munificence is so great that we are able through Jesus Christ to make satisfaction to God the Father not only by punishments voluntarily undertaken by ourselves to atone for sins, or by those imposed by the judgment of the priest according to the measure of our offense, but also, and this is the greatest proof of love, by the temporal afflictions imposed by God and borne patiently by us.

The Doctrine Of The Sacrament Of Extreme Unction

It has seemed good to the holy council to add to the preceding doctrine on penance the following concerning the sacrament of extreme unction, which was considered by the Fathers as the completion not only of penance but also of the whole Christian life, which ought to be a continual penance. First therefore, with regard to its institution it declares and teaches that our most benevolent Redeemer, who wished to have His servants at all times provided with salutary remedies against all the weapons of all enemies,[61] as in the other sacraments He provided the greatest aids by means of which Christians may during life keep themselves free from every graver spiritual evil, so did He fortify the end of life by the sacrament of extreme unction as with the strongest defense. For though our adversary seeks and seizes occasions throughout our whole life to devour our souls in any manner,[62] yet there is no time when he strains more vehemently all the powers of his cunning to ruin us utterly, and if possible to make us even lose faith in the divine mercy, than when he perceives that the end of our life is near.

CHAPTER I
THE INSTITUTION OF THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION

This sacred unction of the sick was instituted by Christ our Lord as truly and properly a sacrament of the New Law, alluded to indeed by Mark[63] but recommended and announced to the faithful by James the Apostle and brother of the Lord. <Is any man>, he says, <sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him.>[64] In which words, as the Church has learned from Apostolic tradition received from hand to hand, he teaches the matter, form, proper administration and effect of this salutary sacrament. For the Church has understood that the matter is the oil blessed by the bishop, because the anointing very aptly represents the grace of the Holy Ghost with which the soul of the sick person is invisibly anointed. The form, furthermore, are those words: "By this unction, etc."

CHAPTER II
THE EFFECT OF THIS SACRAMENT

Moreover, the significance and effect of this sacrament are explained in these words: <And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins they shall be forgiven him.>[65] For the thing signified is the grace of the Holy Ghost whose anointing takes away the sins if there be any still to be expiated, and also the remains of sin and raises up and strengthens the soul of the sick person by exciting in him great confidence in the divine mercy, supported by which the sick one bears more lightly the miseries and pains of his illness and resists more easily the temptations of the devil who lies in wait for his heel;[66] and at times when expedient for the welfare of the soul restores bodily health.

CHAPTER III
THE MINISTER OF THIS SACRAMENT AND THE TIME WHEN IT OUGHT TO BE ADMINISTERED

And now, with regard to prescribing who ought to receive and administer this sacrament, this also was not obscurely expressed in the words cited above. For there it is also pointed out that the proper ministers of this sacrament are the priests of the Church; by which name in that place are to be understood not the elders by age or the highest in rank among the people, but either bishops or priests[67] rightly ordained by bishops with the imposition of the hands of the priesthood.>[68] It is also declared that this anointing is to be applied to the sick, but especially to those who are in such danger as to appear to be at the end of life, whence it is also called the sacrament of the dying. If the sick should after the reception of this sacrament recover, they may again be strengthened with the aid of this sacrament when they fall into another similar danger of death. Wherefore, they are under no condition to be listened to who against so manifest and clear a statement of the Apostle James[69] teach that this anointing is either a human contrivance or is a rite received from the Fathers, having neither a command from God nor a promise of grace; nor those who declare that this has already ceased, as though it were to be understood only as referring to the grace of healing in the primitive Church; nor those who maintain that the rite and usage which the holy Roman Church observes in the administration of this sacrament are opposed to the expression of the Apostle James,[70] and therefore must be changed into some other; nor finally those who assert that this last anointing may without sin be despised by the faithful; for all these things are most clearly at variance with the manifest words of so great an Apostle. Assuredly, in reference to those things that constitute the substance of this sacrament, the Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all other churches, does not observe anything in administering this unction that has not been prescribed by the blessed James. Nor indeed can there be contempt for so great a sacrament without a grievous sin and offense to the Holy Ghost.

These things regarding the sacraments of penance and extreme unction this holy ecumenical council professes and teaches and proposes to all the faithful of Christ to be believed and held. And it submits the following canons to be inviolately observed, and forever anathematizes those who maintain the contrary.

Canons Concerning The Most Holy Sacrament Of Penance

Canon 1. If anyone says that in the Catholic Church penance is not truly and properly a sacrament instituted by Christ the Lord for reconciling the faithful of God as often as they fall into sin after baptism,[71] let him be anathema.

Canon 2. If anyone, confounding the sacraments, says that baptism is itself the sacrament of penance,[72] as though these two sacraments were not distinct, and that penance therefore is not rightly called a second plank after shipwreck,[73] let him be anathema.

Canon 3. If anyone says that those words of the Lord Savior, <Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained,>[74] are not to be understood of the power of forgiving and retaining sins in the sacrament of penance, as the Catholic Church has always understood them from the beginning, but distorts them, contrary to the institution of this sacrament, as applying to the authority of preaching the Gospel, let him be anathema.

Canon 4. If anyone denies that for the full and perfect remission of sins three acts are required on the part of the penitent, constituting as it were the matter of the sacrament of penance, namely, contrition, confession and satisfaction, which are called the three parts of penance;[75] or says that there are only two parts of penance, namely, the terrors of a smitten conscience convinced of sin and the faith received from the Gospel or from absolution, by which one believes that his sins are forgiven him through Christ, let him be anathema.

Canon 5. If anyone says that the contrition which is evoked by examination, recollection and hatred of sins,[76] whereby one recounts his years in the bitterness of his soul,[77] by reflecting on the grievousness, the multitude, the baseness of his sins, the loss of eternal happiness and the incurring of eternal damnation, with a purpose of amendment, is not a true and beneficial sorrow, does not prepare for grace, but makes a man a hypocrite and a greater sinner; finally, that this sorrow is forced and not free and voluntary, let him be anathema.

Canon 6. If anyone denies that sacramental confession was instituted by divine law or is necessary to salvation;[78] or says that the manner of confessing secretly to a priest alone, which the Catholic Church has always observed from the beginning and still observes, is at variance with the institution and command of Christ and is a human contrivance, let him be anathema.

Canon 7. If anyone says that in the sacrament of penance it is not required by divine law for the remission of sins to confess each and all mortal sins which are recalled after a due and diligent examination,[79] also secret ones and those that are a violation of the two last commandments of the Decalogue,[80] as also the circumstances that change the nature of a sin, but that this confession is useful only to instruct and console the penitent and in olden times was observed only to impose a canonical satisfaction; or says that they who strive to confess all sins wish to leave nothing to the divine mercy to pardon; or finally, that it is not lawful to confess venial sins, let him be anathema.

Canon 8. If anyone says that the confession of all sins as it is observed in the Church is impossible and is a human tradition to be abolished by pious people;[81] or that each and all of the faithful of Christ of either sex are not bound thereto once a year in accordance with the constitution of the great Lateran Council[82] and that for this reason the faithful of Christ are to be persuaded not to confess during Lent, let him be anathema.

Canon 9. If anyone says that the sacramental absolution of the priest is not a judicial act but a mere service of pronouncing and declaring to him who confesses that the sins are forgiven, provided only he believes himself to be absolved, even though the priest absolves not in earnest but only in jest;[83] or says that the confession of the penitent is not necessary in order that the priest may be able to absolve him, let him be anathema.

Canon 10. If anyone says that priests who are in mortal sin have not the power of binding and loosing,[84] or that not only priests are the ministers of absolution but that to each and all of the faithful of Christ was it said: <Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed in heaven>;[85] and <whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained;>[86] by virtue of which words everyone can absolve from sins, from public sins by reproof only, provided the one reproved accept correction, and from secret sins by voluntary confession, let him be anathema.

Canon 11. If anyone says that bishops have not the right to reserve cases to themselves except such as pertain to external administration, and that therefore the reservation of cases does not hinder a priest from absolving from reserved cases,[87] let him be anathema.

Canon 12. If anyone says that God always pardons the whole penalty together with the guilt and that the satisfaction of penitents is nothing else than the faith by which they perceive that Christ has satisfied for them,[88] let him be anathema.

Canon 13. If anyone says that satisfaction for sins, as to their temporal punishment, is in no way made to God through the merits of Christ by the punishments inflicted by Him and patiently borne, or by those imposed by the priest, or even those voluntarily undertaken, as by fasts, prayers, almsgiving or other works of piety, and that therefore the best penance is merely a new life,[89] let him be anathema.

Canon 14. If anyone says that the satisfactions by which penitents atone for their sins through Christ are not a worship of God but traditions of men, which obscure the doctrine of grace and the true worship of God and the beneficence itself of the death of Christ,[90] let him be anathema.

Canon 15. If anyone says that the keys have been given to the Church only to loose and not also to bind, and that therefore priests, when imposing penalties on those who confess, act contrary to the purpose of the keys and to the institution of Christ, and that it is a fiction that there remains often a temporal punishment to be discharged after the eternal punishment has by virtue of the keys been removed,[91] let him be anathema.

Canons Concerning The Sacrament Of Extreme Unction

Canon l. If anyone says that extreme unction is not truly and properly a sacrament instituted by Christ our Lord and announced by the blessed Apostle James,[92] but is only a rite received from the Fathers or a human invention, let him be anathema.

Canon 2. If anyone says that the anointing of the sick neither confers any grace nor remits sins nor comforts the sick, but that it has already ceased, as if it had been a healing grace only in the olden days,[93] let him be anathema.

Canon 3. If anyone says that the rite and usage of extreme unction which the holy Roman Church observes is at variance with the statement of the blessed Apostle James,[94] and is therefore to be changed and may without sin be despised by Christians, let him be anathema.

Canon 4. If anyone says that the priests of the Church, whom blessed James exhorts to be brought to anoint the sick, are not the priests who have been ordained by a bishop, but the elders in each community, and that for this reason a priest only is not the proper minister of extreme unction,[95] let him be anathema.

Decree Concerning Reform

Introduction

It is the office of the bishops to admonish their subjects of their duty, especially those appointed to the <cura animarum>

Since it is properly the office of bishops to reprove the transgressions of all their subjects, this especially must claim their attention, that clerics, particularly those appointed to the <cura animarum,> be not wicked, nor lead a disorderly life with their connivance.[96] For if they permit them to be given to evil and corrupt morals, how shall they reprove the lay people for their transgressions when these can by one word repulse them for permitting clerics to be worse than they?[97] And with what freedom shall priests be able to correct laics when they must answer silently to themselves that they have committed the same things that they censure?[98] Wherefore, bishops shall admonish their clergy, of whatever rank they may be, that in conduct, speech and knowledge they be a guide to the people of God committed to them;[99] being mindful of what is written: Be holy, for I also am holy.[100] And in accordance with the word of the Apostle, let them not give offense to any man, that their ministry may not be blamed; but in all things let them exhibit themselves as the ministers of God,[101] lest the saying of the prophet be fulfilled in them: <The priests of God defile the sanctuaries and despise the law.>[102] But that the bishops may be able to execute this more freely, and may not be hindered therein by any pretext whatsoever, the same holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, the same legate and nuncios of the Apostolic See presiding therein, has thought it proper that the following canons be established and decreed.

CHAPTER I
IF ANY, FORBIDDEN TO ADVANCE TO ORDERS, DO SO ADVANCE, IF INTERDICTED OR SUSPENDED, THEY ARE TO BE PUNISHED

Since it is more honorable and safe for a subject to serve in an inferior ministry and render due obedience to those placed over him than to the scandal of the superiors seek the dignity of a higher rank, to him to whom the advance to sacred orders has, for any reason whatsoever, even on account of secret crime, or in whatsoever manner, even extra-judicially, been denied by his own prelate, or who has been suspended from his orders or ecclesiastical rank or dignities, no permission granted against the will of that prelate to bring about his promotion or restoration to former orders, rank, dignities or honors, shall be of any avail.

CHAPTER II
IF A BISHOP SHALL CONFER ANY ORDERS WHATSOEVER ON ONE NOT SUBJECT TO HIM, EVEN IF HE BE HIS OWN DOMESTIC, WITHOUT THE EXPRESSED CONSENT OF THAT PERSON'S PRELATE, BOTH SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE PENALTY PRESCRIBED

Since some bishops of churches located in <partibus infidelium>, having neither clergy nor Christian people, being well-nigh wanderers and without a fixed residence, seeking not the things of Jesus Christ, but other sheep without the knowledge of their pastor,[103] and finding themselves forbidden by this holy council to exercise episcopal functions in the diocese of another without the expressed permission of the local ordinary,[104] and then only in regard to persons who are subject to that ordinary, do in their boldness, by evasion and in contempt of the law, choose as it were an episcopal see in a place which belongs to no diocese, and presume to mark with the clerical character and even promote to the sacred order of the priesthood any who come to them, even though they have no commendatory letters from their bishops or prelates, whence it happens very often that persons are ordained who are but little qualified, who are untrained and ignorant, and have been rejected by their own bishops as incompetent and unworthy, neither able to perform the divine offices nor to administer rightly the sacraments of the Church; none of the bishops, therefore, who are called titular, even though they reside or sojourn in a place within no diocese, even if it be exempt, or in a monastery of whatsoever order, may, by virtue of any privilege granted them for a time, promote those who come to them, or promote or ordain to any sacred or minor orders, or even to the first tonsure, the subject of another bishop, even under the pretext that he is his domestic and companion at table, without the expressed consent of or dimissory letters from that person's own bishop.[105] Those acting contrary to this shall be <ipso jure> suspended for one year from the exercise of pontifical functions, and the one so promoted shall likewise be suspended from the exercise of the orders as long as his own prelate shall see fit.

CHAPTER III
A BISHOP MAY SUSPEND HIS CLERICS WHO HAVE BEEN IMPROPERLY PROMOTED BY ANOTHER, IF HE SHOULD FIND THEM INCOMPETENT

A bishop may suspend for as long a time as he may see fit from the exercise of the orders received, and may prohibit from ministering or from exercising the functions of any order, any of his clerics, especially those who are in sacred orders, who have been promoted by any authority whatsoever without his previous examination and commendatory letters, even though they shall have been approved as competent by him who ordained them, but whom he himself shall find unfit and incapable to celebrate the divine offices or to administer the sacraments of the Church.[106]

CHAPTER IV
NO CLERIC SHALL BE EXEMPT FROM THE CORRECTION OF THE BISHOP, EVEN OUTSIDE THE TIME OF VISITATION

All prelates of churches who ought to apply themselves diligently to correct the excesses of their subjects,[107] and against whom no cleric is by the statutes of this council under pretext of any privilege whatsoever considered secure that he may not be visited, punished and corrected in accordance with the canons, shall, if they reside in their own churches, have the power, delegated for this purpose by the Apostolic See, to correct and punish, even outside the time of visitation, all secular clerics in whatever manner exempt, who would otherwise be subject to their jurisdiction, for their excesses, crimes and delinquencies as often as and whenever there shall be need;[108] no exemptions, declarations, customs, sentences, oaths, agreements, which bind only their authors, shall be of any avail to said clerics and their relations, chaplains, domestics, agents, or to any others whatsoever in view and in consideration of said exempt clerics.

CHAPTER V
THE JURISDICTION OF CONSERVATORS IS RESTRICTED WITHIN CERTAIN LIMITS

Moreover, since some who, under the pretext that divers wrongs and annoyances are inflicted on them in their goods, possessions and rights, obtain certain judges to be appointed by means of conservatory letters to protect and defend them against such annoyances and wrongs and to maintain and keep them in the real or quasi possession of their goods, property and rights without suffering them to be molested therein, in most cases wrest from such letters a meaning that is contrary to the intention of the donor, therefore, conservatory letters, whatever may be their clauses and decrees, whatever judges may be appointed, or under whatever other sort of pretext or color they may have been granted, shall avail absolutely no one, of whatever dignity and condition, even though a chapter, from being in criminal and mixed causes accused and summoned, examined and proceeded against before his own bishop or other ordinary superior, or from being freely summoned before the ordinary judge in those matters, even if any rights should come to him from a concession made to him. In civil causes also, if he be the plaintiff, it shall under no condition be lawful for him to bring anyone for judgment before his own conservatory judges. And if in those cases in which he shall be defendant, it should happen that the conservator chosen by him should be declared by the plaintiff to be suspected by him, or if any dispute shall have arisen between the judges themselves, the conservator and the ordinary, with regard to the competency of jurisdiction, the cause shall not be proceeded with until a decision shall have been made relative to said suspicion or competency of jurisdiction by arbiters legally chosen. Nor shall such conservatory letters be of any avail to the said party's domestics, who are in the habit of shielding themselves thereby, except to two only and then provided they live at his own cost. No one, moreover, shall enjoy the benefit of such letters more than five years. It shall also not be lawful for conservatory judges to have any fixed tribunal. With regard to causes that relate to wages and to destitute persons, the decree of this holy council shall remain in its full force.[109] General universities, however, colleges of doctors or scholars, places belonging to regulars, also hospitals in which hospitality is actually exercised, and persons belonging to such universities, colleges, places and hospitals, are not to be considered included in the present decree, but are and are to be understood as wholly exempt.

CHAPTER VI
A PENALTY IS DECREED AGAINST CLERICS WHO, CONSTITUTED IN SACRED ORDERS OR HOLDING BENEFICES, DO NOT WEAR CLOTHES CONFORMING TO THEIR ORDER

And since, though the habit does not make the monk,[110] it is necessary nevertheless that clerics always wear a dress conformable to their order, that by the propriety of their outward apparel they may show forth the inward uprightness of their morals, yet to such a degree have the contempt of religion and the boldness of some grown in these days, that esteeming but little their own dignity and the clerical honor, they even wear in public the dress of laymen, setting their feet in different paths, one of things divine, the other of the flesh. Wherefore, all ecclesiastical persons, howsoever exempt, who are either in sacred orders or in possession of dignities with or without jurisdiction, offices or whatsoever ecclesiastical benefices, if, after having been admonished by their bishops, even by a public edict, they do not wear a becoming clerical dress conformable to their order and dignity and in conformity with the ordinance and mandate of their bishop, may and ought to be compelled thereto by suspension from their orders, office, benefice and from the fruits, revenues and proceeds of those benefices; and also, if, after having been once rebuked, they offend again in the matter, even by deprivation of those offices and benefices; the constitution of Clement V published in the Council of Vienne, beginning "Quondam," being hereby renewed and amplified.[111]

CHAPTER VII
THE ORDINATION OF VOLUNTARY HOMICIDES IS FORBIDDEN; HOW INVOLUNTARY HOMICIDES ARE TO BE ORDAINED

Since also he who has killed his neighbor on set purpose and by lying in wait for him, is to be taken away from the altar,[112] he who has voluntarily committed a homicide, even though that crime has neither been proved by ordinary judicial process nor is otherwise public, but is secret, can never be promoted to sacred orders; nor shall it be lawful to confer on him any ecclesiastical benefices, even though they have not annexed the <cura animarum>; but he shall be forever excluded from every ecclesiastical order, benefice and office. But if it be declared that the homicide was not committed intentionally but accidentally, or when repelling force with force that one might defend himself from death (in which case indeed a dispensation for the ministry of sacred orders and of the altar and for all benefices and dignities is in some manner due by right), the matter shall be referred to the local ordinary, or if need be to the metropolitan or to the nearest bishop, who may dispense only after having taken cognizance of the case and after the entreaties and allegations have been proved, and not otherwise.

CHAPTER VIII
NO ONE SHALL BY VIRTUE OF ANY PRIVILEGE PUNISH THE CLERICS OF ANOTHER

Furthermore, since there are persons, some of whom are true pastors and have their own sheep, who seek to rule over the sheep of others also,[113] and at times give their attention to the subjects of others to such an extent as to neglect the care of their own; no one, even though he enjoy the episcopal dignity, who may have the privilege of punishing the subjects of another, shall under any circumstances proceed against clerics not subject to him, especially such as are in sacred orders, even if guilty of crimes ever so atrocious, except with the intervention of the bishop of those clerics, if that bishop resides in his own church, or of the person that may be deputed by that bishop; otherwise the proceedings and all their consequences shall be entirely without effect.

CHAPTER IX
THE BENEFICES OF ONE DIOCESE SHALL NOT UNDER ANY PRETEXT BE UNITED TO THE BENEFICES OF ANOTHER

And since it is by a very good law that dioceses and parishes have been made distinct,[114] and to each flock has been assigned its proper pastor and to inferior churches their rectors, each to take care of his own sheep, so that ecclesiastical order may not be disturbed or one and the same church belong in some way to two dioceses, not without grave disadvantage to those subject thereto; the benefices of one diocese, even if they be parochial churches, perpetual vicariates, simple benefices, prestimonies or prestimonial portions, shall not be united <in perpetuum> to a benefice, monastery, college or even to a pious place of another diocese, not even for the purpose of augmenting divine worship or the number of beneficiaries, or for any other reason whatsoever; hereby explaining the decree of this holy council on the subject of unions of this kind.[115]

CHAPTER X
REGULAR BENEFICES SHALL BE CONFERRED ON REGULARS

Benefices of regulars that have been accustomed to be granted in title to professed regulars, shall, when they happen to become vacant by the death of the titular incumbent, or by his resignation or otherwise, be conferred on religious of the same order only[116] or on persons who shall be absolutely bound to take the habit and make profession, and on no others, that they may <not wear a garment that is woven of woolen and linen together.[117]

CHAPTER XI
THOSE TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER ORDER SHALL REMAIN IN THE ENCLOSURE UNDER OBEDIENCE, AND SHALL BE DISQUALIFIED TO HOLD SECULAR BENEFICES

Since regulars, transferred from one order to another, usually obtain permission easily from their superior to remain out of the monastery, whereby occasion is given to wandering about and apostatizing, no prelate or superior of any order shall by virtue of any authority whatsoever, admit anyone to the habit and to profession, unless he remain in the order to which he was transferred and perpetually in the cloister under obedience to his superior[118] and one so transferred, even though he be a canon regular, shall be wholly disqualified to hold secular benefices, even with the <cura> annexed.

CHAPTER XII
NO ONE SHALL OBTAIN A RIGHT OF PATRONAGE EXCEPT BY MEANS OF A FOUNDATION OR AN ENDOWMENT

Moreover, no one, of whatever ecclesiastical or secular dignity, may or ought to procure or have a right of patronage for any reason whatever, except that he has founded and erected <de novo> a church, benefice or chapel; or has adequately endowed out of his own patrimonial resources one already erected but insufficiently endowed.[119] But in case of such foundation or endowment, appointments thereto shall be reserved to the bishop and not to some other inferior person.

CHAPTER XIII
THE PRESENTATION MUST BE MADE TO THE ORDINARY, OTHERWISE IT AND THE APPOINTMENT ARE NULL

Furthermore, it shall not be lawful for a patron, under pretext of any privilege, to present anyone in any way to the benefices that are under his right of patronage except to the ordinary bishop of the locality, to whom the provision for or appointment to that benefice would by right belong if the privilege ceased; 120 otherwise the presentation and the appointment perchance following shall be null and shall be understood as such.

CHAPTER XIV

The holy council declares, moreover, that in the next session, which it has already decreed to be held on the twenty-fifth day of January of the following year, 1552, it will, besides treating of the sacrifice of the mass, also apply itself to and treat of the sacrament of order and continue the subject of reform.

Notes

1 Cf. Sess. VI, chap. 14.

2 Cf. <infra>, chap. 5, Penance.

3 Eph. 2:4.

4 Ps. 102:14.

5 Sess. and chap. cited.

6 Ezech. 18:30.

7 Luke 13:5.

8 Acts 2:38.

9 John 20:22f.; <infra>, can. 3, Penance.

10 Eusebius, <Hist. eccl.>, VI, c. 43.

11 Cf. <infra,> Canon 2. and Sess. VI, chap. 14.

12 See 1 Cor. 5:12.

13 Ibid., 12:13.

14 Gal. 3:27.

15 Cf. <infra>, chap. 4; Sess. VI, chap. 14, and< infra>, can. 4.

16 Cf. Sess. VI, chaps. 6, 14.

17 <Infra>, can. 5.

18 Ezech. 18:31.

19 Ps. 50:6.

20 Ps. 6:7.

21 Is. 38:15.

22 Jonas 3:5; Matt. 12:41; Luke 11:32.

23 Luke 5:14; 17:14; I John 1:9. Cf. <infra>, can. 6.

24 Matt. 16:19, John 20:23.

25 Cf. c. 51, D.I de poenit.

26 Cf. <infra>, can. 7.

27 Deut. 5:21.

28 Cf. Sess. VI, can. 23; c. 20, D. III de poenit.

29 Eph. 2:3.

30 Ps, 18:13.

31 Cf. c. 12, X, De poenit., V, 38.

32 <Infra,> can. 10.

33 Matt. 16:19; 18:18.

34 John 20:23.

35 Cf. Sess. VII, Sacraments, can. 10.

36 C. 8, D. XIX; c. 89, C I, q. I.

37 <Infra>, can. 9.

38 Cf. c. 2 VI, De poenit., V, 10.

39 Cf. c. 52, C.XVI, q. I; c. 29, C.XVII, q. 4 et al.

40 Cf. cc. l, 3, 19, 22, 24, 32, X, De sent. excomm., V, 39; cc. II, 18, h. t. in VI, V, 11; c. l, h. t. in Extrav. comm., V, 10 et al.

41 Rom. 13:1.

42 Cf. <infra>, sess. XXIV, chap. 6 de ref.

43 Cf. c. 29, C.XVII, q. 4; c. 5, VI, De poenis, V, 9; c. 3, h. t. in Clem., V, 8; c. 3, Extrav. comm., De privil, V, 7.

44 See II Tim. 3:5.

45 Cf. sess. VI, chap. 14, can. 30 and <infra>, can. 12.

46 Gen. 3:16 ff.; Num. 12:14 f.; 10:11 f.; II Kings 12:13 f., etc.

47 See l Cor. 3:17.

48 Eph. 4:30.

49 Heb. 10:29.

50 Rom. 2:5; James 5:3

51 Matt. 3:2, 8; 4:17; 11:21.

52 Rom. 5:10.

53 See II Cor. 3:5.

54 Rom. 8:17.

55 See II Cor. 3:5; Phil. 4:13.

56 See I Cor. 1:31; II Cor. 10:17; Gal. 6:14.

57 Acts 17:28.

58 Matt. 3:8; Luke 3:8.

59 Matt. 16:19; John 20:23; <infra>, can. 15.

60 Cf. <infra>. can. 14.

61 Eph. 6:10 ff.

62 See I Pet. 5:8.

63 Mark 6:13.

64 James 5:14 f.

65 Ibid., 5:15.

66 Gen. 3:15.

67 C. 3, D.XCV and <infra>, Extr. Unct., can. 4.

68 See I Tim. 4:14.

69 James 5:14 f.

70 <Infra>, Extr. Unct., can. 3.

71 Cf. <supra>, chap. I.

72 Ibid.

73 C. 72, D.I de poenit.

74 Matt. 16:19; John 20:23 f.; cf. Sess. VI, chap. 14 and <supra>, chap. 1.

75 <Supra>, chap. 3.

76 Ibid., chap. 4 77 38:15.

78 <Supra>, chap. 5.

79 <Supra>, chap. 5.

80 Deut. 5:21.

81 <Supra>, chap. 5.

82 Ibid., chap. 5 at the end.

83 Ibid., chap. 6.

84 Ibid., chaps. 5-6.

85 Matt. 16:19; 18:18.

86 John 20:23.

87 <Supra>, chap. 7.

88 Ibid., chap. 8.

89 Ibid., chaps. 8-9.

90 Ibid., chap. 8.

91 Ibid., chaps 1, 8.

92 James 5:14 f.

93 Cf. supra, Extr. Unct., chap. 2.

94 James 5:14 f.

95 Ibid.; supra, Extr. Unct., chap. 3.

96 C 13, X, De off. jud. ord., I, 31; supra, Sess. VI, chap. 3 de ref.

97 See I Cor. 9:27.

98 C. 6, D.XXV.

99 Cf. Sess. XXII, chap. I de ref.

100 Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7; 1 Pet. 1:16.

101 See II Cor. 6:3 f.

102 Ezech. 22:26; Soph. 3:4.

103 Cf. infra, chap. 8 de ref.

104 Cf. Sess. VI, chap. 5 de ref.

105 Ibid. and Sess. XXIII, chaps. 3, 8, 10 de ref.

106 Cf. Sess. XXIII, chap. 8 de ref.

107 Sess. VI, chap. 3 de ref.; C. 13, X, De off. jud. ord., I, 31.

108 Sess. cit., chap. 4 de ref.

109 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 14 de ref.

110 C. 13, X, De regular., III, 31. 111 C. 2, in Clem., De vit. et hon. cler., III, I.

112 Ex. 21:14; c. I, X, De homicid., V, 12.

113 Cf. <supra,> chap. 2 de ref. and Sess. VI, chap. 5 de ref.

114 Cf. c. 9, X, De his, quae fiunt a prael., III, 10 and Sess. XXIV, chap. 13 de ref.

115 Cf. Sess. VII, chaps. 6 and 7 de ref.; Sess. XXIV, chaps. 13 and 15 de ref.

116 Cf. Sess. XXV, chap. 21 de regular.; c. 5, VI, De praeb., III 4; C. 27, X, De elect., I 6.

117 Deut. 22:11.

118 Cf. Sess. XXV, chap. 4 de regular.

119 Cf. Sess. cit., chap. 9 de ref.

120 Cf. Sess. and chap. cited, and cc. 8, 21, X, De jur. patr., III, 38.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session XV - The fifth under the Supreme Pontiff, Julius III, celebrated on the twenty-fifth day of January, 1552

Decree For Proroguing The Session

Since this holy and general council has during these days, in accordance with the decrees enacted in the last sessions, most accurately and diligently considered the things that relate to the most holy sacrifice of the mass and to the sacrament of order, in order that in the present session it might publish, as the Holy Ghost would have prompted, decrees on these matters and on the four articles concerning the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, which had been finally deferred to this session; and since it was thought that those who call themselves Protestants, for whose sake it had deferred the publication of those articles, and to whom it had given the public faith or a safe-conduct that they might come here freely and without any delay,[1] would in the meantime have presented themselves at this holy council; seeing, however, that they have not yet come, and the holy council having been petitioned in their name that the publication which was to have been made on this day be deferred to the following session, an assured hope being expressed that they will doubtlessly be present long before that session upon receipt in the meantime of a safe-conduct in a more amplified form, the same holy council, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legate and nuncios presiding, desiring nothing more than to remove from among the illustrious German nation all dissensions and schisms regarding religion, and to provide for its tranquillity, peace and concord; being prepared, should they come, to receive them kindly and to listen to them favorably, and trusting that they will come not with the intention of obstinately assailing the Catholic faith but of learning the truth, and that they will at last, as becomes those zealous for evangelical truth, acquiesce in the decrees and discipline of holy mother Church, has deferred the next session for the publication and promulgation of the aforesaid matters to the feast of St. Joseph, which will be the nineteenth day of the month of March, in order that they may have sufficient time and leisure not only to come but also to propose before that day arrives whatever they may wish. And that all cause for further delay on their part may be removed, it freely gives and grants them the public faith or a safe-conduct, the contents and tenor of which is given below. But it ordains and decrees that in the meantime the sacrament of matrimony is to be considered, and it will give in the same session its decisions thereon, in addition to the publication of the above-mentioned decrees, also continuing the matter of reform.

Safe-Conduct Given To The Protestants

The holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legate and nuncios of the Apostolic See presiding, adhering to the safe-conduct given in the session before the last and amplifying it in the manner following, certifies to all men that by the tenor of these presents, it grants and fully concedes the public faith and the fullest and truest security, which they call a safe-conduct, to each and all priests, electors, princes, dukes, marquises, counts, barons, soldiers, the common people, and to all other persons of whatever state, condition or character they may be, of the German province and nation, to the cities and other places thereof, and to all other ecclesiastical and secular persons, especially those of the Confession of Augsburg, who shall come or be sent with them to this general Council of Trent, and to those who are going to come or have already come, by whatever name they are or may be designated, to come freely to this city of Trent, to remain, abide and sojourn here and to propose, speak and consider, examine and discuss any matters whatever with the council, and to present freely whatever they may think suitable, to set forth any articles whatever either in writing or orally, and to explain, establish and prove them by the Sacred Scriptures and by the words, decisions and arguments of the blessed Fathers, and also to reply, if need be, to the objections of the general council, and to dispute and confer charitably and respectfully and without hindrance with those who have been selected by the council, reproachful, vexatious and offensive language being absolutely put aside; and particularly, that the controverted matters shall be treated in this Council of Trent in accordance with Sacred Scripture and the traditions of the Apostles, the approved councils, the consensus of the Catholic Church and the authority of the holy Fathers; with this further addition, that they shall under no condition be punished by reason of religion or of offenses committed or that may be committed in regard thereto; and also that the divine offices shall not by reason of their presence, either upon the road or in any place of their journey, their stay or their return, or in the city of Trent itself, be in any way interrupted; and that on the conclusion of these matters or before their conclusion, whensoever it shall please them, if they should wish by the command and permission of their superiors to return to their homes, or if any one of them should so wish, they may at their pleasure return freely and securely, without restraint, formality or delay, without injury to their property and to the honor and persons of their attendants and vice versa; making known, however, their intention of withdrawing to those to be deputed by the council, so that at a convenient time, without deceit or fraud, provision may be made for their security. The holy council wishes also that all clauses whatsoever, which may be necessary and suitable for a complete, effective and sufficient security for coming; sojourning and returning, be included and contained, and to be considered as included, in this public faith and safe-conduct. For their greater security and for the sake of peace and reconciliation, it declares also that if, which God forbid, any one or several of them should, either on the way to Trent or while sojourning there or returning therefrom, perpetrate or commit an atrocious act, by which the benefit of this public faith and assurance granted to them might be annulled and cassated, it wishes and concedes that those discovered in such crime shall be forthwith punished by their own countrymen and not by others, with a condign chastisement and proper reparation, which the council on its part may justly approve and commend, the form, conditions and terms of the safe-conduct remaining entirely intact thereby. In like manner it wishes also that if, which God forbid, any one or several of this council should, either on the road or while sojourning or returning, perpetrate or commit an atrocious act by which the benefit of this public faith or assurance may be violated or in any manner annulled, those discovered in any such crime shall be forthwith punished by the council itself and not by others, with a condign chastisement and proper reparation, which the Germans of the Augsburg Confession here present may on their part approve and commend, the present form, conditions and terms of the safe-conduct remaining entirely intact thereby. The council wishes furthermore, that each and all of their ambassadors shall be allowed to go out of the city of Trent to take the fresh air as often as it shall be convenient or necessary and to return here; also freely to send or dispatch their messenger or messengers to any place whatsoever to attend to their necessary affairs and to receive those sent or dispatched or the one sent or dispatched as often as they may deem fit; so however that several or one of those appointed by the council may accompany them or him in order to provide for their safety. This safe-conduct and security shall be good and extend from and during the time that they shall have been taken under the protection of this council and its agents to their arrival at Trent, and during the entire time of their sojourn here; and further, after a sufficient hearing has been had, a period of twenty days having expired, when they themselves should desire, or the council on the conclusion of such hearing should give them notice to return, it will, all deceit and fraud being wholly excluded, reconduct them with the help of God from Trent to that place of safety which each may choose for himself. All of which it promises and pledges in good faith to be inviolately observed toward each and all of the faithful of Christ, toward all ecclesiastical and secular princes and all ecclesiastical and secular persons, of whatsoever state and condition they may be or by whatsoever name they may be known. Moreover, it promises in sincere and good faith, to the exclusion of fraud and deceit, that the council will neither openly nor secretly seek any occasion, nor make use of, nor permit anyone else to make use of, any authority, power, right or statute, privilege of laws or canons, or of any councils in whatever form of words expressed, especially those of Constance and Siena, in any way prejudicial to this public faith and the fullest security, and of the public and free hearing granted by this council to the above-named; these it abrogates in this respect and for this occasion. And if the holy council or any member thereof, or any of its adherents, of whatever condition, state or pre-eminence, shall violate, which may the Almighty prevent, in any point or clause whatever, the form and terms of the security and safe-conduct as set forth above, and a satisfactory reparation that in their judgment may be justly approved and commended shall not have forthwith followed, they may consider the council to have incurred all those penalties which by human and divine law or by custom the violators of such safe-conducts can incur, without any excuse or contrary allegation in this respect.

Notes

1 Supra, Sess. XIII at the end.

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Session XVI - The sixth and last under the Supreme Pontiff, Julius III, celebrated on the twenty-eighth day of April, 1552

Decree Suspending The Council

The holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the most reverent Lords, Sebastian, Archbishop of Sipontum, and Aloysius, Bishop of Verona, Apostolic nuncios, presiding in their own names as well as in that of the most reverend and illustrious Lord, the legate Marcellus Crescentius, Cardinal of the holy Roman Church with the title of St. Marcellus, who is absent by reason of a very grave illness, doubts not that it is known to all Christians that this ecumenical Council of Trent was first convoked and assembled by Paul, of happy memory. Afterward at the instance of the most august Emperor, Charles V, reconvened by our most holy Lord Julius III, chiefly for the reason that it might restore religion, which was deplorably divided into various opinions in many parts of the world, especially in Germany, to its former state, and correct the abuses and most corrupt morals of the Christians. And since very many Fathers from different countries, regardless of personal hardships and dangers, had for this purpose willingly assembled, and the business progressed earnestly and happily in the midst of a great concourse of the faithful, and there was great hope that those Germans who had inaugurated those innovations would come to the council so disposed as to accept unanimously the true foundations of the Church, some light seemed at last to have dawned upon affairs, and the Christian commonwealth, before so depressed and afflicted, began to lift up its head. Then suddenly such tumults and wars were enkindled by the craftiness of the enemy of the human race, that the council was at much inconvenience compelled to pause as it were and to interrupt its course, so that all hope for further progress at that time was dissipated; and so far was the council from remedying the evils and troubles existing among the Christians, that, contrary to its intentions, it irritated rather than calmed the minds of many. Since, therefore, the holy council saw that all places, and especially Germany, were ablaze with arms and discords, that almost all the German bishops, especially the electoral princes, solicitous for their churches, had withdrawn from the council, it decided not to resist so great a necessity and to await better times, so that the Fathers who now could achieve nothing might return to their churches to take care of their sheep and no longer spend their time in useless inactivity. Hence, since the conditions of the times so require, it decrees that the progress of this ecumenical Council of Trent shall be suspended for two years, as it does suspend it by the present decree; with this understanding, however, that if peace is brought about sooner and the former tranquillity restored, which it trusts will, with the help of the all-good and great God, come about soon, the progress of the council shall be regarded as resumed from that time and as having its full validity, stability and authority. But if, which may God prevent the aforesaid lawful impediments shall at the expiration of the time specified not have been removed, the suspension shall immediately upon their removal thereafter be considered <eo ipso> revoked, and the council shall be and shall be understood to be restored to its full power and authority without any new convocation thereof, provided the consent and authority of His Holiness and of the Apostolic See has been given to this decree.

In the meantime, however, this holy council exhorts all Christian princes and prelates to observe, and so far as it pertains to them, to cause to be observed in their kingdoms, dominions and churches each and all the things which have so far been ordained and decreed by this holy ecumenical council.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Under the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IV, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, for a perpetual remembrance hereof given in the year of 1560

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Decree Concerning the Celebration of the Council

Bull For The Celebration Of The Council Of Trent

Called by the divine providence of God to the government of the Church, though unequal to so great a burden, and immediately casting the eyes of our mind over every part of the Christian commonwealth, and beholding, not without great horror, how far and wide the pest of heresy and schism have penetrated and how much the morals of the Christian people are in need of reform, we began in accordance with the duty of our office to devote our care and thought to the means whereby we should be able to exterminate those heresies, destroy so great and pernicious a schism, and reform the morals so much corrupted and depraved. And since we understand that for the correction of these evils that remedy is the most suitable which this Holy See has been accustomed to apply, namely, an ecumenical and general council, we formed the resolution to assemble and with the help of God to celebrate one.

The same had indeed already been summoned by our predecessor, Paul III, of happy memory, and Julius, his successor, but due to frequent hindrance and interruption by various causes, it could not be brought to a conclusion. For Paul, having convoked it at first in the city of Mantua, then in Vicenza, for reasons expressed in his letters first suspended it and afterwards transferred it to Trent; then, when for certain reasons the time of its celebration was postponed here also, it was at length, after the removal of the suspension, begun in the city of Trent. After a few sessions had been held, however, and some decrees enacted, the council for certain reasons and with the concurrence of Apostolic authority, transferred itself to Bologna.[1] But Julius, who succeeded him, recalled it to the city of Trent,[2] at which time some more decrees were enacted. But since new disturbances were stirred up in the neighboring parts of Germany, and a very grave war enkindled in Italy and France, the council was again suspended and postponed; the enemy of the human race exerting himself exceedingly and throwing hindrances and difficulties in the way to retard at least as long as possible, since he could not entirely prevent, such a great advantage to the Church. But how greatly the heresies in the meantime increased, multiplied and propagated, how widely the schism spread, we can neither ponder nor relate without the greatest sorrow of mind. But at length the good and merciful Lord, who is never so angry that He forgets mercy,[3] deigned to grant peace and unanimity to the Christian kings and princes. By this proffered opportunity we, relying on His mercy, entertained the strongest hope that by the same means of a council an end may be put to these grave evils in the Church. That therefore schisms and heresies may be destroyed, morals corrected and reformed, and peace among the Christian princes preserved, we have judged that its celebration should no longer be deferred. Wherefore, after mature deliberation with our venerable brethren, the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, and having also made known our intention to our most dear sons in Christ, Ferdinand, Emperor-elect of the Romans, and other kings and princes, whom, as we expected from their great piety and wisdom, we found very well disposed to aid in the celebration of the council, we, to the praise, honor and glory of the Almighty God, for the benefit of the universal Church, with the advice and consent of the same venerable brethren, and relying on and supported by the authority of God Himself and of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, which we also exercise on earth, summon a holy, ecumenical and general council to the city of Trent for the next following most holy day of the Lord's resurrection, and ordain and decree that, all suspension being removed, it be celebrated there. Wherefore, we urgently exhort and admonish in the Lord and also strictly command in virtue of holy obedience, and in virtue also of the oath which they have taken, and under the penalties which they know are prescribed by the sacred canons against those who neglect to attend general councils, our venerable brethren wherever located, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, and our beloved sons the abbots, and others who by common law, privilege or ancient custom are allowed to sit and express their opinion in a general council, unless they happen to be prevented by a legitimate impediment, which they must prove to the council by 'awful procurators. We furthermore admonish each and all whom it does or may concern that they do not neglect to attend the council. Our most dear sons in Christ, the Emperor-elect of the Romans and other Christian kings and princes, whose presence at the council would be earnestly desired, we exhort and beseech that if they themselves should not be able to be present at the council, they at least send as their deputies prudent, reputable and pious men to be present in their name, who, animated by their piety, will see to it that the prelates of their kingdoms and dominions perform without refusal and delay their duty to God and the Church at this so urgent a time; neither do we doubt in the least that they will also see to it that a safe and free road through their kingdoms and dominions is open to the prelates, their attendants, followers and all others who are proceeding to or returning from the council, and that they will be received and treated in all places kindly and courteously, as we also will provide so far as it concerns us, for we have resolved to omit absolutely nothing that we, who have been placed in this position, can do toward the completion of so pious and salutary a work, seeking nothing else, as God knows, and in the celebration of the council having no other desire but the honor of God, the recovery and salvation of the scattered sheep, and the lasting peace and tranquillity of the Christian commonwealth. And that this document and its contents may come to the knowledge of all whom it concerns, and that no one may offer the excuse that he was ignorant of it, especially since there may not perhaps be safe access to all who ought to have knowledge of this letter, we wish and command that it be read publicly and in a loud voice by messengers of our court or by some public notaries in the Vatican Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles and in the Church of the Lateran, at a time when the people are accustomed to assemble there for the celebration of the masses; and that, after having been read, it be affixed to the doors of those churches, also to the Apostolic Chancery, and at the usual place in the Campo di Fiore, where it shall be left for some time that it may be read and made known to all. When it is removed, copies thereof shall remain affixed in the same places. For we wish that by this reading, publication and affixture each and all of those whom it includes, shall after two months from the day of publication and affixture be so obligated and bound as if it had been published and read in their presence. We also ordain and decree that unshaken faith be given to the transcripts thereof, written or subscribed by the hand of a public notary and provided with the seal and signature of some person constituted in ecclesiastical dignity. Therefore, let no one infringe this letter of our summons, statute, decree, admonition and exhortation, or with foolhardy boldness oppose it. But if anyone shall presume to attempt this, let him know that he will incur the indignation of Almighty God and of His blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

Given at Rome at Saint Peter's on the thirtieth of November in the year 1560 of the Lord's incarnation and in the first year of our pontificate.

Antonius Florebellus Lavellinus.

Barengus.

Notes

[1] Supra, Sess. VIII.

[2] Ibid ., Sess. XI.

[3] Hab. 3:2.

Session XVII - The first under the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IV, celebrated on the eighteenth day of January, 1562

Decree Concerning The Celebration Of The Council

Does it please you, for the praise and glory of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the increase and exaltation of the faith and of the Christian religion, that the holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, all suspension being removed, be celebrated from this day on, which is the eighteenth of the month of January of the year 1562 after the Nativity of the Lord, consecrated to the chair at Rome of blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, according to the form and tenor of the letter of our most holy Lord, the sovereign pontiff, Pius IV, and that, due order being observed, those things be considered therein which at the suggestion and under the presidency of the legates shall appear suitable and proper to the council for alleviating the calamities of these times, adjusting religious controversies, restraining deceitful tongues, correcting the abuses of depraved morals, and to bring about true and Christian peace in the Church?

<They answered:> It pleases us.

Summoning Of The Next Session

Does it please you that the next following session be held and celebrated on the Thursday after the second Sunday of Lent, which will be on the twenty-sixth day of the month of February? <They answered:> It pleases us.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session XVIII - The second under the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IV, celebrated on the twenty-sixth day of February, 1562

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Decree Concerning The Choice Of Books And The Invitation Of All To The Council Under Public Protection

The holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding, not confiding in human strength but relying on the power and support of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has promised to give to His Church a mouth and wisdom,[1] has in view above all to restore to its purity and splendor the doctrine of the Catholic faith, which in many places has become defiled and obscured by the opinions of many differing among themselves, and to bring back to a better mode of life morals which have deviated from ancient usage, and to <turn the heart of the fathers unto the children,>[2] and the heart of the children unto the fathers. Since therefore it has first of all observed that the number of suspected and pernicious books in which an impure doctrine is contained and disseminated far and wide has in these days exceedingly increased, for which reason indeed many censures have with pious zeal been issued in various provinces and especially in the fair city of Rome, and that as yet no salutary remedy has been of avail against so great and pernicious a disease; it has thought it proper that the Fathers chosen for this inquiry should consider carefully what ought to be done with regard to censures and books and at an opportune time report thereon to the council, so that it may more easily separate the various and strange doctrines as cockle from the wheat of Christian truth,[3] and may more conveniently deliberate and determine what seems better adapted to remove anxiety from the minds of many and to put an end to causes of complaints. It wishes, moreover, that all this be brought to the knowledge of all persons, as it also does by the present decree bring it, so that if anyone should consider himself in any manner concerned either in the matter of books and censures or in other things which it has declared beforehand are to be treated in this general council, he may not doubt that he will be courteously listened to by the holy council.

And since the same holy council heartily desires and earnestly beseeches God for the things that are for the peace of the Church,[4] so that all acknowledging our common mother on earth, who cannot forget those whom she has begotten,[5] we <may with one mind and one mouth glorify God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,>[6] it invites and exhorts, by the bowels of the mercy of our same God and Lord, to concord and reconciliation all who do not hold communion with us and to come to this holy council, to embrace <charity, which is the bond of perfection>, and to show forth the peace of Christ rejoicing in their hearts, wherein they are called in one body.[7] Wherefore, <hearing this voice,> not of man but of the Holy Ghost, let them not <harden their hearts,>[8] but, walking not after their own sense,[9] nor pleasing themselves,[10] let them be moved and converted by this so pious and salutary admonition of their own mother. For as the holy council invites them with all the kindness of charity, so will it receive them.

Moreover, the same holy council has decreed that the public faith can be granted in a general congregation, and that it shall have the same force, authority and obligation as if it had been given and decreed In public session.

Summons For The Next Session

The same holy Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding, ordains and decrees that the next following session be held and celebrated on the Thursday after the most sacred feast of the Ascension of the Lord, which will be on the fourteenth day of the month of May.

Safe-Conduct Granted To The German Nation In A General Congregation On The Fourth Day Of March, 1562

The holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding, certifies to all men that by the tenor of these presents it grants and fully concedes the public faith and the fullest and truest security, which they call a safe-conduct, to each and all priests, electors, princes, dukes, marquises, counts, barons, soldiers, the common people, and to all other persons, of whatever state, condition or character they may be, the German province and nation, to the cities and other places thereof, and to all other ecclesiastical and secular persons, especially those of the Confession of Augsburg, who shall come or shall be sent with them to this general Council of Trent, and to those who are going to come or have already come, by whatever name they are or may be designated, to come freely to this city of Trent, to remain, abide and sojourn here, and to propose, speak and consider, examine and discuss any matters whatever with the council, to present freely whatever they may think suitable, to set forth any articles whatever either in writing or orally, and to explain, establish and prove them by the Sacred Scriptures and by the words, decisions, and arguments of the blessed Fathers, and also to reply, if need be, to the objections of the general council, and to dispute and confer charitably and respectfully and without hindrance with those who have been selected by the council, putting aside absolutely reproachful, vexatious and offensive language; and particularly, it certifies that the controverted matters shall be treated in this Council of Trent in accordance with Sacred Scriptures and the traditions of the Apostles, the approved councils, the consensus of the Catholic Church and the authority of the holy Fathers; with this further provision, it grants and entirely concedes that they shall under no condition be punished by reason of religion or of offenses committed or that may be committed in regard thereto; provided also that the divine offices shall not by reason of their presence, either upon the road or in any place of their journey, their stay or their return, or in the city of Trent itself, be in any way interrupted; and that on the conclusion of these matters or before their conclusion, whensoever it shall please them, if they should wish by the command and permission of their superiors to return to their homes, or if any one of them should so wish, they may at their pleasure return freely and securely, without restraint, formality or delay, without injury to their property and to the honor and persons of their attendants and vice versa; making known, however, their intention of withdrawing to those to be deputed by the council, so that at a convenient time, without deceit or fraud, provision may be made for their security. The holy council wishes also that all clauses whatsoever, which may be necessary and suitable for a complete, effective and sufficient security for coming, sojourning and returning, be included and contained, and to be considered as included, in this public faith and safe-conduct. For their greater security and for the sake of peace and reconciliation, it declares also that if, which God forbid, any one or several of them should either on the way to Trent or while sojourning in or returning therefrom, perpetrate or commit an atrocious act, by which the benefit of this public faith and assurance granted to them might be annulled and cassated, it wishes and concedes that those discovered in any such crime shall be forthwith punished by their own countrymen and not by others, with a condign chastisement and proper reparation, which the council on its part may justly approve and commend, the form, conditions and terms of the safe-conduct remaining entirely intact thereby. In like manner it wishes also that if, which God forbid, any one or several of this council should, either on the road or while sojourning or returning, perpetrate or commit an atrocious act by which the benefit of this public faith or assurance may be violated or in any manner annulled, those discovered in any such crime shall be forthwith punished by the council itself and not by others, with a condign chastisement and proper reparation, which the Germans of the Augsburg Confession here present may on their part approve and commend, the present form, conditions and terms of the safe-conduct remaining entirely intact thereby. The council wishes furthermore, that each and all of their ambassadors shall be allowed to go out of the city of Trent to take the fresh air as often as it shall be convenient or necessary and to return here; also freely to send or dispatch their messenger or messengers to any place whatsoever to attend to their necessary affairs and to receive those sent or dispatched or the one sent or dispatched as often as they may deem fit; so however that several or one of those appointed by the council may accompany them or him in order to provide for their safety. This safe-conduct and security shall be good and extend from and during the time that they shall have been taken under the protection of this council and its agents to their arrival at Trent, and during the entire time of their sojourn here; and further, after a sufficient hearing has been had, a period of twenty days having expired, when they themselves should desire, or the council on the conclusion of such hearing should give them notice to return, it will, all deceit and fraud being wholly excluded, reconduct them with the help of God from Trent to that place of safety which each may choose for himself. All of which it promises and pledges in good faith to be inviolately observed toward each and all of the faithful of Christ, toward all ecclesiastical and secular princes and all ecclesiastical and secular persons, of whatsoever state and condition they may be or by whatsoever name they may be known. Moreover, it promises in sincere and good faith, to the exclusion of fraud and deceit, that the council will neither openly nor secretly seek any occasion, nor make use of, nor permit anyone else to make use of, any authority, power, right or statute, privilege of laws or canons, or of any councils in whatever form of words expressed, especially those of Constance and Siena, in any way prejudicial to this public faith and the fullest security, and of the public and free hearing granted by this council to the above-named; these it abrogates in this respect and for this occasion. And if the holy council or any member thereof, or any of its adherents, of whatever condition, state or pre-eminence, shall violate, which may the Almighty prevent, in any point or clause whatever, the form and terms of the security and safe-conduct as set forth above, and a satisfactory reparation that in their judgment may be justly approved and commended shall not have forthwith followed, they may consider the council to have incurred all those penalties which by human and divine law or by custom the violators of such safe-conducts can incur, without any excuse or contrary allegation in this respect.

THE EXTENSION OF THE ABOVE TO OTHER NATIONS

The same holy council, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates <de latere> of the Apostolic See presiding, grants the public faith or a safe-conduct under the same form and terms in which it is granted to the Germans, to each and all others who do not hold communion with us in matters of faith, of whatever kingdoms, nations, provinces, cities and places they may be, in which the contrary to that which the holy Roman Church holds is publicly and with impunity preached, taught or believed.

Notes

1 Luke 21:15.

2 Ibid., 1:17.

3 Matt. 13:30.

4 Ps. 121:6.

5 Is. 49:15.

6 Rom. 15:6.

7 Col 3:14f.

8 Ps. 94:8; Heb. 3:8.

9 Eph. 4:17.

10 Rom. 15:1ff.

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Session XIX - The third under the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IV, celebrated on the fourteenth day of May, 1562

Decree For The Prorogation Of The Session

The holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding, has for good and just reasons thought it fit to prorogue and does hereby prorogue to the Thursday after the next feast of Corpus Christi, which will be the fourth day of June, those decrees which were to have been drawn up and sanctioned today in the present session, and announces to all that the session will be held and celebrated on that day In the meantime, supplication is to be made to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the author of peace, that He may sanctify the hearts of all; that by His help the holy council may now and always be able to counsel and accomplish those things that will be for His praise and glory.

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Session XX - The fourth under the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IV, celebrated on the fourth day of June, 1562

Decree For The Prorogation Of The Session

The holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding, has, by reason of various difficulties arising from various causes, and also to the end that all things may proceed in a more befitting manner and with greater deliberation, namely, that dogmas may be dealt with and ratified conjointly with what relates to reform, decreed that whatever seems good to be enacted, concerning both reform and dogma, shall be defined in the next session, which it announces to all for the sixteenth day of the following month of July; adding however, that this holy council may and can freely, at its will and pleasure, as it may judge expedient for the affairs of the council, shorten or extend that term also in a general congregation.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session XXI - The fifth under the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IV, celebrated on the sixteenth day of July, 1562

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The Doctrine of Communion Under Both Kinds and the Communion of Little Children
Canons on Communion Under Both Species and That of Little Children
Decree Concerning Reform
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The Doctrine Of Communion Under Both Kinds And The Communion Of Little Children

The holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding, has thought fit that, since relative to the awe-inspiring and most holy sacrament of the Eucharist various monstrous errors are in different places circulated by the wiles of the evil spirit, by reason of which, in some provinces, many are seen to have fallen away from the faith and obedience of the Catholic Church, those things which relate to communion under both forms and to that of little children be explained in this place. Wherefore, it forbids all the faithful of Christ to presume henceforth to believe, teach or preach on these matters otherwise than is explained and defined in these decrees.

CHAPTER I

LAYMEN AND CLERICS WHEN NOT OFFERING THE SACRIFICE ARE NOT BOUND BY DIVINE LAW TO COMMUNION UNDER BOTH SPECIES

This holy council instructed by the Holy Ghost, who is the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and godliness,[1] and following the judgment and custom of the Church,[2] declares and teaches that laymen and clerics when not offering the sacrifice are bound by no divine precept to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist under both forms, and that there can be no doubt at all, <salva fide>, that communion under either form is sufficient for them to salvation. For though Christ the Lord at the last supper instituted and delivered to the Apostles this venerable sacrament under the forms of bread and wine,[3] yet that institution and administration do not signify that all the faithful are by an enactment of the Lord to receive under both forms. Neither is it rightly inferred from that discourse contained in the sixth chapter of John that communion under both forms was enjoined by the Lord, notwithstanding the various interpretations of it by the holy Fathers and Doctors. For He who said: <Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you>,[4] also said: <He that eateth this bread shall live forever>;[5] and He who said: <He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath life everlasting,>[6] also said: <The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world>;[7] and lastly, He who said: <He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him>,[8] said, nevertheless: <He that eateth this bread shall live forever.>[9]

CHAPTER II

THE POWER OF THE CHURCH CONCERNING THE DISPENSATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

It declares furthermore, that in the dispensation of the sacraments, <salva illorum substantia>, the Church may, according to circumstances, times and places, determine or change whatever she may judge most expedient for the benefit of those receiving them or for the veneration of the sacraments; and this power has always been hers. The Apostle seems to have clearly intimated this when he said: Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God;[10] and that he himself exercised this power, as in many other things so in this sacrament, is sufficiently manifest, for after having given some instructions regarding its use, he says: <The rest I will set in order when I come.>[11] Wherefore, though from the beginning of the Christian religion the use of both forms has not been infrequent, yet since that custom has been already very widely changed, holy mother Church, cognizant of her authority in the administration of the sacraments, has, induced by just and weighty reasons, approved this custom of communicating under either species and has decreed that it be considered the law, which may not be repudiated or changed at pleasure without the authority of the Church.

CHAPTER III

CHRIST, WHOLE AND ENTIRE, AND A TRUE SACRAMENT ARE RECEIVED UNDER EITHER SPECIES

It declares, moreover, that though our Redeemer at the last supper instituted and administered this sacrament to the Apostles under two forms, as has already been said, yet it must be acknowledged that Christ, whole and entire, and a true sacrament are received under either form alone,[12] and therefore, as regards its fruits, those who receive one species only are not deprived of any grace necessary to salvation.

CHAPTER IV

LITTLE CHILDREN ARE NOT BOUND TO SACRAMENTAL COMMUNION

Finally, the same holy council teaches that little children who have not attained the use of reason are not by any necessity bound to the sacramental communion of the Eucharist; for having been regenerated by the laver of baptism and thereby incorporated with Christ,[13] they cannot at that age lose the grace of the sons of God already acquired. Antiquity is not therefore to be condemned, however, if in some places it at one time observed that custom. For just as those most holy Fathers had acceptable ground for what they did under the circumstances, so it is certainly to be accepted without controversy that they regarded it as not necessary to salvation.

Canons On Communion Under Both Species And That Of Little Children

Canon 1. If anyone says that each and all the faithful of Christ are by a precept of God or by the necessity of salvation bound to receive both species of the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist,[14] let him be anathema.

Canon 2. If anyone says that the holy Catholic Church was not moved by just causes and reasons that laymen and clerics when not consecrating should communicate under the form of bread only,[15] or has erred in this, let him be anathema.

Canon 3. If anyone denies that Christ, the fountain and author of all graces, is received whole and entire under the one species of bread, because, as some falsely assert, He is not received in accordance with the institution of Christ under both species,[16] let him be anathema.

Canon 4. If anyone says that communion of the Eucharist is necessary for little children before they have attained the years of discretion,[17] let him be anathema.

The two articles proposed on another occasion but not yet discussed,[18] namely, whether the reasons which moved the holy Catholic Church to decree that laymen and priests not celebrating are to communicate under the one species of bread only, are so stringent that under no circumstances is the use of the chalice to be permitted to anyone; and whether, in case it appears advisable and consonant with Christian charity that the use of the chalice be conceded to a person, nation or kingdom, it is to be conceded under certain conditions, and what are those conditions, the same holy council reserves for examination and definition to another time, at the earliest opportunity that shall present itself.

Decree Concerning Reform

The same holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding, has judged it proper, to the praise of Almighty God and to the glory of holy Church, that what follows, relative to the matter of reform, be at present enacted.

CHAPTER I

BISHOPS SHALL CONFER ORDERS AND GIVE DIMISSORY AND TESTIMONIAL LETTERS GRATIS; THEIR MINISTERS SHALL RECEIVE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING THEREFOR AND NOTARIES THAT WHICH IS PRESCRIBED IN THIS DECREE

Since the ecclesiastical order must be free from every suspicion of avarice, neither bishops nor others who confer orders, or their ministers, shall under any pretext whatever receive anything for the collation of any orders, not even for the clerical tonsure, or for dimissory or testimonial letters, or for the seal or for any other reason whatsoever, even though it should be offered voluntarily. Notaries, except in those places only where the laudable custom of receiving nothing does not prevail, may receive only the tenth part of a gold florin for each dimissory or testimonial letter, provided no salary is paid them for the discharge of the office. Further, no emolument from the income of the notary shall accrue either directly or indirectly to the bishop from the collation of orders, for in that case the council decrees that they are bound to give their labor wholly gratis; annulling and prohibiting absolutely in all localities taxes, statutes and customs to the contrary, even though immemorial, which might preferably be called abuses and corruptions tending to simoniacal depravity. Those who act otherwise givers as well as receivers, shall, apart from the divine punishment incur <ipso facto> the penalties prescribed by law.[19]

CHAPTER II

THOSE WHO HAVE NOT THE MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM SACRED ORDERS

Since it is not becoming that those who are enrolled in the sacred ministry should, to the dishonor of the order, beg or engage in some improper business; and since it is known that very many in different localities are admitted to sacred orders with almost no selection, who by various methods of fraud and deception pretend to have an ecclesiastical benefice or sufficient means, the holy council decrees that henceforth no secular cleric, though otherwise qualified as regards morals, knowledge and age, shall be promoted to sacred orders unless it be first legitimately established that he is in peaceful possession of an ecclesiastical benefice sufficient for a decent livelihood; and he may not resign that benefice without mentioning the fact that he was promoted by reason of the title thereof; neither shall that resignation be accepted unless it is certain that he can live suitably from other sources; a resignation made otherwise shall be void.

As to those who have a patrimony or pension, only those may hereafter be ordained whom the bishop judges ought to be received in consideration of the need or benefit of his churches, having first informed himself that they really possess that patrimony or pension and that there are means sufficient for their subsistence. The same, moreover, may not under any condition be alienated, canceled or remitted without the permission of the bishop, until they have obtained a sufficient ecclesiastical benefice or have some other means whereby to live; the penalties of the ancient canons in respect hereto being renewed.[20]

CHAPTER III

THE MANNER OF INCREASING THE DAILY DISTRIBUTIONS IS PRESCRIBED; TO WHOM THEY SHALL BE DUE; THE CONTUMACY OF THOSE WHO DO NOT SERVE IS PUNISHED

Since benefices have been established for divine worship and for administering the ecclesiastical offices, to the end that divine worship may not be in any part curtailed, but may in all things receive due attention,[21] the holy council decrees that in churches, cathedral as well as collegiate, in which there are no daily distributions, or so meager that they are probably disregarded, a third part of the fruits and of all proceeds and revenues of dignities with and without jurisdiction as well as of canonries, portions and offices, shall be set apart and used for daily distributions, to be divided proportionately among those who possess dignities and others who are present at divine service in accordance with the proportion to be decided by the bishop, also as delegate of the Apostolic See, at the first distribution of the fruits;[22] with the retention, however, of the customs of those churches in which those who do not reside therein or do not serve receive nothing or less than a third; exemptions and other customs, even though immemorial, and appeals whatsoever notwithstanding. In case the contumacy of those who do not serve should increase, they may be proceeded against according to the provision of the law and the sacred canons.[23]

CHAPTER IV

WHEN ASSISTANTS ARE TO BE EMPLOYED IN THE <CURA ANIMARUM>. THE MANNER OF ERECTING NEW PARISHES IS SPECIFIED

In all parochial or baptismal churches in which the people are so numerous that one rector does not suffice to attend to the administration of the sacraments of the Church and divine worship, the bishops shall, also as delegates of the Apostolic See, compel the rectors, or those to whom It pertains, to associate with themselves in this office as many priests as are necessary to administer the sacraments and carry on divine worship. In those, moreover, to which, by reason of distance and hardship, the parishioners cannot come without great inconvenience to receive the sacraments and hear the divine offices, they may, even against the will of the rectors, establish new parishes, pursuant to the form of the constitution of Alexander III, which begins, "Ad audientiam."[24] To those priests who are first to be appointed to the newly erected churches, a suitable portion, decided by the bishop, shall be assigned from the fruits in whatever way belonging to the mother-church, and if it be necessary, he may compel the people to contribute what may be sufficient for the sustenance of those priests; every general or special reservation or attachment respecting the aforesaid churches notwithstanding. Neither can such ordinances and erections be invalidated or hindered by any provisions, even by virtue of resignation or by any other restrictions or hindrances.

CHAPTER V

BISHOPS MAY FORM PERPETUAL UNIONS IN CASES PERMITTED BY LAW

Likewise, in order that the state of the churches in which the divine services are offered to God may be maintained in accordance with their dignity, the bishops may, also as delegates of the Apostolic See, according to the prescription of the law, form perpetual unions,[25] without detriment, however, to the incumbents, of any parochial and baptismal churches and of other benefices with or without the <cura> with those to which a <cura> is annexed, by reason of their poverty or in other cases permitted by law, even if those churches or benefices be generally or specially reserved or in any way attached. These unions shall not be revoked or suppressed by virtue of any provision whatever or by reason of resignation, restriction or hindrance.

CHAPTER VI

TO ILLITERATE RECTORS VICARS SHALL BE GIVEN WITH THE ASSIGNMENT OF A PORTION OF THE FRUITS; THOSE CONTINUING TO GIVE SCANDAL MAY BE DEPRIVED OF THEIR BENEFICES

Since illiterate and incompetent rectors of parochial churches are but little suited for sacred of offices,[26] and others by the depravity of their lives corrupt rather than edify, the bishops may, also as delegates of the Apostolic See, give temporarily to such illiterate and incompetent rectors, if otherwise blameless, assistants or vicars, with a portion of the fruits sufficient for their maintenance or provide for them in some other manner, every appeal and exemption being set aside. But those who live a disgraceful and scandalous life, they shall, after admonishing them, restrain and punish; and if they should continue to be incorrigible in their wickedness, they shall have the authority to deprive them of their benefices in accordance with the prescriptions of the sacred canons,[27] every exemption and appeal being rejected.

CHAPTER VII

BISHOPS SHALL TRANSFER BENEFICES FROM CHURCHES WHICH CANNOT BE RESTORED; OTHERS THEY SHALL HAVE REPAIRED; WHAT IS TO BE OBSERVED IN THIS MATTER

Since great care is to be taken also lest those things which have been dedicated to sacred services may through the injury of time decay and pass away from the memory of men, the bishops may, also as delegates of the Apostolic See, after having summoned those who are interested, transfer simple benefices, even those having the right of patronage, from churches which have fallen into ruin by reason of age or otherwise and which cannot by reason of their poverty be restored, to the mother-churches or to others of the same or neighboring places as they shall judge suitable; and in these churches they shall erect altars or chapels under the same invocations, or transfer them with all the emoluments and obligations imposed on the former churches to altars or chapels already erected. Parochial churches, however, thus fallen into decay, they shall, even if they enjoy the right of patronage, have repaired and restored from the fruits and revenues in any way belonging to those churches.[28] If these are not sufficient, they shall compel by all suitable means the patrons and others who receive any revenues from the said churches, or, in their default, the parishioners, to provide for the repairs; every appeal, exemption and objection being set aside. But if they should all be too poor, then they are to be transferred to the mother-church or neighboring churches, with authority to convert both the said parochial churches and others that are in ruins to profane, though not to sordid uses, nevertheless erecting a cross there.

CHAPTER VIII

MONASTERIES HELD <IN COMMENDAM> IN WHICH REGULAR OBSERVANCE DOES NOT EXIST, AS WELL AS ALL BENEFICES SHALL BE VISITED BY THE BISHOPS ANNUALLY

It is proper that all things in a diocese pertaining to the worship of God be diligently watched over by the ordinary and, where necessary, set in order by him. Wherefore, monasteries held <in commendam>, also abbeys, priories and those called provostries, in which regular observance does not exist, also benefices with or without the <cura>, secular and regular, in whatever manner held <in commendam,> even if exempt shall be visited annually by the bishops, also as delegates of the Apostolic See;[29] and the same bishops shall provide by suitable measures, even by the sequestration of revenues, that whatever needs to be renewed or repaired, be done, and that the care of souls, if those places or those annexed to them be charged therewith, and other services due to them be properly exercised; appeals, privileges, customs, even though prescribed from time immemorial, conservators, commissions of judges and their inhibitions notwithstanding. But if regular observance is therein maintained, the bishops shall by fatherly admonitions see to it that the superiors of those regulars observe and cause to be observed the manner of life required by the rules of their order and that they keep and govern those subject to them in their duty. If however, after having been admonished, they shall not within six months have visited or corrected them, then the bishops, also as delegates of the Apostolic See, may visit and correct them, just as the superiors themselves should do in accordance with their rules; all appeals, privileges and exemptions being absolutely set aside.

CHAPTER IX

THE NAME AND SERVICES OF QUESTORS OF ALMS IS ABOLISHED. THE ORDINARIES SHALL PUBLISH INDULGENCES AND SPIRITUAL GRACES. TWO OF THE CHAPTER SHALL WITHOUT FEE RECEIVE THE ALMS

Since many remedies heretofore applied by different councils, those of the Lateran[30] and Lyons as well as that of Vienne,[31] against the pernicious abuses of questors of alms,[32] have in later times become useless, and since their depravity is, to the great scandal and complaint of the faithful, found to be daily so much on the increase that there seems to be no longer any hope of their amendment left, it is decreed that in all parts of Christendom their name and service be henceforth absolutely abolished and in no wise shall they be permitted to exercise such an office; any privileges granted to churches, monasteries, hospitals, pious places, and to any persons of whatever rank, state and dignity, or any customs, even though immemorial, notwithstanding. With regard to indulgences or other spiritual graces of which the faithful of Christ ought not on this account to be deprived, it is decreed that they are in the future to be announced to the people at suitable times by the local ordinaries aided by two members of the chapter. To these also the authority is given to collect faithfully and without fee the alms and charitable contributions offered them, so that all may understand that these heavenly treasures of the Church are administered not for gain but for piety.

Announcement Of The Next Session

The holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding, has ordained and decreed that the next following session be held and celebrated on the Thursday after the octave of the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which will be on the seventeenth of the month of September next; with the addition, however, that the same holy council freely may and can, according to its will and pleasure, as it shall judge expedient for the affairs of the council, limit or extend, even in a general congregation, the said term and also everyone that is hereafter set for any session.

Notes

1 Is. 11:2.

2 Council of Constance. Sess. XIII (Denzinger, no. 626); cf. infra,> can. 2.

3 Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19 f.; I Cor. 11:24f.

4 John 6:54.

5 Ibid., 6:52.

6 Ibid., 6:55.

7 Ibid., 6:52.

8 Ibid., 6:57.

9 Ibid., 6:59.

10 See I Cor. 4:1.

11 Ibid., 11:34.

12 Cf. Sess. XIII, chap. 3 and can. 3.

13 Tit. 3:5.

14 Cf. <supra>, chap. I.

15 Ibid., chap. 2

16 Ibid., chap. 3; Sess. XIII, chap. 3 and can. 3.

17 <Supra>, chap. 4

18 Cf. pp. 85 f.

19 Cc. 6, 8, 101, 107, 113, C.I, q.l; c. 14, C.II, q. 5; cc. 4, 5, 11, 13, 30, X, De simonia, V, 3, etc.

20 CC, 2, 4, 16, 23, X, De praeb., III, 5; c. 37, h.t. in VI, III, 4.

21 C 15, VI, De rescript, I, 3.

22 Cf. Sess. XXII, chap. 3 de ref. and Sess. XXIV, chap. 12 de ref.

23 Cc. 16, 17, X, De cler. non resid., III, 4; Sess. XXIII, chap. I de ref.

24 C. 3, X, De eccl. aedif., III, 48.

25 C. 8, X, De excess. prael., V, 31; Sess. XIV, chap. 9 de ref. and Sess. XXIV, chap. de ref.

26 C. I, D.XXXVI; c. I, D.XXXVIII; c. 10, X, De renunc., I, 9.

27 CC, 13-15, X, De vit. et hon. cler., III, I.

28 CC. 1, 4, X, De eccl. aedif., III, 48. Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 8 de ref.

29 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 8 de ref.; Sess. XXIV, chap. 9 de ref. and Sess. XXV, chap. 20 de regular.

30 C, 14, X, De poenit., V, 38.

31 C. 2, in Clem., h.t. V, 9.

32 Cf. Sess. V, chap. 2 de ref. and Sess. XXV, Decree on Indulgences.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session XXII - The sixth under the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IV, celebrated on the seventeenth day of September, 1562

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Doctrine Concerning The Sacrifice Of The Mass

That the ancient, complete and in every way perfect faith and teaching regarding the great mystery of the Eucharist in the Catholic Church may be retained, and with the removal of errors and heresies may be preserved in its purity, the holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding, instructed by the light of the Holy Ghost, teaches, declares and orders to be preached to the faithful the following concerning it, since it is the true and only sacrifice.

CHAPTER I
THE INSTITUTION OF THE MOST HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

Since under the former Testament, according to the testimony of the Apostle Paul, there was no perfection because of the weakness of the Levitical priesthood, there was need, God the Father of mercies so ordaining, that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchisedech,[1] our Lord Jesus Christ, who might perfect and lead to perfection as many as were to be sanctified. He, therefore, our God and Lord, though He was by His death about to offer Himself once upon the altar of the cross to God the Father that He might there accomplish an eternal redemption, nevertheless, that His priesthood might not come to an end with His death,[2] at the last supper, on the night He was betrayed, that He might leave to His beloved spouse the Church a visible sacrifice, such as the nature of man requires, whereby that bloody sacrifice once to be accomplished on the cross might be represented, the memory thereof remain even to the end of the world, and its salutary effects applied to the remission of those sins which we daily commit, declaring Himself constituted a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech,[3] offered up to God the Father His own body and blood under the form of bread and wine, and under the forms of those same things gave to the Apostles, whom He then made priests of the New Testament, that they might partake, commanding them and their successors in the priesthood by these words to do likewise: Do this in commemoration of me,[4] as the Catholic Church has always understood and taught. For having celebrated the ancient Passover which the multitude of the children of Israel sacrificed in memory of their departure from Egypt,[5] He instituted a new Passover, namely, Himself, to be immolated under visible signs by the Church through the priests in memory of His own passage from this world to the Father, when by the shedding of His blood He redeemed and delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into his kingdom.[6] And this is indeed that clean oblation which cannot be defiled by any unworthiness or malice on the part of those who offer it; which the Lord foretold by Malachias was to be great among the Gentiles,[7] and which the Apostle Paul has clearly indicated when he says, that they who are defiled by partaking of the table of devils cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord,[8] understanding by table in each case the altar. It is, finally, that [sacrifice] which was prefigured by various types of sacrifices during the period of nature and of the law,[9] which, namely, comprises all the good things signified by them, as being the consummation and perfection of them all.

CHAPTER II
THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS IS PROPITIATORY BOTH FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

And inasmuch as in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the mass is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner the same Christ who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross, the holy council teaches that this is truly propitiatory and has this effect, that if we, contrite and penitent, with sincere heart and upright faith, with fear and reverence, draw nigh to God, <we obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid.>[10] For, appeased by this sacrifice, the Lord grants the grace and gift of penitence and pardons even the gravest crimes and sins. For the victim is one and the same, the same now offering by the ministry of priests who then offered Himself on the cross, the manner alone of offering being different. The fruits of that bloody sacrifice, it is well understood, are received most abundantly through this unbloody one, so far is the latter from derogating in any way from the former. Wherefore, according to the tradition of the Apostles,[11] it is rightly offered not only for the sins, punishments, satisfactions and other necessities of the faithful who are living, but also for those departed in Christ but not yet fully purified.

CHAPTER III
MASSES IN HONOR OF THE SAINTS

And though the Church has been accustomed to celebrate at times certain masses in honor and memory of the saints, she does not teach that sacrifice is offered to them but to God alone who crowned them;[12] whence, the priest does not say: "To thee, Peter or Paul, I offer sacrifice,"[13] but, giving thanks to God for their victories, he implores their favor that they may vouchsafe to intercede for us in heaven whose memory we celebrate on earth.

CHAPTER IV
THE CANON OF THE MASS

And since it is becoming that holy things be administered in a holy manner, and of all things this sacrifice is the most holy, the Catholic Church, to the end that it might be worthily and reverently offered and received, instituted many centuries ago the holy canon,[14] which is so free from error that it contains nothing that does not in the highest degree savor of a certain holiness and piety and raise up to God the minds of those who offer. For it consists partly of the very words of the Lord, partly of the traditions of the Apostles, and also of pious regulations of holy pontiffs.

CHAPTER V
THE CEREMONIES AND RITES OF THE MASS

And since the nature of man is such that he cannot without external means be raised easily to meditation on divine things, holy mother Church has instituted certain rites, namely, that some things in the mass be pronounced in a low tone and others in a louder tone. She has likewise, in accordance with apostolic discipline and tradition, made use of ceremonies,[15] such as mystical blessings, lights, incense, vestments, and many other things of this kind, whereby both the majesty of so great a sacrifice might be emphasized and the minds of the faithful excited by those visible signs of religion and piety to the contemplation of those most sublime things which are hidden in this sacrifice.

CHAPTER VI
THE MASS IN WHICH THE PRIEST ALONE COMMUNICATES

The holy council wishes indeed that at each mass the faithful who are present should communicate, not only in spiritual desire but also by the sacramental partaking of the Eucharist, that thereby they may derive from this most holy sacrifice a more abundant fruit; if, however, that is not always done, it does not on that account condemn as private and illicit those masses in which the priest alone communicates sacramentally, but rather approves and commends them, since these masses also ought to be considered as truly common, partly because at them the people communicate spiritually and partly also because they are celebrated by a public minister of the Church, not for himself only but for all the faithful who belong to the body of Christ.

CHAPTER VII
THE MIXTURE OF WATER WITH WINE IN THE OFFERING OF THE CHALICE

The holy council in the next place calls to mind that the Church has instructed priests to mix water with the wine that is to be offered in the chalice;[16] because it is believed that Christ the Lord did this, and also because from His side there came blood and water;[17] the memory of this mystery is renewed by this mixture, and since in the Apocalypse of St. John the "people" are called "waters,"[18] the union of the faithful people with Christ their head is represented.

CHAPTER VIII
THE MASS MAY NOT BE CELEBRATED IN THE VERNACULAR. ITS MYSTERIES TO BE EXPLAINED TO THE PEOPLE

Though the mass contains much instruction for the faithful, it has, nevertheless, not been deemed advisable by the Fathers that it should be celebrated everywhere in the vernacular tongue. Wherefore, the ancient rite of each Church, approved by the holy Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all churches, being everywhere retained, that the sheep of Christ may not suffer hunger, or <the little ones ask for bread and there is none to break it unto them,>[19] the holy council commands pastors and all who have the <cura animarum> that they, either themselves or through others, explain frequently during the celebration of the mass some of the things read during the mass, and that among other things they explain some mystery of this most holy sacrifice, especially on Sundays and festival days.[20]

CHAPTER IX
PRELIMINARY REMARKS ON THE FOLLOWING CANONS

Since many errors are at this time disseminated and many things taught and discussed by many persons that are in opposition to this ancient faith, which is founded on the holy Gospel, the traditions of the Apostles, and the teaching of the holy Fathers, the holy council, after many and grave deliberations concerning these matters, has resolved with the unanimous consent of all to condemn and eliminate from holy Church by means of the following canons whatever is opposed to this most pure faith and sacred doctrine.

Canons On The Sacrifice Of The Mass

Canon 1. If anyone says that in the mass a true and real sacrifice is not offered to God; or that to be offered is nothing else than that Christ is given to us to eat, let him be anathema.

Canon 2. If anyone says that by those words, <Do this for a commemoration of me,>[21] Christ did not institute the Apostles priests;[22] or did not ordain that they and other priests should offer His own body and blood, let him be anathema.

Canon 3. If anyone says that the sacrifice of the mass is one only of praise and thanksgiving; or that it is a mere commemoration of the sacrifice consummated on the cross but not a propitiatory one;[23] or that it profits him only who receives, and ought not to be offered for the living and the dead, for sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities, let him be anathema.

Canon 4. If anyone says that by the sacrifice of the mass a blasphemy is cast upon the most holy sacrifice of Christ consummated on the cross; or that the former derogates from the latter, let him be anathema.

Canon 5. If anyone says that it is a deception to celebrate masses in honor of the saints and in order to obtain their intercession with God, as the Church intends,[24] let him be anathema.

Canon 6. If anyone says that the canon of the mass contains errors and is therefore to be abrogated,[25] let him be anathema.

Canon 7. If anyone says that the ceremonies, vestments, and outward signs which the Catholic Church uses in the celebration of masses, are incentives to impiety rather than stimulants to piety,[26] let him be anathema.

Canon 8. If anyone says that masses in which the priest alone communicates sacramentally are illicit and are therefore to be abrogated,[27] let him be anathema.

Canon 9. If anyone says that the rite of the Roman Church, according to which a part of the canon and the words of consecration are pronounced in a low tone, is to be condemned; or that the mass ought to be celebrated in the vernacular tongue only;[28] or that water ought not to be mixed with the wine that is to be offered in the chalice because it is contrary to the institution of Christ,[29] let him be anathema.

Decree Concerning The Things To Be Observed And Avoided In The Celebration Of Mass

What great care is to be taken that the holy sacrifice of the mass be celebrated with all religious devotion and reverence, each one may easily conceive who considers that in the sacred writings he is called accursed who does the work of God negligently.[30] And since we must confess that no other work can be performed by the faithful that is so holy and divine as this awe-inspiring mystery, wherein that life-giving victim by which we are reconciled to the Father is daily immolated on the altar by priests, it is also sufficiently clear that all effort and attention must be directed to the end that it be performed with the greatest possible interior cleanness and purity of heart and exterior evidence of devotion and piety.[31] Therefore, since either through the depravity of the times or through the indifference and corruption of men many things seem already to have crept in that are foreign to the dignity of so great a sacrifice, in order that the honor and worship due to it may for the glory of God and the edification of the faithful be restored, the holy council decrees that the local ordinaries shall be zealously concerned and be bound to prohibit and abolish all those things which either covetousness, which is a serving of idols,[32] or irreverence, which can scarcely be separated from ungodliness, or superstition, a false imitation of true piety, have introduced.

And that many things may be summed up in a few, they shall in the first place, as regards avarice, absolutely forbid conditions of compensations of whatever kind, bargains, and whatever is given for the celebration of new masses; also those importunate and unbecoming demands, rather than requests, for alms and other things of this kind which border on simoniacal taint or certainly savor of filthy lucre.

In the second place, that irreverence may be avoided, each in his own diocese shall forbid that any wandering or unknown priest be permitted to celebrate mass.

Furthermore, they shall permit no one who is publicly and notoriously wicked either to minister at the altar or to be present at the sacred services; nor suffer the holy sacrifice to be celebrated by any seculars and regulars whatsoever in private houses or entirely outside the church and the oratories dedicated solely to divine worship and to be designated and visited by the same ordinaries;[33] or unless those present have first shown by their outward disposition and appearance that they are there not in body only but also in mind and devout affection of heart. They shall also banish from the churches all such music which, whether by the organ or in the singing, contains things that are lascivious or impure; likewise all worldly conduct, vain and profane conversations, wandering around, noise and clamor, so that the house of God may be seen to be and may be truly called a house of prayer.[34]

Finally, that no room may be given to superstition, they shall by ordinance and prescribed penalties provide that priests do not celebrate at other than proper hours; or make use of rites or ceremonies and prayers in the celebration of masses other than those that have been approved by the Church and have been received through frequent and praiseworthy usage. They shall completely banish from the Church the practice of any fixed number of masses and candles, which has its origin in superstitious worship rather than in true religion; and they shall instruct the people as to what the very precious and heavenly fruit of this most holy sacrifice is and whence especially it is derived. They shall also admonish their people to go frequently to their own parish churches, at least on Sundays and the greater feast days.[35] All these things, therefore, which have been summarily enumerated, are in such wise set before all local ordinaries, that by the authority given them by this holy council, and also as delegates of the Apostolic See, they may prohibit, command, reform and establish not only the things aforesaid but also whatsoever else shall seem to them to be connected therewith; and they may by ecclesiastical censures and other penalties, which in their judgment they may impose, compel the faithful to observe them inviolately; any privileges, exemptions, appeals and customs to the contrary notwithstanding.

Decree Concerning Reform

The same holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding, that the work of reform may be continued, has deemed it well that the following things be established in the present session.

CHAPTER I
DECREES CONCERNING THE LIFE AND CONDUCT OF CLERICS ARE RENEWED

There is nothing that leads others to piety and to the service of God more than the life and example of those who have dedicated themselves to the divine ministry.[36] For since they are observed to be raised from the things of this world to a higher position, others fix their eyes upon them as upon a mirror and derive from them what they are to imitate. Wherefore, clerics, called to have the Lord for their portion,[37] ought by all means so to regulate their life and conduct that in dress, behavior, gait, speech, and all other things nothing may appear but what is dignified, moderated, and permeated with piety; avoiding also minor offenses which in them would be grievous, so that their actions may inspire reverence. Since therefore the more these things contribute to usefulness and honor in the Church of God, so the more zealously must they be observed, the holy council ordains that those things which have in the past been frequently and wholesomely enacted by the supreme pontiffs and holy councils concerning adherence to the life, conduct, dress, and learning of clerics, as also the avoidance of luxury, feastings, dances, gambling, sports, and all sorts of crime and secular pursuits, shall in the future be observed under the same or greater penalties to be imposed at the discretion of the ordinary;[38] nor shall appeal suspend the execution of that which pertains to the correction of morals. If any of these things shall be found to have fallen into desuetude, the ordinaries shall make it their duty to restore their practice as soon as possible and enforce the careful observance by all, any customs to the contrary notwithstanding; lest they themselves, God being the avenger, may have to pay the penalty deserved by their neglect of the correction of their subjects.

CHAPTER II
WHO ARE TO BE PROMOTED TO CATHEDRAL CHURCHES

Everyone who is hereafter to be promoted to a cathedral church shall not only be qualified by birth, age, morals, and life, and in other respects as required by the sacred canons,[39] but shall also for the space of at least six months previously have been constituted in sacred orders. Information covering these points, in case the (Roman) Curia has no knowledge or only recent knowledge of the person, shall be obtained from the legates of the Apostolic See or from the nuncios of the provinces or from his ordinary, and in his default, from the nearest ordinaries. In addition, he shall possess such learning as will enable him to discharge the obligations of the office that is to be conferred on him. He shall, therefore, have been previously promoted by merit in a university of learning to the rank of master or doctor or licentiate in sacred theology or canon law, or shall be declared by the public testimony of some academy competent to teach others. If he be a regular he shall have a similar attestation from the superiors of his order. All the aforesaid persons from whom the information or testimony is to be obtained, shall be bound to report on these matters faithfully and gratis; otherwise let them know that their consciences will be grievously burdened and that they will have God and their superiors as avengers.

CHAPTER III
DAILY DISTRIBUTIONS ARE TO BE MADE FROM THE THIRD PART OF ALL REVENUES; ON WHOM THE PORTION OF ABSENTEES FALLS; CERTAIN CASES EXCEPTED

Bishops, also as delegates of the Apostolic See, have the authority to divide the third part of the fruits and revenues of all dignities with and without jurisdiction and offices existing in cathedral and collegiate churches into distributions, to be assigned as they shall judge advisable;[40] so namely, that if their recipients should fail on any day to discharge personally the duty that devolves upon them in accordance with the form to be prescribed by the bishops, they shall forfeit the distribution of that day and in no manner acquire proprietorship thereof; but it should be applied to the administration of the church so far as there is need, or, in the judgment of the ordinary, to some other pious purpose. If, however, their contumacy should increase, they shall proceed against them according to the prescriptions of the sacred canons.[41] If anyone of the aforesaid dignitaries possesses neither by right nor by custom any jurisdiction, administration or office in cathedral or collegiate churches, but should there be outside the city in the diocese a <cura animarum> which he is willing to take upon himself, then he shall during the time that he resides in and administers the church with such <cura> be considered as though he were present and assisted at the divine offices in those cathedral and collegiate churches. These things are to be understood as applying to those churches only in which there is no custom or statute whereby the said dignitaries who do not serve, lose something which amounts to the third part of the fruits and revenues; any customs, even though immemorial, exemptions and constitutions, even though confirmed by oath or by any authority whatsoever, to the contrary notwithstanding.

CHAPTER IV
THOSE NOT IN SACRED ORDER SHALL NOT HAVE A VOICE IN THE CHAPTER OF A CATHEDRAL OR COLLEGIATE CHURCH. THE QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF THOSE WHO HOLD BENEFICES THEREIN

Anyone engaged in the divine offices in a cathedral or collegiate church, whether secular or regular, who is not constituted at least in the sub-diaconal order, shall not have a voice in the chapter of those churches, even though this may have been freely conceded to him by the others. Those who hold or shall hereafter hold in the said churches dignities with or without jurisdiction, offices, prebends, portions, or any other benefices whatsoever, to which are attached various obligations, namely, that some say or sing the masses, others the Gospel, others the Epistles, shall be bound, in the absence of a just impediment, to receive the required orders within a year, whatever privilege, exemption, prerogative or nobility of birth they may possess; otherwise they shall incur the penalties provided by the constitution of the Council of Vienne, which begins, "Ut ii, qui,"[42] which is by the present decree renewed. The bishops shall compel them to exercise personally the aforesaid orders on the days specified, and to discharge all other duties required of them in the divine service under the same and even other more severe penalties which may be imposed at their discretion.[43] In the future such offices shall not be assigned except to those who are known to have attained the required age and the other qualifications; otherwise such assignments shall be null.

CHAPTER V
DISPENSATIONS OUTSIDE THE CURIA SHALL BE COMMITTED TO THE BISHOP AND EXAMINED BY HIM

Dispensations, by whatever authority to be granted, if they are to be sent outside the Roman Curia, shall be committed to the ordinaries of those who have obtained them.

Those, however, which are granted as a favor shall not have effect until the ordinaries, as delegates of the Apostolic See, have established summarily only and extra-judicially that the terms of the petition are free from fraud and deception.

CHAPTER VI
LAST TESTAMENTS ARE TO BE ALTERED WITH CAUTION

In alterations of last testaments, which ought not to be made except for a just and necessary cause,[44] the bishops, as delegates of the Apostolic See, shall, before the alterations are put into execution, ascertain summarily and extra-judicially that nothing has been stated in the petition which suppresses what is true or suggests what is false.

CHAPTER VII
THE CHAPTER ROMANA IN <SEXTO>, CONCERNING APPEALS, IS RENEWED

Apostolic legates and nuncios, patriarchs, primates and metropolitans, in appeals brought before them, shall in all causes, both in admitting the appeals and in granting inhibitions after an appeal, be bound to observe the form and tenor of the sacred constitutions and particularly that of Innocent IV, which begins, "Romana";[45] any custom, even though immemorial, usage or privilege to the contrary notwithstanding.

Otherwise the inhibitions and proceedings and all consequences thereof shall be <ipso jure> null.

CHAPTER VIII
BISHOPS SHALL EXECUTE THE PIOUS DISPOSITIONS OF ALL PERSONS; SHALL VISIT PIOUS PLACES IF NOT UNDER THE IMMEDIATE PROTECTION OF KINGS

The bishops, also as delegates of the Apostolic See, shall in the cases conceded by law be the executors of all pious dispositions, whether made by last will or among the living; they shall have the right to visit hospitals and all colleges and confraternities of laymen,[46] even those that are called schools or are known by some other name (not, however, those that are under the immediate protection of kings, except with their permission); also eleemosynary institutions known as loan or charity foundations, and all pious places by whatever name designated, even though the care of the aforesaid institutions be in the hands of laymen and the said pious places protected by the privilege of exemption; by virtue of their office they shall, moreover, take cognizance of and execute in accordance with the ordinances of the sacred canons all things that have been instituted for the worship of God or for the salvation of souls or for the support of the poor;[47] any custom, even though immemorial, privilege or statute whatsoever to the contrary notwithstanding.

CHAPTER IX
ADMINISTRATORS OF ALL PIOUS PLACES SHALL RENDER AN ACCOUNT TO THE ORDINARY, UNLESS IT IS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN THE FOUNDATION

Administrators, whether ecclesiastical or lay, of the revenues of any church, also of cathedrals, hospitals,[48] confraternities, eleemosynary institutions known as loan foundations, and of all pious places, shall be bound to render to the ordinary each year an account of their administration, all customs and privileges to the contrary being set aside, unless perchance it be expressly provided otherwise in the institution and regulation of such a church or fund. But if by reason of custom, privilege or some local regulation their account has to be rendered to others deputed thereto, then the ordinary shall also be employed conjointly with them, and releases made otherwise shall be of no avail to the said administrators.

CHAPTER X
NOTARIES SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE EXAMINATION AND JUDGMENT OF THE BISHOPS

Since the incompetency of notaries causes very much harm and is the occasion of many lawsuits, the bishop, also as delegate of the Apostolic See, may by examination inquire into the fitness of all notaries, even though appointed by Apostolic, imperial or royal authority; and if found incompetent or at any time delinquent in office, he may forbid them either altogether or for a time to exercise the office in ecclesiastical and spiritual affairs, lawsuits and causes. No appeal on their part shall suspend the prohibition of the ordinary.

CHAPTER XI
USURPERS OF THE PROPERTY OF ANY CHURCH OR PIOUS PLACES ARE PUNISHED

If any cleric or laic, of whatever rank, even imperial or royal, should be so possessed by avarice, the root of all evil,[49] as to presume to convert to his own use and to usurp <per se vel alios>, by force or fear, or even by means of supposititious persons, whether clerical or lay, or by any fraud or colored pretext whatsoever, the prerogatives, properties, rents and rights, even those held in fee or under lease, revenues, profits, or any incomes whatsoever, belonging to any church or benefices, secular or regular, eleemosynary institutions or any other pious places, which ought to be used for the needs of the ministers and the poor, or to hinder them from being received by those to whom they by right belong, he shall be anathematized till he shall have restored integrally to the church and to its administrator or beneficiary the prerogatives, properties, effects, rights, fruits and revenues which he has seized or in whatever way they have come to him, even by way of gift from a supposititious person, and furthermore, till he shall have obtained absolution from the Roman pontiff. If he be a patron of that church, he shall, in addition to the aforesaid penalties, be <eo ipso> deprived of the right of patronage. The cleric who instigates or consents to an execrable fraud and usurpation of this kind, shall be subject to the same penalties, and he shall be deprived of all benefices and be rendered unqualified to hold others; and even after complete satisfaction and absolution, he shall be suspended, at the discretion of his ordinary, from the exercise of his orders.

Decree Concerning The Petition For The Concession Of The Chalice

Moreover, since the same holy council in the preceding session reserved to another and more convenient time the examination and definition of two articles which had been proposed on another occasion[50] and had then not yet been discussed, namely, whether the reasons which induced the holy Catholic Church to decide that lay people and also priests when not celebrating are to communicate under the one species of bread, are so to be retained that under no condition is the use of the chalice to be permitted to anyone; and whether in case, for reasons befitting and consonant with Christian charity, it appears that the use of the chalice is to be conceded to any nation or kingdom, it is to be conceded under certain conditions, and what are those conditions; it has now, in its desire to provide for the salvation of those on whose behalf the petition is made, decreed that the entire matter be referred to our most holy Lord [the Pope], as in the present decree it does refer it, who in accordance with his singular prudence will do what he shall judge beneficial for the Christian commonwealth and salutary for those who petition for the use of the chalice.

Announcement Of The Next Session

Moreover, the same holy Council of Trent announces the day of the next session to be the Thursday after the octave of All Saints, which will be the twelfth day of the month of November, and in it will dead with the sacrament of order and the sacrament of matrimony, etc. The session was prorogued till the fifteenth day of July, 1563.

Notes

1 Heb. 7:11.

2 Ibid., 7:24

3 Ps. 109:4.

4 Luke 22:19; I Cor. 11:24f.

5 Ex. 13.

6 Col. 1:13.

7 Mal. 1:11.

8 Cf. 1 Cor. 10:21

9 Gen. 4:4; 12:8, etc.

10 Heb. 4:16.

11 Cf. <infra>, can. 3, and Sess. XXV, decr. on Purgatory.

12 Ibid., can. 5, and Sess. XXV. Invocation of the Saints.

13 St. Aug <De civitate Dei.> VIII. c. 27.

14 C. 6, X, De celebr. miss., III, 41.

15 Cf. <infra>, can. 7.

16 Cc. 4, 5, 7, D. II de cons.; c. 6, X, De celebr. miss., III, 41. Cf. Denzinger, nos. 416, 698. 945.

17 John 19:34.

18 Apoc. 17:1, 15.

19 Lam. 4:4.

20 Cf. Sess. V, chap. 2 de ref., and Sess. XXIV, chap. 7 de ref.

21 Luke 22:19; I Cor. 11:25.

22 Cf. <supra,> chap. I.

23 Ibid., chap. 2.

24 Ibid, chap. 3

25 <Supra>, chap. 4.

26 Ibid., chap. 5.

27 Ibid., chap. 6.

28 Ibid., chap. 8.

29 Ibid., chap. 7.

30 Jer. 48:10.

31 Cf. Sess. XIII, chap. 7.

32 Eph. 5:5.

33 Cc. 12, 34, D.I de cons.

34 Is. 56:7; Matt. 21:13.

35 C. 35, D.I de cons.; CC. 4, 5, C.IX, q. 2; C. 2, X, De paroch., III, 29.

36 Cf. Sess. XXV, chap. I de ref.

37 C.I, D.XXI.

38 Cf tot. tit. de vit. et hon. cler. apud Greg., in VI et in Clem. (III, I).

39 Cf c. 5, D.LI; cc. 7, 19, X, De elect., I, 6; Sess. VII, chap. I de ref., and Sess. XXIV, chaps. 1, 12 de ref.

40 Cf. Sess. XXI, chap. 3 de ref.

41 Ibid.

42 C. 2, De aet. et qual. et ord. praef., in Clem., I, 6.

43 Cf. Sess. XXIV, chap. I: de ref.

44 Cf. Sess. XXV, chap. 4 de ref.

45 C. 3, VI, De appell., II, 15.

46 C 2, in Clem. De relig. dom., III, II.

47 Cf. cc. 3, 6, 17 19, X, De test. et ult. volunt., III, 26.

48 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 15 de ref., and Sess. XXV, chap. 8 de ref.

49 Cf. I Tim. 6:10.

50 Cf. Sess. XIII in the decree of prorogation and Sess. XXI, following can. 4

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session XXIII - which is the seventh under the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IV, celebrated on the fifteenth day of July, 1563

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The True And Catholic Doctrine Concerning The Sacrament Of Order, Defined And Published By The Holy Council Of Trent In The Seventh Session In Condemnation Of Current Errors

Chapter I
The Institution Of The Priesthood Of The New Law

Sacrifice and priesthood are by the ordinance of God so united that both have existed in every law. Since therefore in the New Testament the Catholic Church has received from the institution of Christ the holy, visible sacrifice of the Eucharist, it must also be confessed that there is in that Church a new, visible and external priesthood, into which the old has been translated.[1] That this was instituted by the same Lord our Savior, and that to the Apostles and their successors in the priesthood was given the power of consecrating, offering and administering His body and blood, as also of forgiving and retaining sins, is shown by the Sacred Scriptures and has always been taught by the tradition of the Catholic Church.

Chapter II
The Seven Orders

But since the ministry of so holy a priesthood is something divine, that it might be exercised in a more worthy manner and with greater veneration, it was consistent that in the most well-ordered arrangement of the Church there should be several distinct orders of ministers, who by virtue of their office should minister to the priesthood, so distributed that those already having the clerical tonsure should ascend through the minor to the major orders.[2] For the Sacred Scriptures mention unmistakably not only the priests but also the deacons,[3] and teach in the most definite words what is especially to be observed in their ordination; and from the very beginning of the Church the names of the following orders and the duties proper to each one are known to have been in use, namely, those of the sub-deacon, acolyte, exorcist, rector and porter, though these were not of equal rank; for the sub-diaconate is classed among the major orders by the Fathers and holy councils,[4] in which we also read very often of other inferior orders.[5]

Chapter III
The Order Of The Priesthood Is Truly A Sacrament

Since from the testimony of Scripture, Apostolic tradition and the unanimous agreement of the Fathers it is clear that grace is conferred by sacred ordination, which is performed by words and outward signs, no one ought to doubt that order is truly and properly one of the seven sacraments of holy Church. For the Apostle says: <I admonish thee that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the imposition of my hands. For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sobriety.>[6]

Chapter IV
The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy And Ordination

But since in the sacrament of order, as also in baptism and confirmation, a character is imprinted which can neither be effaced nor taken away,[7] the holy council justly condemns the opinion of those who say that the priests of the New Testament have only a temporary power, and that those who have once been rightly ordained can again become laymen if they do not exercise the ministry of the word of God. And if anyone should assert that all Christians without distinction are priests of the New Testament, or that they are all inter se endowed with an equal spiritual power, he seems to do nothing else than derange the ecclesiastical hierarchy,[8] which is <an army set in array;>[9] as if, contrary to the teaching of St. Paul, all are apostles, all prophets, all evangelists, all pastors, all doctors.[10] Wherefore, the holy council declares that, besides the other ecclesiastical grades, the bishops, who have succeeded the Apostles, principally belong to this hierarchical order, and have been placed, as the same Apostle says, by the Holy Ghost to rule the Church of God;[11] that they are superior to priests, administer the sacrament of confirmation,[12] ordain ministers of the Church, and can perform many other functions over which those of an inferior order have no power.

The council teaches furthermore, that in the ordination of bishops, priests and the other orders, the consent, call or authority, whether of the people or of any civil power or magistrate is not required in such wise that without this the ordination is invalid[13] rather does it decree that all those who, called and instituted only by the people or by the civil power or magistrate, ascend to the exercise of these offices, and those who by their rashness assume them, are not ministers of the Church, but are to be regarded as thieves and robbers, who have not entered by the door.[14] These are the things which in general it has seemed good to the holy council to teach to the faithful of Christ regarding the sacrament of order. The contrary, however, it has resolved to condemn in definite and appropriate canons in the following manner, in order that all, making use with the help of Christ of the rule of faith, may in the midst of the darkness of so many errors recognize more easily the Catholic truth and adhere to it.

Canons On The Sacrament Of Order

Canon 1. If anyone says that there is not in the New Testament a visible and external priesthood,[15] or that there is no power of consecrating and offering the true body and blood of the Lord and of forgiving and retaining sins,[16] but only the office and bare ministry of preaching the Gospel; or that those who do not preach are not priests at all, let him be anathema.

Canon 2. If anyone says that besides the priesthood there are not in the Catholic Church other orders, both major and minor,[17] by which, as by certain steps, advance is made to the priesthood,[18] let him be anathema.

Canon 3. If anyone says that order or sacred ordination is not truly and properly a sacrament instituted by Christ the Lord,[19] or that it is some human contrivance devised by men unskilled in ecclesiastical matters, or that it is only a certain rite for choosing ministers of the word of God and of the sacraments, let him be anathema.

Canon 4. If anyone says that by sacred ordination the Holy Ghost is not imparted and that therefore the bishops say in vain: Receive ye the Holy Ghost, or that by it a character is not imprinted, or that he who has once been a priest can again become a layman, let him be anathema.

Canon 5. If anyone says that the holy unction which the Church uses in ordination is not only not required but is detestable and pernicious, as also are the other ceremonies of order, let him be anathema.

Canon 6. If anyone says that in the Catholic Church there is not instituted a hierarchy by divine ordinance, which consists of bishops, priests and ministers, let him be anathema.

Canon 7. If anyone says that bishops are not superior to priests, or that they have not the power to confirm and ordain, or that the power which they have is common to them and to priests, or that orders conferred by them without the consent or call of the people or of the secular power are invalid, or that those who have been neither rightly ordained nor sent by ecclesiastical and canonical authority, but come from elsewhere, are lawful ministers of the word and of the sacraments, let him be anathema.

Canon 8. If anyone says that the bishops who are chosen by the authority of the Roman pontiff are not true and legitimate bishops, but merely human deception, let him be anathema.

Decree Concerning Reform

The same holy Council of Trent, continuing the matter of reform, resolves and ordains that the things following be at present decreed.

Chapter I
The Negligence Of Pastors Of Churches In The Matter Of Residence Is In Various Ways Restrained. The <Cura Animarum> Is Provided For

Since by divine precept it is enjoined on all to whom is entrusted the <cura animarum> to know their sheep,[20] to offer sacrifice for them, and to feed them by the preaching of the divine word, the administration of the sacraments, and the example of all good works, to exercise a fatherly care in behalf of the poor and other distressed persons and to apply themselves to all other pastoral duties, all of which cannot be rendered and fulfilled by those who do not watch over and are not with their flock, but desert it after the manner of hirelings,[21] the holy council admonishes and exhorts them that, mindful of the divine precepts and <made a pattern of the flock,>[22] they in judgment and in truth be shepherds and leaders. And lest those things that concern residence which have already been piously and with profit decreed under Paul III,[23] of happy memory, be understood in a sense foreign to the mind of the holy council, as if in virtue of that decree it were lawful to be absent during five continuous months, the holy council, adhering to that decree, declares that all who, under whatever name or title, even though they be cardinals of the holy Roman Church, preside over patriarchal, primatial, metropolitan and cathedral churches, are bound to personal residence in their church or diocese, where they are obligated to discharge the office committed to them and from which they may not absent themselves except for the reasons and in the manner subjoined. Since Christian charity, urgent necessity, due obedience, and manifest advantage to the Church or the commonwealth require and demand that some at times be absent, the same holy council decrees that these reasons for lawful absence must be approved in writing by the most blessed Roman pontiff, or by the metropolitan, or, in his absence, by the oldest resident suffragan bishop, whose duty it shall also be to approve the absence of the metropolitan; except when the absence is necessitated by some function or office of the state attached to the episcopal dignity, in which cases the absence being a matter of public knowledge and at times unexpected, it will not be necessary to make known to the metropolitan the reasons therefor. To him, however, in conjunction with the provincial council, it shall pertain to decide concerning the permissions granted by himself or by his suffragans and to see that no one abuses that right and that transgressors are punished in accordance with canonical prescriptions. Moreover, those who are about to depart should remember so to provide for their sheep that as far as possible they may not suffer any injury through their absence.[24] But since those who are absent only for a brief period appear in the sense of the ancient canons not to be absent, because they are soon to return, the holy council wishes that that period of absence in a single year, whether continuous or interrupted, ought, except for the reasons mentioned above, in no case to exceed two or at most three months, and that consideration be taken that it be made from a just cause and without any detriment to the flock. Whether this be the case, the council leaves to the conscience of those who depart, which it hopes will be religious and delicate, for hearts are open to God,[25] whose work they are bound at their peril not to do deceitfully.[26] Meanwhile it admonishes and exhorts them in the Lord, that unless their episcopal duties call them elsewhere in their diocese, they are on no account to absent themselves from their cathedral church during the periods of the Advent of the Lord, Quadragesima, the Nativity, Easter, Pentecost and Corpus Christi, on which days especially the sheep ought to be refreshed and to rejoice in the Lord at the presence of the shepherd.[27]

But if anyone, which it is hoped will never happen, shall have been absent in violation of the provision of this decree, the holy council ordains that in addition to the other penalties imposed upon and renewed against non-residents under Paul III,[28] and the guilt of mortal sin which he incurs, he can acquire no proprietorship of any fruits in proportion to the time of his absence, and cannot, even though no other declaration follows the present one, retain them with a safe conscience, but is bound, even in his default, through his ecclesiastical superior, to apply them to the treasury of the churches or to the poor of the locality; every agreement or arrangement to which appeal is made for ill-gotten fruits, whereby the aforesaid fruits might be restored to him in whole or in part, being forbidden; any privileges whatsoever granted to any college or treasury to the contrary notwithstanding.

Absolutely the same, as regards the guilt, the loss of fruits, and the penalties, does the holy council declare and decree with reference to inferior pastors and to all others who hold any ecclesiastical benefice having the <cura animarum>;[29] so however, that should it happen that they are absent for a reason that has first been made known to and approved by the bishop, they shall leave a due allowance of the stipend to a competent vicar to be approved by the ordinary. The permission to go away, which is to be granted in writing and gratuitously, they shall not obtain for a period longer than two months except for a grave reason. In case they shall be summoned, even though not personally, by an edict, and should be contumacious, the ordinaries shall be at liberty to constrain them by ecclesiastical censures, by the sequestration and withdrawal of fruits and other legal means, even deprivation; and no privilege whatsoever, no concession, domestic position, exemption, not even by reason of some benefice, no contract or statute, even though confirmed by oath or by any authority whatsoever, no custom, even though immemorial, which is to be regarded rather as a corruption, no appeal or inhibition, even in the Roman Curia or by virtue of the constitution of Eugene,[30] shall be able to suspend the execution hereof.

Finally, the holy council commands that both the decree under Paul III[31] and this present one be published in the provincial and episcopal councils; for it desires that things which so intimately concern the office of pastors and the salvation of souls, be frequently impressed on the ears and mind of all, so that with the help of God they may not hereafter fall into decay either through the corrosive action of time, the forgetfulness of men or by desuetude.

Chapter II
Those Placed Over Churches Shall Receive Consecration Within Three Months; Where The Consecration Is To Take Place

If those who, under whatever name or title, even though they be cardinals of the holy Roman Church, have been placed over cathedral or superior churches, shall not within three months have received consecration,[32] they shall be bound to restore the fruits received; if for three more months they shall have neglected to do this, they shall be <ipso jure> deprived of their churches. Their consecration, if performed outside the Roman Curia, shall take place in the church to which they have been promoted, or in the province if it can be conveniently done.

Chapter III
Bishops, Except In Case Of Illness, Shall Confer Orders In Person

Bishops shall confer orders themselves; but should they be prevented by illness, they shall not send their subjects to another bishop to be ordained unless they have first been examined and approved.[33]

Chapter IV
Who May Receive The First Tonsure

No one shall be admitted to the first tonsure who has not received the sacrament of confirmation; who has not been taught the rudiments of the faith; who does not know how to read and write,[34] and concerning whom there is not a probable conjecture that he has chosen this manner of life that he may render to God a faithful service and not to escape fraudulently from civil justice.

Chapter V
Wherewith Those To Be Ordained Are To Be Provided

Those who are to be promoted to minor orders shall have a good testimonial from their pastor and from the master of the school in which they are educated. Those, however, who are to be raised to any one of the major orders, shall a month before the ordination repair to the bishop, who shall commission the pastor or another person whom he may deem more suitable, to make known publicly in the church the names and desire of those who wish to be promoted, to inform himself diligently from trustworthy sources regarding the birth, age, morals and life of those to be ordained,[35] and to transmit to the bishop as soon as possible testimonial letters containing the results of the inquiry.[36]

Chapter VI
The Age Of Fourteen Years Is Required For An Ecclesiastical Benefice; Who Is To Enjoy The <Privilegium Fori>

No one who has received the first tonsure or is constituted in minor orders shall be able to hold a benefice before his fourteenth year.[37] Furthermore, he shall not enjoy the <privilegium fori> unless he has an ecclesiastical benefice, or, wearing the clerical garb and tonsure, serves in some church by order of the bishop, or is in an ecclesiastical seminary or with the permission of the bishop in some school or university on the way, as it were, to the reception of major orders.[38] As regards married clerics, the constitution of Boniface VIII, which begins, "Cleric), qui cum unicis,"[39] shall be observed, provided these clerics, being assigned by the bishop to the service or ministry of some church, serve or minister in that church and wear the clerical garb and tonsure; privilege or custom, even immemorial, shall avail no one in this matter.

Chapter VII
Those To Be Ordained Are To Be Examined By Men Skilled In Divine And Human Law

The holy council, following the footsteps of the ancient canons, decrees that when the bishop has arranged to hold an ordination, all who wish to dedicate themselves to the sacred ministry shall be summoned to the city for the Wednesday before the ordination, or any other day which the bishop may deem convenient.[40] And calling to his assistance priests and other prudent men skilled in the divine law and experienced in the laws of the Church, the bishop shall carefully investigate and examine the parentage, person, age, education, morals, learning and faith of those who are to be ordained.[41]

Chapter VIII
How And By Whom Each One Ought To Be Ordained

The conferring of sacred orders shall be celebrated publicly, at the times specified by law,[42] and in the cathedral church in the presence of the canons of the church, who are to be summoned for that purpose; but if celebrated in another place of the diocese, in the presence of the local clergy, the church holding the highest rank should always, so far as possible, be chosen. Each one shall be ordained by his own bishop.[43] But if anyone should ask to be promoted by another, this shall under no condition, even under the pretext of any general or special rescript or privilege, even at the times specified, be permitted him unless his probity and morals be recommended by the testimony of his ordinary.[44] Otherwise the one ordaining shall be suspended for a year from conferring orders, and the one ordained shall be suspended from exercising the orders received for as long a period as his ordinary shall see fit.

Chapter XI
A Bishop Ordaining One Of His Own Household Shall At Once And In Reality Confer On Him A Benefice

A bishop may not ordain one of his house who is not his subject, unless he has lived with him for a period of three years and to the exclusion of fraud confers on him at once a benefice;[45] any custom, even though immemorial, to the contrary notwithstanding.

Chapter X
Prelates Inferior To Bishops Shall Not Confer The Tonsure Or Minor Orders Except On Religious Subject To Them; Neither They Nor Any Chapter Whatsoever Shall Grant Dimissory Letters; A Severer Penalty Is Prescribed Against Those Who Transgress The Decree

It shall not be lawful in the future for abbots and any other persons, however exempt, residing within the limits of a diocese, even in case they are said to be of no diocese or exempt, to confer the tonsure or minor orders on anyone who is not a religious subject to them; nor shall abbots themselves and other exempt persons, or any colleges or chapters, even those of cathedral churches, grant dimissory letters to any secular clerics that they may be ordained by others. But the ordination of all these persons, when everything contained in the decrees of this holy council has been observed,[46] shall pertain to the bishops within the limits of whose diocese they are; any privileges, prescriptions or customs, even though immemorial, notwithstanding. It commands also that the penalty imposed on those who, contrary to the decree of this holy council under Paul III,[47] procure dimissory letters from the chapter during the vacancy of the episcopal see, be extended to those who shall obtain the said letters not from the chapter but from any other persons who during the vacancy of the see succeed to the jurisdiction of the bishop in lieu of the chapter. Those who issue dimissory letters contrary to the form of this decree, shall be <ipso jure> suspended from their office and benefices for one year.

Chapter XI
The Interstices And Certain Other Regulations To Be Observed In The Reception Of Minor Orders

The minor orders shall be conferred on those who understand at least the Latin language, observing the prescribed interstices,[48] unless the bishop should deem it more expedient to act otherwise, that they may be taught more accurately how great is the burden of this vocation and may in accordance with the direction of the bishop exercise themselves in each office,[49] and this in the church to which they will be assigned (unless they happen to be absent <causa studiorum); and thus they shall ascend step by step, that with increasing age they may grow In worthiness of life and in learning, which especially the example of their good conduct, their assiduous service in the Church, their greater reverence toward priests and the superior orders, and a more frequent communion than heretofore of the body of Christ will prove. And since from here there is entrance to the higher orders and to the most sacred mysteries, no one shall be admitted to them whom the promise of knowledge does not show to be worthy of the major orders.[50] These, however, shall not be promoted to sacred orders till a year after the reception of the last of the minor orders, unless necessity or the need of the Church shall in the judgment of the bishop require otherwise.

Chapter XII
The Age Required For Major Orders; Only Those Worthy Are To Be Admitted

No one shall in the future be promoted to the sub-diaconate before the twenty-second, to the diaconate before the twenty-third, and to the priesthood before the twenty-fifth year of his age.[51] However, the bishops should know that not all who have attained that age are to be admitted to these orders, but those only who are worthy and whose upright life is as old age. Regulars likewise shall not be ordained below that age or without a careful examination by the bishop; all privileges whatsoever 1n this respect being completely set aside.

Chapter XIII
Who May Be Ordained Sub-deacon And Deacon; Their Obligations; On No One Shall Two Sacred Orders Be Conferred The Same Day

Those shall be ordained sub-deacons and deacons who have a good testimonial,[52] have already been approved in minor orders, and are instructed in letters and in those things that pertain to the exercise of the orders. They should hope, with the help of God, to be able to live continently,[53] should serve the churches to which they will be assigned, understand that it is very highly becoming, since they serve at the altar, to receive holy communion at least on the Lord's days and on solemn festival days. Those who have been promoted to the sacred order of sub-deacon shall not till they have completed at least one year therein be permitted to ascend to a higher order,[54] unless the bishop shall judge otherwise. Two sacred orders shall not be conferred on the same day, even to regulars,[55] any privileges and indults whatsoever to whomsoever granted to the contrary notwithstanding.

Chapter XIV
Who Are To Be Promoted To The Priesthood; The Office Of Those So Promoted

Those who have conducted themselves piously and faithfully in their performance of earlier functions and are accepted for the order of priesthood, shall have a good testimonial[56] and be persons who not only have served in the office of deacon for one entire year, unless by reason of the advantage and need of the Church the bishop should judge otherwise, but who also by a previous careful examination have been found competent to teach the people those things which are necessary for all to know unto salvation, and competent also to administer the sacraments, and so conspicuous for piety and purity of morals that a shining example of good works and a guidance for good living may be expected from them. The bishop shall see to it that they celebrate mass at least on the Lord's days and on solemn festivals, but if they have the <cura animarum>, as often as their duty requires. To those who have been promoted <per saltum>,[57] the bishop may for a legitimate reason grant a dispensation, provided they have not exercised the ministry.

Chapter XV
No One Shall Hear Confessions Unless Approved By The Ordinary

Although priests receive by ordination the power of absolving from sins, nevertheless the holy council decrees that no one, even though a regular, can hear the confessions of seculars, even priests, and that he is not to be regarded as qualified thereto, unless he either holds a parochial benefice or is by the bishops, after an examination, if they should deem it necessary, or in some other manner, judged competent and has obtained their approval,[58] which shall be given gratuitously; any privileges and custom whatsoever, even immemorial, notwithstanding.

Chapter XVI
Vagrants And Persons Useless To The Churches Shall Be Excluded From Orders

Since no one ought to be ordained who in the judgment of his bishop is not useful or necessary to his churches, the holy council, following the footsteps of the sixth canon of the Council of Chalcedon,[59] decrees that no one shall in the future be ordained who is not assigned to that church or pious place for the need or utility of which he is promoted, where he may discharge his duties and not wander about without any fixed abode.[60] But if he shall desert that place without consulting the bishop, he shall be forbidden the exercise of the sacred orders. Furthermore, no cleric who is a stranger shall, without commendatory letters from his ordinary, be admitted by any bishop to celebrate the divine mysteries and to administer the sacraments.[61]

Chapter XVII
In What Manner The Exercise Of The Minor Orders Is To Be Restored

That the functions of holy orders from the deacon to the porter, which have been laudably received in the Church from the times of the Apostles, and which have been for some time discontinued in many localities, may again be restored to use in accordance with the canons,[62] and may not be derided by the heretics as useless, the holy council, burning with the desire to restore the ancient usage, decrees that in the future such functions shall not be exercised except by those constituted in these orders, and it exhorts in the Lord each and all prelates of the churches and commands them that they make it their care to restore these functions, so far as it can be conveniently done, in cathedral, collegiate and parochial churches of their diocese, if the number of people and the revenues of the church are able to bear it. To those exercising these functions they shall assign salaries from a part of the revenues of some simple benefices or of the church treasury if the revenues are adequate, or from the revenues of both, and of these salaries they may, if they prove negligent, be deprived in whole or in part by the judgment of the bishop. In case there should not be at hand unmarried clerics to exercise the functions of the four minor orders, their place may be supplied by married clerics of approved life, provided they have not married a second time,[63] are competent to discharge the duties, and wear the tonsure and the clerical garb in church.

Chapter XVIII
Directions For Establishing Seminaries For Clerics, Especially The Younger Ones; In Their Erection Many Things Are To Be Observed; The Education Of Those To Be Promoted To Cathedral And Major Churches

Since the age of youth, unless rightly trained, is inclined to follow after the pleasure of the world,[64] and unless educated from its tender years in piety and religion before the habits of vice take possession of the whole man, will never perfectly and without the greatest and well-nigh extraordinary help of Almighty God persevere in ecclesiastical discipline, the holy council decrees that all cathedral and metropolitan churches and churches greater than these shall be bound, each according to its means and the extent of its diocese, to provide for, to educate in religion, and to train in ecclesiastical discipline, a certain number of boys of their city and diocese, or, if they are not found there, of their province, in a college located near the said churches or in some other suitable place to be chosen by the bishop.[65] Into this college shall be received such as are at least twelve years of age, are born of lawful wedlock, who know how to read and write competently, and whose character and inclination justify the hope that they will dedicate themselves forever to the ecclesiastical ministry. It wishes, however, that in the selection the sons of the poor be given preference, though it does not exclude those of the wealthy class, provided they be maintained at their own expense and manifest a zeal to serve God and the Church. These youths the bishop shall divide into as many classes as he may deem proper, according to their number, age, and progress in ecclesiastical discipline, and shall, when it appears to him opportune, assign some of them to the ministry of the churches, the others he shall keep in the college to be instructed, and he shall replace by others those who have been withdrawn, so that the college may be a perpetual seminary of ministers of God. And that they may be the better trained in the aforesaid ecclesiastical discipline, they shall forthwith and always wear the tonsure and the clerical garb; they shall study grammar, singing, ecclesiastical computation, and other useful arts; shall be instructed in Sacred Scripture, ecclesiastical books, the homilies of the saints, the manner of administering the sacraments, especially those things that seem adapted to the hearing of confessions, and the rites and ceremonies. The bishop shall see to it that they are present every day at the sacrifice of the mass, confess their sins at least once a month, receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ in accordance with the directions of their confessor, and on festival days serve in the cathedral and other churches of the locality. All these and other things beneficial and needful for this purpose each bishop shall prescribe with the advice of two of the senior and more reputable canons chosen by himself as the Holy Ghost shall suggest, and they shall make it their duty by frequent visitation to see to it that they are always observed. The disobedient and incorrigible, and the disseminators of depraved morals they shall punish severely, even with expulsion if necessary; and removing all obstacles, they shall foster carefully whatever appears to contribute to the advancement and preservation of so pious and holy an institution. And since for the construction of the college, for paying salaries to instructors and servants, for the maintenance of the youths and for other expenses, certain revenues will be necessary, the bishops shall, apart from those funds which are in some churches and localities set aside for the instruction and maintenance of youths, and which are <eo ipso> to be considered as applied to this seminary under the care of the bishop, with the advice of two of the chapter, of whom one shall be chosen by the bishop, the other by the chapter, and also of two of the clergy of the city, the choice of one of whom shall in like manner be with the bishop, the other with the clergy, deduct a certain part or portion from the entire revenues of the bishop and of the chapter, and of all dignities with and without jurisdiction, offices, prebends, portions, abbeys and priories of whatever order, even though regular, whatever their character and rank; also of hospitals which, according to the constitution of the Council of Vienne, which begins, "Quia contingit,"[66] are conferred as title or with a view of administration; also of all benefices, even those of regulars, though they enjoy the right of patronage, even if exempt, or belong to no diocese, or are annexed to other churches, monasteries, hospitals, or to any other pious places even though exempt; also of the treasuries of the churches and of other places, and of all other ecclesiastical revenues or incomes, even those of other colleges (in which, however, the seminaries of students and instructors promoting the common good of the Church are not actually included, for the council wishes these to be exempt, except with reference to such revenues as exceed the expense of the suitable maintenance of these seminaries), or associations or confraternities, which in some localities are called schools; and of all monasteries, except those of the mendicants, also of all tithes belonging in any way to laics, from which ecclesiastical maintenance is customarily paid, and of those also which belong to knights, of whatever military body or order they may be, the brethren of St. John of Jerusalem alone excepted; and the part or portion so deducted, as also some simple benefices, of whatever nature or rank, and prestimonies, or prestimonial portions as they are called, even before they become vacant, without prejudice, however, to the divine service or to those who hold them, they shall apply to and incorporate in this college. This shall have effect whether the benefices be reserved or assigned; and the unions and assignments of these benefices can be neither suspended through resignation nor in any way hindered, but they shall have their effect, any vacancy, even in the Curia, notwithstanding, or any constitution whatsoever. For the payment of this portion the local bishop shall by ecclesiastical censures and other legal means, even with the aid of the secular arm, should he deem it necessary, compel the possessors of benefices, dignities with and without jurisdiction, and each and all of the above-mentioned, whether the revenues are for themselves or for the salaries which they perchance pay to others out of the said revenues, retaining, however, a portion equivalent to that which they have to pay on account of these salaries; any privileges, exemptions, even such as might require a special declaration of annulment, custom, even though immemorial, any appeal and allegation which might hinder the execution of any or all of the above, notwithstanding. But if it should happen that as a result of these unions or otherwise, the seminary should be found to be endowed in whole or in part, then the portion deducted from each benefice, as stated above, and incorporated by the bishop, shall be discontinued in whole or in part as circumstances may require. And if the prelates of cathedrals and other major churches should prove negligent in the erection of the seminary and its maintenance and should decline to pay their portion, it shall be the duty of the archbishop to rebuke the bishop sharply and compel him to comply with all the aforesaid matters, and of the provincial synod to rebuke sharply and compel in like manner the archbishop and superiors, and diligently to see to it that this holy and pious work be, wherever possible, expedited without delay. The bishop shall receive annually the accounts of the revenues of the seminary in the presence of two delegated by the chapter and of as many delegated by the clergy of the city.

Furthermore, in order that the establishment of schools of this kind may be procured at less expense, the holy council decrees that bishops, archbishops, primates and other local ordinaries urge and compel, even by the reduction of their revenues, those who hold the position of instructor and others to whose position is attached the function of reading or teaching, to teach those to be educated in those schools personally, if they are competent, otherwise by competent substitutes, to be chosen by themselves and to be approved by the ordinaries.[67] But if these in the judgment of the bishop are not qualified, they shall choose another who is competent, no appeal being permitted; and should they neglect to do this, then the bishop himself shall appoint one. The aforesaid instructors shall teach what the bishop shall judge expedient. In the future, however, those offices or dignities, which are called professorships, shall not be conferred except on doctors or masters or licentiates of Sacred Scripture or canon law and on other competent persons who can personally discharge that office; any appointment made otherwise shall be null and void, all privileges and customs whatsoever, even though immemorial, notwithstanding.

But if in any province the churches labor under such poverty that in some a college cannot be established, then the provincial synod or the metropolitan with two of the oldest suffragans shall provide for the establishment of one or more colleges, as he may deem advisable, at the metropolitan or at some other more convenient church of the province, from the revenues of two or more churches in each of which a college cannot be conveniently established, where the youths of those churches might be educated. In churches having extensive dioceses, however, the bishop may have one or more in the diocese, as he may deem expedient; which, however, shall in all things be dependent on the one erected and established in the [metropolitan] city.

Finally, if either with regard to the unions or the appraisement or assignment or incorporation of portions, or for any other reason, any difficulty should happen to arise by reason of which the establishment or the maintenance of the seminary might be hindered or disturbed, the bishop with those designated above or the provincial synod, shall have the authority, according to the custom of the country and the character of the churches and benefices, to decide and regulate all matters which shall appear necessary and expedient for the happy advancement of the seminary, even to modify or augment, if need be, the contents hereof.

Announcement Of The Next Session

Moreover, the same holy Council of Trent announces the next session for the sixteenth day of the month of September, in which it will treat of the sacrament of matrimony and of other matters pertaining to the doctrine of faith, if there be any which can be disposed of; further, it will deal with the collation of bishoprics, dignities and other ecclesiastical benefices and with various articles of reform.

The session was prorogued to the eleventh day of November, 1563.

Notes

1 Heb. 7:12.

2 Cf. <infra>, can. 2 and chap. 17 de ref.

3 Act 6:5; 21:8. I Tim. 3:8, 12.

4 Cc.11-13, D.XXXII; c.4 D.LX; c.9, X, De aet. et qual. et ord. praef., I, 14.

5 Cf. Synods of Elvira (ca. 305), c.33; Antioch (341), c.10; cc.14, 16, D.XXXII, Denzinger,

<Enchiridion>, nos. 45, 153-58.

6 See II Tim. 1:6f.

7 Cf. Sess VII. Sacraments, can. 9 and <infra>, can. 4.

8 Cf. <infra>, can. 6.

9 Cant. 6:3, 9.

10 See I Cor. 12:28ff.; Eph. 4:11.

11 Acts 20:28.

12 Cf. Sess. VII, Confirmation, can. 3.

13 Cf. Synod of Laodicea, can. 13.

14 John 10:1.

15 Cf. <supra>, chap. I.

16 Matt. 16:19; Luke 22:19 f.; cc. 5, 6, C.XXIV, q. I.

17 Cf. <supra>, chap. 2.

18 Cc.2, 3, D.LXXVII; and <infra>, chap. 13 de ref.

19 Cf. <supra>, chap. 3.

20 John 10:1-16; 21:15-17; Acts 20:28.

21 John 10:12 f.

22 See I Pet. 5:3.

23 Cf. Sess. VI, chaps. I, 2 de ref.

24 Cf. c. 34, VI, De elect., I, 6; Sess. VI, chap. 2 de ref. at the end

25 Ps. 7:10; Acts 1:24.

26 Jer. 48:10.

27 C. 29, C.VII. q. I.

28 Cf. Sess. VI, chap. I de ref.

29 Sess. VI, chap. 2 de ref.

30 Cf. c.3, Extrav. comm., De privil., V, 7.

31 Cf. Sess. VI, chap. I de ref.

32 C 2, D.LXXV; c. I, D.C.; Sess. VII, chap. 9 de ref.

33 Cf. <infra>, chaps. 8, 10; III Synod of Carthage (397), c. 22.

34 Cf. c.4, VI, De temp. ord., I, 9.

35 Cf. c.5, D.XXIV.

36 Cf. <infra>, chap. 7.

37 C. 3, X, De aet. et qual. et ord. praef., I,14.

38 C.7, X, de cler. conjug., III, 3.

39 C. un h.t. in VI, III, 2.

40 C.5, D.XXIV.

41 Cf. <supra>, chap. 5 de ref.

42 Cf. c.7, D.LXXV, cc.1-3, X, De temp. ord., I, II.

43 Cc.1-4, D.LXXI; c.2, D.LXXII; cc.6, 7, 9, 10, C.IX, q.2; cc. I, 2, VI, De temp. ord., I, 9.

44 Cf. Sess. XIV, chaps. 2, 3 de ref.

45 C. 2, X, De praeb., III. 5.

46 Cf. <supra>, chaps. 5, 6 and <infra>, chaps. 11, 12 de ref.

47 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 10 de ref.

48 Cf. <infra,> chap. 13.

49 Ibid., chap. 17 and c.3, D.LIX.

50 Cc. l, 2, 4, D.LIX.

51 C. 3, De aet. et qual. et ord. praef. in Clem., I, 6.

52 See I Tim. 3:7, C.3, D.LXXVII.

53 Cf. c. I, D. XXVIII.

54 Cf. <supra>, chap. II de ref.

55 Cc.13, 15, X, De temp. ord., I, II.

56 Cf. I Tim. 3:7; c.3, D.LXXVII.

57 C. um. D.LII.

58 Cf. c. 2, VI, De poenit., V, 10; c.2, De sepult. in Clem., III, 7.

59 C. I, D. LXX; c. ult., ibid. 60 Ibid., c.2.

61 Cc.6, 7, 9, D.LXXI et al.

62 c. l, D.XXI; Denzinger, nos. 154-58.

63 Cf. tot. tit., X, De big. non ord., 1, 21.

64 Gen. 8: 21- cf. c. 5, D.XXVIII, c. l, C.XII, q. I.

65 Cf. Sess. V, chap. I de ref.

66 C.2, De relig. dom. in Clem., III, II.

67 Cf. Sess. V, chap. I de ref.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session XXIV - which is the eighth under the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IV, celebrated on the eleventh day of November, 1563

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Doctrine Of The Sacrament Of Matrimony

The perpetual and indissoluble bond of matrimony was expressed by the first parent of the human race, when, under the influence of the divine Spirit, he said: <This now is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh.>[1] But that by this bond two only are united and joined together, Christ the Lord taught more plainly when referring to those last words as having been spoken by God, He said: <Therefore now they are not two, but one flesh,>[2] and immediately ratified the firmness of the bond so long ago proclaimed by Adam with these words: <What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.>[3]

But the grace which was to perfect that natural love, and confirm that indissoluble union, and sanctify the persons married, Christ Himself, the instituter and perfecter of the venerable sacraments, merited for us by His passion, which Paul the Apostle intimates when he says: Husbands love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered himself up for it;[4] adding immediately: <This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church.>[5]

Since therefore matrimony in the evangelical law surpasses in grace through Christ the ancient marriages, our holy Fathers, the councils,[6] and the tradition of the universal Church, have with good reason always taught that it is to be numbered among the sacraments of the New Law; and since with regard to this teaching ungodly men of this age, raving madly, have not only formed false ideas concerning this venerable sacrament, but, introducing in conformity with their habit under the pretext of the Gospel a carnal liberty, have by word and writing asserted, not without great harm to the faithful of Christ, many things that are foreign to the teaching of the Catholic Church and to the usage approved of since the times of the Apostles, this holy and general council, desiring to restrain their boldness, has thought it proper, lest their pernicious contagion should attract more, that the principal heresies and errors of the aforesaid schismatics be destroyed by directing against those heretics and their errors the following anathemas.

Canons On The Sacrament Of Matrimony

Canon I. If anyone says that matrimony is not truly and properly one of the seven sacraments of the evangelical law, instituted by Christ the Lord,[7] but has been devised by men in the Church and does not confer grace, let him be anathema.

Can. 2. If anyone says that it is lawful for Christians to have several wives at the same time and that this is not forbidden by any divine law,[8] let him be anathema.

Can. 3. If anyone says that only those degrees of consanguinity and affinity which are expressed in Leviticus can hinder matrimony from being contracted and dissolve it when contracted,[9] and that the Church cannot dispense in some of them or declare that others hinder and dissolve it, let him be anathema.

Can. 4. If anyone says that the Church cannot establish impediments dissolving marriage,[10] or that she has erred in establishing them, let him be anathema.

Can. 5. If anyone says that the bond of matrimony can be dissolved on account of heresy,[11] or irksome cohabitation, or by reason of the voluntary absence of one of the parties, let him be anathema.

Can. 6. If anyone says that matrimony contracted but not consummated is not dissolved by the solemn religious profession of one of the parties,[12] let him be anathema.

Can. 7. If anyone says that the Church errs in that she taught and teaches that in accordance with evangelical and apostolic doctrine the bond of matrimony cannot be dissolved by reason of adultery on the part of one of the parties, and that both, or even the innocent party who gave no occasion for adultery, cannot contract another marriage during the lifetime of the other, and that he is guilty of adultery who, having put away the adulteress, shall marry another, and she also who, having put away the adulterer, shall marry another,[13] let him be anathema.

Can. 8. If anyone says that the Church errs when she declares that for many reasons a separation may take place between husband and wife with regard to bed and with regard to cohabitation for a determinate or indeterminate period, let him be anathema.

Can. 9. If anyone says that clerics constituted in sacred orders or regulars who have made solemn profession of chastity can contract marriage, and that the one contracted is valid notwithstanding the ecclesiastical law or the vow, and that the contrary is nothing else than a condemnation of marriage, and that all who feel that they have not the gift of chastity, even though they have made such a vow, can contract marriage, let him be anathema, since God does not refuse that gift to those who ask for it rightly, neither does <he suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able.>[14]

Can. 10 If anyone says that the married state excels the state of virginity or celibacy, and that it is better and happier to be united in matrimony than to remain in virginity or celibacy,[15] let him be anathema.

Can. 11 If anyone says that the prohibition of the solemnization of marriages at certain times of the year is a tyrannical superstition derived from the superstition of the heathen,[16] or condemns the blessings and other ceremonies which the Church makes use of therein, let him be anathema.

Can. 12. If anyone says that matrimonial causes do not belong to ecclesiastical judges, let him be anathema.

Decree Concerning The Reform Of Matrimony

Chapter I
The Form Prescribed In The Lateran Council For Solemnly Contracting Marriage Is Renewed; Bishops May Dispense With The Publication Of The Banns; Whoever Contracts Marriage Otherwise Than In The Presence Of The Pastor And Of Two Or Three Witnesses, Does So Invalidly

Although it is not to be doubted that clandestine marriages made with the free consent of the contracting parties are valid and true marriages so long as the Church has not declared them invalid,[17] and consequently that those persons are justly to be condemned, as the holy council does condemn them with anathema, who deny that they are true and valid, and those also who falsely assert that marriages contracted by children [minors] without the consent of the parents are invalid, nevertheless the holy Church of God has for very just reasons at all times detested and forbidden them.[18] But while the holy council recognizes that by reason of man's disobedience those prohibitions are no longer of any avail, and considers the grave sins which arise from clandestine marriages, especially the sins of those who continue in the state of damnation, when having left the first wife with whom they contracted secretly, they publicly marry another and live with her in continual adultery, and since the Church which does not judge what is hidden, cannot correct this evil unless a more efficacious remedy is applied, therefore, following in the footsteps of the holy Lateran Council celebrated under Innocent III,[19] it commands that in the future, before a marriage is contracted, the proper pastor of the contracting parties shall publicly announce three times in the church, during the celebration of the mass on three successive festival days, between whom marriage is to be contracted; after which publications, if no legitimate impediment is revealed, the marriage may be proceeded with in the presence of the people, where the parish priest, after having questioned the man and the woman and heard their mutual consent, shall either say: "I join you together in matrimony, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," or he may use other words, according to the accepted rite of each province. But if at some time there should be a probable suspicion that a marriage might be maliciously hindered if so many publications precede it, then either one publication only may be made or the marriage may be celebrated forthwith in the presence of the parish priest and of two or three witnesses. Then before its consummation the publications shall be made in the church, so that if any impediments exist they may be the more easily discovered, unless the ordinary shall deem it advisable to dispense with the publications, which the holy council leaves to his prudence and judgment. Those who shall attempt to contract marriage otherwise than in the presence of the parish priest or of another priest authorized by the parish priest or by the ordinary and in the presence of two or three witnesses, the holy council renders absolutely incapable of thus contracting marriage and declares such contracts invalid and null, as by the present decree it invalidates and annuls them. Moreover, it commands that the parish priest or another priest who shall have been present at a contract of this kind with less than the prescribed number of witnesses, also the witnesses who shall have been present without the parish priest or another priest, and also the contracting parties themselves, shall at the discretion of the ordinary be severely punished. Furthermore, the same holy council exhorts the betrothed parties not to live together in the same house until they have received the sacerdotal blessing in the church;[20] and it decrees that the blessing is to be given by their own parish priest, and permission to impart it cannot be granted to any other priest except by the parish priest himself or by the ordinary, any custom, even though immemorial, which ought rather to be called a corruption, or any privilege notwithstanding. But if any parish priest or any other priest, whether regular or secular, should attempt to unite in marriage or bless the betrothed of another parish without the permission of their parish priest, he shall, even though he may plead that his action was based on a privilege or immemorial custom, remain <ipso jure> suspended until absolved by the ordinary of that parish priest who ought to have been present at the marriage or from whom the blessing ought to have been received. The parish priest shall have a book in which he shall record the names of the persons united in marriage and of the witnesses, and also the day on which and the place where the marriage was contracted, and this book he shall carefully preserve. Finally, the holy council exhorts the betrothed that before they contract marriage, or at least three days before its consummation, they carefully confess their sins and approach devoutly the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist. If any provinces have in this matter other laudable customs and ceremonies in addition to the aforesaid, the holy council wishes earnestly that they be by all means retained. And that these so salutary regulations may not remain unknown to anyone, it commands all ordinaries that they as soon as possible see to it that this decree be published and explained to the people in all the parish churches of their dioceses, and that this be done very often during the first year and after that as often as they shall deem it advisable. It decrees, moreover, that this decree shall begin to take effect in every parish at the expiration of thirty days, to be reckoned from the day of its first publication in that church.

Chapter II
Between Whom Spiritual Relationship Is Contracted

Experience teaches that by reason of the large number of prohibitions, marriages are often unknowingly contracted in prohibited cases in which either the parties continue to live, not without great sin, or the marriages are dissolved, not without great scandal. Wherefore, the holy council wishing to provide against this condition, and beginning with the impediment arising from spiritual relationship, decrees that in accordance with the prescriptions of the holy canons,[21] one person only, whether man or woman, or at most one man and one woman, shall act as sponsors in baptism for the one baptized, and spiritual relationship shall be contracted between these only and the one baptized, and his father and mother, and also between the one baptizing and the one baptized and the father and mother of the one baptized. Before the parish priest proceeds to confer baptism, he shall carefully inquire of those whom it concerns what person or persons they have chosen to act as sponsors at the font for the one to be baptized, and he shall permit him or them only to act as such, shall record their names in the book, and shall teach them what relationship they have contracted, so that they may not have any excuse on the score of ignorance. If any others, besides those designated, should touch the one being baptized, they shall not in any way contract a spiritual relationship, any constitutions asserting the contrary notwithstanding.[22] If through the fault or negligence of the parish priest it should be done otherwise, he shall be punished at the discretion of the ordinary. That relationship also which is contracted in confirmation is not to be extended beyond him who confirms, the one confirmed, his father and mother, and the sponsor;[23] all impediments of this spiritual relationship between other persons being completely removed.

Chapter III
The Impediment Of Public Honesty Is Restricted Within Certain Limits

The holy council completely removes the impediment of justice arising from public honesty where the betrothals are for any reason not valid.[24] But where they are valid, the impediment shall not extend beyond the first degree, because in more remote degrees such a prohibition can no longer be observed without detriment.

Chapter IV
Affinity Arising From Fornication Is Restricted To The Second Degree

Moreover, the holy council, moved by the same and other very grave reasons, restricts the impediment which arises on account of the affinity contracted from fornication, and which dissolves the marriage afterward contracted,[25] to those only who are united in the first and second degree; in more remote degrees it ordains that affinity of this kind does not dissolve the marriage afterward contracted.

Chapter V
No One Is To Marry Within The Prohibited Degrees; In What Manner Dispensation Is To Be Granted Therein

If anyone should presume knowingly to contract marriage within the prohibited degrees, he shall be separated and shall have no hope of obtaining a dispensation;[26] and this shall apply much more to him who has dared not only to contract such a marriage but also to consummate it. If he has done this in ignorance and yet has neglected the solemnities required in the contraction of matrimony, he shall be subject to the same penalties; for he who has rashly despised the salutary precepts of the Church, is not worthy to enjoy without difficulty her beneficence. But if after the observance of the solemnities some impediment should afterward be discovered of which he probably had, no knowledge, then he may more easily and gratuitously be granted a dispensation. In the contraction of marriages either no dispensation at all shall be granted or rarely, and then for a reason and gratuitously. In the second degree a dispensation shall never be granted except in the case of great princes and for a public cause.

Chapter VI
Punishments Against Abductors Are Prescribed

The holy council decrees that between the abductor and the one abducted there can be no marriage so long as she remains in the power of the abductor. But if the one abducted is separated from the abductor and is in a free and safe place, and consents to have him for her husband, the abductor may have her for his wife;[27] nevertheless, the abductor and all who have given him advice, aid and approval shall be <ipso jure> excommunicated and forever infamous and disqualified for all dignities of any kind; and if they be clerics, they shall forfeit all rank.[28] The abductor shall, moreover, be bound, whether he marries the one abducted or not, to bestow on her at the discretion of the judge a suitable endowment.[29]

Chapter VII
Vagrants Are To Be United In Matrimony With Caution

There are many who are vagrants and have no permanent abode, and, being of unprincipled character, after having abandoned their first wife, marry another, very often several in different localities, during the lifetime of the first. The holy council wishing to put an end to this evil, extends this fatherly admonition to all whom it may concern; namely, not to admit to marriage easily this class of vagrants; it also exhorts the civil magistrates to restrain them vigorously. But it commands parish priests not to be present at the marriage of such persons unless they have first made a diligent inquiry, and after having reported the matter to the ordinary, shall have obtained permission from him to do so.

Chapter VIII
Concubinage Is Severely Punished

It is a grave sin for unmarried men to have concubines, but it is a most grave sin, and one committed in singular contempt of this great sacrament, when married men live in this state of damnation and have the boldness at times to maintain and keep them in their homes even with their own wives. Wherefore, the holy council, in order to provide suitable remedies against this great evil, decrees that if these concubinaries, whether unmarried or married, whatever may be their state, dignity or profession, have not, after a threefold admonition in reference to this matter by the ordinary, also ex officio, put away their concubines and separated themselves from intimacy with them, they shall be punished with excommunication from which they shall not be absolved till they have in fact obeyed the admonition given them.[30] But if, regardless of censures, they shall continue in concubinage for a year, the ordinary shall proceed against them with a severity in keeping with the character of the crime. Women, whether married or unmarried, who live publicly with adulterers or concubinaries, if after a threefold admonition they do not obey, shall be punished severely in accordance with their guilt by the local ordinaries, even though not called upon by anyone to do so, <ex officio;> and if the ordinaries should deem it expedient, they shall be expelled, even with the aid of the secular arm, if need be, from the city or the diocese; the other penalties imposed on adulterers and concubinaries shall remain in force.

Chapter IX
Temporal Lords Or Magistrates Shall Not Attempt Anything Contrary To The Freedom Of Marriage

Worldly inclinations and desires very often so blind the mental vision of temporal lords and magistrates, that by threats and ill usage they compel men and women who live under their jurisdiction, especially the rich or those who expect a large inheritance, to contract marriage against their will with those whom these lords or magistrates propose to them. Wherefore, since it is something singularly execrable to violate the freedom of matrimony, and equally execrable that injustice should come from those from whom justice is expected,[31] the holy council commands all, of whatever rank, dignity and profession they may be, under penalty of anathema to be incurred ipso facto, that they do not in any manner whatever, directly or indirectly, compel their subjects or any others whomsoever in any way that will hinder them from contracting marriage freely.[32]

Chapter X
The Solemnities Of Marriages Are Forbidden At Certain Times

The holy council commands that from the Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ till the day of the Epiphany, and from Ash Wednesday till the octave of Easter inclusive, the old prohibitions of solemn nuptials be carefully observed by all;[33] at other times it permits marriages to be celebrated solemnly and the bishops shall see to it that they are conducted with becoming modesty and propriety, for matrimony is a holy thing and IS to be treated in a holy manner.

Decree Concerning Reform

The same holy council, continuing the matter of reform, decrees that the following be ordained in the present session.

Chapter I
Norms Of Procedure In The Election Of Bishops And Cardinals

If in all ecclesiastical grades a prudent and enlightened attention is necessary in order that in the house of the Lord there be nothing disorderly and nothing unbecoming, much more ought we to strive that no error be committed in the election of him who is constituted above all grades. For the state and order of the entire household of the Lord will totter if what is required in the body be not found in the head. Hence, although the holy council has elsewhere decided to advantage a number of things concerning those to be promoted to cathedral and major churches,[34] yet it considers this office to be of such a nature that if viewed in its greatness, there can never be caution enough taken concerning it. Wherefore it decrees that as soon as a church becomes vacant, public and private supplications and prayers be made and be ordered throughout the city and diocese by the chapter, that clergy and people may implore God for a good shepherd. It moreover exhorts and admonishes each and all who in any manner have a right from the Apostolic See to participate in the promotion of those to be placed in authority, or who otherwise render assistance (due to the circumstances of the present time no change being made herein), that they above all bear in mind that they can do nothing more serviceable to the glory of God and the salvation of the people than to exert themselves to the end that good and competent shepherds be promoted to the government of the Church, and that they become partakers in the sins of others and sin mortally unless they strive diligently that those be promoted whom they judge the more worthy and useful to the Church, not moved by entreaties or human affection, or the solicitations of rivals, but because their merits speak for them, whom they know to be persons of lawful wedlock, and whose life, age, learning and all other qualifications meet the requirements of the sacred canons and the decrees of this Council of Trent.[35] But since the taking of the important and competent testimony of upright and learned men regarding the aforesaid qualifications cannot by reason of the diversity of nations, peoples and customs be everywhere uniformly followed, the holy council commands that in the provincial synod to be held by the metropolitan, there be prescribed for each place and province a special or proper form of the examination, investigation or instruction to be made, such as shall appear most useful and suitable for these places and which is to be submitted to the approval of the most holy Roman pontiff; so however, that after the completion of the examination or investigation of the person to be promoted, it shall, after having been put in the form of a public document, be transmitted as soon as possible, with all the attestations and with the profession of faith made by the one to be promoted, to the most holy Roman pontiff, in order that the Roman pontiff himself, with a complete knowledge of the whole matter and of the persons before him, may for the benefit of the Lord's flock provide the churches more profitably if in the examination or investigation they have been found competent. All examinations, investigations, attestations and proofs of whatever kind and by whomever made, even though in the Roman Curia, concerning the qualifications of the one to be promoted and the condition of the church, shall be carefully examined by the cardinal, who shall report thereon to the consistory, and three other cardinals; and this report shall be authenticated by the signature of the cardinal making the report and of the three other cardinals, in which each of the four cardinals shall affirm that, after having given it his careful attention, he has found those to be promoted to possess the qualifications required by law and by this holy council and at the peril of his eternal salvation firmly believes that they are competent to be placed over churches; and the report having been made in one consistory, that the investigation may in the meantime receive more mature consideration, the decision shall be deferred to another consistory, unless the most blessed pontiff shall deem it expedient to act otherwise. Each and all of the particulars relative to the life, age, learning and the other qualifications of those who are to be appointed bishops, which have been determined elsewhere by this council, the same It decrees are to be required in the election of the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, even though they be deacons, whom the most holy Roman pontiff shall, in so far as it can be conveniently done, choose from all the nations of Christendom according as he finds them competent. Finally, the same holy council, moved by so many very grave afflictions of the Church, cannot but call to mind that nothing is more necessary to the Church of God than that the holy Roman pontiff apply that solicitude which by the duty of his office he owes the universal Church in a very special way by associating with himself as cardinals the most select persons only, and appoint to each church most eminently upright and competent shepherds; and this the more so, because our Lord Jesus Christ will require at his hands the blood of the sheep of Christ that perish through the evil government of shepherds who are negligent and forgetful of their office.

Chapter II
Provincial Synods Are To Be Celebrated Every Three Years, Diocesan Synods Every Year; Who Are To Convoke Them And Who Are To Be Present Thereat

Provincial synods, wherever they have been omitted, shall be restored for the regulation of morals, the correction of abuses, the settlement of controversies, and for other purposes permitted by the sacred canons.[36] Wherefore the metropolitans in person, or if they are legitimately hindered, the oldest suffragan bishop, shall not neglect to convoke, each in his own province, a synod within a year at least from the termination of the present council and after that at least every third year, after the octave of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ or at some other more convenient time, according to the custom of the province, and which all the bishops and others who by right or custom are under obligation to be present shall be absolutely bound to attend, those being excepted who at imminent danger would have to cross the sea. The bishops of the province shall not in the future be compelled under pretext of any custom whatsoever to go against their will to the metropolitan church. Those bishops likewise who are not subject to any archbishop shall once for all choose some neighboring metropolitan, at whose provincial synod they shall be obliged to be present with the other bishops, and whatever has been decided therein they shall observe and cause to be observed. In all other respects their exemption and privileges shall remain intact and entire. Diocesan synods also are to be celebrated annually; at which also all those exempt, who would otherwise by reason of the cessation of that exemption have to attend, and who are not subject to general chapters, shall be bound to assemble; those also who have charge of parochial or other secular churches, even though annexed, whoever they may be, must be present at the synod. But if the metropolitans and also the bishops and the others mentioned above prove negligent in these matters, they shall incur the penalties prescribed by the sacred canons.

Chapter III
In What Manner Prelates Are To Make Their Visitation

Patriarchs, primates, metropolitans and bishops shall not neglect to visit their respective dioceses, either personally or, if they are lawfully hindered, through their vicar-general or visitor;[37] if by reason of its extent they are unable to make a visitation of the whole annually, they shall either themselves or through their visitors visit at least the greater part of it, so that the whole may be completed in two years. Metropolitans, even after a complete visitation of their own diocese, shall not visit the cathedral churches or the dioceses of the bishops of their province, except for a cause taken cognizance of and approved by the provincial synod. Archdeacons, deans and other inferiors shall visit those churches in which they have thus far been accustomed legally to make visitations, but from now on with the consent of the bishop, personally and with the aid of a notary. Also the visitors delegated by a chapter, where the chapter has the right of visitation, shall be first approved by the bishop; thereby, however, the bishop, or if he be hindered, his visitor, shall not be prohibited from visiting those same churches apart from these, and the archdeacons and other inferiors shall be bound to render to him an account within a month of the visitation made by them, and to show him the depositions of witnesses and the entire proceedings; any custom, even though immemorial, and any exemptions and privileges whatsoever notwithstanding. But the chief purpose of all these visitations shall be, after the extirpation of heresies, to restore sound and orthodox doctrine, to guard good morals and to correct such as are evil, to animate the people by exhortations and admonitions with religion, peace and innocence, and to regulate the rest for the benefit of the faithful as the prudence of the visitors may suggest, allowance being made for place, time and occasion.[38] That these things may be more easily and happily accomplished, each and all of the aforesaid to whom the right of visitation belongs, are admonished to treat all with a fatherly love and Christian zeal, and therefore content with a modest train of horses and servants, let them strive to complete the visitation as speedily as possible, yet with due attention. Meanwhile they shall exercise care that they do not become troublesome or a burden to anyone by useless expenses, and neither shall they nor any one of theirs, either by way of compensation for the visitation or from wills made for pious purposes, except what is by right due to them from pious bequests, or under any other name, receive anything, be it money or gift of whatever kind or in whatever way offered,[39] any custom, even though immemorial, notwithstanding; with the exception, however, of food, which shall be furnished them and theirs frugally and in moderation during the time necessary for the visitation only and not beyond that.[40] It shall, however, be left to the option of those who are visited to pay, if they prefer, what in accordance with a fixed assessment they have been accustomed to pay in money heretofore, or to furnish the food; inviolate also shall remain the right of old agreements entered into with monasteries or other pious places or with churches not parochial. But in those places or provinces where it is the custom that neither food nor money or anything else be received by the visitors, but that all be done gratuitously, that practice shall continue there. But if anyone, which God forbid, shall presume to receive more in any of the cases mentioned above, in addition to the restitution of double the amount to be made within a month, he shall also incur without hope of pardon the other penalties contained in the constitution of the General Council of Lyons, which begins, "Exigit,"[41] as well as those of the provincial synod at the discretion of that synod. Patrons shall not presume in any way to intrude themselves in those things that pertain to the administration of the sacraments; they shall not interfere with the visitation of the ornaments of the church, or its immovable properties, or the revenues of the buildings, except in so far as they are competent to do this by reason of the institution and foundation; but the bishops themselves shall attend to these things and shall see to it that the revenues of the buildings are devoted to purposes necessary and useful to the church according as they shall deem most expedient.

Chapter IV
By Whom And When The Office Of Preaching Is To Be Discharged. The Parish Church Is To Be Attended To Hear The Word Of God. No One May Preach Without The Permission Of The Bishop

Desiring that the office of preaching, which belongs chiefly to bishops, be exercised as often as possible for the welfare of the faithful, the holy council, for the purpose of accommodating to the use of the present time the canons published elsewhere on this subject under Paul III,[42] of happy memory, decrees that they themselves shall personally, each in his own church, announce the Sacred Scriptures and the divine law, or, if lawfully hindered, have it done by those whom they shall appoint to the office of preaching; but in other churches by the parish priests, or, if they are hindered, by others to be appointed by the bishop in the city or in any part of the diocese as they shall judge it expedient, at the expense of those who are bound or accustomed to defray it, and this they shall do at least on all Sundays and solemn festival days, but during the season of fasts, of Lent and of the Advent of the Lord, daily, or at least on three days of the week if they shall deem it necessary; otherwise, as often as they shall judge that it can be done conveniently. The bishop shall diligently admonish the people that each one is bound to be present at his own parish church, where it can be conveniently done, to hear the word of God.[43] But no one, whether secular or regular, shall presume to preach, even in churches of his own order, in opposition to the will of the bishop. The bishops shall also see to it that at least on Sundays and other festival days, the children in every parish be carefully taught the rudiments of the faith and obedience toward God and their parents by those whose duty it is, and who shall be compelled thereto, if need be, even by ecclesiastical censures; any privileges and customs notwithstanding. In other respects the things decreed under Paul III concerning the office of preaching shall remain in force.[44]

Chapter V
Major Criminal Causes Against Bishops Shall Be Taken Cognizance Of By The Supreme Pontiff Only, Minor Ones By The Provincial Synod

Graver criminal causes against bishops, also that of heresy, which may God prevent, which merit deposition or deprivation, shall be taken cognizance of and decided by the Roman pontiff only.[45] But if the cause be of such a nature that it must perforce be assigned out of the Roman Curia, it shall not be committed to anyone but metropolitans or bishops to be chosen by the most holy pope. This commission shall be both special and signed by the most holy pontiff's own hand, and he shall never grant more to them than this, that they take information only of the fact and draw up the process, which they shall transmit immediately to the Roman pontiff, the definitive sentence being reserved to His Holiness. The other things decreed elsewhere under Julius III,[46] of happy memory, concerning these matters, as also the constitution of the general council under Innocent III, which begins, "Qualiter et quando,"[47] and which the holy council renews in the present decree, shall be observed by all. But the minor criminal causes of bishops shall be taken cognizance of and decided in the provincial synod only, or by persons commissioned by the provincial synod.

Chapter VI
Authority Is Given To The Bishops To Dispense In Cases Of Irregularity And Suspension And To Absolve From Crimes

Bishops are authorized to dispense in all cases of irregularity and suspension resulting from a secret crime, except that arising from willful homicide and those arising from crimes that have found their way before a tribunal, and to absolve gratuitously, after the imposition of a salutary penance, <per se> or through a vicar especially appointed for this purpose <in foro conscientiae> in all occult cases, even those reserved to the Apostolic See, all delinquents subject to them in their diocese. The same is permitted them only, but not their vicars, in the same forum with respect to the crime of heresy.

Chapter VII
The Efficacy Of The Sacraments Shall Be Explained By Bishops And Parish Priests Before They Are Administered To The People. During The Celebration Of The Mass The Sacred Scriptures Are To Be Explained

That the faithful may approach the sacraments with greater reverence and devotion of mind, the holy council commands all bishops that not only when they are themselves about to administer them to the people, they shall first, in a manner adapted to the mental ability of those who receive them, explain their efficacy and use, but also they shall see to it that the same is done piously and prudently by every parish priest, and in the vernacular tongue, if need be and if it can be done conveniently, in accordance with the form which will be prescribed for each of the sacraments by the holy council in a catechism, which the bishops shall have faithfully translated into the language of the people and explained to the people by all parish priests. In like manner shall they explain on all festivals or solemnities during the solemnization of the mass or the celebration of the divine offices, in the vernacular tongue, the divine commands and the maxims of salvation,[48] and leaving aside useless questions, let them strive to engraft these things on the hearts of all and instruct them in the law of the Lord.

Chapter VIII
Public Sinners Shall Do Public Penance, Unless The Bishop Shall Determine Otherwise. A Penitentiary Is To Be Instituted In Cathedrals

The Apostle admonishes that those who sin publicly are to be reproved publicly.[49] When therefore anyone has publicly and in the sight of many committed a crime by which there is no doubt that others have been offended and scandalized, it is proper that a penance commensurate with his guilt be publicly imposed on him, so that those whom he by his example has led to evil morals, he may bring back to an upright life by the evidence of his correction. The bishop, however, should he judge it advisable, may commute this kind of public penance to one that is secret. In all cathedral churches where it can be conveniently done, let the bishop appoint a penitentiary united with the prebend that shall next become vacant, who shall be a master or doctor or licentiate in theology or canon law and forty years of age, or another who may be found to be more suitable for the character of the place and who, while he is hearing confessions in the church, shall be considered as present in the choir.

Chapter IX
By Whom Those Secular Churches Are To Be Visited That Belong To No Diocese

What has elsewhere been ordained by this council under Paul III,[50] of happy memory, and lately under our most blessed Lord Pius IV,[51] regarding the attention to be given by ordinaries to the visitation of benefices, even of those exempt, the same is to be observed also with regard to those secular churches which are said to be in no one's diocese, namely, that they be visited by the bishop whose cathedral church is the nearest, if that is agreed upon, otherwise by him, acting as delegate of the Apostolic See, who has once been chosen for this in the provincial synod by the prelate of that place; any privileges and customs whatsoever, even though immemorial, notwithstanding.

Chapter X
The Execution Of The Visitation Shall Not Be Impeded By The Subjects

That the bishops may be better able to keep the people whom they rule in duty and obedience, they shall in all those things that concern visitation and the correction of the morals of their subjects, have the right and authority, also as delegates of the Apostolic See, to decree, regulate, punish and execute, in accordance with the prescriptions of the canons, those things which in their prudence shall appear to them necessary for the emendation of their subjects and for the good of their dioceses. And in these matters, where it is question of visitation and correction of morals, no exemption, inhibition, appeal or complaint, even though submitted to the Apostolic See, shall in any manner whatsoever hinder or suspend the execution of those things which shall have been commanded, decreed or adjudicated by them.[52]

Chapter XI
Honorary Titles Or Special Privileges Shall Not Detract In Any Way From The Right Of Bishops. The Chapter Cum Capella, Concerning Privileges, Is Renewed

Since privileges and exemptions which are granted to many persons under various titles, are known to create confusion nowadays in the jurisdiction of bishops and to give to those exempt occasion for a more unrestrained life, the holy council decrees that whenever it should be thought proper for just, weighty and apparently necessary reasons that some persons be decorated with the honorary titles of Prothonotary, Acolyte, Count Palatine, Royal Chaplain, or other such titles of distinction, whether in or out of the Roman Curia, as also others granted to any monasteries or in any manner imparted, whether assumed under the name of servants to military orders, monasteries, hospitals, colleges, or under any other title, it is to be understood that by these privileges nothing is taken away from the ordinaries whereby those persons to whom such privileges have already been granted or to whom they may be granted in the future cease to be fully subject in all things to the ordinaries as delegates of the Apostolic See; and as regards Royal Chaplains, let them be subject in accordance with the constitution of Innocent III, which begins, "Cum capella;"[53] those persons, however, being excepted who are engaged in actual service in the aforesaid places or in military orders and who reside within their enclosures or houses and live under obedience to them, and those also who have lawfully and according to the rule of these military orders made profession, whereof the ordinary must be certified; notwithstanding any privileges whatsoever, even those of the order of St. John of Jerusalem and of other military orders. But those privileges which by virtue of the constitution of Eugene[54] they are accustomed to enjoy who reside in the Roman Curia or who are in the household of cardinals, are by no means to be understood as applying to those who hold ecclesiastical benefices in regard to those benefices, but they shall continue to be subject to the jurisdiction of the ordinaries; any inhibitions whatsoever notwithstanding.

Chapter XII
Qualifications Necessary For Those Who Are To Be Promoted To The Dignities And Canonries Of Cathedral Churches And The Duties Of Those So Promoted

Since dignities, especially in cathedral churches, were instituted to maintain and promote ecclesiastical discipline, to the end that those who hold them might be distinguished for piety, be an example to others, and assist the bishops by their labor and service, it is but right that those who are called to them should be such as are able to perform their duty. Wherefore, in the future no one shall be promoted to any dignities whatsoever to which is annexed the <cura animarum,> who has not attained at least the twenty-fifth year of his age, is experienced in the clerical order, and is recommended by the learning necessary for the discharge of his office and the integrity of his morals, conformably to the constitution of Alexander III promulgated in the Council of the Lateran, which begins, "Cum in cunctis."[55] In like manner archdeacons, who are called the eyes of the bishop,[56] shall in all churches where it is possible be masters in theology, or doctors or licentiates in canon law. To other dignities or offices to which no <cura animarum> is annexed, clerics, in other respects qualified, shall not be promoted unless they are twenty-two years of age. Those also who are promoted to any benefices whatever having the <cura animarum>, shall within at least two months from the day of having taken possession be bound to make in the hands of the bishop, or, if he be hindered, in the presence of his vicar-general or official, a public profession of their orthodox faith and to promise solemnly and swear that they will persevere in their obedience to the Roman Church. But those who are promoted to canonries and dignities in cathedral churches, shall be bound to do this not only in the presence of the bishop or his official but also in the chapter; otherwise all those promoted as aforesaid shall not make the fruits their own, neither shall possession be of any avail to them. Furthermore, no one shall in the future be admitted to a dignity, canonry or portion unless he is either already constituted in the sacred order which that dignity, prebend or portion requires, or is of such an age as will qualify him for the reception of that order within the time prescribed by law and by this holy council.[57] In all cathedral churches all canonries and portions shall be attached to the order of the priesthood, deaconship or subdeaconship, and the bishop shall with the advice of the chapter designate and distribute, as he shall deem expedient, to which each of the sacred orders is for the future to be attached; so however that at least one half shall be priests and the rest deacons or subdeacons. But where the more laudable custom obtains that the greater part or all shall be priests, this shall by all means be observed. The holy council also exhorts that in provinces where it can be conveniently done, all dignities and at least one half of the canonries 1n cathedral and prominent collegiate churches be conferred only on masters or doctors, or also on licentiates in theology or canon law Moreover, those who hold dignities, canonries, prebends or portions in such cathedral or collegiate churches, shall not be permitted by virtue of any statute or custom to be absent from those churches more than three months of each year,[58] saving however the statutes of those churches which require a longer period of service; otherwise every offender shall for the first year be deprived of one half of the fruits which he has made his own even by reason of his prebend and residence But if he be again guilty of the same negligence, he shall be deprived of all the fruits which he has acquired during that year, and if he should become more contumacious, he shall be proceeded against in accordance with the prescriptions of the sacred canons.[59] Those shall receive distributions who have been present at the appointed hours; the others shall, all collusion and remission being debarred, forfeit them in accordance with the decree of Boniface VIII, which begins, "Consuetudinem,"[60] and which the holy council restores to practice; any statutes or customs whatsoever notwithstanding. All shall be obliged to perform the divine offices in person and not by substitutes;[61] also to assist and serve the bishop when celebrating or exercising other pontifical functions, and in the choir instituted for psalmody, to praise the name of God reverently, distinctly and devoutly in hymns and canticles. They shall, moreover, wear at all times, both in and out of church, a becoming dress, shall abstain from unlawful hunting, fowling, dancing, taverns and games, and so excel in integrity of morals that they may with justice be called counselors of the Church.[62] With regard to matters that pertain to the proper manner of conducting the divine offices, the proper way of singing or modulating therein, the definite rule for assembling and remaining in choir, the things necessary for those who minister in the church, and such like, the provincial synod shall prescribe for each province a fixed form that will be beneficial to and in accordance with the usage of each province. In the meantime, the bishop, with the aid of no less than two canons, one chosen by himself, the other by the chapter, may provide in these matters as he may deem expedient.

Chapter XIII
How The Poorer Cathedral And Parish Churches Are To Be Provided For. Parishes Are To Be Separated By Definite Boundaries

Since the revenues of many cathedral churches are so limited and scanty that they are in no way in keeping with the episcopal dignity and insufficient for the needs of the churches, the provincial synod, having summoned those who are concerned, shall examine and consider carefully what churches it may be advisable by reason of their limited means and poverty to unite to others in the neighborhood or to provide with additional revenues;[63] and the completed documents concerning this matter it shall send to the supreme Roman pontiff, who being informed thereby shall, as he in his prudence may deem advisable, either unite the poorly provided churches or by additional revenues improve them. In the meantime, until the aforesaid provisions are carried into effect, the supreme pontiff may from certain benefices assist those bishops who by reason of the poverty of their diocese are in need of revenues; provided, however, these benefices are not <curae> or dignities or canonries and prebends, or monasteries in which there is regular observance, or which are subject to general chapters or to certain visitors. In parochial churches also in which the revenues are in like manner so small that they are insufficient to meet the necessary obligations, the bishop, if unable to meet the exigency by a union of benefices, not however those of regulars, shall see to it that by the assignment of first fruits or tithes or by the contributions and collections of the parishioners, or in some other way that he shall deem more profitable, as much be collected as may decently suffice for the needs of the rector and the parish. In all unions, however, whether to be made for the aforesaid or other reasons, parochial churches shall not be united to any monasteries whatsoever, or to abbeys or dignities, or prebends of a cathedral or collegiate church, or to other simple benefices, hospitals or military orders, and those so united shall be investigated again by the ordinary in accordance with the decree elsewhere enacted by this council under Paul III,[64] of happy memory, which is to be observed also and in like manner with regard to unions made since that time; notwithstanding whatever forms of words used therein which shall be considered as sufficiently expressed here. Furthermore, all those cathedral churches whose revenues do not exceed in actual annual value the sum of one thousand ducats, and those parochial churches in which they do not exceed the sum of one hundred ducats, shall not in the future be burdened with taxes or reservations of revenues for this purpose. Also, in those cities and localities where the parochial churches have no definite boundaries, and whose rectors have not their own people whom they may rule but administer the sacraments indiscriminately to all who desire them, the holy council commands the bishops that, for the greater security of the salvation of the souls committed to them, they divide the people into definite and distinct parishes and assign to each its own and permanent parish priest, who can know his people and from whom alone they may licitly receive the sacraments;[65] or that they make other, more beneficial provisions as the conditions of the locality may require. They shall also see to it that the same is done as soon as possible in those cities and localities where there are no parish churches; any privileges and customs whatsoever, even though immemorial, notwithstanding.

Chapter XIV
No One Shall Be Admitted To The Possession Of A Benefice Or Of Distributions When The Distribution Of The Fruits Is Not Applied To Pious Purposes

In many churches, cathedral as well as collegiate and parochial, it is understood to be the practice, derived either from their constitutions or from evil customs, that in the election, presentation, nomination, institution, confirmation, collation or other provision, or upon admission to the possession of a cathedral church or a benefice, of canonries or prebends, or to a portion of the revenues, or to the daily distributions, there are introduced certain conditions or deductions from the fruits, certain payments, promises, or unlawful compensations, or what in some churches is called mutual profits. Since the holy council abhors these practices, it commands the bishops that they prohibit all things of this kind that are not applied to pious purposes and such methods of entering upon offices, which create a suspicion of simoniacal taint or sordid avarice, and that they examine carefully their statutes and customs in regard to the above matter, and retaining only what they approve as laudable, reject and abolish the rest as corrupt and scandalous. It also ordains that those who in any way act in contravention of what is contained in the present decree incur the penalties prescribed against simoniacs by the sacred canons and various constitutions of the supreme pontiffs,[66] all of which it renews; notwithstanding any statutes, constitutions and customs, even though immemorial and confirmed by Apostolic authority, in regard to which any deceit, fraud and defect of intention may be investigated by the bishop as delegate of the Apostolic See.

Chapter XV
Method Of Increasing The Scanty Prebends Of Cathedral And Prominent Collegiate Churches

In cathedral and prominent collegiate churches where the prebends are numerous and in relation to the daily distributions so small that they do not suffice for the decent maintenance of the rank of the canons in keeping with the character of the place and persons,[67] the bishops may with the consent of the chapter combine them with some simple benefices, not however with those of regulars, or, if in this way it cannot be done, they may, with the consent of the patrons if the right of patronage belongs to laymen, reduce their number by suppressing some of them and apply the fruits and proceeds to the daily distributions of the remaining prebends; so however, that such a number remain as may conveniently serve for the celebration of divine service and be in keeping with the dignity of the church;[68] any statutes and privileges, or any reservation whether general or special, or any expectation notwithstanding. The aforesaid unions or suppressions shall not be frustrated or hindered by any provisions whatsoever, not even by virtue of resignation or any other derogations or suspensions.

Chapter XVI
What Duty Devolves Upon The Chapter During The Vacancy Of A See

When a see becomes vacant, the chapter shall, in those places where the duty of receiving the revenues devolves upon it, appoint one or more trustworthy and diligent stewards who shall take care of the ecclesiastical properties and revenues, of which they shall have to give an account to him whom it will concern. It shall also be strictly bound to appoint within eight days after the death of the bishop an official or vicar, or to confirm the incumbent, who shall be at least a doctor or licentiate in canon law, or otherwise as competent a person as is available. In case this is not done, the aforesaid appointment shall devolve upon the metropolitan.[69] But if the church is a metropolitan one or one exempt and the chapter should prove negligent as was said above, then the oldest suffragan bishop in the metropolitan church and the bishop nearest the exempt church shall have the authority to appoint a competent steward and vicar. The bishop who is promoted to the vacant church shall with regard to the matters that pertain to him demand from the steward, vicar and all other officials and administrators who were during the vacancy of the see appointed in his place by the chapter or others, even though they are members of the same chapter, an account of their office, jurisdiction, administration or any other functions, and he shall have the authority to punish those who have been delinquent in their office or administration, even if the aforesaid officials, having turned in their accounts, should have obtained from the chapter or those delegated by it a quittance or discharge. The chapter shall also be bound to render to the bishop an account of documents belonging to the church, if any have come into its possession.

Chapter XVII
The Conferring Of Several Benefices On And Their Retention By One Person Is Restricted

Since ecclesiastical order is upset when one cleric holds the offices of several, the sacred canons have piously provided that no one ought to be enrolled in two churches.[70] But since many, led by the passion of ungodly covetousness, deceiving themselves, not God, are not ashamed to evade by various species of deceit what has been beneficially established and to hold several benefices at the same time, the holy council, desiring to restore discipline in the government of the churches, by the present decree, which it commands to be observed by all persons by whatever title distinguished, even though it be the dignity of the cardinalate, ordains that in the future one ecclesiastical benefice only shall be conferred on a person. If that is not sufficient to provide him on whom it is conferred with a decent livelihood, then it is permissible to confer on him another simple benefice that will afford a sufficiency, provided both do not require personal residence. These provisions shall apply not only to cathedral churches but also to all other benefices, whether secular or regular, even those held in <commendam>, of whatever title or character they may be. Those who now hold several parochial churches, or one cathedral and one parochial church, shall be strictly bound, all dispensations and unions for life notwithstanding, retaining one parochial church only, or the cathedral church only, to resign the other parochial churches within a period of six months;[71] otherwise the parochial churches and also all the benefices which they hold shall be considered <ipso jure> vacant and as such shall be freely conferred on other competent persons;[72] neither can those who previously held them retain conscientiously the fruits after the time specified. The holy council desires, however, that provision be made in some convenient way, as the supreme pontiff may see fit, for the necessities of those who resign.

Chapter XVIII
On The Vacancy Of A Parochial Church The Bishop Shall Appoint Thereto A Vicar Until He Has Provided A Parish Priest. In What Manner And By Whom Those Appointed To Parochial Churches Are To Be Examined

It is highly desirable for the salvation of souls that they be directed by worthy and competent parish priests. That this may be accomplished more diligently and effectively, the holy council decrees that when a parochial church becomes vacant, whether by death or resignation, also in the Curia, or in whatever other manner, it shall be the duty of the bishop immediately upon receipt of information regarding the vacancy of the church to appoint, if need be, a competent vicar to the same, with a suitable assignment, using his own judgment in the matter, of a portion of the fruits thereof, who shall discharge the duties in that church till it has been provided with a rector, even if it be said that the charge of the church belongs to the bishop himself and is administered by one or more, also in churches called patrimonial or receptive, in which it has been the custom of the bishop to assign the <cura animarum> to one or more, all of whom, it commands, are bound to the examination prescribed below,[73] also if the parochial church be generally or specially reserved or assigned, even by virtue of an indult or privilege in favor of cardinals of the holy Roman Church, or of abbots or chapters. Moreover, the bishop and he who has the right of patronage shall within ten days, or such other term as the bishop shall prescribe, designate in the presence of those to be delegated as examiners some competent clerics who are to rule the church. Furthermore, it shall be permitted to others also who may know any who are fit for the office to make known their names, so that a careful investigation may afterward be made as to the age, morals and sufficiency of each But if in accordance with the custom of the country it should appear more suitable to the bishop or the provincial synod, those who wish to be examined may be summoned by a public notice. At the expiration of the time specified, all whose names have been entered shall be examined by the bishop,[74] or, if hindered, by his vicar-general, and by other examiners who shall not be fewer than three, to whose votes, in case they are equal or distributed singly, the bishop or his vicar may add kits in favor of whomsoever he shall deem most fit. At least six examiners shall be proposed annually by the bishop or his vicar in the diocesan synod, and they must prove satisfactory to it and be approved by it. Upon a vacancy occurring in any church, the bishop shall select three out of that number who shall conduct the examination with him, and on a subsequent vacancy he shall select out of the six aforesaid the same or three others whom he may prefer. These examiners shall be masters or doctors or licentiates in theology or canon law, or other clerics, whether regulars, also of the mendicant orders, or seculars, who appear most competent for the purpose; and all shall take an oath on the holy Gospels of God, that, every human consideration being set aside, they will discharge their duty faithfully. Let them take heed, however, that they do not by reason of this examination receive anything whatever either before or after, otherwise both they themselves and the givers will be guilty of the vice of simony, from which they cannot be absolved till they have resigned the benefices which they in any manner whatever possessed before this act, and they shall, moreover, be rendered disqualified to possess others in the future.[75] In all these matters they shall be bound to render an account not only before God but also, if need be, to the provincial synod, by which, if it has been discovered that they have done anything in contravention of their duty, they can at its discretion be severely punished. On the completion of the examination they shall make known how many they have judged fit in the matter of age, morals, learning, prudence, and other qualifications suitable for ruling the vacant church, and from these the bishop shall choose him whom he shall judge the more competent, and to him and to none other shall the collation of the church be made by him to whom such collation pertains.[76] If the church is under ecclesiastical patronage and the appointment thereto belongs to the bishop and to no one else, he whom the patron shall judge the more worthy among those approved by the examiners, shall be bound to present himself to the bishop that he may be appointed by him.[77] But when the appointment is to be made by any other than the bishop, then the bishop only shall choose the worthier among those who are worthy, and the patron shall present him to the one to whom the appointment belongs. If, however, the church is under lay patronage, the one presented by the patron must be examined, as above, by those delegated thereto, and is not to be admitted unless found competent. In all the above-mentioned cases, to no other than to one of those examined and approved by the examiners as aforesaid and in accordance with the above rules shall the church be committed, and no devolution or appeal, even to the Apostolic See or the legates, vice-legates or nuncios of that See, or to any bishops or metropolitans, primates or patriarchs, shall hinder or suspend the execution of the report of the aforesaid examiners, otherwise the vicar whom the bishop has at his discretion already appointed for the time being to the vacant church or whom he may afterward appoint, shall not be removed from the charge and administration of that church until it has been provided for, either by the appointment of the vicar himself or of some other person who has been approved and chosen as stated above. All provisions or appointments made otherwise than in accordance with the above stated form shall be regarded as surreptitious; any exemptions, indults, privileges, anticipations, appropriations, new provisions, indults granted to any universities,[78] also for a certain sum, and any other impediments whatsoever in contravention of this decree, notwithstanding. If, however, the revenues of said parochial churches should be so scanty as not to bear the burden of all this examination, or if no one should care to undergo the examination, or if by reason of open factions or dissensions, which are met with in some localities, more grievous quarrels and disturbances might easily be stirred up, the ordinary may omit this formality and have recourse to a private examination, if in conformity with his conscience and with the advice of the examiners he shall deem this expedient. The other things, however, are to be observed as above prescribed. If the provincial synod should judge that in the above regulations concerning the form of examination something ought to be added or omitted, it shall have the authority to do so.

Chapter XIX
Mandates Concerning Promotion, Expectancies, And Other Things Of This Kind Are Abolished

The holy council decrees that mandates concerning promotion and favors which are called expectancies, shall no longer be granted to anyone, even to colleges, universities, senators, or to any individuals whatsoever, even under the name of an indult, or for a certain sum, or under any other pretext; neither shall it be permitted to anyone to make use of those thus far granted.[79] Neither shall mental reservations nor other favors whatsoever with regard to future vacancies, or indults respecting churches belonging to others, or monasteries, be granted to anyone, not even to cardinals of the holy Roman Church, and those hitherto granted shall be considered abolished.

Chapter XX
The Manner Of Conducting Causes Pertaining To The Ecclesiastical Forum Is Prescribed

All causes belonging in any way whatever to the ecclesiastical forum, even if they relate to benefices, shall be taken cognizance of in the first instance before the local ordinaries only, and shall be completely terminated within at least two years from the day that the suit was instituted; otherwise, at the expiration of that term the parties, or either of them, shall be free to have recourse to superior, but otherwise competent, judges, who shall take up the cause as it then stands and shall see to it that it is terminated as soon as possible. Before that term they shall neither be committed to others nor withdrawn; any appeals introduced by the parties shall not be received by any superior judges, neither shall any assignment or restriction be issued by them except upon a definitive sentence or one having the force of such a sentence, and the grievance arising therefrom cannot be repaired by an appeal from the definitive sentence. From the above are to be excepted those causes which according to the prescriptions of the canons are to be dealt with before the Apostolic See,[80] or which the supreme Roman pontiff shall for an urgent and reasonable cause judge advisable to assign or withdraw by a special rescript provided with the signature of His Holiness signed with his own hand. Furthermore, matrimonial and criminal causes shall not be left to the judgment of a dean, archdeacon or other inferiors, even in the course of their visitation, but shall be reserved to the examination and jurisdiction of the bishop only (even though there should at the time be a dispute, in whatever instance it may be, between the bishop and the dean or archdeacon or other inferiors regarding the examination of those causes), and if in the same matrimonial cause one of the parties should in the presence of the bishop really prove his poverty, he shall not be compelled to litigate his case either in the second or third instance outside the province, unless the other party is prepared to provide for his maintenance and bear the expenses of the trial. In like manner, legates, also those <de latere>, nuncios, ecclesiastical governors or others, shall not only not presume by virtue of any authority whatsoever to hinder bishops in the aforesaid causes, or in any manner take away the exercise of or disturb their jurisdiction, but they shall not even proceed against clerics or other ecclesiastical persons until the bishop has first been approached and has proved himself negligent in the matter; otherwise their proceedings and decisions avail nothing and they shall be bound to make satisfaction to the parties for the damage sustained. Moreover, if anyone should appeal in cases permitted by the law,[81] or make a complaint regarding some grievance, or otherwise by reason of the lapse of two years, as was said above, have recourse to another judge, he shall be bound to transfer at his own expense to the judge of appeal all the acts of the proceedings conducted in the presence of the bishop, having previously, however, notified the bishop, so that if anything appears suitable to him for the direction of the cause, he may communicate it to the judge of appeal. But if the appellee appears, he shall also be bound to bear his proportion of the expenses of transferring the acts if he wishes to use them, unless it is a local custom to act otherwise, namely, that the entire costs are borne by the appellant. Furthermore, the notary shall be bound on receipt of a suitable fee to furnish the appellant as soon as possible and within at least one month with a copy of the proceedings, and should he through delay in supplying such copy be guilty of fraud, he shall at the discretion of the ordinary be suspended from the administration of his office and shall be compelled to pay double the costs of the suit, which is to be divided between the appellant and the poor of the locality. But if the judge himself should be aware of this delay, or should participate therein, or should in any other way hinder the delivery of the entire proceedings to the appellant within the time specified above, he shall be bound to the same penalty of paying double the costs, as was stated above; any privileges, indults, agreements which bind only their authors, and any other customs whatsoever to the contrary in respect to all matters dealt with above, notwithstanding.

Chapter XXI
It Is Declared That By Certain Words Used Above, The Usual Manner Of Treating Matters In General Councils Is Not Changed

The holy council, desiring that no occasion for doubt arise at any future time from decrees which it has published, in explaining those words contained in a decree published in the first session under our most blessed Lord, Pius IV, namely, "which at the suggestion and under the presidency of the legates shall appear suitable and proper to the holy council for alleviating the calamities of these times, adjusting religious controversies, restraining deceitful tongues, correcting the abuses of depraved morals, and to bring about true Christian peace in the world," 82 declares that it was not its intention that by the foregoing words the usual manner of treating matters in general councils should in any part be changed, or that anything new besides that which has so far been established by the sacred canons or the prescriptions of general councils, should be added to or taken away from anyone.

Announcement Of The Next Session

Moreover, the same holy council ordains and decrees that the next session be held on the Thursday after the conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which will be the ninth day of the coming December, with the authority, however, of abbreviating that time. In this session will be considered the sixth chapter now deferred to it and the remaining chapters on reform which have already been set forth and other matters related thereto. If it appears opportune and time will permit, some dogmas may also be considered, as in their turn they will be proposed in the congregations.

The time appointed for the session was abridged.

Notes

1 Gen. 2:23 f. (Matt. 19:4ff.; Mark 10:6ff.; Eph. 5:31 f.).

2 Matt. 19:6 Mark 10:8.

3 Matt., ibid.; Mark 10:9.

4 Eph. 5:25.

5 Ibid., 5:32.

6 Eugene IV in <decr. ad Armenos> (Denzinger, no. 702).

7 Cf. supra, note I.

8 Matt. 19:4-6, 9

9 Lev. 18:6 ff.

10 Matt. 16:19, Sess. XXI chap. 2.

11 Cf. c.4, X, De consang. IV, 14; cc.6, 7, X, De divor., IV, 19.

12 Cf. c. 16, X, De sponsal., IV, I.

13 Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11 f.; Luke 16:18; I Cor. 7:10 f.; cc.5-8, 10, C.XXXII, q.7.

14 Cf. I Cor. 10:13.

15 Matt. 19:11 f.; 1 Cor. 7:25 f., 38, 40; c. 12, C.XXXII, q. I; c.g, C.XXXIII, q.5; c. 16, X, De sponsal., IV, I.

16 Cf. <infra>, chap. 10 de ref. matr.

17 C2, X, De cland. desp., IV, 3.

18 C3, C.XXX, q.5; C.13, C.XXXII, q.2; c.2, C.XXXV, q.6; c.3, X, Qui matr. accus. poss. IV, 18.

19 C. 3, X De eland. deep., IV, 3.

20 Cc.2, 3. 5, C.XXX q.5; C.19, C.XXXV, qq.2, 3.

21 C. 101, D.IV de cons.; c. 3, VI, De cogn. spirit., IV, 3.

22 Cc. 2, 5, C. XXX, q. 3; c3; X, De cogn spirit, IV, II; c. I, h t. in VI, IV 3.

23 C. 2, C.XXX, q. I; c. I, VI, De cogn. spirit., IV, 3.

24 C. un., VI. De sponsal., IV, I.

25 Cc 19-24, C. XXXII, q. 7; tot. tit. X, De eo, qui cog. consang., IV, 13.

26 C. 3, X, De cland. desp., IV, 3; c. un. in Clem., De consang., IV, un.

27 Cc.7, 11, C. XXXVI, q. 2; c. 7, X, De rapt., V, 17.

28 Cc, 2 -6, 10, 11, C.XXXVI, q. 2.

29 Ex. 22:16f., cit. in c.I,X, De adult.,V, 16.

30 C.2, X, De cohab. cler., III, 2; Sess. XXV, chap. 14 de ref.

31 Cf. cc. 14, 17, 29, X, De sponsal., IV, I.

32 Cf. C.6, C.XXXVI, q.2

33 CC, 8-11, C.XXXIII, q.4; c.4, X, De feriis, II, 9.

34 Cf. Sess. VI, chap. I de ref.; VII, chaps. 1, 3 de ref.; XXII, chap. 2 de ref.

35 Cf. preceding references.

36 Cf. cc. 2 - 7, 9- 14, D.XVIII et al.; c.25, X,, De accus., V, I.

37 C. 11, C.X, q. I.

38 C I (# 4), VI, De cens., III, 20.

39 Cc.I, 7, 8, C.X, q.3; c.6, X, De cens., III, 39.

40 C.6, VI, De off. ord., I, 16.

41 C 2, VI, De cens., III, 20.

42 Cf. Sess. V, chap. 2 de ref.

43 Cc.62, 63, D.I de cons.

44 Cf. Sess. V, chap. 2 de ref.

45 Cf. Sess. XIII, chap. 8 de ref.

46 Cf. Sess. XIII, chaps. 6, 7 de ref.

47 C.24, X, De accus., V, I.

48 Cf. Sess. XXII, chap. 8.

49 See I Tim. 5:20; c.19 (# 1), C.II, q.l; C.I, X, De poenit., V, 38.

50 Cf. Sess. VI, chap. 4 de ref. and VII, chap. 8 de ref.

51 Cf. Sess. XXI, chap. 8 de ref.

52 Cf. Sess. XIII, chap. I de ref., XIV, chap. 4 de ref., XXII, chap. I de ref.

53 C. 16, X, De privil., V, 33.

54 C, 3, h.t., Extrav. comm., V, 7; Sess. XXIII, chap. I de ref.

55 C.7, X, De elect., I, 6, Sess. VII, chap. I de ref., XXII, chap. 2 de ref.

56 C.7, X, De off. archid., I, 23.

57 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 12 de ref.

58 Cf. Sess. XXIII, chap. I de ref.

59 Cf. tot. tit. X, De cler. non resid., III, 4.

60 C un. VI, De cler. non resid., III, 3; cf. c. 32, X, De praeb., III, 5.

61 C. 3, X, De cler. non resid., Ill, 4; c. 30, De praeb., III, 5; Sess. XXII chap. 4 de ref.

62 Cf tot. tit, X, De Vit. et hon. cler., III, I; in VI, III, I; in Clem., III, I; in Extrav. comm III, I; tit X, De cler. venat, V, 24.

63 Cf. Sess. VII, chaps. 6, 7 de ref., XIV, chap. 9 de ref., XXIV, chap. 15 de ref.

64 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 6 de ref.

65 Cf. Sess. XIV, chap. 9 de ref.

66 Cf. C. I, q. I; tot. tit. X, De sim., III, 5 et Extrav. comm., V, I.

67 Cf. chap. 13 de ref. of this sess.

68 C. 2, X, De instit., III, 7

69 Cf. c. ult. in VI, De suppl. negl. prael., I, 8.

70 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 2 de ref.

71 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 4 de ref.

72 Cf. C.4, Extrav. comm., De praeb., III, 2.

73 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 13 de ref.

74 Cf. Sess. XXV, chap. 9 de ref.

75 Cf. c.5, D.XXIV.

76 Cf. Sess. XXV, chap. 9 de ref.

77 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 13 de ref.; Sess. XIV, chap. 13 de ref.

78 Cf. Sess. XXV, chap. 9 de ref.

79 Cf. Sess. XXV, chap. 9 de ref., and tot. tit. X, De conc. praeb. non vac., III, 8; in VI, III, 7; in Clem., III, 3.

80 Cf. c.7, C.VI, q.4; Sess. XXV, chap. 10 de ref.

81 Cf. tot. tit. X, De appell., II. 28; in VI, II, 15; in Clem., 11, 12.

82 Cf. Sess. XVII at the beginning.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Session XXV - which is the ninth and last under the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IV, begun on the third and closed on the fourth day of December, 1563

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Decree Concerning Purgatory

Since the Catholic Church, instructed by the Holy Ghost, has, following the sacred writings and the ancient tradition of the Fathers, taught in sacred councils and very recently in this ecumenical council that there is a purgatory,[1] and that the souls there detained are aided by the suffrages of the faithful and chiefly by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar, the holy council commands the bishops that they strive diligently to the end that the sound doctrine of purgatory, transmitted by the Fathers and sacred councils,[2] be believed and maintained by the faithful of Christ, and be everywhere taught and preached. The more difficult and subtle questions, however, and those that do not make for edification and from which there is for the most part no increase in piety, are to be excluded from popular instructions to uneducated people.[3] Likewise, things that are uncertain or that have the appearance of falsehood they shall not permit to be made known publicly and discussed. But those things that tend to a certain kind of curiosity or superstition, or that savor of filthy lucre, they shall prohibit as scandals and stumbling-blocks to the faithful. The bishops shall see to it that the suffrages of the living, that is, the sacrifice of the mass,[4] prayers, alms and other works of piety which they have been accustomed to perform for the faithful departed, be piously and devoutly discharged in accordance with the laws of the Church, and that whatever is due on their behalf from testamentary bequests or other ways, be discharged by the priests and ministers of the Church and others who are bound to render this service not in a perfunctory manner, but diligently and accurately.

On The Invocation, Veneration, And Relics Of Saints, And On Sacred Images

The holy council commands all bishops and others who hold the office of teaching and have charge of the <cura animarum>, that in accordance with the usage of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, received from the primitive times of the Christian religion, and with the unanimous teaching of the holy Fathers and the decrees of sacred councils, they above all instruct the faithful diligently in matters relating to intercession and invocation of the saints, the veneration of relics, and the legitimate use of images, teaching them that the saints who reign together with Christ offer up their prayers to God for men, that it is good and beneficial suppliantly to invoke them and to have recourse to their prayers, assistance and support in order to obtain favors from God through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who alone is our redeemer and savior;[5] and that they think impiously who deny that the saints who enjoy eternal happiness in heaven are to be invoked, or who assert that they do not pray for men, or that our invocation of them to pray for each of us individually is idolatry, or that it is opposed to the word of God and inconsistent with the honor of the one mediator of God and men, Jesus Christ,[6] or that it is foolish to pray vocally or mentally to those who reign in heaven. Also, that the holy bodies of the holy martyrs and of others living with Christ, which were the living members of Christ and the temple the Holy Ghost,[7] to be awakened by Him to eternal life and to be glorified, are to be venerated by the faithful,[8] through which many benefits are bestowed by God on men, so that those who maintain that veneration and honor are not due to the relics of the saints, or that these and other memorials are honored by the faithful without profit, and that the places dedicated to the memory of the saints for the purpose of obtaining their aid are visited in vain, are to be utterly condemned, as the Church has already long since condemned and now again condemns them. Moreover, that the images of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God, and of the other saints are to be placed and retained especially in the churches, and that due honor and veneration is to be given them; not, however, that any divinity or virtue is believed to be in them by reason of which they are to be venerated, or that something is to be asked of them, or that trust is to be placed in images, as was done of old by the Gentiles who placed their hope in idols;[9] but because the honor which is shown them is referred to the prototypes which they represent, so that by means of the images which we kiss and before which we uncover the head and prostrate ourselves, we adore Christ and venerate the saints whose likeness they bear. That is what was defined by the decrees of the councils, especially of the Second Council of Nicaea,[10] against the opponents of images.

Moreover, let the bishops diligently teach that by means of the stories of the mysteries of our redemption portrayed in paintings and other representations the people are instructed and confirmed in the articles of faith, which ought to be borne in mind and constantly reflected upon; also that great profit is derived from all holy images, not only because the people are thereby reminded of the benefits and gifts bestowed on them by Christ, but also because through the saints the miracles of God and salutary examples are set before the eyes of the faithful, so that they may give God thanks for those things, may fashion their own life and conduct in imitation of the saints and be moved to adore and love God and cultivate piety. But if anyone should teach or maintain anything contrary to these decrees, let him be anathema. If any abuses shall have found their way into these holy and salutary observances, the holy council desires earnestly that they be completely removed, so that no representation of false doctrines and such as might be the occasion of grave error to the uneducated be exhibited. And if at times it happens, when this is beneficial to the illiterate, that the stories and narratives of the Holy Scriptures are portrayed and exhibited, the people should be instructed that not for that reason is the divinity represented in picture as if it can be seen with bodily eyes or expressed in colors or figures. Furthermore, in the invocation of the saints, the veneration of relics, and the sacred use of images, all superstition shall be removed,[11] all filthy quest for gain eliminated, and all lasciviousness avoided, so that images shall not be painted and adorned with a seductive charm, or the celebration of saints and the visitation of relics be perverted by the people into boisterous festivities and drunkenness, as if the festivals in honor of the saints are to be celebrated with revelry and with no sense of decency.[12] Finally, such zeal and care should be exhibited by the bishops with regard to these things that nothing may appear that is disorderly or unbecoming and confusedly arranged, nothing that is profane, nothing disrespectful, since holiness becometh the house of God.[13] That these things may be the more faithfully observed, the holy council decrees that no one is permitted to erect or cause to be erected in any place or church, howsoever exempt, any unusual image unless it has been approved by the bishop; also that no new miracles be accepted[14] and no relics recognized[15] unless they have been investigated and approved by the same bishop, who, as soon as he has obtained any knowledge of such matters, shall, after consulting theologians and other pious men, act thereon as he shall judge consonant with truth and piety. But if any doubtful or grave abuse is to be eradicated, or if indeed any graver question concerning these matters should arise, the bishop, before he settles the controversy, shall await the decision of the metropolitan and of the bishops of the province in a provincial synod; so, however, that nothing new or anything that has not hitherto been in use in the Church, shall be decided upon without having first consulted the most holy Roman pontiff.

Concerning Regulars And Nuns

The same holy council, continuing the work of reform, has thought fit that the following matters be decided.

Chapter I
All Regulars Shall Adjust Their Life In Accordance With The Requirements Of The Rule Which They Have Professed; Superiors Shall Sedulously See To It That This Is Done

Since the holy council is not ignorant of how great a splendor and usefulness accrues to the Church of God from monasteries piously regulated and properly administered, it has, to the end that the old and regular discipline may be the more easily and promptly restored where it has collapsed, and may be the more firmly maintained where it has been preserved, thought it necessary to command, as by this decree it does command, that all regulars, men as well as women, adjust and regulate their life in accordance with the requirements of the rule which they have professed, and especially that they observe faithfully whatever pertains to the perfection of their profession, as the vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity,[16] and any other vows and precepts peculiar to any rule and order and belonging to the essence thereof, as well as the preservation of the common life, food and clothing. Superiors shall use all care and diligence, in general and provincial chapters as well as in their visitations, which they shall not neglect to make at the proper times, that these things are not departed from, for it is evident that they cannot make any relaxations in those things that pertain to the substance of the regular life. For if those things that constitute the basis and foundation of all regular discipline are not strictly observed, the whole edifice must necessarily fall.

Chapter II
Private Ownership Is Absolutely Forbidden To Regulars

To no regular, therefore, whether man or woman, shall it be lawful to possess or to hold as his own or even in the name of the convent any movable or immovable property, of whatever nature it may be or In whatever manner acquired;[17] but the same shall be handed over immediately to the superior and be incorporated in the convent. Neither shall it in the future be lawful for superiors to grant immovable property to any regular, not even the usufruct or use, or the administration thereof or as <commendam>. But the administration of the property of monasteries or convents shall belong to the officials thereof only, who are removable at the will of their superiors. Superiors shall so permit the use of movable goods that the furniture is consistent with the state of poverty which they have professed; there shall be nothing superfluous, neither shall anything that is necessary be denied them. But should anyone be discovered or convicted of possessing something in any other manner, he shall be deprived for two years of his active and passive voice and shall also be punished in accordance with the prescriptions of his rule and order.

Chapter III
All Monasteries, Save Those Herein Excepted, May Possess Immovable Property. The Number Of Persons In Them Is To Be Determined By The Amount Of Revenues Or Alms. No Monasteries May Be Erected Without The Permission Of The Bishop

The holy council grants that all monasteries and houses, of men as well as of women, and of mendicants, even those that were forbidden by their constitutions or that had not received permission to this effect by Apostolic privilege, with the exception of the houses of the brethren of St. Francis,[18] the Capuchins, and those called Minor Observants, may in the future possess immovable property. But if any of the aforesaid places, to which it has been granted by Apostolic authority to possess such property, have been deprived thereof, it decrees that the same shall be wholly restored to them. But in the aforesaid monasteries and houses, of men as well as of women, whether they do or do not possess immovable properties, only such a number of persons shall be determined upon and retained in the future as can be suitably maintained either from the revenues of the monasteries or from the customary alms;[19] neither shall such places be erected in the future unless the permission of the bishop in whose diocese they are to be established has first been obtained.

Chapter VI
No Regular Shall Without The Permission Of His Superior Enter The Service Either Of Another Place Or Person, Or Withdraw From His Monastery. When Absent By Reason Of Study He Shall Reside In A Monastery

The holy council forbids that any regular under the pretext of preaching or lecturing or of any pious work, place himself at the service of any prelate, prince, university, community, or of any other person or place whatsoever without the permission of his superior,[20] any privilege or authority obtained from others regarding these matters shall avail him nothing. Should he act in contravention of this he shall at the discretion of his superior be punished as disobedient. Neither shall it be lawful for regulars to leave their convents, even under pretext of going to their superiors, unless they have been sent or summoned by them. Anyone discovered without having obtained the aforesaid command in writing, shall be punished by the local ordinaries as a deserter of his institute. Those who for reasons of study are sent to universities, shall reside in convents only, otherwise the ordinaries shall take action against them.

Chapter V
Provision Is Made For The Enclosure Of Nuns, Especially Those Who Reside Outside The Cities

The holy council, renewing the constitution of Boniface VIII, which begins, "Periculoso,"[21] commands all bishops that by the judgment of God to which It appeals and under threat of eternal malediction, they make it their special care that in all monasteries subject to them by their own authority and in others by the authority of the Apostolic See, the enclosure of nuns be restored wherever it has been violated and that it be preserved where it has not been violated; restraining with ecclesiastical censures and other penalties, every appeal being set aside, the disobedient and gain-sayers, even summoning for this purpose, if need be, the aid of the secular arm. The holy council exhorts all Christian princes to furnish this aid, and binds thereto under penalty of excommunication to be incurred ipso facto all civil magistrates. No nun shall after her profession be permitted to go out of the monastery, even for a brief period under any pretext whatever, except for a lawful reason to be approved by the bishop;[22] any indults and privileges whatsoever notwithstanding. Neither shall anyone, of whatever birth or condition, sex or age, be permitted, under penalty of excommunication to be incurred ipso facto, to enter the enclosure of a monastery without the written permission of the bishop or the superior.[23] But the bishop or superior ought to grant permission in necessary cases only, and no other person shall in any way be able to grant it, even by virtue of any authority or indult already granted or that may be granted in the future. And since monasteries of nuns situated outside the walls of a city or town are often without any protection exposed to the rapacity and other crimes of evil men, the bishops and other superiors shall make it their duty to remove, if they deem it expedient, the nuns from those places to new or old monasteries within cities or more populous towns, summoning, if need be, the aid of the secular arm. Those who hinder or disobey them, they shall compel to submission by ecclesiastical censures.

Chapter VI
The Manner Of Choosing Superiors

That all things may be done properly and without fraud in the election of superiors, temporary abbots and other officials and generals, as also abbesses and other superioresses, the holy council above all things strictly commands that all the aforesaid must be chosen by secret ballot, so that the names of individual voters may never become known. Neither shall it be lawful in the future to appoint provincials, abbots, priors, or any other titled persons whatsoever with a view of determining the election to be made, nor to add the votes and approvals of those absent. But if anyone should be elected contrary to the prescription of this decree, such an election shall be invalid, and he who has permitted himself to be chosen provincial, abbot, or prior in the aforesaid manner, shall from that time on be disqualified to hold any offices whatsoever in the order; any faculties that have been granted in these matters shall be considered as <eo ipso> nullified, and should any others be granted in the future, they shall be regarded as surreptitious.

Chapter VII
Who May Be Elected Abbesses And Superioresses By Whatever Name Known And How They Are To Be Elected. No One Shall Be Appointed Over Two Monasteries

No one shall be elected abbess or prioress, or by whatever other name the one appointed or the superioress may be known, who is less than forty years of age and who has not lived commendably during the eight years after having made her profession. If no one is found in a monastery possessing these qualifications, then one may be chosen from another of the same order. But if the superior who presides over the election should judge even this inconvenient, with the consent of the bishop or other superior one of those in the same monastery who is beyond her thirtieth year and has lived commendably at least five years since her profession may be chosen.[24] No one, however, shall be appointed over two monasteries. If anyone is in any way in possession of two or more, she shall, retaining one, be compelled to resign the remainder within six months, and in case she has not resigned within that period, all shall be <ipso jure> vacant. He who presides at the election, whether it be the bishop or other superior, shall not enter the enclosure of the monastery, but shall hear or receive the vote of each at the little window of the grating. In other matters the constitutions of each order or monastery shall be observed.

Chapter VIII
How The Government Of Monasteries Which Have No Regulars As Ordinary Visitors Is To Be Conducted

All monasteries which are not subject to general chapters or to bishops, and which have not regular visitors who belong to the order, but have been accustomed to be governed under the immediate protection and direction of the Apostolic See, shall be bound within a year from the dissolution of the present council and thereafter every three years, to assemble in congregations in accordance with the form of the constitution of Innocent III published in the general council, which begins, "In singulis";[25] and they shall there authorize certain regulars who shall deliberate and decide on the manner and order of establishing the aforesaid congregations and also the rules to be therein observed. But if they should prove negligent in these matters, then the metropolitan in whose province the aforesaid monasteries are located, as the delegate of the Apostolic See, shall convoke them for the above named purpose. If, however, there is not a sufficient number of such monasteries within the confines of one province to establish a congregation, the monasteries of two or three provinces may form one congregation. When these congregations have been established, their general chapters and the superiors and visitors elected by them shall have the same authority over the monasteries of their congregation and over the regulars residing therein as other superiors and visitors have in other orders, and they shall be bound to visit the monasteries of their congregation frequently, to apply themselves to their reform, and to observe whatever has been decreed in the sacred canons[26] and in this holy council. But if at the request of the metropolitan they fail to take steps to carry the aforesaid matters into effect, then they shall be subject to the bishops, as the delegates of the Apostolic See, in whose dioceses the aforesaid places are situated.

Chapter IX
Monasteries Of Nuns Immediately Subject To The Apostolic See Shall Be Supervised By The Bishop; Others, By Those Delegated In General Chapters Or By Other Regulars

Monasteries of nuns which are immediately subject to the Apostolic See, also those known by the name of Chapters of St. Peter or of St. John or by any other name, shall be supervised by the bishops as delegates of that See, anything to the contrary notwithstanding. Those, however, that are supervised by persons delegated in general chapters or by other regulars, shall be left under their charge and protection.

Chapter X
Nuns Shall Confess And Communicate Once A Month. An Extraordinary Confessor Shall Be Provided For Them By The Bishop. Among Them The Eucharist Shall Not Be Reserved Outside The Public Church

Bishops and other superiors of monasteries of nuns shall take special care that the nuns, as they are admonished in their constitutions, confess their sins and receive the most holy Eucharist at least once a month,[27] so that they may fortify themselves by that salutary safeguard valiantly to overcome all the assaults of the devil. In addition to the ordinary confessor, the bishop and other superiors shall provide twice or three times a year an extraordinary one, whose duty it shall be to hear the confessions of all. The holy council forbids, however, that the holy body of Christ be reserved within the choir or the enclosure of the monastery and not in the public church; any indult or privilege notwithstanding.

Chapter XI
The Bishop Shall Visit Monasteries To Which Is Annexed The <Cura> Of Seculars Besides Those Who Belong To Their Household, And He Shall, With Certain Exceptions, Examine Those Who Are To Exercise That <Cura>

In monasteries or houses of men or women to which is annexed the <cura animarum> of secular persons other than those who belong to the household of those monasteries or places, those persons, whether regulars or seculars, who exercise that <cura> shall in all things that pertain to that <cura> and to the administration of the sacraments be subject immediately to the jurisdiction, visitation, and correction of the bishop in whose diocese they are located. Neither may anyone, not even such as are removable at any moment, be appointed thereto except with his consent and after having been previously examined by him or by his vicar;[28] the monastery of Cluny with its territories being excepted, and excepted also are those monasteries or places in which the abbots, generals, or heads of orders ordinarily have their principal residence, and other monasteries or houses in which abbots or other superiors of regulars exercise episcopal and temporal jurisdiction over the parish priests and parishioners; saving the right, however, of those bishops who exercise a greater jurisdiction over the places or persons named above.

Chapter XII
In The Observance Of Episcopal Censures And Diocesan Feasts, Regulars Shall Act In Accord With The Secular Clergy

Not only the censures and interdicts that have emanated from the Apostolic See but also those promulgated by the ordinaries, shall on the bishop's command be published and observed by the regulars in their churches.[29] The feast days also which the bishop shall command to be observed in his diocese, shall be observed by all those exempt, also by the regulars.[30]

Chapter XIII
Disputes Concerning Precedence The Bishop Shall Settle Immediately. Exempt Persons Who Do Not Live In Very Strict Enclosures, Are Obliged To Attend The Public Prayers

All disputes concerning precedence which very often and not without gray' scandal arise among ecclesiastics, both secular and regular, at public processions as well as the burial of the dead, as also in the matter of carrying the canopy and other things of this kind, the bishop shall settle to the exclusion of every appeal; anything to the contrary notwithstanding. All exempt persons, secular as well as regular clerics, also monks, summoned to public processions, shall be obliged to attend; those only being excepted who live permanently in strict enclosure.

Chapter XIV
By Whom Punishment Is To Be Imposed On A Regular Guilty Of A Public Offense

A regular not subject to the bishop and living within the enclosure of a monastery, who has outside of that enclosure committed so notorious an offense as to be a scandal to the people, shall at the instance of the bishop be severely punished by his superior within the time specified by the bishop, and the superior shall report to the bishop concerning this punishment. Otherwise he shall be deprived of his office by his superior and the delinquent may be punished by the bishop.[31]

Chapter XV
Profession Shall Not Be Made Except After One Year's Probation And On The Completion Of The Sixteenth Year

In no religious order whatever, whether of men or of women, shall profession be made before the completion of the sixteenth year, and no one shall be admitted to profession who has been under probation less than a year after the reception of the habit.[32] Any profession made sooner is null and imposes no obligation to the observance of any rule either of a religious body or an order, neither does it entail any other effects whatsoever.[33]

Chapter XVI
A Renunciation Made Or An Obligation Assumed Two Months Before Profession Is Null. The Probation Completed, The Novices Shall Be Either Professed Or Dismissed. In The Pious Institute Of Clerics Of The Society Of Jesus Nothing New Is Introduced. No Part Of The Property Of A Novice Shall Be Given To The Monastery Before Profession

Moreover, no renunciation or obligation previously made, even upon oath or in favor of any pious cause whatsoever, shall be valid, unless it be made with the permission of the bishop or his vicar within two months immediately preceding profession, and it shall not be understood otherwise to have effect unless the profession followed; but if made in any other manner, even with the express renunciation of this favor, also upon oath, it shall be invalid and of no effect. When novices have completed their novitiate, the superiors shall admit to profession those novices found qualified; the others they shall dismiss from the monastery. Hereby, however, the holy council does not intend to innovate or prohibit something that will hinder the order of clerics of the Society of Jesus from serving the Lord and His Church in accordance with their pious institute approved by the holy Apostolic See. Before the profession of a novice, whether male or female, nothing shall under any pretext whatever be given to the monastery from the property of the same, either by parents, relatives or guardians, except for food and clothing during the time of probation, lest the novice should be unable to leave for the reason that the monastery possesses the whole or greater part of his substance, and he would be unable easily to recover it in case he should leave. The holy council, therefore, commands under penalty of anathema both givers and receivers that this be in no wise done, and that to those who leave before profession everything that was theirs be restored. All of which, that it may be done properly, the bishop shall, if need be, enforce with ecclesiastical censures.

Chapter XVII
If A Girl Who Is More Than Twelve Years Of Age Wishes To Take The Habit Of Regulars, She Shall Be Examined By The Ordinary, And Again Before Profession

The holy council, having in view the freedom of the profession of virgins who are to be dedicated to God, ordains and decrees that if a girl more than twelve years of age wishes to take the habit of regulars, she shall not take that habit, neither shall she nor any other at a later period make profession,[34] until the bishop, or, if he be absent or hindered, his vicar, or someone delegated by them at their expense, has carefully examined the wish of the virgin, whether she has been forced or enticed, or knows what she is doing; [35] and if her will is found to be pious and free and she has the qualifications required by the rule of that monastery and order, and also if the monastery is a suitable one for her, she shall be permitted freely to make profession. And that the bishop may not be Ignorant of the time of the profession, the superioress of the monastery shall be bound to give him notice thereof a month beforehand; but if she fails to make the matter known to him, she shall be suspended from office for as long a period as the bishop shall deem proper.

Chapter XVIII
No One Shall, Except In The Cases Permitted By Law, Compel A Woman To Enter A Monastery Or Prevent Her If She Wishes To Enter. The Constitutions Of The Penitents Or Converts Are To Be Observed

The holy council anathematizes each and all persons, of whatever character or rank they may be, whether clerics or laics, seculars or regulars, and with whatever dignity invested, who shall, except in the cases permitted by law,[36] in any way force any virgin or widow, or any other woman whatsoever, to enter a monastery against her will, or to take the habit of any religious order or to make profession; those also who give advice, aid or encouragement, as well as those who, knowing that she does not enter the monastery or receive the habit, or make profession voluntarily, shall in any way take part in that act by their presence, consent or authority. Similarly does it anathematize those who shall in any way and without a just cause impede the holy wish of virgins or other women to take the veil or pronounce the vows.[37] Each and all of those things which must be done before profession or at the profession itself shall be observed not only in monasteries subject to the bishop but also in all others. From the above, however, are excepted the women who are called penitents or converts, whose own constitutions shall be observed.

Chapter XIX
How To Proceed In The Case Of Those Who Desert An Order

Any regular who shall pretend that he entered a religious order through compulsion and fear, or shall allege that he was professed before the proper age or something similar,[38] and wishes for some reason to lay aside the habit, or departs with the habit without the permission of his superior, shall not be listened to unless it be within five years only from the day of his profession, and not even then unless he has submitted to his superior and to the ordinary the reasons for his pretensions. But if before doing this he has of his own accord laid aside the habit, he shall under no circumstances be admitted to assign any reason whatever, but shall be compelled to return to his monastery and be punished as an apostate, and in the meantime he shall not have the benefit of any privilege of his order. Moreover, no regular shall in virtue of any authority whatsoever be transferred to an order less rigorous,[39] neither shall permission be granted to any regular to wear the habit of his order secretly.

Chapter XX
Superiors Of Orders Not Subject To Bishops Shall Visit And Correct Inferior Monasteries, Even Those Provisionally Collated

Abbots who are heads of orders and other superiors of the aforesaid orders who are not subject to bishops but have a lawful jurisdiction over other inferior monasteries or priories, shall, each in his own locality and order, visit <ex officio> those monasteries and priories that are subject to them, also if held <in commendam.> Since these are subject to the heads of their orders, the holy council declares that they are not to be included in what has been decided elsewhere concerning the visitation of monasteries held <in commendam>,[40] and all superiors of the monasteries of the aforesaid orders shall be bound to receive the above named visitors and to execute their commands. Those monasteries also which are the heads of orders shall be visited in accordance with the constitutions of the holy Apostolic See and of each order. And so long as such provisional collations continue, there shall be appointed by the general chapters or by the visitors of the orders cloistral priors, or subpriors in the priories that have a convent, who shall correct and exercise spiritual authority In all other things the privileges and faculties of the above named orders, which concern their persons, places and rights, shall remain firm and undisturbed.

Chapter XXI
Monasteries Shall Be Conferred On Regulars. Head Or Principal Monasteries Shall Not In The Future Be Conferred On Anyone <In Commendam>

Since most monasteries, also abbeys, priories, and provostries, have suffered no little loss both in spiritual and temporal things through the maladministration of those to whom they have been entrusted, the holy council desires to restore them entirely to a discipline becoming the monastic life. But the present state of the times is so adverse and so full of difficulties that a remedy cannot be applied to all at once, or a common one everywhere, as it desired. Nevertheless, that it may not omit anything that may in time provide advantageously for the aforesaid, it trusts in the first place that the most holy Roman pontiff will according to his piety and prudence make it his care, so far as he sees the times will permit, that regulars expressly professed in the same order and capable of guiding and governing the flock be placed over those monasteries which are now held <in commendam> and which have their own convents. Those which in the future become vacant shall be conferred only on regulars of approved virtue and holiness.[41] With regard to those monasteries which are the head and chief ones of the orders, whether their filiations be called abbeys or priories, they who now hold them <in commendam> shall be bound, if a regular has not been appointed as successor thereto, to make within six months a solemn profession of the vows peculiar to those orders or to resign; otherwise the aforesaid places held <in commendam> shall be considered <ipso jure> vacant. But that in each and all of the aforesaid matters no fraud may be perpetrated, the holy council decrees that in the appointments to the monasteries mentioned the character of each person be expressly stated, and any appointment made otherwise shall be considered surreptitious and shall not be protected by any subsequent possession, even though this covers a period of three years.

Chapter XXII
What Has Been Said Concerning The Reform Of Regulars Shall Be Carried Into Execution Without Delay

The holy council commands that each and all of the matters contained in the foregoing decrees be observed in all convents and monasteries, colleges and houses of all monks and regulars whatsoever, as also of all religious virgins and widows, even though they live under the guidance of military orders, also that (of St. John) of Jerusalem, and by whatever name they may be designated, under whatever rule or constitutions and under whatever protection or administration they may be, or in whatever subjection to, union with, or dependence on any order whatsoever, whether of mendicants or non-mendicants, or of other regular monks or canons whatsoever; any privileges of each and all of those above mentioned in whatever form of words expressed, even those known as mare magnum and those obtained at their foundation, also constitutions and rules, even though subscribed to under oath, and also customs and prescriptions, even though immemorial, notwithstanding. But if there are regulars, men as well as women, who live under a stricter rule or statutes, except with regard to the permission to possess immovable property in common, the holy council does not intend to hinder them in their rule and observance. And since the holy council desires that each and all of the aforesaid matters be put into effect as soon as possible, it commands all bishops that in the monasteries subject to them and in all others specifically committed to them in the foregoing decrees, and all abbots, generals and other superiors of the aforesaid orders, that they put into execution the foregoing matters immediately. And if there be anything that is not put into execution, the provincial synods shall supplement and correct the negligence of the bishops. The negligence of the regulars, their provincial and general chapters, and in default of the general chapters, the provincial synods shall attend to by delegating certain persons of the same order The holy council also exhorts and in virtue of holy obedience commands all kings, princes, governments and magistrates to deign to lend, as often as requested, their help and influence in support of the aforesaid bishops, abbots, generals, and other superiors in the execution of the reform indicated above, so that they may without hindrance properly put into effect the foregoing matters to the praise of Almighty God.

Decree Concerning Reform

Chapter I
Cardinals And All Prelates Of The Churches Shall Have Plain Furniture And Table. They Shall Not Enrich Their Relations And Domestics From The Property Of The Church

It is to be desired that those who assume the episcopal office know what are their duties, and understand that they have been called not for their own convenience, not for riches or luxury, but to labors and cares for the glory of God. For it is not to be doubted that the rest of the faithful will be more easily roused to religion and innocence, if they see those who are placed over them concentrate their thoughts not on the things of this world but on the salvation of souls and on their heavenly country. Since the holy council considers these things to be of the greatest importance in the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline, it admonishes all bishops that they reflect often on these things and also by the actions and behavior of their life, which is a sort of perpetual sermon, give evidence that their deportment is consistent with their Office; but above all that they so regulate their whole conduct that others may derive therefrom examples of moderation, modesty, continency, and of that holy humility which recommends us so to God.[42] Wherefore, after the example of our Fathers in the Council of Carthage,[43] it commands not only that bishops be content with modest furniture and a frugal table, but also that they take heed that in the rest of their manner of living and in their whole house, nothing appears that is at variance with this holy ordinance, or that does not manifest simplicity, zeal for God and a contempt for van ties. But above all does it forbid them to attempt to enrich their relations or domestics from the income of the Church,[44] since the canons of the Apostles also forbid that ecclesiastical goods, which belong to God, be given to relations;[45] but if they are poor, let them distribute to them as poor, but they shall not alienate or waste these goods for their sake. Indeed, the holy council admonishes them to the utmost of its ability that they lay aside completely all this human affection of the flesh toward brothers, nephews, and relations, which is the nursery of many evils in the Church. And what has been said of bishops is to be observed not only by all who hold ecclesiastical benefices, whether secular or regular, according to the nature of the rank of each, but it decrees that it applies also to the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, for since the administration of the universal Church is supported by their advice to the most holy Roman pontiff, it can appear wicked if they do not shine in the splendor of the virtues and in discipline of life, which should justly draw upon them the eyes of all.

Chapter II
By Whom Particularly The Decrees Of The Council Are To Be Solemnly Received And Taught

The distress of the times and the malice of increasing heresies make it necessary that nothing be left undone which may appear to be for the edification of the faithful and for the defense of the Catholic faith. Wherefore, the holy council commands patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, and all others who by right or custom ought to be present at the provincial synod,[46] that in the very first provincial synod to be held after the close of the present council, they receive publicly each and all of the matters which have been defined and decreed by this holy council; also that they promise and profess true obedience to the supreme Roman pontiff and at the same time publicly express their hatred of and anathematize all the heresies that have been condemned by the sacred canons and general councils and especially by this council. The same shall in the future be observed by all who are promoted to patriarchal, primatial, archiepiscopal and episcopal sees, in the first provincial synod at which they are present. But if anyone of all the aforesaid should refuse, which God forbid, the comprovincial bishops shall be bound under penalty of divine indignation to give notice thereof immediately to the supreme Roman pontiff, and shall in the meantime abstain from communion with that person. All others who now hold or hereafter will hold ecclesiastical benefices, whose duty it is to assemble in diocesan synod, shall do and observe in the first synod to be held the same as was prescribed above, otherwise they shall be punished in accordance with the prescriptions of the sacred canons. Furthermore, all those to whom pertains the care, visitation, and reform of universities and of [houses of] general studies, shall diligently see to it that the canons and decrees of this holy council are integrally received by the universities and that the masters, doctors, and others in those universities teach and interpret the things that are of Catholic faith in conformity therewith, and at the beginning of each year bind themselves by solemn oath to the observance of this ordinance;[47] and if there be any other matters in the aforesaid universities that need correction and reform, they shall for the advancement of religion and ecclesiastical discipline be reformed and put in order by those to whom it pertains. Those universities, however, that are immediately subject to the protection and visitation of the supreme Roman pontiff, His Holiness will provide for in the matters of visitation and reform through his delegates in the manner aforesaid and as shall seem to him most beneficial.

Chapter III
The Sword Of Excommunication Is Not To Be Used Rashly. Where In Things And Persons The End Can Be Obtained, Censures Are To Be Abstained From And The Civil Authority Has No Right To Intrude

Although the sword of excommunication is the nerve of ecclesiastical discipline and very salutary for holding the people in their duty, it is, however, to be used with moderation and great discretion, since experience teaches that if wielded rashly or for trifling reasons, it is more despised than feared and is productive of destruction rather than of salvation. Wherefore, those excommunications which after previous admonitions are customarily imposed for the purpose of eliciting a so-called disclosure, or by reason of properties squandered or alienated, shall be issued by absolutely no one but the bishop, and even then not except by reason of an unusual circumstance and after a diligent and very complete examination by the bishop of the cause which moves his mind thereto.[48] Neither shall he allow himself to be moved to their imposition by the authority of any secular person, even though a magistrate, but the entire matter shall be left to his own judgment and conscience, whether, after considering the circumstances, place, person or time, he shall himself deem it advisable to impose them. With regard to judicial causes, all ecclesiastical judges, of whatever dignity they may be, are commanded that both during the proceedings and in rendering decisions, they abstain from ecclesiastical censures or interdict whenever the action can in each stage of the process be completed by themselves through their own authority; but in civil causes belonging in any way to the ecclesiastical forum, they may, if they deem it advisable, proceed against all persons, also laics, and terminate suits by pecuniary fines, which shall as soon as they have been collected be without further ado assigned to the pious places of the locality, or by distress of property, or by restraint of the persons, to be effected by their own or other agents, or even by the deprivation of benefices and other legal means. But if the action against the guilty party cannot be completed in this way and there be contumacy toward the judge, he may then in addition to other penalties chastise them also with the sword of anathema, if he should deem it expedient. In criminal causes also where a suit can be completed as was stated above, censures are to be abstained from. But if that effect cannot be easily obtained, it shall be lawful for the judge to make use of this spiritual sword against delinquents, provided the nature of the offense, preceded by at least two admonitions, even by an edict, requires it. But it shall not be lawful for any civil magistrate to prohibit an ecclesiastical judge from excommunicating anyone, or to command him to revoke an excommunication that has been imposed, under the pretext that the contents of the present decree have not been observed, since the investigation of this matter does not pertain to seculars but to ecclesiastics. But every excommunicated person who after the legitimate admonitions does not repent, shall not only be excluded from the sacraments and from intercourse and from friendship with the faithful, but if, bound with censure, he shall with obdurate heart remain therein for a year, he may also be proceeded against as suspected of heresy.[49]

Chapter IV
Where The Number Of Masses To Be Celebrated Is Too Great, Bishops, Abbots And Generals Of Orders Shall Make Such Disposition As They Shall Deem Expedient

It often happens in some churches that by reason of various bequests from deceased persons either so great a number of masses to be celebrated is left with them that it is not possible to take care of them on the particular days specified by the testators, or that the alms given for their celebration is so small that it is not easy to find one who is willing to accept this obligation; the result being that the pious intentions of the testators are defeated and occasion is given of burdening the consciences of those to whom the aforesaid obligations pertain. The holy council, desirous that these bequests for pious purposes be satisfied in the fullest and most useful manner possible, empowers bishops in the diocesan synod and likewise abbots and generals of orders in their general chapters, to decide with regard to the aforesaid churches, which they shall find to stand in need of regulation in this matter, whatever in their consciences they shall after a diligent examination of the circumstances judge to be most beneficial for the honor and service of God and the good of the churches;[50] So, however, that a commemoration be always made of the departed who for the welfare of their souls have left those bequests for pious purposes.

Chapter V
From Well Established Foundations With An Obligation Annexed Nothing Shall Be Removed

Reason requires that from those things which have been well established nothing be withdrawn by contrary ordinances. When, therefore, in virtue of the erection or foundation of any benefices whatsoever or other constitutions, certain qualifications are required or certain obligations are attached to them, then in the collation of the benefices or in any other arrangement whatsoever nothing shall be taken from them. The same is to be observed in the matter of prebends for theologians, masters, doctors, priests, deacons, and subdeacons whenever they have been so established, so that in any provision nothing shall be altered with regard to their qualifications and orders, and any provision made otherwise shall be considered surreptitious.

Chapter VI
How The Bishop Ought To Act With Regard To The Visitation Of Exempt Chapters

The holy council ordains that in all cathedral and collegiate churches the decree published under Paul III, of happy memory, which begins, "Capitula cathedralium,"[51] be observed, not only when the bishop makes his visitation but also as often as he proceeds ex officio or at the request of one against anyone of those included in said decree; so, however, that when he institutes proceedings outside of visitation all the following particulars shall be observed, namely, that the chapter at the beginning of each year choose two of its members, with whose counsel and consent the bishop or his vicar shall be bound to proceed both in shaping the process and in all other transactions connected therewith to the end of the action inclusively, in the presence, however, of the bishop's notary and in his residence or in the customary court of justice. These two, however, shall have only one vote, and one of them may cast his with the bishop. But if in any transaction or interlocutory or definitive sentence both should disagree with the bishop, then they shall within six days choose in union with the bishop a third party; and should they disagree also in the choice of that third party, the selection shall devolve on the nearest bishop and the point on which they disagreed shall be decided in favor of the opinion with which the third party agrees. Otherwise the proceedings and what followed therefrom shall be null and without effect in law. In criminal cases, however, arising from incontinency, of which mention has been made in the decree dealing with <concubinarii>,[52] and in the more outrageous crimes that demand deposition and degradation, where it is feared that judgment may be evaded by flight and the detention of the person is therefore necessary, the bishop may in the beginning proceed alone to a summary investigation and the necessary detention, observing, however, the above order in the rest. But in all cases consideration is to be given to this, that the delinquents be confined in a suitable place in keeping with the nature of the crime and the character of the persons. Moreover, everywhere there shall be given to the bishops the honor which is in keeping with their dignity; to them belongs the first seat in the choir, in the chapter, in processions, and in other public functions,[53] and the place which they themselves may select, and theirs shall be the chief authority in everything that is to be done. If they propose something to the canons for deliberation and the matter is not one that is of benefit to them or theirs, the bishops themselves shall convoke the chapter, examine the votes, and decide according to them.[54] But in the absence of the bishop this shall be done entirely by those of the chapter to whom it by law or custom pertains, and the vicar of the bishop is not to be admitted to this. In all other things the jurisdiction and power of the chapter, if it perchance has any, and the administration of properties shall be left absolutely unimpaired and intact. All those, however, who do not possess dignities and do not belong to the chapter, shall in ecclesiastical causes be subject to the bishop, notwithstanding, with regard to what has been said above, privileges, even those accruing from a foundation, or customs, even though immemorial, or judgments, oaths, pacts, which bind only the authors thereof; the privileges, however, which have been granted to universities of general studies or to the persons attached thereto, shall in all things remain intact. But each and all of these things shall not have effect in those churches in which the bishops or their vicars, in virtue of constitutions, privileges, customs, pacts, or any other right, possess a power, authority, and jurisdiction greater than that included in the present decree; these the holy council does not intend to impair.

Chapter VII
Access And Regress To Benefices Are Abolished. How, To Whom And For What Reason A Coadjutor Is To Be Granted

Since whatever in the matter of ecclesiastical benefices has the appearance of hereditary succession is odious to the sacred constitutions and contrary to the decrees of the Fathers,[55] no access or regress to any ecclesiastical benefice of whatever kind shall in future, even with consent, be granted to anyone, and those thus far granted shall not be suspended, extended, or transferred. And this decree shall apply to all ecclesiastical benefices whatsoever and to all persons, even though distinguished with the dignity of the cardinalate. In the case of coadjutors with future succession also the same shall hereafter be observed, so that they shall not be permitted to anyone in any ecclesiastical benefices whatsoever. But if at any time urgent necessity or the manifest interest of a cathedral church or of a monastery should demand that a coadjutor be given to a prelate, he shall not be given with the right of future succession until the reason therefore has first been diligently investigated by the most holy Roman pontiff,[56] and until it is certain that he possesses all the qualifications which by law and by the decrees of this holy council are required in bishops and prelates;[57] otherwise the concessions made in these matters shall be considered surreptitious.

Chapter VIII
Duty Of The Administrators Of Hospitals. By Whom And How Their Negligence Is To Be Punished

The holy council admonishes all who hold ecclesiastical benefices, whether secular or regular, to accustom themselves, so far as their revenues will permit, to exercise with promptness and kindness the office of hospitality so often commended by the holy Fathers;[58] being mindful that those who love hospitality receive Christ in their guests.[59] Those who hold <in commendam>, by way of administration or under any other title whatsoever, or also have united to their own churches institutions commonly called hospitals, or other pious places established especially for the benefit of pilgrims, of the infirm, the aged or the poor, or if parish churches perchance united to hospitals or converted into hospitals have been handed over to their patrons to be administered by them, it strictly commands that they discharge the office and duty imposed on them and actually exercise the hospitality that they owe from the revenues set aside for that purpose, in accordance with the constitution of the Council of Vienne, renewed elsewhere by this same council under Paul III, of happy memory, which begins, "Quia contingit."[60] But if these hospitals were established to receive a certain class of pilgrims, infirm persons or others, and in the place in which they are located there are no such persons or very few to be found, it commands further that their revenues be diverted to some other pious purpose that is more closely related to their foundation and the more useful in respect of place and time, as shall appear most expedient to the ordinary, aided by two of the chapter experienced in the administration of property and to be chosen by himself; unless it has perchance been specified otherwise, even with regard to this event, in their foundation or institution, in which case the bishop shall see to it that what has been prescribed be observed, or if that is not possible he shall, as above, regulate the matter in a beneficial manner. If, therefore, any or all of the aforesaid, of whatever rank, order and dignity, even if they be laics, who have the administration of hospitals not however subject to regulars where regular observance is in force, shall, after having been admonished by the ordinary, actually neglect to discharge the duty of hospitality in the fulness to which they are bound, they may be compelled thereto not only by ecclesiastical censures and other legal means, but may also be deprived forever of the administration and care of the hospital and others shall be put in their place by those to whom this pertains. The aforesaid persons, moreover, shall be bound in conscience to the restitution of the revenues which they have received in violation of the institution of these hospitals, which shall not be pardoned by any remission or agreement; neither shall the administration or government of such places be in the future entrusted to one and the same person for a longer period than three years, unless it be otherwise provided for in their foundation; notwithstanding, with regard to all of the aforesaid, any union, exemption and custom, even though immemorial, to the contrary, or any privileges or indults whatsoever.

Chapter IX
How The Right Of Patronage Is To Be Proved. On Whom The Office Of Patrons May Be Conferred. Accessions Prohibited. By Whom That Right May Not Be Acquired

Just as it is not equitable to take away the legitimate rights of patronage and to infringe upon the pious intentions of the faithful in their institution, so also is it not to be permitted that under this pretext ecclesiastical benefices be reduced to a state of servitude, as is impudently done by many. That, therefore, in all things a proper procedure may be observed, the holy council decrees that the title of the right of patronage is based on a foundation or on an endowment and is to be proved from an authentic document and by other proofs required by law;[61] or also by repeated presentations during a period of time so remote that it goes beyond the memory of man, or by other methods, as the law may direct. But in the case of those persons, communities or universities in which that right is for the most part usually presumed to have been acquired by usurpation, a more complete and more precise proof shall be required to establish the true title; and even the proof derived from immemorial time shall avail them nothing, unless, in addition to the other things necessary for it, it shall be proved from authentic documents that presentations have been made without interruption during a period of no less than fifty years, all of which have been carried into effect. All other rights of patronage relating to benefices, secular as well as regular, or parochial, or in regard to dignities, or any other benefices whatsoever in a cathedral or collegiate church, as also faculties and the privileges granted in virtue of patronage or with any other right whatsoever to nominate, elect, and present to the same when vacant, shall be understood as completely abrogated and nullified <in totum,> together with the quasi-possession that followed therefrom, and benefices of this kind shall be conferred as being free by their collators and such appointments shall have full effect; excepted are the rights of patronage that belong to cathedral churches and those that belong to the emperor, or to kings, or to those possessing supreme jurisdiction, and to other high and pre-eminent princes who have the rights of sovereignty within their own dominions, and those which have been granted in favor of general studies.[62] Moreover, it shall be lawful for the bishop to reject those presented by the patrons if they are incompetent. But if the appointment belongs to inferiors, they [the presentees] shall nevertheless be examined by the bishop, in accordance with what has elsewhere been decreed by this holy council;[63] otherwise the appointment made by inferiors shall be null and void. The patrons of benefices, however, of whatever order and dignity, also if they are communities, universities, colleges of clerics or laics, shall by no means or for any reason or under any pretext interfere with the receiving of the fruits, revenues and dues of any benefices whatsoever,[64] even if they are by virtue of foundation or endowment truly under their right of patronage, but they shall leave them to be distributed freely by the rector or the incumbent, any custom whatsoever notwithstanding. Neither shall they contrary to the prescriptions of the canons presume to transfer to others the said right of patronage under the title of sale or under any other title.[65] If they act otherwise, they shall be subject to the penalties of excommunication and interdict and shall be <ipso jure> deprived of that right of patronage. Furthermore, the accessions made by way of union of free benefices with churches that are subject to the right of patronage, even to laics, whether they are parochial churches or benefices of any other kind whatsoever, even simple benefices, or dignities, or hospitals, in such wise that the aforesaid free benefices are made to be of the same nature as those to which they are united and placed under the right of patronage, if they have not yet been carried into full effect, or shall in the future be made at the instance of any person, by whatever authority they shall have been granted, even the Apostolic, they shall, together with the unions themselves, be considered as having been obtained surreptitiously, notwithstanding any form of words therein or any derogation which might be considered as equivalent to being expressed; neither shall they be any more carried into execution, but the benefices so united shall, when vacant, be freely conferred as heretofore. Those, however, which have been made within the last forty years and have obtained their full effect and complete incorporation, shall nevertheless be inquired into and examined by the ordinaries as delegates of the Apostolic See, and those which are found to have been obtained surreptitiously or deceitfully shall together with the unions be declared null and the benefices shall be separated and conferred on others.[66] In like manner also all rights of patronage over churches and all other benefices, also over dignities formerly free, which were acquired within the last forty years, or that may in the future be acquired, whether through an increase in the endowment or in consequence of new construction or through some similar reason, even though with the authority of the Apostolic See, shall be carefully examined by the ordinaries as delegates aforesaid, who shall not in these matters be hindered by the authority or privileges of anyone; and those which they shall find to have been not legitimately established for a very manifest necessity of the church, benefice or dignity, they shall revoke <in totum>, and, without detriment to the incumbents thereof and after restoration to the patrons of whatever they may have given therefor, they shall restore benefices of this kind to their former state of liberty; any privileges, constitutions, and customs, even though immemorial, notwithstanding.

Chapter X
Judges To Be Delegated By The Apostolic See Are To Be Designated By The Synod; By Them And By The Ordinaries Causes Are To Be Terminated Speedily

Since by reason of the malicious suggestions of petitioners and sometimes by reason of the distance of places an adequate knowledge of the persons to whom causes are committed cannot be obtained, and hence local causes are at times referred to judges who are not altogether competent, the holy council decrees that in all provincial and diocesan synods some persons who possess the qualifications required by the constitution of Boniface VIII, which begins, "Statutum,"[67] and who are otherwise suited thereto be designated, so that to them also, besides the local ordinaries, may hereafter be committed ecclesiastical and spiritual causes and such as belong to the ecclesiastical forum which have to be referred to their districts. And if one of those designated should happen to die in the meantime, then the local ordinary shall with the advice of the chapter appoint another in his place till the next provincial or diocesan synod, so that each diocese may have at least four or even more approved and qualified persons, as specified above, to whom causes of this kind may be committed by any legate or nuncio and also by the Apostolic See. Moreover, after the designation has been made, which the bishops shall transmit at once to the supreme Roman pontiff, all assignments of other judges made to others than these shall be regarded as surreptitious. The holy council furthermore admonishes the ordinaries and all other judges to strive to terminate causes in as brief a time as possible,[68] and to meet in every way, either by prescribing a definite time or by some other available method, the artifices of the litigants, whether it be in delaying the admission of the suit or in any other part of the trial.

Chapter XI
Various Leases Of Ecclesiastical Property Are Forbidden; Some Already Made Are Invalidated

It usually brings great ruin on churches when their property is, to the disadvantage of those who succeed, leased to others on the present payment of a sum of money. Wherefore, all such leases, if made for payments in advance, shall be in no way considered valid to the disadvantage of those who succeed,[69] any indult or privilege whatsoever notwithstanding; neither shall such leases be confirmed in the Roman Curia or elsewhere. It shall furthermore not be lawful to lease ecclesiastical jurisdiction or the authority to nominate or delegate vicars in matters spiritual,[70] or for the lessees to exercise them <per se aut alios>, and any concessions made otherwise, even by the Apostolic See, shall be considered surreptitious. The holy council declares invalid, even if confirmed by Apostolic authority, leases of ecclesiastical goods made within thirty years, for a long time, or as they are designated in some localities, for twenty-nine or for twice twenty-nine years, which the provincial synod or its delegates shall judge to have been contracted to the detriment of the church and contrary to the prescriptions of the canons.[71]

Chapter XII
Tithes Are To Be Paid In Full; Those Who Withhold Them Are To Be Excommunicated. The Rectors Of Poor Churches Are To Be Piously Supported

Those are not to be tolerated who strive by various devices to withhold the tithes due to the churches, or who rashly take possession of and apply to their own use tithes to be paid by others, since the payment of tithes is due to God, and those who refuse to pay them or hinder those who pay them usurp the property of others.[72] Therefore, the holy council commands all, of whatever rank or condition, on whom rests the obligation to pay tithes, that they in the future pay in full, to the cathedral or to whatever other churches or persons to whom they are legitimately due, the tithes to which they are bound by law. Those who withhold them or hinder their payment shall be excommunicated, and they shall not be absolved from this crime until full restitution has been made.[73] It further exhorts each and all in Christian charity and the duty they owe their pastors, that they do not regard it a burden to assist liberally, out of the things given them by God, the bishops and priests who preside over the poorer churches, for the honor of God and the maintenance of the dignity of their pastors who watch over them.

Chapter XIII
The Cathedral Or Parish Churches Shall Receive A Fourth Part Of Funeral Dues

The holy council decrees that in whatever places it has for forty years been the custom to pay to the cathedral or parochial church a fourth of the funeral dues,[74] as they are called, but has subsequently by virtue of any privilege whatever been granted to other monasteries, hospitals, or any pious places whatsoever, the same shall in the future, with unimpaired right and in the same proportion as was formerly the custom, be paid to the cathedral or parochial church; all concessions, favors, privileges, even those called <mare magnum,> or any others notwithstanding.

Chapter XIV
The Manner Of Proceeding Against Clerics Who Keep Concubines Is Prescribed

How shameful and how unworthy it is of the name of clerics who have dedicated themselves to the service of God to live in the filth of impurity and unclean cohabitation, the thing itself sufficiently testifies by the common scandal of all the faithful and the supreme disgrace on the clerical order. Wherefore, that the ministers of the Church may be brought back to that continency and purity of life which is proper to them, and that for this reason the people may learn to reverence them the more, the more honorable they see them in their conduct, the holy council forbids all clerics whatsoever to presume to keep concubines or other women concerning whom suspicion can be had in their house or elsewhere, or to presume to have any association with them; otherwise they shall be punished with the penalties imposed by the sacred canons or the statutes of the churches.[75] But if after being admonished by their superiors they do not keep away from them, they shall be ipso facto deprived of the third part of the fruits, revenues and dues of all their benefices and of their salaries, which shall be applied to the treasury of the church or to another pious place according to the judgment of the bishop.[76] If, however, they should persist in the same crime with the same or another woman and not obey even the second admonition, then they shall not only forfeit <eo ipso> all the fruits and revenues of their benefices and their salaries, which shall be applied to the aforesaid places, but they shall also be suspended from the administration of the benefices for as long a period as the ordinary, as also the delegate of the Apostolic See, shall deem advisable; and if those so suspended shall still not put them away or shall still associate with them, then they shall be forever deprived of their ecclesiastical benefices, portions, offices and salaries of whatever kind, and shall be declared disqualified and unworthy to hold any honors, dignities, benefices and offices whatsoever in the future, until after a manifest amendment of life it appears good to their superiors on justifiable grounds to grant them a dispensation. But if, after having once put them away, they should presume to renew the interrupted intercourse or to take to themselves other scandalous women of this kind, they shall, in addition to the aforesaid penalties, be chastised with the sword of excommunication.[77] Nor shall any appeal or exemption hinder or suspend the aforesaid execution, and the investigation of all the aforesaid shall pertain not to the archdeacons, or to the deans or other inferiors, but to the bishops themselves, who may proceed summarily and solely in accordance with the truth of the fact ascertained. Clerics who have no ecclesiastical benefices or salaries shall be punished by the bishop himself with imprisonment, suspension from order, disqualification to hold benefices, or in other ways conformable to the sacred canons. Bishops also, if, which God forbid, they do not abstain from crime of this nature and, after being admonished by the provincial synod, do not amend, are ipso facto suspended;[78] and if they persist therein, they shall be reported by that synod to the most holy Roman pontiff, who shall punish them according to the nature of the crime, even with deprivation if necessary.

Chapter XV
From What Benefices The Illegitimate Sons Of Clerics Are Excluded

That the memory of the incontinency of the fathers may be banished as far as possible from places consecrated to God, where purity and holiness are most especially becoming, it shall not be lawful for sons of clerics, who have not been born in lawful wedlock, to hold in those churches in which their fathers have or had some ecclesiastical benefice, any benefice whatsoever, even though a different one, or to minister in any way in those churches, or to have salaries from the revenues of the benefices which their fathers hold or formerly have held.[79] But if a father and son shall be found at the present time to hold benefices in the same church, the son shall be compelled to resign his benefice, or within three months to exchange it for another in another church, otherwise he shall be <ipso jure> deprived of it and any dispensation in this matter shall be considered surreptitious. Furthermore, any reciprocal resignations made in the future by fathers who are clerics in favor of their sons that one may obtain the benefice of the other, shall in every respect be considered as an evasion of this decree and of the prescriptions of the canons; nor shall the collations that followed by virtue of resignations of this kind, or of any others whatsoever made fraudulently, be of any avail to sons of clerics.

Chapter XVI
Benefices With The <Cura> Annexed Shall Not Be Converted Into Simple Benefices. A Suitable Portion Shall Be Assigned To Him To Whom The <Cura Animarum> Has Been Committed, Vicariates Shall Come To An End When The <Cura> Is Reunited To The Benefice

The holy council decrees that secular ecclesiastical benefices, by whatever name they may be designated, which by virtue of their original institution or in any other manner whatever have the <cura animarum>, shall not in the future be converted into a simple benefice, even though a suitable portion be assigned to a perpetual vicar; notwithstanding any favors whatsoever which have not obtained their plenary effect. With regard to those, however, in which contrary to their institution or foundation the <cura animarum>! has been transferred to a perpetual vicar, even though they are found to have been in this state from time immemorial, if a suitable portion of the fruits has not been assigned to the vicar of the church, by whatever name he may be designated, it shall be assigned as soon as possible and within a year from the end of the present council, as the ordinary shall see fit, in accordance with the form of the decree made under Paul III, of happy memory.[80] But if this cannot be conveniently done, or if within that term it has not been done, then as soon as the benefice or vicariate shall have become vacant either by the retirement or death of the vicar or rector, or in any other way, the benefice shall again receive the <cura animarum> and be restored to its former state, and the name of vicariate shall be discontinued.

Chapter XVII
Bishops Shall Maintain Their Dignity With Seriousness Of Manners, And Shall Not Conduct Themselves With Unworthy Servility Toward Ministers Of Kings, Princes Or Barons

The holy council cannot but be deeply distressed when it hears that some bishops, forgetful of their state, dishonor the episcopal dignity by conducting themselves, both in and out of the church, with an unbecoming servility toward the ministers of kings, princes and barons, and as inferior ministers of the altar not only most unworthily give them precedence but even serve them in person. Wherefore, the holy council, detesting these and similar things, renews all the sacred canons, general councils and other Apostolic ordinances that relate to the decorum and esteem of the episcopal dignity, and commands that in the future bishops abstain from such things, and that both in and out of the church, having before their eyes their rank and order, they bear in mind everywhere that they are fathers and pastors; the rest, princes as well as all others, it commands that they pay them paternal honor and due reverence.

Chapter XVIII
The Canons Shall Be Strictly Observed. If At Any Time A Dispensation Is To Be Granted With Regard To Them, It Shall Be Done Validly, With Mature Consideration And Gratis

Just as the public good requires that the fetters of the law be at times relaxed in order that cases and necessities which arise may be met more fully for the common good, so to dispense too frequently from the law and to yield to petitioners by reason of precedent rather than through a certain discrimination of persons and things is nothing else than to open the way for each one to transgress the laws. Wherefore, be it known to all that the most sacred canons are to be accurately observed by all and, so far as this is possible, without distinction. But if an urgent and just reason and at times a greater good should require that one or another be dispensed, this is to be granted after the matter has been investigated and after the most mature deliberation and gratis by those to whom that dispensation pertains, and any dispensation granted otherwise shall be regarded as surreptitious.

Chapter XIX
Dueling Is Punished With The Severest Penalties

The abominable practice of dueling, introduced by the contrivance of the devil, that by the cruel death of the body he may bring about also the destruction of the soul, should be utterly eradicated from the Christian world. Emperor, kings, dukes, princes, marquises, counts, and temporal rulers by whatever other name known, who shall within their territories grant a place for dueling between Christians, shall be <eo ipso> excommunicated and shall be understood to be deprived of the jurisdiction and dominion obtained from the Church over any city, castle or locality in which or at which they have permitted the duel to take place, and if they are fiefs they shall forthwith revert to their direct rulers. Those who entered the combat as well as those who are called their seconds shall incur the penalty of excommunication, the confiscation of all their property, and perpetual infamy, and are in conformity with the sacred canons to be punished as homicides, and if they are killed in the combat they shall be forever deprived of Christian burial.[81] Those also who give advice in the matter of a duel, whether in questions of right or of fact, or in any other way whatever persuade anyone thereto, as also those who are present, shall be bound by the fetters of excommunication and everlasting malediction; any privilege whatsoever or evil custom, even though immemorial, no notwithstanding.

Chapter XX
The Rights Of The Church Are Recommended To The Princes For Observance And Protection

The holy council, desirous that ecclesiastical discipline be not only restored among the Christian people, but also forever preserved unimpaired against all obstacles, besides those things which it has ordained concerning ecclesiastical persons, has deemed it proper that secular princes also be admonished of their duty; being confident that as Catholics whom God has willed to be protectors of the holy faith and the Church,[82] they will not only allow that the Church be restored her right but also will lead back all their subjects to due reverence toward the clergy, parish priests and the higher orders, and will not permit their officials or inferior magistrates through any spirit of covetousness or imprudence to violate the immunity of the Church and of ecclesiastical persons, which has been established by the authority of God and the ordinances of the canons, but that they, together with the princes themselves, render due obedience to the sacred constitutions of the supreme pontiffs and councils. It ordains therefore and commands that the sacred canons and all the general councils, as also other Apostolic ordinances published in the interest of ecclesiastical persons, the liberty of the Church, and against the violators thereof, all of which it renews by the present decree, be accurately observed by all. And hence it admonishes the emperor, kings, states, princes, and each and all, of whatever state or dignity they may be, that the more bountifully they are adorned with temporal goods and with power over others, the more religiously should they respect those things that are of ecclesiastical right as ordinances of God and as covered by His protection; and that they suffer them not to be infringed by any barons, members of their families, governors, or other temporal lords or magistrates, and above all by the ministers of the princes, but that they punish severely those who obstruct her liberty, immunity and jurisdiction. To these they themselves should be an example in the matter of piety, religion and protection of the churches, in imitation of their predecessors, those most excellent and religious princes, who not only defended the Church against injuries by others but by their authority and munificence promoted her interests in a special manner. Wherefore, let each one discharge his duty sedulously in this matter so that divine worship may be celebrated devoutly and the prelates and other clerics may remain quietly and without hindrances in their residences and in the discharge of their duties for the benefit and edification of the people.

Chapter XXI
In All Things The Authority Of The Apostolic See Shall Remain Intact

Lastly, the holy council declares that each and all of the things which under whatever clauses and words have been established in this holy council in the matter of reform of morals and ecclesiastical discipline, under the supreme pontiffs Paul III and Julius III, of happy memory, as well as under the most blessed Pius IV, have been so decreed that in these matters the authority of the Apostolic See is and is understood to be intact.[83]

Decree Concerning The Continuation Of The Session On The Following Day

Since all the things that were to be considered in the present session cannot by reason of the lateness of the hour be conveniently dispatched, the things that remain are deferred till tomorrow by continuing this same session, as was resolved by the Fathers in a general congregation.

Continuation Of The Session On The Fourth Day Of December Decree Concerning Indulgences

Since the power of granting indulgences was conferred by Christ on the Church,[84] and she has even in the earliest times made use of that power divinely given to her, the holy council teaches and commands that the use of indulgences, most salutary to the Christian people and approved by the authority of the holy councils, is to be retained in the Church, and it condemns with anathema those who assert that they are useless or deny that there is in the Church the power of granting them. In granting them, however, it desires that in accordance with the ancient and approved custom in the Church moderation be observed, lest by too great facility ecclesiastical discipline be weakened. But desiring that the abuses which have become connected with them, and by reason of which this excellent name of indulgences is blasphemed by the heretics, be amended and corrected it ordains in a general way by the present decree that all evil traffic in them, which has been a most prolific source of abuses among the Christian people, be absolutely abolished.[85] Other abuses, however, of this kind which have sprung from superstition, ignorance, irreverence, or from whatever other source, since by reason of the manifold corruptions in places and provinces where they are committed, they cannot conveniently be prohibited individually, it commands all bishops diligently to make note of, each in his own church, and report them in the next provincial synod,[86] so that after having been examined by the other bishops also they may forthwith be referred to the supreme Roman pontiff, by whose authority and prudence that may be ordained which is expedient for the universal Church; that thus the gift of holy indulgences may be dispensed to all the faithful piously, holily and without corruption.

Concerning The Choice Of Foods; Fasts And Festival Days

The holy council exhorts furthermore, and by the most holy Advent of our Lord and Savior conjures all pastors, that like good soldiers they sedulously commend to all the faithful all those things which the holy Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all churches, has decreed; also those things which have been established in this council and in the other ecumenical councils, and to make every effort that they comply with all these things, particularly those which tend to mortify the flesh, as the choice of foods and fasts, also those that serve to increase piety, as the devout and religious celebration of festival days often admonishing the people to obey those placed over them, since those who hear them will hear God as a rewarder, while those who despise them will feel God as an avenger.[87]

Concerning The Index Of Books And The Catechism, Breviary And Missal

The holy council in the second session,[88] celebrated under our most holy Lord, Pius IV, commissioned some Fathers to consider what ought to be done concerning various censures and books either suspected or pernicious and to report to this holy council. Hearing now that they have put the finishing hand to this work, which, however, by reason of the variety and multitude of books the holy council cannot distinctly and easily estimate, it commands that whatever has been done by them be given over to the most holy Roman pontiff, that it may by his judgment and authority be completed and made public. The same it commands shall be done with regard to the catechism by the Fathers to whom it was assigned,[89] and likewise with regard to the missal and breviary.

Concerning The Place Of Ambassadors

The holy council declares that by the place assigned to ambassadors, ecclesiastics as well as seculars, whether in the sessions, processions, or in any other acts whatsoever, no prejudice has been created with regard to any of them,[90] but that all their rights and prerogatives, as well as those of the emperor, their kings, states, and princes are unimpaired and intact and continue in the same state in which they were before the present council.

Concerning The Acceptance And Observance Of The Decrees Of The Council

So great have been the misfortunes of these times and such the inveterate malice of the heretics, that in the statement of our faith there has been nothing so clearly and so certainly defined, which they at the instigation of the enemy of the human race have not defiled with some kind of error. For which reason the holy council has taken very special care to condemn and anathematize the chief errors of the heretics of our time and to transmit and teach the true and Catholic doctrine, as it has condemned, anathematized, and decreed. And since so many bishops, summoned from the various provinces of the Christian world, cannot for so long a time without great loss to the flock committed to them and without universal danger be absent from their churches, and since there is no hope that the heretics who have been so often invited, even provided with a safe-conduct which they desired,[91] and have been so long expected, will come here later, and it is therefore necessary finally to bring this holy council to an end, it remains now that it admonish in the Lord all princes, which it hereby does, so to direct their activity as not to permit the things that it has established to be corrupted or mutilated by the heretics, but that they be devoutly received and faithfully observed by them and by all others. But if with regard to their acceptance any difficulty should arise, or something should turn up which requires explanation or definition, which does not appear probable, the holy council trusts that besides the other remedies established in this council, the most blessed Roman pontiff will see to it that for the glory of God and the tranquillity of the Church, the necessities of the provinces be provided for either by summoning, especially from those provinces where the difficulty has arisen, the persons whom he shall judge competent to discuss the matter, or by the celebration of a general council if he should deem it necessary, or in any other way as shall seem to him more suitable.

The Reading Of The Decrees Of The Council Under Paul III And Julius III In The Session

Since at different times under Paul III as well as under Julius III, of happy memory, many things relative to dogma and the reform of morals have been decreed and defined in this council,[92] the holy council wishes that they be now recited and read. <They were read>.

The End Of The Council And The Request For Confirmation From Our Most Holy Lord

Most illustrious Lords and most reverend Fathers, does it please you that to the praise of Almighty God an end be put to this holy ecumenical council and that the confirmation of each and all of the things which have been decreed and defined therein under the Roman pontiffs, Paul III and Julius III, of happy memory, as well as under our most holy Lord, Pius IV, be sought in the name of this holy council by the presidents and the legates of the Apostolic See from the most blessed Roman pontiff?

They replied: It pleases us.

Hereupon the most illustrious and most reverend Cardinal Morone, the first legate and president, blessing the holy council, said: After having given thanks to God, most reverend Fathers, go in peace.

They replied: Amen.

Acclamations Of The Fathers At The Close Of The Council

The Cardinal of Lorraine: To the most blessed Pius, Pope and our Lord, pontiff of the holy universal Church, many years and eternal memory.

Reply of the Fathers: O Lord God, do Thou preserve very long, for many years, the most holy Father to thy Church.

The Cardinal: To the souls of the most blessed sovereign pontiffs, Paul III and Julius III, by whose authority this holy, general council was begun, peace from the Lord, and eternal glory, and happiness in the light of the saints.

Reply: Be their memory in benediction.

The Cardinal: May the memory of the Emperor Charles V and of the most serene kings, who have promoted and protected this universal council, be in benediction.

Reply: Amen, Amen.

The Cardinal: To the most serene Emperor Ferdinand, ever august, orthodox, and peaceful, and to all our kings, states, and princes, many years.

Reply: Preserve, O Lord, the pious and Christian Emperor; O, heavenly Emperor, protect earthly kings, the preservers of the right faith.

The Cardinal: To the legates of the Apostolic See, and the presidents of this council, many years and many thanks.

Reply: Many thanks; the Lord reward them.

The Cardinal: To the most reverend cardinals and most illustrious ambassadors.

Reply: Many thanks; many years.

The Cardinal: To the most holy bishops, life and a happy return to their churches.

Reply: To the heralds of truth perpetual memory; to the orthodox senate many years.

The Cardinal: The holy, ecumenical Council of Trent; let us confess its faith; let us always observe its decrees.

Reply: Let us always confess, always observe.

The Cardinal: We all believe thus, we all think the same, agreeing therein and embracing them, we all subscribe. This is the faith of blessed Peter and of the Apostles; this is the faith of the Fathers; this is the faith of the orthodox.

Reply: Thus we believe; thus we think; thus we subscribe.

The Cardinal: Adhering to these decrees, may we be made worthy of the mercies and grace of the first and great supreme priest, Jesus Christ God; our inviolate Lady, the holy Mother of God, and all the saints interceding.

Reply: So be it, so be it. Amen, Amen.

The Cardinal: Anathema to all heretics.

Reply: Anathema, anathema.

After this the legates presiding commanded all the Fathers under penalty of excommunications, that they before leaving the city of Trent subscribe with their own hand the decrees of the council, or approve them by some public instrument; all then subscribed, and they were in number two hundred and fifty-five, namely, four legates, two cardinals, three patriarchs, twenty-five archbishops, one hundred and sixty-eight bishops, seven abbots, thirty-nine procurators of absentees with lawful commission, seven generals of orders.

Praise Be To God

It agrees with the original; in faith whereof we have subscribed:

I, Angelus Massarellus, Bishop of Telese, secretary of the holy Council of Trent.

I, Marcus Antonius Peregrinus, of Como, notary of the same council.

I, Cynthius Pamphilius, cleric of the diocese of Camerino, notary of the same council.

Notes

1 Cf. Sess. VI, can. 30 and Sess. XXII, chap. 2 and can. 3.

2 Cf. CC.4, 5, D.XXV; Eugene IV in the Council of Florence (Denzinger, Enchridion, no. 693).

3 See I Tim. 1:4; II Tim. 2:23; Tit. 3:9.

4 Cf. <infra>, chap. 4 de ref.

5 Cf. Sess XXII, chap. 3.

6 See I Tim. 2:5.

7 See I Cor. 3:16; 6:19; II Cor. 6:16.

8 Cf. II Council of Nicaea (787), can. 7.

9 Ps 134:15.

10 Sess. III, IV, VI.

11 Cf. c.ult., X, De reliq. et ven. sanct., III, 45.

12 C.2, D.III de cons.

13 Ps. 92:5.

14 Cf. c. I, X, De reliq. et ven. sanct., III, 45.

15 Cf. c.ult., X, h.t., De reliq.

16 Cf. c. I (# Quum igitur in primis), in Clem., De verb. sig., V, II.

17 Cf. cc. II, 13, C.XII, q. I; cc. 2, 6, X, De statu monach., III, 35.

18 Cf. c. 3 (# Porro), VI, De verb. sig., V, 12; C. l, h.t. in Clem., V, II.

19 Cf. c.9, X, De vit. et hon. cler., III. I; c. I, X, De instit., III, 7; c. un. (# I), VI, De stat. regul., III, 16.

20 Cf. c. 35, C.XVI, q. l; c.7, X, De off. jud. ord., I, 31; cc. 3, 4, X, Ne cler. vel monach III. 50; C.1 (# 5), in Clem., De stat. monach., III, 10.

21 C. un., VI, De stat. regul., III, 16.

22 Cf. c. un., VI, De stat. regular., III, 16.

23 C.8, X, De vit. et hon. cler., III, I.

24 Cf. C.43, VI, De elect., I, 6.

25 Cf. c.7, X, De stat. monach., III, 35.

26 Cf. tot. tit. X, De stat. monach., III, 35, De stat. regul. in VI, III, 16, De stat. monach. in Clem., III, 10.

27 C. T (# 2), in Clem., De stat. monach., III, 10.

28 Cf. C. II, C. XVIII. q. 2

29 C. I, in Clem., De sent. excomm., V, 10.

30 C.13, D.XII.

31 Cf. c. ult., X, De stat. monach., III, 35.

32 Cf. C. l, C.XVII, q. 2; C. 16, X, De regular., III, 31; c. 2, h.t. in VI, III, 14.

33 Cf. c.8, X, h.t., III, 31; c. I, h.t., in VI, III, 14.

34 C. 12, X, De regular., III, 31.

35 C 10, C.XX, q.l; C.I, X, De regular., III, 31.

36 Cf. cc. 18, 19, X, De conv. conjug., III, 32.

37 C.2, C.XX, q.2; C.16, C.XXXII, q.2.

38 C.8, C.XX, q.I; C.12, X, De regular., III, 31.

39 Cf. Sess. XIV, chap. II de ref.

40 Cf. Sess. XXI, chap. 8 de ref

41 Cf. Sess. XIV, chap. 10 de ref.

42 Cf. Ps. 101:18: Ecclus. 3:20; 35:21; Matt. 18:3f.

43 C.7, D.XLI.

44 C. 23, C.XII, q.I; c. 19, C.XII, q.2.

45 Cf. Apost. can. 39.

46 Cf. Sess. XXIV, chap. 2 de ref.

47 Cf. Sess. V, chap. I de ref.

48 Cf. cc.8, 41, 42, C.XI, q.3; c.48, X, De sent. excomm., V, 39.

49 Cf. cc. 18, 19, 25, 26, C.XI, q.3; cc.8, 9, 15, 18, 29-31, 38, 39, X, De sent. excomm,.

50 Cf. Sess. XXII, chap. 6 de ref.

51 Cf. Sess. VI, chap. 4 de ref.; Sess. XIV, chap. 4 de ref.

52 Cf. Sess. XXIV, chap. 8 de ref. Matr. and chap. 14 <infra>.

53 C.10, D.XCV.

54 Cf. cc. 4, 5, X, De his, quae fiunt a prael., III. 10.

55 Cf. cc.5, 7, C.VIII, q. I; cc.7, 10, 11l, 13, X, De fil. presb., I, 17; cc.6, 15, X, De jur. patr., III, 38.

56 Cf. Sess. XXI, chap. 6 de ref.; cc. I, 14, C.VII, q. I.

57 Cf. Sess. VII, chaps.I, 3 de ref. and XXII, chap. 2 de ref.

58 Cf. c.2, D.XLII; c. un. D.LXXXV; c. 2, D.LXXXIX; c.30, C.XII, q.2.

59 Matt. 25:35.

60 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 15 de ref.; c.2 in Clem., De relig. dom., III, II.

61 Cf. Sess. XIV, chap. 12 de ref.; c.25, X, De jur. patr., III, 38.

62 Cf. Sess. XXIV, chap. 19 de ref.

63 Cf. Sess. XIV, chap. 13 de ref. and XXIV, chap. 18 de ref.

64 Cf. c. un., X, Ut eccles. benef. sine demin. confer., III, 12.

65 Cc.6. 16. X. De jur. patr., III, 38.

66 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 6 de ref.

67 C.II, VI, De rescript., 1, 3.

68 Cf. cc.5, 10, X, De dolo et cont., II, 14; c.2, X, De sent. et re jud., II, 27; Sess. XXIV, chap. 20 de ref.

69 C.6, C.X, q. 2.

70 Cc. I, 2, X, ne prael. vices sues, V, 4.

71 Cf. c. un., De reb. eccl. non al. in Extrav. comm., III, 4.

72 EX. 22:29; Lev. 27:30 f.; Num. 18:21 ff.; Tob. 1:6; Mal. 3:10; c.66, C.XVI, q.I; cc.6, 7, C.XVI, q.7; cc.14, 23, 26, X, De decimis, III, 30.

73 Cf. c. 5, C.XVI, q.7; cc.5, 22, 25, 32, X, De decimis, III, 30; c. I, in Clem., h.t., III, 8.

74 Cf. c.8, X, De sepult., III, 28; c.2, h.t. in VI, III, 12; C.2, h.t. in Clem., III, 7.

75 Cf. tot. tit X, De cohab. cler. et mul., III, 2.

76 Cf. cc.4, 6, h.t.

77 Cf. cc.2, 3, h.t.

78 C.I, D.XXXIV; cc.13, 16, D.LXXXI.

79 Cf. tot. tit. X, De fil. presb., I, 17.

80 Cf. Sess. VII, chap. 7 de ref.

81 Cf. C.22, C.II, q.5; tot. tit. X, De torneam., V, 13, De cler. pugn. in duello, V, 14, et De homicid., V, 12.

82 Cf. C.20, C.XXIII, q 5.

83 Cf. Sess. VII de ref. at the beginning.

84 Matt. 16: 19; John 20:23.

85 C.2, in Clem., De poenit. er remiss., V, 9.

86 Cf. Sess. XXI, chap. 9 de ref.

87 Luke 10:16; Heb. 13:17; c.9, D.XCIII.

88 Cf. Sess. XVIII at the beginning.

89 Cf. Sess. XXIV, chap. 7 de ref.

90 Cf. Sess. II at the end.

91 Cf. Sess. XIII, XV, XVIII.

92 Cf. Sess. V-VII, XIII, XIV.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT
Session IX - and last - celebrated on the third and fourth day of December, 1563 under the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IV

by the most Reverend Jerome Ragazonus, of Venice,
Bishop of Nazianzus and Coadjutor of Famagusta

Oration

Wherein all that was defined in the Council of Trent pertaining to faith and morals is summarized

"Hear these things, all ye nations; give ear all ye inhabitants of the world."[1]

The Council of Trent which was begun long ago, was for a time suspended, often postponed and dispersed, now at last through a singular favor of Almighty God and with a complete and wonderful accord of all ranks and nations has come to a close. This most happy day has dawned for the Christian people; the day in which the temple of the Lord, often shattered and destroyed, is restored and completed, and this one ship, laden with every blessing and buffeted by the worst and most relentless storms and waves, is brought safely into port. Oh, that those for whose sake this voyage was chiefly undertaken had decided to board it with us; that those who caused us to take this work in hand had participated in the erection of this edifice! Then indeed we would now have reason for greater rejoicing. But it is certainly not through our fault that it so happened.

For that reason we chose this city, situated at the entrance to Germany situated almost at the threshold of their homes; we have, in order to give them no ground for suspicion that the place is not entirely free, employed no guard for ourselves; we granted them that public security which they requested and which they themselves had drawn up; for a long time we awaited them and never did we cease to exhort them and plead with them to come here and learn the truth. Indeed, even in their absence we were, I think, sufficiently concerned about them. For since in a twofold respect medicine had to be applied to their weak and infirm spirits, one, the explanation and confirmation of the teaching of the Catholic and truly evangelical faith in those matters upon which they had cast doubt and which at this time appeared opportune for the dispersion and destruction of all the darkness of errors; the other, the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline, the collapse of which they claim was the chief cause of their severance from us, we have amply accomplished both so far as was in our power and so far as the conditions of the times would permit.

At the beginning, after having in accordance with a laudable custom of our forefathers made a profession of faith, in order to lay a foundation, as it were, for subsequent transactions and to point out by what witnesses and evidence the definition of articles of faith must be supported, this holy council scrupulously and prudently enumerated, after the example of the most approved ancient councils, the books of the Old and New Testaments which must be accepted without a doubt; and that no difficulty might arise as regards the wording of various translations, it approved a trustworthy and certain translation from the Greek and Hebrew. Thereupon, attacking the pillar and bulwark of all heresies concerning the original corruption of human nature, it stated what the truth itself would express if it could speak. Then, with reference to justification, an important matter and assailed in a striking manner by heretics of ancient as well as modern times, it defined, with such wonderful order and admirable wisdom that the spirit of God is easily discerned therein, those things by which the most pernicious opinions of this kind might be refuted and the correct manner of thinking pointed out. Through this most extraordinary decree in the memory of man well-nigh all heresies are strangled and, as darkness before the sun, dispersed and dissipated, and the truth appears with such clearness and splendor that no one can any longer pretend not to see so great a light. Hereupon followed the consideration of the seven sacraments of the Church; first in general, then each one in particular. Who does not see here how exactly, how clearly, copiously, resplendently, and, what is most important, how truly the nature of these heavenly mysteries is summed up? Who can in this body of doctrine, so great and rich in content, in any way still wish for something which is to be observed or avoided? Who will in all this find room or occasion to go astray? Who finally can henceforth entertain any doubt as to the power and efficacy of these sacraments, since it is clear that that grace which daily like trickling water flows through them into the souls of the faithful was then so abundantly present in us? Thereupon followed the decisions concerning the most holy sacrifice of the mass, communion under both species and for little children, than which we have nothing holier, nothing more beneficial, so that they appear to have fallen from heaven rather than to have been composed by men. To these is added today the true teaching concerning purgatory, the veneration and invocation of saints, images and relics, Whereby not only the deceptions and calumnies of heretics are opposed but also the consciences of pious Catholics fully satisfied.

These things, dealing with matters that pertain to our salvation and known as dogmas, have been successfully and happily accomplished, and in this respect nothing more will be expected of us at this time.

But since in the administration of some of the foregoing matters there were some things which were not rightly and properly observed, you have, most esteemed Fathers, very carefully provided that they be carried out in a correct and untarnished manner and in accordance with the usages and institutions of the Fathers. You have thereby removed from the celebration of the mass all superstition, all greed for lucre and all irreverence; forbidden vagrant, unknown and depraved priests to offer this holy sacrifice; removed its celebration from private homes and profane places to holy and consecrated sanctuaries; you have banished from the temple of the Lord the more effeminate singing and musical compositions, promenades, conversations and business transactions; you have thus prescribed for each ecclesiastical rank such laws as leave no room for the abuse of the orders divinely conferred. You have likewise removed some matrimonial impediments which seemed to give occasion for violating the precepts of the Church, and to those who do not enter the conjugal union legitimately you have closed the easy way of obtaining forgiveness.

And what shall I say about furtive and clandestine marriages? For myself I feel that if there had been no other reason for convoking the council, and there were many and grave reasons, this one alone would have provided sufficient ground for its convocation. For since this is a matter that concerns all, and since there is no corner of the earth which this plague has not invaded, provision had to be made by which this common evil might be remedied by common deliberation. By your clear-sighted and well-nigh divine direction, most holy Fathers, the occasion for innumerable and grave excesses and crimes has been completely removed, and the government of the Christian commonweal most wisely provided for. To this is added the exceedingly salutary and necessary prohibition of many abuses connected with purgatory, the veneration and invocation of the saints, images and relics, and also indulgences, abuses which appeared to defile and deform in no small measure the beautiful aspect of these objects.

The other part, in which was considered the restoration of the tottering and well-nigh collapsed ecclesiastical discipline, was most carefully performed and completed. In the future only those who are known for their virtues, not for their ambition, who will serve the interests of the people, not their own, and who desire to be useful rather than invested with authority, will be chosen for the discharge of ecclesiastical offices. The word of God, which is more penetrating than any two-edged sword,[2] will be more frequently and more zealously preached and explained.

The bishops and others to whom the <cura animarum> has been committed, will remain with and watch over their flocks and not wander about outside the districts entrusted to them. Privileges will no longer avail anyone for an impure and wicked life or for evil and pernicious teaching; no crime will go unpunished, no virtue will be without its reward. The multitude of poor and mendicant priests have been very well provided for; everyone will be assigned to a definite church and to a prescribed field of labor whence he may obtain sustenance.

Avarice, than which there is no vice more hideous,[3] especially in the house of God, will be absolutely banished therefrom, and the sacraments, as is proper, will be dispensed gratuitously. From one Church many will be established and from many one, according as the welfare of the people and circumstances demand. Questors of alms, as they are called, who, seeking their own and not the things of Jesus Christ, have brought great injury, great dishonor upon our religion, will be completely removed from the memory of men, which must be regarded as a very great blessing. For from this our present calamity took its beginning; from it an endless evil did not cease to creep in by degrees and daily take a wider course, nor have precautionary and disciplinary measures of many councils thus far been able to suppress it. Wherefore, who will not agree that for this reason it was a very prudent undertaking to cut off this member, on whose restoration to health much labor had been vainly spent, lest it corrupt the remainder of the body?

Moreover, divine worship will be discharged more purely and promptly, and those who carry the vessels of the Lord will be so chastened that they will move others to follow their example. In connection with this point plans were skillfully devised whereby those who are to be promoted to sacred orders might in every church be from their youth up instructed in the habits of Christian life and knowledge, so that in this way a sort of seminary of all virtues might be established. In addition, provincial synods were restored; visitations reintroduced for the welfare of the people, not for the disturbance and oppression of them; greater faculties granted to the pastors for guiding and feeding their flocks; public penance again put into practice; hospitality recommended to ecclesiastical persons as well as to pious foundations; in the bestowal upon priests of the <cura animarum> a memorable and well-nigh heavenly method was adopted; plurality of benefices abolished; the hereditary possession of the sanctuary of God prohibited; excommunication restricted and the manner of its imposition determined; first judgments assigned to the places where the disputes arise; duels forbidden; a sort of bridle put on the luxury, greed and licentiousness of all people, particularly the clergy, which cannot be easily shaken off; kings and princes diligently reminded of their duties, and other things of a similar nature were enacted with the greatest discernment. Who does not see that you, most illustrious Fathers, have also in these matters done your duty in the fullest measure?

Oftentimes in earlier councils our faith was explained and morals corrected, but I do not know whether ever more carefully and more clearly. We had here, especially during these two years, from all peoples and nations by whom the truth of the Catholic religion is recognized, not only Fathers but also ambassadors. And what men! If we consider science, the most learned; practice, the most experienced; mental gifts, the most penetrating; piety, the most religious; and deportment, the most irreproachable. The number also was such that if the present distresses of the Christian world are considered, this assembly appears the largest in attendance of all that preceded it. Here the individual wounds of all were uncovered, morals exposed, nothing was concealed. The propositions and arguments of our adversaries were so treated that it appeared as if their case not ours was the point under consideration. Some things were discussed three and even four times; debates were carried on with the greatest vehemence, for the purpose, namely, that as gold is tried in the fire, so might the power and vigor of the truth be proved through such contests. For how could there be discords among those who have the same view and the same aim?

That being the case, though it was very much desired, as I said in the beginning, to discuss these things conjointly with those for whose sake they were chiefly discussed, nevertheless such provision was made for the welfare and salvation of the absentees that it appears it could not have been otherwise even if they had been present. Let them read with humility, as becomes a Christian, what we have defined concerning our faith, and if some light should come upon them, let them not turn away the face; if they should hear the voice of the Lord, let them not harden their hearts, and if they should wish to return to the common embrace of mother Church from which they severed themselves, they may rest assured that every indulgence and sympathy will be extended to them.

But the best way, most esteemed Fathers, to win the minds of those who differ with us and to hold in the faith and duty those who are in union with us is this, that we in our churches translate into action the enactments which we have here expressed in language. Laws may be the best, they are, however, but mute entities. Of what avail to the Hebrew people were the laws that came from the mouth of God Himself? What advantage did the laws of Lycurgus bring to the Lacedaemonians, those of Solon to the Athenians, for the preservation of liberty, the sole purpose for which they were written? But why do I make mention of such alien and ancient instances? What further instructions and precepts for good and holy living can we or should we desire in the life and teaching of our Lord Christ?

Likewise, what was omitted by our forefathers that belongs either to the true faith or to a commendable conduct? For a long time we have had the salutary medicine, properly mixed and prepared; but if it is to drive out disease it must be taken and through the veins find its way throughout the entire body. From this cup of salvation, dearest brethren, let us first satiate ourselves, and let us be living and vocal laws, a model and rule by which the actions and aspirations of others may be guided, and so each one may convince himself that nothing will be gained from the advantage and honor of the Christian commonweal unless he zealously contributes in so far as is in him.

If this was our solicitude in the past, it must be more scrupulously so in the future. For if after the example of our Master and Savior we must first do and then teach,[4] what can be our excuse if after we have taught we fail to practice our teaching? Who could endure and tolerate us if after we have pointed out that theft is forbidden we ourselves steal? that adultery is forbidden and we ourselves commit adultery?

It is certainly not proper that saints turn away from the holy council, the innocent and virtuous from the precepts of virtue and innocence, the strong and steadfast in the faith from the firmly established teaching of our faith. And such are we expected to be by our people, who, for a long time anxiously awaiting our return, have consoled themselves with the consideration that we on our return will with greater zeal repair this absence. This you will do, I hope, most holy Fathers, with zealous endeavor; and as you have done here so will you also at home render due service to God and to the people.

Now let us first of all, so far as time will permit, express and render our most fervent and undying thanks to the great and eternal God, who has recompensed us not according to the sins that we have committed nor according to our transgressions,[5] but in His great goodness has granted us not only to see this most joyful day, which many desired to see, but also to celebrate it with the full and unqualified consent and approval of the entire Christian people.

Then we must give special and everlasting thanks to our great and illustrious pontiff, Pius IV, who, as soon as he had ascended the chair of St. Peter, was so kindled with the desire to reconvene this council that he directed to it all his energy and attention. He immediately dispatched as delegates the most experienced men to announce the council to those provinces and nations for whose benefit it was chiefly convoked. These traversed nearly all the countries of the North, entreated, implored and adjured; they promised every security and friendship, and even passed over into England. Later, since he could not himself be present at the council, as he so ardently wished, he sent legates distinguished for piety and learning, two of whom, whose memory is in benediction, he wished to be here on the day appointed, though scarcely any bishops had yet arrived.

These, together with a third added shortly after, spent nine inactive months in this place waiting for the arrival of an adequate number of bishops to open the council. In the meantime the Pope himself did nothing and contemplated nothing other than that very many and very distinguished Fathers should come here as soon as possible and all kings and princes of Christendom should send their ambassadors, so that by the common desire and deliberation of all this common matter, the gravest and most important of all, might be fully considered. And what did he later omit in the way of attention, anxiety and expenses that seemed in any manner to contribute to the greatness, liberty and success of this council?

Oh, the extraordinary piety and prudence of our pastor and father! Oh, the fullest happiness to him by whose authority and under whose protection this long tossed about and distracted council found stability and rest! You who have passed away, Paul III and Julius, you I ask, how long and with what yearning have you desired to see what we see! at what costs and labor have you brought this about!

Wherefore, most holy and most blessed Pius, we truly and heartily congratulate you that the Lord has reserved to you such great joy, to your name such high honor, which is the greatest proof of God's benevolence toward you; and with united prayers and supplications we beseech Him that He will for the honor and ornament of His holy Church very speedily restore you to us in good health and preserve you for many years. To the most illustrious Emperor also we must by every right extend our thanks and congratulations.

Having won as a basic point the good will of the most powerful rulers who were kindled with such wonderful zeal for the propagation of the Christian religion, he has kept this city free from all danger and by his vigilance has seen to it that we might enjoy a safe and undisturbed peace; by the constant presence of his three representatives, men of the highest character, which was almost a pledge to us, he brought great security to our minds.

In conformity with his eminent piety he was singularly solicitous about our affairs. He spared no labor to bring out of the densest darkness in which they dwell those who differed from him and from us in matters of faith and to lead them to see the bright light of this holy council. We must, moreover, hold in grateful remembrance the exceedingly pious disposition of the Christian kings and princes in honoring this council with the presence of their highly esteemed ambassadors and in committing their power to your authority.

Finally, who is it, most illustrious legates and cardinals, who does not acknowledge his great obligation to you? You have been the most trustful leaders and directors of our deliberations. With incredible patience and perseverance you have taken care that our freedom either in the discussions or the decisions might not appear to be infringed upon. You have spared no bodily labor, no mental effort, that the business which many others like you have attempted in vain might be brought to the desired termination as soon as possible. In this, you, most illustrious and distinguished Morone, must feel a special and peculiar joy, you who twenty years ago laid the first stone for this magnificent edifice, and now, after many other master-builders have been employed at this work, you have fortunately by your extraordinary and almost divine wisdom put the final hand to it. This remarkable and singular deed of yours will be forever celebrated in words and no age will ever maintain its silence regarding your renown.

What shall I say about you, most holy Fathers? How well you have merited by these your most marvelous deliberations in the interests of the Christian state! What commendation, what glory will be given to the name of each one of you by the entire Christian people! All will acknowledge and proclaim you true fathers, true pastors; everyone will cheerfully reward you for the preservation of his life and the attainment of salvation. Oh, how happy and joyful will that day be for our people, when on our return home from erecting this temple of the Lord they can again for the first time see and embrace us!

But thou Lord, our God, grant that we may by noble needs justify so generous an opinion of ourselves, and that the seed which we have sown in Thy field may yield abundant fruit and Thy word issue forth as dew, and that what Thou hast promised may take place during our time, that there be one fold and one shepherd of all, and he preferably Pius IV, to the eternal glory of Thy name. Amen.

Notes

1 Ps. 48:2.

2 Heb. 4:12.

3 Ecclus. 10:9.

4 Acts 1:1.

5 Ps. 102:10.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Under Pope Pius IV, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, for a perpetual remembrance hereof

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Petition For The Confirmation Of The Council

We, Alexander of Farnese, cardinal-deacon of St. Lawrence in Damasus, vice-chancellor of the holy Roman Church, do certify and attest that on this day, Wednesday, the twenty-sixth of January, 1564, in the fifth year of the pontificate of our most holy Lord Pius IV, by the providence of God, Pope, my most reverend Lords, the Cardinals Morone and Simoneta, lately returned from the holy Council of Trent, at which they had presided as legates of the Apostolic See, did in a secret consistory held at St. Peter's petition our most holy Lord as follows:

"Most blessed Father, in a decree regarding the close of the ecumenical Council of Trent, published on the fourth of December last, it was declared that through the legates and presidents of Your Holiness and of the holy Apostolic See, confirmation of each and all of the things which were therein established and defined under Paul III and Julius III, of happy memory, as well as under Your Holiness, should be requested in the name of the Council from Your Holiness. Wherefore, we, Cardinal John Morone and Cardinal Louis Simoneta, who were then legates and presidents, wishing to execute what is ordained in that decree, do humbly petition in the name of the said ecumenical Council of Trent that Your Holiness deign to confirm each and all of the things which have been decreed and defined therein under Paul III and Julius III, of happy memory, as well as under Your Holiness."

Upon hearing which His Holiness, after having seen and read the contents of the said decree, and after having obtained the advice of my most reverend Lords, the cardinals, replied in these words:

"We, yielding to the petition made to us by the aforesaid legates in the name of the ecumenical Council of Trent regarding the confirmation thereof, with Apostolic authority and with the advice and assent of our venerable brethren, the cardinals, having previously had mature deliberation with them, confirm each and all of the things which have been decreed and defined in said Council under our predecessors, Paul III and Julius III, of happy memory, as well as during the time of our pontificate, and we command that they be received and inviolately observed by all the faithful of Christ, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Thus it is.

A. Farnese, Cardinal, Vice-Chancellor.

Bull Concerning The Confirmation

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort,"[1] who, having deigned to look upon His holy Church, agitated and tossed by so many storms and tempests and day by day more sorely distressed, has at length come to her aid with a suitable and longed-for remedy.

To extirpate so many and most destructive heresies, to reform morals and restore ecclesiastical discipline, to bring about peace and harmony among the Christian people, an ecumenical and general council had already a long time ago been summoned by our predecessor, Paul III, of happy memory, to meet in the city of Trent and had been begun by holding several sessions. Recalled by his successor Julius to the same city, it was, after the celebration of several sessions, by reason of various hindrances and difficulties that prevented its continuance, for a long time interrupted, not without the greatest grief on the part of all pious persons, since the Church day by day increased her prayers for the success of that remedy.

But after having assumed the government of the Apostolic See, we, trusting in the divine mercy, undertook to accomplish, as our pastoral solicitude directed us, so necessary and salutary a work, and supported by the pious zeal of our most beloved son in Christ, Ferdinand, Emperor-elect of the Romans, and of other Christian kings, states and princes, we at length attained that for which we did not cease to labor in watchfulness day and night and for which we have assiduously besought the Father of lights. For since a very large assembly of bishops and other distinguished prelates, one worthy of an ecumenical council, had, by our letters of convocation and impelled also by their piety, gathered from all Christian nations in that city, together with very many other pious persons pre-eminent for their knowledge of sacred letters and divine and human law, under the presidency in that council of the legates of the Apostolic See, and since we so favored the freedom of the council that we by letters to our legates voluntarily left the council free to deal with matters properly reserved to the Apostolic See, those things which remained to be considered, defined and decreed regarding the sacraments and other matters which seemed necessary for the refutation of heresies, removal of abuses, and reform of morals, were dealt with and accurately and very deliberately defined, explained and decreed by the holy council with the fullest freedom and thoroughness.

On the completion of these matters the council was brought to a close with so great unanimity on the part of all who participated therein, that it was manifest that such agreement was the Lord's doing, and it was very wonderful in our eyes[2] and in those of all. For this so singular favor of God we at once ordered public prayers in this fair city in which the clergy and people participated with great devotion, and we made it our care that praises and thanksgivings so justly due be paid to the divine majesty, since the close of the council has brought with it a great and well-nigh assured hope that greater fruits will day by day accrue to the Church from its decrees and constitutions.

But since the holy council itself, in its reverence toward the Apostolic See and following in this also the footsteps of the ancient councils, has, in a decree made in public session, petitioned us for the confirmation of all its decrees made in our time and in that of our predecessors, we, having been made acquainted with the request of the council, first by the letters of our legates, then, on their return, by what they diligently reported in the name of the council, after mature deliberation thereon with our venerable brethren, the cardinals of the holy Roman Church, and, above all, having invoked the aid of the Holy Ghost, after we had ascertained that all those decrees were Catholic, useful and salutary to the Christian people, to the praise of Almighty God, with the advice and assent of our brethren aforesaid, have this day in our secret consistory confirmed by Apostolic authority each and all, and have decreed that they be received and observed by all the faithful of Christ, as we also, for the clearer knowledge of all men, do by the contents of this letter confirm them and decree that they be received and observed by all.

Moreover, in virtue of holy obedience and under the penalties prescribed by the holy canons, and others more severe, even of deprivation, to be imposed at our discretion, we command each and all of our venerable brethren, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, and all other prelates of churches, whatever may be their state, rank, order and dignity, even though distinguished with the honor of the cardinalate, to observe diligently the said decrees and ordinances in their churches, cities and dioceses both in and out of the court of justice, and to cause them to be observed inviolately, each by his own subjects whom it may in any way concern; restraining all opponents and obstinate persons by means of judicial sentences, censures and ecclesiastical penalties contained in those decrees, every appeal being set aside, calling in also, if need be, the aid of the secular arm. We admonish and by the bowels of the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ conjure our most beloved son the Emperor elect and the other Christian kings, states and princes, that they, with the same piety and zeal which they manifested through their ambassadors at the council, for the honor of God and the salvation of their people, in reverence also toward the Apostolic See and the holy council, support, if need be, with their aid and encouragement, the prelates in enforcing and observing the decrees of the council, and not to permit opinions contrary to the sound and salutary doctrine of the council to be received by the people under their jurisdiction, but to forbid them absolutely.

Furthermore, to avoid the perversion and confusion which might arise if everyone were allowed to publish, as he saw fit, his commentaries on and interpretations of the decrees of the council, we by Apostolic authority forbid all persons, ecclesiastics, of whatever order, condition or rank they may be, as well as laics, with whatever honor and power invested, prelates, indeed, under penalty of being prohibited entrance into the church, and others, whoever they may be, under penalty of excommunication <latae sententiae>, to presume without our authority to publish in any form any commentaries, glosses, annotations, scholia on, or any kind of interpretation whatsoever of the decrees of this council, or to decide something under whatever name, even under pretext of greater corroboration or better execution of the decrees, or under any other color or pretext. But if anything therein should appear to anyone to have been expressed and defined in an obscure manner and for that reason stands in need of some interpretation or decision, let him go up to the place which the Lord has chosen,[3] namely, to the Apostolic See, the mistress of all the faithful, whose authority the holy council also has so reverently acknowledged. For if difficulties and controversies relative to those decrees shall arise, their explanation and decision we reserve to ourselves, as the holy council itself has also decreed; being prepared, as that council has justly confided to us, to provide for the necessities of all the provinces as it shall appear to us most suitable; at the same time we declare null and void whatever should be attempted to the contrary in these matters, whether knowingly or unknowingly, by any authority whatsoever.

But that these things may come to the knowledge of all and that no one may plead ignorance as an excuse, we wish and command that this letter be read publicly and in a loud voice by some officials of our court in the Vatican Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles and in the Lateran Church at a time when the people are accustomed to assemble there for the celebration of the masses; and after having been read, let it be affixed to the doors of those churches and also to those of the Apostolic Chancery and at the usual place in the Campo di Fiore, and let it be left there for some time that it may be read and come to the knowledge of all; but when removed thence, copies being according to custom left there, let it be committed to the press in the fair city that it may be more conveniently made known throughout the provinces and kingdoms of Christendom.

We command and decree also that an unwavering faith be given to the transcripts thereof, written or subscribed by the hand of a notary public and authenticated by the seal and signature of some person constituted in ecclesiastical dignity. Let no one, therefore, infringe this our letter of confirmation, admonition, inhibition, will, commands and decrees, or with foolhardy boldness oppose it. But if anyone shall presume to attempt this, let him know that he will incur the indignation of Almighty God and of His blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

Given at Rome at Saint Peter's in the year 1564 of the Lord's incarnation on the twenty-sixth of January, in the fifth year of our pontificate.

I, Pius, Bishop of the Catholic Church.

I, F. Card. Pisanus, Bishop of Ostia, Dean.

I, Fed. Card. Caesius, Bishop of Porto.

I, Jo. Card. Moronus, Bishop of Tusculum.

I, A. Card. Farnesius, Vice-Chancellor, Bishop of Sabina.

I, R. Card. S. Angeli, Major Penitentiary.

I, Jo. Card. S. Vitalis.

I, Jo. Michael Card. Sarasenus.

I, Jo. B. Cicada, Card. S. Clementis.

I, Scipio Card. Pisarum.

I, Jo. Card. Romanus.

I, F. M. G. Card. Alexandrinus.

I, F. Clemens Card. Arae Coeli.

I, Jo. Card. Sabellus.

I, B. Card. Salviatus.

I, Philip. Card. Aburd.

I, Lud. Card. Simoneta.

I, F. Card. Pacieccus y de Toll

I, M. A. Card. Amulius.

I, Jo. Franc. Card. de Gambara.

I, Carolus Card. Borromaeus.

I, M. S. Card. Constant.

I, Alph. Card. Gesualdus.

I, Hipp. Card. Ferrar.

I, Franciscus Card. Gonzaga.

I, Gui. Asc. Diac. Card. Cam.

I, Vitellotius Card. Vitellius.

Ant. Florebellus Lavellinus.

H. Cumyn.

Notes

1 Cf. II Cor. 1:3.

2 Ps. 117:23.

3 Deut. 17:8.

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THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Ten Rules Concerning Prohibited Books Drawn Up By The Fathers Chosen By The Council Of Trent And Approved By Pope Pius[1]

I

All books which have been condemned either by the supreme pontiffs or by ecumenical councils before the year 1515 and are not contained in this list, shall be considered condemned in the same manner as they were formerly condemned.

II

The books of those heresiarchs, who after the aforesaid year originated or revived heresies, as well as of those who are or have been the heads or leaders of heretics, as Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Balthasar Friedberg, Schwenkfeld, and others like these, whatever may be their name, title or nature of their heresy, are absolutely forbidden. The books of other heretics, however, which deal professedly with religion are absolutely condemned. Those on the other hand, which do not deal with religion and have by order of the bishops and inquisitors been examined by Catholic theologians and approved by them, are permitted. Likewise, Catholic books written by those who afterward fell into heresy, as well as by those who after their fall returned to the bosom of the Church, may be permitted if they have been approved by the theological faculty of a Catholic university or by the general inquisition.

III

The translations of writers, also ecclesiastical, which have till now been edited by condemned authors, are permitted provided they contain nothing contrary to sound doctrine. Translations of the books of the Old Testament may in the judgment of the bishop be permitted to learned and pious men only, provided such translations are used only as elucidations of the Vulgate Edition for the understanding of the Holy Scriptures and not as the sound text. Translations of the New Testament made by authors of the first class of this list shall be permitted to no one, since great danger and little usefulness usually results to readers from their perusal. But if with such translations as are permitted or with the Vulgate Edition some annotations are circulated, these may also, after the suspected passages have been expunged by the theological faculty of some Catholic university or by the general inquisition, be permitted to those to whom the translations are permitted. Under these circumstances the entire volume of the Sacred Books, which is commonly called the <biblia Vatabli,> or parts of it, may be permitted to pious and learned men. From the Bibles of Isidore Clarius of Brescia, however, the preface and introduction are to be removed, and no one shall regard its text as the text of the Vulgate Edition.

IV

Since it is clear from experience that if the Sacred Books are permitted everywhere and without discrimination in the vernacular, there will by reason of the boldness of men arise therefrom more harm than good, the matter is in this respect left to the judgment of the bishop or inquisitor, who may with the advice of the pastor or confessor permit the reading of the Sacred Books translated into the vernacular by Catholic authors to those who they know will derive from such reading no harm but rather an increase of faith and piety, which permission they must have in writing. Those, however, who presume to read or possess them without such permission may not receive absolution from their sins till they have handed them over to the ordinary. Bookdealers who sell or in any other way supply Bibles written in the vernacular to anyone who has not this permission, shall lose the price of the books, which is to be applied by the bishop to pious purposes, and in keeping with the nature of the crime they shall be subject to other penalties which are left to the judgment of the same bishop. Regulars who have not the permission of their superiors may not read or purchase them.

V

Those books which sometimes produce the works of heretical authors, in which these add little or nothing of their own but rather collect therein the sayings of others, as lexicons, concordances, apothegms, parables, tables of contents and such like, are permitted if whatever needs to be eliminated in the additions is removed and corrected in accordance with the suggestions of the bishop, the inquisitor and Catholic theologians.

VI

Books which deal in the vernacular with the controversies between Catholics and heretics of our time may not be permitted indiscriminately, but the same is to be observed with regard to them what has been decreed concerning Bibles written in the vernacular. There is no reason, however, why those should be prohibited which have been written in the vernacular for the purpose of pointing out the right way to live, to contemplate, to confess, and similar purposes, if they contain sound doctrine, just as popular sermons in the vernacular are not prohibited. But if hitherto in some kingdom or province certain books have been prohibited because they contained matter the reading of which would be of no benefit to all indiscriminately, these may, if their authors are Catholic, be permitted by the bishop and inquisitor after they have been corrected.

VII

Books which professedly deal with, narrate or teach things lascivious or obscene are absolutely prohibited, since not only the matter of faith but also that of morals, which are usually easily corrupted through the reading of such books, must be taken into consideration, and those who possess them are to be severely punished by the bishops. Ancient books written by heathens may by reason of their elegance and quality of style be permitted, but may by no means be read to children.

VIII

Books whose chief contents are good but in which some things have incidentally been inserted which have reference to heresy, ungodliness, divination or superstition, may be permitted if by the authority of the general inquisition they have been purged by Catholic theologians. The same decision holds good with regard to prefaces, summaries or annotations which are added by condemned authors to books not condemned. Hereafter, however, these shall not be printed till they have been corrected.

IX

All books and writings dealing with geomancy, hydromancy, aeromancy, pyromancy, oneiromancy, chiromancy, necromancy, or with sortilege, mixing of poisons, augury, auspices, sorcery, magic arts, are absolutely repudiated. The bishops shall diligently see to it that books, treatises, catalogues determining destiny by astrology, which in the matter of future events, consequences, or fortuitous occurrences, or of actions that depend on the human will, attempt to affirm something as certain to take place, are not read or possessed.[2] Permitted, on the other hand, are the opinions and natural observations which have been written in the interest of navigation, agriculture or the medical art.

X

In the printing of books or other writings is to be observed what was decreed in the tenth session of the Lateran Council under Leo X.[3] Wherefore, if in the fair city of Rome any book is to be printed, it shall first be examined by the vicar of the supreme pontiff and by the Master of the Sacred Palace or by the persons appointed by our most holy Lord. In other localities this approbation and examination shall pertain to the bishop or to one having a knowledge of the book or writing to be printed appointed by the bishop and to the inquisitor of the city or diocese in which the printing is done, and it shall be approved by the signature of their own hand, free of charge and without delay under the penalties and censures contained in the same decree, with the observance of this rule and condition that an authentic copy of the book to be printed, undersigned by the author's hand, remain with the examiner. Those who circulate books in manuscript form before they have been examined and approved, shall in the judgment of the Fathers delegated by the council be subject to the same penalties as the printers, and those who possess and read them shall, unless they make known the authors, be themselves regarded as the authors. The approbation of such books shall be given in writing and must appear authentically in the front of the written or printed book and the examination, approbation and other things must be done free of charge. Moreover, in all cities and dioceses the houses or places where the art of printing is carried on and the libraries offering books for sale, shall be visited often by persons appointed for this purpose by the bishop or his vicar and also by the inquisitor, so that nothing that is prohibited be printed, sold or possessed. All book-dealers and venders of books shall have in their libraries a list of the books which they have for sale subscribed by the said persons, and without the permission of the same appointed persons they may not under penalties of confiscation of the books and other penalties to be imposed in the judgment of the bishops and inquisitors, possess or sell or in any other manner whatsoever supply other books. Venders, readers and printers shall be punished according to the judgment of the same. If anyone brings into any city any books whatsoever he shall be bound to give notice thereof to the same delegated persons, or in case a public place is provided for wares of that kind, then the public officials of that place shall notify the aforesaid persons that books have been brought in. But let no one dare give to anyone a book to read which he himself or another has brought into the city or in any way dispose of or loan it, unless he has first exhibited the book and obtained the permission of the persons appointed, or unless it is well known that the reading of the book is permitted to all. The same shall be observed by heirs and executors of last wills, so, namely, that they exhibit the books left by those deceased, or a list of them, to the persons delegated and obtain from them permission before they use them or in any way transfer them to other persons. In each and all of such cases let a penalty be prescribed, covering either the confiscation of books or in the judgment of the bishops or inquisitors another that is in keeping with the degree of the contumacy or the character of the offense.

With reference to those books which the delegated Fathers have examined and expurgated or have caused to be expurgated, or under certain conditions have permitted to be printed again, the book-dealers as well as others shall observe whatever is known to have been prescribed by them. The bishops and general inquisitors, however, in view of the authority which they have, are free to prohibit even those books which appear to be permitted by these rules, if they should deem this advisable in their kingdoms, provinces or dioceses. Moreover, the secretary of those delegated has by order of our most holy Lord [the pope] to hand over in writing to the notary of the holy universal Roman inquisition the names of the books which have been expurgated by the delegated Fathers as well as the names of those to whom they committed this task.

Finally, all the faithful are commanded not to presume to read or possess any books contrary to the prescriptions of these rules or the prohibition of this list. And if anyone should read or possess books by heretics or writings by any author condemned and prohibited by reason of heresy or suspicion of false teaching, he incurs immediately the sentence of excommunication. He, on the other hand, who reads or possesses books prohibited under another name shall, besides incurring the guilt of mortal sin, be severely punished according to the judgment of the bishops.

Notes

1 Cf. Sess. XXV, decree concerning the index of books.

2 For the mode of procedure suggested to the bishops and local inquisitors, cf. the bull <Coeli et terrae>, of Sixtus V, 5 Jan., 1586.

3 Fifth Lateran, Hardouin, IX, pp. 1775-77; Schroeder, <Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils>, pp. 504, 644 f.

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BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNION OF BREST (1595)

Treaty Of Brest Document

Articles Concerning Union With The Roman Church

[These articles were accepted by the hierarchy of the Church in Kiev in three languages: Ukrainian, Polish, and Latin. It is on this basis that the Church of Kiev is in communion with the Roman Catholic Church.

The articles frequently refer to the King of Poland. The function of the King of Poland vis-à-vis the Greek-Catholic Church were assumed by the Austrian Emperor. As there is no longer a King or Emperor, and the Greek-Catholic Church is certainly not state-supported in Ukraine, these functions revert to the synod or lapse entirely.]

We require prior guarantees of these articles from the Romans before we enter into union with the Roman Church.

1.—Since there is a quarrel between the Romans and Greeks about the procession of the Holy Spirit, which greatly impede unity really for no other reason than that we do not wish to understand one another—we ask that we should not be compelled to any other creed but that we should remain with that which was handed down to us in the Holy Scriptures, in the Gospel, and in the writings of the holy Greek Doctors, that is, that the Holy Spirit proceeds, not from two sources and not by a double procession, but from one origin, from the Father through the Son.

2.—That the divine worship and all prayers and services of Orthros, Vespers, and the night services shall remain intact (without any change at all) for us according to the ancient custom of the Eastern Church, namely: the Holy Liturgies of which there are three, that of Saint Basil, that of Saint Chrysostom, and that of Epiphanius which is served during the Great Lent with Presanctified Gifts, and all other ceremonies and services of our Church, as we have had them until now, for in Rome these same services are kept within the obedience of the Supreme Pontiff, and that these services should be in our own language.

3.—That the Mysteries of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ should be retained entirely as we have been accustomed until now, under the species of bread and wine; that this should remain among us eternally the same and unchangeable.

4.—That the Mystery of Holy Baptism and its form should remain among us unchanged as we have served it until now, without any addition.

5.—We shall not debate about purgatory, but we entrust ourselves to the teaching of the Holy Church.

6.—We will accept the new calendar, if the old one cannot be, but without any violation of the Paschalia [the Easter cycle] and our other feasts as they were in the time of unity, because we have some special feasts which the Romans do not have; on the sixth of January we celebrate the memory of the Baptism of the Lord Christ and the first revelation of the One God in Trinity. We call this feast Theophany, and on this day we have a special service of the Blessing of Waters.

7.—That we should not be compelled to take part in processions on the day of Corpus Christi—that we should not have to make such processions with our Mysteries inasmuch as our use of the Mysteries is different.

8.—Likewise that we should not be compelled to have the blessing of fire, the use of wooden clappers, and similar ceremonies before Easter, for we have not had such ceremonies in our Church until now, but that we should maintain our ceremonies according to the rubrics and the Typicon of our Church.

9.—That the marriages of priests remain intact, except for bigamists.

10.—That the metropolitanate, the episcopate, and other ecclesiastical dignities shall be conferred on no one except the Rus' people or Greeks, who must be of our religion. And since our Canons require that the Metropolitain, the Bishops, and so on, first elected by the clergy, must be worthy people, we ask the King's Grace that the election be free, leaving intact the authority of the King's Grace to appoint the one whom he pleases. This means that as soon as someone has died we should elect four candidates, and the King's Grace will freely chose whom he wishes from among the four. This is necessary, especially so that the persons named to such positions will be worthy and educated, for the King's Grace, who is not of the same religion, cannot know who is worthy of this, and thus it has happened that such uninstructed people were appointed that they were scarcely literate. If the King's Grace should wish to appoint a layman to these spiritual posts, the appointee must receive Holy Orders within no more than three months under pain of losing appointment, according to the Constitution of the Parliament of Grondo and the Articles of King Sigmund Augustus of blessed memory, approved by the present King's Grace, for at the moment there are some who hold certain spiritual appointments in their hands but do not receive Holy Orders even for years, justifying themselves with some sort of royal "exemptions". We ask that in future this should not be.

11.—That our Bishops should not send to Rome for the sacrae (permission to consecrate), but, if the King's Grace names someone to a bishopric, that according to the old custom the Archbishop—Metropolitain should have the duty and the right to ordain him. The Metropolitain himself, before entering upon the office of metropolitain, should send the sacrae to the Pope. Then, after he has received the sacrae from Rome, let the bishops ordain him, at least two of them, according to their custom. If a bishop is elected Metropolitain, let him not send for the sacrae, because he already has the episcopal cheirotonia; he may take an oath of obedience to the Supreme Pontiff in the presence of the Archbishop of Gniezno (who on that occasion will not be functioning as Archbishop, but as Primate of Poland).

12.—So that our authority would be greater and we should govern our faithful with greater respect, we ask seats in the Senate of the King's Grace for the Metropolitain and the bishops. We ask this for many reasons for we have the same office and hierarchical dignity as the Roman Bishops.

13.—And if in time the Lord shall grant that the rest of the brethren of our people and of the Greek Religion shall come to this same holy unity, it shall not be held against us or begrudged to us that we have preceded them in this unity, for we have to do this for definite, serious reasons for harmony in the Christian republic [Poland] to avoid further confusion and discord.

14.—Most important of all, it is necessary that if in our dioceses presbyters—Archimandrates, Hegumenoi, presbyters, and other clergy, but especially foreigners, even bishops and monks who might come from Greece—of our Religion should not wish to be under our obedience they should never dare to perform any divine service. For if that were allowed then there would never be any order.

15.—If in the future someone of our Religion should want to join the Roman Church, denying his own Religion and Ceremonies, let him not be accepted, since he is degrading the Ceremonies of the one Church of God, since, being already in one Church, we shall have one Pope.

16.—That marriages may freely take place between the Roman faithful and the Rus' faithful, without any compulsion as to Religion, for both are already one Church.

17.—Inasmuch as we have lost the possession of many ecclesiastical properties, some of which our predecessors alienated by rights other than the free administration of these goods during their personal lives, so that we find ourselves in such want and poverty that we cannot provide satisfactorily for the needs of the churches, and indeed we ourselves scarcely have the means of subsistence, we require that these properties be returned to our churches. If anyone has legitimately acquired the lifetime usufruct of any ecclesiastical benefice, let him be obliged to pay an annual rent to the Church, and upon his death let the benefice revert to the Church. Such a benefice shall not be granted to anyone without the consent of the bishop and his chapter. Every benefice to which the Church presently has title is to be recorded in the Gospel Books, even if the Church does not exercise any control over some benefices. In that way they will at least belong indisputably to the Church. With this accomplished, the Church can then undertake to regain those benefices which have been alienated at an earlier time.

18.—Upon the death of the Metropolitain or of a bishop, the wardens and state treasurer shall not interfere in the ecclesiastical properties. As is the custom and tradition of the Roman Church, these properties shall be administered by the chapter until a new Metropolitain or bishop is elected. While this is already guaranteed to us by our privilege, we ask that it be incorporated into the constitution of the kingdom.

19.—That Archimandrates, Hegumenoi, monks and their monasteries, according to the old custom shall be under the obedience of the bishops of their dioceses, for among us there is only one monastic Rule, which even the bishops use, and we do not have "Provincials".

20.—That at the tribunal among the Roman Clergy we also should have two of our [clergy] to look after the affairs of our Church.

21.—That the archimandrates, hegumenoi, priests, archdeacons, and our other clergy be held in the same esteem as the Roman clergy, and should enjoy and make use of the same liberties and privileges which were granted by King Ladislaus; they should be exempt from all taxation, both personal and concerning ecclesiastical property, in contrast to the unjust practice which has hitherto obtained—if they possess some private properties then they should pay taxes on them, whatever is just, as other proprietors do. Any priest and other clergy who possesses ecclesiastical properties within the territories of the senators and nobility are subject to them and must obey them: they should not appeal to the courts or enter into quarrels with the landlords, but must acknowledge the right of patronage. But accusations regarding the person of the clergy and their spiritual functions, are subject only to the bishop, and the misdemeanors of the clergy shall be punished exclusively by the bishop on the complaints of the landlord. Thus everyone, clergy and laity, will have their rights preserved whole and inviolate.

22.—That the Romans should not forbid us to ring bells in our churches on Good Friday, both in the cities and everywhere else.

23.—That we should not be forbidden to visit the sick with the Most Holy Mysteries, publicly, with lights and vestments, according to our rubrics.

24.—That without any interference we might be free to hold processions, as many as are required, on holy days, according to our custom.

25.—That our Rus' monasteries and churches should not be changed into Roman Catholic churches. And if any Roman Catholic has damaged or destroyed one of our churches or monasteries, in his territory, he shall be obliged to repair it or build a new one for the exclusive use of the Rus' people.

26.—The spiritual Church Brotherhoods which have recently been erected by the Patriarchs and confirmed by the King's Grace—for example, those in L'viv, in Brest, in Vilnius, and elsewhere—in which we see great benefit for the Church of God and the cultivation of divine worship if they wish to abide in this unity, shall be maintained in all their integrity under the obedience of their Metropolitain and of the bishops in whose dioceses they function and to whom each of them is properly ascribed.

27.—That we shall be free to have schools and seminaries in the Greek and Church—Slavonic languages in the localities where it is most convenient, and that our printing-presses shall be free (of course under the supervision of the Metropolitain and bishops, so that no heresies be propagated and nothing be printed without the knowledge and consent of the Metropolitain and bishops).

28.—Since there have been great abuses and disobedience on the part of some priests in the dominions of the King's Grace as well as in the lands of the lords and magnates, so that these priests have obtained the protection of the landlords and magnates for their abuses, dissolving marriages, so that the wardens and other officials profit to some extent by the fees from these divorces and therefore shield these priests, not permitting the bishops and the synod to summon such wayward clerics, abusing and even beating our visitators, we request that such abuses should cease, and that we would be free to correct the wayward and keep order, and if someone should be excommunicated because of his disobedience or for an abuse, let the government and the lords, once they have been informed by the bishops or the visitator, not permit such excommunicated clergy to perform clerical functions or serve in the churches until they have been absolved by their pastors from their faults. This shall also be understood for archimandrates and hegumenoi and other ecclesiastics who are subject to the bishops and to their authority.

29.—Than the Cathedrals in the main cities and all the parish churches everywhere in the dominions of the King's Grace, of every place and jurisdiction, whether founded by the King, or by the city, or by a local lord, shall be subject to the bishop and under his authority, and that lay people shall not administer them under any pretext, for there are those who meddle against the obedience of the bishop, arranging matters as they wish and who do not want to obey their bishops. Let this not occur in the future.

30.—And if someone has been excommunicated by his bishops for any offense, let him not be received into the Roman Church but, on the contrary, let his excommunication be proclaimed there also. And we shall do the same with regard to those excommunicated from the Roman Church, for this is a joint concern.

31.—And when the Lord God by His will and holy grace shall permit the rest of our brothers of the Eastern Church of the Greek tradition to come to the holy unity with the Western Church, and later in this common union and by the permission of the Universal Church there should be any change in the ceremonies and Typicon of the Greek Church, we shall share all this as people of the same religion.

32.—We have heard that some have departed for Greece to procure ecclesiastical powers and return here to advise and influence the clergy and extend their jurisdiction over us. We, therefore, request the King's Grace to order precautions to be taken on the state borders so that anyone bearing such jurisdictions and excommunications be barred from entering the kingdom. Otherwise, grave misunderstandings could arise between the pastors and the flocks of the Church.

33.—All these things we the undersigned, desiring holy concord for the praise of God's Name and for the peace of the Holy Church of Christ, we have given these articles which we consider necessary for our Church and for which we require agreement in advance and guarantees from the Holy Father the Pope and from the King's Grace, our merciful lord, for greater security, we have committed our Instructions to our Reverend brothers in God, father Hypatius Potij, the Protothrone, Bishop Volodymyr of Brest, and Father Cyril Terletsky, Exarch and Bishop of Lutsk and Ostrih, so that in our name and in their own name they should ask the Most Holy Father the Pope, and also the King's Grace, our merciful lord, to confirm and guarantee beforehand all the articles which we have here given in writing, so that assured as to the faith, the Mysteries, and our ceremonies, we might come to this holy accord with the Roman Church without any violation of our conscience and the flock of Christ committed unto us and likewise that others who are still hesitating, seeing that we retain everything inviolate, might more quickly come after us to this holy union.

Given in the Year of God 1595, the month of June, the first day according to the Old Calendar.

Michael, Metropolitain of Kiev and Halych and all Rus'

Hypatius, Bishop of Volodymyr and Brest

Cyril Terletsky, by the grace of God Exarch and Bishop of Lutsk and

Ostrih Leontius Pelchytsky, by the grace of God Bishop of Pinsk and Turov

[the seals of eight bishops are added, including Gedeon Balaban of L'viv and Dionysius Zbirujski of Kholm.]

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FIRST VATICAN COUNCIL (1869-1870)

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Introduction

This council was summoned by Pope Pius IX by the bull Aeterni Patris of 29 June 1868. The first session was held in St. Peter's basilica on 8 December 1869 in the presence and under the presidency of the Pope.

The purpose of the council was, besides the condemnation of contemporary errors, to define the Catholic doctrine concerning the Church of Christ. In fact, in the three following sessions, there was discussion and approval of only two constitutions: Dogmatic Constitution On The Catholic Faith and First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ, the latter dealing with the primacy and infallibility of the bishop of Rome. The discussion and approval of the latter constitution gave rise, particularly in Germany, to bitter and most serious controversies which led to the withdrawal from the Church of those known as "Old Catholics".

The outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war led to the interruption of the council. It was in fact never resumed, nor was it ever officially closed. As in other councils at which the Pope was present and presided, the decrees were in the form of bulls, at the end of which was the clear declaration: "with the approval of the sacred council". Very large numbers attended this council, including, for the first time, bishops from outside Europe and its neighboring lands. Bishops from the eastern Orthodox Churches were also invited, but did not come.

The decrees of the council were published in various simultaneous editions. Later they were included in volume 7 of Collectio Lacensis (1892) and in volumes 49-53 of Mansi's collection (1923-1927). The collection which we use is that entitled Acta et decreta sacrosancti oecumenici concilii Vaticani in quatuor prionbus sessionibus, Rome 1872. Comparison with other editions reveals no discrepancies, indeed absolute agreement.

Session 1 : 8 December 1869

Decree of opening of the council

Pius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. Most reverend fathers, is it your pleasure that, to the praise and glory of the Holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for the increase and exaltation of the Catholic faith and religion, for the uprooting of current errors, for the reformation of the clergy and the Christian people, and for the common peace and concord of all, the holy ecumenical Vatican council should be opened, and be declared to have been opened?

[They replied: Yes]

Pius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. Most reverend fathers, is it your pleasure that the next session of the holy ecumenical Vatican council should be held on the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord, that is 6 January 1870?

[They replied: Yes]

Session 2 : 6 January 1870

Profession of faith

1. I, Pius, bishop of the Catholic Church, with firm faith believe and profess each and every article contained in the profession of faith which the Holy Roman Church uses, namely: I believe in one God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things seen and unseen. And in one Lord Jesus Christ the only-begotten Son of God. Born of the Father before all ages. God from God, light from light, true God from true God. Begotten not made, of one substance with the Father: through whom all things were made. Who for us humans and for our salvation came down from heaven. He was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary: and became man. He was crucified also for us, he suffered under Pontius Pilate and was buried. The third day he rose again according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the lord and the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. Who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified: who spoke through the prophets. And one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the remission of Sins. And I look for the resurrection of the dead. And the life of the world to come Amen.

2. Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions and all other observances and constitutions of that same Church I most firmly accept and embrace.

3. Likewise I accept Sacred Scripture according to that sense which Holy mother Church held and holds, since it is her right to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures; nor will I ever receive and interpret them except according to the unanimous consent of the fathers.

4. I profess also that there are seven sacraments of the new law, truly and properly so called, instituted by our lord Jesus Christ and necessary for salvation, though each person need not receive them all. They are:

> 1. baptism, 2. confirmation, 3. the Eucharist, 4. penance, 5. last anointing, 6. order and 7. matrimony; and they confer grace. Of these baptism, confirmation and order may not be repeated without sacrilege.

5. I likewise receive and accept the rites of the Catholic Church which have been received and approved in the solemn administration of all the aforesaid sacraments.

6. I embrace and accept the whole and every part of what was defined and declared by the holy Council of Trent concerning original sin and justification. Likewise

7. I profess that in the mass there is offered to God a true, proper and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead; and that in the most Holy sacrament of the Eucharist there is truly, really and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our lord Jesus Christ; and that there takes place the conversion of the whole substance of the bread into his body, and of the whole substance of the wine into his blood, and this conversion the Catholic Church calls transubstantiation.

8. I confess that under either species alone the whole and complete Christ and the true sacrament are received.

9. I firmly hold that purgatory exists, and that the souls detained there are helped by the suffrages of the faithful. Likewise, that the saints reigning with Christ are to be honored and prayed to, and that they offer prayers to God on our behalf, and that their relics should be venerated.

10. I resolutely assert that images of

> 1. Christ and
> 2. the ever Virgin Mother of God, and likewise those of
> 3. the other saints, are to be kept and retained, and that due honor and reverence is to be shown them.

11. I affirm that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in the Church, and that their use is eminently beneficial to the Christian people.

12. I acknowledge the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all the Churches [1].

13. Likewise all other things which have been transmitted, defined and declared by the sacred canons and the ecumenical councils, especially the sacred Trent, I accept unhesitatingly and profess; in the same way whatever is to the contrary, and whatever heresies have been condemned, rejected and anathematized by the Church, I too condemn, reject and anathematize.

This true Catholic faith, outside of which none can be saved, which I now freely profess and truly hold, is what I shall steadfastly maintain and confess, by the help of God, in all its completeness and purity until my dying breath, and I shall do my best to ensure [2] that all others do the same. This is what I, the same Pius, promise, vow and swear. So help me God and these holy gospels of God.

Session 3 : 24 April 1870

Dogmatic constitution on the Catholic faith

Pius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the Sacred Council, for an everlasting record.

1. The Son of God, redeemer of the human race, our lord Jesus Christ, promised, when about to return to his heavenly Father, that he would be with this Church militant upon earth all days even to the end of the world [3]. Hence never at any time has he ceased to stand by his beloved bride, assisting her when she teaches, blessing her in her labors and bringing her help when she is in danger.

2. Now this redemptive providence appears very clearly in unnumbered benefits, but most especially is it manifested in the advantages which have been secured for the Christian world by ecumenical councils, among which the Council of Trent requires special mention, celebrated though it was in evil days.

3. Thence came 1. a closer definition and more fruitful exposition of the holy dogmas of religion and 2. the condemnation and repression of errors; thence too, 3. the restoration and vigorous strengthening of ecclesiastical discipline, 4. the advancement of the clergy in zeal for learning and piety, 5. the founding of colleges for the training of the young for the service of religion; and finally 6. the renewal of the moral life of the Christian people by a more accurate instruction of the faithful, and a more frequent reception of the sacraments. What is more, thence also came 7. a closer union of the members with the visible head, and an increased vigor in the whole mystical body of Christ. Thence came 8. the multiplication of religious orders and other organizations of Christian piety; thence too 9. that determined and constant ardor for the spreading of Christ's kingdom abroad in the world, even at the cost of shedding one's blood.

4. While we recall with grateful hearts, as is only fitting, these and other outstanding gains, which the divine mercy has bestowed on the Church especially by means of the last ecumenical synod, we cannot subdue the bitter grief that we feel at most serious evils, which have largely arisen either because the authority of the sacred synod was held in contempt by all too many, or because its wise decrees were neglected.

5. Everybody knows that those heresies, condemned by the fathers of Trent, which rejected the divine magisterium of the Church and allowed religious questions to be a matter for the judgment of each individual, have gradually collapsed into a multiplicity of sects, either at variance or in agreement with one another; and by this means a good many people have had all faith in Christ destroyed.

6. Indeed even the Holy Bible itself, which they at one time claimed to be the sole source and judge of the Christian faith, is no longer held to be divine, but they begin to assimilate it to the inventions of myth.

7. Thereupon there came into being and spread far and wide throughout the world that doctrine of rationalism or naturalism,—utterly opposed to the Christian religion, since this is of supernatural origin,—which spares no effort to bring it about that Christ, who alone is our lord and savior, is shut out from the minds of people and the moral life of nations. Thus they would establish what they call the rule of simple reason or nature. The abandonment and rejection of the Christian religion, and the denial of God and his Christ, has plunged the minds of many into the abyss of pantheism, materialism and atheism, and the consequence is that they strive to destroy rational nature itself, to deny any criterion of what is right and just, and to overthrow the very foundations of human society.

8. With this impiety spreading in every direction, it has come about, alas, that many even among the children of the Catholic Church have strayed from the path of genuine piety, and as the truth was gradually diluted in them, their Catholic sensibility was weakened. Led away by diverse and strange teachings [4] and confusing nature and grace, human knowledge and divine faith, they are found to distort the genuine sense of the dogmas which Holy mother Church holds and teaches, and to endanger the integrity and genuineness of the faith.

9. At the sight of all this, how can the inmost being of the Church not suffer anguish? For just as God wills all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth [5], just as Christ came to save what was lost [6] and to gather into one the children of God who were scattered abroad [7], so the Church, appointed by God to be mother and mistress of nations, recognizes her obligations to all and is always ready and anxious to raise the fallen, to steady those who stumble, to embrace those who return, and to strengthen the good and urge them on to what is better. Thus she can never cease from witnessing to the truth of God which heals all [8] and from declaring it, for she knows

that these words were directed to her: My spirit which is upon you, and my words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth from this time forth and for evermore.[9]

10. And so we, following in the footsteps of our predecessors, in accordance with our supreme apostolic office, have never left off teaching and defending Catholic truth and condemning erroneous doctrines. But now it is our purpose to profess and declare from this chair of Peter before all eyes the saving teaching of Christ, and, by the power given us by God, to reject and condemn the contrary errors. This we shall do with the bishops of the whole world as our co-assessors and fellow-judges, gathered here as they are in the Holy Spirit by our authority in this ecumenical council, and relying on the word of God in Scripture and tradition as we have received it, religiously preserved and authentically expounded by the Catholic Church.

Chapter 1
On God the creator of all things

1. The Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church believes and acknowledges that there is one true and living God, creator and lord of heaven and earth, almighty, eternal, immeasurable, incomprehensible, infinite in will, understanding and every perfection.

2. Since he is one, singular, completely simple and unchangeable spiritual substance, he must be declared to be in reality and in essence, distinct from the world, supremely happy in himself and from himself, and inexpressibly loftier than anything besides himself which either exists or can be imagined.

3. This one true God, by his goodness and almighty power, not with the intention of increasing his happiness, nor indeed of obtaining happiness, but in order to manifest his perfection by the good things which he bestows on what he creates, by an absolutely free plan, together from the beginning of time brought into being from nothing the twofold created order, that is the spiritual and the bodily, the angelic and the earthly, and thereafter the human which is, in a way, common to both since it is composed of spirit and body [10].

4. Everything that God has brought into being he protects and governs by his providence, which reaches from one end of the earth to the other and orders all things well [11]. All things are open and laid bare to his eyes [12], even those which will be brought about by the free activity of creatures.

Chapter 2
On revelation

1. The same Holy mother Church holds and teaches that God, the source and end of all things, can be known with certainty from the consideration of created things, by the natural power of human reason : ever since the creation of the world, his invisible nature has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. [13] 2. It was, however, pleasing to his wisdom and goodness to reveal himself and the eternal laws of his will to the human race by another, and that a supernatural, way. This is how the Apostle puts it : In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son [14].

3. It is indeed thanks to this divine revelation, that those matters concerning God which are not of themselves beyond the scope of human reason, can, even in the present state of the human race, be known by everyone without difficulty, with firm certitude and with no intermingling of error.

4. It is not because of this that one must hold revelation to be absolutely necessary; the reason is that God directed human beings to a supernatural end, that is a sharing in the good things of God that utterly surpasses the understanding of the human mind; indeed eye has not seen, neither has ear heard, nor has it come into our hearts to conceive what things God has prepared for those who love him [15].

5. Now this supernatural revelation, according to the belief of the universal Church, as declared by the sacred Council of Trent, is contained in written books and unwritten traditions, which were received by the apostles from the lips of Christ himself, or came to the apostles by the dictation of the Holy Spirit, and were passed on as it were from hand to hand until they reached us [16].

6. The complete books of the old and the new Testament with all their parts, as they are listed in the decree of the said Council and as they are found in the old Latin Vulgate edition, are to be received as sacred and canonical.

7. These books the Church holds to be sacred and canonical not because she subsequently approved them by her authority after they had been composed by unaided human skill, nor simply because they contain revelation without error, but because, being written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have God as their author, and were as such committed to the Church.

8. Now since the decree on the interpretation of Holy Scripture, profitably made by the Council of Trent, with the intention of constraining rash speculation, has been wrongly interpreted by some, we renew that decree and declare its meaning to be as follows: that in matters of faith and morals, belonging as they do to the establishing of Christian doctrine, that meaning of Holy Scripture must be held to be the true one, which Holy mother Church held and holds, since it is her right to judge of the true meaning and interpretation of Holy Scripture.

9. In consequence, it is not permissible for anyone to interpret Holy Scripture in a sense contrary to this, or indeed against the unanimous consent of the fathers.

Chapter 3
On faith

1. Since human beings are totally dependent on God as their creator and lord, and created reason is completely subject to uncreated truth, we are obliged to yield to God the revealer full submission of intellect and will by faith.

2. This faith, which is the beginning of human salvation, the Catholic Church professes to be a supernatural virtue, by means of which, with the grace of God inspiring and assisting us, we believe to be true what He has revealed, not because we perceive its intrinsic truth by the natural light of reason, but because of the authority of God himself, who makes the revelation and can neither deceive nor be deceived.

3. Faith, declares the Apostle, is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen [17].

4. Nevertheless, in order that the submission of our faith should be in accordance with reason, it was God's will that there should be linked to the internal assistance of the Holy Spirit external indications of his revelation, that is to say divine acts, and first and foremost miracles and prophecies, which clearly demonstrating as they do the omnipotence and infinite knowledge of God, are the most certain signs of revelation and are suited to the understanding of all.

5. Hence Moses and the prophets, and especially Christ our lord himself, worked many absolutely clear miracles and delivered prophecies; while of the apostles we read: And they went forth and preached every, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it [18]. Again it is written: We have the prophetic word made more sure; you will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place [19].

6. Now, although the assent of faith is by no means a blind movement of the mind, yet no one can accept the gospel preaching in the way that is necessary for achieving salvation without the inspiration and illumination of the Holy Spirit, who gives to all facility in accepting and believing the truth [20].

7. And so faith in itself, even though it may not work through charity, is a gift of God, and its operation is a work belonging to the order of salvation, in that a person yields true obedience to God himself when he accepts and collaborates with his grace which he could have rejected.

8. Wherefore, by divine and Catholic faith all those things are to be believed which are contained in the word of God as found in Scripture and tradition, and which are proposed by the Church as matters to be believed as divinely revealed, whether by her solemn judgment or in her ordinary and universal magisterium.

9. Since, then, without faith it is impossible to please God [21] and reach the fellowship of his sons and daughters, it follows that no one can ever achieve justification without it, neither can anyone attain eternal life unless he or she perseveres in it to the end.

10. So that we could fulfill our duty of embracing the true faith and of persevering unwaveringly in it, God, through his only begotten Son, founded the Church, and he endowed his institution with clear notes to the end that she might be recognized by all as the guardian and teacher of the revealed word.

11. To the Catholic Church alone belong all those things, so many and so marvelous, which have been divinely ordained to make for the manifest credibility of the Christian faith.

12. What is more, the Church herself by reason of her astonishing propagation, her outstanding holiness and her inexhaustible fertility in every kind of goodness, by her Catholic unity and her unconquerable stability, is a kind of great and perpetual motive of credibility and an incontrovertible evidence of her own divine mission.

13. So it comes about that, like a standard lifted up for the nations [22], she both invites to herself those who have not yet believed, and likewise assures her sons and daughters that the faith they profess rests on the firmest of foundations.

14. To this witness is added the effective help of power from on high. For, the kind Lord stirs up those who go astray and helps them by his grace so that they may come to the knowledge of the truth [23] ; and also confirms by his grace those whom he has translated into his admirable light [24], so that they may persevere in this light, not abandoning them unless he is first abandoned.

15. Consequently, the situation of those, who by the heavenly gift of faith have embraced the Catholic truth, is by no means the same as that of those who, led by human opinions, follow a false religion; for those who have accepted the faith under the guidance of the Church can never have any just cause for changing this faith or for calling it into question.

This being so, giving thanks to God the Father who has made us worthy to share with the saints in light [25] let us not neglect so great a salvation [26], but looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith [27], let us hold the unshakable confession of our hope [28].

Chapter 4.
On faith and reason

1. The perpetual agreement of the Catholic Church has maintained and maintains this too: that there is a twofold order of knowledge, distinct not only as regards its source, but also as regards its object.

2. With regard to the source, we know at the one level by natural reason, at the other level by divine faith.

3. With regard to the object, besides those things to which natural reason can attain, there are proposed for our belief mysteries hidden in God which, unless they are divinely revealed, are incapable of being known.

Wherefore, when the Apostle, who witnesses that God was known to the gentiles from created things [29], comes to treat of the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ [30], he declares: We impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glorification. None of the rulers of this age understood this. God has revealed it to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God [31]. And the Only-begotten himself, in his confession to the Father, acknowledges that the Father has hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to the little ones [32].

4. Now reason, does indeed when it seeks persistently, piously and soberly, achieve by God's gift some understanding, and that most profitable, of the mysteries, whether by analogy from what it knows naturally, or from the connection of these mysteries with one another and with the final end of humanity; but reason is never rendered capable of penetrating these mysteries in the way in which it penetrates those truths which form its proper object.

For the divine mysteries, by their very nature, so far surpass the created understanding that, even when a revelation has been given and accepted by faith, they remain covered by the veil of that same faith and wrapped, as it were, in a certain obscurity, as long as in this mortal life we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, and not by sight [33].

5. Even though faith is above reason, there can never be any real disagreement between faith and reason, since it is the same God who reveals the mysteries and infuses faith, and who has endowed the human mind with the light of reason.

6. God cannot deny himself, nor can truth ever be in opposition to truth. The appearance of this kind of specious contradiction is chiefly due to the fact that either the dogmas of faith are not understood and explained in accordance with the mind of the Church, or unsound views are mistaken for the conclusions of reason.

7. Therefore we define that every assertion contrary to the truth of enlightened faith is totally false [34].

8. Furthermore the Church which, together with its apostolic office of teaching, has received the charge of preserving the deposit of faith, has by divine appointment the right and duty of condemning what wrongly passes for knowledge, lest anyone be led astray by philosophy and empty deceit [35].

9. Hence all faithful Christians are forbidden to defend as the legitimate conclusions of science those opinions which are known to be contrary to the doctrine of faith, particularly if they have been condemned by the Church; and furthermore they are absolutely bound to hold them to be errors which wear the deceptive appearance of truth.

10. Not only can faith and reason never be at odds with one another but they mutually support each other, for on the one hand right reason established the foundations of the faith and, illuminated by its light, develops the science of divine things; on the other hand, faith delivers reason from errors and protects it and furnishes it with knowledge of many kinds.

11. Hence, so far is the Church from hindering the development of human arts and studies, that in fact she assists and promotes them in many ways. For she is neither ignorant nor contemptuous of the advantages which derive from this source for human life, rather she acknowledges that those things flow from God, the lord of sciences, and, if they are properly used, lead to God by the help of his grace.

12. Nor does the Church forbid these studies to employ, each within its own area, its own proper principles and method: but while she admits this just freedom, she takes particular care that they do not become infected with errors by conflicting with divine teaching, or, by going beyond their proper limits, intrude upon what belongs to faith and engender confusion.

13. For the doctrine of the faith which God has revealed is put forward not as some philosophical discovery capable of being perfected by human intelligence, but as a divine deposit committed to the spouse of Christ to be faithfully protected and infallibly promulgated.

14. Hence, too, that meaning of the sacred dogmas is ever to be maintained which has once been declared by Holy mother Church, and there must never be any abandonment of this sense under the pretext or in the name of a more profound understanding.

May understanding, knowledge and wisdom increase as ages and centuries roll along, and greatly and vigorously flourish, in each and all, in the individual and the whole Church: but this only in its own proper kind, that is to say, in the same doctrine, the same sense, and the same understanding [36].

Canons

1. On God the creator of all things

1. If anyone denies the one true God, creator and lord of things visible and invisible: let him be anathema.

2. If anyone is so bold as to assert that there exists nothing besides matter: let him be anathema.

3. If anyone says that the substance or essence of God and that of all things are one and the same: let him be anathema.

4. If anyone says that finite things, both corporal and spiritual, or at any rate, spiritual, emanated from the divine substance; or that the divine essence, by the manifestation and evolution of itself becomes all things or, finally, that God is a universal or indefinite being which by self determination establishes the totality of things distinct in genera, species and individuals: let him be anathema.

5. If anyone does not confess that the world and all things which are contained in it, both spiritual and material, were produced, according to their whole substance, out of nothing by God; or holds that God did not create by his will free from all necessity, but as necessarily as he necessarily loves himself; or denies that the world was created for the glory of God: let him be anathema.

2. On revelation

1. If anyone says that the one, true God, our creator and lord, cannot be known with certainty from the things that have been made, by the natural light of human reason: let him be anathema.

2. If anyone says that it is impossible, or not expedient, that human beings should be taught by means of divine revelation about God and the worship that should be shown him : let him be anathema.

3. If anyone says that a human being cannot be divinely elevated to a knowledge and perfection which exceeds the natural, but of himself can and must reach finally the possession of all truth and goodness by continual development: let him be anathema.

4. If anyone does not receive as sacred and canonical the complete books of Sacred Scripture with all their parts, as the holy Council of Trent listed them, or denies that they were divinely inspired : let him be anathema.

3. On faith

1. If anyone says that human reason is so independent that faith cannot be commanded by God: let him be anathema.

2. If anyone says that divine faith is not to be distinguished from natural knowledge about God and moral matters, and consequently that for divine faith it is not required that revealed truth should be believed because of the authority of God who reveals it: let him be anathema.

3. If anyone says that divine revelation cannot be made credible by external signs, and that therefore men and women ought to be moved to faith only by each one's internal experience or private inspiration: let him be anathema.

4. If anyone says that all miracles are impossible, and that therefore all reports of them, even those contained in Sacred Scripture, are to be set aside as fables or myths; or that miracles can never be known with certainty, nor can the divine origin of the Christian religion be proved from them: let him be anathema.

5. If anyone says that the assent to Christian faith is not free, but is necessarily produced by arguments of human reason; or that the grace of God is necessary only for living faith which works by charity: let him be anathema.

6. If anyone says that the condition of the faithful and those who have not yet attained to the only true faith is alike, so that Catholics may have a just cause for calling in doubt, by suspending their assent, the faith which they have already received from the teaching of the Church, until they have completed a scientific demonstration of the credibility and truth of their faith: let him be anathema.

4. On faith and reason

1. If anyone says that in divine revelation there are contained no true mysteries properly so-called, but that all the dogmas of the faith can be understood and demonstrated by properly trained reason from natural principles: let him be anathema.

2. If anyone says that human studies are to be treated with such a degree of liberty that their assertions may be maintained as true even when they are opposed to divine revelation, and that they may not be forbidden by the Church: let him be anathema.

3. If anyone says that it is possible that at some time, given the advancement of knowledge, a sense may be assigned to the dogmas propounded by the Church which is different from that which the Church has understood and understands: let him be anathema.

And so in the performance of our supreme pastoral office, we beseech for the love of Jesus Christ and we command, by the authority of him who is also our God and savior, all faithful Christians, especially those in authority or who have the duty of teaching, that they contribute their zeal and labor to the warding off and elimination of these errors from the Church and to the spreading of the light of the pure faith.

But since it is not enough to avoid the contamination of heresy unless those errors are carefully shunned which approach it in greater or less degree, we warn all of their duty to observe the constitutions and decrees in which such wrong opinions, though not expressly mentioned in this document, have been banned and forbidden by this Holy See.

Session 4 : 18 July 1870

First dogmatic constitution on the Church of Christ

Pius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the Sacred Council, for an everlasting record.

1. The eternal shepherd and guardian of our souls [37], in order to render permanent the saving work of redemption, determined to build a Church in which, as in the house of the living God, all the faithful should be linked by the bond of one faith and charity.

2. Therefore, before he was glorified, he besought his Father, not for the apostles only, but also for those who were to believe in him through their word, that they all might be one as the Son himself and the Father are one [38].

3. So then, just as he sent apostles, whom he chose out of the world [39], even as he had been sent by the Father [40], in like manner it was his will that in his Church there should be shepherds and teachers until the end of time.

4. In order, then, that the episcopal office should be one and undivided and that, by the union of the clergy, the whole multitude of believers should be held together in the unity of faith and communion, he set blessed Peter over the rest of the apostles and instituted in him the permanent principle of both unities and their visible foundation.

5. Upon the strength of this foundation was to be built the eternal temple, and the Church whose topmost part reaches heaven was to rise upon the firmness of this foundation [41].

6. And since the gates of hell trying, if they can, to overthrow the Church, make their assault with a hatred that increases day by day against its divinely laid foundation, we judge it necessary, with the approbation of the Sacred Council, and for the protection, defense and growth of the Catholic flock, to propound the doctrine concerning the 1. institution, 2. permanence and 3. nature of the sacred and apostolic primacy, upon which the strength and coherence of the whole Church depends.

7. This doctrine is to be believed and held by all the faithful in accordance with the ancient and unchanging faith of the whole Church.

8. Furthermore, we shall proscribe and condemn the contrary errors which are so harmful to the Lord's flock.

Chapter 1
On the institution of the apostolic primacy in blessed Peter

1. We teach and declare that, according to the gospel evidence, a primacy of jurisdiction over the whole Church of God was immediately and directly promised to the blessed apostle Peter and conferred on him by Christ the lord.

2. It was to Simon alone, to whom he had already said You shall be called Cephas [42], that the Lord, after his confession, You are the Christ, the son of the living God, spoke these words:

Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the underworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven [43] .

3. And it was to Peter alone that Jesus, after his resurrection, confided the jurisdiction of Supreme Pastor and ruler of his whole fold, saying:
Feed my lambs, feed my sheep [44].

4. To this absolutely manifest teaching of the Sacred Scriptures, as it has always been understood by the Catholic Church, are clearly opposed the distorted opinions of those who misrepresent the form of government which Christ the lord established in his Church and deny that Peter, in preference to the rest of the apostles, taken singly or collectively, was endowed by Christ with a true and proper primacy of jurisdiction.

5. The same may be said of those who assert that this primacy was not conferred immediately and directly on blessed Peter himself, but rather on the Church, and that it was through the Church that it was transmitted to him in his capacity as her minister.

6. Therefore, if anyone says that blessed Peter the apostle was not appointed by Christ the lord as prince of all the apostles and visible head of the whole Church militant; or that it was a primacy of honor only and not one of true and proper jurisdiction that he directly and immediately received from our lord Jesus Christ himself: let him be anathema.

Chapter 2.
On the permanence of the primacy of blessed Peter in the Roman pontiffs

1. That which our lord Jesus Christ, the prince of shepherds and great shepherd of the sheep, established in the blessed apostle Peter, for the continual salvation and permanent benefit of the Church, must of necessity remain for ever, by Christ's authority, in the Church which, founded as it is upon a rock, will stand firm until the end of time [45].

2. For no one can be in doubt, indeed it was known in every age that the holy and most blessed Peter, prince and head of the apostles, the pillar of faith and the foundation of the Catholic Church, received the keys of the kingdom from our lord Jesus Christ, the savior and redeemer of the human race, and that to this day and for ever he lives and presides and exercises judgment in his successors the bishops of the Holy Roman See, which he founded and consecrated with his blood [46].

3. Therefore whoever succeeds to the chair of Peter obtains by the institution of Christ himself, the primacy of Peter over the whole Church. So what the truth has ordained stands firm, and blessed Peter perseveres in the rock-like strength he was granted, and does not abandon that guidance of the Church which he once received [47].

4. For this reason it has always been necessary for every Church--that is to say the faithful throughout the world--to be in agreement with the Roman Church because of its more effective leadership. In consequence of being joined, as members to head, with that see, from which the rights of sacred communion flow to all, they will grow together into the structure of a single body [48].

5. Therefore, if anyone says that it is not by the institution of Christ the lord himself (that is to say, by divine law) that blessed Peter should have perpetual successors in the primacy over the whole Church; or that the Roman Pontiff is not the successor of blessed Peter in this primacy: let him be anathema.

Chapter 3.
On the power and character of the primacy of the Roman Pontiff

1. And so, supported by the clear witness of Holy Scripture, and adhering to the manifest and explicit decrees both of our predecessors the Roman Pontiffs and of general councils, we promulgate anew the definition of the ecumenical Council of Florence [49], which must be believed by all faithful Christians, namely that the Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff hold a world-wide primacy, and that the Roman Pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter, the prince of the apostles, true vicar of Christ, head of the whole Church and father and teacher of all Christian people.

To him, in blessed Peter, full power has been given by our lord Jesus Christ to tend, rule and govern the universal Church.

All this is to be found in the acts of the ecumenical councils and the sacred canons.

2. Wherefore we teach and declare that, by divine ordinance, the Roman Church possesses a pre-eminence of ordinary power over every other Church, and that this jurisdictional power of the Roman Pontiff is both episcopal and immediate. 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.

3. In this way, by unity with the Roman Pontiff in communion and in profession of the same faith , the Church of Christ becomes one flock under one Supreme Shepherd [50].

4. This is the teaching of the Catholic truth, and no one can depart from it without endangering his faith and salvation.

5. This power of the Supreme Pontiff by no means detracts from that ordinary and immediate power of episcopal jurisdiction, by which bishops, who have succeeded to the place of the apostles by appointment of the Holy Spirit, tend and govern individually the particular flocks which have been assigned to them. On the contrary, this power of theirs is asserted, supported and defended by the Supreme and Universal Pastor; for St. Gregory the Great says: "My honor is the honor of the whole Church. My honor is the steadfast strength of my brethren. Then do I receive true honor, when it is denied to none of those to whom honor is due." [51]

6. Furthermore, it follows from that supreme power which the Roman Pontiff has in governing the whole Church, that he has the right, in the performance of this office of his, to communicate freely with the pastors and flocks of the entire Church, so that they may be taught and guided by him in the way of salvation.

7. And therefore we condemn and reject the opinions of those who hold that this communication of the Supreme Head with pastors and flocks may be lawfully obstructed; or that it should be dependent on the civil power, which leads them to maintain that what is determined by the Apostolic See or by its authority concerning the government of the Church, has no force or effect unless it is confirmed by the agreement of the civil authority.

8. Since the Roman Pontiff, by the divine right of the apostolic primacy, governs the whole Church, we likewise teach and declare that he is the supreme judge of the faithful [52], and that in all cases which fall under ecclesiastical jurisdiction recourse may be had to his judgment [53]. The sentence of the Apostolic See (than which there is no higher authority) is not subject to revision by anyone, nor may anyone lawfully pass judgment thereupon [54]. And so they stray from the genuine path of truth who maintain that it is lawful to appeal from the judgments of the Roman pontiffs to an ecumenical council as if this were an authority superior to the Roman Pontiff.

9. 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, and this not only in matters of faith and morals, but also in those which concern the discipline and government of the Church dispersed throughout the whole world; or that he has only the principal part, but not the absolute fullness, of this supreme power; or that this power of his is not ordinary and immediate both over all and each of the Churches and over all and each of the pastors and faithful: let him be anathema.

Chapter 4.
On the infallible teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff

1. That apostolic primacy which the Roman Pontiff possesses as successor of Peter, the prince of the apostles, includes also the supreme power of teaching. This Holy See has always maintained this, the constant custom of the Church demonstrates it, and the ecumenical councils, particularly those in which East and West met in the union of faith and charity, have declared it.

2. So the fathers of the fourth Council of Constantinople, following the footsteps of their predecessors, published this solemn profession of faith: The first condition of salvation is to maintain the rule of the true faith. And since that saying of our lord Jesus Christ, You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church [55], cannot fail of its effect, the words spoken are confirmed by their consequences. For in the Apostolic See the Catholic religion has always been preserved unblemished, and sacred doctrine been held in honor. Since it is our earnest desire to be in no way separated from this faith and doctrine, we hope that we may deserve to remain in that one communion which the Apostolic See preaches, for in it is the whole and true strength of the Christian religion [56].

What is more, with the approval of the second Council of Lyons, the Greeks made the following profession:
"The Holy Roman Church possesses the supreme and full primacy and principality over the whole Catholic Church. She truly and humbly acknowledges that she received this from the Lord himself in blessed Peter, the prince and chief of the apostles, whose successor the Roman Pontiff is, together with the fullness of power. And since before all others she has the duty of defending the truth of the faith, so if any questions arise concerning the faith, it is by her judgment that they must be settled." [57]

Then there is the definition of the Council of Florence:
"The Roman Pontiff is the true vicar of Christ, the head of the whole Church and the father and teacher of all Christians; and to him was committed in blessed Peter, by our lord Jesus Christ, the full power of tending, ruling and governing the whole Church." [58]

3. To satisfy this pastoral office, our predecessors strove unwearyingly that the saving teaching of Christ should be spread among all the peoples of the world; and with equal care they made sure that it should be kept pure and uncontaminated wherever it was received.

4. It was for this reason that the bishops of the whole world, sometimes individually, sometimes gathered in synods, according to the long established custom of the Churches and the pattern of ancient usage referred to this Apostolic See those dangers especially which arose in matters concerning the faith. This was to ensure that any damage suffered by the faith should be repaired in that place above all where the faith can know no failing [59].

5. The Roman pontiffs, too, as the circumstances of the time or the state of affairs suggested, sometimes by summoning ecumenical councils or consulting the opinion of the Churches scattered throughout the world, sometimes by special synods, sometimes by taking advantage of other useful means afforded by divine providence, defined as doctrines to be held those things which, by God's help, they knew to be in keeping with Sacred Scripture and the apostolic traditions.

6. For the Holy Spirit was promised to the successors of Peter not so that they might, by his revelation, make known some new doctrine, but that, by his assistance, they might religiously guard and faithfully expound the revelation or deposit of faith transmitted by the apostles.

Indeed, their apostolic teaching was embraced by all the venerable fathers and reverenced and followed by all the holy orthodox doctors, for they knew very well that this See of St. Peter always remains unblemished by any error, in accordance with the divine promise of our Lord and Savior to the prince of his disciples: I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren [60].

7. This gift of truth and never-failing faith was therefore divinely conferred on Peter and his successors in this See so that they might discharge their exalted office for the salvation of all, and so that the whole flock of Christ might be kept away by them from the poisonous food of error and be nourished with the sustenance of heavenly doctrine. Thus the tendency to schism is removed and the whole Church is preserved in unity, and, resting on its foundation, can stand firm against the gates of hell.

8. But since in this very age when the salutary effectiveness of the apostolic office is most especially needed, not a few are to be found who disparage its authority, we judge it absolutely necessary to affirm solemnly the prerogative which the only-begotten Son of God was pleased to attach to the supreme pastoral office.

9. Therefore, faithfully adhering to the tradition received from the beginning of the Christian faith, to the glory of God our savior, for the exaltation of the Catholic religion and for the salvation of the Christian people, with the approval of the Sacred Council, we teach and define as a divinely revealed dogma that when the Roman Pontiff speaks EX CATHEDRA, that is, when, in the exercise of his office as shepherd and teacher of all Christians, in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole Church, 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.

So then, should anyone, which God forbid, have the temerity to reject this definition of ours: let him be anathema.

Given at Rome in public session, solemnly held in the Vatican Basilica in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy, on the eighteenth day of July, in the twenty-fifth year of Our Pontificate.

In conformity with the original.

Joseph, Bishop of St. Polten Secretary to the Vatican Council

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Notes

1 The Profession of faith of the other fathers added: and I pledge and swear true obedience to the Roman Pontiff, successor of blessed Peter the Prince of the Apostles, and Vicar of Jesus Christ

2 The profession of faith of the other fathers continues: my subjects, or those for whom I have responsibility in virtue of my office, hold, teach and preach the same

3 See Mt 28, 20.

4 See Heb 13, 9.

5 1 Tm 2, 4.

6 Lk 19, 10.

7 Jn 11, 52.

8 See Wis 16, 12.

9 Is 59, 21.

10 See Lateran Council IV, const. 1 (see above, p. 230).

11 Wis 8, 1.

12 Heb 4, 13.

13 Rm 1, 20.

14 Heb 1, 1-2.

15 1 Cor 2, 9.

16 Council of Trent, session 4, first decree (see above p. 663).

17 Heb 11, 1.

18 Mk 16, 20.

19 2 Pt 1, 19.

20 Council of Orange II (529), canon 7 (Bruns 2, 178; Msi 8, 713).

21 Heb 11, 6.

22 Is 11, 12.

23 1 Tm 2, 4.

24 1 Pt 2, 9; Col 1, 13.

25 Col 1, 12.

26 Heb 2, 3.

27 Heb 12, 2.

28 Heb 10, 12.

29 Rm 1, 20.

30 Jn 1, 17.

31 i Cor 2, 7-8, 10.

32 Mt 11, 25.

33 2 Cor 5, 6-7.

34 See Lateran Council V, session 8 (see above p. 605).

35 See Col 2, 8.

36 Vincent of Lerins, Commonitorium (Notebook), 28 (PL 50, 668).

37 1 Pt 2,25.

38 Jn 17, 20-21.

39 Jn 15, 19.

40 Jn 20, 21.

41 Leo 1, Serm. (Sermons), 4 (elsewhere 3), ch. 2 for the day of his birth (PL 54, 150).

42 Jn 1, 42.

43 Mt 16, 16 19.

44 Jn 21, 15-17.

45 See Mt 7, 25; Lk 6, 48.

46 From the speech of Philip, the Roman legate, at the 3rd session of the Council of Ephesus (D no. 112).

47 Leo I, Serm. (Sermons), 3 (elsewhere 2), ch. 3 (PL 54, 146).

48 Irenaeus, Adv. haeres. (Against Heresies) 1113 (PG 7, 849), Council of Aquilea (381), to be found among: Ambrose, Epistolae (Letters), 11 (PL 16, 946).

49 Council of Florence, session 6 (see above p. 528).

50 See Jn 10, 16.

51 Ep. ad Eulog. Alexandrin. (Letter to Eulogius of Alexandria), VIII 29 (30) (MGH, Ep. 2, 31 28-30, PL 77, 933).

52 Pius VI, Letter Super soliditate dated 28 Nov. 1786.

53 From Michael Palaeologus's profession of faith which was read out at the second Council of Lyons (D no. 466).

54 Nicholas I, Ep. ad Michaelem imp. (Letter to the emperor Michael) (PL 119, 954).

55 Mt 16, 18.

56 From Pope Hormisdas's formula of the year 517 (D no. 171), see above p. 157 n. 1.

57 From Michael Palaeologus's profession of faith which was read out at the second Council of Lyons (D no. 466).

58 Council of Florence, session 6 (see above p. 528). S Bernard, Ep. (Letters) 190 (PL 182, 1053).

59 Bernard, Ep. (Letters) 190 (PL 182, 1053).

60 Lk 22, 32.

The translation found here is that which appears in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils ed. Norman Tanner. S.J. The numbering of the canons is however found in Tanner's text.

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VATICAN I’S TEACHING AS TIMELY AS EVER

Rino Fisichella, Auxiliary Bishop of Rome

Prophetic Foresight of Pius IX

After an interval of three centuries, on 8 December 1869 Plus IX brought the Council back to the centre of the Church. Holding it at St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican was equivalent to recovering the great tradition of the medieval Councils, which at the time were convoked in Rome at the Lateran Basilica. The First Vatican Council, from this symbolic standpoint, initiated an event that would remain in the Church's history as a point of no return for the growth of faith.

The opening of the Council, however, was not entirely unexpected. In the early years of his pontificate, Pius IX had energetically revived the celebration of Synods, privileged moments for dialogue and the collegial contribution of the Bishops. From 1849 to 1867, 58 Provincial Synods had already been held in Europe and the United States. So the announcement of the first Council at the Vatican on the 1,800th anniversary of the martyrdom of Sts Peter and Paul, 29 June 1867, took neither the Church nor the society of the time by surprise.

The Council chose various topics for analysis. Certain ecclesiological questions, which directly concerned the Bishops, had been left unresolved at the preceding Council of Trent; others, such as the discipline of the clergy and priestly life, had been added over the centuries. Two problems, however, required urgent attention from the start: the nature of the Catholic faith and the structure of the Church, with particular reference to the primacy of the Pope. It would be a mistake to identify the whole Council with the definition of the Holy Father's infallibility. This kind of misunderstanding has led some authors to an over hasty conclusion that bears no relation to reality. Indeed, to speak of Vatican I as the Council which dealt exclusively with the issue of "authority" does not do justice to the Council itself or to the dogmatic development that the Fathers allowed to take place. Moreover, a careful reading not only of the documents but of the entire conciliar debate clearly shows the deep pastoral concern that motivated the approximately 700 Fathers who came to Rome for the Council.

Vatican I preserved unchanged a content of profound timeliness. A coherent analysis of its writings, without the now dated preconceptions which endure more for ideological reasons than for their substance, demonstrates the great step forward that the Church took through the reflection and teaching of the Council. The theme of faith should first be mentioned. For the first time a Council discussed the nature of faith. It undoubtedly did so to counter certain extreme positions which had always marked the Church's history, such as theological rationalism and traditionalistic fideism. The document it approved, *Dei Filius*, remained the pivot around which doctrine consistently developed until the Second Vatican Council. Unlike Trent, which had related faith to justification, Vatican I presented faith in relation to *truth*. On this issue, in fact, were focused the harshest objections to the Catholic faith raised at the time by rationalist thought, which was party to a predominant culture that wrongly tried to impose its own vision of the world, while disregarding any relationship to the transcendent.

Faith is presented by the Fathers, in the language available to them at the time, as the obediential response to God who reveals himself. No one, the Council teaches, can refuse to believe merely because reason claims to be the only way to answer to any question. Since he is created by God, each person is called to exercise his freedom in the decision for faith, which encompasses a broader knowledge than reason alone. Therefore faith can be neither a "blind impulse of the mind" nor a "rational science". The reasonableness of faith draws its strength from grace and from reason. These allow an act to be performed in full freedom, in which each individual is fully and personally involved in analyzing the signs of credibility. Vatican Council II, in n. 5 of *Dei Verbum*, will merely quote the text of *Dei Filius*.

The Council's second document was *Pastor aeternus*. The Church presented the divine nature of her institution. The few words that form the introduction to the Constitution are fundamental for understanding the sense of the Council's entire teaching on the primacy and infallibility of the Roman Pontiff: so that the episcopate might be one and undivided, and that believers dispersed throughout the world might abide in the faith of all times and in the unity of communion, Christ established in Peter the visible and lasting principle of his Church's unity. The discussions about the approval of infallibility are well known. What is certainly clear is that the Fathers at the Council made a courageous choice; for some it was a difficult one, but in each case a decision of historical import was reached. The proclamation of infallibility embraced and expressed that sense of faith of all the baptized, which sees in Peter the rock on which Christ has indefectibly and infallibly established his Church.

It is no exaggeration to say that with Vatican I Pius IX intended to wage a great battle for freedom. The gold chains that States had offered the Church in past centuries were certainly golden but they were still chains! The moment had come to render unto Caesar what was Caesar's, to permit the Church to carry out her ministry of evangelization to the full. With the Council, first of all, the Bishops recovered one of the salient features of their vocation: the indissoluble bond of collegiality and fidelity to Peter. One can well imagine that in convoking the Council Pope Mastai had deeply prophetic foresight. At the beginning of an epochal revolution and surrounded by a culture entrenched in the intransigent positions of an aprioristic liberalism and rationalism, Pius IX offered the challenge of a Church now politically weak, but strong in her awareness of bearing Christ's Gospel, even in the weakness of a Galilean fisherman's preaching. The Apostle's words must have been heard loud and clear not only by the Pope but by all the Council's Bishops: "When I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor 12:10). Without this awareness, the Second Vatican Council would have found it difficult to write the four Constitutions that mark the history of our times.

As with all events, Vatican I needed time so that what it formulated could become the patrimony of all. Historical events connected with the "capture of Rome" hastened the conclusion of the Council's work, leaving various matters unresolved. In calling the second Council at the Vatican, John XXIII was opening a new chapter in that one book which is the Church's history. It was not a break with the past, but a handing down, a continuity with and a fidelity to the faith of all time, which is visibly manifest in the joint beatification of the two Popes.

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INTER MIRIFICA
Decree on the Media of the Social Communications
Second Vatican Council

DECREE ON THE MEDIA OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS
INTER MIRIFICA
SOLEMNLY PROMULGATED BY
HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI
ON DECEMBER 4, 1963

INTRODUCTION

1. Among the wonderful technological discoveries which men of talent, especially in the present era, have made with God's help, the Church welcomes and promotes with special interest those which have a most direct relation to men's minds and which have uncovered new avenues of communicating most readily news, views and teachings of every sort. The most important of these inventions are those media which, such as the press, movies, radio, television and the like, can, of their very nature, reach and influence, not only individuals, but the very masses and the whole of human society, and thus can rightly be called the media of social communication.

2. The Church recognizes that these media, if properly utilized, can be of great service to mankind, since they greatly contribute to men's entertainment and instruction as well as to the spread and support of the Kingdom of God. The Church recognizes, too, that men can employ these media contrary to the plan of the Creator and to their own loss. Indeed, the Church experiences maternal grief at the harm all too often done to society by their evil use. Hence, this sacred Synod, attentive to the watchful concern manifested by the Supreme Pontiffs and Bishops in a matter of such great importance, judges it to be its duty to treat of the principal questions linked with the media of social communication. It trusts, moreover, that the teaching and regulations it thus sets forth will serve to promote, not only the eternal welfare of Christians, but also the progress of all mankind.

CHAPTER I

ON THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH

3. The Catholic Church, since it was founded by Christ our Lord to bear salvation to all men and thus is obliged to preach the Gospel, considers it one of its duties to announce the Good News of salvation also with the help of the media of social communication and to instruct men in their proper use.

It is, therefore, an inherent right of the Church to have at its disposal and to employ any of these media insofar as they are necessary or useful for the instruction of Christians and all its efforts for the welfare of souls. It is the duty of Pastors to instruct and guide the faithful so that they, with the help of these same media, may further the salvation and perfection of themselves and of the entire human family. In addition, the laity especially must strive to instill a human and Christian spirit into these media, so that they may fully measure up to the great expectations of mankind and to God's design.

4. For the proper use of these media it is most necessary that all who employ them be acquainted with the norms of morality and conscientiously put them into practice in this area. They must look, then, to the nature of what is communicated, given the special character of each of these media. At the same time they must take into consideration the entire situation or circumstances, namely, the persons, place, time and other conditions under which communication takes place and which can affect or totally change its propriety. Among these circumstances to be considered is the precise manner in which a given medium achieves its effect. For its influence can be so great that men, especially if they are unprepared, can scarcely become aware of it, govern its impact, or, if necessary, reject it.

5. It is, however, especially necessary that all parties concerned should adopt for themselves a proper moral outlook on the use of these media, especially with respect to certain questions that have been vigorously aired in our day.

The first question has to do with "information," as it is called, or the search for and reporting of the news. Now clearly this has become most useful and very often necessary for the progress of contemporary society and for achieving closer links among men. The prompt publication of affairs and events provides every individual with a fuller, continuing acquaintance with them, and thus all can contribute more effectively to the common good and more readily promote and advance the welfare of the entire civil society. Therefore, in society men have a right to information, in accord with the circumstances in each case, about matters concerning individuals or the community. The proper exercise of this right demands, however, that the news itself that is communicated should always be true and complete, within the bounds of justice and charity. In addition, the manner in which the news is communicated should be proper and decent. This means that in both the search for news and in reporting it, there must be full respect for the laws of morality and for the legitimate rights and dignity of the individual. For not all knowledge is helpful, but "it is charity that edifies."(1)

6. The second question deals with the relationship between the rights, as they are called, of art and the norms of morality. Since the mounting controversies in this area frequently take their rise from false teachings about ethics and esthetics, the Council proclaims that all must hold to the absolute primacy of the objective moral order, that is, this order by itself surpasses and fittingly coordinates all other spheres of human affairs-the arts not excepted-even though they be endowed with notable dignity. For man who is endowed by God with the gift of reason and summoned to pursue a lofty destiny, is alone affected by the moral order in his entire being. And likewise, if man resolutely and faithfully upholds this order, he will be brought to the attainment of complete perfection and happiness.

7. Finally, the narration, description or portrayal of moral evil, even through the media of social communication, can indeed serve to bring about a deeper knowledge and study of humanity and, with the aid of appropriately heightened dramatic effects, can reveal and glorify the grand dimensions of truth and goodness. Nevertheless, such presentations ought always to be subject to moral restraint, lest they work to the harm rather than the benefit of souls, particularly when there is question of treating matters which deserve reverent handling or which, given the baneful effect of original sin in men, could quite readily arouse base desires in them.

8. Since public opinion exercises the greatest power and authority today in every sphere of life, both private and public, every member of society must fulfill the demands of justice and charity in this area. As a result, all must strive, through these media as well, to form and spread sound public opinion.

9. All who, of their own free choice, make use of these media of communications as readers, viewers or listeners have special obligations. For a proper choice demands that they fully favor those presentations that are outstanding for their moral goodness, their knowledge and their artistic or technical merit. They ought, however, to void those that may be a cause or occasion of spiritual harm to themselves, or that can lead others into danger through base example, or that hinder desirable presentations and promote those that are evil. To patronize such presentations, in most instances, would merely reward those who use these media only for profit.

In order that those who make use of these media may fulfill the moral code, they ought not to neglect to inform themselves in time about judgments passed by authorities competent in these matters. They ought also to follow such judgments according to the norms of an upright conscience. So that they may more easily resist improper inducements and rather encourage those that are desirable, let them take care to guide and instruct their consciences with suitable aids.

10. Those who make use of the media of communications, especially the young, should take steps to accustom themselves to moderation and self-control in their regard. They should, moreover, endeavor to deepen their understanding of what they see, hear or read. They should discuss these matters with their teachers and experts, and learn to pass sound judgements on them. Parents should remember that they have a most serious duty to guard carefully lest shows, publications and other things of this sort, which may be morally harmful, enter their homes or affect their children under other circumstances.

11. The principle moral responsibility for the proper use of the media of social communication falls on newsmen, writers, actors, designers, producers, displayers, distributors, operators and sellers, as well as critic and all others who play any part in the production and transmission of mass presentations. It is quite evident what gravely important responsibilities they have in the present day when they are in a position to lead the human race to good or to evil by informing or arousing mankind.

Thus, they must adjust their economic, political or artistic and technical aspects so as never to oppose the common good. For the purpose of better achieving this goal, they are to be commended when they join professional associations, which-even under a code, if necessary, of sound moral practice-oblige their members to show respect for morality in the duties and tasks of their craft.

They ought always to be mindful, however, that a great many of their readers and audiences are young people, who need a press and entertainment that offer them decent amusement and cultural uplift. In addition, they should see to it that communications or presentations concerning religious matters are entrusted to worthy and experienced hands and are carried out with fitting reverence.

12. The public authority, in these matters, is bound by special responsibilities in view of the common good, to which these media are ordered. The same authority has, in virtue of its office, the duty of protecting and safeguarding true and just freedom of information, a freedom that is totally necessary for the welfare of contemporary society, especially when it is a question of freedom of the press. It ought also to encourage spiritual values, culture and the fine arts and guarantee the rights of those who wish to use the media. Moreover, public authority has the duty of helping those projects which, though they are certainly most beneficial for young people, cannot otherwise be undertaken.

Lastly, the same public authority, which legitimately concerns itself with the health of the citizenry, is obliged, through the promulgation and careful enforcement of laws, to exercise a fitting and careful watch lest grave damage befall public morals and the welfare of society through the base use of these media. Such vigilance in no wise restricts the freedom of individuals or groups, especially where there is a lack of adequate precaution on the part of those who are professionally engaged in using these media.

Special care should be taken to safeguard young people from printed matter and performances which may be harmful at their age.

CHAPTER II

ON THE PASTORAL ACTIVITY OF THE CHURCH

13. All the children of the Church should join, without delay and with the greatest effort in a common work to make effective use of the media of social communication in various apostolic endeavors, as circumstances and conditions demand. They should anticipate harmful developments, especially in regions where more urgent efforts to advance morality and religion are needed.

Pastors should hasten, therefore, to fulfill their duty in this respect, one which is intimately linked with their ordinary preaching responsibility. The laity, too, who have something to do with the use of these media, should endeavor to bear witness to Christ, first of all by carrying out their individual duties or office expertly and with an apostolic spirit, and, further, by being of direct help in the pastoral activity of the Church-to the best of their ability-through their technical, economic, cultural and artistic talents.

14. First, a good press should be fostered. To instill a fully Christian spirit into readers, a truly Catholic press should be set up and encouraged. Such a press-whether immediately fostered and directed by ecclesiastical authorities or by Catholic laymen-should be edited with the clear purpose of forming, supporting and advancing public opinion in accord with natural law and Catholic teaching and precepts. It should disseminate and properly explain news concerning the life of the Church. Moreover, the faithful ought to be advised of the necessity both to spread and read the Catholic press to formulate Christian judgments for themselves on all events.

The production and showing of films that have value as decent entertainment, humane culture or art, especially when they are designed for young people, ought to be encouraged and assured by every effective means. This can be done particularly by supporting and joining in projects and enterprises for the production and distribution of decent films, by encouraging worthwhile films through critical approval and awards, by patronizing or jointly sponsoring theaters operated by Catholic and responsible managers.

Similarly, effective support should be given to good radio and television programs, above all those that are suitable for families. Catholic programs should be promoted, in which listeners and viewers can be brought to share in the life of the Church and learn religious truths. An effort should also be made, where it may be necessary, to set up Catholic stations. In such instances, however, care must be taken that their programs are outstanding for their standards of excellence and achievement.

In addition, there should be an effort to see that the noble and ancient art of the drama, which now is diffused everywhere by the media of social communication, serves the cultural and moral betterment of audiences.

15. To provide for the needs just set forth, priests, religious and laymen who are equipped with the proper skills for adapting these media to the objectives of the apostolate should be appointed promptly.

Importantly, laymen ought to be afforded technical, doctrinal and moral training. For this purpose, the number of school faculties and institutes should be increased, where newsmen, writers for screen, radio and television and all other interested parties can obtain a sound training that is imbued with the Christian spirit, especially with respect to the social teaching of the Church.

Finally, care must be taken to prepare literary, film, radio, television and other critics, who will be equipped with the best skills in their own crafts and trained and encouraged to render judgments which always put moral issues in their proper light.

16. Since the proper use of the media of social communications which are available to audiences of different cultural backgrounds and ages, calls for instruction proper to their needs, programs which are suitable for the purpose-especially where they are designed for young people-should be encouraged, increased in numbers and organized according to Christian moral principles. This should be done in Catholic schools at every level, in seminaries and in lay apostolate groups. To speed this along catechetical manuals should present and explain Catholic teaching and regulations on this matter.

17. It is quite unbecoming for the Church's children idly to permit the message of salvation to be thwarted or impeded by the technical delays or expenses, however vast, which are encountered by the very nature of these media. Therefore, this sacred Synod advises them of the obligation they have to maintain and assist Catholic newspapers, periodicals and film projects, radio and television programs and stations, whose principal objective is to spread and defend the truth and foster Christian influence in human society. At the same time, the Synod earnestly invites those organizations and individuals who possess financial and technical ability to support these media freely and generously with their resources and their skills, inasmuch as they contribute to genuine culture and the apostolate.

18. Moreover, that the varied apostolates of the Church with respect to the media of social communication may be strengthened effectively, each year in every diocese of the world, by the determination of the Bishops, there should be celebrated a day on which the faithful are instructed in their responsibilities in this regard. They should be invited to pray and contribute funds for this cause. Such funds are to be expended exclusively on the promotion, maintenance and development of institutes and undertakings of the Church in this area, according to the needs of the whole Catholic world.

19. In fulfilling his supreme pastoral charge with respect to the media of social communication, the Sovereign Pontiff has at hand a special office of the Holy See. Moreover, the Fathers of the Council, freely acceding to the wish of the "Secretariat for the Supervision of Publications and Entertainment," reverently request that the Sovereign Pontiff extend the duties and competence of this office to include all media of social communication, including the press, and that experts from various countries be named to it, including laymen.

20. It will be the task of the Bishops, however, to watch over such works and undertakings in their own dioceses, to promote them and, as far as the public apostolate is concerned, to guide them, not excluding those that are under the direction of exempt religious.

21. Since an effective apostolate on a national scale calls for unity of planning and resources, this sacred Synod decrees and orders that national offices for affairs of the press, films, radio and television be established everywhere and given every aid. It will be the special task of these offices to see to it that the consciences of the faithful are properly instructed with respect to these media. Likewise they should foster and guide whatever is done by Catholics in these areas.

In each country the direction of such offices should be entrusted to a special committee of Bishops, or to a single Bishop. Moreover, laymen who are experts in Catholic teaching and in these arts or techniques should have a role in these offices.

22. Since the effectiveness of these media reaches beyond national boundaries and has an impact on individual members of the whole human family, national offices should co-operate among themselves on an international plane. The offices spoken of in Number 21 should assiduously work together with their own international Catholic associations. These Catholic international associations are legitimately approved by the Holy See alone and depend on it.

APPENDICES

23. So that the general principles and norms of this sacred Synod with respect to the media of social communications may be put into effect, by the express will of the Council, the office of the Holy See mentioned in Number 19 should undertake, with the assistance of experts from various countries, to issue a pastoral instruction.

24. As for the rest, this sacred Synod is confident that its issuance of these instructions and norms will be gladly accepted and religiously kept by all the Church's children. By using these helps they will experience no harm and, like salt and light, they will give savor to the earth and brighten the world. Moreover, the Synod invites all men of good will, especially those who have charge of these media, to strive to turn them solely to the good of society, whose fate depends more and more on their proper use. Thus, as was the case with ancient works of art, the name of the Lord may be glorified by these new discoveries in accordance with those words of the Apostle: "Jesus Christ, yesterday and today, and the same forever."(2)

NOTES

(1) Corinthians 8:1.

(2) Hebrews 13:8.

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SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM
Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
Second Vatican Council

CONSTITUTION
ON THE SACRED LITURGY
SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM
SOLEMNLY PROMULGATED BY
HIS HOLINESS

POPE PAUL VI
ON DECEMBER 4, 1963

INTRODUCTION

1. This sacred Council has several aims in view: it desires to impart an ever increasing vigor to the Christian life of the faithful; to adapt more suitably to the needs of our own times those institutions which are subject to change; to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ; to strengthen whatever can help to call the whole of mankind into the household of the Church. The Council therefore sees particularly cogent reasons for undertaking the reform and promotion of the liturgy.

2. For the liturgy, "through which the work of our redemption is accomplished," (1) most of all in the divine sacrifice of the eucharist, is the outstanding means whereby the faithful may express in their lives, and manifest to others, the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church. It is of the essence of the Church that she be both human and divine, visible and yet invisibly equipped, eager to act and yet intent on contemplation, present in this world and yet not at home in it; and she is all these things in such wise that in her the human is directed and subordinated to the divine, the visible likewise to the invisible, action to contemplation, and this present world to that city yet to come, which we seek (2). While the liturgy daily builds up those who are within into a holy temple of the Lord, into a dwelling place for God in the Spirit (3), to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ (4), at the same time it marvelously strengthens their power to preach Christ, and thus shows forth the Church to those who are outside as a sign lifted up among the nations (5) under which the scattered children of God may be gathered together (6), until there is one sheepfold and one shepherd (7).

3. Wherefore the sacred Council judges that the following principles concerning the promotion and reform of the liturgy should be called to mind, and that practical norms should be established.

Among these principles and norms there are some which can and should be applied both to the Roman rite and also to all the other rites. The practical norms which follow, however, should be taken as applying only to the Roman rite, except for those which, in the very nature of things, affect other rites as well.

4. Lastly, in faithful obedience to tradition, the sacred Council declares that holy Mother Church holds all lawfully acknowledged rites to be of equal right and dignity; that she wishes to preserve them in the future and to foster them in every way. The Council also desires that, where necessary, the rites be revised carefully in the light of sound tradition, and that they be given new vigor to meet the circumstances and needs of modern times.

CHAPTER I

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE: RESTORATION AND PROMOTION OF THE SACRED LITURGY

1. The Nature of the Sacred Liturgy and Its Importance in the Church's Life

5. God who "wills that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4), "who in many and various ways spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets" (Heb. 1:1), when the fullness of time had come sent His Son, the Word made flesh, anointed by the Holy Spirit, to preach the the gospel to the poor, to heal the contrite of heart (8), to be a "bodily and spiritual medicine" (9), the Mediator between God and man (10). For His humanity, united with the person of the Word, was the instrument of our salvation. Therefore in Christ "the perfect achievement of our reconciliation came forth, and the fullness of divine worship was given to us" (11).

The wonderful works of God among the people of the Old Testament were but a prelude to the work of Christ the Lord in redeeming mankind and giving perfect glory to God. He achieved His task principally by the paschal mystery of His blessed passions resurrection from the dead, and the glorious ascension, whereby "dying, he destroyed our death and, rising, he restored our life" (12). For it was from the side of Christ as He slept the sleep of death upon the cross that there came forth "the wondrous sacrament of the whole Church" (13).

6. Just as Christ was sent by the Father, so also He sent the apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit. This He did that, by preaching the gospel to every creature (14), they might proclaim that the Son of God, by His death and resurrection, had freed us from the power of Satan (15) and from death, and brought us into the kingdom of His Father. His purpose also was that they might accomplish the work of salvation which they had proclaimed, by means of sacrifice and sacraments, around which the entire liturgical life revolves. Thus by baptism men are plunged into the paschal mystery of Christ: they die with Him, are buried with Him, and rise with Him (16); they receive the spirit of adoption as sons "in which we cry: Abba, Father" (Rom. 8 :15), and thus become true adorers whom the Father seeks (17). In like manner, as often as they eat the supper of the Lord they proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes (18). For that reason, on the very day of Pentecost, when the Church appeared before the world, "those who received the word" of Peter "were baptized." And "they continued steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles and in the communion of the breaking of bread and in prayers . . . praising God and being in favor with all the people" (Acts 2:41-47). From that time onwards the Church has never failed to come together to celebrate the paschal mystery: reading those things "which were in all the scriptures concerning him" (Luke 24:27), celebrating the eucharist in which "the victory and triumph of his death are again made present" (19), and at the same time giving thanks "to God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. 9:15) in Christ Jesus, "in praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:12), through the power of the Holy Spirit.

7. To accomplish so great a work, Christ is always present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of His minister, "the same now offering, through the ministry of priests, who formerly offered himself on the cross" (20), but especially under the eucharistic species. By His power He is present in the sacraments, so that when a man baptizes it is really Christ Himself who baptizes (21). He is present in His word, since it is He Himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church. He is present, lastly, when the Church prays and sings, for He promised: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20) .

Christ indeed always associates the Church with Himself in this great work wherein God is perfectly glorified and men are sanctified. The Church is His beloved Bride who calls to her Lord, and through Him offers worship to the Eternal Father.

Rightly, then, the liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy the sanctification of the man is signified by signs perceptible to the senses, and is effected in a way which corresponds with each of these signs; in the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members.

From this it follows that every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest and of His Body which .s the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree.

8. In the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, a minister of the holies and of the true tabernacle (22); we sing a hymn to the Lord's glory with all the warriors of the heavenly army; venerating the memory of the saints, we hope for some part and fellowship with them; we eagerly await the Saviour, Our Lord Jesus Christ, until He, our life, shall appear and we too will appear with Him in glory (23).

9. The sacred liturgy does not exhaust the entire activity of the Church. Before men can come to the liturgy they must be called to faith and to conversion: "How then are they to call upon him in whom they have not yet believed? But how are they to believe him whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear if no one preaches? And how are men to preach unless they be sent?" (Rom. 10:14-15).

Therefore the Church announces the good tidings of salvation to those who do not believe, so that all men may know the true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, and may be converted from their ways, doing penance (24). To believers also the Church must ever preach faith and penance, she must prepare them for the sacraments, teach them to observe all that Christ has commanded (25), and invite them to all the works of charity, piety, and the apostolate. For all these works make it clear that Christ's faithful, though not of this world, are to be the light of the world and to glorify the Father before men.

10. Nevertheless the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows. For the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of His Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's supper.

The liturgy in its turn moves the faithful, filled with "the paschal sacraments," to be "one in holiness" (26); it prays that "they may hold fast in their lives to what they have grasped by their faith" (27); the renewal in the eucharist of the covenant between the Lord and man draws the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and sets them on fire. From the liturgy, therefore, and especially from the eucharist, as from a font, grace is poured forth upon us; and the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God, to which all other activities of the Church are directed as toward their end, is achieved in the most efficacious possible way.

11. But in order that the liturgy may be able to produce its full effects, it is necessary that the faithful come to it with proper dispositions, that their minds should be attuned to their voices, and that they should cooperate with divine grace lest they receive it in vain (28) . Pastors of souls must therefore realize that, when the liturgy is celebrated, something more is required than the mere observation of the laws governing valid and licit celebration; it is their duty also to ensure that the faithful take part fully aware of what they are doing, actively engaged in the rite, and enriched by its effects.

12. The spiritual life, however, is not limited solely to participation in the liturgy. The Christian is indeed called to pray with his brethren, but he must also enter into his chamber to pray to the Father, in secret (29); yet more, according to the teaching of the Apostle, he should pray without ceasing (30). We learn from the same Apostle that we must always bear about in our body the dying of Jesus, so that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodily frame (31). This is why we ask the Lord in the sacrifice of the Mass that, "receiving the offering of the spiritual victim," he may fashion us for himself "as an eternal gift" (32).

13. Popular devotions of the Christian people are to be highly commended, provided they accord with the laws and norms of the Church, above all when they are ordered by the Apostolic See.

Devotions proper to individual Churches also have a special dignity if they are undertaken by mandate of the bishops according to customs or books lawfully approved.

But these devotions should be so drawn up that they harmonize with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some fashion derived from it, and lead the people to it, since, in fact, the liturgy by its very nature far surpasses any of them.

II. The Promotion of Liturgical Instruction and Active Participation

14. Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people (1 Pet. 2:9; cf. 2:4-5), is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.

In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit; and therefore pastors of souls must zealously strive to achieve it, by means of the necessary instruction, in all their pastoral work.

Yet it would be futile to entertain any hopes of realizing this unless the pastors themselves, in the first place, become thoroughly imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy, and undertake to give instruction about it. A prime need, therefore, is that attention be directed, first of all, to the liturgical instruction of the clergy. Wherefore the sacred Council has decided to enact as follows:

15. Professors who are appointed to teach liturgy in seminaries, religious houses of study, and theological faculties must be properly trained for their work in institutes which specialize in this subject.

16. The study of sacred liturgy is to be ranked among the compulsory and major courses in seminaries and religions houses of studies; in theological faculties it is to rank among the principal courses. It is to be taught under its theological, historical, spiritual, pastoral, and juridical aspects. Moreover, other professors, while striving to expound the mystery of Christ and the history of salvation from the angle proper to each of their own subjects, must nevertheless do so in a way which will clearly bring out the connection between their subjects and the liturgy, as also the unity which underlies all priestly training. This consideration is especially important for professors of dogmatic, spiritual, and pastoral theology and for those of holy scripture.

17. In seminaries and houses of religious, clerics shall be given a liturgical formation in their spiritual life. For this they will need proper direction, so that they may be able to understand the sacred rites and take part in them wholeheartedly; and they will also need personally to celebrate the sacred mysteries, as well as popular devotions which are imbued with the spirit of the liturgy. In addition they must learn how to observe the liturgical laws, so that life in seminaries and houses of religious may be thoroughly influenced by the spirit of the liturgy.

18. Priests, both secular and religious, who are already working in the Lord's vineyard are to be helped by every suitable means to understand ever more fully what it is that they are doing when they perform sacred rites; they are to be aided to live the liturgical life and to share it with the faithful entrusted to their care.

19. With zeal and patience, pastors of souls must promote the liturgical instruction of the faithful, and also their active participation in the liturgy both internally and externally, taking into account their age and condition, their way of life, and standard of religious culture. By so doing, pastors will be fulfilling one of the chief duties of a faithful dispenser of the mysteries of God; and in this matter they must lead their flock not only in word but also by example.

20. Transmissions of the sacred rites by radio and television shall be done with discretion and dignity, under the leadership and direction of a suitable person appointed for this office by the bishops. This is especially important when the service to be broadcast is the Mass.

III. The Reform of the Sacred Liturgy

21. In order that the Christian people may more certainly derive an abundance of graces from the sacred liturgy, holy Mother Church desires to undertake with great care a general restoration of the liturgy itself. For the liturgy is made up of immutable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change. These not only may but ought to be changed with the passage of time if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become unsuited to it.

In this restoration, both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly the holy things which they signify; the Christian people, so far as possible, should be enabled to understand them with ease and to take part in them fully, actively, and as befits a community.

Wherefore the sacred Council establishes the following general norms:

A) General norms

22. 1. Regulation of the sacred liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church, that is, on the Apostolic See and, as laws may determine, on the bishop.

2. In virtue of power conceded by the law, the regulation of the liturgy within certain defined limits belongs also to various kinds of competent territorial bodies of bishops legitimately established.

3. Therefore no other person, even if he be a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority.

23. That sound tradition may be retained, and yet the way remain open to legitimate progress Careful investigation is always to be made into each part of the liturgy which is to be revised. This investigation should be theological, historical, and pastoral. Also the general laws governing the structure and meaning of the liturgy must be studied in conjunction with the experience derived from recent liturgical reforms and from the indults conceded to various places. Finally, there must be no innovations unless the good of the Church genuinely and certainly requires them; and care must be taken that any new forms adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing.

As far as possible, notable differences between the rites used in adjacent regions must be carefully avoided.

24. Sacred scripture is of the greatest importance in the celebration of the liturgy. For it is from scripture that lessons are read and explained in the homily, and psalms are sung; the prayers, collects, and liturgical songs are scriptural in their inspiration and their force, and it is from the scriptures that actions and signs derive their meaning. Thus to achieve the restoration, progress, and adaptation of the sacred liturgy, it is essential to promote that warm and living love for scripture to which the venerable tradition of both eastern and western rites gives testimony.

25. The liturgical books are to be revised as soon as possible; experts are to be employed on the task, and bishops are to be consulted, from various parts of the world.

B) Norms drawn from the hierarchic and communal nature of the Liturgy

26. Liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which is the "sacrament of unity," namely, the holy people united and ordered under their bishops (33)

Therefore liturgical services pertain to the whole body of the Church; they manifest it and have effects upon it; but they concern the individual members of the Church in different ways, according to their differing rank, office, and actual participation.

27. It is to be stressed that whenever rites, according to their specific nature, make provision for communal celebration involving the presence and active participation of the faithful, this way of celebrating them is to be preferred, so far as possible, to a celebration that is individual and quasi-private.

This applies with especial force to the celebration of Mass and the administration of the sacraments, even though every Mass has of itself a public and social nature.

28. In liturgical celebrations each person, minister or layman, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to his office by the nature of the rite and the principles of liturgy.

29. Servers, lectors commentators, and members of the choir also exercise a genuine liturgical function. They ought, therefore, to discharge their office with the sincere piety and decorum demanded by so exalted a ministry and rightly expected of them by God's people.

Consequently they must all be deeply imbued with the spirit of the liturgy, each in his own measure, and they must be trained to perform their functions in a correct and orderly manner.

30. To promote active participation, the people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalmody, antiphons, and songs, as well as by actions, gestures, and bodily attitudes. And at the proper times all should observe a reverent silence.

31. The revision of the liturgical books must carefully attend to the provision of rubrics also for the people's parts.

32. The liturgy makes distinctions between persons according to their liturgical function and sacred Orders, and there are liturgical laws providing for due honors to be given to civil authorities. Apart from these instances, no special honors are to be paid in the liturgy to any private persons or classes of persons, whether in the ceremonies or by external display.

C) Norms based upon the didactic and pastoral nature of the Liturgy

33. Although the sacred liturgy is above all things the worship of the divine Majesty, it likewise contains much instruction for the faithful (34). For in the liturgy God speaks to His people and Christ is still proclaiming His gospel. And the people reply to God both by song and prayer.

Moreover, the prayers addressed to God by the priest who presides over the assembly in the person of Christ are said in the name of the entire holy people and of all present. And the visible signs used by the liturgy to signify invisible divine things have been chosen by Christ or the Church. Thus not only when things are read "which were written for our instruction" (Rom. 15:4), but also when the Church prays or sings or acts, the faith of those taking part is nourished and their minds are raised to God, so that they may offer Him their rational service and more abundantly receive His grace.

Wherefore, in the revision of the liturgy, the following general norms should be observed:

34. The rites should be distinguished by a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear, and unencumbered by useless repetitions; they should be within the people's powers of comprehension, and normally should not require much explanation.

35. That the intimate connection between words and rites may be apparent in the liturgy:

1) In sacred celebrations there is to be more reading from holy scripture, and it is to be more varied and suitable.

2) Because the sermon is part of the liturgical service, the best place for it is to be indicated even in the rubrics, as far as the nature of the rite will allow; the ministry of preaching is to be fulfilled with exactitude and fidelity. The sermon, moreover, should draw its content mainly from scriptural and liturgical sources, and its character should be that of a proclamation of God's wonderful works in the history of salvation, the mystery of Christ, ever made present and active within us, especially in the celebration of the liturgy.

3) Instruction which is more explicitly liturgical should also be given in a variety of ways; if necessary, short directives to be spoken by the priest or proper minister should be provided within the rites themselves. But they should occur only at the more suitable moments, and be in prescribed or similar words.

4) Bible services should be encouraged, especially on the vigils of the more solemn feasts, on some weekdays in Advent and Lent, and on Sundays and feast days. They are particularly to be commended in places where no priest is available; when this is so, a deacon or some other person authorized by the bishop should preside over the celebration.

36. 1. Particular law remaining in force, the use of the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin rites.

2. But since the use of the mother tongue, whether in the Mass, the administration of the sacraments, or other parts of the liturgy, frequently may be of great advantage to the people, the limits of its employment may be extended. This will apply in the first place to the readings and directives, and to some of the prayers and chants, according to the regulations on this matter to be laid down separately in subsequent chapters.

3. These norms being observed, it is for the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority mentioned in Art. 22, 2, to decide whether, and to what extent, the vernacular language is to be used; their decrees are to be approved, that is, confirmed, by the Apostolic See. And, whenever it seems to be called for, this authority is to consult with bishops of neighboring regions which have the same language.

4. Translations from the Latin text into the mother tongue intended for use in the liturgy must be approved by the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority mentioned above.

D) Norms for adapting the Liturgy to the culture and traditions of peoples

37. Even in the liturgy, the Church has no wish to impose a rigid uniformity in matters which do not implicate the faith or the good of the whole community; rather does she respect and foster the genius and talents of the various races and peoples. Anything in these peoples' way of life which is not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error she studies with sympathy and, if possible, preserves intact. Sometimes in fact she admits such things into the liturgy itself, so long as they harmonize with its true and authentic spirit.

38. Provisions shall also be made, when revising the liturgical books, for legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions, and peoples, especially in mission lands, provided that the substantial unity of the Roman rite is preserved; and this should be borne in mind when drawing up the rites and devising rubrics.

39. Within the limits set by the typical editions of the liturgical books, it shall be for the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority mentioned in Art. 22, 2, to specify adaptations, especially in the case of the administration of the sacraments, the sacramentals, processions, liturgical language, sacred music, and the arts, but according to the fundamental norms laid down in this Constitution.

40. In some places and circumstances, however, an even more radical adaptation of the liturgy is needed, and this entails greater difficulties. Wherefore:

1) The competent territorial ecclesiastical authority mentioned in Art. 22, 2, must, in this matter, carefully and prudently consider which elements from the traditions and culture of individual peoples might appropriately be admitted into divine worship. Adaptations which are judged to be useful or necessary should when be submitted to the Apostolic See, by whose consent they may be introduced.

2) To ensure that adaptations may be made with all the circumspection which they demand, the Apostolic See will grant power to this same territorial ecclesiastical authority to permit and to direct, as the case requires, the necessary preliminary experiments over a determined period of time among certain groups suited for the purpose.

3) Because liturgical laws often involve special difficulties with respect to adaptation, particularly in mission lands, men who are experts in these matters must be employed to formulate them.

E) Promotion of Liturgical Life in Diocese and Parish

41. The bishop is to be considered as the high priest of his flock, from whom the life in Christ of his faithful is in some way derived and dependent.

Therefore all should hold in great esteem the liturgical life of the diocese centered around the bishop, especially in his cathedral church; they must be convinced that the pre-eminent manifestation of the Church consists in the full active participation of all God's holy people in these liturgical celebrations, especially in the same eucharist, in a single prayer, at one altar, at which there presides the bishop surrounded by his college of priests and by his ministers (35).

42. But because it is impossible for the bishop always and everywhere to preside over the whole flock in his Church, he cannot do other than establish lesser groupings of the faithful. Among these the parishes, set up locally under a pastor who takes the place of the bishop, are the most important: for in some manner they represent the visible Church constituted throughout the world.

And therefore the liturgical life of the parish and its relationship to the bishop must be fostered theoretically and practically among the faithful and clergy; efforts also must be made to encourage a sense of community within the parish, above all in the common celebration of the Sunday Mass.

F) The Promotion of Pastoral-Liturgical Action

43. Zeal for the promotion and restoration of the liturgy is rightly held to be a sign of the providential dispositions of God in our time, as a movement of the Holy Spirit in His Church. It is today a distinguishing mark of the Church's life, indeed of the whole tenor of contemporary religious thought and action.

So that this pastoral-liturgical action may become even more vigorous in the Church, the sacred Council decrees:

44. It is desirable that the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority mentioned in Art. 22, 2, set up a liturgical commission, to be assisted by experts in liturgical science, sacred music, art and pastoral practice. So far as possible the commission should be aided by some kind of Institute for Pastoral Liturgy, consisting of persons who are eminent in these matters, and including laymen as circumstances suggest. Under the direction of the above-mentioned territorial ecclesiastical authority the commission is to regulate pastoral-liturgical action throughout the territory, and to promote studies and necessary experiments whenever there is question of adaptations to be proposed to the Apostolic See.

45. For the same reason every diocese is to have a commission on the sacred liturgy under the direction of the bishop, for promoting the liturgical apostolate.

Sometimes it may be expedient that several dioceses should form between them one single commission which will be able to promote the liturgy by common consultation.

46. Besides the commission on the sacred liturgy, every diocese, as far as possible, should have commissions for sacred music and sacred art.

These three commissions must work in closest collaboration; indeed it will often be best to fuse the three of them into one single commission.

CHAPTER II

THE MOST SACRED MYSTERY OF THE EUCHARIST

47. At the Last Supper, on the night when He was betrayed, our Saviour instituted the eucharistic sacrifice of His Body and Blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until He should come again, and so to entrust to His beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of His death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity (36), a paschal banquet in which Christ is eaten, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us (37).

48. The Church, therefore, earnestly desires that Christ's faithful, when present at this mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators; on the contrary, through a good understanding of the rites and prayers they should take part in the sacred action conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration. They should be instructed by God's word and be nourished at the table of the Lord's body; they should give thanks to God; by offering the Immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn also to offer themselves; through Christ the Mediator (38), they should be drawn day by day into ever more perfect union with God and with each other, so that finally God may be all in all.

49. For this reason the sacred Council, having in mind those Masses which are celebrated with the assistance of the faithful, especially on Sundays and feasts of obligation, has made the following decrees in order that the sacrifice of the Mass, even in the ritual forms of its celebration, may become pastorally efficacious to the fullest degree.

50. The rite of the Mass is to be revised in such a way that the intrinsic nature and purpose of its several parts, as also the connection between them, may be more clearly manifested, and that devout and active participation by the faithful may be more easily achieved.

For this purpose the rites are to be simplified, due care being taken to preserve their substance; elements which, with the passage of time, came to be duplicated, or were added with but little advantage, are now to be discarded; other elements which have suffered injury through accidents of history are now to be restored to the vigor which they had in the days of the holy Fathers, as may seem useful or necessary.

51. The treasures of the bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God's word. In this way a more representative portion of the holy scriptures will be read to the people in the course of a prescribed number of years.

52. By means of the homily the mysteries of the faith and the guiding principles of the Christian life are expounded from the sacred text, during the course of the liturgical year; the homily, therefore, is to be highly esteemed as part of the liturgy itself; in fact, at those Masses which are celebrated with the assistance of the people on Sundays and feasts of obligation, it should not be omitted except for a serious reason.

53. Especially on Sundays and feasts of obligation there is to be restored, after the Gospel and the homily, "the common prayer" or "the prayer of the faithful." By this prayer, in which the people are to take part, intercession will be made for holy Church, for the civil authorities, for those oppressed by various needs, for all mankind, and for the salvation of the entire world (39).

54. In Masses which are celebrated with the people, a suitable place may be allotted to their mother tongue. This is to apply in the first place to the readings and "the common prayer," but also, as local conditions may warrant, to those parts which pertain to the people, according to tho norm laid down in Art. 36 of this Constitution.

Nevertheless steps should be taken so that the faithful may also be able to say or to sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them.

And wherever a more extended use of the mother tongue within the Mass appears desirable, the regulation laid down in Art. 40 of this Constitution is to be observed.

55. That more perfect form of participation in the Mass whereby the faithful, after the priest's communion, receive the Lord's body from the same sacrifice, is strongly commended.

The dogmatic principles which were laid down by the Council of Trent remaining intact (40), communion under both kinds may be granted when the bishops think fit, not only to clerics and religious, but also to the laity, in cases to be determined by the Apostolic See, as, for instance, to the newly ordained in the Mass of their sacred ordination, to the newly professed in the Mass of their religious profession, and to the newly baptized in the Mass which follows their baptism.

56. The two parts which, in a certain sense, go to make up the Mass, namely, the liturgy of the word and the eucharistic liturgy, are so closely connected with each other that they form but one single act of worship. Accordingly this sacred Synod strongly urges pastors of souls that, when instructing the faithful, they insistently teach them to take their part in the entire Mass, especially on Sundays and feasts of obligation.

57. 1. Concelebration, whereby the unity of the priesthood is appropriately manifested, has remained in use to this day in the Church both in the east and in the west. For this reason it has seemed good to the Council to extend permission for concelebration to the following cases:

1.

a) on the Thursday of the Lord's Supper, not only at the Mass of the Chrism, but also at the evening Mass.

b) at Masses during councils, bishops' conferences, and synods;

c) at the Mass for the blessing of an abbot.

2. Also, with permission of the ordinary, to whom it belongs to decide whether concelebration is opportune:

a) at conventual Mass, and at the principle Mass in churches when the needs of the faithful do not require that all priests available should celebrate individually;

b) at Masses celebrated at any kind of priests' meetings, whether the priests be secular clergy or religious.

2.

1. The regulation, however, of the discipline of con-celebration in the diocese pertains to the bishop.

2. Nevertheless, each priest shall always retain his right to celebrate Mass individually, though not at the same time in the same church as a concelebrated Mass, nor on Thursday of the Lord's Supper.

58. A new rite for concelebration is to be drawn up and inserted into the Pontifical and into the Roman Missal.

CHAPTER III

THE OTHER SACRAMENTS AND THE SACRAMENTALS

59. The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify men, to build up the body of Christ, and, finally, to give worship to God; because they are signs they also instruct. They not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects they also nourish, strengthen, and express it; that is why they are called "sacraments of faith." They do indeed impart grace, but, in addition, the very act of celebrating them most effectively disposes the faithful to receive this grace in a fruitful manner, to worship God duly, and to practice charity.

It is therefore of the highest importance that the faithful should easily understand the sacramental signs, and should frequent with great eagerness those sacraments which were instituted to nourish the Christian life.

60. Holy Mother Church has, moreover, instituted sacramentals. These are sacred signs which bear a resemblance to the sacraments: they signify effects, particularly of a spiritual kind, which are obtained through the Church's intercession. By them men are disposed to receive the chief effect of the sacraments, and various occasions in life are rendered holy.

61. Thus, for well-disposed members of the faithful, the liturgy of the sacraments and sacramentals sanctifies almost every event in their lives; they are given access to the stream of divine grace which flows from the paschal mystery of the passion, death, the resurrection of Christ, the font from which all sacraments and sacramentals draw their power. There is hardly any proper use of material things which cannot thus be directed toward the sanctification of men and the praise of God.

62. With the passage of time, however, there have crept into the rites of the sacraments and sacramentals certain features which have rendered their nature and purpose far from clear to the people of today; hence some changes have become necessary to adapt them to the needs of our own times. For this reason the sacred Council decrees as follows concerning their revision.

63. Because of the use of the mother tongue in the administration of the sacraments and sacramentals can often be of considerable help to the people, this use is to be extended according to the following norms:

a) The vernacular language may be used in administering the sacraments and sacramentals, according to the norm of Art. 36.

b) In harmony with the new edition of the Roman Ritual, particular rituals shall be prepared without delay by the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority mentioned in Art. 22, 2, of this Constitution. These rituals, which are to be adapted, also as regards the language employed, to the needs of the different regions, are to be reviewed by the Apostolic See and then introduced into the regions for which they have been prepared. But in drawing up these rituals or particular collections of rites, the instructions prefixed to the individual rites the Roman Ritual, whether they be pastoral and rubrical or whether they have special social import, shall not be omitted.

64. The catechumenate for adults, comprising several distinct steps, is to be restored and to be taken into use at the discretion of the local ordinary. By this, means the time of the catechumenate, which is intended as a period of suitable instruction, may be sanctified by sacred rites to be celebrated at successive intervals of time.

65. In mission lands it is found that some of the peoples already make use of initiation rites. Elements from these, when capable of being adapted to Christian ritual, may be admitted along with those already found in Christian tradition, according to the norm laid down in Art. 37-40, of this Constitution.

66. Both the rites for the baptism of adults are to be revised: not only the simpler rite, but also the more solemn one, which must take into account the restored catechumenate. A special Mass "for the conferring of baptism" is to be inserted into the Roman Missal.

67. The rite for the baptism of infants is to be revised, and it should be adapted to the circumstance that those to be baptized are, in fact, infants. The roles of parents and godparents, and also their duties, should be brought out more clearly in the rite itself.

68. The baptismal rite should contain variants, to be used at the discretion of the local ordinary, for occasions when a very large number are to be baptized together. Moreover, a shorter rite is to be drawn up, especially for mission lands, to be used by catechists, but also by the faithful in general when there is danger of death, and neither priest nor deacon is available.

69. In place of the rite called the "Order of supplying what was omitted in the baptism of an infant," a new rite is to be drawn up. This should manifest more fittingly and clearly that the infant, baptized by the short rite, has already been received into the Church.

And a new rite is to be drawn up for converts who have already been validly baptized; it should indicate that they are now admitted to communion with the Church.

70. Except during Eastertide, baptismal water may be blessed within the rite of baptism itself by an approved shorter formula.

71. The rite of confirmation is to be revised and the intimate connection which this sacrament has with the whole of Christian initiation is to be more clearly set forth; for this reason it is fitting for candidates to renew their baptismal promises just before they are confirmed.

Confirmation may be given within the Mass when convenient; when it is given outside the Mass, the rite that is used should be introduced by a formula to be drawn up for this purpose.

72. The rite and formulas for the sacrament of penance are to be revised so that they more clearly express both the nature and effect of the sacrament.

73. "Extreme unction," which may also and more fittingly be called "anointing of the sick," is not a sacrament for those only who are at the point of death. Hence, as soon as any one of the faithful begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, the fitting time for him to receive this sacrament has certainly already arrived.

74. In addition to the separate rites for anointing of the sick and for viaticum, a continuous rite shall be prepared according to which the sick man is anointed after he has made his confession and before he receives viaticum.

75. The number of the anointings is to be adapted to the occasion, and the prayers which belong to the rite of anointing are to be revised so as to correspond with the varying conditions of the sick who receive the sacrament.

76. Both the ceremonies and texts of the ordination rites are to be revised. The address given by the bishop at the beginning of each ordination or consecration may be in the mother tongue.

When a bishop is consecrated, the laying of hands may be done by all the bishops present.

77. The marriage rite now found in the Roman Ritual is to be revised and enriched in such a way that the grace of the sacrament is more clearly signified and the duties of the spouses are taught.

"If any regions are wont to use other praiseworthy customs and ceremonies when celebrating the sacrament of matrimony, the sacred Synod earnestly desires that these by all means be retained" (41).

Moreover the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority mentioned in Art. 22, 52, of this Constitution is free to draw up its own rite suited to the usages of place and people, according to the provision of Art. 63. But the rite must always conform to the law that the priest assisting at the marriage must ask for and obtain the consent of the contracting parties.

78. Matrimony is normally to be celebrated within the Mass, after the reading of the gospel and the homily, and before "the prayer of the faithful." The prayer for the bride, duly amended to remind both spouses of their equal obligation to remain faithful to each other, may be said in the mother tongue.

But if the sacrament of matrimony is celebrated apart from Mass, the epistle and gospel from the nuptial Mass are to be read at the beginning of the rite, and the blessing should always be given to the spouses.

79. The sacramentals are to undergo a revision which takes into account the primary principle of enabling the faithful to participate intelligently, actively, and easily; the circumstances of our own days must also be considered. When rituals are revised, as laid down in Art. 63, new sacramentals may also be added as the need for these becomes apparent.

Reserved blessings shall be very few; reservations shall be in favor of bishops or ordinaries.

Let provision be made that some sacramentals, at least in special circumstances and at the discretion of the ordinary, may be administered by qualified lay persons.

80. The rite for the consecration of virgins at present found in the Roman Pontifical is to be revised.

Moreover, a rite of religious profession and renewal of vows shall be drawn up in order to achieve greater unity, sobriety, and dignity. Apart from exceptions in particular law, this rite should be adopted by those who make their profession or renewal of vows within the Mass.

Religious profession should preferably be made within the Mass.

81. The rite for the burial of the dead should express more clearly the paschal character of Christian death, and should correspond more closely to the circumstances and traditions found in various regions. This holds good also for the liturgical color to be used.

82. The rite for the burial of infants is to be revised, and a special Mass for the occasion should be provided.

CHAPTER IV

THE DIVINE OFFICE

83. Christ Jesus, high priest of the new and eternal covenant, taking human nature, introduced into this earthly exile that hymn which is sung throughout all ages in the halls of heaven. He joins the entire community of mankind to Himself, associating it with His own singing of this canticle of divine praise.

For he continues His priestly work through the agency of His Church, which is ceaselessly engaged in praising the Lord and interceding for the salvation of the whole world. She does this, not only by celebrating the eucharist, but also in other ways, especially by praying the divine office.

84. By tradition going back to early Christian times, the divine office is devised so that the whole course of the day and night is made holy by the praises of God. Therefore, when this wonderful song of praise is rightly performed by priests and others who are deputed for this purpose by the Church's ordinance, or by the faithful praying together with the priest in the approved form, then it is truly the voice of the bride addressed to her bridegroom; It is the very prayer which Christ Himself, together with His body, addresses to the Father.

85. Hence all who render this service are not only fulfilling a duty of the Church, but also are sharing in the greatest honor of Christ's spouse, for by offering these praises to God they are standing before God's throne in the name of the Church their Mother.

86. Priests who are engaged in the sacred pastoral ministry will offer the praises of the hours with greater fervor the more vividly they realize that they must heed St. Paul's exhortation: "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:11). For the work in which they labor will effect nothing and bring forth no fruit except by the power of the Lord who said: "Without me you can do nothing" (John 15: 5). That is why the apostles, instituting deacons, said: "We will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4).

81. In order that the divine office may be better and more perfectly prayed in existing circumstances, whether by priests or by other members of the Church, the sacred Council, carrying further the restoration already so happily begun by the Apostolic See, has seen fit to decree as follows concerning the office of the Roman rite.

88. Because the purpose of the office is to sanctify the day, the traditional sequence of the hours is to be restored so that once again they may be genuinely related to the time of the day when they are prayed, as far as this may be possible. Moreover, it will be necessary to take into account the modern conditions in which daily life has to be lived, especially by those who are called to labor in apostolic works.

89. Therefore, when the office is revised, these norms are to be observed:

a) By the venerable tradition of the universal Church, Lauds as morning prayer and Vespers as evening prayer are the two hinges on which the daily office turns; hence they are to be considered as the chief hours and are to be celebrated as such.

b) Compline is to be drawn up so that it will be a suitable prayer for the end of the day.

c) The hour known as Matins, although it should retain the character of nocturnal praise when celebrated in choir, shall be adapted so that it may be recited at any hour of the day; it shall be made up of fewer psalms and longer readings.

d) The hour of Prime is to be suppressed.

e) In choir the hours of Terce, Sext, and None are to be observed. But outside choir it will be lawful to select any one of these three, according to the respective time of the day.

90. The divine office, because it is the public prayer of the Church, is a source of piety, and nourishment for personal prayer. And therefore priests and all others who take part in the divine office are earnestly exhorted in the Lord to attune their minds to their voices when praying it. The better to achieve this, let them take steps to improve their understanding of the liturgy and of the bible, especially of the psalms.

In revising the Roman office, its ancient and venerable treasures are to be so adapted that all those to whom they are handed on may more extensively and easily draw profit from them.

91. So that it may really be possible in practice to observe the course of the hours proposed in Art. 89, the psalms are no longer to be distributed throughout one week, but through some longer period of time.

The work of revising the psalter, already happily begun, is to be finished as soon as possible, and is to take into account the style of Christian Latin, the liturgical use of psalms, also when sung, and the entire tradition of the Latin Church.

92. As regards the readings, the following shall be observed: a) Readings from sacred scripture shall be arranged so that the riches of God's word may be easily accessible in more abundant measure.

b) Readings excerpted from the works of the fathers, doctors, and ecclesiastical writers shall be better selected.

c) The accounts of martyrdom or the lives of the saints are to accord with the facts of history.

93. To whatever extent may seem desirable, the hymns are to be restored to their original form, and whatever smacks of mythology or ill accords with Christian piety is to be removed or changed. Also, as occasion may arise, let other selections from the treasury of hymns be incorporated.

94. That the day may be truly sanctified, and that the hours themselves may be recited with spiritual advantage, it is best that each of them be prayed at a time which most closely corresponds with its true canonical time.

95. Communities obliged to choral office are bound to celebrate the office in choir every day in addition to the conventual Mass. In particular:

a) Orders of canons, of monks and of nuns, and of other regulars bound by law or constitutions to choral office must celebrate the entire office.

b) Cathedral or collegiate chapters are bound to recite those parts of the office imposed on them by general or particular law.

c) All members of the above communities who are in major orders or who are solemnly professed, except for lay brothers, are bound to recite individually those canonical hours which they do not pray in choir.

96. Clerics not bound to office in choir, if they are in major orders, are bound to pray the entire office every day, either in common or individually, as laid down in Art. 89.

97. Appropriate instances are to be defined by the rubrics in which a liturgical service may be substituted for the divine office.

In particular cases, and for a just reason, ordinaries can dispense their subjects wholly or in part from the obligation of reciting the divine office, or may commute the obligation.

98. Members of any institute dedicated to acquiring perfection who, according to their constitutions, are to recite any parts of the divine office are thereby performing the public prayer of the Church.

They too perform the public prayer of the Church who, in virtue of their constitutions, recite any short office, provided this is drawn up after the pattern of the divine office and is duly approved.

99. Since the divine office is the voice of the Church, that is of the whole mystical body publicly praising God, those clerics who are not obliged to office in choir, especially priests who live together or who assemble for any purpose, are urged to pray at least some part of the divine office in common.

All who pray the divine office, whether in choir or in common, should fulfill the task entrusted to them as perfectly as possible: this refers not only to the internal devotion of their minds but also to their external manner of celebration.

It is, moreover, fitting that the office, both in choir and in common, be sung when possible.

100. Pastors of souls should see to it that the chief hours, especially Vespers, are celebrated in common in church on Sundays and the more solemn feasts. And the laity, too, are encouraged to recite the divine office, either with the priests, or among themselves, or even individually.

101. 1. In accordance with the centuries-old tradition of the Latin rite, the Latin language is to be retained by clerics in the divine office. But in individual cases the ordinary has the power of granting the use of a vernacular translation to those clerics for whom the use of Latin constitutes a grave obstacle to their praying the office properly. The vernacular version, however, must be one that is drawn up according to the provision of Art. 36.

2. The competent superior has the power to grant the use of the vernacular in the celebration of the divine office, even in choir, to nuns and to members of institutes dedicated to acquiring perfection, both men who are not clerics and women. The version, however, must be one that is approved.

3. Any cleric bound to the divine office fulfills his obligation if he prays the office in the vernacular together with a group of the faithful or with those mentioned in 52 above provided that the text of the translation is approved.

CHAPTER V

THE LITURGICAL YEAR

102. Holy Mother Church is conscious that she must celebrate the saving work of her divine Spouse by devoutly recalling it on certain days throughout the course of the year. Every week, on the day which she has called the Lord's day, she keeps the memory of the Lord's resurrection, which she also celebrates once in the year, together with His blessed passion, in the most solemn festival of Easter.

Within the cycle of a year, moreover, she unfolds the whole mystery of Christ, from the incarnation and birth until the ascension, the day of Pentecost, and the expectation of blessed hope and of the coming of the Lord.

Recalling thus the mysteries of redemption, the Church opens to the faithful the riches of her Lord's powers and merits, so that these are in some way made present for all time, and the faithful are enabled to lay hold upon them and become filled with saving grace.

103. In celebrating this annual cycle of Christ's mysteries, holy Church honors with especial love the Blessed Mary, Mother of God, who is joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her Son. In her the Church holds up and admires the most excellent fruit of the redemption, and joyfully contemplates, as in a faultless image, that which she herself desires and hopes wholly to be.

104. The Church has also included in the annual cycle days devoted to the memory of the martyrs and the other saints. Raised up to perfection by the manifold grace of God, and already in possession of eternal salvation, they sing God's perfect praise in heaven and offer prayers for us. By celebrating the passage of these saints from earth to heaven the Church proclaims the paschal mystery achieved in the saints who have suffered and been glorified with Christ; she proposes them to the faithful as examples drawing all to the Father through Christ, and through their merits she pleads for God's favors.

105. Finally, in the various seasons of the year and according to her traditional discipline, the Church completes the formation of the faithful by means of pious practices for soul and body, by instruction, prayer, and works of penance and of mercy.

Accordingly the sacred Council has seen fit to decree as follows.

106. By a tradition handed down from the apostles which took its origin from the very day of Christ's resurrection, the Church celebrates the paschal mystery every eighth day; with good reason this, then, bears the name of the Lord's day or Sunday. For on this day Christ's faithful are bound to come together into one place so that; by hearing the word of God and taking part in the eucharist, they may call to mind the passion, the resurrection and the glorification of the Lord Jesus, and may thank God who "has begotten them again, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto a living hope" (1 Pet. 1:3). Hence the Lord's day is the original feast day, and it should be proposed to the piety of the faithful and taught to them so that it may become in fact a day of joy and of freedom from work. Other celebrations, unless they be truly of greatest importance, shall not have precedence over the Sunday which is the foundation and kernel of the whole liturgical year.

107. The liturgical year is to be revised so that the traditional customs and discipline of the sacred seasons shall be preserved or restored to suit the conditions of modern times; their specific character is to be retained, so that they duly nourish the piety of the faithful who celebrate the mysteries of Christian redemption, and above all the paschal mystery. If certain adaptations are considered necessary on account of local conditions, they are to be made in accordance with the provisions of Art. 39 and 40.

108. The minds of the faithful must be directed primarily toward the feasts of the Lord whereby the mysteries of salvation are celebrated in the course of the year. Therefore, the proper of the time shall be given the preference which is its due over the feasts of the saints, so that the entire cycle of the mysteries of salvation may be suitably recalled.

109. The season of Lent has a twofold character: primarily by recalling or preparing for baptism and by penance, it disposes the faithful, who more diligently hear the word of God and devote themselves to prayer, to celebrate the paschal mystery. This twofold character is to be brought into greater prominence both in the liturgy and by liturgical catechesis. Hence:

a) More use is to be made of the baptismal features proper to the Lenten liturgy; some of them, which used to flourish in bygone days, are to be restored as may seem good.

b) The same is to apply to the penitential elements. As regards instruction it is important to impress on the minds of the faithful not only a social consequences of sin but also that essence of the virtue of penance which leads to the detestation of sin as an offence against God; the role of the Church in penitential practices is not to be passed over, and the people must be exhorted to pray for sinners.

110. During Lent penance should not be only internal and individual, but also external and social. The practice of penance should be fostered in ways that are possible in our own times and in different regions, and according to the circumstances of the faithful; it should be encouraged by the authorities mentioned in Art. 22.

Nevertheless, let the paschal fast be kept sacred. Let it be celebrated everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible, prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, so that the joys of the Sunday of the resurrection may be attained with uplifted and clear mind.

111. The saints have been traditionally honored in the Church and their authentic relics and images held in veneration. For the feasts of the saints proclaim the wonderful works of Christ in His servants, and display to the faithful fitting examples for their imitation.

Lest the feasts of the saints should take precedence over the feasts which commemorate the very mysteries of salvation, many of them should be left to be celebrated by a particular Church or nation or family of religious; only those should be extended to the universal Church which commemorate saints who are truly of universal importance.

CHAPTER

VI SACRED MUSIC

112. The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as sacred song united to the words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy.

Holy Scripture, indeed, has bestowed praise upon sacred song (42), and the same may be said of the fathers of the Church and of the Roman pontiffs who in recent times, led by St. Pius X, have explained more precisely the ministerial function supplied by sacred music in the service of the Lord.

Therefore sacred music is to be considered the more holy in proportion as it is more closely connected with the liturgical action, whether it adds delight to prayer, fosters unity of minds, or confers greater solemnity upon the sacred rites. But the Church approves of all forms of true art having the needed qualities, and admits them into divine worship.

Accordingly, the sacred Council, keeping to the norms and precepts of ecclesiastical tradition and discipline, and having regard to the purpose of sacred music, which is the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful, decrees as follows.

113. Liturgical worship is given a more noble form when the divine offices are celebrated solemnly in song, with the assistance of sacred ministers and the active participation of the people.

As regards the language to be used, the provisions of Art. 36 are to be observed; for the Mass, Art. 54; for the sacraments, Art. 63; for the divine office. Art. 101.

114. The treasure of sacred music is to be preserved and fostered with great care. Choirs must be diligently promoted, especially in cathedral churches; but bishops and other pastors of souls must be at pains to ensure that, whenever the sacred action is to be celebrated with song, the whole body of the faithful may be able to contribute that active participation which is rightly theirs, as laid down in Art. 28 and 30.

115. Great importance is to be attached to the teaching and practice of music in seminaries, in the novitiates and houses of study of religious of both sexes, and also in other Catholic institutions and schools. To impart this instruction, teachers are to be carefully trained and put in charge of the teaching of sacred music.

It is desirable also to found higher institutes of sacred music whenever this can be done.

Composers and singers, especially boys, must also be given a genuine liturgical training.

116. The Church acknowledges Gregorian chant as specially suited to the Roman liturgy: therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services.

But other kinds of sacred music, especially polyphony, are by no means excluded from liturgical celebrations, so long as they accord with the spirit of the liturgical action, as laid down in Art. 30.

117. The typical edition of the books of Gregorian chant is to be completed; and a more critical edition is to be prepared of those books already published since the restoration by St. Pius X.

It is desirable also that an edition be prepared containing simpler melodies, for use in small churches.

118. Religious singing by the people is to be intelligently fostered so that in devotions and sacred exercises, as also during liturgical services, the voices of the faithful may ring out according to the norms and requirements of the rubrics.

119. In certain parts of the world, especially mission lands, there are peoples who have their own musical traditions, and these play a great part in their religious and social life. For this reason due importance is to be attached to their music, and a suitable place is to be given to it, not only in forming their attitude toward religion, but also in adapting worship to their native genius, as indicated in Art. 39 and 40.

Therefore, when missionaries are being given training in music, every effort should be made to see that they become competent in promoting the traditional music of these peoples, both in schools and in sacred services, as far as may be practicable.

120. In the Latin Church the pipe organ is to be held in high esteem, for it is the traditional musical instrument which adds a wonderful splendor to the Church's ceremonies and powerfully lifts up man's mind to God and to higher things.

But other instruments also may be admitted for use in divine worship, with the knowledge and consent of the competent territorial authority, as laid down in Art. 22, 52, 37, and 40. This may be done, however, only on condition that the instruments are suitable, or can be made suitable, for sacred use, accord with the dignity of the temple, and truly contribute to the edification of the faithful.

121. Composers, filled with the Christian spirit, should feel that their vocation is to cultivate sacred music and increase its store of treasures.

Let them produce compositions which have the qualities proper to genuine sacred music, not confining themselves to works which can be sung only by large choirs, but providing also for the needs of small choirs and for the active participation of the entire assembly of the faithful.

The texts intended to be sung must always be in conformity with Catholic doctrine; indeed they should be drawn chiefly from holy scripture and from liturgical sources.

CHAPTER VII

SACRED ART AND SACRED FURNISHINGS

122. Very rightly the fine arts are considered to rank among the noblest activities of man's genius, and this applies especially to religious art and to its highest achievement, which is sacred art. These arts, by their very nature, are oriented toward the infinite beauty of God which they attempt in some way to portray by the work of human hands; they achieve their purpose of redounding to God's praise and glory in proportion as they are directed the more exclusively to the single aim of turning men's minds devoutly toward God.

Holy Mother Church has therefore always been the friend of the fine arts and has ever sought their noble help, with the special aim that all things set apart for use in divine worship should be truly worthy, becoming, and beautiful, signs and symbols of the supernatural world, and for this purpose she has trained artists. In fact, the Church has, with good reason, always reserved to herself the right to pass judgment upon the arts, deciding which of the works of artists are in accordance with faith, piety, and cherished traditional laws, and thereby fitted for sacred use.

The Church has been particularly careful to see that sacred furnishings should worthily and beautifully serve the dignity of worship, and has admitted changes in materials, style, or ornamentation prompted by the progress of the technical arts with he passage of time.

Wherefore it has pleased the Fathers to issue the following decrees on these matters.

123. The Church has not adopted any particular style of art as her very own; she has admitted styles from every period according to the natural talents and circumstances of peoples, and the needs of the various rites. Thus, in the course of the centuries, she has brought into being a treasury of art which must be very carefully preserved. The art of our own days, coming from every race and region, shall also be given free scope in the Church, provided that it adorns the sacred buildings and holy rites with due reverence and honor; thereby it is enabled to contribute its own voice to that wonderful chorus of praise in honor of the Catholic faith sung by great men in times gone by.

124. Ordinaries, by the encouragement and favor they show to art which is truly sacred, should strive after noble beauty rather than mere sumptuous display. This principle is to apply also in the matter of sacred vestments and ornaments.

Let bishops carefully remove from the house of God and from other sacred places those works of artists which are repugnant to faith, morals, and Christian piety, and which offend true religious sense either by depraved forms or by lack of artistic worth, mediocrity and pretense.

And when churches are to be built, let great care be taken that they be suitable for the celebration of liturgical services and for the active participation of the faithful.

125. The practice of placing sacred images in churches so that they may be venerated by the faithful is to be maintained. Nevertheless their number should be moderate and their relative positions should reflect right order. For otherwise they may create confusion among the Christian people and foster devotion of doubtful orthodoxy.

126. When passing judgment on works of art, local ordinaries shall give a hearing to the diocesan commission on sacred art and, if needed, also to others who are especially expert, and to the commissions referred to in Art. 44, 45, and 46.

Ordinaries must be very careful to see that sacred furnishings and works of value are not disposed of or dispersed; for they are the ornaments of the house of God.

127. Bishops should have a special concern for artists, so as to imbue them with the spirit of sacred art and of the sacred liturgy. This they may do in person or through suitable priests who are gifted with a knowledge and love of art.

It is also desirable that schools or academies of sacred art should be founded in those parts of the world where they would be useful, so that artists may be trained.

All artists who, prompted by their talents, desire to serve God's glory in holy Church, should ever bear in mind that they are engaged in a kind of sacred imitation of God the Creator, and are concerned with works destined to be used in Catholic worship, to edify the faithful, and to foster their piety and their religious formation.

128. Along with the revision of the liturgical books, as laid down in Art. 25, there is to be an early revision of the canons and ecclesiastical statutes which govern the provision of material things involved in sacred worship. These laws refer especially to the worthy and well planned construction of sacred buildings, the shape and construction of altars, the nobility, placing, and safety of the eucharistic tabernacle, the dignity and suitability of the baptistery, the proper ordering of sacred images, embellishments, and vestments. Laws which seem less suited to the reformed liturgy are to be brought into harmony with it, or else abolished; and any which are helpful are to be retained if already in use, or introduced where they are lacking.

According to the norm of Art. 22 of this Constitution, the territorial bodies of bishops are empowered to adapt such things to the needs and customs of their different regions; this applies especially to the materials and form of sacred furnishings and vestments.

129. During their philosophical and theological studies, clerics are to be taught about the history and development of sacred art, and about the sound principles governing the production of its works. In consequence they will be able to appreciate and preserve the Church's venerable monuments, and be in a position to aid, by good advice, artists who are engaged in producing works of art.

130. It is fitting that the use of pontificals be reserved to those ecclesiastical persons who have episcopal rank or some particular jurisdiction.

APPENDIX

A DECLARATION OF THE SECOND ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF THE VATICAN ON REVISION OF THE CALENDAR

The Second Ecumenical Sacred Council of the Vatican, recognizing the importance of the wishes expressed by many concerning the assignment of the feast of Easter to a fixed Sunday and concerning an unchanging calendar, having carefully considered the effects which could result from the introduction of a new calendar, declares as follows:

1. The Sacred Council would not object if the feast of Easter were assigned to a particular Sunday of the Gregorian Calendar, provided that those whom it may concern, especially the brethren who are not in communion with the Apostolic See, give their assent.
2. The sacred Council likewise declares that it does not oppose efforts designed to introduce a perpetual calendar into civil society.

But among the various systems which are being suggested to stabilize a perpetual calendar and to introduce it into civil life, the Church has no objection only in the case of those systems which retain and safeguard a seven-day week with Sunday, without the introduction of any days outside the week, so that the succession of weeks may be left intact, unless there is question of the most serious reasons. Concerning these the Apostolic See shall judge.

NOTES

1. Secret of the ninth Sunday after Pentecost.

2. Cf. Heb. 13:14.

3. Cf. Eph. 2:21-22.

4. Cf. Eph. 4:13.

5. Cf. Is. 11:12.

6. Cf. John 11:52.

7. Cf. John 10:16.

8. Cf. Is. 61:1; Luke 4:18.

9. St. Ignatius of Antioch, To the Ephesians, 7, 2.

10. Cf. 1 Tim. 2:5.

11. Sacramentarium Veronese (ed. Mohlberg), n. 1265; cf. also n. 1241, 1248.

12. Easter Preface of the Roman Missal.

13. Prayer before the second lesson for Holy Saturday, as it was in the Roman Missal before the restoration of Holy Week.

14. Cf. Mark 16:15.

15. Cf. Acts 26:18.

16. Cf. Rom. 6:4; Eph. 2:6; Col. 3:1; 2 Tim. 2:11.

17. Cf. John 4:23.

18. Cf. 1 Cor. 11:26.

19. Council of Trent, Session XIII, Decree on the Holy Eucharist, c.5.

20. Council of Trent, Session XXII, Doctrine on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, c. 2.

21. Cf. St. Augustine, Tractatus in Ioannem, VI, n. 7.

22. Cf. Apoc. 21:2; Col. 3:1; Heb. 8:2.

23. Cf. Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:4.

24. Cf. John 17:3; Luke 24:27; Acts 2:38.

25. Cf. Matt. 28:20.

26. Postcommunion for both Masses of Easter Sunday.

27. Collect of the Mass for Tuesday of Easter Week.

28. Cf. 2 Cor. 6:1.

29. Cf. Matt. 6:6.

30. Cf . 1 Thess. 5:17.

31. Cf . 2 Cor. 4:10-11.

32. Secret for Monday of Pentecost Week.

33. St. Cyprian, On the Unity of the Cathotic Church, 7; cf. Letter 66, n. 8, 3.

34. Cf. Council of Trent, Session XXII, Doctrine on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, c. 8.

35. Cf. St. Ignatius of Antioch, To the Smyrnians, 8; To the Magnesians, 7; To the Philadelphians, 4.

36. Cf. St. Augustine, Tractatus in Ioannem, VI, n. 13.

37. Roman Breviary, feast of Corpus Christi, Second Vespers, antiphon to the Magnificat.

38. Cf. St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on the Gospel of John, book XI, chap. XI-XII: Migne, Patrologia Graeca, 74, 557-564.

39. Cf. 1 Tim. 2:1-2.

40. Session XXI, July 16, 1562. Doctrine on Communion under Both Species, chap. 1-3: Condlium Tridentinum. Diariorum, Actorum, Epistolarum, Tractatuum nova collectio ed. Soc. Goerresiana, tome VIII (Freiburg in Br., 1919), 698-699.

41. Council of Trent, Session XXIV, November 11, 1563, On Reform, chap. I. Cf. Roman Ritual, title VIII, chap. II, n. 6.

42. Cf. Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.

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LUMEN GENTIUM
Dogmatic Constitution on the Church
Second Vatican Council

DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION ON THE CHURCH
LUMEN GENTIUM
SOLEMNLY PROMULGATED BY HOLINESS
POPE PAUL VI
ON NOVEMBER 21, 1964

CHAPTER I

THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH

1. Christ is the Light of nations. Because this is so, this Sacred Synod gathered together in the Holy Spirit eagerly desires, by proclaiming the Gospel to every creature,(1) to bring the light of Christ to all men, a light brightly visible on the countenance of the Church. Since the Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race, it desires now to unfold more fully to the faithful of the Church and to the whole world its own inner nature and universal mission. This it intends to do following faithfully the teaching of previous councils. The present- day conditions of the world add greater urgency to this work of the Church so that all men, joined more closely today by various social, technical and cultural ties, might also attain fuller unity in Christ.

2. The eternal Father, by a free and hidden plan of His own wisdom and goodness, created the whole world. His plan was to raise men to a participation of the divine life. Fallen in Adam, God the Father did not leave men to themselves, but ceaselessly offered helps to salvation, in view of Christ, the Redeemer "who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature".(2) All the elect, before time began, the Father "foreknew and pre- destined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that he should be the firstborn among many brethren".(3) He planned to assemble in the holy Church all those who would believe in Christ. Already from the beginning of the world the foreshadowing of the Church took place. It was prepared in a remarkable way throughout the history of the people of Israel and by means of the Old Covenant.(1*) In the present era of time the Church was constituted and, by the outpouring of the Spirit, was made manifest. At the end of time it will gloriously achieve completion, when, as is read in the Fathers, all the just, from Adam and "from Abel, the just one, to the last of the elect,"(2*) will be gathered together with the Father in the universal Church.

3. The Son, therefore, came, sent by the Father. It was in Him, before the foundation of the world, that the Father chose us and predestined us to become adopted sons, for in Him it pleased the Father to re-establish all things.(4) To carry out the will of the Father, Christ inaugurated the Kingdom of heaven on earth and revealed to us the mystery of that kingdom. By His obedience He brought about redemption. The Church, or, in other words, the kingdom of Christ now present in mystery, grows visibly through the power of God in the world. This inauguration and this growth are both symbolized by the blood and water which flowed from the open side of a crucified Jesus,(5) and are foretold in the words of the Lord referring to His death on the Cross: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself".(6) As often as the sacrifice of the cross in which Christ our Passover was sacrificed, is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemption is carried on, and, in the sacrament of the eucharistic bread, the unity of all believers who form one body in Christ (8) is both expressed and brought about. All men are called to this union with Christ, who is the light of the world, from whom we go forth, through whom we live, and toward whom our whole life strains.

4. When the work which the Father gave the Son to do on earth (9) was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in order that He might continually sanctify the Church, and thus, all those who believe would have access through Christ in one Spirit to the Father.(10) He is the Spirit of Life, a fountain of water springing up to life eternal.(11) To men, dead in sin, the Father gives life through Him, until, in Christ, He brings to life their mortal bodies.(12) The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful, as in a temple.(13) In them He prays on their behalf and bears witness to the fact that they are adopted sons.(14) The Church, which the Spirit guides in way of all truth(15) and which He unified in communion and in works of ministry, He both equips and directs with hierarchical and charismatic gifts and adorns with His fruits.(16) By the power of the Gospel He makes the Church keep the freshness of youth. Uninterruptedly He renews it and leads it to perfect union with its Spouse. (3*) The Spirit and the Bride both say to Jesus, the Lord, "Come!"(17)

Thus, the Church has been seen as "a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."(4*)

5. The mystery of the holy Church is manifest in its very foundation. The Lord Jesus set it on its course by preaching the Good News, that is, the coming of the Kingdom of God, which, for centuries, had been promised in the Scriptures: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand"(18). In the word, in the works, and in the presence of Christ, this kingdom was clearly open to the view of men. The Word of the Lord is compared to a seed which is sown in a field;(19) those who hear the Word with faith and become part of the little flock of Christ,(20) have received the Kingdom itself. Then, by its own power the seed sprouts and grows until harvest time.(21) The Miracles of Jesus also confirm that the Kingdom has already arrived on earth: "If I cast out devils by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you".(22) Before all things, however, the Kingdom is clearly visible in the very Person of Christ, the Son of God and the Son of Man, who came "to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many:"(23)

When Jesus, who had suffered the death of the cross for mankind, had risen, He appeared as the one constituted as Lord, Christ and eternal Priest,(24) and He poured out on His disciples the Spirit promised by the Father.(25) From this source the Church, equipped with the gifts of its Founder and faithfully guarding His precepts of charity, humility and self-sacrifice, receives the mission to proclaim and to spread among all peoples the Kingdom of Christ and of God and to be, on earth, the initial budding forth of that kingdom. While it slowly grows, the Church strains toward the completed Kingdom and, with all its strength, hopes and desires to be united in glory with its King.

6. In the old Testament the revelation of the Kingdom is often conveyed by means of metaphors. In the same way the inner nature of the Church is now made known to us in different images taken either from tending sheep or cultivating the land, from building or even from family life and betrothals, the images receive preparatory shaping in the books of the Prophets.

The Church is a sheepfold whose one and indispensable door is Christ.(26) It is a flock of which God Himself foretold He would be the shepherd,(27) and whose sheep, although ruled by human shepherds; are nevertheless continuously led and nourished by Christ Himself, the Good Shepherd and the Prince of the shepherds,(28) who gave His life for the sheep.(29)

The Church is a piece of land to be cultivated, the village of God.(30) On that land the ancient olive tree grows whose holy roots were the Prophets and in which the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles has been brought about and will be brought about.(31) That land, like a choice vineyard, has been planted by the heavenly Husbandman.(32) The true vine is Christ who gives life and the power to bear abundant fruit to the branches, that is, to us, who through the Church remain in Christ without whom we can do nothing.(33)

Often the Church has also been called the building of God.(34) The Lord Himself compared Himself to the stone which the builders rejected, but which was made into the cornerstone.(35) On this foundation the Church is built by the apostles,(36) and from it the Church receives durability and consolidation. This edifice has many names to describe it: the house of God (37) in which dwells His family; the household of God in the Spirit;(38) the dwelling place of God among men;(39) and, especially, the holy temple. This Temple, symbolized in places of worship built out of stone, is praised by the Holy Fathers and, not without reason, is compared in the liturgy to the Holy City, the New Jerusalem (5*). As living stones we here on earth are built into it.(40) John contemplates this holy city coming down from heaven at the renewal of the world as a bride made ready and adorned for her husband.(41)

The Church, further, "that Jerusalem which is above" is also called "our mother".(42) It is described as the spotless spouse of the spotless Lamb,(43) whom Christ "loved and for whom He delivered Himself up that He might sanctify her",(44) whom He unites to Himself by an unbreakable covenant, and whom He unceasingly "nourishes and cherishes",(45) and whom, once purified, He willed to be cleansed and joined to Himself, subject to Him in love and fidelity,(46) and whom, finally, He filled with heavenly gifts for all eternity, in order that we may know the love of God and of Christ for us, a love which surpasses all knowledge.(47) The Church, while on earth it journeys in a foreign land away from the Lord,(48) is like an exile. It seeks and experiences those things which are above, where Christ is seated at the right-hand of God, where the life of the Church is hidden with Christ in God until it appears in glory with its Spouse.(49)

7. In the human nature united to Himself the Son of God, by overcoming death through His own death and resurrection, redeemed man and re-molded him into a new creation.(50) By communicating His Spirit, Christ made His brothers, called together from all nations, mystically the components of His own Body.

In that Body the life of Christ is poured into the believers who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ who suffered and was glorified.(6*) Through Baptism we are formed in the likeness of Christ: "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body"(51). In this sacred rite a oneness with Christ's death and resurrection is both symbolized and brought about: "For we were buried with Him by means of Baptism into death"; and if "we have been united with Him in the likeness of His death, we shall be so in the likeness of His resurrection also"(52) Really partaking of the body of the Lord in the breaking of the eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with Him and with one another. "Because the bread is one, we though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread".(53) In this way all of us are made members of His Body,(54) "but severally members one of another".(55)

As all the members of the human body, though they are many, form one body, so also are the faithful in Christ.(56) Also, in the building up of Christ's Body various members and functions have their part to play. There is only one Spirit who, according to His own richness and the needs of the ministries, gives His different gifts for the welfare of the Church.(57) What has a special place among these gifts is the grace of the apostles to whose authority the Spirit Himself subjected even those who were endowed with charisms.(58) Giving the body unity through Himself and through His power and inner joining of the members, this same Spirit produces and urges love among the believers. From all this it follows that if one member endures anything, all the members co-endure it, and if one member is honored, all the members together rejoice.(59)

The Head of this Body is Christ. He is the image of the invisible God and in Him all things came into being. He is before all creatures and in Him all things hold together. He is the head of the Body which is the Church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He might have the first place.(60) By the greatness of His power He rules the things in heaven and the things on earth, and with His all-surpassing perfection and way of acting He fills the whole body with the riches of His glory

All the members ought to be molded in the likeness of Him, until Christ be formed in them.(62) For this reason we, who have been made to conform with Him, who have died with Him and risen with Him, are taken up into the mysteries of His life, until we will reign together with Him.(63) On earth, still as pilgrims in a strange land, tracing in trial and in oppression the paths He trod, we are made one with His sufferings like the body is one with the Head, suffering with Him, that with Him we may be glorified.(64)

From Him "the whole body, supplied and built up by joints and ligaments, attains a growth that is of God".(65) He continually distributes in His body, that is, in the Church, gifts of ministries in which, by His own power, we serve each other unto salvation so that, carrying out the truth in love, we might through all things grow unto Him who is our Head.(66)

In order that we might be unceasingly renewed in Him,(67) He has shared with us His Spirit who, existing as one and the same being in the Head and in the members, gives life to, unifies and moves through the whole body. This He does in such a way that His work could be compared by the holy Fathers with the function which the principle of life, that is, the soul, fulfills in the human body.(8*)

Christ loves the Church as His bride, having become the model of a man loving his wife as his body;(68) the Church, indeed, is subject to its Head.(69) "Because in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily",(70) He fills the Church, which is His body and His fullness, with His divine gifts (71) so that it may expand and reach all the fullness of God.(72)

8. Christ, the one Mediator, established and continually sustains here on earth His holy Church, the community of faith, hope and charity, as an entity with visible delineation (9*) through which He communicated truth and grace to all. But, the society structured with hierarchical organs and the Mystical Body of Christ, are not to be considered as two realities, nor are the visible assembly and the spiritual community, nor the earthly Church and the Church enriched with heavenly things; rather they form one complex reality which coalesces from a divine and a human element.(10*) For this reason, by no weak analogy, it is compared to the mystery of the incarnate Word. As the assumed nature inseparably united to Him, serves the divine Word as a living organ of salvation, so, in a similar way, does the visible social structure of the Church serve the Spirit of Christ, who vivifies it, in the building up of the body.(73) (11*)

This is the one Church of Christ which in the Creed is professed as one, holy, catholic and apostolic, (12*) which our Saviour, after His Resurrection, commissioned Peter to shepherd,(74) and him and the other apostles to extend and direct with authority,(75) which He erected for all ages as "the pillar and mainstay of the truth".(76) This Church constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the Bishops in communion with him,(13*) although many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of its visible structure. These elements, as gifts belonging to the Church of Christ, are forces impelling toward catholic unity.

Just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and persecution, so the Church is called to follow the same route that it might communicate the fruits of salvation to men. Christ Jesus, "though He was by nature God . . . emptied Himself, taking the nature of a slave",(77) and "being rich, became poor"(78) for our sakes. Thus, the Church, although it needs human resources to carry out its mission, is not set up to seek earthly glory, but to proclaim, even by its own example, humility and selfsacrifice. Christ was sent by the Father "to bring good news to the poor, to heal the contrite of heart",(79) "to seek and to save what was lost".(80) Similarly, the Church encompasses with love all who are afflicted with human suffering and in the poor and afflicted sees the image of its poor and suffering Founder. It does all it can to relieve their need and in them it strives to serve Christ. While Christ, holy, innocent and undefiled(81) knew nothing of sin,(82) but came to expiate only the sins of the people,(83) the Church, embracing in its bosom sinners, at the same time holy and always in need of being purified, always follows the way of penance and renewal. The Church, "like a stranger in a foreign land, presses forward amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God"(14*), announcing the cross and death of the Lord until He comes."(84) By the power of the risen Lord it is given strength that it might, in patience and in love, overcome its sorrows and its challenges, both within itself and from without, and that it might reveal to the world, faithfully though darkly, the mystery of its Lord until, in the end, it will be manifested in full light.

CHAPTER II

ON THE PEOPLE OF GOD

9. At all times and in every race God has given welcome to whosoever fears Him and does what is right.(85) God, however, does not make men holy and save them merely as individuals, without bond or link between one another. Rather has it pleased Him to bring men together as one people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness. He therefore chose the race of Israel as a people unto Himself. With it He set up a covenant. Step by step He taught and prepared this people, making known in its history both Himself and the decree of His will and making it holy unto Himself. All these things, however, were done by way of preparation and as a figure of that new and perfect covenant, which was to be ratified in Christ, and of that fuller revelation which was to be given through the Word of God Himself made flesh. "Behold the days shall come saith the Lord, and I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel, and with the house of Judah . . . I will give my law in their bowels, and I will write it in their heart, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people . . . For all of them shall know Me, from the least of them even to the greatest, saith the Lord.(86) Christ instituted this new covenant, the new testament, that is to say, in His Blood,(87) calling together a people made up of Jew and gentile, making them one, not according to the flesh but in the Spirit. This was to be the new People of God. For those who believe in Christ, who are reborn not from a perishable but from an imperishable seed through the word of the living God,(88) not from the flesh but from water and the Holy Spirit,(89) are finally established as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people . . . who in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God".(90)

That messianic people has Christ for its head, "Who was delivered up for our sins, and rose again for our justification",(91) and now, having won a name which is above all names, reigns in glory in heaven. The state of this people is that of the dignity and freedom of the sons of God, in whose hearts the Holy Spirit dwells as in His temple. Its law is the new commandment to love as Christ loved us.(92) Its end is the kingdom of God, which has been begun by God Himself on earth, and which is to be further extended until it is brought to perfection by Him at the end of time, when Christ, our life,(93) shall appear, and "creation itself will be delivered from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the sons of God".(94) So it is that that messianic people, although it does not actually include all men, and at times may look like a small flock, is nonetheless a lasting and sure seed of unity, hope and salvation for the whole human race. Established by Christ as a communion of life, charity and truth, it is also used by Him as an instrument for the redemption of all, and is sent forth into the whole world as the light of the world and the salt of the earth.(95)

Israel according to the flesh, which wandered as an exile in the desert, was already called the Church of God.(96) So likewise the new Israel which while living in this present age goes in search of a future and abiding city (97) is called the Church of Christ.(98) For He has bought it for Himself with His blood,(99) has filled it with His Spirit and provided it with those means which befit it as a visible and social union. God gathered together as one all those who in faith look upon Jesus as the author of salvation and the source of unity and peace, and established them as the Church that for each and all it may be the visible sacrament of this saving unity. (1*) While it transcends all limits of time and confines of race, the Church is destined to extend to all regions of the earth and so enters into the history of mankind. Moving forward through trial and tribulation, the Church is strengthened by the power of God's grace, which was promised to her by the Lord, so that in the weakness of the flesh she may not waver from perfect fidelity, but remain a bride worthy of her Lord, and moved by the Holy Spirit may never cease to renew herself, until through the Cross she arrives at the light which knows no setting.

10. Christ the Lord, High Priest taken from among men,(100) made the new people "a kingdom and priests to God the Father".(101) The baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are consecrated as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood, in order that through all those works which are those of the Christian man they may offer spiritual sacrifices and proclaim the power of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light.(102) Therefore all the disciples of Christ, persevering in prayer and praising God,(103) should present themselves as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.(104) Everywhere on earth they must bear witness to Christ and give an answer to those who seek an account of that hope of eternal life which is in them.(105)

Though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ.(2*) The ministerial priest, by the sacred power he enjoys, teaches and rules the priestly people; acting in the person of Christ, he makes present the eucharistic sacrifice, and offers it to God in the name of all the people. But the faithful, in virtue of their royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist.(3*) They likewise exercise that priesthood in receiving the sacraments, in prayer and thanksgiving, in the witness of a holy life, and by self-denial and active charity.

11. It is through the sacraments and the exercise of the virtues that the sacred nature and organic structure of the priestly community is brought into operation. Incorporated in the Church through baptism, the faithful are destined by the baptismal character for the worship of the Christian religion; reborn as sons of God they must confess before men the faith which they have received from God through the Church (4*). They are more perfectly bound to the Church by the sacrament of Confirmation, and the Holy Spirit endows them with special strength so that they are more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith, both by word and by deed, as true witnesses of Christ (5*). Taking part in the eucharistic sacrifice, which is the fount and apex of the whole Christian life, they offer the Divine Victim to God, and offer themselves along with It.(6*) Thus both by reason of the offering and through Holy Communion all take part in this liturgical service, not indeed, all in the same way but each in that way which is proper to himself. Strengthened in Holy Communion by the Body of Christ, they then manifest in a concrete way that unity of the people of God which is suitably signified and wondrously brought about by this most august sacrament.

Those who approach the sacrament of Penance obtain pardon from the mercy of God for the offence committed against Him and are at the same time reconciled with the Church, which they have wounded by their sins, and which by charity, example, and prayer seeks their conversion. By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of her priests the whole Church commends the sick to the suffering and glorified Lord, asking that He may lighten their suffering and save them;(106) she exhorts them, moreover, to contribute to the welfare of the whole people of God by associating themselves freely with the passion and death of Christ.(107) Those of the faithful who are consecrated by Holy Orders are appointed to feed the Church in Christ's name with the word and the grace of God. Finally, Christian spouses, in virtue of the sacrament of Matrimony, whereby they signify and partake of the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and His Church,(108) help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children. By reason of their state and rank in life they have their own special gift among the people of God.(109) (7*) From the wedlock of Christians there comes the family, in which new citizens of human society are born, who by the grace of the Holy Spirit received in baptism are made children of God, thus perpetuating the people of God through the centuries. The family is, so to speak, the domestic church. In it parents should, by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children; they should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each of them, fostering with special care vocation to a sacred state.

Fortified by so many and such powerful means of salvation, all the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord, each in his own way, to that perfect holiness whereby the Father Himself is perfect.

12. The holy people of God shares also in Christ's prophetic office; it spreads abroad a living witness to Him, especially by means of a life of faith and charity and by offering to God a sacrifice of praise, the tribute of lips which give praise to His name.(110) The entire body of the faithful, anointed as they are by the Holy One,(111) cannot err in matters of belief. They manifest this special property by means of the whole peoples' supernatural discernment in matters of faith when "from the Bishops down to the last of the lay faithful" (8*) they show universal agreement in matters of faith and morals. That discernment in matters of faith is aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth. It is exercised under the guidance of the sacred teaching authority, in faithful and respectful obedience to which the people of God accepts that which is not just the word of men but truly the word of God.(112) Through it, the people of God adheres unwaveringly to the faith given once and for all to the saints,(113) penetrates it more deeply with right thinking, and applies it more fully in its life.

It is not only through the sacraments and the ministries of the Church that the Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the people of God and enriches it with virtues, but, "allotting his gifts to everyone according as He wills,(114) He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices which contribute toward the renewal and building up of the Church, according to the words of the Apostle: "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit".(115) These charisms, whether they be the more outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation for they are perfectly suited to and useful for the needs of the Church. Extraordinary gifts are not to be sought after, nor are the fruits of apostolic labor to be presumptuously expected from their use; but judgment as to their genuinity and proper use belongs to those who are appointed leaders in the Church, to whose special competence it belongs, not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to that which is good.(116)

13. All men are called to belong to the new people of God. Wherefore this people, while remaining one and only one, is to be spread throughout the whole world and must exist in all ages, so that the decree of God's will may be fulfilled. In the beginning God made human nature one and decreed that all His children, scattered as they were, would finally be gathered together as one. (117) It was for this purpose that God sent His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things,(118) that be might be teacher, king and priest of all, the head of the new and universal people of the sons of God. For this too God sent the Spirit of His Son as Lord and Life- giver. He it is who brings together the whole Church and each and every one of those who believe, and who is the well-spring of their unity in the teaching of the apostles and in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers.(119)

It follows that though there are many nations there is but one people of God, which takes its citizens from every race, making them citizens of a kingdom which is of a heavenly rather than of an earthly nature. All the faithful, scattered though they be throughout the world, are in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit, and so, he who dwells in Rome knows that the people of India are his members"(9*). Since the kingdom of Christ is not of this world(120) the Church or people of God in establishing that kingdom takes nothing away from the temporal welfare of any people. On the contrary it fosters and takes to itself, insofar as they are good, the ability, riches and customs in which the genius of each people expresses itself. Taking them to itself it purifies, strengthens, elevates and ennobles them. The Church in this is mindful that she must bring together the nations for that king to whom they were given as an inheritance,(121) and to whose city they bring gifts and offerings.(122) This characteristic of universality which adorns the people of God is a gift from the Lord Himself. By reason of it, the Catholic Church strives constantly and with due effect to bring all humanity and all its possessions back to its source In Christ, with Him as its head and united in His Spirit. (10*)

In virtue of this catholicity each individual part contributes through its special gifts to the good of the other parts and of the whole Church. Through the common sharing of gifts and through the common effort to attain fullness in unity, the whole and each of the parts receive increase. Not only, then, is the people of God made up of different peoples but in its inner structure also it is composed of various ranks. This diversity among its members arises either by reason of their duties, as is the case with those who exercise the sacred ministry for the good of their brethren, or by reason of their condition and state of life, as is the case with those many who enter the religious state and, tending toward holiness by a narrower path, stimulate their brethren by their example. Moreover, within the Church particular Churches hold a rightful place; these Churches retain their own traditions, without in any way opposing the primacy of the Chair of Peter, which presides over the whole assembly of charity (11*) and protects legitimate differences, while at the same time assuring that such differences do not hinder unity but rather contribute toward it. Between all the parts of the Church there remains a bond of close communion whereby they share spiritual riches, apostolic workers and temporal resources. For the members of the people of God are called to share these goods in common, and of each of the Churches the words of the Apostle hold good: "According to the gift that each has received, administer it to one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God".(123)

All men are called to be part of this catholic unity of the people of God which in promoting universal peace presages it. And there belong to or are related to it in various ways, the Catholic faithful, all who believe in Christ, and indeed the whole of mankind, for all men are called by the grace of God to salvation.

14. This Sacred Council wishes to turn its attention firstly to the Catholic faithful. Basing itself upon Sacred Scripture and Tradition, it teaches that the Church, now sojourning on earth as an exile, is necessary for salvation. Christ, present to us in His Body, which is the Church, is the one Mediator and the unique way of salvation. In explicit terms He Himself affirmed the necessity of faith and baptism(124) and thereby affirmed also the necessity of the Church, for through baptism as through a door men enter the Church. Whosoever, therefore, knowing that the Catholic Church was made necessary by Christ, would refuse to enter or to remain in it, could not be saved.

They are fully incorporated in the society of the Church who, possessing the Spirit of Christ accept her entire system and all the means of salvation given to her, and are united with her as part of her visible bodily structure and through her with Christ, who rules her through the Supreme Pontiff and the bishops. The bonds which bind men to the Church in a visible way are profession of faith, the sacraments, and ecclesiastical government and communion. He is not saved, however, who, though part of the body of the Church, does not persevere in charity. He remains indeed in the bosom of the Church, but, as it were, only in a "bodily" manner and not "in his heart."(12*) All the Church's children should remember that their exalted status is to be attributed not to their own merits but to the special grace of Christ. If they fail moreover to respond to that grace in thought, word and deed, not only shall they not be saved but they will be the more severely judged.(13*)

Catechumens who, moved by the Holy Spirit, seek with explicit intention to be incorporated into the Church are by that very intention joined with her. With love and solicitude Mother Church already embraces them as her own.

15. The Church recognizes that in many ways she is linked with those who, being baptized, are honored with the name of Christian, though they do not profess the faith in its entirety or do not preserve unity of communion with the successor of Peter. (14*) For there are many who honor Sacred Scripture, taking it as a norm of belief and a pattern of life, and who show a sincere zeal. They lovingly believe in God the Father Almighty and in Christ, the Son of God and Saviour. (15*) They are consecrated by baptism, in which they are united with Christ. They also recognize and accept other sacraments within their own Churches or ecclesiastical communities. Many of them rejoice in the episcopate, celebrate the Holy Eucharist and cultivate devotion toward the Virgin Mother of God.(16*) They also share with us in prayer and other spiritual benefits. Likewise we can say that in some real way they are joined with us in the Holy Spirit, for to them too He gives His gifts and graces whereby He is operative among them with His sanctifying power. Some indeed He has strengthened to the extent of the shedding of their blood. In all of Christ's disciples the Spirit arouses the desire to be peacefully united, in the manner determined by Christ, as one flock under one shepherd, and He prompts them to pursue this end. (17*) Mother Church never ceases to pray, hope and work that this may come about. She exhorts her children to purification and renewal so that the sign of Christ may shine more brightly over the face of the earth.

16. Finally, those who have not yet received the Gospel are related in various ways to the people of God.(18*) In the first place we must recall the people to whom the testament and the promises were given and from whom Christ was born according to the flesh.(125) On account of their fathers this people remains most dear to God, for God does not repent of the gifts He makes nor of the calls He issues.(126); But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place amongst these there are the Mohamedans, who, professing to hold the faith of Abraham, along with us adore the one and merciful God, who on the last day will judge mankind. Nor is God far distant from those who in shadows and images seek the unknown God, for it is He who gives to all men life and breath and all things,(127) and as Saviour wills that all men be saved.(128) Those also can attain to salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or His Church, yet sincerely seek God and moved by grace strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience.(19*) Nor does Divine Providence deny the helps necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God and with His grace strive to live a good life. Whatever good or truth is found amongst them is looked upon by the Church as a preparation for the Gospel.(20*) She knows that it is given by Him who enlightens all men so that they may finally have life. But often men, deceived by the Evil One, have become vain in their reasonings and have exchanged the truth of God for a lie, serving the creature rather than the Creator.(129) Or some there are who, living and dying in this world without God, are exposed to final despair. Wherefore to promote the glory of God and procure the salvation of all of these, and mindful of the command of the Lord, "Preach the Gospel to every creature",(130) the Church fosters the missions with care and attention.

17. As the Son was sent by the Father,(131) so He too sent the Apostles, saying: "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world".(132) The Church has received this solemn mandate of Christ to proclaim the saving truth from the apostles and must carry it out to the very ends of the earth.(133) Wherefore she makes the words of the Apostle her own: "Woe to me, if I do not preach the Gospel",(134) and continues unceasingly to send heralds of the Gospel until such time as the infant churches are fully established and can themselves continue the work of evangelizing. For the Church is compelled by the Holy Spirit to do her part that God's plan may be fully realized, whereby He has constituted Christ as the source of salvation for the whole world. By the proclamation of the Gospel she prepares her hearers to receive and profess the faith. She gives them the dispositions necessary for baptism, snatches them from the slavery of error and of idols and incorporates them in Christ so that through charity they may grow up into full maturity in Christ. Through her work, whatever good is in the minds and hearts of men, whatever good lies latent in the religious practices and cultures of diverse peoples, is not only saved from destruction but is also cleansed, raised up and perfected unto the glory of God, the confusion of the devil and the happiness of man. The obligation of spreading the faith is imposed on every disciple of Christ, according to his state.(21*) Although, however, all the faithful can baptize, the priest alone can complete the building up of the Body in the eucharistic sacrifice. Thus are fulfilled the words of God, spoken through His prophet: "From the rising of the sun until the going down thereof my name is great among the gentiles, and in every place a clean oblation is sacrificed and offered up in my name".(135)(22*) In this way the Church both prays and labors in order that the entire world may become the People of God, the Body of the Lord and the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and that in Christ, the Head of all, all honor and glory may be rendered to the Creator and Father of the Universe.

CHAPTER III

ON THE HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH AND IN PARTICULAR ON THE EPISCOPATE

18. For the nurturing and constant growth of the People of God, Christ the Lord instituted in His Church a variety of ministries, which work for the good of the whole body. For those ministers, who are endowed with sacred power, serve their brethren, so that all who are of the People of God, and therefore enjoy a true Christian dignity, working toward a common goal freely and in an orderly way, may arrive at salvation.

This Sacred Council, following closely in the footsteps of the First Vatican Council, with that Council teaches and declares that Jesus Christ, the eternal Shepherd, established His holy Church, having sent forth the apostles as He Himself had been sent by the Father;(136) and He willed that their successors, namely the bishops, should be shepherds in His Church even to the consummation of the world. And in order that the episcopate itself might be one and undivided, He placed Blessed Peter over the other apostles, and instituted in him a permanent and visible source and foundation of unity of faith and communion.(1*) And all this teaching about the institution, the perpetuity, the meaning and reason for the sacred primacy of the Roman Pontiff and of his infallible magisterium, this Sacred Council again proposes to be firmly believed by all the faithful. Continuing in that same undertaking, this Council is resolved to declare and proclaim before all men the doctrine concerning bishops, the successors of the apostles, who together with the successor of Peter, the Vicar of Christ,(2*) the visible Head of the whole Church, govern the house of the living God.

19. The Lord Jesus, after praying to the Father, calling to Himself those whom He desired, appointed twelve to be with Him, and whom He would send to preach the Kingdom of God;(137) and these apostles(138) He formed after the manner of a college or a stable group, over which He placed Peter chosen from among them.(139) He sent them first to the children of Israel and then to all nations,(140) so that as sharers in His power they might make all peoples His disciples, and sanctify and govern them,(141) and thus spread His Church, and by ministering to it under the guidance of the Lord, direct it all days even to the consummation of the world.(142) And in this mission they were fully confirmed on the day of Pentecost (143) in accordance with the Lord's promise: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria, and even to the very ends of the earth".(144) And the apostles, by preaching the Gospel everywhere,(145) and it being accepted by their hearers under the influence of the Holy Spirit, gather together the universal Church, which the Lord established on the apostles and built upon blessed Peter, their chief, Christ Jesus Himself being the supreme cornerstone.(146)(3*)

20. That divine mission, entrusted by Christ to the apostles, will last until the end of the world,(147) since the Gospel they are to teach is for all time the source of all life for the Church. And for this reason the apostles, appointed as rulers in this society, took care to appoint successors.

For they not only had helpers in their ministry,(4*) but also, in order that the mission assigned to them might continue after their death, they passed on to their immediate cooperators, as it were, in the form of a testament, the duty of confirming and finishing the work begun by themselves,(5*) recommending to them that they attend to the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit placed them to shepherd the Church of God.(148) They therefore appointed such men, and gave them the order that, when they should have died, other approved men would take up their ministry.(6*) Among those various ministries which, according to tradition, were exercised in the Church from the earliest times, the chief place belongs to the office of those who, appointed to the episcopate, by a succession running from the beginning,(7*) are passers-on of the apostolic seed.(8*) Thus, as St. Irenaeus testifies, through those who were appointed bishops by the apostles, and through their successors down In our own time, the apostolic tradition is manifested (9*) and preserved.(10*)

Bishops, therefore, with their helpers, the priests and deacons, have taken up the service of the community, (11*) presiding in place of God over the flock,(12*) whose shepherds they are, as teachers for doctrine, priests for sacred worship, and ministers for governing.(13*) And just as the office granted individually to Peter, the first among the apostles, is permanent and is to be transmitted to his successors, so also the apostles' office of nurturing the Church is permanent, and is to be exercised without interruption by the sacred order of bishops. (14*) Therefore, the Sacred Council teaches that bishops by divine institution have succeeded to the place of the apostles, (15*) as shepherds of the Church, and he who hears them, hears Christ, and he who rejects them, rejects Christ and Him who sent Christ.(149)(16*)

21. In the bishops, therefore, for whom priests are assistants, Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Supreme High Priest, is present in the midst of those who believe. For sitting at the right hand of God the Father, He is not absent from the gathering of His high priests,(17*) but above all through their excellent service He is preaching the word of God to all nations, and constantly administering the sacraments of faith to those who believe, by their paternal functioning(150) He incorporates new members in His Body by a heavenly regeneration, and finally by their wisdom and prudence He directs and guides the People of the New Testament in their pilgrimage toward eternal happiness. These pastors, chosen to shepherd the Lord's flock of the elect, are servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God,(151) to whom has been assigned the bearing of witness to the Gospel of the grace of God,(152) and the ministration of the Spirit and of justice in glory.(153)

For the discharging of such great duties, the apostles were enriched by Christ with a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit coming upon them,(154) and they passed on this spiritual gift to their helpers by the imposition of hands,(155) and it has been transmitted down to us in episcopal consecration.(18*) And the Sacred Council teaches that by episcopal consecration the fullness of the sacrament of Orders is conferred, that fullness of power, namely, which both in the Church's liturgical practice and in the language of the Fathers of the Church is called the high priesthood, the supreme power of the sacred ministry.(19*) But episcopal consecration, together with the office of sanctifying, also confers the office of teaching and of governing, which, however, of its very nature, can be exercised only in hierarchical communion with the head and the members of the college. For from the tradition, which is expressed especially in liturgical rites and in the practice of both the Church of the East and of the West, it is clear that, by means of the imposition of hands and the words of consecration, the grace of the Holy Spirit is so conferred,(20*) and the sacred character so impressed,(21*) that bishops in an eminent and visible way sustain the roles of Christ Himself as Teacher, Shepherd and High Priest, and that they act in His person.(22*) Therefore it pertains to the bishops to admit newly elected members into the episcopal body by means of the sacrament of Orders.

22. Just as in the Gospel, the Lord so disposing, St. Peter and the other apostles constitute one apostolic college, so in a similar way the Roman Pontiff, the successor of Peter, and the bishops, the successors of the apostles, are joined together. Indeed, the very ancient practice whereby bishops duly established in all parts of the world were in communion with one another and with the Bishop of Rome in a bond of unity, charity and peace,(23*) and also the councils assembled together,(24*) in which more profound issues were settled in common, (25*) the opinion of the many having been prudently considered,(26*) both of these factors are already an indication of the collegiate character and aspect of the episcopal order; and the ecumenical councils held in the course of centuries are also manifest proof of that same character. And it is intimated also in the practice, introduced in ancient times, of summoning several bishops to take part in the elevation of the newly elected to the ministry of the high priesthood. Hence, one is constituted a member of the episcopal body in virtue of sacramental consecration and hierarchical communion with the head and members of the body.

But the college or body of bishops has no authority unless it is understood together with the Roman Pontiff, the successor of Peter as its head. The pope's power of primacy over all, both pastors and faithful, remains whole and intact. In virtue of his office, that is as Vicar of Christ and pastor of the whole Church, the Roman Pontiff has full, supreme and universal power over the Church. And he is always free to exercise this power. The order of bishops, which succeeds to the college of apostles and gives this apostolic body continued existence, is also the subject of supreme and full power over the universal Church, provided we understand this body together with its head the Roman Pontiff and never without this head.(27*) This power can be exercised only with the consent of the Roman Pontiff. For our Lord placed Simon alone as the rock and the bearer of the keys of the Church,(156) and made him shepherd of the whole flock;(157) it is evident, however, that the power of binding and loosing, which was given to Peter,(158) was granted also to the college of apostles, joined with their head.(159)(28*) This college, insofar as it is composed of many, expresses the variety and universality of the People of God, but insofar as it is assembled under one head, it expresses the unity of the flock of Christ. In it, the bishops, faithfully recognizing the primacy and pre-eminence of their head, exercise their own authority for the good of their own faithful, and indeed of the whole Church, the Holy Spirit supporting its organic structure and harmony with moderation. The supreme power in the universal Church, which this college enjoys, is exercised in a solemn way in an ecumenical council. A council is never ecumenical unless it is confirmed or at least accepted as such by the successor of Peter; and it is prerogative of the Roman Pontiff to convoke these councils, to preside over them and to confirm them.(29*) This same collegiate power can be exercised together with the pope by the bishops living in all parts of the world, provided that the head of the college calls them to collegiate action, or at least approves of or freely accepts the united action of the scattered bishops, so that it is thereby made a collegiate act.

23. This collegial union is apparent also m the mutual relations of the individual bishops with particular churches and with the universal Church. The Roman Pontiff, as the successor of Peter, is the perpetual and visible principle and foundation of unity of both the bishops and of the faithful.(30*) The individual bishops, however, are the visible principle and foundation of unity in their particular churches, (31*) fashioned after the model of the universal Church, in and from which churches comes into being the one and only Catholic Church.(32*) For this reason the individual bishops represent each his own church, but all of them together and with the Pope represent the entire Church in the bond of peace, love and unity.

The individual bishops, who are placed in charge of particular churches, exercise their pastoral government over the portion of the People of God committed to their care, and not over other churches nor over the universal Church. But each of them, as a member of the episcopal college and legitimate successor of the apostles, is obliged by Christ's institution and command to be solicitous for the whole Church,(33*) and this solicitude, though it is not exercised by an act of jurisdiction, contributes greatly to the advantage of the universal Church. For it is the duty of all bishops to promote and to safeguard the unity of faith and the discipline common to the whole Church, to instruct the faithful to love for the whole mystical body of Christ, especially for its poor and sorrowing members and for those who are suffering persecution for justice's sake,(160) and finally to promote every activity that is of interest to the whole Church, especially that the faith may take increase and the light of full truth appear to all men. And this also is important, that by governing well their own church as a portion of the universal Church, they themselves are effectively contributing to the welfare of the whole Mystical Body, which is also the body of the churches.(34*)

The task of proclaiming the Gospel everywhere on earth pertains to the body of pastors, to all of whom in common Christ gave His command, thereby imposing upon them a common duty, as Pope Celestine in his time recommended to the Fathers of the Council of Ephesus.(35*) From this it follows that the individual bishops, insofar as their own discharge of their duty permits, are obliged to enter into a community of work among themselves and with the successor of Peter, upon whom was imposed in a special way the great duty of spreading the Christian name.(36*) With all their energy, therefore, they must supply to the missions both workers for the harvest and also spiritual and material aid, both directly and on their own account. as well as by arousing the ardent cooperation of the faithful. And finally, the bishops, in a universal fellowship of charity, should gladly extend their fraternal aid to other churches, especially to neighboring and more needy dioceses in accordance with the venerable example of antiquity.

By divine Providence it has come about that various churches, established in various places by the apostles and their successors, have in the course of time coalesced into several groups, organically united, which, preserving the unity of faith and the unique divine constitution of the universal Church, enjoy their own discipline, their own liturgical usage, and their own theological and spiritual heritage. Some of these churches, notably the ancient patriarchal churches, as parent-stocks of the Faith, so to speak, have begotten others as daughter churches, with which they are connected down to our own time by a close bond of charity in their sacramental life and in their mutual respect for their rights and duties.(37*) This variety of local churches with one common aspiration is splendid evidence of the catholicity of the undivided Church. In like manner the episcopal bodies of today are in a position to render a manifold and fruitful assistance, so that this collegiate feeling may be put into practical application.

24. Bishops, as successors of the apostles, receive from the Lord, to whom was given all power in heaven and on earth, the mission to teach all nations and to preach the Gospel to every creature, so that all men may attain to salvation by faith, baptism and the fulfilment of the commandments.(161) To fulfill this mission, Christ the Lord promised the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and on Pentecost day sent the Spirit from heaven, by whose power they would be witnesses to Him before the nations and peoples and kings even to the ends of the earth.(162) And that duty, which the Lord committed to the shepherds of His people, is a true service, which in sacred literature is significantly called "diakonia" or ministry.(163)

The canonical mission of bishops can come about by legitimate customs that have not been revoked by the supreme and universal authority of the Church, or by laws made or recognized be that the authority, or directly through the successor of Peter himself; and if the latter refuses or denies apostolic communion, such bishops cannot assume any office.(38*)

25. Among the principal duties of bishops the preaching of the Gospel occupies an eminent place.(39*) For bishops are preachers of the faith, who lead new disciples to Christ, and they are authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ, who preach to the people committed to them the faith they must believe and put into practice, and by the light of the Holy Spirit illustrate that faith. They bring forth from the treasury of Revelation new things and old,(164) making it bear fruit and vigilantly warding off any errors that threaten their flock.(165) Bishops, teaching in communion with the Roman Pontiff, are to be respected by all as witnesses to divine and Catholic truth. In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ and the faithful are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with a religious assent. This religious submission of mind and will must be shown in a special way to the authentic magisterium of the Roman Pontiff, even when he is not speaking ex cathedra; that is, it must be shown in such a way that his supreme magisterium is acknowledged with reverence, the judgments made by him are sincerely adhered to, according to his manifest mind and will. His mind and will in the matter may be known either from the character of the documents, from his frequent repetition of the same doctrine, or from his manner of speaking.

Although the individual bishops do not enjoy the prerogative of infallibility, they nevertheless proclaim Christ's doctrine infallibly whenever, even though dispersed through the world, but still maintaining the bond of communion among themselves and with the successor of Peter, and authentically teaching matters of faith and morals, they are in agreement on one position as definitively to be held.(40*) This is even more clearly verified when, gathered together in an ecumenical council, they are teachers and judges of faith and morals for the universal Church, whose definitions must be adhered to with the submission of faith.(41*)

And this infallibility with which the Divine Redeemer willed His Church to be endowed in defining doctrine of faith and morals, extends as far as the deposit of Revelation extends, which must be religiously guarded and faithfully expounded. And this is the infallibility which the Roman Pontiff, the head of the college of bishops, enjoys in virtue of his office, when, as the supreme shepherd and teacher of all the faithful, who confirms his brethren in their faith,(166) by a definitive act he proclaims a doctrine of faith or morals.(42*) And therefore his definitions, of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church, are justly styled irreformable, since they are pronounced with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, promised to him in blessed Peter, and therefore they need no approval of others, nor do they allow an appeal to any other judgment. For then the Roman Pontiff is not pronouncing judgment as a private person, but as the supreme teacher of the universal Church, in whom the charism of infallibility of the Church itself is individually present, he is expounding or defending a doctrine of Catholic faith.(43*) The infallibility promised to the Church resides also in the body of Bishops, when that body exercises the supreme magisterium with the successor of Peter. To these definitions the assent of the Church can never be wanting, on account of the activity of that same Holy Spirit, by which the whole flock of Christ is preserved and progresses in unity of faith.(44*)

But when either the Roman Pontiff or the Body of Bishops together with him defines a judgment, they pronounce it in accordance with Revelation itself, which all are obliged to abide by and be in conformity with, that is, the Revelation which as written or orally handed down is transmitted in its entirety through the legitimate succession of bishops and especially in care of the Roman Pontiff himself, and which under the guiding light of the Spirit of truth is religiously preserved and faithfully expounded in the Church.(45*) The Roman Pontiff and the bishops, in view of their office and the importance of the matter, by fitting means diligently strive to inquire properly into that revelation and to give apt expression to its contents;(46*) but a new public revelation they do not accept as pertaining to the divine deposit of faith.(47*)

26. A bishop marked with the fullness of the sacrament of Orders, is "the steward of the grace of the supreme priesthood," (48*) especially in the Eucharist, which he offers or causes to be offered,(49*) and by which the Church continually lives and grows. This Church of Christ is truly present in all legitimate local congregations of the faithful which, united with their pastors, are themselves called churches in the New Testament.(50*) For in their locality these are the new People called by God, in the Holy Spirit and in much fullness.(167) In them the faithful are gathered together by the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, and the mystery of the Lord's Supper is celebrated, that by the food and blood of the Lord's body the whole brotherhood may be joined together.(51*) In any community of the altar, under the sacred ministry of the bishop,(52*) there is exhibited a symbol of that charity and "unity of the mystical Body, without which there can be no salvation."(53*) In these communities, though frequently small and poor, or living in the Diaspora, Christ is present, and in virtue of His presence there is brought together one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.(54*) For "the partaking of the body and blood of Christ does nothing other than make us be transformed into that which we consume".(55*)

Every legitimate celebration of the Eucharist is regulated by the bishop, to whom is committed the office of offering the worship of Christian religion to the Divine Majesty and of administering it in accordance with the Lord's commandments and the Church's laws, as further defined by his particular judgment for his diocese.

Bishops thus, by praying and laboring for the people, make outpourings in many ways and in great abundance from the fullness of Christ's holiness. By the ministry of the word they communicate God's power to those who believe unto salvation(168) and through the sacraments, the regular and fruitful distribution of which they regulate by their authority,(56*) they sanctify the faithful. They direct the conferring of baptism, by which a sharing in the kingly priesthood of Christ is granted. They are the original ministers of confirmation, dispensers of sacred Orders and the moderators of penitential discipline, and they earnestly exhort and instruct their people to carry out with faith and reverence their part in the liturgy and especially in the holy sacrifice of the Mass. And lastly, by the example of their way of life they must be an influence for good to those over whom they preside, refraining from all evil and, as far as they are able with God's help, exchanging evil for good, so that together with the flock committed to their care they may arrive at eternal life.(57*)

27. Bishops, as vicars and ambassadors of Christ, govern the particular churches entrusted to them (58*) by their counsel, exhortations, example, and even by their authority and sacred power, which indeed they use only for the edification of their flock in truth and holiness, remembering that he who is greater should become as the lesser and he who is the chief become as the servant.(169) This power, which they personally exercise in Christ's name, is proper, ordinary and immediate, although its exercise is ultimately regulated by the supreme authority of the Church, and can be circumscribed by certain limits, for the advantage of the Church or of the faithful. In virtue of this power, bishops have the sacred right and the duty before the Lord to make laws for their subjects, to pass judgment on them and to moderate everything pertaining to the ordering of worship and the apostolate.

The pastoral office or the habitual and daily care of their sheep is entrusted to them completely; nor are they to be regarded as vicars of the Roman Pontiffs, for they exercise an authority that is proper to them, and are quite correctly called "prelates," heads of the people whom they govern.(59*) Their power, therefore, is not destroyed by the supreme and universal power, but on the contrary it is affirmed, strengthened and vindicated by it,(60*) since the Holy Spirit unfailingly preserves the form of government established by Christ the Lord in His Church.

A bishop, since he is sent by the Father to govern his family, must keep before his eyes the example of the Good Shepherd, who came not to be ministered unto but to minister,(170) and to lay down his life for his sheep.(171) Being taken from among men, and himself beset with weakness, he is able to have compassion on the ignorant and erring.(172) Let him not refuse to listen to his subjects, whom he cherishes as his true sons and exhorts to cooperate readily with him. As having one day to render an account for their souls,(173) he takes care of them by his prayer, preaching, and all the works of charity, and not only of them but also of those who are not yet of the one flock, who also are commended to him in the Lord. Since, like Paul the Apostle, he is debtor to all men, let him be ready to preach the Gospel to all,(174) and to urge his faithful to apostolic and missionary activity. But the faithful must cling to their bishop, as the Church does to Christ, and Jesus Christ to the Father, so that all may be of one mind through unity,(61*) and abound to the glory of God.(175)

28. Christ, whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, (176) has through His apostles, made their successors, the bishops, partakers of His consecration and His mission.(62*) They have legitimately handed on to different individuals in the Church various degrees of participation in this ministry. Thus the divinely established ecclesiastical ministry is exercised on different levels by those who from antiquity have been called bishops, priests and deacons.(63*) Priests, although they do not possess the highest degree of the priesthood, and although they are dependent on the bishops in the exercise of their power, nevertheless they are united with the bishops in sacerdotal dignity.(64*) By the power of the sacrament of Orders,(65*) in the image of Christ the eternal high Priest,(177) they are consecrated to preach the Gospel and shepherd the faithful and to celebrate divine worship, so that they are true priests of the New Testament.(66*) Partakers of the function of Christ the sole Mediator,(178) on their level of ministry, they announce the divine word to all. They exercise their sacred function especially in the eucharistic worship or the celebration of the Mass by which acting in the person of Christ (67*) and proclaiming His Mystery they unite the prayers of the faithful with the sacrifice of their Head and renew and apply (68*) in the sacrifice of the Mass until the coming of the Lord(179) the only sacrifice of the New Testament namely that of Christ offering Himself once for all a spotless Victim to the Father.(180) For the sick and the sinners among the faithful, they exercise the ministry of alleviation and reconciliation and they present the needs and the prayers of the faithful to God the Father.(181) Exercising within the limits of their authority the function of Christ as Shepherd and Head,(69*) they gather together God's family as a brotherhood all of one mind,(70*) and lead them in the Spirit, through Christ, to God the Father. In the midst of the flock they adore Him in spirit and in truth.(182) Finally, they labor in word and doctrine,(183) believing what they have read and meditated upon in the law of God, teaching what they have believed, and putting in practice in their own lives what they have taught.(71*)

Priests, prudent cooperators with the episcopal order,(72*) its aid and instrument, called to serve the people of God, constitute one priesthood (73*) with their bishop although bound by a diversity of duties. Associated with their bishop in a spirit of trust and generosity, they make him present in a certain sense in the individual local congregations, and take upon themselves, as far as they are able, his duties and the burden of his care, and discharge them with a daily interest. And as they sanctify and govern under the bishop's authority, that part of the Lord's flock entrusted to them they make the universal Church visible in their own locality and bring an efficacious assistance to the building up of the whole body of Christ.(184) intent always upon the welfare of God's children, they must strive to lend their effort to the pastoral work of the whole diocese, and even of the entire Church. On account of this sharing in their priesthood and mission, let priests sincerely look upon the bishop as their father and reverently obey him. And let the bishop regard his priests as his co-workers and as sons and friends, just as Christ called His disciples now not servants but friends.(185) All priests, both diocesan and religious, by reason of Orders and ministry, fit into this body of bishops and priests, and serve the good of the whole Church according to their vocation and the grace given to them.

In virtue of their common sacred ordination and mission, all priests are bound together in intimate brotherhood, which naturally and freely manifests itself in mutual aid, spiritual as well as material, pastoral as well as personal, in their meetings and in communion of life, of labor and charity.

Let them, as fathers in Christ, take care of the faithful whom they have begotten by baptism and their teaching.(186) Becoming from the heart a pattern to the flock,(187) let them so lead and serve their local community that it may worthily be called by that name, by which the one and entire people of God is signed, namely, the Church of God.(188) Let them remember that by their daily life and interests they are showing the face of a truly sacerdotal and pastoral ministry to the faithful and the infidel, to Catholics and non-Catholics, and that to all they bear witness to the truth and life, and as good shepherds go after those also,(189) who though baptized in the Catholic Church have fallen away from the use of the sacraments, or even from the faith.

Because the human race today is joining more and more into a civic, economic and social unity, it is that much the more necessary that priests, by combined effort and aid, under the leadership of the bishops and the Supreme Pontiff, wipe out every kind of separateness, so that the whole human race may be brought into the unity of the family of God.

29. At a lower level of the hierarchy are deacons, upon whom hands are imposed "not unto the priesthood, but unto a ministry of service."(74*) For strengthened by sacramental grace, in communion with the bishop and his group of priests they serve in the diaconate of the liturgy, of the word, and of charity to the people of God. It is the duty of the deacon, according as it shall have been assigned to him by competent authority, to administer baptism solemnly, to be custodian and dispenser of the Eucharist, to assist at and bless marriages in the name of the Church, to bring Viaticum to the dying, to read the Sacred Scripture to the faithful, to instruct and exhort the people, to preside over the worship and prayer of the faithful, to administer sacramentals, to officiate at funeral and burial services. Dedicated to duties of charity and of administration, let deacons be mindful of the admonition of Blessed Polycarp: "Be merciful, diligent, walking according to the truth of the Lord, who became the servant of all."(75*)

Since these duties, so very necessary to the life of the Church, can be fulfilled only with difficulty in many regions in accordance with the discipline of the Latin Church as it exists today, the diaconate can in the future be restored as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy. It pertains to the competent territorial bodies of bishops, of one kind or another, with the approval of the Supreme Pontiff, to decide whether and where it is opportune for such deacons to be established for the care of souls. With the consent of the Roman Pontiff, this diaconate can, in the future, be conferred upon men of more mature age, even upon those living in the married state. It may also be conferred upon suitable young men, for whom the law of celibacy must remain intact.

CHAPTER IV

THE LAITY

30. Having set forth the functions of the hierarchy, the Sacred Council gladly turns its attention. to the state of those faithful called the laity. Everything that has been said above concerning the People of God is intended for the laity, religious and clergy alike. But there are certain things which pertain in a special way to the laity, both men and women, by reason of their condition and mission. Due to the special circumstances of our time the foundations of this doctrine must be more thoroughly examined. For their pastors know how much the laity contribute to the welfare of the entire Church. They also know that they were not ordained by Christ to take upon themselves alone the entire salvific mission of the Church toward the world. On the contrary they understand that it is their noble duty to shepherd the faithful and to recognize their ministries and charisms, so that all according to their proper roles may cooperate in this common undertaking with one mind. For we must all "practice the truth in love, and so grow up in all things in Him who is head, Christ. For from Him the whole body, being closely joined and knit together through every joint of the system, according to the functioning in due measure of each single part, derives its increase to the building up of itself in love".(190)

31. The term laity is here understood to mean all the faithful except those in holy orders and those in the state of religious life specially approved by the Church. These faithful are by baptism made one body with Christ and are constituted among the People of God; they are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetical, and kingly functions of Christ; and they carry out for their own part the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world.

What specifically characterizes the laity is their secular nature. It is true that those in holy orders can at times be engaged in secular activities, and even have a secular profession. But they are by reason of their particular vocation especially and professedly ordained to the sacred ministry. Similarly, by their state in life, religious give splendid and striking testimony that the world cannot be transformed and offered to God without the spirit of the beatitudes. But the laity, by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God. They live in the world, that is, in each and in all of the secular professions and occupations. They live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, from which the very web of their existence is woven. They are called there by God that by exercising their proper function and led by the spirit of the Gospel they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven. In this way they may make Christ known to others, especially by the testimony of a life resplendent in faith, hope and charity. Therefore, since they are tightly bound up in all types of temporal affairs it is their special task to order and to throw light upon these affairs in such a way that they may come into being and then continually increase according to Christ to the praise of the Creator and the Redeemer.

32. By divine institution Holy Church is ordered and governed with a wonderful diversity. "For just as in one body we have many members, yet all the members have not the same function, so we, the many, are one body in Christ, but severally members one of another".(191) Therefore, the chosen People of God is one: "one Lord, one faith, one baptism"(192); sharing a common dignity as members from their regeneration in Christ, having the same filial grace and the same vocation to perfection; possessing in common one salvation, one hope and one undivided charity. There is, therefore, in Christ and in the Church no inequality on,the basis of race or nationality, social condition or sex, because "there is neither Jew nor Greek: there is neither bond nor free: there is neither male nor female. For you are all 'one' in Christ Jesus".(193)

If therefore in the Church everyone does not proceed by the same path, nevertheless all are called to sanctity and have received an equal privilege of faith through the justice of God.(194) And if by the will of Christ some are made teachers, pastors and dispensers of mysteries on behalf of others, yet all share a true equality with regard to the dignity and to the activity common to all the faithful for the building up of the Body of Christ. For the distinction which the Lord made between sacred ministers and the rest of the People of God bears within it a certain union, since pastors and the other faithful are bound to each other by a mutual need. Pastors of the Church, following the example of the Lord, should minister to one another and to the other faithful. These in their turn should enthusiastically lend their joint assistance to their pastors and teachers. Thus in their diversity all bear witness to the wonderful unity in the Body of Christ. This very diversity of graces, ministries and works gathers the children of God into one, because "all these things are the work of one and the same Spirit".(195)

Therefore, from divine choice the laity have Christ for their brothers who though He is the Lord of all, came not to be served but to serve.(196) They also have for their brothers those in the sacred ministry who by teaching, by sanctifying and by ruling with the authority of Christ feed the family of God so that the new commandment of charity may be fulfilled by all. St. Augustine puts this very beautifully when he says: "What I am for you terrifies me; what I am with you consoles me. For you I am a bishop; but with you I am a Christian. The former is a duty; the latter a grace. The former is a danger; the latter, salvation" (1*).

33. The laity are gathered together in the People of God and make up the Body of Christ under one head. Whoever they are they are called upon, as living members, to expend all their energy for the growth of the Church and its continuous sanctification, since this very energy is a gift of the Creator and a blessing of the Redeemer.

The lay apostolate, however, is a participation in the salvific mission of the Church itself. Through their baptism and confirmation all are commissioned to that apostolate by the Lord Himself. Moreover, by the sacraments, especially holy Eucharist, that charity toward God and man which is the soul of the apostolate is communicated and nourished. Now the laity are called in a special way to make the Church present and operative in those places and circumstances where only through them can it become the salt of the earth (2*). Thus every layman, in virtue of the very gifts bestowed upon him, is at the same time a witness and a living instrument of the mission of the Church itself "according to the measure of Christ's bestowal".(197)

Besides this apostolate which certainly pertains to all Christians, the laity can also be called in various ways to a more direct form of cooperation in the apostolate of the Hierarchy (3*). This was the way certain men and women assisted Paul the Apostle in the Gospel, laboring much in the Lord.(198) Further, they have the capacity to assume from the Hierarchy certain ecclesiastical functions, which are to be performed for a spiritual purpose.

Upon all the laity, therefore, rests the noble duty of working to extend the divine plan of salvation to all men of each epoch and in every land. Consequently, may every opportunity be given them so that, according to their abilities and the needs of the times, they may zealously participate in the saving work of the Church.

34. The supreme and eternal Priest, Christ Jesus, since he wills to continue his witness and service also through the laity, vivifies them in this Spirit and increasingly urges them on to every good and perfect work.

For besides intimately linking them to His life and His mission, He also gives them a sharing in His priestly function of offering spiritual worship for the glory of God and the salvation of men. For this reason the laity, dedicated to Christ and anointed by the Holy Spirit, are marvelously called and wonderfully prepared so that ever more abundant fruits of the Spirit may be produced in them. For all their works, prayers and apostolic endeavors, their ordinary married and family life, their daily occupations, their physical and mental relaxation, if carried out in the Spirit, and even the hardships of life, if patiently borne-all these become "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ".(199) Together with the offering of the Lord's body, they are most fittingly offered in the celebration of the Eucharist. Thus, as those everywhere who adore in holy activity, the laity consecrate the world itself to God.

35. Christ, the great Prophet, who proclaimed the Kingdom of His Father both by the testimony of His life and the power of His words, continually fulfills His prophetic office until the complete manifestation of glory. He does this not only through the hierarchy who teach in His name and with His authority, but also through the laity whom He made His witnesses and to whom He gave understanding of the faith (sensu fidei) and an attractiveness in speech(200) so that the power of the Gospel might shine forth in their daily social and family life. They conduct themselves as children of the promise, and thus strong in faith and in hope they make the most of the present,(201) and with patience await the glory that is to come.(202) Let them not, then, hide this hope in the depths of their hearts, but even in the program of their secular life let them express it by a continual conversion and by wrestling "against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness.(203)

Just as the sacraments of the New Law, by which the life and the apostolate of the faithful are nourished, prefigure a new heaven and a new earth,(204) so too the laity go forth as powerful proclaimers of a faith in things to be hoped for,(205) when they courageously join to their profession of faith a life springing from faith. This evangelization, that is, this announcing of Christ by a living testimony as well as by the spoken word, takes on a specific quality and a special force in that it is carried out in the ordinary surroundings of the world.

In connection with the prophetic function, that state of life which is sanctified by a special sacrament obviously of great importance, namely, married and family life. For where Christianity pervades the entire mode of family life, ala gradually transforms it, one will find there both the practice and an excellent school of the lay apostolate. In such a home husbands and wives find their proper vocation in being witnesses of the faith and love of Christ to one another and to their children. The Christian family loudly proclaims both the present virtues of the Kingdom of God and the hope of a blessed life to come. Thus by its example and its witness it accuses the world of sin and enlightens those who seek the truth.

Consequently, even when preoccupied with temporal cares, the laity can and must perform a work of great value for the evangelization of the world. For even if some of them have to fulfill their religious duties on their own, when there are no sacred ministers or in times of persecution; and even if many of them devote all their energies to apostolic work; still it remains for each one of them to cooperate in the external spread and the dynamic growth of the Kingdom of Christ in the world. Therefore, let the laity devotedly strive to acquire a more profound grasp of revealed truth, and let them insistently beg of God the gift of wisdom.

36. Christ, becoming obedient even unto death and because of this exalted by the Father,(206) entered into the glory of His kingdom. To Him all things are made subject until He subjects Himself and all created things to the Father that God may be all in all.(207) Now Christ has communicated this royal power to His disciples that they might be constituted in royal freedom and that by true penance and a holy life they might conquer the reign of sin in themselves.(208) Further, He has shared this power so that serving Christ in their fellow men they might by humility and patience lead their brethren to that King for whom to serve is to reign. But the Lord wishes to spread His kingdom also by means of the laity, namely, a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace (4*). In this kingdom creation itself will be delivered from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the sons of God.(209) Clearly then a great promise and a great trust is committed to the disciples: "All things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's"(210)

The faithful, therefore, must learn the deepest meaning and the value of all creation, as well as its role in the harmonious praise of God. They must assist each other to live holier lives even in their daily occupations. In this way the world may be permeated by the spirit of Christ and it may more effectively fulfill its purpose in justice, charity and peace. The laity have the principal role in the overall fulfillment of this duty. Therefore, by their competence in secular training and by their activity, elevated from within by the grace of Christ, let them vigorously contribute their effort, so that created goods may be perfected by human labor, technical skill and civic culture for the benefit of all men according to the design of the Creator and the light of His Word. May the goods of this world be more equitably distributed among all men, and may they in their own way be conducive to universal progress in human and Christian freedom. In this manner, through the members of the Church, will Christ progressively illumine the whole of human society with His saving light.

Moreover, let the laity also by their combined efforts remedy the customs and conditions of the world, if they are an inducement to sin, so that they all may be conformed to the norms of justice and may favor the practice of virtue rather than hinder it. By so doing they will imbue culture and human activity with genuine moral values; they will better prepare the field of the world for the seed of the Word of God; and at the same time they will open wider the doors of the Church by which the message of peace may enter the world.

Because of the very economy of salvation the faithful should learn how to distinguish carefully between those rights and duties which are theirs as members of the Church, and those which they have as members of human society. Let them strive to reconcile the two, remembering that in every temporal affair they must be guided by a Christian conscience, since even in secular business there is no human activity which can be withdrawn from God's dominion. In our own time, however, it is most urgent that this distinction and also this harmony should shine forth more clearly than ever in the lives of the faithful, so that the mission of the Church may correspond more fully to the special conditions of the world today. For it must be admitted that the temporal sphere is governed by its own principles, since it is rightly concerned with the interests of this world. But that ominous doctrine which attempts to build a society with no regard whatever for religion, and which attacks and destroys the religious liberty of its citizens, is rightly to be rejected (5*).

37. The laity have the right, as do all Christians, to receive in abundance from their spiritual shepherds the spiritual goods of the Church, especially the assistance of the word of God and of the sacraments (6*). They should openly reveal to them their needs and desires with that freedom and confidence which is fitting for children of God and brothers in Christ. They are, by reason of the knowledge, competence or outstanding ability which they may enjoy, permitted and sometimes even obliged to express their opinion on those things which concern the good of the Church (7*). When occasions arise, let this be done through the organs erected by the Church for this purpose. Let it always be done in truth, in courage and in prudence, with reverence and charity toward those who by reason of their sacred office represent the person of Christ.

The laity should, as all Christians, promptly accept in Christian obedience decisions of their spiritual shepherds, since they are representatives of Christ as well as teachers and rulers in the Church. Let them follow the example of Christ, who by His obedience even unto death, opened to all men the blessed way of the liberty of the children of God. Nor should they omit to pray for those placed over them, for they keep watch as having to render an account of their souls, so that they may do this with joy and not with grief.(211)

Let the spiritual shepherds recognize and promote the dignity as well as the responsibility of the laity in the Church. Let them willingly employ their prudent advice. Let them confidently assign duties to them in the service of the Church, allowing them freedom and room for action. Further, let them encourage lay people so that they may undertake tasks on their own initiative. Attentively in Christ, let them consider with fatherly love the projects, suggestions and desires proposed by the laity.(8*) However, let the shepherds respectfully acknowledge that just freedom which belongs to everyone in this earthly city

A great many wonderful things are to be hoped for from this familiar dialogue between the laity and their spiritual leaders: in the laity a strengthened sense of personal responsibility; a renewed enthusiasm; a more ready application of their talents to the projects of their spiritual leaders. The latter, on the other hand, aided by the experience of the laity, can more clearly and more incisively come to decisions regarding both spiritual and temporal matters. In this way, the whole Church, strengthened by each one of its members, may more effectively fulfill is mission for the life of the world.

38. Each individual layman must stand before the world as a witness to the resurrection and life of the Lord Jesus and a symbol of the living God. All the laity as a community and each one according to his ability must nourish the world with spiritual fruits.(212) They must diffuse in the world that spirit which animates the poor, the meek, the peace makers-whom the Lord in the Gospel proclaimed as blessed.(213) In a word, "Christians must be to the world what the soul is to the body."(9*)

CHAPTER V

THE UNIVERSAL CALL TO HOLINESS IN THE CHURCH

39. The Church, whose mystery is being set forth by this Sacred Synod, is believed to be indefectibly holy. Indeed Christ, the Son of God, who with the Father and the Spirit is praised as "uniquely holy," (1*) loved the Church as His bride, delivering Himself up for her. He did this that He might sanctify her.(214) He united her to Himself as His own body and brought it to perfection by the gift of the Holy Spirit for God's glory. Therefore in the Church, everyone whether belonging to the hierarchy, or being cared for by it, is called to holiness, according to the saying of the Apostle: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification".(215) However, this holiness of the Church is unceasingly manifested, and must be manifested, in the fruits of grace which the Spirit produces in the faithful; it is expressed in many ways in individuals, who in their walk of life, tend toward the perfection of charity, thus causing the edification of others; in a very special way this (holiness) appears in the practice of the counsels, customarily called "evangelical." This practice of the counsels, under the impulsion of the Holy Spirit, undertaken by many Christians, either privately or in a Church-approved condition or state of life, gives and must give in the world an outstanding witness and example of this same holiness.

40. The Lord Jesus, the divine Teacher and Model of all perfection, preached holiness of life to each and everyone of His disciples of every condition. He Himself stands as the author and consumator of this holiness of life: "Be you therefore perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect".(216)(2*) Indeed He sent the Holy Spirit upon all men that He might move them inwardly to love God with their whole heart and their whole soul, with all their mind and all their strength(217) and that they might love each other as Christ loves them.(218) The followers of Christ are called by God, not because of their works, but according to His own purpose and grace. They are justified in the Lord Jesus, because in the baptism of faith they truly become sons of God and sharers in the divine nature. In this way they are really made holy. Then too, by God's gift, they must hold on to and complete in their lives this holiness they have received. They are warned by the Apostle to live "as becomes saints",(219) and to put on "as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patience",(220) and to possess the fruit of the Spirit in holiness.(221) Since truly we all offend in many things (222) we all need God's mercies continually and we all must daily pray: "Forgive us our debts"(223)(3*)

Thus it is evident to everyone, that all the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity;(4*) by this holiness as such a more human manner of living is promoted in this earthly society. In order that the faithful may reach this perfection, they must use their strength accordingly as they have received it, as a gift from Christ. They must follow in His footsteps and conform themselves to His image seeking the will of the Father in all things. They must devote themselves with all their being to the glory of God and the service of their neighbor. In this way, the holiness of the People of God will grow into an abundant harvest of good, as is admirably shown by the life of so many saints in Church history.

41. The classes and duties of life are many, but holiness is one-that sanctity which is cultivated by all who are moved by the Spirit of God, and who obey the voice of the Father and worship God the Father in spirit and in truth. These people follow the poor Christ, the humble and cross-bearing Christ in order to be worthy of being sharers in His glory. Every person must walk unhesitatingly according to his own personal gifts and duties in the path of living faith, which arouses hope and works through charity.

In the first place, the shepherds of Christ's flock must holily and eagerly, humbly and courageously carry out their ministry, in imitation of the eternal high Priest, the Shepherd and Guardian of our souls. They ought to fulfill this duty in such a way that it will be the principal means also of their own sanctification. Those chosen for the fullness of the priesthood are granted the ability of exercising the perfect duty of pastoral charity by the grace of the sacrament of Orders. This perfect duty of pastoral charity (5*) is exercised in every form of episcopal care and service, prayer, sacrifice and preaching. By this same sacramental grace, they are given the courage necessary to lay down their lives for their sheep, and the ability of promoting greater holiness in the Church by their daily example, having become a pattern for their flock.(224)

Priests, who resemble bishops to a certain degree in their participation of the sacrament of Orders, form the spiritual crown of the bishops.(6*) They participate in the grace of their office and they should grow daily in their love of God and their neighbor by the exercise of their office through Christ, the eternal and unique Mediator. They should preserve the bond of priestly communion, and they should abound in every spiritual good and thus present to all men a living witness to God.(7*) All this they should do in emulation of those priests who often, down through the course of the centuries, left an outstanding example of the holiness of humble and hidden service. Their praise lives on in the Church of God. By their very office of praying and offering sacrifice for their own people and the entire people of God, they should rise to greater holiness. Keeping in mind what they are doing and imitating what they are handling,(8*) these priests, in their apostolic labors, rather than being ensnared by perils and hardships, should rather rise to greater holiness through these perils and hardships. They should ever nourish and strengthen their action from an abundance of contemplation, doing all this for the comfort of the entire Church of God. All priests, and especially those who are called "diocesan priests," due to the special title of their ordination, should keep continually before their minds the fact that their faithful loyalty toward and their generous cooperation with their bishop is of the greatest value in their growth in holiness.

Ministers of lesser rank are also sharers in the mission and grace of the Supreme Priest. In the first place among these ministers are deacons, who, in as much as they are dispensers of Christ's mysteries and servants of the Church,(9*) should keep themselves free from every vice and stand before men as personifications of goodness and friends of God.(225) Clerics, who are called by the Lord and are set aside as His portion in order to prepare themselves for the various ministerial offices under the watchful eye of spiritual shepherds, are bound to bring their hearts and minds into accord with this special election (which is theirs). They will accomplish this by their constancy in prayer, by their burning love, and by their unremitting recollection of whatever is true, just and of good repute. They will accomplish all this for the glory and honor of God. Besides these already named, there are also laymen, chosen of God and called by the bishop. These laymen spend themselves completely in apostolic labors, working the Lord's field with much success.(10*).

Furthermore, married couples and Christian parents should follow their own proper path (to holiness) by faithful love. They should sustain one another in grace throughout the entire length of their lives. They should embue their offspring, lovingly welcomed as God's gift, with Christian doctrine and the evangelical virtues. In this manner, they offer all men the example of unwearying and generous love; in this way they build up the brotherhood of charity; in so doing, they stand as the witnesses and cooperators in the fruitfulness of Holy Mother Church; by such lives, they are a sign and a participation in that very love, with which Christ loved His Bride and for which He delivered Himself up for her.(11*) A like example, but one given in a different way, is that offered by widows and single people, who are able to make great contributions toward holiness and apostolic endeavor in the Church. Finally, those who engage in labor-and frequently it is of a heavy nature- should better themselves by their human labors. They should be of aid to their fellow citizens. They should raise all of society, and even creation itself, to a better mode of existence. Indeed, they should imitate by their lively charity, in their joyous hope and by their voluntary sharing of each others' burdens, the very Christ who plied His hands with carpenter's tools and Who in union with His Father, is continually working for the salvation of all men. In this, then, their daily work they should climb to the heights of holiness and apostolic activity.

May all those who are weighed down with poverty, infirmity and sickness, as well as those who must bear various hardships or who suffer persecution for justice sake-may they all know they are united with the suffering Christ in a special way for the salvation of the world. The Lord called them blessed in His Gospel and they are those whom "the God of all graces, who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will Himself, after we have suffered a little while, perfect, strengthen and establish".(226)

Finally all Christ's faithful, whatever be the conditions, duties and circumstances of their lives-and indeed through all these, will daily increase in holiness, if they receive all things with faith from the hand of their heavenly Father and if they cooperate with the divine will. In this temporal service, they will manifest to all men the love with which God loved the world.

42. "God is love, and he who abides in love, abides in God and God in Him".(227) But, God pours out his love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, Who has been given to us;(228) thus the first and most necessary gift is love, by which we love God above all things and our neighbor because of God. Indeed, in order that love, as good seed may grow and bring forth fruit in the soul, each one of the faithful must willingly hear the Word of God and accept His Will, and must complete what God has begun by their own actions with the help of God's grace. These actions consist in the use of the sacraments and in a special way the Eucharist, frequent participation in the sacred action of the Liturgy, application of oneself to prayer, self-abnegation, lively fraternal service and the constant exercise of all the virtues. For charity, as the bond of perfection and the fullness of the law,(229) rules over all the means of attaining holiness and gives life to these same means.(12*) It is charity which guides us to our final end. It is the love of God and the love of one's neighbor which points out the true disciple of Christ.

Since Jesus, the Son of God, manifested His charity by laying down His life for us, so too no one has greater love than he who lays down his life for Christ and His brothers.(230) From the earliest times, then, some Christians have been called upon-and some will always be called upon-to give the supreme testimony of this love to all men, but especially to persecutors. The Church, then, considers martyrdom as an exceptional gift and as the fullest proof of love. By martyrdom a disciple is transformed into an image of his Master by freely accepting death for the salvation of the world -as well as his conformity to Christ in the shedding of his blood. Though few are presented such an opportunity, nevertheless all must be prepared to confess Christ before men. They must be prepared to make this profession of faith even in the midst of persecutions, which will never be lacking to the Church, in following the way of the cross.

Likewise, the holiness of the Church is fostered in a special way by the observance of the counsels proposed in the Gospel by Our Lord to His disciples.(13*) An eminent position among these is held by virginity or the celibate state.(231) This is a precious gift of divine grace given by the Father to certain souls,(232) whereby they may devote themselves to God alone the more easily, due to an undivided heart. (14*) This perfect continency, out of desire for the kingdom of heaven, has always been held in particular honor in the Church. The reason for this was and is that perfect continency for the love of God is an incentive to charity, and is certainly a particular source of spiritual fecundity in the world.

The Church continually keeps before it the warning of the Apostle which moved the faithful to charity, exhorting them to experience personally what Christ Jesus had known within Himself. This was the same Christ Jesus, who "emptied Himself, taking the nature of a slave . . . becoming obedient to death",(233) and because of us "being rich, he became poor".(234) Because the disciples must always offer an imitation of and a testimony to the charity and humility of Christ, Mother Church rejoices at finding within her bosom men and women who very closely follow their Saviour who debased Himself to our comprehension. There are some who, in their freedom as sons of God, renounce their own wills and take upon themselves the state of poverty. Still further, some become subject of their own accord to another man, in the matter of perfection for love of God. This is beyond the measure of the commandments, but is done in order to become more fully like the obedient Christ.(15*)

Therefore, all the faithful of Christ are invited to strive for the holiness and perfection of their own proper state. Indeed they have an obligation to so strive. Let all then have care that they guide aright their own deepest sentiments of soul. Let neither the use of the things of this world nor attachment to riches, which is against the spirit of evangelical poverty, hinder them in their quest for perfect love Let them heed the admonition of the Apostle to those who use this world; let them not come to terms with this world; for this world, as we see it, is passing away.(235)(16*)

CHAPTER VI

RELIGIOUS

43. The evangelical counsels of chastity dedicated to God, poverty and obedience are based upon the words and examples of the Lord. They were further commanded by the apostles and Fathers of the Church, as well as by the doctors and pastors of souls. The counsels are a divine gift, which the Church received from its Lord and which it always safeguards with the help of His grace. Church authority has the duty, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, of interpreting these evangelical counsels, of regulating their practice and finally to build on them stable forms of living. Thus it has come about, that, as if on a tree which has grown in the field of the Lord, various forms of solidarity and community life, as well as various religious families have branched out in a marvelous and multiple way from this divinely given seed. Such a multiple and miraculous growth augments both the progress of the members of these various religious families themselves and the welfare of the entire Body of Christ.(1*) These religious families give their members the support of a more firm stability in their way of life and a proven doctrine of acquiring perfection. They further offer their members the support of fraternal association in the militia of Christ and of liberty strengthened by obedience. Thus these religious are able to tranquilly fulfill and faithfully observe their religious profession and so spiritually rejoicing make progress on the road of charity.(2*)

From the point of view of the divine and hierarchical structure of the Church, the religious state of life is not an intermediate state between the clerical and lay states. But, rather, the faithful of Christ are called by God from both these states of life so that they might enjoy this particular gift in the life of the Church and thus each in one's own way, may be of some advantage to the salvific mission of the Church.(3*)

44. The faithful of Christ bind themselves to the three aforesaid counsels either by vows, or by other sacred bonds, which are like vows in their purpose. By such a bond, a person is totally dedicated to God, loved beyond all things. In this way, that person is ordained to the honor and service of God under a new and special title. Indeed through Baptism a person dies to sin and is consecrated to God. However, in order that he may be capable of deriving more abundant fruit from this baptismal grace, he intends, by the profession of the evangelical counsels in the Church, to free himself from those obstacles, which might draw him away from the fervor of charity and the perfection of divine worship. By his profession of the evangelical counsels, then, he is more intimately consecrated to divine service.(4*) This consecration will be the more perfect, in as much as the indissoluble bond of the union of Christ and His bride, the Church, is represented by firm and more stable bonds.

The evangelical counsels which lead to charity (5*) join their followers to the Church and its mystery in a special way. Since this is so, the spiritual life of these people should then be devoted to the welfare of the whole Church. From this arises their duty of working to implant and strengthen the Kingdom of Christ in souls and to extend that Kingdom to every clime. This duty is to be undertaken to the extent of their capacities and in keeping with the proper type of their own vocation. This can be realized through prayer or active works of the apostolate. It is for this reason that the Church preserves and fosters the special character of her various religious institutes.

The profession of the evangelical counsels, then, appears as a sign which can and ought to attract all the members of the Church to an effective and prompt fulfillment of the duties of their Christian vocation. The people of God have no lasting city here below, but look forward to one that is to come. Since this is so, the religious state, whose purpose is to free its members from earthly cares, more fully manifests to all believers the presence of heavenly goods already possessed here below. Furthermore, it not only witnesses to the fact of a new and eternal life acquired by the redemption of Christ, but it foretells the future resurrection and the glory of the heavenly kingdom. Christ proposed to His disciples this form of life, which He, as the Son of God, accepted in entering this world to do the will of the Father. This same state of life is accurately exemplified and perpetually made present in the Church. The religious state clearly manifests that the Kingdom of God and its needs, in a very special way, are raised above all earthly considerations. Finally it clearly shows all men both the unsurpassed breadth of the strength of Christ the King and the infinite power of the Holy Spirit marvelously working in the Church.

Thus, the state which is constituted by the profession of the evangelical counsels, though it is not the hierarchical structure of the Church, nevertheless, undeniably belongs to its life and holiness.

45. It is the duty of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to regulate the practice of the evangelical counsels by law, since it is the duty of the same hierarchy to care for the People of God and to lead them to most fruitful pastures.(236) The importance of the profession of the evangelical counsels is seen in the fact that it fosters the perfection of love of God and love of neighbor in an outstanding manner and that this profession is strengthened by vows.(6*) Furthermore, the hierarchy, following with docility the prompting of the Holy Spirit, accepts the rules presented by outstanding men and women and authentically approves these rules after further adjustments. It also aids by its vigilant and safeguarding authority those institutes variously established for the building up of Christ's Body in order that these same institutes may grow and flourish according to the spirit of the founders.

Any institute of perfection and its individual members may be removed from the jurisdiction of the local Ordinaries by the Supreme Pontiff and subjected to himself alone. This is done in virtue of his primacy over the entire Church in order to more fully provide for the necessities of the entire flock of the Lord and in consideration of the common good.(7*) In like manner, these institutes may be left or committed to the charge of the proper patriarchical authority. The members of these institutes, in fulfilling their obligation to the Church due to their particular form of life, ought to show reverence and obedience to bishops according to the sacred canons. The bishops are owed this respect because of their pastoral authority in their own churches and because of the need of unity and harmony in the apostolate.(8*).

The Church not only raises the religious profession to the dignity of a canonical state by her approval, but even manifests that this profession is a state consecrated to God by the liturgical setting of that profession. The Church itself, by the authority given to it by God, accepts the vows of the newly professed. It begs aid and grace from God for them by its public prayer. It commends them to God, imparts a spiritual blessing on them and accompanies their self-offering by the Eucharistic sacrifice.

46. Religious should carefully keep before their minds the fact that the Church presents Christ to believers and non-believers alike in a striking manner daily through them. The Church thus portrays Christ in contemplation on the mountain, in His proclamation of the kingdom of God to the multitudes, in His healing of the sick and maimed, in His work of converting sinners to a better life, in His solicitude for youth and His goodness to all men, always obedient to the will of the Father who sent Him.(9*)

All men should take note that the profession of the evangelical counsels, though entailing the renunciation of certain values which are to be undoubtedly esteemed, does not detract from a genuine development of the human persons, but rather by its very nature is most beneficial to that development. Indeed the counsels, voluntarily undertaken according to each one's personal vocation, contribute a great deal to the purification of heart and spiritual liberty. They continually stir up the fervor of charity. But especially they are able to more fully mold the Christian man to that type of chaste and detached life, which Christ the Lord chose for Himself and which His Mother also embraced. This is clearly proven by the example of so many holy founders. Let no one think that religious have become strangers to their fellowmen or useless citizens of this earthly city by their consecration. For even though it sometimes happens that religious do not directly mingle with their contemporaries, yet in a more profound sense these same religious are united with them in the heart of Christ and spiritually cooperate with them. In this way the building up of the earthly city may have its foundation in the Lord and may tend toward Him, lest perhaps those who build this city shall have labored in vain. (10*)

Therefore, this Sacred Synod encourages and praises the men and women, Brothers and Sisters, who in monasteries, or in schools and hospitals, or in the missions, adorn the Bride of Christ by their unswerving and humble faithfulness in their chosen consecration and render generous services of all kinds to mankind.

47. Let each of the faithful called to the profession of the evangelical counsels, therefore, carefully see to it that he persevere and ever grow in that vocation God has given him. Let him do this for the increased holiness of the Church, for the greater glory of the one and undivided Trinity, which in and through Christ is the fount and the source of all holiness.

CHAPTER VII

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL NATURE OF THE PILGRIM CHURCH AND ITS UNION WITH THE CHURCH IN HEAVEN

48. The Church, to which we are all called in Christ Jesus, and in which we acquire sanctity through the grace of God, will attain its full perfection only in the glory of heaven, when there will come the time of the restoration of all things.(237) At that time the human race as well as the entire world, which is intimately related to man and attains to its end through him, will be perfectly reestablished in Christ.(238)

Christ, having been lifted up from the earth has drawn all to Himself.(239) Rising from the dead(240) He sent His life-giving Spirit upon His disciples and through Him has established His Body which is the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation. Sitting at the right hand of the Father, He is continually active in the world that He might lead men to the Church and through it join them to Himself and that He might make them partakers of His glorious life by nourishing them with His own Body and Blood. Therefore the promised restoration which we are awaiting has already begun in Christ, is carried forward in the mission of the Holy Spirit and through Him continues in the Church in which we learn the meaning of our terrestrial life through our faith, while we perform with hope in the future the work committed to us in this world by the Father, and thus work out our salvation.(241)

Already the final age of the world has come upon us (242) and the renovation of the world is irrevocably decreed and is already anticipated in some kind of a real way; for the Church already on this earth is signed with a sanctity which is real although imperfect. However, until there shall be new heavens and a new earth in which justice dwells,(243) the pilgrim Church in her sacraments and institutions, which pertain to this present time, has the appearance of this world which is passing and she herself dwells among creatures who groan and travail in pain until now and await the revelation of the sons of God.(244)

Joined with Christ in the Church and signed with the Holy Spirit "who is the pledge of our inheritance",(245) truly we are called and we are sons of God(246) but we have not yet appeared with Christ in glory,(247) in which we shall be like to God, since we shall see Him as He is.(248) And therefore "while we are in the body, we are exiled from the Lord (249) and having the first-fruits of the Spirit we groan within ourselves(250) and we desire to be with Christ".(251) By that same charity however, we are urged to live more for Him, who died for us and rose again.(252) We strive therefore to please God in all things(253) and we put on the armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil and resist in the evil day.(254) Since however we know not the day nor the hour, on Our Lord's advice we must be constantly vigilant so that, having finished the course of our earthly life,(255) we may merit to enter into the marriage feast with Him and to be numbered among the blessed(256) and that we may not be ordered to go into eternal fire(257) like the wicked and slothful servant,(258) into the exterior darkness where "there will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth".(259) For before we reign with Christ in glory, all of us will be made manifest "before the tribunal of Christ, so that each one may receive what he has won through the body, according to his works, whether good or evil"(260) and at the end of the world "they who have done good shall come forth unto resurrection of life; but those who have done evil unto resurrection of judgment".(261) Reckoning therefore that "the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that will be revealed in us",(262) strong in faith we look for the "blessed hope and the glorious coming of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ"(263) "who will refashion the body of our lowliness, conforming it to the body of His glory(264). and who will come "to be glorified in His saints and to be marveled at in all those who have believed"(265).

49. Until the Lord shall come in His majesty, and all the angels with Him (266) and death being destroyed, all things are subject to Him,(277) some of His disciples are exiles on earth, some having died are purified, and others are in glory beholding "clearly God Himself triune and one, as He is"; (1*) but all in various ways and degrees are in communion in the same charity of God and neighbor and all sing the same hymn of glory to our God. For all who are in Christ, having His Spirit, form one Church and cleave together in Him.(268) Therefore the union of the wayfarers with the brethren who have gone to sleep in the peace of Christ is not in the least weakened or interrupted, but on the contrary, according to the perpetual faith of the Church, is strengthened by communication of spiritual goods.(2*) For by reason of the fact that those in heaven are more closely united with Christ, they establish the whole Church more firmly in holiness, lend nobility to the worship which the Church offers to God here on earth and in many ways contribute to its greater edification.(269)(3*) For after they have been received into their heavenly home and are present to the Lord,(270) through Him and with Him and in Him they do not cease to intercede with the Father for us,(4*) showing forth the merits which they won on earth through the one Mediator between God and man,(271) serving God in all things and filling up in their flesh those things which are lacking of the sufferings of Christ for His Body which is the Church.(272)(5*) Thus by their brotherly interest our weakness is greatly strengthened.

50. Fully conscious of this communion of the whole Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the pilgrim Church from the very first ages of the Christian religion has cultivated with great piety the memory of the dead,(6*) and "because it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins",(273) also offers suffrages for them. The Church has always believed that the apostles and Christ's martyrs who had given the supreme witness of faith and charity by the shedding of their blood, are closely joined with us in Christ, and she has always venerated them with special devotion, together with the Blessed Virgin Mary and the holy angels.(7*) The Church has piously implored the aid of their intercession. To these were soon added also those who had more closely imitated Christ's virginity and poverty,(8*) and finally others whom the outstanding practice of the Christian virtues (9*) and the divine charisms recommended to the pious devotion and imitation of the faithful.(10*)

When we look at the lives of those who have faithfully followed Christ, we are inspired with a new reason for seeking the City that is to come (274) and at the same time we are shown a most safe path by which among the vicissitudes of this world, in keeping with the state in life and condition proper to each of us, we will be able to arrive at perfect union with Christ, that is, perfect holiness. (11*) In the lives of those who, sharing in our humanity, are however more perfectly transformed into the image of Christ,(275) God vividly manifests His presence and His face to men. He speaks to us in them, and gives us a sign of His Kingdom,(12*) to which we are strongly drawn, having so great a cloud of witnesses over us (276) and such a witness to the truth of the Gospel.

Nor is it by the title of example only that we cherish the memory of those in heaven, but still more in order that the union of the whole Church may be strengthened in the Spirit by the practice of fraternal charity.(277) For just as Christian communion among wayfarers brings us closer to Christ, so our companionship with the saints joins us to Christ, from Whom as from its Fountain and Head issues every grace and the very life of the people of God.(13*) It is supremely fitting, therefore, that we love those friends and coheirs of Jesus Christ, who are also our brothers and extraordinary benefactors, that we render due thanks to God for them (14*) and "suppliantly invoke them and have recourse to their prayers, their power and help in obtaining benefits from God through His Son, Jesus Christ, who is our Redeemer and Saviour."(15*) For every genuine testimony of love shown by us to those in heaven, by its very nature tends toward and terminates in Christ who is the "crown of all saints,"(16*) and through Him, in God Who is wonderful in his saints and is magnified in them.(17*)

Our union with the Church in heaven is put into effect in its noblest manner especially in the sacred Liturgy, wherein the power of the Holy Spirit acts upon us through sacramental signs. Then, with combined rejoicing we celebrate together the praise of the divine majesty;(18*) then all those from every tribe and tongue and people and nation (278) who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and gathered together into one Church, with one song of praise magnify the one and triune God. Celebrating the Eucharistic sacrifice therefore, we are most closely united to the Church in heaven in communion with and venerating the memory first of all of the glorious ever-Virgin Mary, of Blessed Joseph and the blessed apostles and martyrs and of all the saints.(19*)

51. This Sacred Council accepts with great devotion this venerable faith of our ancestors regarding this vital fellowship with our brethren who are in heavenly glory or who having died are still being purified; and it proposes again the decrees of the Second Council of Nicea,(20*) the Council of

Florence (21*) and the Council of Trent.(22*) And at the same time, in conformity with our own pastoral interests, we urge all concerned, if any abuses, excesses or defects have crept in here or there, to do what is in their power to remove or correct them, and to restore all things to a fuller praise of Christ and of God. Let them therefore teach the faithful that the authentic cult of the saints consists not so much in the multiplying of external acts, but rather in the greater intensity of our love, whereby, for our own greater good and that of the whole Church, we seek from the saints "example in their way of life, fellowship in their communion, and aid by their intercession."(23*) On the other hand, let them teach the faithful that our communion with those in heaven, provided that it is understood in the fuller light of faith according to its genuine nature, in no way weakens, but conversely, more thoroughly enriches the latreutic worship we give to God the Father, through Christ, in the Spirit.(24*)

For all of us, who are sons of God and constitute one family in Christ.(279) as long as we remain in communion with one another in mutual charity and in one praise of the most holy Trinity, are corresponding with the intimate vocation of the Church and partaking in foretaste the liturgy of consummate glory.(25*) For when Christ shall appear and the glorious resurrection of the dead will take place, the glory of God will light up the heavenly City and the Lamb will be the lamp thereof.(280) Then the whole Church of the saints in the supreme happiness of charity will adore God and "the Lamb who was slain",(281) proclaiming with one voice: "To Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb blessing, and honor, and glory, and dominion forever and ever".(282)

CHAPTER VIII

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF GOD IN THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

I. Introduction

52. Wishing in His supreme goodness and wisdom to effect the redemption of the world, "when the fullness of time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, ..that we might receive the adoption of sons".(283) "He for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit from the Virgin Mary."(1*) This divine mystery of salvation is revealed to us and continued in the Church, which the Lord established as His body. Joined to Christ the Head and in the unity of fellowship with all His saints, the faithful must in the first place reverence the memory "of the glorious ever Virgin Mary, Mother of our God and Lord Jesus Christ".(2*)

53. The Virgin Mary, who at the message of the angel received the Word of God in her heart and in her body and gave Life to the world, is acknowledged and honored as being truly the Mother of God and Mother of the Redeemer. Redeemed by reason of the merits of her Son and united to Him by a close and indissoluble tie, she is endowed with the high office and dignity of being the Mother of the Son of God, by which account she is also the beloved daughter of the Father and the temple of the Holy Spirit. Because of this gift of sublime grace she far surpasses all creatures, both in heaven and on earth. At the same time, however, because she belongs to the offspring of Adam she is one with all those who are to be saved. She is "the mother of the members of Christ . . . having cooperated by charity that faithful might be born in the Church, who are members of that Head."(3*) Wherefore she is hailed as a pre-eminent and singular member of the Church, and as its type and excellent exemplar in faith and charity. The Catholic Church, taught by the Holy Spirit, honors her with filial affection and piety as a most beloved mother.

54. Wherefore this Holy Synod, in expounding the doctrine on the Church, in which the divine Redeemer works salvation, intends to describe with diligence both the role of the Blessed Virgin in the mystery of the Incarnate Word and the Mystical Body, and the duties of redeemed mankind toward the Mother of God, who is mother of Christ and mother of men, particularly of the faithful. It does not, however, have it in mind to give a complete doctrine on Mary, nor does it wish to decide those questions which the work of theologians has not yet fully clarified. Those opinions therefore may be lawfully retained which are propounded in Catholic schools concerning her, who occupies a place in the Church which is the highest after Christ and yet very close to us.(4*)

II. The Role of the Blessed Mother in the Economy of Salvation

55. The Sacred Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament, as well as ancient Tradition show the role of the Mother of the Saviour in the economy of salvation in an ever clearer light and draw attention to it. The books of the Old Testament describe the history of salvation, by which the coming of Christ into the world was slowly prepared. These earliest documents, as they are read in the Church and are understood in the light of a further and full revelation, bring the figure of the woman, Mother of the Redeemer, into a gradually clearer light. When it is looked at in this way, she is already prophetically foreshadowed in the promise of victory over the serpent which was given to our first parents after their fall into sin.(284) Likewise she is the Virgin who shall conceive and bear a son, whose name will be called Emmanuel.(285) She stands out among the poor and humble of the Lord, who confidently hope for and receive salvation from Him. With her the exalted Daughter of Sion, and after a long expectation of the promise, the times are fulfilled and the new Economy established, when the Son of God took a human nature from her, that He might in the mysteries of His flesh free man from sin.

56. The Father of mercies willed that the incarnation should be preceded by the acceptance of her who was predestined to be the mother of His Son, so that just as a woman contributed to death, so also a woman should contribute to life. That is true in outstanding fashion of the mother of Jesus, who gave to the world Him who is Life itself and who renews all things, and who was enriched by God with the gifts which befit such a role. It is no wonder therefore that the usage prevailed among the Fathers whereby they called the mother of God entirely holy and free from all stain of sin, as though fashioned by the Holy Spirit and formed as a new creature.(5*) Adorned from the first instant of her conception with the radiance of an entirely unique holiness, the Virgin of Nazareth is greeted, on God's command, by an angel messenger as "full of grace",(286) and to the heavenly messenger she replies: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word".(287) Thus Mary, a daughter of Adam, consenting to the divine Word, became the mother of Jesus, the one and only Mediator. Embracing God's salvific will with a full heart and impeded by no sin, she devoted herself totally as a handmaid of the Lord to the person and work of her Son, under Him and with Him, by the grace of almighty God, serving the mystery of redemption. Rightly therefore the holy Fathers see her as used by God not merely in a passive way, but as freely cooperating in the work of human salvation through faith and obedience. For, as St. Irenaeus says, she "being obedient, became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race."(6*) Hence not a few of the early Fathers gladly assert in their preaching, "The knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience; what the virgin Eve bound through her unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosened by her faith."(7*) Comparing Mary with Eve, they call her "the Mother of the living,"(8*) and still more often they say: "death through Eve, life through Mary."(9*)

57. This union of the Mother with the Son in the work of salvation is made manifest from the time of Christ's virginal conception up to His death it is shown first of all when Mary, arising in haste to go to visit Elizabeth, is greeted by her as blessed because of her belief in the promise of salvation and the precursor leaped with joy in the womb of his mother.(288) This union is manifest also at the birth of Our Lord, who did not diminish His mother's virginal integrity but sanctified it,(10*) when the Mother of God joyfully showed her firstborn Son to the shepherds and Magi. When she presented Him to the Lord in the temple, making the offering of the poor, she heard Simeon foretelling at the same time that her Son would be a sign of contradiction and that a sword would pierce the mother's soul, that out of many hearts thoughts might be revealed.(289) When the Child Jesus was lost and they had sought Him sorrowing, His parents found Him in the temple, taken up with the things that were His Father's business; and they did not understand the word of their Son. His Mother indeed kept these things to be pondered over in her heart.(290)

58. In the public life of Jesus, Mary makes significant appearances. This is so even at the very beginning, when at the marriage feast of Cana, moved with pity, she brought about by her intercession the beginning of miracles of Jesus the Messiah.(291) In the course of her Son's preaching she received the words whereby in extolling a kingdom beyond the calculations and bonds of flesh and blood, He declared blessed(292) those who heard and kept the word of God, as she was faithfully doing.(293) After this manner the Blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross, where she stood, in keeping with the divine plan,(294) grieving exceedingly with her only begotten Son, uniting herself with a maternal heart with His sacrifice, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this Victim which she herself had brought forth. Finally, she was given by the same Christ Jesus dying on the cross as a mother to His disciple with these words: "Woman, behold thy son".(295) (11*)

59. But since it has pleased God not to manifest solemnly the mystery cf the salvation of the human race before He would pour forth the Spirit promised by Christ, we see the apostles before the day of Pentecost "persevering with one mind in prayer with the women and Mary the Mother of Jesus, and with His brethren",(296) and Mary by her prayers imploring the gift of the Spirit, who had already overshadowed her in the Annunciation. Finally, the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all guilt of original sin,(12*) on the completion of her earthly sojourn, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory,(13*) and exalted by the Lord as Queen of the universe, that she might be the more fully confimed to her Son, the Lord of lords(297) and the conqueror of sin and death.(l4*)

III. On the Blessed Virgin and the Church

60. There is but one Mediator as we know from the words of the apostle, "for there is one God and one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a redemption for all".(298) The maternal duty of Mary toward men in no wise obscures or diminishes this unique mediation of Christ, but rather shows His power. For all the salvific influence of the Blessed Virgin on men originates, not from some inner necessity, but from the divine pleasure. It flows forth from the superabundance of the merits of Christ, rests on His mediation, depends entirely on it and draws all its power from it. In no way does it impede, but rather does it foster the immediate union of the faithful with Christ.

61. Predestined from eternity by that decree of divine providence which determined the incarnation of the Word to be the Mother of God, the Blessed Virgin was in this earth the virgin Mother of the Redeemer, and above all others and in a singular way the generous associate and humble handmaid of the Lord. She conceived, brought forth and nourished Christ. she presented Him to the Father in the temple, and was united with Him by compassion as He died on the Cross. In this singular way she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in the work of the Saviour in giving back supernatural life to souls. Wherefore she is our mother in the order of grace.

62. This maternity of Mary in the order of grace began with the consent which she gave in faith at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross, and lasts until The eternal fulfillment of all the elect. Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this salvific duty, but by her constant intercession continued to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation.(15*) By her maternal charity, she cares for the brethren of her Son, who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led into the happiness of their true home. Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked by the Church under the titles of Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix, and Mediatrix.(16*) This, however, is to be so understood that it neither takes away from nor adds anything to the dignity and efficaciousness of Christ the one Mediator.(17*)

For no creature could ever be counted as equal with the Incarnate Word and Redeemer. Just as the priesthood of Christ is shared in various ways both by the ministers and by the faithful, and as the one goodness of God is really communicated in different ways to His creatures, so also the unique mediation of the Redeemer does not exclude but rather gives rise to a manifold cooperation which is but a sharing in this one source.

The Church does not hesitate to profess this subordinate role of Mary. It knows it through unfailing experience of it and commends it to the hearts of the faithful, so that encouraged by this maternal help they may the more intimately adhere to the Mediator and Redeemer.

63. By reason of the gift and role of divine maternity, by which she is united with her Son, the Redeemer, and with His singular graces and functions, the Blessed Virgin is also intimately united with the Church. As St. Ambrose taught, the Mother of God is a type of the Church in the order of faith, charity and perfect union with Christ.(18*) For in the mystery of the Church, which is itself rightly called mother and virgin, the Blessed Virgin stands out in eminent and singular fashion as exemplar both of virgin and mother. (19*) By her belief and obedience, not knowing man but overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, as the new Eve she brought forth on earth the very Son of the Father, showing an undefiled faith, not in the word of the ancient serpent, but in that of God's messenger. The Son whom she brought forth is He whom God placed as the first-born among many brethren,(299) namely the faithful, in whose birth and education she cooperates with a maternal love.

64. The Church indeed, contemplating her hidden sanctity, imitating her charity and faithfully fulfilling the Father's will, by receiving the word of God in faith becomes herself a mother. By her preaching she brings forth to a new and immortal life the sons who are born to her in baptism, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of God. She herself is a virgin, who keeps the faith given to her by her Spouse whole and entire. Imitating the mother of her Lord, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, she keeps with virginal purity an entire faith, a firm hope and a sincere charity.(20*)

65. But while in the most holy Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she is without spot or wrinkle, the followers of Christ still strive to increase in holiness by conquering sin.(300) And so they turn their eyes to Mary who shines forth to the whole community of the elect as the model of virtues. Piously meditating on her and contemplating her in the light of the Word made man, the Church with reverence enters more intimately into the great mystery of the Incarnation and becomes more and more like her Spouse. For Mary, who since her entry into salvation history unites in herself and re-echoes the greatest teachings of the faith as she is proclaimed and venerated, calls the faithful to her Son and His sacrifice and to the love of the Father. Seeking after the glory of Christ, the Church becomes more like her exalted Type, and continually progresses in faith, hope and charity, seeking and doing the will of God in all things. Hence the Church, in her apostolic work also, justly looks to her, who, conceived of the Holy Spirit, brought forth Christ, who was born of the Virgin that through the Church He may be born and may increase in the hearts of the faithful also. The Virgin in her own life lived an example of that maternal love, by which it behooves that all should be animated who cooperate in the apostolic mission of the Church for the regeneration of men.

IV. The Cult of the Blessed Virgin in the Church

66. Placed by the grace of God, as God's Mother, next to her Son, and exalted above all angels and men, Mary intervened in the mysteries of Christ and is justly honored by a special cult in the Church. Clearly from earliest times the Blessed Virgin is honored under the title of Mother of God, under whose protection the faithful took refuge in all their dangers and necessities.(21*) Hence after the Synod of Ephesus the cult of the people of God toward Mary wonderfully increased in veneration and love, in invocation and imitation, according to her own prophetic words: "All generations shall call me blessed, because He that is mighty hath done great things to me".(301) This cult, as it always existed, although it is altogether singular, differs essentially from the cult of adoration which is offered to the Incarnate Word, as well to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and it is most favorable to it. The various forms of piety toward the Mother of God, which the Church within the limits of sound and orthodox doctrine, according to the conditions of time and place, and the nature and ingenuity of the faithful has approved, bring it about that while the Mother is honored, the Son, through whom all things have their being (302) and in whom it has pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell, (303) is rightly known, loved and glorified and that all His commands are observed.

67. This most Holy Synod deliberately teaches this Catholic doctrine and at the same time admonishes all the sons of the Church that the cult, especially the liturgical cult, of the Blessed Virgin, be generously fostered, and the practices and exercises of piety, recommended by the magisterium of the Church toward her in the course of centuries be made of great moment, and those decrees, which have been given in the early days regarding the cult of images of Christ, the Blessed Virgin and the saints, be religiously observed.(22*) But it exhorts theologians and preachers of the divine word to abstain zealously both from all gross exaggerations as well as from petty narrow-mindedness in considering the singular dignity of the Mother of God.(23*) Following the study of Sacred Scripture, the Holy Fathers, the doctors and liturgy of the Church, and under the guidance of the Church's magisterium, let them rightly illustrate the duties and privileges of the Blessed Virgin which always look to Christ, the source of all truth, sanctity and piety. Let them assiduously keep away from whatever, either by word or deed, could lead separated brethren or any other into error regarding the true doctrine of the Church. Let the faithful remember moreover that true devotion consists neither in sterile or transitory affection, nor in a certain vain credulity, but proceeds from true faith, by which we are led to know the excellence of the Mother of God, and we are moved to a filial love toward our mother and to the imitation of her virtues.

V. Mary the sign of created hope and solace to the wandering people of God

68. In the interim just as the Mother of Jesus, glorified in body and soul in heaven, is the image and beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected is the world to come, so too does she shine forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come,(304) as a sign of sure hope and solace to the people of God during its sojourn on earth.

69. It gives great joy and comfort to this holy and general Synod that even among the separated brethren there are some who give due honor to the Mother of our Lord and Saviour, especially among the Orientals, who with devout mind and fervent impulse give honor to the Mother of God, ever virgin.(24*) The entire body of the faithful pours forth instant supplications to the Mother of God and Mother of men that she, who aided the beginnings of the Church by her prayers, may now, exalted as she is above all the angels and saints, intercede before her Son in the fellowship of all the saints, until all families of people, whether they are honored with the title of Christian or whether they still do not know the Saviour, may be happily gathered together in peace and harmony into one people of God, for the glory of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity.

Each and all these items which are set forth in this dogmatic Constitution have met with the approval of the Council Fathers. And We by the apostolic power given Us by Christ together with the Venerable Fathers in the Holy Spirit, approve, decree and establish it and command that what has thus been decided in the Council be promulgated for the glory of God.

Given in Rome at St. Peter's on November 21, 1964.

APPENDIX From the Acts of the Council*

'NOTIFICATIONES' GIVEN BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE COUNCIL AT THE 123RD GENERAL CONGREGATION, NOVEMBER 16, 1964

A question has arisen regarding the precise theological note which should be attached to the doctrine that is set forth in the Schema de Ecclesia and is being put to a vote.

The Theological Commission has given the following response regarding the Modi that have to do with Chapter III of the de Ecclesia Schema: "As is self-evident, the Council's text must always be interpreted in accordance with the general rules that are known to all."

On this occasion the Theological Commission makes reference to its Declaration of March 6, 1964, the text of which we transcribe here:

"Taking conciliar custom into consideration and also the pastoral purpose of the present Council, the sacred Council defines as binding on the Church only those things in matters of faith and morals which it shall openly declare to be binding. The rest of the things which the sacred Council sets forth, inasmuch as they are the teaching of the Church's supreme magisterium, ought. to be accepted and embraced by each and every one of Christ's faithful according to the mind of the sacred Council. The mind of the Council becomes known either from the matter treated or from its manner of speaking, in accordance with the norms of theological interpretation."

The following was published as an appendix to the official Latin version of the Constitution on the Church.

A preliminary note of explanation is being given to the Council Fathers from higher-authority, regarding the Modi bearing on Chapter III of the Schema de Ecclesia; the doctrine set forth in Chapter III ought to be-explained and understood in accordance with the meaning and intent of this explanatory note.

Preliminary Note of Explanation

The Commission has decided to preface the assessment of the Modi with the following general observations.

1. "College" is not understood in a strictly juridical sense, that is as a group of equals who entrust their power to their president, but as a stable group whose structure and authority must be learned from Revelation. For this reason, in reply to Modus 12 it is expressly said of the Twelve that the Lord set them up "as a college or stable group." Cf. also Modus 53, c.

For the same reason, the words "Ordo" or "Corpus" are used throughout with reference to the College of bishops. The parallel between Peter and the rest of the Apostles on the one hand, and between the Supreme Pontiff and the bishops on the other hand, does not imply the transmission of the Apostles' extraordinary power to their successors; nor does it imply, as is obvious, equality between the head of the College and its members, but only a pro- portionality between the first relationship (Peter-Apostles) and the second (Pope-bishops). Thus the Commission decided to write "pari ratione, " not "eadem ratione," in n. 22. Cf. Modus 57.

2. A person becomes a member of the College by virtue of episcopal consecration and by hierarchical communion with the head of the College and with its members. Cf. n. 22, end of 1 1.

In his consecration a person is given an ontological participation in the sacred functions [lmunera]; this is absolutely clear from Tradition, liturgical tradition included. The word "functions [munera]" is used deliberately instead of the word "powers [potestates]," because the latter word could be understood as a power fully ready to act. But for this power to be fully ready to act, there must be a further canonical or juridical determination through the hierarchical authority. This determination of power can consist in the granting of a particular office or in the allotment of subjects, and it is done according to the norms approved by the supreme authority. An additional norm of this sort is required by the very nature of the case, because it involves functions [munera] which must be exercised by many subjects cooperating in a hierarchical manner in accordance with Christ's will. It is evident that this "communion" was applied in the Church's life according to the circumstances of the time, before it was codified as law.

For this reason it is clearly stated that hierarchical communion with the head and members of the church is required. Communion is a notion which is held in high honor in the ancient Church (and also today, especially in the East). However, it is not understood as some kind of vague disposition, but as an organic reality which requires a juridical form and is animated by charity. Hence the Commission, almost unanimously, decided that this wording should be used: "in hierarchical communion." Cf. Modus 40 and the statements on canonical mission (n. 24).

The documents of recent Pontiffs regarding the jurisdiction of bishops must be interpreted in terms of this necessary determination of powers.

3. The College, which does not exist without the head, is said "to exist also as the subject of supreme and full power in the universal Church." This must be admitted of necessity so that the fullness of power belonging to the Roman Pontiff is not called into question. For the College, always and of necessity, includes its head, because in the college he preserves unhindered his function as Christ's Vicar and as Pastor of the universal Church. In other words, it is not a distinction between the Roman Pontiff and the bishops taken collectively, but a distinction between the Roman Pontiff taken separately and the Roman Pontiff together with the bishops. Since the Supreme Pontiff is head of the College, he alone is able to perform certain actions which are not at all within the competence of the bishops, e.g., convoking the College and directing it, approving norms of action, etc. Cf. Modus 81. It is up to the judgment of the Supreme Pontiff, to whose care Christ's whole flock has been entrusted, to determine, according to the needs of the Church as they change over the course of centuries, the way in which this care may best be exercised-whether in a personal or a collegial way. The Roman Pontiff, taking account of the Church's welfare, proceeds according to his own discretion in arranging, promoting and approving the exercise of collegial activity.

4. As Supreme Pastor of the Church, the Supreme Pontiff can always exercise his power at will, as his very office demands. Though it is always in existence, the College is not as a result permanently engaged in strictly collegial activity; the Church's Tradition makes this clear. In other words, the College is not always "fully active [in actu pleno]"; rather, it acts as a college in the strict sense only from time to time and only with the consent of its head. The phrase "with the consent of its head" is used to avoid the idea of dependence on some kind of outsider; the term "consent" suggests rather communion between the head and the members, and implies the need for an act which belongs properly to the competence of the head. This is explicitly affirmed in n. 22, 12, and is explained at the end of that section. The word "only" takes in all cases. It is evident from this that the norms approved by the supreme authority must always be observed. Cf. Modus 84.

It is clear throughout that it is a question of the bishops acting in conjunction with their head, never of the bishops acting independently of the Pope. In the latter instance, without the action of the head, the bishops are not able to act as a College: this is clear from the concept of "College." This hierarchical communion of all the bishops with the Supreme Pontiff is certainly firmly established in Tradition.

N.B. Without hierarchical communion the ontologico-sacramental function [munus], which is to be distinguished from the juridico-canonical aspect, cannot be exercised. However, the Commission has decided that it should not enter into question of liceity and validity. These questions are left to theologians to discuss-specifically the question of the power exercised de facto among the separated Eastern Churches, about which there are various explanations."

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Titular Archbishop of Samosata
Secretary General of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council

NOTES

1 Cf. Mk. 16, 15.

2 Col. 1, 15.

3 Rom. 8, 29.

4 Cf. Eph. 1, 4-5 and 10.

5 Cf. Jn. 19, 34.

6 Jn. 12, 32.

7 1 Cor 5, 7.

8 Cf. 1 Cor. 10, 17.

9 Cf. Jn. 17, 4.

10 Cf Eph. 1, 18.

11 Cf Jn. 4, 14; 7, 38-39.

12 Cf. Rom. 8, 10-11.

13 Cf. Cor. 3, 16; 6, 19.

14 Cf. Gal. 4,6; Rom. 8, 15-16 and 26.

15 Cf. Jn. 16, 13.

16 Cf. Eph. 1, 11-12; 1 Cor. 12, 4 Gal. 5 22.

17. 22, 17

18. Mk. 1, 15; cf. Mt. 4, 17.

19. Mk. 4, 14.

20 Lk. 12, 32.

21 Cf. Mk. 4, 26-29.

22 Lk. 11, 20; cf. Mt.12, 28.

23 Mk. 10, 45.

24 Cf. Act. 2, 36; Hebr. 5, 6; 7, 17-21.

25 Cf. Act. 2, 33.

26 Jn. 10, 1-10.

27 Cf. Is. 40, 11; Ex. 34, llf.

28 Cf Jn. 10, 11; 1 Pet. 5, 4.

29 Cf. Jn. 10, 11-15.

30 l Cor. 3, 9.

31 I Rom. 11, 13-26.

32 Mt. 21, 33-43; cf.15, 5, 1f.

33 Jn. 15, 1-5.

34 1 Cor. 3, 9.

35 Mt 21, 42; cf. Act. 4, 11; 1 F 2, 7; Ps. 117, 22.

36 Cf. 1 Cor. 3, 11.

37 1 Tim. 3, 15.

38 Eph. 2, 19-22.

39 Apoc. 21, 3.

40 1 Pet. 2, 5.

41 Apoc. 21, 16.

42 Gal. 4, 26; cf. Apoc. 12, 17.

43 Apoc. 19, 7; 21, 2 and 9; 22, 17

44 Eph. 5, 26.

45 Eph. 5, 29.

46 Cf. Eph. 5, 24.

47 Cf. Eph. 3, 19.

48 Cf. 2 Cor. 5, 6.

49 Cf. Col. 3, 1-4.

50 Cf Gal. 6, 15; 2 Cor. 5,17.

51 Cor. 12, 13.

52 Rom. 6, 15.

53 1 Cor. 10, 17.

54 Cf 1 Cor 12, 27.

55 Rom. 12, 5.

56 Cf. 1 Cor. 12, 12.

57 Cf. 1 Cor. 12, 1-11.

58 Cf. 1 Cor. 14.

59 Cf. l Cor. 12, 26.

60 Cf. Col. 1, 15-18.

61 Cf. Eph. 1, 18-23.

62 Cf. Gal. 4, 19.

63 Cf. Phil. 3, 21, 2 Tim. 2, 11; Eph. 2, 6; Col. 2, 12 etc.

64 Cf. Rom. 8, 17.

65 Col. 2, 19.

66 Cf. Eph. 4, 11-16.

67 Cf. Eph. 4,23.

68 Cf. Eph. 5, 25-28.

69 Ibid. 23-24.

70 Col. 2, 9.

71 Cf. Eph. 1, 22-23.

72 Cf. Fph. 3,19.

73 Cf. Eph. 4, 16.

74 Jn. 21, 17.

75 Cf. Mt. 28, 18, f.

76 1 Tim. 3, 15.

77 Phil. 2, 6.

78 2 Cor. 8, 9.

79 Lk. 4, 18.

80 Lk. 19, 1O.

81 Hebr. 7, 26.

82 2 Cor. 5, 21.

83 Cf. Hebr. 2, 17.

84 Cf. 1 Cor. 11,26.

85 Cf. Acts 10, 35.

86 Jer. 31, 31-34.

87 Cf. 1 Cor. 11, 25.

88 Cf. 1 Pet. 1, 23.

89 Cf. Jn. 3, 5-6.

90 1 Pet. 2, 9-10.

91 Rom. 4, 25.

92 Cf. Jn. 13, 34.

93 Cf. Col. 3, 4.

94 Rom. 8, 21.

95 Cf. Mt. 5, 13-16.

96 2 Esdr 13, 1; cf. Deut. 23 1 ff; Num. 20, 4.

97 Cf. Heb. 13, 14.

98 Cf. Matt. 16,18.

99 Cf. Acts 20, 28.

100 Cf. Heb. 5, 1-5.

101 Cf Apoc. 6,cf.S. 9-10

102 Cf. 1 Pet.2, 4-10.

103 Cf. Acts 2, 42, 47.

104 Cf. Rom. 12, 1.

105 Cf 1 Pet. 3, 15

107 Cf. Rom; 8,17 Col. 1, 24; 2 Tim. 2, 11-12; 1 Pet. 4, 13.

108 Cf. Eph. 5, 32.

109 Cf. 1 Cor. 7, 7.

110 Cf. Heb. 13, 15.

111 Cf. Jn. 2, 20, 27

112 Cf. 1 Thess. 2, 13.

113 Cf. Jud. 3

114 1 Cor. 12, 11.

115 Cf. 1 Thess 5, 12, 19-21.

116 Cf. Jn. 11, 52.

117 Cf. Heb. 1, 2.

119 Cf. Acts 2, 42.

120 Cf. Jn. 18, 36

121 Cf. Ps. 2, 8.

122 Cf. Ps. 71 (72), 10; Is. 60, 4-7; Apoc. 21, 24.

123 1 Pet. 4, 10.

124 Cf. Mc 16, 16; Jn. 3, 5.

125 Cf. Rom. 9, 4-5

126 Cf. Rom. 1 l, 28-29.

127 Cf. Acts 17,25-28.

128 Cf. 1 Tim. 2, 4.

129 Cf Rom. 1, 21, 25.

130 Mk. 16, 16.

131 Cf. ln. 20, 21.

132 Mt. 21,18-20.

133 Cf. Acts 1, 8.

134 I Cor. 9 16.

135 Mal. 1, 11

136 Jn. 20, 21.

137 Mk. 3, 13-19; Mt. 10, 1-42.

138 Cf Lk. 6, 13.

139 Cf. Jn. 21, 15-17.

140 Rom. 1, 16.

141 Cf. Mt. 28, 16-20; Mk. 16, 15; Lk. 24, 45-48; Jn. 20, 21-23.

142 Cf. Mt. 28, 20.

143 Cf. Acts 2, 1-26.

144 Acts 1, 8.

145 Cf. Cf. Mk. 16, 20.

146 Cf. Apoc. 21, 14; Mt. 16, 18; Eph. 2, 20.

147 Cf. Mt. 28, 20.

148 Cf. Act. 20, 28.

149 Cf. Lk. 10, 16.

150 Cf. 1 Cor. 4, 15.

151 Cf. 1 Cor. 4, 1.

152 Cf. Rom. 15, 16; Act. 20, 24.

153 Cf. 2 Cor. 3, 8-9.

154 Cf Acts 1, 8 2 4, Jn. 20, 22-23.

155 Cf 1 Tim. 4 14; 2 Tim. 1, 6-7.

156 Cf. Mt. 16, 18-19.

157 Cf. Jn. 21, 15 ff.

158 Mt. 16, 19.

159 Mt. 18, 18; 28, 16-20.

160 Cf . Mt. 5, 10.

161 Cf. Mt. 28, 18; Mk. 16, 15-16; Acts 26,17 ff.

162 Cf Acts 1, 8- 2, 1 ff; 9, 15.

163 Cf Acts 1 17, 25; 21, 19; Rom. 11, 13; i Tim. 1, 12.

164 Cf. Mt. 13, 52.

165 Cf.2 Tim. 4, 1-4.

166 Cf. Lk. 22, 32.

167 Cf. 1. Thess. 1, 5.

168 Cf. Rom. 1, 16.

169 Cf. Lk. 22, 26-27.

170 Cf. Mt. 20, 28; Mk. 10, 45.

171 Cf. Jn. 10, 11.

172 Cf. Heb. 5, 1-2.

173 Cf. Heb. 13,17.

174 cf Rom.. 1, 14-15.

175 Cf 1 Cor. 4, 15.

176 Jn. 10.36.

177 Heb. 5, 1-10; 7,24; 9, 11-28.

178 1 Tim. 2, 5.

179 Cf. 1 Cor. 11, 26.

180 Cf. Heb. 9, 11-28.

181 Heb. 5, 1-4.

182 ln. 4, 24.

183 Cf. 1 Tim. 5, 17.

184 Cf. Eph. 4, 12.

185 Cf. Jn. 15, 15.

186 Cf. 1 Cor. 4, 15; 1 Pet. 1, 23.

187 1 Pet. 5,3.

188 Cf 1 Cor. 1, 2; 2 Cor. 1, 1.

189 Cf Lk. 15, 4-7.

190 Eph. 4, 15-16.

191 1 Rom. 12, 4-5

192 cf Eph. 4, 5.

193 Gal. 3, 28; cf. Col. 3, 11.

194 Cf. 2 pt. 1,1.

195 1 Cor. 12, 11.

196 Cf. Mt. 20, 28.

197 Eph. 4, 7.

198 Cf. Phil. 4, 3; Rom. 16, 3ff.

199 Pet. 2, 5.

200 Cf. Act. 2, 17-18; Apoc. 19, 10.

201 Cf. Eph. 5, 16; Col. 4, 5.

202 Cf. Rom. 8, 25.

203 Eph. 6, 12.fi3

204 Cf. Apoc. 21, 1.

205 Cf. Heb. 11-1

206 Cf. Phil. 2, 8-9.

207 Cf 1 Cor. 15, 27

208 Cf. Rom. 6, 12.

209 Cf Rom. 8, 21.

210 I Cor. 3, 23.

211 Cf. Heb. 13, 17.

212 Cf. Gal. 5, 12.

213 Cf Mt. 5, 3-9.

214 Cf Eph. 5, 25-26.

215 l Thess. 4, 3; Eph.

216 Mt. 5, 48.

217 Cf. Mc. 12, 30.

218 Cf Jn. 13, 34; 15, 12.

219 Eph. 5, 3.

220 Col . 3, 12.

221 Cf. Gal. 5, 22; Rom. 6, 22.

222 Cf. Jas. 3, 2.

223 1 Mt. 6, 12.

224 Cf. 1 Pet. 5, 3.

225 Cf. 1 Tim. 3,, 8-10 and 12-1

226 1 pt 5, 10.

227 1 Jn. 4, 16.

228 Cf. Rom 5. 5.

229 Cf. Col. 3, 14; Rom. 13, 10.

230 Cf. 1. Jn. 3, 16; Jn. 15, 13.

231 Cf 1 Cor. 7, 32-34.

232 Cf Mt. l9, 11; 1 Cor.7,7.

233 Phil. 2, 7-8.

234 2 Cor. 8, 9.

235 Cf 1. Cor. 7, 31ff.

236 Ezech. 34, 14.

237 Acts 3, 21.

238 Cf Eph. 1, 1O; Col. 1, 20; 2 3, 10-13.

239 Cf. Jn. 12, 32.

240 cf. Rom. 6, 9.

241 Cf. Phil. 2, 12.

242 Cf 1 Cor. 10. 11.

243 Cf. 2. Pet. 3, 13.

244 Cf. Rom. 8, 19-22.

245 Eph. 1, 14.

246 Cf. 1 Jn. 3, 1.

247 Cf. Col- 3. 4

248 Cf. 1 Jn. 3, 2

249 2 Cor. 5, 6.

250 Cf. Rom. 8, 23.

251 Cf. Phil. 1. 23.

252 Cf. 2 Cor 5, 15.

253 Cf. 2 Cor. 5, 9.

254 Cf.Eph.6, 11-13.

255 Cf. Heb 9, 27.

256 Cf. Mt. 25, 31-46.

257 Cf. Mt. 25, 41.

258 Cf. Mt. 25, 26.

259 Mt. 22, 13 and 25. 30.

260 2 Cor. 5, 10.

261 Jn. 5, 29; Cf. Matt. 25, 46.

262 Ram. 8, 18; cf. 2 Tim. 2, 11-12.

263 Tit. 2, 13.

264 Phil. 3, 21.

265 2 Thess. 1, 10.

266 Cf. Mt. 25, 31.

267 Cf. 1 Cor. 15, 26-27.

268 Cf. Eph. 4, 16.

269 Cf. 1 Cor. 12, 12-27.

270 Cf. 2 Cor. 5, 8.

271 Cf. 1 Tim. 2, 5.

272 Cf. Col. 1, 24.

273 2 Mach. 12, 46.

274 Cf. Heb. 13, 14; 11, 10.

275 cf. 2 Cor. 3, 18.

276 Cf. Heb. 12, 1.

277 Cf Eph 4, 1-6.

278 Cf. Apoc. 5, 9.

279 Cf. Heb. 3, 6.

280 Cf. Apoc. 21, 24.

281 Apoc. 5, 12.

282 Apoc. 5, 13-14.

283 Gal. 4, 4-5.

284 Cf. Gen. 3. 15.

285 Cf Is 7, 14; cf. Mich. 5, 2-3; Mt. 1, 22-23.

286 Cf. Lk. 1, 28.

287 Lk. 1 , 38.

288 Cf. Lk. 1, 41-45.

289 Cf. Lk. 2, 34-35

290 Cf. Lk. 2, 41-51.

291 Cf. Jn. 2, 1-11.

292 Cf. Mk. 3. 35; 27-28.

293 Cf. Lk. 2, 19, 51.

294 Cf. Jn. 19, 25.

295 Cf. Jn. 19, 26-27.

296 Acts 1, 14.

297 Cf Apoc. 19. 16

298 1 Tim. 2, 5-6.

299 Rom. 8, 29.

300 Cf. Eph 5, 27.

301 Lk. 1, 48.

302 Cf. Col. 1, 15-16.

303 Col 1, 19.

304 Cf. 2 Pet. 3, 10.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES (*)

Chapter I

(1) Cfr. S. Cyprianus, Epist. 64, 4: PL 3, 1017. CSEL (Hartcl), III B p. 720. S. Hilarius Pict., In Mt 23, 6: PL 9, 1047. S. Augustinus, passim. S. Cyrillus Alex., Glaph in Gen. 2, 10: PG 69, 110 A.

(2) Cfr. S. Gregorius M., Hom in Evang. 19, 1: PL 76, 1154 B. S Augustinus, Serm. 341, 9, 11: PL 39, 1499 s. S. Io. Damascenus, Adv. Iconocl. 11: PG 96, 1357.

(3) Cfr. S. Irenaeus, adv. Haer, 111 24, 1: PG 7, 966 B; Harvey 2, 13i, ed. Sagnard, Sources Chr., p 398.

(4) S. Cyprianus, De Orat Dom. 23: PL 4, 5S3, Hartel, III A, p. 28S. S. Augustinus, Serm. 71, 20, 33: PL 38, 463 s. S. Io. Damascenus, Adv. Iconocl. 12: PG 96, 1358 D.

(5) Cfr. Origenes, In Matth. 16, 21: PG 13, 1443 C, Tertullianus Adv. Marc. 3, 7: PL 2, 357 C, CSEL 47, 3 p. 386. Pro documentis liturgicis, cfr. Sacramentarium Gregorianum: PL 78, 160 B.Vel C. Mohlberg, Liber Sactamentorum romanae ecclesiae, Romao 195O, p. 111, XC:.Deus, qui ex omni coaptacione sanctorum aeternum tibi condis habitaculum..... Hymnus Urbs Ierusalem beata in Breviario monastico, et Coclest urbs Ierusalem in Breviario Romano.

(6) Cfr. S. Thomas, Sumtna Theol. III, q. 62, a. 5, ad 1.

(7) Cfr. Pius XII, Litt. Encycl Mystici Corporis, 29 iun. 1943 AAS 35 (1943), p. 208.

(8) Cfr. Leo XIII, Epist. Encycl Divinum illud, 9 maii 1897: AAS 29 (1896-97) p. 6S0. Pius XII, Litt Encyl. Mystici Corporis, 1. c., pp 219-220; Denz. 2288 (3808).S. Augustinus, Serm. 268, 2: PL 38 232, ct alibi. S. Io. Chrysostomus n Eph. Hom. 9, 3: PG 62, 72. idymus Alex., Trin. 2, 1: PG 39 49 s. S. Thomas, In Col. 1, 18 cet. 5 ed. Marietti, II, n. 46-Sieut constituitur unum eorpus ex nitate animae, ita Ecelesia ex unil atc Spiritus.....

(9) Leo XIII, Litt. Encycl. Sapientiae christianae, 10 ian. 1890 AAS 22 (1889-90) p. 392. Id., Epist. Encycl. Satis cognitium, 29 iun. 1896; AAS 28 (1895-96) pp. 710 ct 724 ss. Pius XII, Litt. Eneyel. Mystici Corporis, 1. c., pp. 199-200.

(10) Cfr. Pius XII, Litt. Encycl. Mystici Corporis, 1. c., p. 221 ss. Id., Lin. Encycl. Humani genesis, 12 Aug. 1950: AAS 42 (1950) p. 571.

(11) Leo XIII, Epist. Encycl. Satis cognitum, 1. c., p. 713.

(12) Cfr. Symbolum Apostolicum: Denz. 6-9 (10-13); Symb. Nic.-Const.: Denz. 86 (150), coll. Prof. fidei Trid.: Denz. 994 et 999 (1862 et 1868).

(13) Dieitur. Saneta (catholica apostolica) Romana Ecelesia .: in Prof. fidei Trid., 1. c. et Concl. Vat. I, Sess. III, Const. dogm. de fide cath.: Denz. 1782 (3001).

(14) S. Augustinus, Civ. Dei, XVIII, 51, 2: PL 41, 614.

Chapter II

(1) Cfr. S. Cyprianus, Epist. 69, 6: PL 3, 1142 B; Hartel 3 B, p. 754: inseparabile unitatis sacramentum ..

(2) Cfr. Pius XII, Alloc. Magnificate Dominum, 2 nov. 1954: AAS 46 (1954) p. 669. Litt. Encycl. Mediator Dei, 20 nov. 1947: AAS 39 (1947) p. 555.

(3) Cfr. Pius XI, Litt. Encycl. Miserentissimus Redemptor, 8 maii 1928: AAS 20 (1928) p. 171 s. Pius XII Alloc. Vous nous avez, 22 sept. 1956: AAS 48 (1956) p. 714.

(4) Cfr. S. Thomas, Summa Theol. III, q. 63, a. 2.

(5) Cfr. S. Cyrillus Hieros., Catech. 17, de Spiritu Sancto, II, 35-37: PG 33, 1009-1012. Nic. Cabasilas, De vita in Christo, lib. III, de utilitate chrismatis: PG 150, 569-580. S. Thomas, Summa Theol. III, q. 65, a. 3 et q. 72, a. 1 et 5.

(6) Cfr. Pius XII, Litt. Encycl. Mediator Dei 20 nov. 1947: AAS 39 (1947), paesertim p. 552 s.

(7) I Cor. 7, 7: . Unusquisque proprium donum (idion charisma) habet ex Deo: alius quidem sic alius vero sic .. Cfr. S. Augustinus, De Dono Persev. 14, 37: PL 45, 1015 s.: Non tantum continenti Dei donum est, sed coniugatorum etiam castitas.

(8) Cfr. S. Augustinus, D Praed. Sanct. 14, 27: PL 44, 980.

(9) Cfr. S. Io. Chrysostomus, In Io. Hom. 65, 1: PG 59, 361.

(10) Cfr. S. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. III, 16, 6; III, 22, 1-3: PG 7, 925 C-926 Aet 955 C - 958 A; Harvey 2, 87 s. et 120-123; Sagnard, Ed. Sources Chret., pp. 290-292 et 372 ss.

(11) Cfr. S. Ignatius M., Ad Rom., Praef.: Ed. Funk, I, p. 252.

(12) Cfr. S. Augustinus, Bapt. c. Donat. V, 28, 39; PL 43, 197: Certe manifestum est, id quod dicitur, in Ecdesia intus et foris, in corde, non in corpore cogitandum. Cfr. ib., III, 19, 26: col. 152; V, 18, 24: col. 189; In Io. Tr. 61, 2: PL 35, 1800, et alibi saepe.

(13) Cfr. Lc. 12, 48: Omni autem, cui multum datum est, multum quaeretur ab eo. Cfr. etiam Mt. 5, 19-20; 7, 21-22; 25 41-46; Iac., 2, 14.

(14) Cfr. Leo XIII, Epist. Apost. Praeclara gratulationis, 20 iun. 1894; AAS 26 (1893-94) p. 707.

(15) Cfr. Leo XIII, Epist. Encycl. Satis cognitum, 29 iun. 1896: ASS 28 (1895-96) p. 738. Epist. Encycl. Caritatis studium, 25 iul. 1898: ASS 31 (1898-99) p. 11. Pius XII, Nuntius radioph. Nell'alba, 24 dec. 1941: AAS 34 (1942) p. 21.

(16) Cfr. Pius XI, Litt. Encycl. Rerum Orientalium, 8 sept. 1928: AAS 20 (1928) p. 287. Pius XII, Litt. Encycl Orientalis Ecclesiae, 9 apr. 1944: AAS 36 (1944) p. 137

(17) Cfr. Inst. S.S.C.S. Officii 20 dec. 1949: AAS 42 (1950) p.142.

(18) Cfr. S. Thomas, Summa Theol. III, q. 8, a. 3, ad 1.

(19) Cfr. Epist. S.S.C.S. Officii ad Archiep. Boston.: Denz. 3869-72.

(20) Cfr. Eusebius Caes., Praeparatio Evangelica, 1, 1: PG 2128 AB.

(21) Cfr. Benedictus XV, Epist. Apost. Maximum illud: AAS 11 (1919) p. 440, praesertim p. 451 ss. Pius XI, Litt. Encycl. Rerum Ecclesiae: AAS 18 (1926) p. 68-69. Pius XII, Litt. Encycl. Fidei Donum, 21 apr. 1957: AAS 49 (1957) pp. 236-237.

(22) Cfr. Didache, 14: ed. Funk I, p. 32. S. Iustinus, Dial. 41: PG 6, 564. S. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. IV 17, 5; PG 7, 1023; Harvey, 2, p. 199 s. Conc. Trid., Sess. 22, cap. 1; Denz. 939 (1742).

Chapter III

(1) Cfr. Conc. Vat. I, Sess. IV, Const. Dogm. Pastor aeternus. Denz. 1821 (3050 s.).

(2) Cfr. Conc. Flor., Decretum pro Graecis: Denz. 694 (1307) et Conc. Vat. I, ib.: Denz. 1826 (3059)

(3) Cfr. Liber sacramentorum S. Gregorii, Praefatio in Cathedra S. Petri, in natali S. Mathiae et S. Thomas: PL 78, 50, 51 et 152. S. Hilarius, In Ps. 67, 10: PL 9, 4S0; CSEL 22, p. 286. S.Hieronymus, Adv. Iovin. 1, 26: PL 23, 247 A. S. Augustinus, In Ps. 86, 4: PL 37, 1103. S. Gregorius M., Mor. in lob, XXVIII, V: PL 76, 455-456. Primasius, Comm. in Apoc. V: PL 68, 924 BC. Paschasius Radb., In Matth. L. VIII, cap. 16: PL 120, 561 C. Cfr. Leo XIII, Epist. Et sane, 17 dec. 1888: AAS 21 (1888) p. 321.

(4) Cfr. Act 6, 2-6; 11, 30; 13, 1, 14, 23; 20, 17; 1 Thess. 5, 12-13; Phil. 1, 1 Col. 4, 11, et passim.

(5) Cfr. Act. 20, 25-27; 2 Tim. 4, 6 s. coll. c. I Tim. 5, 22; 2 Tim. 2, 2 Tit. 1, 5; S. Clem. Rom., Ad Cor. 44, 3; ed. Funk, 1, p. 156.

(6) S. Clem. Rom., ad Cor. 44, 2; ed. Funk, I, p. 154 s.

(7) Cfr. Tertull., Praescr. Haer. 32; PL 2, 52 s.; S. Ignatius M., passim.

(8) Cfr. Tertull., Praescr. Haer. 32; PL 2, 53.

(9) Cfr. S. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. III, 3, 1; PG 7, 848 A; Harvey 2, 8; Sagnard, p. 100 s.: manifestatam.

(10) Cfr. S. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. III, 2, 2; PG 7, 847; Harvey 2, 7; Sagnard, p. 100: . custoditur ,., cfr. ib. IV, 26, 2; col. 1O53, Harvey 2, 236, necnon IV, 33, 8; col. 1077; Harvey 2, 262.

(11) S. Ign. M., Philad., Praef.; ed. Funk, I, p. 264.

(12) S. Ign. M., Philad., 1, 1; Magn. 6, 1; Ed. Funk, I, pp. 264 et 234.

(13) S. Clem. Rom., 1. c., 42, 3-4, 44, 3-4; 57, 1-2; Ed. Funk. I, 152, 156, 171 s. S. Ign. M., Philad. 2; Smyrn. 8; Magn. 3; Trall. 7; Ed. Funk, I, p. 265 s.; 282; 232 246 s. etc.; S. Iustinus, Apol., 1, 6S G 6, 428; S. Cyprianus, Epist. assim.

(14) Cfr. Leo XIII, Epist. Encycl. Satis cognitum, 29 iun. 896: ASS 28 (1895-96) p. 732.

(15) Cfr. Conc. Trid., Sess. 23, ecr. de sacr. Ordinis, cap. 4; enz. 960 (1768); Conc. Vat. I, ess. 4 Const. Dogm. I De Ecclesia Christi, cap. 3: Denz. 1828 (3061). Pius XII, Litt. Encycl. Mystici Cororis, 29 iun. 1943: ASS 35 (1943) p. 209 et 212. Cod. Iur. Can., c. 29 1.

(16) Cfr. Leo XIII, Epist. Et sane, 17 dec. 1888: ASS 21 (1888) p. 321 s.

(17) S. Leo M., Serm. 5, 3: PL 54, 154.

(18) Conc. Trid., Sess. 23, cap. 3, citat verba 2 Tim. 1, 6-7, ut demonstret Ordinem esse verum sacramentum: Denz. 959 (1766).

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(26) S. Cyprianus, Epist. 56, 3: Hartel, 111 B, p. 650; Bayard, p.154.

(27) Cfr. Relatio officialis Zinelli, in Conc. Vat. I: Mansi S2,1 109 C.

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(30) Cfr. Conc. Vat. I, Const.Dogm. Pastor aeternis: Denz. 1821 (3050 s.).

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(38) Cfr. Cod. luris pro Eccl. I Orient., c. 216-314: de Patriarchis; c. 324-399: de Archiepiscopis I maioribus; c. 362-391: de aliis dignitariis; in specie, c. 238 3; 216; 240; 251; 255: de Episcopis a Patriarch nominandis.

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(42) Cfr. Conc. Vat. I, Const. dogm. Pastor Aecrnus: Denz. 1839 (3074).

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(44) Gasser, ib.: Mansi 1214 A.

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(48) Oratio consecrationis cpiscopalis in ritu byzantino: Euchologion to mega, Romae, 1873, p. 139.

(49) Cfr. S. Ignatius M. Smyrn 8, 1: ed. Funk, 1, p. 282.

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(54) Cfr. S. Augustinus, C. Faustum, 12, 20: PL 42, 26S Serm. 57, 7: PL 38, 389, etc.

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(63) Cfr. Conc. Trid., Sess. 23, sacr. Ordinis, cap. 2: Denz. 958 (1765), et can. 6: Denz. 966 (1776).

(64) Cfr. Innocentius I, Epist. d Decentium: PL 20, 554 A; sansi 3, 1029; Denz. 98 (215): Presbyteri, licet secundi sint sa erdotcs, pontificatus tamen api em non habent.. S. Cyprianus, Epist. 61, 3: ed. Hartel, p. 696.

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(14) De praestantia sacrae virginitatis, cfr. Tertullianus, Exhort. Cast. 10: PL 2, 925 C. S. Cyprianus, Hab. Virg. 3 et 22: PL 4, 443 B et 461 A. A. S. Athanasius (?), De Virg.: PG 28, 252 ss. S. Io. Chrysostomus, De Virg.: PG 48, 533 u.

(15) De spirituali paupertate et oboedientia testimonia praccipua S.Scripturae et Patrum afferuntur in Relatione pp. 152-153.

(16) De praxi effectiva consiliorum quae non omnibus imponitur, cfr. S. Io. Chrysostomus, In Matth. Hom. 7, 7: PG S7, 8 I s. 5. Ambrosius, De Vidu s, 4, 23: PL 16, 241 s.

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(3) S. Augustine, De S. Virginitate. 6: PL 40, 399.

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(6) S. Irenaeus, Adv. Hacr. III, 22, 4: PG 7, 9S9 A; Harvey, 2, 123.

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(12) Cfr. Pius IX, Bulla Ineffabilis 8 dec. 1854: acta Pii IX, I, I, p. 616; Denz. 1641 (2803).

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(17) S. Ambrosius, Epist. 63: PL 16, 1218.

(18) S. Ambrosius, Expos. Lc. II, 7: PL 15, 1555.

(19) Cfr. Ps.-Petrus Dam. Serm. 63: PL 144, 861 AB. Godefridus a S. Victore. In nat. B. M., Ms. Paris, Mazarine, 1002, fol. 109 r. Gerhohus Reich., De gloria ct honore Filii hominis, 10: PL 194, 1105AB.

(20) S. Ambrosius, l. c. et Expos. Lc. X, 24-25: PL 15, 1810. S.Augustinus, In lo. Tr. 13, 12: PL 35 1499. Cfr. Serm. 191, 2, 3: PL 38 1010; etc. Cfr. ctiam Ven. Beda, In Lc. Expos. I, cap. 2: PL 92, 330. Isaac de Stella, Serm. 51. PL 194, 1863 A.

(21) Sub tuum praesidium

(22) Conc. Nicaenum II, anno 787: Mansi 13. 378-379; Denz. 302 (600-601) . Conc. Trident., sess. 2S: Mansi 33, 171-172.

(23) Cfr. Pius XII, Nunius radioph., 24 oct. 1954: AAS 46 (1954) p. 679. Litt. Encycl. Ad coeli Reginam, 11 oct. 1954: AAS 46 (1954) p. 637.

(24) Cfr. Pius XI, Litt. Encycl. Ecclesiam Dei, 12 nov. 1923: AAS 15 (1923) p. 581. Pius XII, Litt. Encycl. Fulgens corona, 8 sept. 1953: AAS 45 (1953) pp. 590-591.

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UNITATIS REDINTEGRATIO
Decree on Ecumenism
Second Vatican Council

DECREE ON ECUMENISM

UNITATIS REDINTEGRATIO

INTRODUCTION

1. The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council. Christ the Lord founded one Church and one Church only. However, many Christian communions present themselves to men as the true inheritors of Jesus Christ; all indeed profess to be followers of the Lord but differ in mind and go their different ways, as if Christ Himself were divided.(1) Such division openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages the holy cause of preaching the Gospel to every creature.

But the Lord of Ages wisely and patiently follows out the plan of grace on our behalf, sinners that we are. In recent times more than ever before, He has been rousing divided Christians to remorse over their divisions and to a longing for unity. Everywhere large numbers have felt the impulse of this grace, and among our separated brethren also there increases from day to day the movement, fostered by the grace of the Holy Spirit, for the restoration of unity among all Christians. This movement toward unity is called "ecumenical." Those belong to it who invoke the Triune God and confess Jesus as Lord and Savior, doing this not merely as individuals but also as corporate bodies. For almost everyone regards the body in which he has heard the Gospel as his Church and indeed, God's Church. All however, though in different ways, long for the one visible Church of God, a Church truly universal and set forth into the world that the world may be converted to the Gospel and so be saved, to the glory of God.

The Sacred Council gladly notes all this. It has already declared its teaching on the Church, and now, moved by a desire for the restoration of unity among all the followers of Christ, it wishes to set before all Catholics the ways and means by which they too can respond to this grace and to this divine call.

CHAPTER I

CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES ON ECUMENISM

2. What has revealed the love of God among us is that the Father has sent into the world His only-begotten Son, so that, being made man, He might by His redemption give new life to the entire human race and unify it.(2) Before offering Himself up as a spotless victim upon the altar, Christ prayed to His Father for all who believe in Him: "that they all may be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, so that the world may believe that thou has sent me".(3) In His Church He instituted the wonderful sacrament of the Eucharist by which the unity of His Church is both signified and made a reality. He gave His followers a new commandment to love one another,(4) and promised the Spirit, their Advocate,(5) who, as Lord and life-giver, should remain with them forever.

After being lifted up on the cross and glorified, the Lord Jesus poured forth His Spirit as He had promised, and through the Spirit He has called and gathered together the people of the New Covenant, who are the Church, into a unity of faith, hope and charity, as the Apostle teaches us: "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one Baptism".(6) For "all you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ ... for you are all one in Christ Jesus".(7) It is the Holy Spirit, dwelling in those who believe and pervading and ruling over the Church as a whole, who brings about that wonderful communion of the faithful. He brings them into intimate union with Christ, so that He is the principle of the Church's unity. The distribution of graces and offices is His work too,(8) enriching the Church of Jesus Christ with different functions "in order to equip the saints for the work of service, so as to build up the body of Christ".(9)

In order to establish this His holy Church everywhere in the world till the end of time, Christ entrusted to the College of the Twelve the task of teaching, ruling and sanctifying.(10) Among their number He selected Peter, and after his confession of faith determined that on him He would build His Church. Also to Peter He promised the keys of the kingdom of heaven,(11) and after His profession of love, entrusted all His sheep to him to be confirmed in faith(12) and shepherded in perfect unity.(13) Christ Jesus Himself was forever to remain the chief cornerstone (14) and shepherd of our souls.(15)

Jesus Christ, then, willed that the apostles and their successors -the bishops with Peter's successor at their head-should preach the Gospel faithfully, administer the sacraments, and rule the Church in love. It is thus, under the action of the Holy Spirit, that Christ wills His people to increase, and He perfects His people's fellowship in unity: in their confessing the one faith, celebrating divine worship in common, and keeping the fraternal harmony of the family of God.

The Church, then, is God's only flock; it is like a standard lifted high for the nations to see it:(16) for it serves all mankind through the Gospel of peace(17) as it makes its pilgrim way in hope toward the goal of the fatherland above.(18)

This is the sacred mystery of the unity of the Church, in Christ and through Christ, the Holy Spirit energizing its various functions. It is a mystery that finds its highest exemplar and source in the unity of the Persons of the Trinity: the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit, one God.

3. Even in the beginnings of this one and only Church of God there arose certain rifts,(19) which the Apostle strongly condemned.(20) But in subsequent centuries much more serious dissensions made their appearance and quite large communities came to be separated from full communion with the Catholic Church-for which, often enough, men of both sides were to blame. The children who are born into these Communities and who grow up believing in Christ cannot be accused of the sin involved in the separation, and the Catholic Church embraces upon them as brothers, with respect and affection. For men who believe in Christ and have been truly baptized are in communion with the Catholic Church even though this communion is imperfect. The differences that exist in varying degrees between them and the Catholic Church-whether in doctrine and sometimes in discipline, or concerning the structure of the Church-do indeed create many obstacles, sometimes serious ones, to full ecclesiastical communion. The ecumenical movement is striving to overcome these obstacles. But even in spite of them it remains true that all who have been justified by faith in Baptism are members of Christ's body,(21) and have a right to be called Christian, and so are correctly accepted as brothers by the children of the Catholic Church.(22)

Moreover, some and even very many of the significant elements and endowments which together go to build up and give life to the Church itself, can exist outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church: the written word of God; the life of grace; faith, hope and charity, with the other interior gifts of the Holy Spirit, and visible elements too. All of these, which come from Christ and lead back to Christ, belong by right to the one Church of Christ.

The brethren divided from us also use many liturgical actions of the Christian religion. These most certainly can truly engender a life of grace in ways that vary according to the condition of each Church or Community. These liturgical actions must be regarded as capable of giving access to the community of salvation.

It follows that the separated Churches(23) and Communities as such, though we believe them to be deficient in some respects, have been by no means deprived of significance and importance in the mystery of salvation. For the Spirit of Christ has not refrained from using them as means of salvation which derive their efficacy from the very fullness of grace and truth entrusted to the Church.

Nevertheless, our separated brethren, whether considered as individuals or as Communities and Churches, are not blessed with that unity which Jesus Christ wished to bestow on all those who through Him were born again into one body, and with Him quickened to newness of life-that unity which the Holy Scriptures and the ancient Tradition of the Church proclaim. For it is only through Christ's Catholic Church, which is "the all-embracing means of salvation," that they can benefit fully from the means of salvation. We believe that Our Lord entrusted all the blessings of the New Covenant to the apostolic college alone, of which Peter is the head, in order to establish the one Body of Christ on earth to which all should be fully incorporated who belong in any way to the people of God. This people of God, though still in its members liable to sin, is ever growing in Christ during its pilgrimage on earth, and is guided by God's gentle wisdom, according to His hidden designs, until it shall happily arrive at the fullness of eternal glory in the heavenly Jerusalem.

4. Today, in many parts of the world, under the inspiring grace of the Holy Spirit, many efforts are being made in prayer, word and action to attain that fullness of unity which Jesus Christ desires. The Sacred Council exhorts all the Catholic faithful to recognize the signs of the times and to take an active and intelligent part in the work of ecumenism.

The term "ecumenical movement" indicates the initiatives and activities planned and undertaken, according to the various needs of the Church and as opportunities offer, to promote Christian unity. These are: first, every effort to avoid expressions, judgments and actions which do not represent the condition of our separated brethren with truth and fairness and so make mutual relations with them more difficult; then, "dialogue" between competent experts from different Churches and Communities. At these meetings, which are organized in a religious spirit, each explains the teaching of his Communion in greater depth and brings out clearly its distinctive features. In such dialogue, everyone gains a truer knowledge and more just appreciation of the teaching and religious life of both Communions. In addition, the way is prepared for cooperation between them in the duties for the common good of humanity which are demanded by every Christian conscience; and, wherever this is allowed, there is prayer in common. Finally, all are led to examine their own faithfulness to Christ's will for the Church and accordingly to undertake with vigor the task of renewal and reform.

When such actions are undertaken prudently and patiently by the Catholic faithful, with the attentive guidance of their bishops, they promote justice and truth, concord and collaboration, as well as the spirit of brotherly love and unity. This is the way that, when the obstacles to perfect ecclesiastical communion have been gradually overcome, all Christians will at last, in a common celebration of the Eucharist, be gathered into the one and only Church in that unity which Christ bestowed on His Church from the beginning. We believe that this unity subsists in the Catholic Church as something she can never lose, and we hope that it will continue to increase until the end of time.

However, it is evident that, when individuals wish for full Catholic communion, their preparation and reconciliation is an undertaking which of its nature is distinct from ecumenical action. But there is no opposition between the two, since both proceed from the marvelous ways of God.

Catholics, in their ecumenical work, must assuredly be concerned for their separated brethren, praying for them, keeping them informed about the Church, making the first approaches toward them. But their primary duty is to make a careful and honest appraisal of whatever needs to be done or renewed in the Catholic household itself, in order that its life may bear witness more clearly and faithfully to the teachings and institutions which have come to it from Christ through the Apostles.

For although the Catholic Church has been endowed with all divinely revealed truth and with all means of grace, yet its members fail to live by them with all the fervor that they should, so that the radiance of the Church's image is less clear in the eyes of our separated brethren and of the world at large, and the growth of God's kingdom is delayed. All Catholics must therefore aim at Christian perfection (24) and, each according to his station, play his part that the Church may daily be more purified and renewed. For the Church must bear in her own body the humility and dying of Jesus,(25) against the day when Christ will present her to Himself in all her glory without spot or wrinkle.(26)

All in the Church must preserve unity in essentials. But let all, according to the gifts they have received enjoy a proper freedom, in their various forms of spiritual life and discipline, in their different liturgical rites, and even in their theological elaborations of revealed truth. In all things let charity prevail. If they are true to this course of action, they will be giving ever better expression to the authentic catholicity and apostolicity of the Church.

On the other hand, Catholics must gladly acknowledge and esteem the truly Christian endowments from our common heritage which are to be found among our separated brethren. It is right and salutary to recognize the riches of Christ and virtuous works in the lives of others who are bearing witness to Christ, sometimes even to the shedding of their blood. For God is always wonderful in His works and worthy of all praise.

Nor should we forget that anything wrought by the grace of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of our separated brethren can be a help to our own edification. Whatever is truly Christian is never contrary to what genuinely belongs to the faith; indeed, it can always bring a deeper realization of the mystery of Christ and the Church.

Nevertheless, the divisions among Christians prevent the Church from attaining the fullness of catholicity proper to her, in those of her sons who, though attached to her by Baptism, are yet separated from full communion with her. Furthermore, the Church herself finds it more difficult to express in actual life her full catholicity in all her bearings.

This Sacred Council is gratified to note that the participation by the Catholic faithful in ecumenical work is growing daily. It commends this work to the bishops everywhere in the world to be vigorously stimulated by them and guided with prudence.

CHAPTER II

THE PRACTICE OF ECUMENISM

5. The attainment of union is the concern of the whole Church, faithful and shepherds alike. This concern extends to everyone, according to his talent, whether it be exercised in his daily Christian life or in his theological and historical research. This concern itself reveals already to some extent the bond of brotherhood between all Christians and it helps toward that full and perfect unity which God in His kindness wills.

6. Every renewal of the Church(27) is essentially grounded in an increase of fidelity to her own calling. Undoubtedly this is the basis of the movement toward unity.

Christ summons the Church to continual reformation as she sojourns here on earth. The Church is always in need of this, in so far as she is an institution of men here on earth. Thus if, in various times and circumstances, there have been deficiencies in moral conduct or in church discipline, or even in the way that church teaching has been formulated-to be carefully distinguished from the deposit of faith itself-these can and should be set right at the opportune moment.

Church renewal has therefore notable ecumenical importance. Already in various spheres of the Church's life, this renewal is taking place. The Biblical and liturgical movements, the preaching of the word of God and catechetics, the apostolate of the laity, new forms of religious life and the spirituality of married life, and the Church's social teaching and activity-all these should be considered as pledges and signs of the future progress of ecumenism.

7. There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart. For it is from renewal of the inner life of our minds,(28) from self-denial and an unstinted love that desires of unity take their rise and develop in a mature way. We should therefore pray to the Holy Spirit for the grace to be genuinely self-denying, humble. gentle in the service of others, and to have an attitude of brotherly generosity towards them. St. Paul says: "I, therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace".(29) This exhortation is directed especially to those raised to sacred Orders precisely that the work of Christ may be continued. He came among us "not to be served but to serve".(30)

The words of St. John hold good about sins against unity: "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us".(31) So we humbly beg pardon of God and of our separated brethren, just as we forgive them that trespass against us.

All the faithful should remember that the more effort they make to live holier lives according to the Gospel, the better will they further Christian unity and put it into practice. For the closer their union with the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, the more deeply and easily will they be able to grow in mutual brotherly love.

8. This change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and merits the name, "spiritual ecumenism."

It is a recognized custom for Catholics to have frequent recourse to that prayer for the unity of the Church which the Saviour Himself on the eve of His death so fervently appealed to His Father: "That they may all be one".(32)

In certain special circumstances, such as the prescribed prayers "for unity," and during ecumenical gatherings, it is allowable, indeed desirable that Catholics should join in prayer with their separated brethren. Such prayers in common are certainly an effective means of obtaining the grace of unity, and they are a true expression of the ties which still bind Catholics to their separated brethren. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them".(33)

Yet worship in common (communicatio in sacris) is not to be considered as a means to be used indiscriminately for the restoration of Christian unity. There are two main principles governing the practice of such common worship: first, the bearing witness to the unity of the Church, and second, the sharing in the means of grace. Witness to the unity of the Church very generally forbids common worship to Christians, but the grace to be had from it sometimes commends this practice. The course to be adopted, with due regard to all the circumstances of time, place, and persons, is to be decided by local episcopal authority, unless otherwise provided for by the Bishops' Conference according to its statutes, or by the Holy See.

9. We must get to know the outlook of our separated brethren. To achieve this purpose, study is of necessity required, and this must be pursued with a sense of realism and good will. Catholics, who already have a proper grounding, need to acquire a more adequate understanding of the respective doctrines of our separated brethren, their history, their spiritual and liturgical life, their religious psychology and general background. Most valuable for this purpose are meetings of the two sides-especially for discussion of theological problems-where each can treat with the other on an equal footing-provided that those who take part in them are truly competent and have the approval of the bishops. From such dialogue will emerge still more clearly what the situation of the Catholic Church really is. In this way too the outlook of our separated brethren will be better understood, and our own belief more aptly explained.

10. Sacred theology and other branches of knowledge, especially of an historical nature, must be taught with due regard for the ecumenical point of view, so that they may correspond more exactly with the facts.

It is most important that future shepherds and priests should have mastered a theology that has been carefully worked out in this way and not polemically, especially with regard to those aspects which concern the relations of separated brethren with the Catholic Church.

This importance is the greater because the instruction and spiritual formation of the faithful and of religious depends so largely on the formation which their priests have received.

Moreover, Catholics engaged in missionary work in the same territories as other Christians ought to know, particularly in these times, the problems and the benefits in their apostolate which derive from the ecumenical movement.

11. The way and method in which the Catholic faith is expressed should never become an obstacle to dialogue with our brethren. It is, of course, essential that the doctrine should be clearly presented in its entirety. Nothing is so foreign to the spirit of ecumenism as a false irenicism, in which the purity of Catholic doctrine suffers loss and its genuine and certain meaning is clouded.

At the same time, the Catholic faith must be explained more profoundly and precisely, in such a way and in such terms as our separated brethren can also really understand.

Moreover, in ecumenical dialogue, Catholic theologians standing fast by the teaching of the Church and investigating the divine mysteries with the separated brethren must proceed with love for the truth, with charity, and with humility. When comparing doctrines with one another, they should remember that in Catholic doctrine there exists a "hierarchy" of truths, since they vary in their relation to the fundamental Christian faith. Thus the way will be opened by which through fraternal rivalry all will be stirred to a deeper understanding and a clearer presentation of the unfathomable riches of Christ.(34)

12. Before the whole world let all Christians confess their faith in the triune God, one and three in the incarnate Son of God, our Redeemer and Lord. United in their efforts, and with mutual respect, let them bear witness to our common hope which does not play us false. In these days when cooperation in social matters is so widespread, all men without exception are called to work together, with much greater reason all those who believe in God, but most of all, all Christians in that they bear the name of Christ. Cooperation among Christians vividly expresses the relationship which in fact already unites them, and it sets in clearer relief the features of Christ the Servant. This cooperation, which has already begun in many countries, should be developed more and more, particularly in regions where a social and technical evolution is taking place be it in a just evaluation of the dignity of the human person, the establishment of the blessings of peace, the application of Gospel principles to social life, the advancement of the arts and sciences in a truly Christian spirit, or also in the use of various remedies to relieve the afflictions of our times such as famine and natural disasters, illiteracy and poverty, housing shortage and the unequal distribution of wealth. All believers in Christ can, through this cooperation, be led to acquire a better knowledge and appreciation of one another, and so pave the way to Christian unity.

CHAPTER III

CHURCHES AND ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES SEPARATED FROM THE ROMAN APOSTOLIC SEE

13. We now turn our attention to the two chief types of division as they affect the seamless robe of Christ.

The first divisions occurred in the East, when the dogmatic formulae of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon were challenged, and later when ecclesiastical communion between the Eastern Patriarchates and the Roman See was dissolved.

Other divisions arose more than four centuries later in the West, stemming from the events which are usually referred to as "The Reformation." As a result, many Communions, national or confessional, were separated from the Roman See. Among those in which Catholic traditions and institutions in part continue to exist, the Anglican Communion occupies a special place.

These various divisions differ greatly from one another not only by reason of their origin, place and time, but especially in the nature and seriousness of questions bearing on faith and the structure of the Church. Therefore, without minimizing the differences between the various Christian bodies, and without overlooking the bonds between them which exist in spite of divisions, this holy Council decides to propose the following considerations for prudent ecumenical action.

I. The Special Consideration of the Eastern Churches

14. For many centuries the Church of the East and that of the West each followed their separate ways though linked in a brotherly union of faith and sacramental life; the Roman See by common consent acted as guide when disagreements arose between them over matters of faith or discipline. Among other matters of great importance, it is a pleasure for this Council to remind everyone that there flourish in the East many particular or local Churches, among which the Patriarchal Churches hold first place, and of these not a few pride themselves in tracing their origins back to the apostles themselves. Hence a matter of primary concern and care among the Easterns, in their local churches, has been, and still is, to preserve the family ties of common faith and charity which ought to exist between sister Churches.

Similarly it must not be forgotten that from the beginning the Churches of the East have had a treasury from which the Western Church has drawn extensively-in liturgical practice, spiritual tradition, and law. Nor must we undervalue the fact that it was the ecumenical councils held in the East that defined the basic dogmas of the Christian faith, on the Trinity, on the Word of God Who took flesh of the Virgin Mary. To preserve this faith these Churches have suffered and still suffer much.

However, the heritage handed down by the apostles was received with differences of form and manner, so that from the earliest times of the Church it was explained variously in different places, owing to diversities of genius and conditions of life. All this, quite apart from external causes, prepared the way for decisions arising also from a lack of charity and mutual understanding.

For this reason the Holy Council urges all, but especially those who intend to devote themselves to the restoration of full communion hoped for between the Churches of the East and the Catholic Church, to give due consideration to this special feature of the origin and growth of the Eastern Churches, and to the character of the relations which obtained between them and the Roman See before separation. They must take full account of all these factors and, where this is done, it will greatly contribute to the dialogue that is looked for.

15. Everyone also knows with what great love the Christians of the East celebrate the sacred liturgy, especially the eucharistic celebration, source of the Church's life and pledge of future glory, in which the faithful, united with their bishop, have access to God the Father through the Son, the Word made flesh, Who suffered and has been glorified, and so, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, they enter into communion with the most holy Trinity, being made "sharers of the divine nature".(35) Hence, through the celebration of the Holy Eucharist in each of these churches, the Church of God is built up and grows in stature(36) and through concelebration, their communion with one another is made manifest.

In this liturgical worship, the Christians of the East pay high tribute, in beautiful hymns of praise, to Mary ever Virgin, whom the ecumenical Council of Ephesus solemnly proclaimed to be the holy Mother of God, so that Christ might be acknowledged as being truly Son of God and Son of Man, according to the Scriptures. Many also are the saints whose praise they sing, among them the Fathers of the universal Church.

These Churches, although separated from us, yet possess true sacraments and above all, by apostolic succession, the priesthood and the Eucharist, whereby they are linked with us in closest intimacy. Therefore some worship in common (communicatio in sacris), given suitable circumstances and the approval of Church authority, is not only possible but to be encouraged.

Moreover, in the East are found the riches of those spiritual traditions which are given expression especially in monastic life. There from the glorious times of the holy Fathers, monastic spirituality flourished which, then later flowed over into the Western world, and there provided the source from which Latin monastic life took its rise and has drawn fresh vigor ever since. Catholics therefore are earnestly recommended to avail themselves of the spiritual riches of the Eastern Fathers which lift up the whole man to the contemplation of the divine.

The very rich liturgical and spiritual heritage of the Eastern Churches should be known, venerated, preserved and cherished by all. They must recognize that this is of supreme importance for the faithful preservation of the fullness of Christian tradition, and for bringing about reconciliation between Eastern and Western Christians.

16. Already from the earliest times the Eastern Churches followed their own forms of ecclesiastical law and custom, which were sanctioned by the approval of the Fathers of the Church, of synods, and even of ecumenical councils. Far from being an obstacle to the Church's unity, a certain diversity of customs and observances only adds to her splendor, and is of great help in carrying out her mission, as has already been stated. To remove, then, all shadow of doubt, this holy Council solemnly declares that the Churches of the East, while remembering the necessary unity of the whole Church, have the power to govern themselves according to the disciplines proper to them, since these are better suited to the character of their faithful, and more for the good of their souls. The perfect observance of this traditional principle not always indeed carried out in practice, is one of the essential prerequisites for any restoration of unity.

17. What has just been said about the lawful variety that can exist in the Church must also be taken to apply to the differences in theological expression of doctrine. In the study of revelation East and West have followed different methods, and have developed differently their understanding and confession of God's truth. It is hardly surprising, then, if from time to time one tradition has come nearer to a full appreciation of some aspects of a mystery of revelation than the other, or has expressed it to better advantage. In such cases, these various theological expressions are to be considered often as mutually complementary rather than conflicting. Where the authentic theological traditions of the Eastern Church are concerned, we must recognize the admirable way in which they have their roots in Holy Scripture, and how they are nurtured and given expression in the life of the liturgy. They derive their strength too from the living tradition of the apostles and from the works of the Fathers and spiritual writers of the Eastern Churches. Thus they promote the right ordering of Christian life and, indeed, pave the way to a full vision of Christian truth.

All this heritage of spirituality and liturgy, of discipline and theology, in its various traditions, this holy synod declares to belong to the full Catholic and apostolic character of the Church. We thank God that many Eastern children of the Catholic Church, who preserve this heritage, and wish to express it more faithfully and completely in their lives, are already living in full communion with their brethren who follow the tradition of the West.

18. After taking all these factors into consideration, this Sacred Council solemnly repeats the declaration of previous Councils and Roman Pontiffs, that for the restoration or the maintenance of unity and communion it is necessary "to impose no burden beyond what is essential".(37) It is the Council's urgent desire that, in the various organizations and living activities of the Church, every effort should be made toward the gradual realization of this unity, especially by prayer, and by fraternal dialogue on points of doctrine and the more pressing pastoral problems of our time. Similarly, the Council commends to the shepherds and faithful of the Catholic Church to develop closer relations with those who are no longer living in the East but are far from home, so that friendly collaboration with them may increase, in the spirit of love, to the exclusion of all feeling of rivalry or strife. If this cause is wholeheartedly promoted, the Council hopes that the barrier dividing the Eastern Church and Western Church will be removed, and that at last there may be but the one dwelling, firmly established on Christ Jesus, the cornerstone, who will make both one.(38)

II. Separated Churches and Ecclesial Communities in the West

19. In the great upheaval which began in the West toward the end of the Middle Ages, and in later times too, Churches and ecclesial Communities came to be separated from the Apostolic See of Rome. Yet they have retained a particularly close affinity with the Catholic Church as a result of the long centuries in which all Christendom lived together in ecclesiastical communion.

However, since these Churches and ecclesial Communities, on account of their different origins, and different teachings in matters of doctrine on the spiritual life, vary considerably not only with us, but also among themselves, the task of describing them at all adequately is extremely difficult; and we have no intention of making such an attempt here.

Although the ecumenical movement and the desire for peace with the Catholic Church have not yet taken hold everywhere, it is our hope that ecumenical feeling and mutual esteem may gradually increase among all men.

It must however be admitted that in these Churches and ecclesial Communities there exist important differences from the Catholic Church, not only of an historical, sociological, psychological and cultural character, but especially in the interpretation of revealed truth. To make easier the ecumenical dialogue in spite of these differences, we wish to set down some considerations which can, and indeed should, serve as a basis and encouragement for such dialogue.

20. Our thoughts turn first to those Christians who make open confession of Jesus Christ as God and Lord and as the sole Mediator between God and men, to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We are aware indeed that there exist considerable divergences from the doctrine of the Catholic Church concerning Christ Himself, the Word of God made flesh, the work of redemption, and consequently, concerning the mystery and ministry of the Church, and the role of Mary in the plan of salvation. But we rejoice to see that our separated brethren look to Christ as the source and center of Church unity. Their longing for union with Christ inspires them to seek an ever closer unity, and also to bear witness to their faith among the peoples of the earth.

21. A love and reverence of Sacred Scripture which might be described as devotion, leads our brethren to a constant meditative study of the sacred text. For the Gospel "is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and then to the Greek".(39)

While invoking the Holy Spirit, they seek in these very Scriptures God as it were speaking to them in Christ, Whom the prophets foretold, Who is the Word of God made flesh for us. They contemplate in the Scriptures the life of Christ and what the Divine Master taught and did for our salvation, especially the mysteries of His death and resurrection.

But while the Christians who are separated from us hold the divine authority of the Sacred Books, they differ from ours-some in one way, some in another-regarding the relationship between Scripture and the Church. For, according to Catholic belief, the authentic teaching authority of the Church has a special place in the interpretation and preaching of the written word of God.

But Sacred Scriptures provide for the work of dialogue an instrument of the highest value in the mighty hand of God for the attainment of that unity which the Saviour holds out to all.

22. Whenever the Sacrament of Baptism is duly administered as Our Lord instituted it, and is received with the right dispositions, a person is truly incorporated into the crucified and glorified Christ, and reborn to a sharing of the divine life, as the Apostle says: "You were buried together with Him in Baptism, and in Him also rose again-through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead".(40)

Baptism therefore establishes a sacramental bond of unity which links all who have been reborn by it. But of itself Baptism is only a beginning, an inauguration wholly directed toward the fullness of life in Christ. Baptism, therefore, envisages a complete profession of faith, complete incorporation in the system of salvation such as Christ willed it to be, and finally complete ingrafting in eucharistic communion.

Though the ecclesial Communities which are separated from us lack the fullness of unity with us flowing from Baptism, and though we believe they have not retained the proper reality of the eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Orders, nevertheless when they commemorate His death and resurrection in the Lord's Supper, they profess that it signifies life in communion with Christ and look forward to His coming in glory. Therefore the teaching concerning the Lord's Supper, the other sacraments, worship, the ministry of the Church, must be the subject of the dialogue.

23. The daily Christian life of these brethren is nourished by their faith in Christ and strengthened by the grace of Baptism and by hearing the word of God. This shows itself in their private prayer, their meditation on the Bible, in their Christian family life, and in the worship of a community gathered together to praise God. Moreover, their form of worship sometimes displays notable features of the liturgy which they shared with us of old.

Their faith in Christ bears fruit in praise and thanksgiving for the blessings received from the hands of God. Among them, too, is a strong sense of justice and a true charity toward their neighbor. This active faith has been responsible for many organizations for the relief of spiritual and material distress, the furtherance of the education of youth, the improvement of the social conditions of life, and the promotion of peace throughout the world.

While it is true that many Christians understand the moral teaching of the Gospel differently from Catholics, and do not accept the same solutions to the more difficult problems of modern society, nevertheless they share our desire to stand by the words of Christ as the source of Christian virtue, and to obey the command of the Apostle: "And whatever you do, in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him".(41) For that reason an ecumenical dialogue might start with discussion of the application of the Gospel to moral conduct.

24. Now that we have briefly set out the conditions for ecumenical action and the principles by which it is to be directed, we look with confidence to the future. This Sacred Council exhorts the faithful to refrain from superficiality and imprudent zeal, which can hinder real progress toward unity. Their ecumenical action must be fully and sincerely Catholic, that is to say, faithful to the truth which we have received from the apostles and Fathers of the Church, in harmony with the faith which the Catholic Church has always professed, and at the same time directed toward that fullness to which Our Lord wills His Body to grow in the course of time.

It is the urgent wish of this Holy Council that the measures undertaken by the sons of the Catholic Church should develop in conjunction with those of our separated brethren so that no obstacle be put in the ways of divine Providence and no preconceived judgments impair the future inspirations of the Holy Spirit. The Council moreover professes its awareness that human powers and capacities cannot achieve this holy objective-the reconciling of all Christians in the unity of the one and only Church of Christ. It is because of this that the Council rests all its hope on the prayer of Christ for the Church, on our Father's love for us, and on the power of the Holy Spirit. "And hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us".(42)

Each and all these matters which are set forth in this Decree have been favorably voted on by the Fathers of the Council. And We, by the apostolic authority given Us by Christ and in union with the Fathers, approve, decree and establish them in the Holy Spirit and command that they be promulgated for the glory of God.

Given in Rome at St. Peter's, November 21, 1964

NOTES

1. Cf. 1 Cor. 1, 13.

2. Cf. 1 Jn. 4, 9; Col. 1, 18-20; Jn. 11, S2.

3. Jn. 17, 21.

4. Cf. Jn. 13, 34.

5. Cf. Jn. 16, 7.

6. Eph. 4, 4-5.

7. Gal. 3, 27-28.

8. Cf. 1 Cor. 12, 4-11.

9. Eph. 4, 12.

10. Cf. Mt. 28, 18-20, collato Jn. 20 21-23.

11. Cf. Mt. 16, 18, collato Mt. 18, 18.

12. Cf. Lc. 22, 32.

13. Cf. Jn. 21, 15-18.

14. Cf. Eph. 2, 20.

15. Cf. 1 Petr. 2, 2S; CONC. VATICANUM 1, Sess. IV (1870), Constitutio Pastor Aeternus: Collac 7, 482 a.

16. Cf. Is. 11, 10-12.

17. Cf. Eph. 2, 17-18, collato Mc. 16, 15.

18. Cf. 1 Petr. 1, 3-9.

19. Cf. 1 Cor. 11, 18-19; Gal. 1, 6-9; 1 Jn. 2, 18-19.

20. Cf. 1 Cor. 1, 11 sqq; 11, 22.

21. Cf. CONC. FLORENTINUM, Sess. VIII (1439), Decretum Exultate Deo: Mansi 31, 1055 A.

22. Cf. S. AUGUSTINUS, In Ps. 32, Enarr. 11, 29: PL 36, 299

23. Cf. CONC. LATERANENSE IV (1215) Constitutio IV: Mansi 22, 990; CONC. LUGDUNENSE II (1274), Professio fidei Michaelis Palaeologi: Mansi 24, 71 E; CONC. FLORENTINUM, Sess. VI (1439), Definitio Laetentur caeli: Mansi 31, 1026 E.

24. Cf. Iac. 1, 4; Rom. 12, 1-2.

25. Cf. 2 Cor. 4, 10, Phil. 2, 5-8

26. Cf. Eph. 5, 27.

27. Cf. CONC. LATERANSE V, Sess. XII (1517), Constitutio Constituti: Mansi 32, 988 B-C.

28. Cf. Eph. 4, 24.

29. Eph. 4, 1-3.

30. Mt. 20, 28.

31. 1 Jn. 1, 10.

32. Jn. 17, 21.

33. Mt. 18, 20.

34. Cf. Eph. 3, 8.

35. 2 Petr. 1, 4.

36. Cf. S. IOANNES CHRYSOSTOMOS, In loannem Homelia XLVI, PG 59, 260-262.

37. Acts 15, 28.

38. Cf. CONC. FLORENTINUM, Sess. VI (1439), Definitio Laetentur caeli: Mansi 31 1026 E.

39. Rom. 1, 16.

40. Col. 2, 12; cf. Rom. 6, 4

41. Col. 3, 17.

42. Rom. 5, 5.

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GRAVISSIMUM EDUCATIONIS
Declaration on Christian Education
Second Vatican Council

DECLARATION ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
GRAVISSIMUM EDUCATIONIS
PROCLAIMED BY
POPE PAUL VI
ON OCTOBER 28, 1965

INTRODUCTION

The Sacred Ecumenical Council has considered with care how extremely important education is in the life of man and how its influence ever grows in the social progress of this age.(1)

Indeed, the circumstances of our time have made it easier and at once more urgent to educate young people and, what is more, to continue the education of adults. Men are more aware of their own dignity and position; more and more they want to take an active part in social and especially in economic and political life.(2) Enjoying more leisure, as they sometimes do, men find that the remarkable development of technology and scientific investigation and the new means of communication offer them an opportunity of attaining more easily their cultural and spiritual inheritance and of fulfilling one another in the closer ties between groups and even between peoples.

Consequently, attempts are being made everywhere to promote more education. The rights of men to an education, particularly the primary rights of children and parents, are being proclaimed and recognized in public documents.(3) As the number of pupils rapidly increases, schools are multiplied and expanded far and wide and other educational institutions are established. New experiments are conducted in methods of education and teaching. Mighty attempts are being made to obtain education for all, even though vast numbers of children and young people are still deprived of even rudimentary training and so many others lack a suitable education in which truth and love are developed together.

To fulfill the mandate she has received from her divine founder of proclaiming the mystery of salvation to all men and of restoring all things in Christ, Holy Mother the Church must be concerned with the whole of man's life, even the secular part of it insofar as it has a bearing on his heavenly calling.(4) Therefore she has a role in the progress and development of education. Hence this sacred synod declares certain fundamental principles of Christian education especially in schools. These principles will have to be developed at greater length by a special post-conciliar commission and applied by episcopal conferences to varying local situations.

1. The Meaning of the Universal Right to an Education

All men of every race, condition and age, since they enjoy the dignity of a human being, have an inalienable right to an education (5) that is in keeping with their ultimate goal,(6) their ability, their sex, and the culture and tradition of their country, and also in harmony with their fraternal association with other peoples in the fostering of true unity and peace on earth. For a true education aims at the formation of the human person in the pursuit of his ultimate end and of the good of the societies of which, as man, he is a member, and in whose obligations, as an adult, he will share.

Therefore children and young people must be helped, with the aid of the latest advances in psychology and the arts and science of teaching, to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual endowments so that they may gradually acquire a mature sense of responsibility in striving endlessly to form their own lives properly and in pursuing true freedom as they surmount the vicissitudes of life with courage and constancy. Let them be given also, as they advance in years, a positive and prudent sexual education. Moreover they should be so trained to take their part in social life that properly instructed in the necessary and opportune skills they can become actively involved in various community organizations, open to discourse with others and willing to do their best to promote the common good.

This sacred synod likewise declares that children and young people have a right to be motivated to appraise moral values with a right conscience, to embrace them with a personal adherence, together with a deeper knowledge and love of God. Consequently it earnestly entreats all those who hold a position of public authority or who are in charge of education to see to it that youth is never deprived of this sacred right. It further exhorts the sons of the Church to give their attention with generosity to the entire field of education, having especially in mind the need of extending very soon the benefits of a suitable education and training to everyone in all parts of the world.(7)

2. Christian Education

Since all Christians have become by rebirth of water and the Holy Spirit a new creature(8) so that they should be called and should be children of God, they have a right to a Christian education. A Christian education does not merely strive for the maturing of a human person as just now described, but has as its principal purpose this goal: that the baptized, while they are gradually introduced the knowledge of the mystery of salvation, become ever more aware of the gift of Faith they have received, and that they learn in addition how to worship God the Father in spirit and truth (cf. John 4:23) especially in liturgical action, and be conformed in their personal lives according to the new man created in justice and holiness of truth (Eph. 4:22-24); also that they develop into perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ (cf. Eph. 4:13) and strive for the growth of the Mystical Body; moreover, that aware of their calling, they learn not only how to bear witness to the hope that is in them (cf. Peter 3:15) but also how to help in the Christian formation of the world that takes place when natural powers viewed in the full consideration of man redeemed by Christ contribute to the good of the whole society.(9) Wherefore this sacred synod recalls to pastors of souls their most serious obligation to see to it that all the faithful, but especially the youth who are the hope of the Church, enjoy this Christian education.(10)

3. The Authors of Education

Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and principal educators.(11) This role in education is so important that only with difficulty can it be supplied where it is lacking. Parents are the ones who must create a family atmosphere animated by love and respect for God and man, in which the well-rounded personal and social education of children is fostered. Hence the family is the first school of the social virtues that every society needs. It is particularly in the Christian family, enriched by the grace and office of the sacrament of matrimony, that children should be taught from their early years to have a knowledge of God according to the faith received in Baptism, to worship Him, and to love their neighbor. Here, too, they find their first experience of a wholesome human society and of the Church. Finally, it is through the family that they are gradually led to a companionship with their fellowmen and with the people of God. Let parents, then, recognize the inestimable importance a truly Christian family has for the life and progress of God's own people.(12)

The family which has the primary duty of imparting education needs help of the whole community. In addition, therefore, to the rights of parents and others to whom the parents entrust a share in the work of education, certain rights and duties belong indeed to civil society, whose role is to direct what is required for the common temporal good. Its function is to promote the education of youth in many ways, namely: to protect the duties and rights of parents and others who share in education and to give them aid; according to the principle of subsidiarity, when the endeavors of parents and other societies are lacking, to carry out the work of education in accordance with the wishes of the parents; and, moreover, as the common good demands, to build schools and institutions.(13)

Finally, in a special way, the duty of educating belongs to the Church, not merely because she must be recognized as a human society capable of educating, but especially because she has the responsibility of announcing the way of salvation to all men, of communicating the life of Christ to those who believe, and, in her unfailing solicitude, of assisting men to be able to come to the fullness of this life.(14) The Church is bound as a mother to give to these children of hers an education by which their whole life can be imbued with the spirit of Christ and at the same time do all she can to promote for all peoples the complete perfection of the human person, the good of earthly society and the building of a world that is more human.(15)

4. Various Aids to Christian Education

In fulfilling its educational role, the Church, eager to employ all suitable aids, is concerned especially about those which are her very own. Foremost among these is catechetical instruction,(16) which enlightens and strengthens the faith, nourishes life according to the spirit of Christ, leads to intelligent and active participation in the liturgical mystery(17) and gives motivation for apostolic activity. The Church esteems highly and seeks to penetrate and ennoble with her own spirit also other aids which belong to the general heritage of man and which are of great influence in forming souls and molding men, such as the media of communication,(18) various groups for mental and physical development, youth associations, and, in particular, schools.

5. The Importance of Schools

Among all educational instruments the school has a special importance.(19) It is designed not only to develop with special care the intellectual faculties but also to form the ability to judge rightly, to hand on the cultural legacy of previous generations, to foster a sense of values, to prepare for professional life. Between pupils of different talents and backgrounds it promotes friendly relations and fosters a spirit of mutual understanding; and it establishes as it were a center whose work and progress must be shared together by families, teachers, associations of various types that foster cultural, civic, and religious life, as well as by civil society and the entire human community.

Beautiful indeed and of great importance is the vocation of all those who aid parents in fulfilling their duties and who, as representatives of the human community, undertake the task of education in schools. This vocation demands special qualities of mind and heart, very careful preparation, and continuing readiness to renew and to adapt.

6. The Duties and Rights of Parents

Parents who have the primary and inalienable right and duty to educate their children must enjoy true liberty in their choice of schools. Consequently, the public power, which has the obligation to protect and defend the rights of citizens, must see to it, in its concern for distributive justice, that public subsidies are paid out in such a way that parents are truly free to choose according to their conscience the schools they want for their children.(20)

In addition it is the task of the state to see to it that all citizens are able to come to a suitable share in culture and are properly prepared to exercise their civic duties and rights. Therefore the state must protect the right of children to an adequate school education, check on the ability of teachers and the excellence of their training, look after the health of the pupils and in general, promote the whole school project. But it must always keep in mind the principle of subsidiarity so that there is no kind of school monopoly, for this is opposed to the native rights of the human person, to the development and spread of culture, to the peaceful association of citizens and to the pluralism that exists today in ever so many societies.(21)

Therefore this sacred synod exhorts the faithful to assist to their utmost in finding suitable methods of education and programs of study and in forming teachers who can give youth a true education. Through the associations of parents in particular they should further with their assistance all the work of the school but especially the moral education it must impart.(22)

7. Moral and Religious Education in all Schools

Feeling very keenly the weighty responsibility of diligently caring for the moral and religious education of all her children, the Church must be present with her own special affection and help for the great number who are being trained in schools that are not Catholic. This is possible by the witness of the lives of those who teach and direct them, by the apostolic action of their fellow-students,(23) but especially by the ministry of priests and laymen who give them the doctrine of salvation in a way suited to their age and circumstances and provide spiritual aid in every way the times and conditions allow.

The Church reminds parents of the duty that is theirs to arrange and even demand that their children be able to enjoy these aids and advance in their Christian formation to a degree that is abreast of their development in secular subjects. Therefore the Church esteems highly those civil authorities and societies which, bearing in mind the pluralism of contemporary society and respecting religious freedom, assist families so that the education of their children can be imparted in all schools according to the individual moral and religious principles of the families.(24)

8. Catholic Schools

The influence of the Church in the field of education is shown in a special manner by the Catholic school. No less than other schools does the Catholic school pursue cultural goals and the human formation of youth. But its proper function is to create for the school community a special atmosphere animated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity, to help youth grow according to the new creatures they were made through baptism as they develop their own personalities, and finally to order the whole of human culture to the news of salvation so that the knowledge the students gradually acquire of the world, life and man is illumined by faith.(25) So indeed the Catholic school, while it is open, as it must be, to the situation of the contemporary world, leads its students to promote efficaciously the good of the earthly city and also prepares them for service in the spread of the Kingdom of God, so that by leading an exemplary apostolic life they become, as it were, a saving leaven in the human community.

Since, therefore, the Catholic school can be such an aid to the fulfillment of the mission of the People of God and to the fostering of the dialogue between the Church and mankind, to the benefit of both, it retains even in our present circumstances the utmost importance. Consequently this sacred synod proclaims anew what has already been taught in several documents of the magisterium,(26) namely: the right of the Church freely to establish and to conduct schools of every type and level. And the council calls to mind that the exercise of a right of this kind contributes in the highest degree to the protection of freedom of conscience, the rights of parents, as well as to the betterment of culture itself.

But let teachers recognize that the Catholic school depends upon them almost entirely for the accomplishment of its goals and programs.(27) They should therefore be very carefully prepared so that both in secular and religious knowledge they are equipped with suitable qualifications and also with a pedagogical skill that is in keeping with the findings of the contemporary world. Intimately linked in charity to one another and to their students and endowed with an apostolic spirit, may teachers by their life as much as by their instruction bear witness to Christ, the unique Teacher. Let them work as partners with parents and together with them in every phase of education give due consideration to the difference of sex and the proper ends Divine Providence assigns to each sex in the family and in society. Let them do all they can to stimulate their students to act for themselves and even after graduation to continue to assist them with advice, friendship and by establishing special associations imbued with the true spirit of the Church. The work of these teachers, this sacred synod declares, is in the real sense of the word an apostolate most suited to and necessary for our times and at once a true service offered to society. The Council also reminds Catholic parents of the duty of entrusting their children to Catholic schools wherever and whenever it is possible and of supporting these schools to the best of their ability and of cooperating with them for the education of their children.(28)

9. Different Types of Catholic Schools

To this concept of a Catholic school all schools that are in any way dependent on the Church must conform as far as possible, though the Catholic school is to take on different forms in keeping with local circumstances.(29) Thus the Church considers very dear to her heart those Catholic schools, found especially in the areas of the new churches, which are attended also by students who are not Catholics.

Attention should be paid to the needs of today in establishing and directing Catholic schools. Therefore, though primary and secondary schools, the foundation of education, must still be fostered, great importance is to be attached to those which are required in a particular way by contemporary conditions, such as: professional(30) and technical schools, centers for educating adults and promoting social welfare, or for the retarded in need of special care, and also schools for preparing teachers for religious instruction and other types of education.

This Sacred Council of the Church earnestly entreats pastors and all the faithful to spare no sacrifice in helping Catholic schools fulfill their function in a continually more perfect way, and especially in caring for the needs of those who are poor in the goods of this world or who are deprived of the assistance and affection of a family or who are strangers to the gift of Faith.

10. Catholic Colleges and Universities

The Church is concerned also with schools of a higher level, especially colleges and universities. In those schools dependent on her she intends that by their very constitution individual subjects be pursued according to their own principles, method, and liberty of scientific inquiry, in such a way that an ever deeper understanding in these fields may be obtained and that, as questions that are new and current are raised and investigations carefully made according to the example of the doctors of the Church and especially of St. Thomas Aquinas,(31) there may be a deeper realization of the harmony of faith and science. Thus there is accomplished a public, enduring and pervasive influence of the Christian mind in the furtherance of culture and the students of these institutions are molded into men truly outstanding in their training, ready to undertake weighty responsibilities in society and witness to the faith in the world.(32)

In Catholic universities where there is no faculty of sacred theology there should be established an institute or chair of sacred theology in which there should be lectures suited to lay students. Since science advances by means of the investigations peculiar to higher scientific studies, special attention should be given in Catholic universities and colleges to institutes that serve primarily the development of scientific research.

The sacred synod heartily recommends that Catholic colleges and universities be conveniently located in different parts of the world, but in such a way that they are outstanding not for their numbers but for their pursuit of knowledge. Matriculation should be readily available to students of real promise, even though they be of slender means, especially to students from the newly emerging nations.

Since the destiny of society and of the Church itself is intimately linked with the progress of young people pursuing higher studies,(33) the pastors of the Church are to expend their energies not only on the spiritual life of students who attend Catholic universities, but, solicitous for the spiritual formation of all their children, they must see to it, after consultations between bishops, that even at universities that are not Catholic there should be associations and university centers under Catholic auspices in which priests, religious and laity, carefully selected and prepared, should give abiding spiritual and intellectual assistance to the youth of the university. Whether in Catholic universities or others, young people of greater ability who seem suited for teaching or research should be specially helped and encouraged to undertake a teaching career.

11. Faculties of Sacred Sciences

The Church expects much from the zealous endeavors of the faculties of the sacred sciences.(34) For to them she entrusts the very serious responsibility of preparing her own students not only for the priestly ministry, but especially for teaching in the seats of higher ecclesiastical studies or for promoting learning on their own or for undertaking the work of a more rigorous intellectual apostolate. Likewise it is the role of these very faculties to make more penetrating inquiry into the various aspects of the sacred sciences so that an ever deepening understanding of sacred Revelation is obtained, the legacy of Christian wisdom handed down by our forefathers is more fully developed, the dialogue with our separated brethren and with non-Christians is fostered, and answers are given to questions arising from the development of doctrine.(35)

Therefore ecclesiastical faculties should reappraise their own laws so that they can better promote the sacred sciences and those linked with them and, by employing up-to-date methods and aids, lead their students to more penetrating inquiry.

12. Coordination to be Fostered in Scholastic Matters

Cooperation is the order of the day. It increases more and more to supply the demand on a diocesan, national and international level. Since it is altogether necessary in scholastic matters, every means should be employed to foster suitable cooperation between Catholic schools, and between these and other schools that collaboration should be developed which the good of all mankind requires.(36) From greater coordination and cooperative endeavor greater fruits will be derived particularly in the area of academic institutions. Therefore in every university let the various faculties work mutually to this end, insofar as their goal will permit. In addition, let the universities also endeavor to work together by promoting international gatherings, by sharing scientific inquiries with one another, by communicating their discoveries to one another, by having exchange of professors for a time and by promoting all else that is conducive to greater assistance.

CONCLUSION

The sacred synod earnestly entreats young people themselves to become aware of the importance of the work of education and to prepare themselves to take it up, especially where because of a shortage of teachers the education of youth is in jeopardy. This same sacred synod, while professing its gratitude to priests, Religious men and women, and the laity who by their evangelical self-dedication are devoted to the noble work of education and of schools of every type and level, exhorts them to persevere generously in the work they have undertaken and, imbuing their students with the spirit of Christ, to strive to excel in pedagogy and the pursuit of knowledge in such a way that they not merely advance the internal renewal of the Church but preserve and enhance its beneficent influence upon today's world, especially the intellectual world.

NOTES

1. Among many documents illustrating the importance of education confer above all apostolic letter of Benedict XV, Communes Litteras, April 10, 1919: A.A.S. 11 (1919) p. 172. Pius XI's apostolic encyclical, Divini Illius Magistri, Dec. 31, 1929: A.A.S. 22 (1930) pp. 49-86. Pius XII's allocution to the youths of Italian Catholic Action, April 20, 1946: Discourses and Radio Messages, vol. 8, pp. 53-57. Allocution to fathers of French families, Sept. 18, 1951: Discourses and Radio Messages, vol. 13, pp. 241-245. John XXIII's 30th anniversary message on the publication of the encyclical letter, Divini Illius Magistri, Dec. 30, 1959: A.A.S. 52 (1960) pp. 57-S9. Paul VI's allocution to members of Federated Institutes Dependent on Ecclesiastic Authority, Dec. 30, 1963: Encyclicals and Discourses of His Holiness Paul VI, Rome, 1964, pp. 601-603. Above all are to be consulted the Acts and Documents of the Second Vatican Council appearing in the first series of the ante-preparatrory phase. vol. 3. pp. 363-364; 370-371; 373-374.

2. Cf. John XXIII's encyclical letter Mater et Magistra, May 15, 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961) pp. 413-415; 417-424; Encyclical letter, Pacem in Terris, April 11, 1963: A.A.S. 55 (1963) p. 278 ff.

3. Declaration on the Rights of Man of Dec. 10, 1948, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, and also cf. the Declaration of the Rights of Children of Nov. 20 1959; additional protocol to the Convention Safeguarding the Rights of Men and Fundamental Liberties, Paris, March 20, 1952; regarding that universal profession of the character of human laws cf. apostolic letter Pacem in Terris, of John XXIII of April 11, 1963: A.A.S. 55 (1963) p. 295 ff.

4. Cf. John XXIII's encyclical letter, Mater et Magistra, May 15, 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961) p. 402. Cf. Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, no. 17: A.A.S. 57 (1965) p. 21, and schema on the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, 1965.

5. Pius XII's radio message of Dec. 24, 1942: A.A.S. 35 (1943) pp. 12-19, and John XXIII's encyclical letter, Pacem in Terris April 11, 1963: A.A.S. 55 (1963) p. 259 ff. Also cf. declaration cited on the rights of man in footnote 3.

6. Cf. Pius XI's encyclical letter, Divini Illius Magistri, Dec. 31, 1929: A.A.S. 22 (1930) p. 50 ff.

7. Cf. John XXIII's encyclical letter, Mater et Magistra, May 15 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961) p. 441 ff.

8. Cf. Pius XI's encyclical letter, Divini Illius Magistri, 1, p. 83.

9. Cf. Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, no. 36: A.A.S. 57 (1965) p. 41 ff.

10. Cf. Second Vatican Council's schema on the Decree on the Lay Apostolate (1965), no. 12.

11. Cf. Pius XI's encyclical letter Divini Illius Magistri, 1, p. 59 ff., encyclical letter Mit Brennender Sorge, March 14, 1937: A.A.S. 29; Pius XII's allocution to the first national congress of the Italian Catholic Teachers' Association, Sept. 8, 1946: Discourses and Radio Messages, vol. 8, p. 218.

12. Cf. Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, nos. 11 and 35: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 16, 40 ff.

13. Cf. Pius XI's encyclical letter Divini Illius Magistri, 1, p. 63 ff. Pius XII's radio message of June 1, 1941: A.A.S. 33 (1941) p. 200; allocution to the first national congress of the Association of Italian Catholic Teachers, Sept 8, 1946: Discourses and Radio Messages, vol. 8, 1946: Discourses and Radio Messages, vol. 8 p. 218. Regarding the principle of subsidiarity, cf. John XXIII's encyclical letter, Pacem in Terris, April 11, 1963: A.A.S. 55 (1963) p. 294.

14. Cf. Pius XI's encyclical letter, Divini Illius Magistri, 1 pp. 53 ff. and 56 ff.; Encyclical letter, Non Abbiamo Bisogno June 29, 1931: A.A.S. 23 (1931) p. 311 ff. Pius XII's letter from Secretariat of State to 28th Italian Social Week, Sept. 20, 1955; L'Osservatore Romano, Sept. 29, 1955.

15. The Church praises those local, national and international civic authorities who, conscious of the urgent necessity in these times, expend all their energy so that all peoples may benefit from more education and human culture. Cf. Paul VI's allocution to the United Nations General Assembly, Oct. 4, 1965: L'Osservatore Romano, Oct. 6, 1965.

16. Cf. Pius XI's motu proprio. Orbem Catholicum, June 29 1923: A.A.S. 15 (1923) pp. 327-329; decree, Provide Sane, Jan. 12, 1935: A.A.S. 27 (1935) pp. 145-152. Second Vatican Council's Decree on Bishops and Pastoral Duties, nos. 13 and 14.

17. Cf. Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, no. 14: A.A.S. 56 (1964) p. 104.

18. Cf. Second Vatican Council's Decree on Communications Media, nos. 13 and 14: A.A.S. 56 (1964) p. 149 ff.

19. Cf. Pius XI's encyclical letter, Divini Illius Magistri, 1, p. 76; Pius XII's allocution to Bavarian Association of Catholic Teachers, Dec. 31, 1956: Discourses and Radio Messages, vol. 18, p. 746.

20. Cf. Provincial Council of Cincinnati III, a. 1861: Collatio Lacensis, III, col. 1240, c/d; Pius XI's encyclical letter, Divini Illius Magistri, 1, pp. 60, 63 ff.

21. Cf. Pius XI's encyclical letter, Divini Illius Magistri, 1, p. 63; encyclical letter, Non Abbiamo Misogno, June 29, 1931: A.A.S. 23 (1931) p. 305, Pius XII's letter from the Secretary of State to the 28th Italian Social Week, Sept. 20, 1955: L'Osservatore Romano, Sept. 29, 1955. Paul VI's allocution to the Association of Italian Christian Workers, Oct. 6, 1963: Encyclicals and Discourses of Paul VI, vol. 1, Rome, 1964, p. 230.

22. Cf. John XXIII's message on the 30th anniversary of the encyclical letter, Divini Illius Magistri, Dec. 30, 1959: A.A.S. 52 (1960) p. 57.

23. The Church considers it as apostolic action of great worth also when Catholic teachers and associates work in these schools. Cf. Second Vatican Council's schema of the Decree on the Lay Apostolate (1965), nos. 12 and 16.

24. Cf. Second Vatican Council's schema on the Declaration on Religious Liberty (1965), no. 5.

25. Cf. Provincial Council of Westminster I, a. 1852: Collatio Lacensis III, col. 1334, a/b; Pius XI's encyclical letter, Divini Illius Magistri, 1, p. 77 ff.; Pius XII's allocution to the Bavarian Association of Catholic Teachers, Dec. 31, 1956: Discourses and Radio Messages, vol. 18, p. 746; Paul VI's allocution to the members of Federated Institutes Dependent on Ecclesiastic Authority, Dec. 30, 1963: Encyclicals and Discourses of Paul VI, 1, Rome, 1964, 602 ff.

26. Cf. especially the document mentioned in the first note; moreover this law of the Church is proclaimed by many provincial councils and in the most recent declarations of very many of the episcopal conferences.

27. Cf. Pius XI's encyclical letter, Divini Illius Magistri, 1 p. 80 ff.; Pius XII's allocution to the Catholic Association of Italian Teachers in Secondary Schools, Jan. 5, 1954: Discourses and Radio Messages, 15, pp. 551-55B; John XXIII's allocution to the 6th Congress of the Associations of Catholic Italian Teachers Sept. 5, 1959: Discourses, Messages, Conversations, 1, Rome,1960, pp. 427-431.

28. Cf. Pius XII's allocution to the Catholic Association of Italian Teachers in Secondary Schools, Jan. 5, 1954, 1, p. 555.

29. Cf. Paul VI's allocution to the International Office of Catholic Education, Feb. 25, 1964: Encyclicals and Discourses of Paul VI, 2, Rome, 1964, p. 232.

30. Cf. Paul VI's allocution to the Christian Association of Italian Workers, Oct. 6, 1963: Encyclicals and Discourses of Paul VI, 1, Rome, 1964, p. 229.

31. Cf. Paul VI's allocution to the International Thomistic Congress, Sept. 10, 1965: L'Osservatore Romano, Sept. 13-14, 1965.

32. Cf. Pius XII's allocution to teachers and students of French Institutes of Higher Catholic Education, Sept. 21, 1950: Discourses and Radio Messages, 12, pp. 219-221; letters to the 22nd congress of Pax Romana, Aug. 12, 1952: Discourses and Radio Messages, 14, pp. 567-569; John XXIII's allocution to the Federation of Catholic Universities, April 1, 1959: Discourses, Messages and Conversations, 1, Rome, 1960, pp. 226-229; Paul VI's allocution to the Academic Senate of the Catholic University of Milan, April 5, 1964: Encyclicals and Discourses of Paul VI, 2, Rome, 1964, pp. 438-443.

33. Cf. Pius XII's allocution to the academic senate and students of the University of Rome, June 15, 1952: Discourses and Radio Messages, 14, p. 208: "The direction of today's society principally is placed in the mentality and hearts of the universities of today."

34. Cf. Pius XII's apostolic constitution, Deus Scientiarum Dominus, May 24, 1931: A.A.S. 23 (1931) pp. 245-247.

35. Cf. Pius XII's encyclical letter, Humani Generis Aug. 12, 1950 A.A.S. 42 (1950) pp. 568 ff. and 578; Paul VI's encyclical letter, Ecclesiam Suam, part III Aug. 6, 1964; A.A.S. 56 (1964) pp. 637-659; Second Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 90-107.

36. Cf. John XXIII's encyclical letter, Pacem in Terris, April 11, 1963: A.A.S. 55 (1963) p. 284 and elsewhere.

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DIGNITATIS HUMANAE
Declaration on Religious Freedom
Second Vatican Council

DECLARATION ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
DIGNITATIS HUMANAE
ON THE RIGHT OF THE PERSON AND OF COMMUNITIES
TO SOCIAL AND CIVIL FREEDOM IN MATTERS RELIGIOUS
PROMULGATED BY HIS HOLINESS
POPE PAUL VI
ON DECEMBER 7, 1965

1. A sense of the dignity of the human person has been impressing itself more and more deeply on the consciousness of contemporary man,(1) and the demand is increasingly made that men should act on their own judgment, enjoying and making use of a responsible freedom, not driven by coercion but motivated by a sense of duty. The demand is likewise made that constitutional limits should be set to the powers of government, in order that there may be no encroachment on the rightful freedom of the person and of associations. This demand for freedom in human society chiefly regards the quest for the values proper to the human spirit. It regards, in the first place, the free exercise of religion in society. This Vatican Council takes careful note of these desires in the minds of men. It proposes to declare them to be greatly in accord with truth and justice. To this end, it searches into the sacred tradition and doctrine of the Church-the treasury out of which the Church continually brings forth new things that are in harmony with the things that are old.

First, the council professes its belief that God Himself has made known to mankind the way in which men are to serve Him, and thus be saved in Christ and come to blessedness. We believe that this one true religion subsists in the Catholic and Apostolic Church, to which the Lord Jesus committed the duty of spreading it abroad among all men. Thus He spoke to the Apostles: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have enjoined upon you" (Matt. 28: 19-20). On their part, all men are bound to seek the truth, especially in what concerns God and His Church, and to embrace the truth they come to know, and to hold fast to it.

This Vatican Council likewise professes its belief that it is upon the human conscience that these obligations fall and exert their binding force. The truth cannot impose itself except by virtue of its own truth, as it makes its entrance into the mind at once quietly and with power.

Religious freedom, in turn, which men demand as necessary to fulfill their duty to worship God, has to do with immunity from coercion in civil society. Therefore it leaves untouched traditional Catholic doctrine on the moral duty of men and societies toward the true religion and toward the one Church of Christ.

Over and above all this, the council intends to develop the doctrine of recent popes on the inviolable rights of the human person and the constitutional order of society.

2. This Vatican Council declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits.

The council further declares that the right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person as this dignity is known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself.(2) This right of the human person to religious freedom is to be recognized in the constitutional law whereby society is governed and thus it is to become a civil right.

It is in accordance with their dignity as persons-that is, beings endowed with reason and free will and therefore privileged to bear personal responsibility-that all men should be at once impelled by nature and also bound by a moral obligation to seek the truth, especially religious truth. They are also bound to adhere to the truth, once it is known, and to order their whole lives in accord with the demands of truth However, men cannot discharge these obligations in a manner in keeping with their own nature unless they enjoy immunity from external coercion as well as psychological freedom. Therefore the right to religious freedom has its foundation not in the subjective disposition of the person, but in his very nature. In consequence, the right to this immunity continues to exist even in those who do not live up to their obligation of seeking the truth and adhering to it and the exercise of this right is not to be impeded, provided that just public order be observed.

3. Further light is shed on the subject if one considers that the highest norm of human life is the divine law-eternal, objective and universal-whereby God orders, directs and governs the entire universe and all the ways of the human community by a plan conceived in wisdom and love. Man has been made by God to participate in this law, with the result that, under the gentle disposition of divine Providence, he can come to perceive ever more fully the truth that is unchanging. Wherefore every man has the duty, and therefore the right, to seek the truth in matters religious in order that he may with prudence form for himself right and true judgments of conscience, under use of all suitable means.

Truth, however, is to be sought after in a manner proper to the dignity of the human person and his social nature. The inquiry is to be free, carried on with the aid of teaching or instruction, communication and dialogue, in the course of which men explain to one another the truth they have discovered, or think they have discovered, in order thus to assist one another in the quest for truth.

Moreover, as the truth is discovered, it is by a personal assent that men are to adhere to it.

On his part, man perceives and acknowledges the imperatives of the divine law through the mediation of conscience. In all his activity a man is bound to follow his conscience in order that he may come to God, the end and purpose of life. It follows that he is not to be forced to act in manner contrary to his conscience. Nor, on the other hand, is he to be restrained from acting in accordance with his conscience, especially in matters religious. The reason is that the exercise of religion, of its very nature, consists before all else in those internal, voluntary and free acts whereby man sets the course of his life directly toward God. No merely human power can either command or prohibit acts of this kind.(3) The social nature of man, however, itself requires that he should give external expression to his internal acts of religion: that he should share with others in matters religious; that he should profess his religion in community. Injury therefore is done to the human person and to the very order established by God for human life, if the free exercise of religion is denied in society, provided just public order is observed.

There is a further consideration. The religious acts whereby men, in private and in public and out of a sense of personal conviction, direct their lives to God transcend by their very nature the order of terrestrial and temporal affairs. Government therefore ought indeed to take account of the religious life of the citizenry and show it favor, since the function of government is to make provision for the common welfare. However, it would clearly transgress the limits set to its power, were it to presume to command or inhibit acts that are religious.

4. The freedom or immunity from coercion in matters religious which is the endowment of persons as individuals is also to be recognized as their right when they act in community. Religious communities are a requirement of the social nature both of man and of religion itself.

Provided the just demands of public order are observed, religious communities rightfully claim freedom in order that they may govern themselves according to their own norms, honor the Supreme Being in public worship, assist their members in the practice of the religious life, strengthen them by instruction, and promote institutions in which they may join together for the purpose of ordering their own lives in accordance with their religious principles.

Religious communities also have the right not to be hindered, either by legal measures or by administrative action on the part of government, in the selection, training, appointment, and transferral of their own ministers, in communicating with religious authorities and communities abroad, in erecting buildings for religious purposes, and in the acquisition and use of suitable funds or properties.

Religious communities also have the right not to be hindered in their public teaching and witness to their faith, whether by the spoken or by the written word. However, in spreading religious faith and in introducing religious practices everyone ought at all times to refrain from any manner of action which might seem to carry a hint of coercion or of a kind of persuasion that would be dishonorable or unworthy, especially when dealing with poor or uneducated people. Such a manner of action would have to be considered an abuse of one's right and a violation of the right of others.

In addition, it comes within the meaning of religious freedom that religious communities should not be prohibited from freely undertaking to show the special value of their doctrine in what concerns the organization of society and the inspiration of the whole of human activity. Finally, the social nature of man and the very nature of religion afford the foundation of the right of men freely to hold meetings and to establish educational, cultural, charitable and social organizations, under the impulse of their own religious sense.

5. The family, since it is a society in its own original right, has the right freely to live its own domestic religious life under the guidance of parents. Parents, moreover, have the right to determine, in accordance with their own religious beliefs, the kind of religious education that their children are to receive. Government, in consequence, must acknowledge the right of parents to make a genuinely free choice of schools and of other means of education, and the use of this freedom of choice is not to be made a reason for imposing unjust burdens on parents, whether directly or indirectly. Besides, the right of parents are violated, if their children are forced to attend lessons or instructions which are not in agreement with their religious beliefs, or if a single system of education, from which all religious formation is excluded, is imposed upon all.

6. Since the common welfare of society consists in the entirety of those conditions of social life under which men enjoy the possibility of achieving their own perfection in a certain fullness of measure and also with some relative ease, it chiefly consists in the protection of the rights, and in the performance of the duties, of the human person.(4) Therefore the care of the right to religious freedom devolves upon the whole citizenry, upon social groups, upon government, and upon the Church and other religious communities, in virtue of the duty of all toward the common welfare, and in the manner proper to each.

The protection and promotion of the inviolable rights of man ranks among the essential duties of government.(5) Therefore government is to assume the safeguard of the religious freedom of all its citizens, in an effective manner, by just laws and by other appropriate means.

Government is also to help create conditions favorable to the fostering of religious life, in order that the people may be truly enabled to exercise their religious rights and to fulfill their religious duties, and also in order that society itself may profit by the moral qualities of justice and peace which have their origin in men's faithfulness to God and to His holy will. (6)

If, in view of peculiar circumstances obtaining among peoples, special civil recognition is given to one religious community in the constitutional order of society, it is at the same time imperative that the right of all citizens and religious communities to religious freedom should be recognized and made effective in practice.

Finally, government is to see to it that equality of citizens before the law, which is itself an element of the common good, is never violated, whether openly or covertly, for religious reasons. Nor is there to be discrimination among citizens.

It follows that a wrong is done when government imposes upon its people, by force or fear or other means, the profession or repudiation of any religion, or when it hinders men from joining or leaving a religious community. All the more is it a violation of the will of God and of the sacred rights of the person and the family of nations when force is brought to bear in any way in order to destroy or repress religion, either in the whole of mankind or in a particular country or in a definite community.

7. The right to religious freedom is exercised in human society: hence its exercise is subject to certain regulatory norms. In the use of all freedoms the moral principle of personal and social responsibility is to be observed. In the exercise of their rights, individual men and social groups are bound by the moral law to have respect both for the rights of others and for their own duties toward others and for the common welfare of all. Men are to deal with their fellows in justice and civility.

Furthermore, society has the right to defend itself against possible abuses committed on the pretext of freedom of religion. It is the special duty of government to provide this protection. However, government is not to act in an arbitrary fashion or in an unfair spirit of partisanship. Its action is to be controlled by juridical norms which are in conformity with the objective moral order. These norms arise out of the need for the effective safeguard of the rights of all citizens and for the peaceful settlement of conflicts of rights, also out of the need for an adequate care of genuine public peace, which comes about when men live together in good order and in true justice, and finally out of the need for a proper guardianship of public morality.

These matters constitute the basic component of the common welfare: they are what is meant by public order. For the rest, the usages of society are to be the usages of freedom in their full range: that is, the freedom of man is to be respected as far as possible and is not to be curtailed except when and insofar as necessary.

8. Many pressures are brought to bear upon the men of our day, to the point where the danger arises lest they lose the possibility of acting on their own judgment. On the other hand, not a few can be found who seem inclined to use the name of freedom as the pretext for refusing to submit to authority and for making light of the duty of obedience. Wherefore this Vatican Council urges everyone, especially those who are charged with the task of educating others, to do their utmost to form men who, on the one hand, will respect the moral order and be obedient to lawful authority, and on the other hand, will be lovers of true freedom-men, in other words, who will come to decisions on their own judgment and in the light of truth, govern their activities with a sense of responsibility, and strive after what is true and right, willing always to join with others in cooperative effort.

Religious freedom therefore ought to have this further purpose and aim, namely, that men may come to act with greater responsibility in fulfilling their duties in community life.

9. The declaration of this Vatican Council on the right of man to religious freedom has its foundation in the dignity of the person, whose exigencies have come to be are fully known to human reason through centuries of experience. What is more, this doctrine of freedom has roots in divine revelation, and for this reason Christians are bound to respect it all the more conscientiously. Revelation does not indeed affirm in so many words the right of man to immunity from external coercion in matters religious. It does, however, disclose the dignity of the human person in its full dimensions. It gives evidence of the respect which Christ showed toward the freedom with which man is to fulfill his duty of belief in the word of God and it gives us lessons in the spirit which disciples of such a Master ought to adopt and continually follow. Thus further light is cast upon the general principles upon which the doctrine of this declaration on religious freedom is based. In particular, religious freedom in society is entirely consonant with the freedom of the act of Christian faith.

10. It is one of the major tenets of Catholic doctrine that man's response to God in faith must be free: no one therefore is to be forced to embrace the Christian faith against his own will.(8) This doctrine is contained in the word of God and it was constantly proclaimed by the Fathers of the Church.(7) The act of faith is of its very nature a free act. Man, redeemed by Christ the Savior and through Christ Jesus called to be God's adopted son,(9) cannot give his adherence to God revealing Himself unless, under the drawing of the Father,(10) he offers to God the reasonable and free submission of faith. It is therefore completely in accord with the nature of faith that in matters religious every manner of coercion on the part of men should be excluded. In consequence, the principle of religious freedom makes no small contribution to the creation of an environment in which men can without hindrance be invited to the Christian faith, embrace it of their own free will, and profess it effectively in their whole manner of life.

11. God calls men to serve Him in spirit and in truth, hence they are bound in conscience but they stand under no compulsion. God has regard for the dignity of the human person whom He Himself created and man is to be guided by his own judgment and he is to enjoy freedom. This truth appears at its height in Christ Jesus, in whom God manifested Himself and His ways with men. Christ is at once our Master and our Lord(11) and also meek and humble of heart.(12) In attracting and inviting His disciples He used patience.(13) He wrought miracles to illuminate His teaching and to establish its truth, but His intention was to rouse faith in His hearers and to confirm them in faith, not to exert coercion upon them.(14) He did indeed denounce the unbelief of some who listened to Him, but He left vengeance to God in expectation of the day of judgment.(15) When He sent His Apostles into the world, He said to them: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved. He who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16). But He Himself, noting that the cockle had been sown amid the wheat, gave orders that both should be allowed to grow until the harvest time, which will come at the end of the world.(16) He refused to be a political messiah, ruling by force:(17) He preferred to call Himself the Son of Man, who came "to serve and to give his life as a ransom for the many" (Mark 10:45). He showed Himself the perfect servant of God,(18) who "does not break the bruised reed nor extinguish the smoking flax" (Matt. 12:20).

He acknowledged the power of government and its rights, when He commanded that tribute be given to Caesar: but He gave clear warning that the higher rights of God are to be kept inviolate: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21). In the end, when He completed on the cross the work of redemption whereby He achieved salvation and true freedom for men, He brought His revelation to completion. For He bore witness to the truth,(19) but He refused to impose the truth by force on those who spoke against it. Not by force of blows does His rule assert its claims.(20) It is established by witnessing to the truth and by hearing the truth, and it extends its dominion by the love whereby Christ, lifted up on the cross, draws all men to Himself.(21)

Taught by the word and example of Christ, the Apostles followed the same way. From the very origins of the Church the disciples of Christ strove to convert men to faith in Christ as the Lord; not, however, by the use of coercion or of devices unworthy of the Gospel, but by the power, above all, of the word of God.(22) Steadfastly they proclaimed to all the plan of God our Savior, "who wills that all men should be saved and come to the acknowledgment of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4). At the same time, however, they showed respect for those of weaker stuff, even though they were in error, and thus they made it plain that "each one of us is to render to God an account of himself" (Romans 14:12),(23) and for that reason is bound to obey his conscience. Like Christ Himself, the Apostles were unceasingly bent upon bearing witness to the truth of God, and they showed the fullest measure of boldness in "speaking the word with confidence" (Acts 4:31) (24) before the people and their rulers. With a firm faith they held that the Gospel is indeed the power of God unto salvation for all who believe.(25) Therefore they rejected all "carnal weapons:(26) they followed the example of the gentleness and respectfulness of Christ and they preached the word of God in the full confidence that there was resident in this word itself a divine power able to destroy all the forces arrayed against God(27) and bring men to faith in Christ and to His service.(28) As the Master, so too the Apostles recognized legitimate civil authority. "For there is no power except from God," the Apostle teaches, and thereafter commands: "Let everyone be subject to higher authorities.... He who resists authority resists God's ordinance" (Romans 13:1-5).(29) At the same time, however, they did not hesitate to speak out against governing powers which set themselves in opposition to the holy will of God: "It is necessary to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).(30) This is the way along which the martyrs and other faithful have walked through all ages and over all the earth.

12. In faithfulness therefore to the truth of the Gospel, the Church is following the way of Christ and the apostles when she recognizes and gives support to the principle of religious freedom as befitting the dignity of man and as being in accord with divine revelation. Throughout the ages the Church has kept safe and handed on the doctrine received from the Master and from the apostles. In the life of the People of God, as it has made its pilgrim way through the vicissitudes of human history, there has at times appeared a way of acting that was hardly in accord with the spirit of the Gospel or even opposed to it. Nevertheless, the doctrine of the Church that no one is to be coerced into faith has always stood firm.

Thus the leaven of the Gospel has long been about its quiet work in the minds of men, and to it is due in great measure the fact that in the course of time men have come more widely to recognize their dignity as persons, and the conviction has grown stronger that the person in society is to be kept free from all manner of coercion in matters religious.

13. Among the things that concern the good of the Church and indeed the welfare of society here on earth-things therefore that are always and everywhere to be kept secure and defended against all injury-this certainly is preeminent, namely, that the Church should enjoy that full measure of freedom which her care for the salvation of men requires.(31) This is a sacred freedom, because the only-begotten Son endowed with it the Church which He purchased with His blood. Indeed it is so much the property of the Church that to act against it is to act against the will of God. The freedom of the Church is the fundamental principle in what concerns the relations between the Church and governments and the whole civil order.

In human society and in the face of government the Church claims freedom for herself in her character as a spiritual authority, established by Christ the Lord, upon which there rests, by divine mandate, the duty of going out into the whole world and preaching the Gospel to every creature.(32) The Church also claims freedom for herself in her character as a society of men who have the right to live in society in accordance with the precepts of the Christian faith.(33)

In turn, where the principle of religious freedom is not only proclaimed in words or simply incorporated in law but also given sincere and practical application, there the Church succeeds in achieving a stable situation of right as well as of fact and the independence which is necessary for the fulfillment of her divine mission.

This independence is precisely what the authorities of the Church claim in society.(34) At the same time, the Christian faithful, in common with all other men, possess the civil right not to be hindered in leading their lives in accordance with their consciences. Therefore, a harmony exists between the freedom of the Church and the religious freedom which is to be recognized as the right of all men and communities and sanctioned by constitutional law.

14. In order to be faithful to the divine command, "teach all nations" (Matt. 28:19-20), the Catholic Church must work with all urgency and concern "that the word of God be spread abroad and glorified" (2 Thess. 3:1). Hence the Church earnestly begs of its children that, "first of all, supplications, prayers, petitions, acts of thanksgiving be made for all men.... For this is good and agreeable in the sight of God our Savior, who wills that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:1-4). In the formation of their consciences, the Christian faithful ought carefully to attend to the sacred and certain doctrine of the Church.(35) For the Church is, by the will of Christ, the teacher of the truth. It is her duty to give utterance to, and authoritatively to teach, that truth which is Christ Himself, and also to declare and confirm by her authority those principles of the moral order which have their origins in human nature itself. Furthermore, let Christians walk in wisdom in the face of those outside, "in the Holy Spirit, in unaffected love, in the word of truth" (2 Cor. 6:6-7), and let them be about their task of spreading the light of life with all confidence(36) and apostolic courage, even to the shedding of their blood.

The disciple is bound by a grave obligation toward Christ, his Master, ever more fully to understand the truth received from Him, faithfully to proclaim it, and vigorously to defend it, never-be it understood-having recourse to means that are incompatible with the spirit of the Gospel. At the same time, the charity of Christ urges him to love and have prudence and patience in his dealings with those who are in error or in ignorance with regard to the faith.(37) All is to be taken into account-the Christian duty to Christ, the life-giving word which must be proclaimed, the rights of the human person, and the measure of grace granted by God through Christ to men who are invited freely to accept and profess the faith.

15. The fact is that men of the present day want to be able freely to profess their religion in private and in public. Indeed, religious freedom has already been declared to be a civil right in most constitutions, and it is solemnly recognized in international documents.(38) The further fact is that forms of government still exist under which, even though freedom of religious worship receives constitutional recognition, the powers of government are engaged in the effort to deter citizens from the profession of religion and to make life very difficult and dangerous for religious communities.

This council greets with joy the first of these two facts as among the signs of the times. With sorrow, however, it denounces the other fact, as only to be deplored. The council exhorts Catholics, and it directs a plea to all men, most carefully to consider how greatly necessary religious freedom is, especially in the present condition of the human family. All nations are coming into even closer unity. Men of different cultures and religions are being brought together in closer relationships. There is a growing consciousness of the personal responsibility that every man has. All this is evident. Consequently, in order that relationships of peace and harmony be established and maintained within the whole of mankind, it is necessary that religious freedom be everywhere provided with an effective constitutional guarantee and that respect be shown for the high duty and right of man freely to lead his religious life in society.

May the God and Father of all grant that the human family, through careful observance of the principle of religious freedom in society, may be brought by the grace of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit to the sublime and unending and "glorious freedom of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:21).

NOTES

1. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963: AAS 55 (1963) p. 279; ibid., p. 265; Pius XII, radio message, Dec. 24, 1944: AAS 37 (1945), p. 14.

2. Cf. John XXIII, encycL "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963: AAS 55 (1963), pp. 260-261; Pius XII, radio message, Dec. 24, 1942: AAS 35 (1943), p. 19; Pius XI, encycl. "Mit Brennender Sorge," March 14, 1937: AAS 29 (1937), p. 160; Leo XIII, encycl. "Libertas Praestantissimum," June 20, 1888: Acts of Leo XIII 8 (1888), p. 237-238.

3. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963: AAS 55 (1963), p. 270; Paul VI, radio message, Dec. 22, 1964: AAS 57 (1965), pp. 181-182.

4. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Mater et Magistra," May 15, 1961: AAS 53 (1961), p. 417; idem, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963: AAS 55 (1963), p. 273.

5. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963: AAS 55 (1963), pp. 273-274; Pius XII, radio message, June 1 1941: AAS 33 (1941), p. 200.

6. Cf. Leo XIII, encycl. "Immortale Dei," Nov. 1, 1885: AAS 18 (1885) p. 161.

7. Cf. Lactantius "Divinarum Institutionum," Book V, 19: CSEL 19, pp. 463-464, 465: PL 6, 614 and 616 (ch. 20); St. Ambrose, "Epistola ad Valentianum Imp.," Letter 21: PL 16, 1005; St. Augustine, "Contra Litteras Petiliani," Book II, ch. 83: CSEL 52 p. 112: PL 43, 315; cf. C. 23, q. 5, c. 33, (ed. Friedberg, col. 939); idem, Letter 23: PL 33, 98, idem, Letter 34: PL 33, 132; idem, Letter 35: PL 33, 135; St. Gregory the Great, "Epistola ad Virgilium et Theodorum Episcopos Massiliae Galliarum, Register of Letters I, 45: MGH Ep. 1, p. 72: PL 77, 510-511 (Book I, ep. 47); idem, "Epistola ad Johannem Episcopum Constantinopolitanum," Register of Letters, III, 52: MGH Letter 1, p. 210: PL 77, 649 (Book III, Letter 53); cf. D. 45, c. 1 (ed. Friedberg, col 160); Council of Toledo IV, c. 57: Mansi 10, 633; cf. D. 45, c. 5 (ed. Friedberg, col. 161-162); Clement III: X., V, 6, 9: ed. Friedberg, col. 774; Innocent III, "Epistola ad Arelatensem Archiepiscopum," X., III, 42, 3: Friedberg, col. 646.

8. Cf. CIC, c. 1351; Pius XII, allocution to prelate auditors and other officials and administrators of the tribune of the Holy Roman Rota, Oct. 6, 1946: AAS 38 (1946), p. 394; idem. Encycl Mystici Corporis," June 29, 1943: AAS (1943) p. 243.

9. Cf. Eph. 1:5.

10. Cf. John 6:44.

11. Cf. John 13:13.

12. Cf. Matt. 11:29.

13. Cf Matt. 11:28-30; John 6:67-68.

14. Cf Matt. 9:28-29; Mark 9:23-24; 6:5-6; Paul VI, encycl. "Ecclesiam Suam," Aug. 6, 1964: AAS 56 (1964), pp. 642-643.

15. Cf. Matt. 11:20-24; Rom. 12:19-20; 2 Thess. 1:8.

16. Cf. Matt. 13:30 and 40-42.

17. Cf. Matt. 4:8-10; John 6:15.

18. Cf. Is. 42:1-4.

19. Cf. John 18:37.

20. Cf. Matt. 26:51-53; John 18:36.

21. Cf. John 12:32.

22. Cf. 1 Cor. 2:3-5; 1 Thess. 2:3-5.

23. Cf. Rom. 14:1-23; 1 Cor. 8:9-13; 10:23-33.

24. Cf. Eph. 6:19-20.

25. Cf. Rom. 1:16.

26. Cf. 2 Cor. 10:4; 1 Thess. 5:8-9.

27. Cf. Eph. 6:11-17.

28. Cf. 2 Cor. 10:3-5.

29. Cf. 1 Pet. 2:13-17.

30. Cf. Acts 4: 19-20.

31. Cf. Leo XIII, letter "Officio Sanctissimo," Dec. 22 1887: AAS 20 (1887), p. 269; idem, letter "Ex Litteris," April 7 1887: AAS 19 (1886), p. 465.

32. Cf. Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:18-20, Pius XII, encycl. "Summi Pontificatus," Oct. 20, 1939: AAS 31 (1939). pp. 445-446.

33. Cf. Pius XI, letter "Firmissiman Constantiam," March 28, 1937: AAS 29 (1937), p. 196.

34. Cf. Pius XII, allocution, "Ci Riesce," Dec. 6, 1953: AAS 45 (1953), p. 802.

35. Cf. Pius XII, radio message, March 23, 1952: AAS 44 (1952) pp. 270-278.

36. Cf. Acts 4:29.

37. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963:AAS 55 (1963), pp. 299-300.

38. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963:AAS 55 (1963) pp. 295-296.

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NOSTRA AETATE
Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions
Second Vatican Council

DECLARATION ON
THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS
NOSTRA AETATE
PROCLAIMED BY HIS HOLINESS
POPE PAUL VI
ON OCTOBER 28, 1965

1. In our time, when day by day mankind is being drawn closer together, and the ties between different peoples are becoming stronger, the Church examines more closely he relationship to non- Christian religions. In her task of promoting unity and love among men, indeed among nations, she considers above all in this declaration what men have in common and what draws them to fellowship.

One is the community of all peoples, one their origin, for God made the whole human race to live over the face of the earth.(1) One also is their final goal, God. His providence, His manifestations of goodness, His saving design extend to all men,(2) until that time when the elect will be united in the Holy City, the city ablaze with the glory of God, where the nations will walk in His light.(3)

Men expect from the various religions answers to the unsolved riddles of the human condition, which today, even as in former times, deeply stir the hearts of men: What is man? What is the meaning, the aim of our life? What is moral good, what sin? Whence suffering and what purpose does it serve? Which is the road to true happiness? What are death, judgment and retribution after death? What, finally, is that ultimate inexpressible mystery which encompasses our existence: whence do we come, and where are we going?

2. From ancient times down to the present, there is found among various peoples a certain perception of that hidden power which hovers over the course of things and over the events of human history; at times some indeed have come to the recognition of a Supreme Being, or even of a Father. This perception and recognition penetrates their lives with a profound religious sense.

Religions, however, that are bound up with an advanced culture have struggled to answer the same questions by means of more refined concepts and a more developed language. Thus in Hinduism, men contemplate the divine mystery and express it through an inexhaustible abundance of myths and through searching philosophical inquiry. They seek freedom from the anguish of our human condition either through ascetical practices or profound meditation or a flight to God with love and trust. Again, Buddhism, in its various forms, realizes the radical insufficiency of this changeable world; it teaches a way by which men, in a devout and confident spirit, may be able either to acquire the state of perfect liberation, or attain, by their own efforts or through higher help, supreme illumination. Likewise, other religions found everywhere try to counter the restlessness of the human heart, each in its own manner, by proposing "ways," comprising teachings, rules of life, and sacred rites. The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men. Indeed, she proclaims, and ever must proclaim Christ "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), in whom men may find the fullness of religious life, in whom God has reconciled all things to Himself.(4)

The Church, therefore, exhorts her sons, that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, carried out with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life, they recognize, preserve and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among these men.

3. The Church regards with esteem also the Moslems. They adore the one God, living and subsisting in Himself; merciful and all-powerful, the Creator of heaven and earth,(5) who has spoken to men; they take pains to submit wholeheartedly to even His inscrutable decrees, just as Abraham, with whom the faith of Islam takes pleasure in linking itself, submitted to God. Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God, they revere Him as a prophet. They also honor Mary, His virgin Mother; at times they even call on her with devotion. In addition, they await the day of judgment when God will render their desserts to all those who have been raised up from the dead. Finally, they value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting.

Since in the course of centuries not a few quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems, this sacred synod urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom.

4. As the sacred synod searches into the mystery of the Church, it remembers the bond that spiritually ties the people of the New Covenant to Abraham's stock.

Thus the Church of Christ acknowledges that, according to God's saving design, the beginnings of her faith and her election are found already among the Patriarchs, Moses and the prophets. She professes that all who believe in Christ-Abraham's sons according to faith (6)-are included in the same Patriarch's call, and likewise that the salvation of the Church is mysteriously foreshadowed by the chosen people's exodus from the land of bondage. The Church, therefore, cannot forget that she received the revelation of the Old Testament through the people with whom God in His inexpressible mercy concluded the Ancient Covenant. Nor can she forget that she draws sustenance from the root of that well-cultivated olive tree onto which have been grafted the wild shoots, the Gentiles.(7) Indeed, the Church believes that by His cross Christ, Our Peace, reconciled Jews and Gentiles. making both one in Himself.(8)

The Church keeps ever in mind the words of the Apostle about his kinsmen: "theirs is the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the law and the worship and the promises; theirs are the fathers and from them is the Christ according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:4-5), the Son of the Virgin Mary. She also recalls that the Apostles, the Church's main-stay and pillars, as well as most of the early disciples who proclaimed Christ's Gospel to the world, sprang from the Jewish people.

As Holy Scripture testifies, Jerusalem did not recognize the time of her visitation,(9) nor did the Jews in large number, accept the Gospel; indeed not a few opposed its spreading.(10) Nevertheless, God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers; He does not repent of the gifts He makes or of the calls He issues-such is the witness of the Apostle.(11) In company with the Prophets and the same Apostle, the Church awaits that day, known to God alone, on which all peoples will address the Lord in a single voice and "serve him shoulder to shoulder" (Soph. 3:9).(12)

Since the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews is thus so great, this sacred synod wants to foster and recommend that mutual understanding and respect which is the fruit, above all, of biblical and theological studies as well as of fraternal dialogues.

True, the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ;(13) still, what happened in His passion cannot be charged against all the Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures. All should see to it, then, that in catechetical work or in the preaching of the word of God they do not teach anything that does not conform to the truth of the Gospel and the spirit of Christ.

Furthermore, in her rejection of every persecution against any man, the Church, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel's spiritual love, decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone.

Besides, as the Church has always held and holds now, Christ underwent His passion and death freely, because of the sins of men and out of infinite love, in order that all may reach salvation. It is, therefore, the burden of the Church's preaching to proclaim the cross of Christ as the sign of God's all-embracing love and as the fountain from which every grace flows.

5. We cannot truly call on God, the Father of all, if we refuse to treat in a brotherly way any man, created as he is in the image of God. Man's relation to God the Father and his relation to men his brothers are so linked together that Scripture says: "He who does not love does not know God" (1 John 4:8).

No foundation therefore remains for any theory or practice that leads to discrimination between man and man or people and people, so far as their human dignity and the rights flowing from it are concerned.

The Church reproves, as foreign to the mind of Christ, any discrimination against men or harassment of them because of their race, color, condition of life, or religion. On the contrary, following in the footsteps of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, this sacred synod ardently implores the Christian faithful to "maintain good fellowship among the nations" (1 Peter 2:12), and, if possible, to live for their part in peace with all men,(14) so that they may truly be sons of the Father who is in heaven.(15)

NOTES

1. Cf. Acts 17:26

2. Cf. Wis. 8:1; Acts 14:17; Rom. 2:6-7; 1 Tim. 2:4

3. Cf. Apoc. 21:23f.

4. Cf 2 Cor. 5:18-19

5. Cf St. Gregory VII, letter XXI to Anzir (Nacir), King of Mauritania (Pl. 148, col. 450f.)

6. Cf. Gal. 3:7

7. Cf. Rom. 11:17-24

8. Cf. Eph. 2:14-16

9. Cf. Lk. 19:44

10. Cf. Rom. 11:28

11. Cf. Rom. 11:28-29; cf. dogmatic Constitution, Lumen Gentium (Light of nations) AAS, 57 (1965) pag. 20

12. Cf. Is. 66:23; Ps. 65:4; Rom. 11:11-32

13. Cf. John. 19:6

14. Cf. Rom. 12:18

15. Cf. Matt. 5:45

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CHRISTUS DOMINUS
Decree Concerning the Pastoral Office of Bishops
Second Vatican Council

DECREE CONCERNING
THE PASTORAL OFFICE OF BISHOPS
IN THE CHURCH
CHRISTUS DOMINUS
PROCLAIMED BY
HIS HOLINESS, POPE PAUL VI
ON OCTOBER 28, 1965

PREFACE

1. Christ the Lord, Son of the living God, came that He might save His people from their sins(1) and that all men might be sanctified. Just as He Himself was sent by the Father, so He also sent His Apostles.(2) Therefore, He sanctified them, conferring on them the Holy Spirit, so that they also might glorify the Father upon earth and save men, "to the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12), which is the Church.

2. In this Church of Christ the Roman pontiff, as the successor of Peter, to whom Christ entrusted the feeding of His sheep and lambs, enjoys supreme, full, immediate, and universal authority over the care of souls by divine institution. Therefore, as pastor of all the faithful, he is sent to provide for the common good of the universal Church and for the good of the individual churches. Hence, he holds a primacy of ordinary power over all the churches.

The bishops themselves, however, having been appointed by the Holy Spirit, are successors of the Apostles as pastors of souls.(3) Together with the supreme pontiff and under his authority they are sent to continue throughout the ages the work of Christ, the eternal pastor.(4) Christ gave the Apostles and their successors the command and the power to teach all nations, to hallow men in the truth, and to feed them. Bishops, therefore, have been made true and authentic teachers of the faith, pontiffs, and pastors through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to them.(5)

3. Bishops, sharing in the solicitude for all the churches, exercise this episcopal office of theirs, which they have received through episcopal consecration,(6) in communion with and under the authority of the supreme pontiff. As far as their teaching authority and pastoral government are concerned, all are united in a college or body with respect to the universal Church of God.

They exercise this office individually in reference to the portions of the Lord's flock assigned to them, each one taking care of the particular church committed to him, or sometimes some of them jointly providing for certain common needs of various churches.

This sacred synod, therefore, attentive to the conditions of human association which have brought about a new order of things in our time,(7) intends to determine more exactly the pastoral office of bishops and, therefore, has decreed the things that follow.

CHAPTER I

THE RELATIONSHIP OF BISHOPS TO THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

I. The Role of the Bishops in the Universal Church

4. By virtue of sacramental consecration and hierarchical communion with the head and members of the college, bishops are constituted as members of the episcopal body.(1) "The order of bishops is the successor to the college of the apostles in teaching and pastoral direction, or rather, in the episcopal order, the apostolic body continues without a break. Together with its head, the Roman pontiff, and never without this head it exists as the subject of supreme, plenary power over the universal Church. But this power cannot be exercised except with the agreement of the Roman pontiff."(2) This power however, "is exercised in a solemn manner in an ecumenical council."(3) Therefore, this sacred synod decrees that all bishops who are members of the episcopal college, have the right to be present at an ecumenical council.

"The exercise of this collegiate power in union with the pope is possible although the bishops are stationed all over the world, provided that the head of the college gives them a call to collegiate action, or, at least, gives the unified action of the dispersed bishops such approval, or such unconstrained acceptance, that it becomes truly collegiate action."(4)

5. Bishops chosen from various parts of the world, in ways and manners established or to be established by the Roman pontiff, render more effective assistance to the supreme pastor of the Church in a deliberative body which will be called by the proper name of Synod of Bishops.(5) Since it shall be acting in the name of the entire Catholic episcopate, it will at the same time show that all the bishops in hierarchical communion partake of the solicitude for the universal Church.(6)

6. As legitimate successors of the Apostles and members of the episcopal college, bishops should realize that they are bound together and should manifest a concern for all the churches. For by divine institution and the rule of the apostolic office each one together with all the other bishops is responsible for the Church.(7) They should especially be concerned about those parts of the world where the word of God has not yet been proclaimed or where the faithful, particularly because of the small number of priests, are in danger of departing from the precepts of the Christian life, and even of losing the faith itself.

Let bishops, therefore, make every effort to have the faithful actively support and promote works of evangelization and the apostolate. Let them strive, moreover, to see to it that suitable sacred ministers as well as auxiliaries, both religious and lay, be prepared for the missions and other areas suffering from a lack of clergy. They should also see to it, as much as possible, that some of their own priests go to the above-mentioned missions or dioceses to exercise the sacred ministry there either permanently or for a set period of time.

Bishops should also be mindful, in administering ecclesiastical property, of the needs not only of their own dioceses but also of the other particular churches, for they are also a part of the one Church of Christ. Finally, they should direct their attention, according to their means, to the relief of disasters by which other dioceses and regions are affected.

7. Let them especially embrace in brotherly affection those bishops who, for the sake of Christ, are plagued with slander and indigence, detained in prisons, or held back from their ministry. They should take an active brotherly interest in them so that their sufferings may be assuaged and alleviated through the prayers and good works of their confreres.

II. Bishops and the Apostolic See

8. (a) To bishops, as successors of the Apostles, in the dioceses entrusted to them, there belongs per se all the ordinary, proper, and immediate authority which is required for the exercise of their pastoral office. But this never in any way infringes upon the power which the Roman pontiff has, by virtue of his office, of reserving cases to himself or to some other authority.

(b) The general law of the Church grants the faculty to each diocesan bishop to dispense, in a particular case, the faithful over whom they legally exercise authority as often as they judge that it contributes to their spiritual welfare, except in those cases which have been especially reserved by the supreme authority of the Church.

9. In exercising supreme, full, and immediate power in the universal Church, the Roman pontiff makes use of the departments of the Roman Curia which, therefore, perform their duties in his name and with his authority for the good of the churches and in the service of the sacred pastors.

The fathers of this sacred council, however, desire that these departments-which have furnished distinguished assistance to the Roman pontiff and the pastors of the Church-be reorganized and better adapted to the needs of the times, regions, and rites especially as regards their number, name, competence and peculiar method of' procedure, as well as the coordination of work among them.(8) The fathers also desire that, in view of the very nature of the pastoral office proper to the bishops, the office of legates of the Roman pontiff be more precisely determined.

10. Furthermore, since these departments are established for the good of the universal Church, it is desirable that their members, officials, and consultors as well as legates of the Roman pontiff be more widely taken from various regions of the Church, insofar as it is possible. In such a way the offices and central organs of the Catholic Church will exhibit a truly universal character.

It is also desired that some bishops, too-especially diocesan bishops-will be chosen as members of the departments, for they will be able to report more fully to the supreme pontiff the thinking, the desires, and the needs of all the churches.

Finally, the fathers of the council think it would be most advantageous if these same departments would listen more attentively to laymen who are outstanding for their virtue, knowledge, and experience. In such a way they will have an appropriate share in Church affairs.

CHAPTER II

BISHOPS AND THEIR PARTICULAR CHURCHES OR DIOCESES

I. Diocesan Bishops

11. A diocese is a portion of the people of God which is entrusted to a bishop to be shepherded by him with the cooperation of the presbytery. Thus by adhering to its pastor and gathered together by him through the Gospel and the Eucharist in the Holy Spirit, it constitutes a particular church in which the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative.

Individual bishops who have been entrusted with the care of a particular church-under the authority of the supreme pontiff-feed their sheep in the name of the Lord as their own, ordinary, and immediate pastors, performing for them the office of teaching, sanctifying, and governing. Nevertheless, they should recognize the rights which legitimately belong to patriarchs or other hierarchical authorities.(1)

Bishops should dedicate themselves to their apostolic office as witness of Christ before all men. They should not only look after those who already follow the Prince of Pastors but should also wholeheartedly devote themselves to those who have strayed in any way from the path of truth or are ignorant of the Gospel of Christ and His saving mercy until finally all men walk "in all goodness and justice and truth" (Eph. 5:9).

12. In exercising their duty of teaching-which is conspicuous among the principal duties of bishops(2)-they should announce the Gospel of Christ to men, calling them to a faith in the power of the Spirit or confirming them in a living faith. They should expound the whole mystery of Christ to them, namely, those truths the ignorance of which is ignorance of Christ. At the same time they should point out the divinely revealed way to give glory to God and thereby to attain to eternal happiness.(3)

They should show, moreover, that earthly goods and human institutions according to the plan of God the Creator are also disposed for man's salvation and therefore can contribute much to the building up of the body of Christ.

Therefore, they should teach, according to the doctrine of the Church, the great value of these things: the human person with his freedom and bodily life, the family and its unity and stability, the procreation and education of children, civil society with its laws and professions, labor and leisure, the arts and technical inventions, poverty and affluence. Finally, they should set forth the ways by which are to be answered the most serious questions concerning the ownership, increase, and just distribution of material goods, peace and war, and brotherly relations among all countries.(4)

13. The bishops should present Christian doctrine in a manner adapted to the needs of the times, that is to say, in a manner that will respond to the difficulties and questions by which people are especially burdened and troubled. They should also guard that doctrine, teaching the faithful to defend and propagate it. In propounding this doctrine they should manifest the maternal solicitude of the Church toward all men whether they be believers or not. With a special affection they should attend upon the poor and the lower classes to whom the Lord sent them to preach the Gospel.

Since it is the mission of the Church to converse with the human society in which it lives,(5) it is especially the duty of bishops to seek out men and both request and promote dialogue with them. These conversations on salvation ought to be noted for clarity of speech as well as humility and mildness in order that at all times truth may be joined to charity and understanding with love. Likewise they should be noted for due prudence joined with trust, which fosters friendship and thus is capable of bringing about a union of minds.(6)

They should also strive to make use of the various media at hand nowadays for proclaiming Christian doctrine, namely, first of all, preaching and catechetical instruction which always hold the first place, then the presentation of this doctrine in schools, academies, conferences, and meetings of every kind, and finally its dissemination through public statements at times of outstanding events as well as by the press and various other media of communication, which by all means ought to be used in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ.(7)

14. Bishops should take pains that catechetical instruction-which is intended to make the faith, as illumined by teaching, a vital, explicit and effective force in the lives of men-be given with sedulous care to both children and adolescents, youths and adults. In this instruction a suitable arrangement should be observed as well as a method suited to the matter that is being treated and to the character, ability, age, and circumstances of the life of the students. Finally, they should see to it that this instruction is based on Sacred Scripture, tradition, the liturgy, magisterium, and life of the Church.

Moreover, they should take care that catechists be properly trained for their function so that they will be thoroughly acquainted with the doctrine of the Church and will have both a theoretical and a practical knowledge of the laws of psychology and of pedagogical methods.

Bishops should also strive to renew or at least adapt in a better way the instruction of adult catechumens.

15. In exercising their office of sanctifying, bishops should be mindful that they have been taken from among men and appointed their representative before God in order to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. Bishops enjoy the fullness of the sacrament of orders and both presbyters and deacons are dependent upon them in the exercise of their authority. For the presbyters are the prudent fellow workers of the episcopal order and are themselves consecrated as true priests of the New Testament, just as deacons are ordained for the ministry and serve the people of God in communion with the bishop and his presbytery. Therefore bishops are the principal dispensers of the mysteries of God, as well as being the governors, promoters, and guardians of the entire liturgical life in the church committed to them.(8)

They should, therefore, constantly exert themselves to have the faithful know and live the paschal mystery more deeply through the Eucharist and thus become a firmly-knit body in the unity of the charity of Christ.(9) "Intent upon prayer and the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4), they should devote their labor to this end that all those committed to their care may be of one mind in prayer(10) and through the reception of the sacraments may grow in grace and be faithful witnesses to the Lord.

As those who lead others to perfection, bishops should be diligent in fostering holiness among their clerics, religious, and laity according to the special vocation of each.(11) They should also be mindful of their obligation to give an example of holiness in charity, humility, and simplicity of life. Let them so hallow the churches entrusted to them that the feeling of the universal Church of Christ may shine forth fully in them. For that reason they should foster priestly and religious vocations as much as possible, and should take a special interest in missionary vocations.

16. In exercising their office of father and pastor, bishops should stand in the midst of their people as those who serve.(12) Let them be good shepherds who know their sheep and whose sheep know them. Let them be true fathers who excel in the spirit of love and solicitude for all and to whose divinely conferred authority all gratefully submit themselves. Let them so gather and mold the whole family of their flock that everyone, conscious of his own duties, may live and work in the communion of love.

In order effectively to accomplish these things, bishops, "ready for every good work" (2 Tim. 2:21) and "enduring all things for the sake of the chosen ones" (2 Tim. 2:10), should arrange their life in such a way as to accommodate it to the needs of our times.

Bishops should always embrace priests with a special love since the latter to the best of their ability assume the bishops' anxieties and carry them on day by day so zealously. They should regard the priests as sons and friends(13) and be ready to listen to them. Through their trusting familiarity with their priests they should strive to promote the whole pastoral work of the entire diocese.

They should be solicitous for the spiritual, intellectual and material welfare of the priests so that the latter can live holy and pious lives and fulfill their ministry faithfully and fruitfully. Therefore, they should encourage institutes and hold special meetings in which priests might gather from time to time both for the performance of longer exercises and the renewal of their spiritual life and for the acquisition of deeper subjects, especially Sacred Scripture and theology, the more important social questions, and the new methods of pastoral activity.

With active mercy bishops should pursue priests who are involved in any danger or who have failed in certain respects.

In order to be able to look more closely to the welfare of the faithful according to the condition of each one, bishops should strive to become duly acquainted with their needs in the social circumstances in which they live. Therefore, they ought to employ suitable methods, especially social research. They should manifest their concern for everyone, no matter what their age, condition, or nationality, be they natives, strangers, or foreigners. In exercising this pastoral care they should preserve for their faithful the share proper to them in Church affairs; they should also respect their duty and right of actively collaborating in the building up of the Mystical Body of Christ.

They should deal lovingly with the separated brethren, urging the faithful also to conduct themselves with great kindness and charity in their regard and fostering ecumenism as it is understood by the Church.(14) They should also have a place in their hearts for the non-baptized so that upon them too there may shine the charity of Christ Jesus, to whom the bishops are witnesses before all men.

17. Various forms of the apostolate should be encouraged, and in the whole diocese or in any particular areas of it the coordination and close connection of all apostolic works should be fostered under the direction of the bishop. Thus all undertakings and organizations, be they catechetical, missionary, charitable, social, familial, educational, or anything else pursuing a pastoral aim, should be directed toward harmonious action. Thus at the same time the unity of the diocese will also be made more evident.

The faithful should be earnestly urged to assume their duty of carrying on the apostolate, each according to his state in life and ability. They should be admonished to participate in and give aid to the various works of the apostolate of the laity, especially Catholic Action. Those associations should also be promoted and supported which either directly or indirectly pursue a supernatural objective, that is, either the attaining of a more perfect life, the spreading of the Gospel of Christ to all men, and the promoting of Christian doctrine or the increase of public worship, or the pursuing of social aims or the performing of works of piety and charity.

The forms of the apostolate should be properly adapted to the needs of the present day with regard not only for man's spiritual and moral circumstances but also for his social, demographic, and economic conditions. Religious and social research, through offices of pastoral sociology, contributes much to the efficacious and fruitful attainment of that goal, and it is highly recommended.

18. Special concern should be shown for those among the faithful who, on account of their way of life, cannot sufficiently make use of the common and ordinary pastoral care of parish priests or are quite cut off from it. Among this group are the majority of migrants, exiles and refugees, seafarers, air-travelers, gypsies, and others of this kind. Suitable pastoral methods should also be promoted to sustain the spiritual life of those who go to other lands for a time for the sake of recreation.

Episcopal conferences, especially national ones, should pay special attention to the very pressing problems concerning the above-mentioned groups. Through voluntary agreement and united efforts, they should look to and promote their spiritual care by means of suitable methods and institutions. They should also bear in mind the special rules either already laid down or to be laid down by the Apostolic See(15) which can be wisely adapted to the circumstances of time, place, and persons.

19. In discharging their apostolic office, which concerns the salvation of souls, bishops per se enjoy full and perfect freedom and independence from any civil authority. Hence, the exercise of their ecclesiastical office may not be hindered, directly or indirectly, nor may they be forbidden to communicate freely with the Apostolic See, or ecclesiastical authorities, or their subjects.

Assuredly, while sacred pastors devote themselves to the spiritual care of their flock, they also in fact have regard for their social and civil progress and prosperity. According to the nature of their office and as behooves bishops, they collaborate actively with public authorities for this purpose and advocate obedience to just laws and reverence for legitimately constituted authorities.

20. Since the apostolic office of bishops was instituted by Christ the Lord and pursues a spiritual and supernatural purpose, this sacred ecumenical synod declares that the right of nominating and appointing bishops belongs properly, peculiarly, and per se exclusively to the competent ecclesiastical authority.

Therefore, for the purpose of duly protecting the freedom of the Church and of promoting more conveniently and efficiently the welfare of the faithful, this holy council desires that in future no more rights or privileges of election, nomination, presentation, or designation for the office of bishop be granted to civil authorities. The civil authorities, on the other hand, whose favorable attitude toward the Church the sacred synod gratefully acknowledges and highly appreciates, are most kindly requested voluntarily to renounce the above-mentioned rights and privileges which they presently enjoy by reason of a treaty or custom, after discussing the matter with the Apostolic See.

21. Since the pastoral office of bishops is so important and weighty, diocesan bishops and others regarded in law as their equals, who have become less capable of fulfilling their duties properly because of the increasing burden of age or some other serious reason, are earnestly requested to offer their resignation from office either at their own initiative or upon the invitation of the competent authority. If the competent authority should accept the resignation, it will make provision both for the suitable support of those who have resigned and for special rights to be accorded them.

II. Diocesan Boundaries

22. For a diocese to fulfill its purpose the nature of the Church must be clearly evident to the people of God who constitute that diocese. To this end also bishops must be able to carry out their pastoral duties effectively among their people. Finally, the welfare of the people of God must be served as perfectly as possible.

All this demands, then, a proper determination of the boundaries of dioceses and a distribution of clergy and resources that is reasonable and in keeping with the needs of the apostolate. All these things will benefit not only the clergy and Christian people involved, but also the entire Catholic Church.

Concerning diocesan boundaries, therefore, this sacred synod decrees that, to the extent required by the good of souls, a fitting revision of diocesan boundaries be undertaken prudently and as soon as possible. This can be done by dividing dismembering or uniting them, or by changing their boundaries, or by determining a better place for the episcopal see or, finally, especially in the case of dioceses having larger cities, by providing them with a new internal organization.

23. In revising diocesan boundaries first place must be accorded to organic unity of each diocese, with due regard to the personnel, the offices and institutions, which form, as it were, a living body. In individual cases all circumstances should be carefully studied and the general criteria which follow should be kept in mind.

1.) In determining a diocesan boundary, as far as possible consideration should be given the variety in composition of the people of God, for this can contribute greatly to a more effective exercise of the pastoral office. At the same time the natural population units of people, together with the civil jurisdictions and social institutions that compose their organic structure, should be preserved as far as possible as units. For this reason, obviously, the territory of each diocese should be continuous.

Attention should also be given, if necessary, to civil boundaries and the special characteristics of regions and peoples, such as their psychological, economic, geographic and historical backgrounds.

2.) The extent of the diocese and the number of its inhabitants should generally be such that, on the one hand, the bishop himself- even though assisted by others-can officiate at pontifical functions, make pastoral visitations, faithfully direct and coordinate all the works of the apostolate in the diocese and know well especially his priests, and also the religious and lay people who are engaged in diocesan projects. On the other hand, an adequate and suitable area should be provided so that bishop and clergy, mindful also of the needs of the universal Church, can usefully devote all their energies to the ministry.

3.) Finally, in order that the ministry of salvation be more effectively carried out in each diocese, it should be considered a general rule that each diocese have clergy, in number and qualifications at least sufficient, for the proper care of the people of God; also, there should be no lack of the offices, institutions and organizations which are proper to the particular church and which experience has shown necessary for its efficient government and apostolate; finally, resources for the support of personnel and institutions should be at hand or at least prudently foreseen in prospect.

For this same purpose, where there are faithful of a different rite, the diocesan bishop should provide for their spiritual needs either through priests or parishes of that rite or through an episcopal vicar endowed with the necessary faculties. Wherever it is fitting, the last named should also have episcopal rank. Otherwise the Ordinary himself may perform the office of an Ordinary of different rites. If for certain reasons, these prescriptions are not applicable in the judgment of the Apostolic See, then a proper hierarchy for the different rites is to be established.(16)

Also, where similar situations exist, provision should be made for the faithful of different language groups, either through priests or parishes of the same language, or through an episcopal vicar well versed in the language-and if needs be having the episcopal dignity-or at least in some other more appropriate way.

24. In order to bring about the changes and alterations of dioceses as set forth in numbers 22-23-and leaving untouched the discipline of the Oriental Churches-it is desirable that the competent episcopal conferences examine these matters each for its respective territory. If deemed opportune, they may employ a special episcopal commission for this purpose, but always taking into account the opinions of the bishops of the provinces or regions concerned. Finally, they are to propose their recommendations and desires to the Apostolic See.

III. Assistants in the Pastoral Office of the Diocesan Bishops

1. Coadjutor and auxiliary bishops

25. The pastoral office of Bishops should be so constituted for the governing of dioceses that the good of the Lord's flock is always the supreme consideration. Rightly to achieve this goal, auxiliary bishops will frequently be appointed because the diocesan bishop cannot personally fulfill all his episcopal duties as the good of souls demands, either because of the vast extent of the diocese or the great number of its inhabitants, or because of the special nature of the apostolate or other reasons of a different nature. Sometimes, in fact, a particular need requires that a coadjutor bishop be appointed to assist the diocesan bishop. Coadjutor and auxiliary bishops should be granted those faculties necessary for rendering their work more effective and safeguarding the dignity proper to bishops. This, of course, should always be accomplished without detriment to the unity of the diocesan administration and the authority of the diocesan bishop.

Furthermore, coadjutor and auxiliary bishops, since they are called to share part of the burden of the diocesan bishops, so should exercise their office that they may proceed in all matters in single-minded agreement with him. In addition, they should always show respect and reverence for the diocesan bishop and he, in turn, should have a fraternal love for coadjutor and auxiliary bishops and hold them in esteem.

26. To the extent that the good of souls demands, the diocesan bishop should not hesitate to ask the competent authority for one or more auxiliaries who will be appointed for the diocese without the right of succession.

If there is no provision for it in the letter of nomination, the diocesan bishop is to appoint his auxiliary or auxiliaries as vicar generals or at least as episcopal vicars. They shall be dependent upon his authority only and he may wish to consult them in examining questions of major importance, especially of a pastoral nature.

Unless competent authority has otherwise determined, the powers and faculties which auxiliary bishops have by law do not cease when the office of the diocesan bishop comes to an end. It is also desirable that when the See is vacant the office of ruling the diocese-unless some serious reasons persuade otherwise-should be committed to the auxiliary bishop or, when there are more than one, to one of the auxiliaries.

A coadjutor bishop, appointed with the right of succession, must always be named vicar general by the diocesan bishop. In particular cases the competent authority can grant him even more extensive faculties.

In order to provide for the greatest possible present and future good of the diocese, the diocesan bishop and his coadjutor should not fail to consult with each other on matters of great importance.

2. The diocesan curia and commissions

27. The most important office in the diocesan curia is that of vicar general. However, as often as the proper government of the diocese requires it, one or more episcopal vicars can be named by the bishop. These automatically enjoy the same authority which the common law grants the vicar general, but only for a certain part of the diocese, or for a determined type of transaction or for the faithful of a determined rite.

Among the collaborators of the bishop in the government of the diocese are numbered those presbyters who constitute his senate, or council, such as the cathedral chapter, the board of consultors or other committees according to the circumstances or nature of various localities. These institutions, especially the cathedral chapters, should be reorganized wherever necessary in keeping with present day needs.

Priests and lay people who belong to the diocesan curia should realize that they are making a helpful contribution to the pastoral ministry of the bishop.

The diocesan curia should be so organized that it is an appropriate instrument for the bishop, not only for administering the diocese but also for carrying out the works of the apostolate.

It is greatly desired that in each diocese a pastoral commission will be established over which the diocesan bishop himself will preside and in which specially chosen clergy, religious and lay people will participate. The duty of this commission will be to investigate and weigh pastoral undertakings and to formulate practical conclusions regarding them.

3. The diocesan clergy

28. All presbyters, both diocesan and religious, participate in and exercise with the bishop the one priesthood of Christ and are thereby constituted prudent cooperators of the episcopal order. In the care of souls, however, the first place is held by diocesan priests who are incardinated or attached to a particular church, for they have fully dedicated themselves in the service of caring for a single portion of the Lord's flock. In consequence, they form one presbytery and one family whose father is the bishop. In order to distribute more equitably and properly the sacred ministries among his priests, the bishop should possess a necessary freedom in bestowing offices and benefices. Therefore, rights or privileges which in any way limit this freedom are to be suppressed.

The relationships between the bishop and the diocesan priests should rest most especially upon the bonds of supernatural charity so that the harmony of the will of the priests with that of their bishop will render their pastoral activity more fruitful. Wherefore, for the sake of greater service to souls, let the bishop call the priests into dialogue, especially about pastoral matters. This he should do not only on a given occasion but at regularly fixed intervals insofar as this is possible.

Furthermore all diocesan priests should be united among themselves and so should share a genuine concern for the spiritual welfare of the whole diocese. They should also be mindful that the benefits they receive by reason of their ecclesiastical office are closely bound up with their sacred work. Therefore they should contribute generously, as the bishop may direct and as their means permit, to the material needs of the diocese.

29. The closer collaborators of the bishop are those priests who are charged with a pastoral office or apostolic organizations of a supra-parochial nature, whether in a certain area of the diocese or among special groups of the faithful or with respect to a specific kind of activity.

Priests assigned by the bishop to various works of the apostolate, whether in schools or in other institutions or associations, contribute an exceedingly valuable assistance. Those priests also who are engaged in supra-diocesan works are commended to the special consideration of the bishop in whose diocese they reside, for they perform outstanding works of the apostolate.

30. Pastors, however, are cooperators of the bishop in a very special way, for as pastors in their own name they are entrusted with the care of souls in a certain part of the diocese under the bishop's authority.

1.) In exercising this care of souls, pastors and their assistants should so fulfill their duty of teaching, sanctifying and governing that the faithful and the parish communities will truly realize that they are members both of the diocese and of the universal Church. For this reason, they should collaborate with other pastors and priests who exercise a pastoral office in the area (such as vicars forane and deans), as well as with those engaged in works of a supra-parochial nature. In this way the pastoral work in the diocese will be unified and made more effective.

Moreover, the care of souls should always be infused with a missionary spirit so that it reaches out as it should to everyone living within the parish boundaries. If the pastor cannot contact certain groups of people, he should seek the assistance of others, even laymen who can assist him in the apostolate.

To render the care of souls more efficacious, community life for priests-especially those attached to the same parish-is highly recommended. This way of living, while it encourages apostolic action, also affords an example of charity and unity to the faithful.

2.) In the exercise of their teaching office it is the duty of pastors to preach God's word to all the Christian people so that, rooted in faith, hope and charity, they will grow in Christ, and as a Christian community bear witness to that charity which the Lord commended.(17) It is also the duty of pastors to bring the faithful to a full knowledge of the mystery of salvation through a catechetical instruction which is consonant with each one's age. In imparting this instruction they should seek not only the assistance of religious but also the cooperation of the laity, establishing also the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.

In discharging their duty of sanctifying their people, pastors should see to it that the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice is the center and culmination of the whole life of the Christian community. They should labor without stint that the faithful are nourished with spiritual food through the devout and frequent reception of the Sacraments and through intelligent and active participation in the Liturgy. Pastors should also be mindful of how much the sacrament of Penance contributes to developing the Christian life and, therefore, should always make themselves available to hear the confessions of the faithful. If necessary, they should invite the assistance of priests who are experienced in various languages.

In fulfilling their office as shepherd, pastors should take pains to know their own flock. Since they are the servants of all the sheep, they should encourage a full Christian life among the individual faithful and also in families, in associations especially dedicated to the apostolate, and in the whole parish community. Therefore, they should visit homes and schools to the extent that their pastoral work demands. They should pay especial attention to adolescents and youth. They should devote themselves with a paternal love to the poor and the sick. They should have a particular concern for workingmen. Finally, they should encourage the faithful to assist in the works of the apostolate.

3.) Assistant pastors, as cooperators with the pastor, make under the authority of the pastor an indispensable and active contribution to the pastoral ministry. Therefore, there should always be fraternal association, mutual charity and reverence between the pastor and his assistants. They should assist one another with counsel, help and example, providing a united will and common zeal in the service of the parish.

31. In forming a judgment on the suitability of a priest for the administration of any parish the bishop should take into consideration not only his knowledge of doctrine but also his piety, apostolic zeal and other gifts and qualities which are necessary for the proper exercise of the care of souls.

Now the parish exists solely for the good of souls. Wherefore, the bishop should be able to provide more easily and effectively for vacant pastorates. To this end all rights whatsoever of presentation, nomination, reservation, excepting the right of Religious-and where it exists, the law of concursus whether general or particular-are to be suppressed.

Pastors should enjoy in their respective parishes that stability of office which the good of souls demands. The distinction between removable and irremovable pastors is to be abrogated and the procedure for transferring and removing pastors is to be re-examined and simplified. In this way the bishop, while observing natural and canonical equity, can better provide for the needs of the good of souls.

Pastors who are unable to fulfill their office properly and fruitfully because of the increasing burden of old age or some other serious reason are urgently requested to tender their resignation voluntarily upon the invitation of the bishop. The bishop should provide suitable support for those who have resigned.

32. Finally, the same concern for souls should be the basis for determining or reconsidering the erection or suppression of parishes and any other changes of this kind which the bishop is empowered to undertake on his own authority.

4. Religious

33. (In all that follows with Religious are included also the members of other institutes who profess the evangelical counsels.) All Religious have the duty, each according to his proper vocation, of cooperating zealously and diligently in building up and increasing the whole Mystical Body of Christ and for the good of the particular churches.

It is their first duty to foster these objectives by prayer, works of penance and the example of their own life for which this sacred synod strongly urges them to increase their esteem and zeal. With due consideration for the character proper to each religious community, they should also enter more vigorously into the external works of the apostolate.

34. Religious priests are by consecration assumed into the responsibilities of the presbyterate so as to become themselves the prudent cooperators of the episcopal order. Today they can be of even greater help to bishops in view of the greater needs of souls. Therefore, they can be said in a real sense to belong to the clergy of the diocese inasmuch as they share in the care of souls and in carrying out works of the apostolate under the authority of the prelates.

Other members of religious communities, both men and women, also belong in a special way to the diocesan family and offer great assistance to the sacred hierarchy. With the increasing demands of the apostolate they can and should offer that assistance even more and more.

35. In order that the works of the apostolate be carried out harmoniously in individual dioceses and that the unity of diocesan discipline be preserved intact, these principles are established as fundamental:

1.) All Religious should always look upon the bishops, as upon successors of the Apostles, with devoted respect and reverence. Whenever they are legitimately called upon to undertake works of the apostolate, they are obliged to discharge their duties as active and obedient helpers of the bishops.(18) Indeed, Religious should consider it an honor to respond promptly and faithfully to the requests and desires of the bishops and in such a way they may assume an even more ample role in the ministry of human salvation. This they should do with due respect for the character of their institute and in keeping with their constitutions which, if needs be, should be accommodated to this goal in accord with the principles of this conciliar decree.

Especially in view of the urgent need of souls and the scarcity of diocesan clergy, Religious communities which the not dedicated exclusively to the contemplative life can be called upon by the bishops to assist in various pastoral ministries. They should, however, keep in mind the particular character of each community. Superiors should encourage this work to the utmost, by accepting parishes, even on a temporary basis.

2.) Religious engaged in the active apostolate, however, must always be imbued with the spirit of their Religious community, and remain faithful to the observance of their rule and spirit of submissiveness due to their own superiors. Bishops should not neglect to impress this obligation upon them.

3.) The institute of exemption, by which Religious are called to the service of the supreme pontiff or other ecclesiastical authority and withdrawn from the jurisdiction of bishops, refers chiefly to the internal order of their communities so that in them all things may be properly coordinated and the growth and perfection of the Religious common life promoted.(19) These communities are also exempt so that the supreme pontiff can dispose of them for the good of the universal Church(20) and any other competent authority for the good of the churches under its own jurisdiction.

This exemption, however, does not exclude Religious in individual dioceses from the jurisdiction of bishops in accordance with the norm of law, insofar as the performance of their pastoral office and the right ordering of the care of souls requires.(21)

4.) All Religious, exempt and non-exempt, are subject to the authority of the local Ordinaries in those things which pertain to the public exercise of divine worship-except where differences in rites are concerned-the care of souls, the sacred preaching intended for the people, the religious and moral education of the Christian faithful, especially of the children, catechetical instruction and liturgical formation. They are subject to the local Ordinary also in what pertains to the decorum proper to the clerical state as well as in the various works which concern the exercise of the sacred apostolate. Catholic schools conducted by Religious are also subject to the authority of the local Ordinaries for purposes of general policy- making and vigilance, but the right of Religious to direct them remains intact. Religious also are bound to observe all those things which councils or conferences of bishops shall legitimately prescribe for observance by all.

5.) A well-ordered cooperation is to be encouraged between various religious communities and between them and the diocesan clergy. There should also be a very close coordination of all apostolic works and activities which especially depend upon a supernatural attitude of hearts and minds, rooted in and founded upon charity. The Apostolic See is competent to supervise this coordination for the universal Church; sacred pastors are competent in their own respective dioceses: and patriarchal synods and episcopal conferences in their own territory.

For those works of the apostolate which Religious are to undertake, bishops or episcopal conferences, religious superiors or conferences of major religious superiors should take action only after mutual consultations.

6.) In order to foster harmonious and fruitful mutual relations between bishops and religious, at stated times and as often as it is deemed opportune, bishops and religious superiors should meet to discuss those affairs which pertain to the apostolate in their territory.

CHAPTER III

CONCERNING BISHOPS COOPERATING FOR THE COMMON GOOD OF MANY CHURCHES

I. Synods, Councils and especially Episcopal Conferences

36. From the very first centuries of the Church bishops, as rulers of individual churches, were deeply moved by the communion of fraternal charity and zeal for the universal mission entrusted to the Apostles. And so they pooled their abilities and their wills for the common good and for the welfare of the individual churches. Thus came into being synods, provincial councils and plenary councils in which bishops established for various churches the way to be followed in teaching the truths of faith and ordering ecclesiastical discipline.

This sacred ecumenical synod earnestly desires that the venerable institution of synods and councils flourish with fresh vigor. In such a way faith will be deepened and discipline preserved more fittingly and efficaciously in the various churches, as the needs of the times require.

37. In these days especially bishops frequently are unable to fulfill their office effectively and fruitfully unless they develop a common effort involving constant growth in harmony and closeness of ties with other bishops. Episcopal conferences already established in many nations-have furnished outstanding proofs of a more fruitful apostolate. Therefore, this sacred synod considers it to be supremely fitting that everywhere bishops belonging to the same nation or region form an association which would meet at fixed times. Thus, when the insights of prudence and experience have been shared and views exchanged, there will emerge a holy union of energies in the service of the common good of the churches.

Wherefore, this sacred synod decrees the following concerning episcopal conferences:

38. 1.) An episcopal conference is, as it were, a council in which the bishops of a given nation or territory jointly exercise their pastoral office to promote the greater good which the Church offers mankind, especially through the forms and methods of the apostolate fittingly adapted to the circumstances of the age.

2.) Members of the episcopal conference are all local Ordinaries of every rite-excluding vicar generals-and coadjutors, auxiliaries and other titular bishops who perform a special work entrusted to them by the Apostolic See or the episcopal conferences. Other titular bishops, legates of the Roman pontiff, because of their exceptional office in the territory are not de iure members of the conferences. Local Ordinaries and coadjutors hold a deliberative vote. Auxiliaries and other bishops who have a right to attend the conference will hold either a deliberative or a consultative vote, as the statutes of the conference determine.

3.) Each episcopal conference is to draft its own statutes for recognition by the Apostolic See. In these statutes, among other things, offices should be established which will aid in achieving its purpose more efficaciously, for example, a permanent board of bishops, episcopal commissions and a general secretariat.

4.) Decisions of the episcopal conference, provided they have been approved legitimately and by the votes of at least two-thirds of the prelates who have a deliberative vote in the conference, and have been recognized by the Apostolic See, are to have juridically binding force only in those cases prescribed by the common law or determined by a special mandate of the Apostolic See, given either spontaneously or in response to a petition of the conference itself.

5.) Wherever special circumstances require and with the approbation of the Apostolic See, bishops of many nations can establish a single conference.

Communications between episcopal conferences of different nations should be especially encouraged in order to promote and safeguard the common good.

6.) It is highly recommended that the prelates of the Oriental Churches, promoting the discipline of their own churches in synods and efficaciously fostering works for the good of religion, should take into account also the common good of the whole territory where many churches of different rites exist. They should exchange views at inter-ritual meetings in keeping with norms to be given by the competent authority.

II. The. Boundaries of Ecclesiastical Provinces and the Erection of Ecclesiastical Regions

39. The good of souls requires fitting boundaries not only for dioceses but also for ecclesiastical provinces; indeed it sometimes counsels the establishment of new ecclesiastical regions. Thus the needs of the apostolate will be better met in keeping with social and local circumstances. Thus, too, the relationships of the bishops with each other and with their metropolitans, and with other bishops of the same nation and even between bishops and civil authorities will be rendered easier and more fruitful.

40. Therefore, in order to accomplish these aims this sacred synod decrees as follows:

1.) The boundaries of ecclesiastical provinces are to be submitted to an early review and the rights and privileges of metropolitans are to be defined by new and suitable norms.
2.) As a general rule all dioceses and other territorial divisions that are by law equivalent to dioceses should be attached to an ecclesiastical province. Therefore dioceses which are now directly subject to the Apostolic See and which are not united to any other are either to be brought together to form a new ecclesiastical province, if that be possible, or else attached to that province which is nearer or more convenient. They are to be made subject to the metropolitan jurisdiction of the bishop, in keeping with the norms of the common law.
3.) Wherever advantageous, ecclesiastical provinces should be grouped into ecclesiastical regions for the structure of which juridical provision is to be made.

41. It is fitting that the competent episcopal conferences examine the question of boundaries of such provinces and the establishment of regions in keeping with the norms given with respect to diocesan boundaries in numbers 23-24. They are then to submit their suggestions and desires to the Apostolic See.

III. Bishops Having an Inter-Diocesan Office

42. Since pastoral needs require more and more that some pastoral undertakings be directed and carried forward as joint projects, it is fitting that certain offices be created for the service of all or many dioceses of a determined region or nation. These offices can be filled by bishops.

This sacred synod recommends that between the prelates or bishops serving in these offices and the diocesan bishops and the episcopal conferences, there exist always fraternal association and harmonious cooperation in the expression of pastoral concern.

These relationships should also be clearly defined by common law.

43. Since, because of the unique conditions of their way of life, the spiritual care of military personnel requires special consideration, there should be established in every nation, if possible, a military vicariate. Both the military vicar and the chaplains should devote themselves unsparingly to this difficult work in complete cooperation with the diocesan bishops.(1)

Diocesan bishops should release to the military vicar a sufficient number of priests who are qualified for this serious work. At the same time they should promote all endeavors which will improve the spiritual welfare of military personnel.(2)

GENERAL DIRECTIVE

44. This sacred synod prescribes that in the revision of the code of canon law suitable laws be drawn up in keeping with the principles stated in this decree. Due consideration should also be given the observations made by the commissions and the council Fathers.

This sacred synod also prescribes that general directories be prepared treating of the care of souls for the use of both bishops and pastors. Thus they will be provided with certain methods which will help them to discharge their own pastoral office with greater ease and effectiveness.

There should be prepared also a particular directory concerning the pastoral care of special groups of the faithful as the different circumstances of individual nations or regions require. Another directory should be composed concerning the catechetical instruction of the Christian people; this directory will consider the fundamental principles of such instruction, its disposition and the composition of books on the subject. In preparing these directories, special attention should be given to the views which have been expressed both by the commissions and the council Fathers.

NOTES

Preface

1. cf. Matt. 1:21.

2. cf. John 20:21.

3. cf. First Vatican Council, fourth session, part 1 of Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ, c. 3, Denz. 1828 (3061).

4. cf. First Vatican Council, fourth session, Introduction to Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ, Denz. 1821 (3050).

5. cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, chap. 3, nos. 21, 24 and 25: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 24-25, 29-31.

6. cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, chap. 3, no. 21: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 24-25.

7. cf. John XXIII's apostolic constitution, Humanae Salutis, Dec. 25, 1961: A.A.S. 54 (1962) p. 6.

Chapter I

1. cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, chap. 3, no. 22: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 25-27.

2. ibid.

3. ibid.

4. ibid.

5. cf. Paul VI's motu proprio, Apostolica Sollicitudo, Sept. 15, 1965.

6. cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, chap. 3, no. 23: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 27-28.

7. cf. Pius XII's encyclical letter, Fidei Donum, April 21, 1957: A.A.S. 49 (1957) p. 27 ff.; also cf. Benedict XV's apostolic letter, Maximum Illud, Nov. 30, 1919: A.A.S. 11 (1919) p. 440; Pius XI's encyclical letter, Rerum Ecclesiae, Feb. 28, 1926: A.A.S. 18 (1926) p.68.

8. cf. Paul VI's allocution to the cardinals, prelates and various officials of the Roman curia, Sept. 21, 1963: A.A.S. 55 (1963) p. 793 ff.

Chapter II

1. cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches, Nov. 21, 1964, nos. 7-11 A.A.S. 57 (1965) p. 29 ff.

2. cf. Council of Trent, fifth session, Decree De Reform., c. 2, Mansi 33, 30: 24th session, Decree De Reform., c. Mansi 33, 159 [cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. chap. 3, no. 25: A.A.S. 57 (1965) p. 29 ff.]

3. cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, chap. 3, no. 25: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 29-31.

4. cf. John XXIII's encyclical letter, Pacem in Terris, April 11, 1963, passim: A.A.S. 55 (1963) pp. 257-304.

5. cf. Paul VI's encyclical letter, Ecclesiam Suam, April 6, 1964: A.A.S. 56 (1964) p. 639.

6. cf. Paul VI's encyclical letter, Ecclesiam Suam, April 6, 1964: A.A.S. 56 (1964) pp. 644-645.

7. cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on Communications Media, Dec. 4, 1963: A.A.S. 56 (1964) pp. 145-153.

8. cf. Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Dec. 4, 1963: A.A.S. 56 (1964) p. 97 ff; Paul VI's motu proprio, Sacram Liturgiam, Jan. 25, 1964: A.A.S. 56 (1964) p. 139 ff.

9.Pius XII's encyclical letter, Mediator Dei, Nov. 20, 1947: A.A.S. 39 (1947) p. 97 ff.; Paul VI's encyclical letter, Mysterium Fidei, Sept. 3, 1965.

10. cf. Acts 1:14 and 2:46.

11. cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, chap. 6, nos. 44 and 45: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 50-52.

12. cf. Luke 22:26-27.

13. cf. John 15:15.

14. cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on Ecumenism, Nov. 21 1964: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 90-107.

15. cf. St. Pius X's motu proprio, Iampridem, March 19, 1914: A.A.S. 6 (1914) p. 174 ff.; Pius XII's apostolic constitution, Exul Familia, Aug. 1, 1952: A.A.S. 54 (1952) p. 652 ff.; Leges Operis Apostolatus Maris, compiled under the authority of Pius XII Nov. 21, 1957: A.A.S. 50 (1958) p. 375 ff.

16. cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches, Nov. 21, 1964, no. 4: A.A.S. 57 (1965) p. 77.

17. cf. John 13:35.

18. cf. Pius XII's allocution of Dec. 8, 1950: A.A.S. 43 (1951) p. 28; also cf. Paul VI's allocution of May 23, 1964: A.A.S. 56 (1964) p. 571.

19. cf. Leo XIII's apostolic constitution, Romanos Pontifices, May 8, 1881: Acta Leonis XIII, vol. 2, 1882, p. 234.

20. cf. Paul VI's allocution of May 23, 1964: A.A.S. 56 (1965) pp. 570-571.

21. cf. Pius XII's allocution of Dec. 8, 1950, 1. c.

CHAPTER III

1. cf. Consistorial Congregation's Instruction to Military Ordinariates, April 23, 1951: A.A.S. 43 (1951) pp. 562-565; Formula Regarding the Conferring of the Status of Military Ordinariates, Oct. 20, 1956: A.A.S. 49 (1957) pp. 150-163; Decree on Ad Limina Visits of Military Ordinariates, Feb. 28, 1959: A.A.S. 51 (1959) pp. 272-274; Decree on the Granting of Faculties for Confessions to Military Chaplains, Nov. 27, 1960: A.A.S. 53 (1961) pp. 49-50. Also cf. Congregation of Religious' Instruction on Religious Military Chaplains, Feb. 2, 1955: A.A.S. 47 (1955) pp. 93-97.

2. cf. Consistorial Congregation's letter to the cardinals, archbishops and bishops of Spanish-speaking nations, June 27, 1951: A.A.S. 43 (1951) p. 566.

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OPTATAM TOTIUS
Decree on Priestly Training
Second Vatican Council

DECREE ON PRIESTLY TRAINING
OPTATAM TOTIUS
PROCLAIMED BY HIS HOLINESS
POPE PAUL VI
ON OCTOBER 28, 1965

Animated by the spirit of Christ, this sacred synod is fully aware that the desired renewal of the whole Church depends to a great extent on the ministry of its priests. It proclaims the extreme importance of priestly training and lays down certain basic principles by which those regulations may be strengthened which long use has shown to be sound and by which those new elements can be added which correspond to the constitutions and decrees of this sacred council and to the changed conditions of our times. Because of the very unity of the Catholic priesthood this priestly formation is necessary for all priests, diocesan and religious and of every rite. Wherefore, while these prescriptions directly concern the diocesan clergy, they are to be appropriately adapted to all.

I.

THE PROGRAM OF PRIESTLY TRAINING TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY EACH COUNTRY

1. Since only general laws can be made where there exists a wide variety of nations and regions, a special "program of priestly training" is to be undertaken by each country or rite. It must be set up by the episcopal conferences, revised from time to time and approved by the Apostolic See. In this way will the universal laws be adapted to the particular circumstances of the times and localities so that the priestly training will always be in tune with the pastoral needs of those regions in which the ministry is to be exercised.

II.

THE URGENT FOSTERING OF PRIESTLY VOCATIONS

2. The duty of fostering vocations pertains to the whole Christian community, which should exercise it above all by a fully Christian life. The principal contributors to this are the families which, animated by the spirit of faith and love and by the sense of duty, become a kind of initial seminary, and the parishes in whose rich life the young people take part. Teachers and all those who are in any way in charge of the training of boys and young men, especially Catholic associations, should carefully guide the young people entrusted to them so that these will recognize and freely accept a divine vocation. All priests especially are to manifest an apostolic zeal in fostering vocations and are to attract the interest of youths to the priesthood by their own life lived in a humble and industrious manner and in a happy spirit as well as by mutual priestly charity and fraternal sharing of labor.

Bishops on the other hand are to encourage their flock to promote vocations and should be concerned with coordinating all forces in a united effort to this end. As fathers, moreover, they must assist without stint those whom they have judged to be called to the Lord's work.

The effective union of the whole people of God in fostering vocations is the proper response to the action of Divine Providence which confers the fitting gifts on those men divinely chosen to participate in the hierarchical priesthood of Christ and helps them by His grace. Moreover, this same Providence charges the legitimate ministers of the Church to call forward and to consecrate with the sign of the Holy Spirit to the worship of God and to the service of the Church those candidates whose fitness has been acknowledged and who have sought so great an office with the right intention and with full freedom.

The sacred synod commends first of all the traditional means of common effort, such as urgent prayer, Christian penance and a constantly more intensive training of the faithful by preaching, by catechetical instructions or by the many media of social communication that will show forth the need, the nature and the importance of the priestly vocation. The synod moreover orders that the entire pastoral activity of fostering vocations be methodically and coherently planned and, with equal prudence and zeal, fostered by those organizations for promoting vocations which, in accord with the appropriate pontifical documents, have already been or will be set up in the territory of individual dioceses, regions or countries. Also, no opportune aids are to be overlooked which modern Psychological and sociological research has brought to light.

The work of fostering vocations should, in a spirit of openness, transcend the limits of individual dioceses, countries, religious families and rites. Looking to the needs of the universal Church, it should provide aid particularly for those regions in which workers for the Lord's vineyard are being requested more urgently.

3. In minor seminaries erected to develop the seeds of vocations, the students should be prepared by special religious formation, particularly through appropriate spiritual direction, to follow Christ the Redeemer with generosity of spirit and purity of heart. Under the fatherly direction of the superiors, and with the proper cooperation of the parents, their daily routine should be in accord with the age, the character and the stage of development of adolescence and fully adapted to the norms of a healthy psychology. Nor should the fitting opportunity be lacking for social and cultural contacts and for contact with one's own family. Moreover, whatever is decreed in the following paragraphs about major seminaries is also to be adapted to the minor seminary to the extent that it is in accord with its purpose and structure. Also, studies undertaken by the students should be so arranged that they can easily continue them elsewhere should they choose a different state of life.

With equal concern the seeds of vocations among adolescents and young men are also to be fostered in those special institutes which, in accord with the local circumstances, serve the purpose of a minor seminary as well as among those who are trained in other schools or by other educational means. Finally, those institutions and other schools initiated for those with a belated vocation are to be carefully developed.

III.

THE SETTING UP OF MAJOR SEMINARIES

4. Major seminaries are necessary for priestly formation. Here the entire training of the students should be oriented to the formation of true shepherds of souls after the model of our Lord Jesus Christ, teacher, priest and shepherd. They are therefore to be prepared for the ministry of the word: that they might understand ever more perfectly the revealed word of God; that, meditating on it they might possess it more firmly, and that they might express it in words and in example; for the ministry of worship and of sanctification: that through their prayers and their carrying out of the sacred liturgical celebrations they might perfect the work oœ salvation through the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments; for the ministry of the parish: that they might know how to make Christ present to men, Him who did not "come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45; cf. John 13:12-17), and that, having become the servants of all, they might win over all the more (cf. 1 Cor. 9:19).

Therefore, all the forms of training, spiritual, intellectual, disciplinary, are to be ordered with concerted effort towards this pastoral end, and to attain it all the administrators and teachers are to work zealously and harmoniously together, faithfully obedient to the authority of the bishop.

5. Since the training of students depends both on wise laws and, most of all, on qualified educators, the administrators and teachers of seminaries are to be selected from the best men, and are to be carefully prepared in sound doctrine, suitable pastoral experience and special spiritual and pedagogical training. Institutes, therefore, should be set up to attain this end. Or at least courses are to be arranged with a proper program, and the meetings of seminary directors are to take place at specified times.

Administrators, however, and teachers must be keenly aware of how much the success of the students' formation depends on their manner of thinking and acting. Under the rector's leadership they are to form a very closely knit community both in spirit and in activity and they are to constitute among themselves and with the students that kind of family that will answer to the Lord's prayer "That they be one" (cf. John 17:11) and that will develop in the students a deep joy in their own vocation. The bishop, on the other hand, should, with a constant and loving solicitude, encourage those who labor in the seminary and prove himself a true father in Christ to the students themselves. Finally, all priests are to look on the seminary as the heart of the diocese and are to offer willingly their own helpful service.

6. With watchful concern for the age of each and for his stage of progress, an inquiry should be made into the candidate's proper intention and freedom of choice, into his spiritual, moral and intellectual qualifications, into his appropriate physical and psychic health-taking into consideration also possible hereditary deficiencies. Also to be considered is the ability of the candidate to bear the priestly burdens and exercise the pastoral offices.

In the entire process of selecting and testing students, however, a due firmness is to be adopted, even if a deplorable lack of priests should exist, since God will not allow His Church to want for ministers if those who are worthy are promoted and those not qualified are, at an early date, guided in a fatherly way to undertake other tasks. The latter should also be given sufficient direction so that, conscious of their vocation as Christians, they might eagerly embrace the lay apostolate.

7. Where individual dioceses are unable to institute their own seminaries properly, seminaries for many dioceses or for an entire region or for a country are to be set up and developed, so that the sound training of the students, which must be considered the supreme law in this matter, can be taken care of in a more effective manner. These seminaries, if they are regional or national, are to be regulated according to directives set down by the bishops concerned and approved by the Apostolic See.

In these seminaries, however, where there are many students, while retaining a unity of direction and of scientific training, the students should be conveniently divided into smaller groups so that a better provision is had for the personal formation of each.

IV.

THE CAREFUL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL TRAINING

8. The spiritual training should be closely connected with the doctrinal and pastoral, and, with the special help of the spiritual director, should be imparted in such a way that the students might learn to live in an intimate and unceasing union with the Father through His Son Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. Conformed to Christ the Priest through their sacred ordination they should be accustomed to adhere to Him as friends, in an intimate companionship, their whole life through. They should so live His paschal mystery themselves that they can initiate into it the flock committed to them. They should be taught to seek Christ in the faithful meditation on God's word, in the active participation in the sacred mysteries of the Church, especially in the Eucharist and in the divine office, in the bishop who sends them and in the people to whom they are sent, especially the poor, the children, the sick, the sinners and the unbelievers. They should love and venerate with a filial trust the most blessed Virgin Mary, who was given as mother to the disciple by Christ Jesus as He was dying on the cross.

Those practices of piety that are commended by the long usage of the Church should be zealously cultivated; but care should be taken lest the spiritual formation consist in them alone or lest it develop only a religious affectation. The students should learn to live according to the Gospel ideal, to be strengthened in faith, hope and charity, so that, in the exercise of these practices, they may acquire the spirit of prayer, learn to defend and strengthen their vocation, obtain an increase of other virtues and grow in the zeal to gain all men for Christ.

9. The students should be so saturated with the mystery of the Church, especially as described by this sacred synod, that, bound to the Vicar of Christ in a humble and trusting charity and, once ordained priests, adhering to their own bishop as faithful helpers and engaging in a common effort with their fellow-priests, they bear witness to that unity that attracts men to Christ. They should learn to take part with a generous heart in the life of the whole Church in accord with what St. Augustine wrote: "to the extent that one loves the Church of Christ, to that extent does he possess the Holy Spirit." The students should understand most clearly that they are not destined for domination or for honors but are given over totally to the service of God and to the pastoral ministry. With a particular concern should they be so formed in priestly obedience, in a simple way of life and in the spirit of self-denial that they are accustomed to giving up willingly even those things which are permitted but are not expedient, and to conform themselves to Christ crucified.

The students are to be made clearly aware of the burdens they will be undertaking, and no problem of the priestly life is to be concealed from them. This is to be done, however, not that they should be almost solely concerned with the notion of danger in their future labors, but rather that they might be more readily conformed to a spiritual life that more than in any other way is actually strengthened by the very pastoral work they do.

10. Students who follow the venerable tradition of celibacy according to the holy and fixed laws of their own rite are to be educated to this state with great care. For renouncing thereby the companionship of marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven (cf. Matt. 19:12), they embrace the Lord with an undivided love altogether befitting the new covenant, bear witness to the resurrection of the world to come (cf. Luke 20:36), and obtain a most suitable aid for the continual exercise of that perfect charity whereby they can become all things to all men in their priestly ministry. Let them deeply realize how gratefully that state ought to be received, not, indeed, only as commanded by ecclesiastical law, but as a precious gift of God for which they should humbly pray. Through the inspiration and help of the grace of the Holy Spirit let them freely and generously hasten to respond to this gift.

Students ought rightly to acknowledge the duties and dignity of Christian matrimony, which is a sign of the love between Christ and the Church. Let them recognize, however, the surpassing excellence of virginity consecrated to Christ, so that with a maturely deliberate and generous choice they may consecrate themselves to the Lord by a complete gift of body and soul.

They are to be warned of the dangers that threaten their chastity especially in present-day society. Aided by suitable safeguards, both divine and human, let them learn to integrate their renunciation of marriage in such a way that they may suffer in their lives and work not only no harm from celibacy but rather acquire a deeper mastery of soul and body and a fuller maturity, and more perfectly receive the blessedness spoken of in the Gospel.

11. The norms of Christian education are to be religiously observed and properly complemented by the newer findings of sound psychology and pedagogy. Therefore, by a wisely planned training there is also to be developed in the students a due human maturity. This will be made especially evident in stability of mind, in an ability to make weighty decisions, and in a sound evaluation of men and events. The students should be accustomed to work properly at their own development. They are to be formed in strength of character, and, in general, they are to learn to esteem those virtues which are held in high regard by men and which recommend a minister of Christ. Such virtues are sincerity of mind, a constant concern for justice, fidelity to one's promises, refinement in manners, modesty in speech coupled with charity.

The discipline of seminary life is to be reckoned not only as a strong safeguard of community life and of charity but also as a necessary part of the total whole training formation. For thereby self- mastery is acquired, solid personal maturity is promoted, and the other dispositions of mind are developed which very greatly aid the ordered and fruitful activity of the Church. Seminary discipline should be so maintained, however, that the students acquire an internal attitude whereby they accept the authority of superiors from personal conviction, that is to say, from a motive of conscience (cf. Rom. 13:5), and for supernatural reasons. The norms of discipline are to be applied according to the age of the students so that they themselves, as they gradually learn self-mastery, may become accustomed to use freedom wisely, to act spontaneously and energetically, and to work together harmoniously with their fellows and with the laity.

The whole pattern of seminary life, permeated with a desire for piety and silence and a careful concern for mutual help, must be so arranged that it provides, in a certain sense, an initiation into the future life which the priest shall lead.

12. In order that the spiritual training rest upon a more solid basis and that the students embrace their vocation with a fully deliberate choice, it will be the prerogative of the bishops to establish a fitting period of time for a more intense introduction to the spiritual life. It will also be their charge to determine the opportuneness of providing for a certain interruption in the studies or of establishing a suitable introduction to pastoral work, in order that they may more satisfactorily test the fitness of candidates for the priesthood. In accordance with the conditions of individual regions it will also be the bishops' responsibility to make a decision about extending the age beyond that demanded at present by common law for the reception of sacred orders, and of deliberating whether it be opportune to rule that students, at the end of their course in theology, exercise the order of deacon for a fitting period of time before being promoted to the priesthood.

V.

THE REVISION OF ECCLESIASTICAL STUDIES

13. Before beginning specifically ecclesiastical subjects, seminarians should be equipped with that humanistic and scientific training which young men in their own countries are wont to have as a foundation for higher studies. Moreover they are to acquire a knowledge of Latin which will enable them to understand and make use of the sources of so many sciences and of the documents of the Church. The study of the liturgical language proper to each rite should be considered necessary; a suitable knowledge of the languages of the Bible and of Tradition should be greatly encouraged.

14. In revising ecclesiastical studies the aim should first of all be that the philosophical and theological disciplines be more suitably aligned and that they harmoniously work toward opening more and more the minds of the students to the mystery of Christ. For it is this mystery which affects the whole history of the human race, continually influences the Church, and is especially at work in the priestly ministry.

That this vision be communicated to the students from the outset of their training, ecclesiastical studies are to be begun with an introductory course which should last for an appropriate length of time. In this initiation to ecclesiastical studies the mystery of salvation should be so proposed that the students perceive the meaning, order, and pastoral end of their studies. At the same time they should be helped to establish and penetrate their own entire lives with faith and be strengthened in embracing their vocation with a personal dedication and a joyful heart.

15. The philosophical disciplines are to be taught in such a way that the students are first of all led to acquire a solid and coherent knowledge of man, the world, and of God, relying on a philosophical patrimony which is perennially valid and taking into account the philosophical investigations of later ages. This is especially true of those investigations which exercise a greater influence in their own nations. Account should also be taken of the more recent progress of the sciences. The net result should be that the students, correctly understanding the characteristics of the contemporary mind, will be duly prepared for dialogue with men of their time.

The history of philosophy should be so taught that the students, while reaching the ultimate principles of the various systems, will hold on to what is proven to be true therein and will be able to detect the roots of errors and to refute them.

In the very manner of teaching there should be stirred up in the students a love of rigorously searching for the truth and of maintaining and demonstrating it, together with an honest recognition of the limits of human knowledge. Attention must be carefully drawn to the necessary connection between philosophy and the true problems of life, as well as the questions which preoccupy the minds of the students. Likewise students should be helped to perceive the links between the subject-matter of philosophy and the mysteries of salvation which are considered in theology under the higher light of faith.

16. The theological disciplines, in the light of faith and under the guidance of the magisterium of the Church, should be so taught that the students will correctly draw out Catholic doctrine from divine revelation, profoundly penetrate it, make it the food of their own spiritual lives, and be enabled to proclaim, explain, and protect it in their priestly ministry.

The students are to be formed with particular care in the study of the Bible, which ought to be, as it were, the soul of all theology. After a suitable introduction they are to be initiated carefully into the method of exegesis; and they are to see the great themes of divine revelation and to receive from their daily reading of and meditating on the sacred books inspiration and nourishment.

Dogmatic theology should be so arranged that these biblical themes are proposed first of all. Next there should be opened up to the students what the Fathers of the Eastern and Western Church have contributed to the faithful transmission and development of the individual truths of revelation. The further history of dogma should also be presented, account being taken of its relation to the general history of the Church. Next, in order that they may illumine the mysteries of salvation as completely as possible, the students should learn to penetrate them more deeply with the help of speculation, under the guidance of St. Thomas, and to perceive their interconnections. They should be taught to recognize these same mysteries as present and working in liturgical actions and in the entire life of the Church. They should learn to seek the solutions to human problems under the light of revelation, to apply the eternal truths of revelation to the changeable conditions of human affairs and to communicate them in a way suited to men of our day.

Likewise let the other theological disciplines be renewed through a more living contact with the mystery of Christ and the history of salvation. Special care must be given to the perfecting of moral theology. Its scientific exposition, nourished more on the teaching of the Bible, should shed light on the loftiness of the calling of the faithful in Christ and the obligation that is theirs of bearing fruit in charity for the life of the world. Similarly the teaching of canon law and of Church history should take into account the mystery of the Church, according to the dogmatic constitution "De Ecclesia" promulgated by this sacred synod. Sacred liturgy, which is to be considered as the primary and indispensable source of the truly Christian spirit, should be taught according to the mind of articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.

The circumstances of various regions being duly considered, students are to be brought to a fuller understanding of the churches and ecclesial communities separated from the Apostolic Roman See, so that they may be able to contribute to the work of re- establishing unity among all Christians according to the prescriptions of this holy synod.

Let them also be introduced to a knowledge of other religions which are more widespread in individual regions, so that they may acknowledge more correctly what truth and goodness these religions, in God's providence, possess, and so that they may learn to refute their errors and be able to communicate the full light of truth to those who do not have it.

17. But since doctrinal training ought to tend not to a mere communication of ideas but to a true and intimate formation of the students, teaching methods are to be revised both as regards lectures, discussions, and seminars and also the development of study on the part of the students, whether done privately or in small groups. Unity and soundness of the entire training is carefully to be provided for by avoiding an excessive multiplication of courses and lectures and by the omission of those questions which scarcely retain any importance or which ought to be referred to higher academic studies.

18. It will be the bishops' concern that young men suited by temperament, virtue, and ability be sent to special institutes faculties, or universities so that priests may be trained at a higher scientific level in the sacred sciences and in other fields which may be judged opportune. Thus they will be able to meet the various needs of the apostolate. The spiritual and pastoral training of these men, however, especially if they are not yet ordained as priests, is in no way to be neglected.

VI.

THE PROMOTION OF STRICTLY PASTORAL TRAINING

19. That pastoral concern which ought to permeate thoroughly the entire training of the students also demands that they be diligently instructed in those matters which are particularly linked to the sacred ministry, especially in catechesis and preaching, in liturgical worship and the administration of the sacraments, in works of charity, in assisting the erring and the unbelieving, and in the other pastoral functions. They are to be carefully instructed in the art of directing souls, whereby they will be able to bring all the sons of the Church first of all to a fully conscious and apostolic Christian life and to the fulfillment of the duties of their state of life. Let them learn to help, with equal solicitude, religious men and women that they may persevere in the grace of their vocations and may make progress according to the spirit of their various Institutes.

In general, those capabilities are to be developed in the students which especially contribute to dialogue with men, such as the ability to listen to others and to open their hearts and minds in the spirit of charity to the various circumstances and needs of men.

20. They should also be taught to use the aids which the disciplines of pedagogy, psychology, and sociology can provide, according to correct methodology and the norms of ecclesiastical authority. Likewise, let them be properly instructed in inspiring and fostering the apostolic activity of the laity and in promoting the various and more effective forms of the apostolate. Let them also be imbued with that truly Catholic spirit which will accustom them to transcend the limits of their own diocese, nation, or rite, and to help the needs of the whole Church, prepared in spirit to preach the Gospel everywhere.

But since it is necessary for the students to learn the art of exercising the apostolate not only theoretically but also practically, and to be able to act both on their own responsibility and in harmonious conjunction with others, they should be initiated into pastoral work, both during their course of studies and also during the time of vacations, by opportune practical projects. These should be carried out in accordance with the age of the students and local conditions, and with the prudent judgment of the bishops, methodically and under the leadership of men skilled in pastoral work, the surpassing power of supernatural means being always remembered.

VII.

TRAINING TO BE ACHIEVED AFTER THE COURSE OF STUDIES

21. Since priestly training, because of the circumstances particularly of contemporary society, must be pursued and perfected even after the completion of the course of studies in seminaries, it will be the responsibility of episcopal conferences in individual nations to employ suitable means to this end. Such would be pastoral institutes working together with suitably chosen parishes, meetings held at stated times, and appropriate projects whereby the younger clergy would be gradually introduced into the priestly life and apostolic activity, under its spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral aspects, and would be able, day by day, to renew and foster them more effectively.

CONCLUSION

The Fathers of this holy synod have pursued the work begun by the Council of Trent. While they confidently entrust to seminary administrators and teachers the task of forming the future priests of Christ in the spirit of the renewal promoted by this sacred synod, they earnestly exhort those who are preparing for the priestly ministry to realize that the hope of the Church and the salvation of souls is being committed to them. They urge them also to receive the norms of this decree willingly and thus to bring forth most abundant fruit which will always remain.

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PERFECTAE CARITATIS
Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life
Second Vatican Council

DECREE ON
THE ADAPTATION AND RENEWAL OF RELIGIOUS LIFE
PERFECTAE CARITATIS
PROCLAIMED BY HIS HOLINESS
POPE PAUL VI
ON OCTOBER 28, 1965

1. The sacred synod has already shown in the constitution on the Church that the pursuit of perfect charity through the evangelical counsels draws its origin from the doctrine and example of the Divine Master and reveals itself as a splendid sign of the heavenly kingdom. Now it intends to treat of the life and discipline of those institutes whose members make profession of chastity, poverty and obedience and to provide for their needs in our time.

Indeed from the very beginning of the Church men and women have set about following Christ with greater freedom and imitating Him more closely through the practice of the evangelical counsels, each in his own way leading a life dedicated to God. Many of them, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, lived as hermits or founded religious families, which the Church gladly welcomed and approved by her authority. So it is that in accordance with the Divine Plan a wonderful variety of religious communities has grown up which has made it easier for the Church not only to be equipped for every good work (cf. 2 Tim 3:17) and ready for the work of the ministry-the building up of the Body of Christ (cf. Eph. 4:12)-but also to appear adorned with the various gifts of her children like a spouse adorned for her husband (cf. Apoc. 21:2) and for the manifold Wisdom of God to be revealed through her (cf. Eph. 3:10).

Despite such a great variety of gifts, all those called by God to the practice of the evangelical counsels and who, faithfully responding to the call, undertake to observe the same, bind themselves to the Lord in a special way, following Christ, who chaste and poor (cf. Matt. 8:20; Luke 9:58) redeemed and sanctified men through obedience even to the death of the Cross (cf. Phil. 2:8). Driven by love with which the Holy Spirit floods their hearts (cf. Rom. 5:5) they live more and more for Christ and for His body which is the Church (cf. Col. 1:24). The more fervently, then, they are joined to Christ by this total life-long gift of themselves, the richer the life of the Church becomes and the more lively and successful its apostolate.

In order that the great value of a life consecrated by the profession of the counsels and its necessary mission today may yield greater good to the Church, the sacred synod lays down the following prescriptions. They are meant to state only the general principles of the adaptation and renewal of the life and discipline of Religious orders and also, without prejudice to their special characteristics, of societies of common life without vows and secular institutes. Particular norms for the proper explanation and application of these principles are to be determined after the council by the authority in question.

2. The adaptation and renewal of the religious life includes both the constant return to the sources of all Christian life and to the original spirit of the institutes and their adaptation to the changed conditions of our time. This renewal, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Church, must be advanced according to the following principles:

a) Since the ultimate norm of the religious life is the following of Christ set forth in the Gospels, let this be held by all institutes as the highest rule.

b) It redounds to the good of the Church that institutes have their own particular characteristics and work. Therefore let their founders' spirit and special aims they set before them as well as their sound traditions-all of which make up the patrimony of each institute-be faithfully held in honor.

c) All institutes should share in the life of the Church, adapting as their own and implementing in accordance with their own characteristics the Church's undertakings and aims in matters biblical, liturgical, dogmatic, pastoral, ecumenical, missionary and social.

d) Institutes should promote among their members an adequate knowledge of the social conditions of the times they live in and of the needs of the Church. In such a way, judging current events wisely in the light of faith and burning with apostolic zeal, they may be able to assist men more effectively.

e) The purpose of the religious life is to help the members follow Christ and be united to God through the profession of the evangelical counsels. It should be constantly kept in mind, therefore, that even the best adjustments made in accordance with the needs of our age will be ineffectual unless they are animated by a renewal of spirit. This must take precedence over even the active ministry.

3. The manner of living, praying and working should be suitably adapted everywhere, but especially in mission territories, to the modern physical and psychological circumstances of the members and also, as required by the nature of each institute, to the necessities of the apostolate, the demands of culture, and social and economic circumstances.

According to the same criteria let the manner of governing the institutes also be examined.

Therefore let constitutions, directories, custom books, books of prayers and ceremonies and such like be suitably re-edited and, obsolete laws being suppressed, be adapted to the decrees of this sacred synod.

4. An effective renewal and adaptation demands the cooperation of all the members of the institute.

However, to establish the norms of adaptation and renewal, to embody it in legislation as well as to make allowance for adequate and prudent experimentation belongs only to the competent authorities, especially to general chapters. The approbation of the Holy See or of the local Ordinary must be obtained where necessary according to law. But superiors should take counsel in an appropriate way and hear the members of the order in those things which concern the future well being of the whole institute.

For the adaptation and renewal of convents of nuns suggestions and advice may be obtained also from the meetings of federations or from other assemblies lawfully convoked.

Nevertheless everyone should keep in mind that the hope of renewal lies more in the faithful observance of the rules and constitutions than in multiplying laws.

5. Members of each institute should recall first of all that by professing the evangelical counsels they responded to a divine call so that by being not only dead to sin (cf. Rom. 6:11) but also renouncing the world they may live for God alone. They have dedicated their entire lives to His service. This constitutes a special consecration, which is deeply rooted in that of baptism and expresses it more fully.

Since the Church has accepted their surrender of self they should realize they are also dedicated to its service.

This service of God ought to inspire and foster in them the exercise of the virtues, especially humility, obedience, fortitude and chastity. In such a way they share in Christ's emptying of Himself (cf. Phil. 2:7) and His life in the spirit (cf. Rom. 8:1-13).

Faithful to their profession then, and leaving all things for the sake of Christ (cf. Mark 10:28), religious are to follow Him (cf. Matt. 19:21) as the one thing necessary (cf. Luke 10:42) listening to His words (cf. Luke 10:39) and solicitous for the things that are His (cf. 1 Cor. 7:32).

It is necessary therefore that the members of every community, seeking God solely and before everything else, should join contemplation, by which they fix their minds and hearts on Him, with apostolic love, by which they strive to be associated with the work of redemption and to spread the kingdom of God.

6. Let those who make profession of the evangelical counsels seek and love above all else God who has first loved us (cf. 1 John 4:10) and let them strive to foster in all circumstances a life hidden with Christ in God (cf. Col. 3:3). This love of God both excites and energizes that love of one's neighbor which contributes to the salvation of the world and the building up of the Church. This love, in addition, quickens and directs the actual practice of the evangelical counsels.

Drawing therefore upon the authentic sources of Christian spirituality, members of religious communities should resolutely cultivate both the spirit and practice of prayer. In the first place they should have recourse daily to the Holy Scriptures in order that, by reading and meditating on Holy Writ, they may learn "the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:8). They should celebrate the sacred liturgy, especially the holy sacrifice of the Mass, with both lips and heart as the Church desires and so nourish their spiritual life from this richest of sources.

So refreshed at the table of divine law and the sacred altar of God, they will love Christ's members as brothers, honor and love their pastors as sons should do, and living and thinking ever more in union with the Church, dedicate themselves wholly to its mission.

7. Communities which are entirely dedicated to contemplation, so that their members in solitude and silence, with constant prayer and penance willingly undertaken, occupy themselves with God alone, retain at all times, no matter how pressing the needs of the active apostolate may be, an honorable place in the Mystical Body of Christ, whose "members do not all have the same function" (Rom. 12:4). For these offer to God a sacrifice of praise which is outstanding. Moreover the manifold results of their holiness lends luster to the people of God which is inspired by their example and which gains new members by their apostolate which is as effective as it is hidden. Thus they are revealed to be a glory of the Church and a well-spring of heavenly graces. Nevertheless their manner of living should be revised according to the principles and criteria of adaptation and renewal mentioned above. However their withdrawal from the world and the exercises proper to the contemplative life should be preserved with the utmost care.

8. There are in the Church very many communities, both clerical and lay, which devote themselves to various apostolic tasks. The gifts which these communities possess differ according to the grace which is allotted to them. Administrators have the gift of administration, teachers that of teaching, the gift of stirring speech is given to preachers, liberality to those who exercise charity and cheerfulness to those who help others in distress (cf. Rom. 12:5-8). "The gifts are varied, but the Spirit is the same" (1 Cor. 12:4).

In these communities apostolic and charitable activity belongs to the very nature of the religious life, seeing that it is a holy service and a work characteristic of love, entrusted to them by the Church to be carried out in its name. Therefore, the whole religious life of their members should be inspired by an apostolic spirit and all their apostolic activity formed by the spirit of religion. Therefore in order that their members may first correspond to their vocation to follow Christ and serve Him in His members, their apostolic activity must spring from intimate union with Him. Thus love itself towards God and the neighbor is fostered.

These communities, then, should adjust their rules and customs to fit the demands of the apostolate to which they are dedicated. The fact however that apostolic religious life takes on many forms requires that its adaptation and renewal take account of this diversity and provide that the lives of religious dedicated to the service of Christ in these various communities be sustained by special provisions appropriate to each.

9. The monastic life, that venerable institution which in the course of a long history has won for itself notable renown in the Church and in human society, should be preserved with care and its authentic spirit permitted to shine forth ever more splendidly both in the East and the West. The principal duty of monks is to offer a service to the divine majesty at once humble and noble within the walls of the monastery, whether they dedicate themselves entirely to divine worship in the contemplative life or have legitimately undertaken some apostolate or work of Christian charity. Retaining, therefore, the characteristics of the way of life proper to them, they should revive their ancient traditions of service and so adapt them to the needs of today that monasteries will become institutions dedicated to the edification of the Christian people.

Some religious communities according to their rule or constitutions closely join the apostolic life to choir duty and monastic observances. These should so adapt their manner of life to the demands of the apostolate appropriate to them that they observe faithfully their way of life, since it has been of great service to the Church.

10. The religious life, undertaken by lay people, either men or women, is a state for the profession of the evangelical counsels which is complete in itself. While holding in high esteem therefore this way of life so useful to the pastoral mission of the Church in educating youth, caring for the sick and carrying out its other ministries, the sacred synod confirms these religious in their vocation and urges them to adjust their way of life to modern needs.

The sacred synod declares that there is nothing to prevent some members of religious communities of brothers being admitted to holy orders by provision of their general chapter in order to meet the need for priestly ministrations in their own houses, provided that the lay character of the community remains unchanged.

11. Secular Institutes, although not Religious institutes involve a true and full profession of the evangelical counsels in the world. This profession is recognized by the Church and consecrates to God men and women, lay and clerical, who live in the world. Hence they should make a total dedication of themselves to God in perfect charity their chief aim, and the institutes themselves should preserve their own proper, i.e., secular character, so that they may be able to carry out effectively everywhere in and, as it were, from the world the apostolate for which they were founded.

It may be taken for granted, however, that so great a task cannot be discharged unless the members be thoroughly trained in matters divine and human so that they are truly a leaven in the world for the strengthening and growth of the body of Christ. Superiors, therefore, should give serious attention especially to the spiritual training to be given members as well as encourage their further formation.

12. The chastity "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:12) which religious profess should be counted an outstanding gift of grace. It frees the heart of man in a unique fashion (cf. 1 Cor. 7:32-35) so that it may be more inflamed with love for God and for all men. Thus it not only symbolizes in a singular way the heavenly goods but also the most suitable means by which religious dedicate themselves with undivided heart to the service of God and the works of the apostolate. In this way they recall to the minds of all the faithful that wondrous marriage decreed by God and which is to be fully revealed in the future age in which the Church takes Christ as its only spouse.

Religious, therefore, who are striving faithfully to observe the chastity they have professed must have faith in the words of the Lord, and trusting in God's help not overestimate their own strength but practice mortification and custody of the senses. Neither should they neglect the natural means which promote health of mind and body. As a result they will not be influenced by those false doctrines which scorn perfect continence as being impossible or harmful to human development and they will repudiate by a certain spiritual instinct everything which endangers chastity. In addition let all, especially superiors, remember that chastity is guarded more securely when true brotherly love flourishes in the common life of the community.

Since the observance of perfect continence touches intimately the deepest instincts of human nature, candidates should neither present themselves for nor be admitted to the vow of chastity, unless they have been previously tested sufficiently and have been shown to possess the required psychological and emotional maturity. They should not only be warned about the dangers to chastity which they may meet but they should be so instructed as to be able to undertake the celibacy which binds them to God in a way which will benefit their entire personality.

13. Religious should diligently practice and if need be express also in new forms that voluntary poverty which is recognized and highly esteemed especially today as an expression of the following of Christ. By it they share in the poverty of Christ who for our sakes became poor, even though He was rich, so that by His poverty we might become rich (cf. 2 Cor. 8:9; Matt. 8:20).

With regard to religious poverty it is not enough to use goods in a way subject to the superior's will, but members must be poor both in fact and in spirit, their treasures being in heaven (cf. Matt. 6:20).

Religious should consider themselves in their own assignments to be bound by the common law of labor, and while they procure what is required for their sustenance and works, they should banish all undue solicitude and trust themselves to the provident care of their Father in heaven (cf. Matt. 6:25).

Religious congregations by their constitutions can permit their members to renounce inheritances, both those which have been acquired or may be acquired.

Due regard being had for local conditions, religious communities should readily offer a quasi-collective witness to poverty and gladly use their own goods for other needs of the Church and the support of the poor whom all religious should love after the example of Christ (cf. Matt. 19:21, 25:34-46 James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17). The several provinces and houses of each community should share their temporal goods with one another, so that those who have more help the others who are in need.

Religious communities have the right to possess whatever is required for their temporal life and work, unless this is forbidden by their rules and constitutions. Nevertheless, they should avoid every appearance of luxury, excessive wealth and the accumulation of goods.

14. In professing obedience, religious offer the full surrender of their own will as a sacrifice of themselves to God and so are united permanently and securely to God's salvific will.

After the example of Jesus Christ who came to do the will of the Father (cf. John 4:34; 5:30; Heb. 10:7; Ps. 39:9) and "assuming the nature of a slave" (Phil. 2:7) learned obedience in the school of suffering (cf. Heb. 5:8), religious under the motion of the Holy Spirit, subject themselves in faith to their superiors who hold the place of God. Under their guidance they are led to serve all their brothers in Christ, just as Christ himself in obedience to the Father served His brethren and laid down His life as a ransom for many (cf. Matt. 20:28; John 10:14-18). So they are closely bound to the service of the Church and strive to attain the measure of the full manhood of Christ (Eph. 4:13).

Religious, therefore, in the spirit of faith and love for the divine will should humbly obey their superiors according to their rules and constitutions. Realizing that they are contributing to building up the body of Christ according to God's plan, they should use both the forces of their intellect and will and the gifts of nature and grace to execute the commands and fulfill the duties entrusted to them. In this way religious obedience, far from lessening the dignity of the human person, by extending the freedom of the sons of God, leads it to maturity.

Superiors, as those who are to give an account of the souls entrusted to them (Heb. 13:17), should fulfill their office in a way responsive to God's will. They should exercise their authority out of a spirit of service to the brethren, expressing in this way the love with which God loves their subjects. They should govern these as sons of God, respecting their human dignity. In this way they make it easier for them to subordinate their wills. They should be particularly careful to respect their subjects' liberty in the matters of sacramental confession and the direction of conscience. Subjects should be brought to the point where they will cooperate with an active and responsible obedience in undertaking new tasks and in carrying those already undertaken. And so superiors should gladly listen to their subjects and foster harmony among them for the good of the community and the Church, provided that thereby their own authority to decide and command what has to be done is not harmed.

Chapters and deliberative bodies should faithfully discharge the part in ruling entrusted to them and each should in its own way express that concern for the good of the entire community which all its members share.

15. Common life, fashioned on the model of the early Church where the body of believers was united in heart and soul (cf. Acts 4:32), and given new force by the teaching of the Gospel, the sacred liturgy and especially the Eucharist, should continue to be lived in prayer and the communion of the same spirit. As members of Christ living together as brothers, religious should give pride of place in esteem to each other (cf. Rom. 12:10) and bear each other's burdens (cf. Gal. 6:2). For the community, a true family gathered together in the name of the Lord by God's love which has flooded the hearts of its members through the Holy Spirit (cf.Rom. 5:5), rejoices because He is present among them (cf. Matt. 18:20). Moreover love sums up the whole law (cf. Rom. 13:10), binds all together in perfect unity (cf. Col. 3:14) and by it we know that we have crossed over from death to life (cf. 1 John 3:14). Furthermore, the unity of the brethren is a visible pledge that Christ will return (cf. John 13:35; 17:21) and a source of great apostolic energy.

That all the members be more closely knit by the bond of brotherly love, those who are called lay-brothers, assistants, or some similar name should be drawn closely in to the life and work of the community. Unless conditions really suggest something else, care should be taken that there be only one class of Sisters in communities of women. Only that distinction of persons should be retained which corresponds to-the diversity of works for which the Sisters are destined, either by special vocation from God or by reason of special aptitude.

However, monasteries of men and communities which are not exclusively lay can, according to their nature and constitutions, admit clerics and lay persons on an equal footing and with equal rights and obligations, excepting those which flow from sacred orders.

16. Papal cloister should be maintained in the case of nuns engaged exclusively in the contemplative life. However, it must be adjusted to conditions of time and place and obsolete practices suppressed. This should be done after due consultation with the monasteries in question. But other nuns applied by rule to apostolic work outside the convent should be exempted from papal cloister in order to enable them better to fulfill the apostolic duties entrusted to them. Nevertheless, cloister is to be maintained according to the prescriptions of their constitutions.

17. The religious habit, an outward mark of consecration to God, should be simple and modest, poor and at the same becoming. In addition it must meet the requirements of health and be suited to the circumstances of time and place and to the needs of the ministry involved. The habits of both men and women religious which do not conform to these norms must be changed.

18. Adaptation and renewal depend greatly on the education of religious. Consequently neither non-clerical religious nor religious women should be assigned to apostolic works immediately after the novitiate. Rather, their religious and apostolic formation, joined with instruction in arts and science directed toward obtaining appropriate degrees, must be continued as needs require in houses established for those purposes.

In order that the adaptation of religious life to the needs of our time may not be merely external and that those employed by rule in the active apostolate may be equal to their task, religious must be given suitable instruction, depending on their intellectual capacity and personal talent, in the currents and attitudes of sentiment and thought prevalent in social life today. This education must blend its elements together harmoniously so that an integrated life on the part of the religious concerned results.

Religious should strive during the whole course of their lives to perfect the culture they have received in matters spiritual and in arts and sciences. Likewise, superiors must, as far as this is possible, obtain for them the opportunity, equipment and time to do this.

Superiors are also obliged to see to it that directors, spiritual fathers, and professors are carefully chosen and thoroughly trained.

19. When the question of founding new religious communities arises, their necessity or at least the many useful services they promise must be seriously weighed. Otherwise communities may be needlessly brought into being which are useless or which lack sufficient resources. Particularly in those areas where churches have recently established, those forms of religious life should be promoted and developed which take into account the genius and way of life of the inhabitants and the customs and conditions of the regions.

20. Religious communities should continue to maintain and fulfill the ministries proper to them. In addition, after considering the needs of the Universal Church and individual dioceses, they should adapt them to the requirements of time and place, employing appropriate and even new programs and abandoning those works which today are less relevant to the spirit and authentic nature of the community.

The missionary spirit must under all circumstances be preserved in religious communities. It should be adapted, accordingly, as the nature of each community permits, to modern conditions so that the preaching of the Gospel may be carried out more effectively in every nation.

21. There may be communities and monasteries which the Holy See, after consulting the interested local Ordinaries, will judge not to possess reasonable hope for further development. These should be forbidden to receive novices in the future. If it is possible, these should be combined with other more flourishing communities and monasteries whose scope and spirit is similar.

22. Independent institutes and monasteries should, when opportune and the Holy See permits, form federations if they can be considered as belonging to the same religious family. Others who have practically identical constitutions and rules and a common spirit should unite, particularly when they have too few members. Finally, those who share the same or a very similar active apostolate should become associated, one to the other.

23. This synod favors conferences or councils of major superiors, established by the Holy See. These can contribute very much to achieve the purpose of each institute; to encourage more effective cooperation for the welfare of the Church; to ensure a more just distribution of ministers of the Gospel in a given area; and finally to conduct affairs of interest to all religious. Suitable coordination and cooperation with episcopal conferences should be established with regard to the exercise of the apostolate.

Similar conferences should also be established for secular institutes.

24. Priests and Christian educators should make serious efforts to foster religious vocations, thereby increasing the strength of the Church, corresponding to its needs. These candidates should be suitably and carefully chosen. In ordinary preaching, the life of the evangelical counsels and the religious state should be treated more frequently. Parents, too, should nurture and protect religious vocations in their children by instilling Christian virtue in their hearts.

Religious communities have the right to make themselves known in order to foster vocations and seek candidates. In doing this, however, they should observe the norms laid down by the Holy See and the local Ordinary.

Religious should remember there is no better way than their own example to commend their institutes and gain candidates for the religious life.

25. Religious institutes, for whom these norms of adaptation and renewal have been laid down, should respond generously to the specific vocation God gave them as well as their work in the Church today. The sacred synod highly esteems their way of life in poverty, chastity and obedience, of which Christ the Lord is Himself the exemplar. Moreover, their apostolate, most effective, whether obscure or well known, offers this synod great hope for the future. Let all religious, therefore, rooted in faith and filled with love for God and neighbor, love of the cross and the hope of future glory, spread the good news of Christ throughout the whole world so that their witness may be seen by all and our Father in heaven may be glorified (Matt. 5:16). Therefore, let them beseech the Virgin Mary, the gentle Mother of God, "whose life is a model for all,"(1) that their number may daily increase and their salutary work be more effective.

NOTES

1. St. Ambrose, De Virginitate, 1, II, c. II, n. 15.

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APOSTOLICAM ACTUOSITATEM

Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity

Second Vatican Council

DECREE ON THE APOSTOLATE OF THE LAITY
APOSTOLICAM ACTUOSITATEM
SOLEMNLY PROMULGATED BY HIS HOLINESS,
POPE PAUL VI
ON NOVEMBER 18, 1965

INTRODUCTION

1. To intensify the apostolic activity of the people of God,(1) the most holy synod earnestly addresses itself to the laity, whose proper and indispensable role in the mission of the Church has already been dealt with in other documents.(2) The apostolate of the laity derives from their Christian vocation and the Church can never be without it. Sacred Scripture clearly shows how spontaneous and fruitful such activity was at the very beginning of the Church (cf. Acts 11:19-21; 18:26; Rom. 16:1-16; Phil. 4:3).

Our own times require of the laity no less zeal: in fact, modern conditions demand that their apostolate be broadened and intensified. With a constantly increasing population, continual progress in science and technology, and closer interpersonal relationships, the areas for the lay apostolate have been immensely widened particularly in fields that have been for the most part open to the laity alone. These factors have also occasioned new problems which demand their expert attention and study. This apostolate becomes more imperative in view of the fact that many areas of human life have become increasingly autonomous. This is as it should be, but it sometimes involves a degree of departure from the ethical and religious order and a serious danger to Christian life. Besides, in many places where priests are very few or, in some instances, deprived of due freedom for priestly work, the Church could scarcely exist and function without the activity of the laity.

An indication of this manifold and pressing need is the unmistakable work being done today by the Holy Spirit in making the laity ever more conscious of their own responsibility and encouraging them to serve Christ and the Church in all circumstances.(3)

In this decree the Council seeks to describe the nature, character, and diversity of the lay apostolate, to state its basic principles, and to give pastoral directives for its more effective exercise. All these should be regarded as norms when the canon law, as it pertains to the lay apostolate, is revised.

CHAPTER I

THE VOCATION OF THE LAITY TO THE APOSTOLATE

2. The Church was founded for the purpose of spreading the kingdom of Christ throughout the earth for the glory of God the Father, to enable all men to share in His saving redemption,(1) and that through them the whole world might enter into a relationship with Christ. All activity of the Mystical Body directed to the attainment of this goal is called the apostolate, which the Church carries on in various ways through all her members. For the Christian vocation by its very nature is also a vocation to the apostolate. No part of the structure of a living body is merely passive but has a share in the functions as well as life of the body: so, too, in the body of Christ, which is the Church, "the whole body . . . in keeping with the proper activity of each part, derives its increase from its own internal development" (Eph. 4:16).

Indeed, the organic union in this body and the structure of the members are so compact that the member who fails to make his proper contribution to the development of the Church must be said to be useful neither to the Church nor to himself.

In the Church there is a diversity of ministry but a oneness of mission. Christ conferred on the Apostles and their successors the duty of teaching, sanctifying, and ruling in His name and power. But the laity likewise share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own share in the mission of the whole people of God in the Church and in the world.(2)

They exercise the apostolate in fact by their activity directed to the evangelization and sanctification of men and to the penetrating and perfecting of the temporal order through the spirit of the Gospel. In this way, their temporal activity openly bears witness to Christ and promotes the salvation of men. Since the laity, in accordance with their state of life, live in the midst of the world and its concerns, they are called by God to exercise their apostolate in the world like leaven, with the ardor of the spirit of Christ.

3. The laity derive the right and duty to the apostolate from their union with Christ the head; incorporated into Christ's Mystical Body through Baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit through Confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate by the Lord Himself. They are consecrated for the royal priesthood and the holy people (cf. 1 Peter 2:4-10) not only that they may offer spiritual sacrifices in everything they do but also that they may witness to Christ throughout the world. The sacraments, however, especially the most holy Eucharist, communicate and nourish that charity which is the soul of the entire apostolate.(3)

One engages in the apostolate through the faith, hope, and charity which the Holy Spirit diffuses in the hearts of all members of the Church. Indeed, by the precept of charity, which is the Lord's greatest commandment, all the faithful are impelled to promote the glory of God through the coming of His kingdom and to obtain eternal life for all men-that they may know the only true God and Him whom He sent, Jesus Christ (cf. John 17:3). On all Christians therefore is laid the preeminent responsibility of working to make the divine message of salvation known and accepted by all men throughout the world.

For the exercise of this apostolate, the Holy Spirit Who sanctifies the people of God through ministry and the sacraments gives the faithful special gifts also (cf. 1 Cor. 12:7), "allotting them to everyone according as He wills" (1 Cor. 12:11) in order that individuals, administering grace to others just as they have received it, may also be "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10), to build up the whole body in charity (cf. Eph. 4:16). From the acceptance of these charisms, including those which are more elementary, there arise for each believer the right and duty to use them in the Church and in the world for the good of men and the building up of the Church, in the freedom of the Holy Spirit who "breathes where He wills" (John 3:8). This should be done by the laity in communion with their brothers in Christ, especially with their pastors who must make a judgment about the true nature and proper use of these gifts not to extinguish the Spirit but to test all things and hold for what is good (cf. 1 Thess. 5:12,19,21).(4)

4. Since Christ, sent by the Father, is the source and origin of the whole apostolate of the Church, the success of the lay apostolate depends upon the laity's living union with Christ, in keeping with the Lord's words, "He who abides in me, and I in him, bears much fruit, for without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). This life of intimate union with Christ in the Church is nourished by spiritual aids which are common to all the faithful, especially active participation in the sacred liturgy.(5) These are to be used by the laity in such a way that while correctly fulfilling their secular duties in the ordinary conditions of life, they do not separate union with Christ from their life but rather performing their work according to God's will they grow in that union. In this way the laity must make progress in holiness in a happy and ready spirit, trying prudently and patiently to overcome difficulties.(6) Neither family concerns nor other secular affairs should be irrelevant to their spiritual life, in keeping with the words of the Apostle, "What-ever you do in word or work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Col. 3:17).

Such a life requires a continual exercise of faith, hope, and charity. Only by the light of faith and by meditation on the word of God can one always and everywhere recognize God in Whom "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28), seek His will in every event, see Christ in everyone whether he be a relative or a stranger, and make correct judgments about the true meaning and value of temporal things both in themselves and in their relation to man's final goal.

They who have this faith live in the hope of the revelation of the sons of God and keep in mind the cross and resurrection of the Lord. In the pilgrimage of this life, hidden with Christ in God and free from enslavement to wealth, they aspire to those riches which remain forever and generously dedicate themselves wholly to the advancement of the kingdom of God and to the reform and improvement of the temporal order in a Christian spirit. Among the trials of this life they find strength in hope, convinced that "the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that will be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

Impelled by divine charity, they do good to all men, especially to those of the household of the faith (cf. Gal. 6:10), laying aside "all malice and all deceit and pretense, and envy, and all slander" (1 Peter 2:1), and thereby they draw men to Christ. This charity of God, "which is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Rom. 5:5), enables the laity really to express the spirit of the beatitudes in their lives. Following Jesus in His poverty, they are neither depressed by the lack of temporal goods nor inflated by their abundance; imitating Christ in His humility, they have no obsession for empty honors (cf. Gal. 5:26) but seek to please God rather than men, ever ready to leave all things for Christ's sake (cf. Luke 14:26) and to suffer persecution for justice sake (cf. Matt. 5:10), as they remember the words of the Lord, "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24) . Promoting Christian friendship among themselves, they help one another in every need whatsoever.

This plan for the spiritual life of the laity should take its particular character from their married or family state or their single or widowed state, from their state of health, and from their professional and social activity. They should not cease to develop earnestly the qualities and talents bestowed on them in accord with these conditions of life, and they should make use of the gifts which they have received from the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, the laity who have followed their vocation and have become members of one of the associations or institutes approved by the Church try faithfully to adopt the special characteristics of the spiritual life which are proper to them as well. They should also hold in high esteem professional skill, family and civic spirit, and the virtues relating to social customs, namely, honesty, justice, sincerity, kindness, and courage, without which no true Christian life can exist.

The perfect example of this type of spiritual and apostolic life is the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Apostles, who while leading the life common to all here on earth, one filled with family concerns and labors, was always intimately united with her Son and in an entirely unique way cooperated in the work of the Savior. Having now been assumed into heaven, with her maternal charity she cares for these brothers of her Son who are still on their earthly pilgrimage and remain involved in dangers and difficulties until they are led into the happy fatherland.(7) All should devoutly venerate her and commend their life and apostolate to her maternal care.

CHAPTER II

OBJECTIVES

5. Christ's redemptive work, while essentially concerned with the salvation of men, includes also the renewal of the whole temporal order. Hence the mission of the Church is not only to bring the message and grace of Christ to men but also to penetrate and perfect the temporal order with the spirit of the Gospel. In fulfilling this mission of the Church, the Christian laity exercise their apostolate both in the Church and in the world, in both the spiritual and the temporal orders. These orders, although distinct, are so connected in the singular plan of God that He Himself intends to raise up the whole world again in Christ and to make it a new creation, initially on earth and completely on the last day. In both orders the layman, being simultaneously a believer and a citizen, should be continuously led by the same Christian conscience.

6. The mission of the Church pertains to the salvation of men, which is to be achieved by belief in Christ and by His grace. The apostolate of the Church and of all its members is primarily designed to manifest Christ's message by words and deeds and to communicate His grace to the world. This is done mainly through the ministry of the Word and the sacraments, entrusted in a special way to the clergy, wherein the laity also have their very important roles to fulfill if they are to be "fellow workers for the truth" (3 John 8). It is especially on this level that the apostolate of the laity and the pastoral ministry are mutually complementary.

There are innumerable opportunities open to the laity for the exercise of their apostolate of evangelization and sanctification. The very testimony of their Christian life and good works done in a supernatural spirit have the power to draw men to belief and to God; for the Lord says, "Even so let your light shine before men in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

However, an apostolate of this kind does not consist only in the witness of one's way of life; a true apostle looks for opportunities to announce Christ by words addressed either to non-believers with a view to leading them to faith, or to the faithful with a view to instructing, strengthening, and encouraging them to a more fervent life. "For the charity of Christ impels us" (2 Cor. 5:14). The words of the Apostle should echo in all hearts, "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16).(1)

Since, in our own times, new problems are arising and very serious errors are circulating which tend to undermine the foundations of religion, the moral order, and human society itself, this sacred synod earnestly exhorts laymen-each according to his own gifts of intelligence and learning-to be more diligent in doing what they can to explain, defend, and properly apply Christian principles to the problems of our era in accordance with the mind of the Church.

7. God's plan for the world is that men should work together to renew and constantly perfect the temporal order.

All those things which make up the temporal order, namely, the good things of life and the prosperity of the family, culture, economic matters, the arts and professions, the laws of the political community, international relations, and other matters of this kind, as well as their development and progress, not only aid in the attainment of man's ultimate goal but also possess their own intrinsic value. This value has been established in them by God, whether they are considered in themselves or as parts of the whole temporal order. "God saw that all He had made was very good" (Gen. 1:31). This natural goodness of theirs takes on a special dignity as a result of their relation to the human person, for whose service they were created. It has pleased God to unite all things, both natural and supernatural, in Christ Jesus "so that in all things He may have the first place" (Col. 1:18). This destination, however, not only does not deprive the temporal order of its independence, its proper goals, laws, supports, and significance for human welfare but rather perfects the temporal order in its own intrinsic strength and worth and puts it on a level with man's whole vocation upon earth.

In the course of history, the use of temporal things has been marred by serious vices. Affected by original sin, men have frequently fallen into many errors concerning the true God, the nature of man, and the principles of the moral law. This has led to the corruption of morals and human institutions and not rarely to contempt for the human person himself. In our own time, moreover, those who have trusted excessively in the progress of the natural sciences and the technical arts have fallen into an idolatry of temporal things and have become their slaves rather than their masters.

The whole Church must work vigorously in order that men may become capable of rectifying the distortion of the temporal order and directing it to God through Christ. Pastors must clearly state the principles concerning the purpose of creation and the use of temporal things and must offer the moral and spiritual aids by which the temporal order may be renewed in Christ.

The laity must take up the renewal of the temporal order as their own special obligation. Led by the light of the Gospel and the mind of the Church and motivated by Christian charity, they must act directly and in a definite way in the temporal sphere. As citizens they must cooperate with other citizens with their own particular skill and on their own responsibility. Everywhere and in all things they must seek the justice of God's kingdom. The temporal order must be renewed in such a way that, without detriment to its own proper laws, it may be brought into conformity with the higher principles of the Christian life and adapted to the shifting circumstances of time, place, and peoples. Preeminent among the works of this type of apostolate is that of Christian social action which the sacred synod desires to see extended to the whole temporal sphere, including culture.(2)

8. While every exercise of the apostolate should be motivated by charity, some works by their very nature can become specially vivid expressions of this charity. Christ the Lord wanted these works to be signs of His messianic mission (cf. Matt. 11:4-5).

The greatest commandment in the law is to love God with one's whole heart and one's neighbor as oneself (cf. Matt. 22:37-40). Christ made this commandment of love of neighbor His own and enriched it with a new meaning. For He wanted to equate Himself with His brethren as the object of this love when He said, "As long as you did it for one of these, the least of My brethren, you did it for Me" (Matt. 25:40). Assuming human nature, He bound the whole human race to Himself as a family through a certain supernatural solidarity and established charity as the mark of His disciples, saying, "By this will all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

ln her very early days, the holy Church added the agape to the eucharistic supper and thus showed itself to be wholly united around Christ by the bond of charity. So, too, in every era it is recognized by this sign of love, and while it rejoices in the undertakings of others, it claims works of charity as its own inalienable duty and right. For this reason, pity for the needy and the sick and works of charity and mutual aid intended to relieve human needs of every kind are held in highest honor by the Church.(3)

At the present time, with the development of more rapid facilities for communication, with the barrier of distance separating men greatly reduced, with the inhabitants of the entire globe becoming one great family, these charitable activities and works have become more urgent and universal. These charitable enterprises can and should reach out to all persons and all needs. Wherever there are people in need of food and drink, clothing, housing, medicine, employment, education; wherever men lack the facilities necessary for living a truly human life or are afflicted with serious distress or illness or suffer exile or imprisonment, there Christian charity should seek them out and find them, console them with great solicitude, and help them with appropriate relief. This obligation is imposed above all upon every prosperous nation and person.(4)

In order that the exercise of charity on this scale may be unexceptionable in appearance as well as in fact, it is altogether necessary that one should consider in one's neighbor the image of God in which he has been created, and also Christ the Lord to Whom is really offered whatever is given to a needy person. It is imperative also that the freedom and dignity of the person being helped be respected with the utmost consideration, that the purity of one's charitable intentions be not stained by seeking one's own advantage or by striving for domination,(5) and especially that the demands of justice be satisfied lest the giving of what is due in justice be represented as the offering of a charitable gift. Not only the effects but also the causes of these ills must be removed and the help be given in such a way that the recipients may gradually be freed from dependence on outsiders and become self-sufficient.

Therefore, the laity should hold in high esteem and, according to their ability, aid the works of charity and projects for social assistance, whether public or private, including international programs whereby effective help is given to needy individuals and peoples. In so doing, they should cooperate with all men of good will.(6)

CHAPTER III

THE VARIOUS FIELDS OF THE APOSTOLATE

9. The laity carry out their manifold apostolate both in the Church and in the world. In both areas there are various opportunities for apostolic activity. We wish to list here the more important fields of action, namely, church communities, the family, youth, the social milieu, and national and international levels. Since in our times women have an ever more active shale in the whole life of society, it is very important that they participate more widely also in the various fields of the Church's apostolate.

10. As sharers in the role of Christ as priest, prophet, and king, the laity have their work cut out for them in the life and activity of the Church. Their activity is so necessary within the Church communities that without it the apostolate of the pastors is often unable to achieve its full effectiveness. In the manner of the men and women who helped Paul in spreading the Gospel (cf. Acts 18:18, 26; Rom. 16:3) the laity with the right apostolic attitude supply what is lacking to their brethren and refresh the spirit of pastors and of the rest of the faithful (cf. 1 Cor. 16:17-18). Strengthened by active participation in the liturgical life of their community, they are eager to do their share of the apostolic works of that community. They bring to the Church people who perhaps are far removed from it, earnestly cooperate in presenting the word of God especially by means of catechetical instruction, and offer their special skills to make the care of souls and the administration of the temporalities of the Church more efficient and effective.

The parish offers an obvious example of the apostolate on the community level inasmuch as it brings together the many human differences within its boundaries and merges them into the universality of the Church.(1) The laity should accustom themselves to working in the parish in union with their priests,(2) bringing to the Church community their own and the world's problems as well as questions concerning human salvation, all of which they should examine and resolve by deliberating in common. As far as possible the laity ought to provide helpful collaboration for every apostolic and missionary undertaking sponsored by their local parish.

They should develop an ever-increasing appreciation of their own diocese, of which the parish is a kind of cell, ever ready at their pastor's invitation to participate in diocesan projects. Indeed, to fulfill the needs of cities and rural areas,(3) they should not limit their cooperation to the parochial or diocesan boundaries but strive to extend it to interparochial, interdiocesan, national, and international fields. This is constantly becoming all the more necessary because the daily increase in mobility of populations, reciprocal relationships, and means of communication no longer allow any sector of society to remain closed in upon itself. Thus they should be concerned about the needs of the people of God dispersed throughout the world. They should especially make missionary activity their own by giving material or even personal assistance. It is a duty and honor for Christians to return to God a part of the good things that they receive from Him.

11. Since the Creator of all things has established conjugal society as the beginning and basis of human society and, by His grace, has made it a great mystery in Christ and the Church (cf. Eph. 5:32), the apostolate of married persons and families is of unique importance for the Church and civil society.

Christian husbands and wives are cooperators in grace and witnesses of faith for each other, their children, and all others in their household. They are the first to communicate the faith to their children and to educate them by word and example for the Christian and apostolic life. They prudently help them in the choice of their vocation and carefully promote any sacred vocation which they may discern in them.

It has always been the duty of Christian married partners but today it is the greatest part of their apostolate to manifest and prove by their own way of life the indissolubility and sacredness of the marriage bond, strenuously to affirm the right and duty of parents and guardians to educate children in a Christian manner, and to defend the dignity and lawful autonomy of the family. They and the rest of the faithful, therefore, should cooperate with men of good will to ensure the preservation of these rights in civil legislation and to make sure that governments give due attention to the needs of the family regarding housing, the education of children, working conditions, social security, and taxes; and that in policy decisions affecting migrants their right to live together as a family should be safeguarded.(4)

This mission-to be the first and vital cell of society-the family has received from God. It will fulfill this mission if it appears as the domestic sanctuary of the Church by reason of the mutual affection of its members and the prayer that they offer to God in common, if the whole family makes itself a part of the liturgical worship of the Church, and if it provides active hospitality and promotes justice and other good works for the service of all the brethren in need. Among the various activities of the family apostolate may be enumerated the following: the adoption of abandoned infants, hospitality to strangers, assistance in the operation of schools, helpful advice and material assistance for adolescents, help to engaged couples in preparing themselves better for marriage, catechetical work, support of married couples and families involved in material and moral crises, help for the aged not only by providing them with the necessities of life but also by obtaining for them a fair share of the benefits of an expanding economy.

At all times and places but particularly in areas where the first seeds of the Gospel are being sown, or where the Church is just beginning, or is involved in some serious difficulty, Christian families can give effective testimony to Christ before the world by remaining faithful to the Gospel and by providing a model of Christian marriage through their whole way of life.(5)

To facilitate the attainment of the goals of their apostolate, it can be useful for families to be brought together into groups.(6)

12. Young persons exert very important influence in modern society.(7) There has been a radical change in the circumstances of their lives, their mental attitudes, and their relationships with their own families. Frequently they move too quickly into a new social and economic status. While their social and even their political importance is growing from day to day, they seem to be unable to cope adequately with their new responsibilities.

Their heightened influence in society demands of them a proportionate apostolic activity, but their natural qualities also fit them for this activity. As they become more conscious of their own personalities, they are impelled by a zest for life and a ready eagerness to assume their own responsibility, and they yearn to play their part in social and cultural life. If this zeal is imbued with the spirit of Christ and is inspired by obedience and love for the Church, it can be expected to be very fruitful. They should become the first to carry on the apostolate directly to other young persons, concentrating their apostolic efforts within their own circle, according to the needs of the social environment in which they live.(8)

Adults ought to engage in such friendly discussion with young people that both age groups, overcoming the age barrier, may become better acquainted and share the special benefits each generation can offer the other. Adults should stimulate young persons first by good example to take part in the apostolate and, if the opportunity presents itself, by offering them effective advice and willing assistance. By the same token young people should cultivate toward adults respect and trust, and although they are naturally attracted to novelties, they should duly appreciate praiseworthy traditions.

13. The apostolate in the social milieu, that is, the effort to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws, and structures of the community in which one lives, is so much the duty and responsibility of the laity that it can never be performed properly by others. In this area the laity can exercise the apostolate of like toward like. It is here that they complement the testimony of life with the testimony of the word.(9) It is here where they work or practice their profession or study or reside or spend their leisure time or have their companionship that they are more capable of helping their brethren.

The laity fulfill this mission of the Church in the world especially by conforming their lives to their faith so that they become the light of the world as well as by practicing honesty in all their dealings so that they attract all to the love of the true and the good and finally to the Church and to Christ. They fulfill their mission also by fraternal charity which presses them to share in the living conditions, labors, sorrows, and aspirations of their brethren with the result that the hearts of all about them are quietly prepared for the workings of saving grace. Another requisite for the accomplishment of their task is a full consciousness of their role in building up society whereby they strive to perform their domestic, social, and professional duties with such Christian generosity that their manner of acting should gradually penetrate the whole world of life and labor.

This apostolate should reach out to all wherever they may be encountered; it should not exclude any spiritual or temporal benefit which they have the ability to confer. True apostles however, are not content with this activity alone but endeavor to announce Christ to their neighbors by means of the spoken word as well. For there are many persons who can hear the Gospel and recognize Christ only through the laity who live near them.

Children also have their own apostolic work to do. According to their ability they are true living witnesses of Christ among their companions.

10. A vast field for the apostolate has opened up on the national and international levels where the laity especially assist with their Christian wisdom. In loyalty to their country and in faithful fulfillment of their civic obligations, Catholics should feel themselves obliged to promote the true common good. Thus they should make the weight of their opinion felt in order that the civil authority may act with justice and that legislation may conform to moral precepts and the common good. Catholics skilled in public affairs and adequately enlightened in faith and Christian doctrine should not refuse to administer pubic affairs since by doing this in a worthy manner they can both further the common good and at the same time prepare the way for the Gospel.

Catholics should try to cooperate with all men and women of good will to promote whatever is true, whatever just, whatever holy, whatever lovable (cf. Phil. 4:8). They should hold discussions with them, excel them in prudence and courtesy, and initiate research on social and public practices which should be improved in line with the spirit of the Gospel.

Among the signs of our times, the irresistibly increasing sense of the solidarity of all peoples is especially noteworthy. It is a function of the lay apostolate sedulously to promote this awareness and to transform it into a sincere and genuine love of brotherhood. Furthermore, the laity should be aware of the international field and of the questions and solutions, doctrinal as well as practical, which arise in this field, with special reverence to developing nations.(10)

All who work in or give help to foreign nations must remember that relations among peoples should be a genuine fraternal exchange in which each party is at the same time a giver and a receiver. Travelers, whether their interest is international affairs, business, or leisure, should remember that they are itinerant heralds of Christ wherever they go and should act accordingly.

CHAPTER IV

THE VARIOUS FORMS OF THE APOSTOLATE

15. The laity can engage in their apostolic activity either as individuals or together as members of various groups or associations.

16. The individual apostolate, flowing generously from its source in a truly Christian life (cf. John 4:14), is the origin and condition of the whole lay apostolate, even of the organized type, and it admits of no substitute.

Regardless of status, all lay persons (including those who have no opportunity or possibility for collaboration in associations) are called to this type of apostolate and obliged to engage in it. This type of apostolate is useful at all times and places, but in certain circumstances it is the only one appropriate and feasible.

There are many forms of the apostolate whereby the laity build up the Church, sanctify the world, and give it life in Christ. A particular form of the individual apostolate as well as a sign specially suited to our times is the testimony of the whole lay life arising from faith, hope, and charity. It manifests Christ living in those who believe in Him. Then by the apostolate the spoken and written word, which is utterly necessary under certain circumstances, lay people announce Christ, explain and spread His teaching in accordance with one's status and ability, and faithfully profess it.

Furthermore, in collaborating as citizens of this world, in whatever pertains to the upbuilding and conducting of the temporal order, the laity must seek in the light of faith loftier motives of action in their family, professional, cultural, and social life and make them known to others when the occasion arises. Doing this, they should be aware of the fact that they are cooperating with God the creator, redeemer, and sanctifier and are giving praise to Him.

Finally, the laity should vivify their life with charity and express it as best they can in their works.

They should all remember that they can reach all men and contribute to the salvation of the whole world by public worship and prayer as well as by penance and voluntary acceptance of the labors and hardships of life whereby they become like the suffering Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 4:10; Col. 1:24).

17. There is a very urgent need for this individual apostolate in those regions where the freedom of the Church is seriously infringed. In these trying circumstances, the laity do what they can to take the place of priests, risking their freedom and sometimes their life to teach Christian doctrine to those around them, training them in a religious way of life and a Catholic way of thinking, leading them to receive the sacraments frequently and developing in them piety, especially Eucharistic devotion.(1) While the sacred synod heartily thanks God for continuing also in our times to raise up lay persons of heroic fortitude in the midst of persecutions, it embrace them with fatherly affection and gratitude.

The individual apostolate has a special field in areas where Catholics are few in number and widely dispersed. Here the laity who engage in the apostolate only as individuals, whether for the reasons already mentioned or for special reasons including those deriving also from their own professional activity, usefully gather into smaller groups for serious conversation without any more formal kind of establishment or organization, so that an indication of the community of the Church is always apparent to others as a true witness of love. In this way, by giving spiritual help to one another through friendship and the communicating of the benefit of their experience, they are trained to overcome the disadvantages of excessively isolated life and activity and to make their apostolate more productive.

18. The faithful are called to engage in the apostolate as individuals in the varying circumstances of their life. They should remember, nevertheless, that man is naturally social and that it has pleased God to unite those who believe in Christ into the people of God (cf. 1 Peter 2:5-10) and into one body (cf. 1 Cor. 12:12). The group apostolate of Christian believers then happily corresponds to a human and Christian need and at the same time signifies the communion and unity of the Church in Christ, who said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20).

For this reason the faithful should participate in the apostolate by way of united effort.(2) They should be apostles both in their family communities and in their parishes and dioceses, which themselves express the community nature of the apostolate, as well as in the informal groups which they decide to form among themselves.

The group apostolate is very important also because the apostolate must often be performed by way of common activity both the Church communities and the various spheres. For the associations established for carrying on the apostolate in common sustain their members, form them for the apostolate, and rightly organize and regulate their apostolic work so that much better results can be expected than if each member were to act on his own.

In the present circumstances, it is quite necessary that, in the area of lay activity, the united and organized form of the apostolate be strengthened. In fact, only the pooling of resources is capable of fully achieving all the aims of the modern apostolate and firmly protecting its interests.(3) Here it is important that the apostolate encompass even the common attitudes and social conditions of those for whom it is designed. Otherwise those engaged in the apostolate are often unable to bear up under the pressure of public opinion or of social institutions.

19. There is a great variety of associations in the apostolate.(4) Some set before themselves the broad apostolic purpose of the Church; others aim to evangelize and sanctify in a special way. Some purpose to infuse a Christian spirit into the temporal order; others bear witness to Christ in a special way through works of mercy and charity.

Among these associations, those which promote and encourage closer unity between the concrete life of the members and their faith must be given primary consideration. Associations are not ends unto themselves; rather they should serve the mission of the Church to the world. Their apostolic dynamism depends on their conformity with the goals of the Church as well as on the Christian witness and evangelical spirit of every member and of the whole association.

Now, in view of the progress of social institutions and the the fast- moving pace of modern society, the global nature of the Church's mission requires that apostolic enterprises of Catholics should more and more develop organized forms in the international sphere. Catholic international organizations will more effectively achieve their purpose if the groups comprising them, as well as their members, are more closely united to these international organizations.

Maintaining the proper relationship to Church authorities,(5) the laity have the right to found and control such associations(6) and to join those already existing. Yet the dispersion of efforts must be avoided. This happens when new associations and projects are promoted without a sufficient reason, or if antiquated associations or methods are retained beyond their period of usefulness. Nor is it always fitting to transfer indiscriminately forms of the apostolates that have been used in one nation to other nations.(7)

20. Many decades ago the laity in many nations began to dedicate themselves increasingly to the apostolate. They grouped themselves into various kinds of activities and societies which, while maintaining a closer union with the hierarchy, pursued and continue to pursue goals which are properly apostolic. Of these associations, or even among similar and older institutions, those are specially noteworthy which followed different methods of operation and yet produced excellent results for Christ's kingdom. These societies were deservedly recommended and promoted by the popes and many bishops, from whom they received the title of "Catholic Action," and were often described as the collaboration of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy.(8)

Whether these forms of the apostolate have the name of "Catholic Action" or some other title, they exercise an apostolate of great value for our times and consist in the combination and simultaneous possession of the following characteristics:

a) The immediate aim of organizations of this kind is the Church's apostolic aim, that is, the evangelization and sanctification of men and the formation of a Christian conscience among them so that they can infuse the spirit of the Gospel into various communities and departments of life.

b) Cooperating with the hierarchy in their own way, the laity contribute the benefit of their experience to, and assume responsibility for the direction of these organizations, the consideration of the conditions in which the pastoral activity of the Church is to be conducted, and the elaboration and execution of the plan of things to be done.

c) The laity act together in the manner of an organic body so that the community of the Church is more fittingly symbolized and the apostolate rendered more effective.

d) Whether they offer themselves spontaneously or are invited to action and direct cooperation with the apostolate of the hierarchy, the laity function under the higher direction of the hierarchy itself, and the latter can sanction this cooperation by an explicit mandate.

Organizations in which, in the opinion of the hierarchy, the ensemble of these characteristics is realized, must be considered to be Catholic Action even though they take on various forms and titles because of the needs of different regions and peoples.

The most holy council earnestly recommends these associations, which surely answer the needs of the apostolate of the Church among many peoples and countries, and invites the clergy and laity working in them to develop the above-mentioned characteristics to an ever greater degree and to cooperate at all times with all other forms of the apostolate in a fraternal manner in the Church.

21. All associations of the apostolate must be given due appreciation. Those, however, which the hierarchy have praised or recommended as responsive to the needs of time and place, or have ordered to be established as particularly urgent, must be held in highest esteem by priests, Religious, and laity and promoted according to each one's ability. Among these associations, moreover, international associations or groups of Catholics must be specially appreciated at the present time.

22. Deserving of special honor and commendation in the Church are those lay people, single or married, who devote themselves with professional experience, either permanently or temporarily, to the service of associations and their activities. There is a source of great joy for the Church in the fact that there is a daily increase in the number of lay persons who offer their personal service to apostolic associations and activities, either within the limits of their own nation or in the international field or especially in Catholic mission communities and in regions where the Church has only recently been implanted.

The pastors of the Church should gladly and gratefully welcome these lay persons and make sure that the demands of justice, equity, and charity relative to their status be satisfied to the fullest extent, particularly as regards proper support for them and their families. They should also take care to provide for these lay people the necessary formation, spiritual consolation, and incentive.

CHAPTER V

EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

23. Whether the lay apostolate is exercised by the faithful as individuals or as members of organizations, it should be incorporated into the apostolate of the whole Church according to a right system of relationships. Indeed, union with those whom the Holy Spirit has assigned to rule His Church (cf. Acts 20:28) is an essential element of the Christian apostolate. No less necessary is cooperation among various projects of the apostolate which must be suitably directed by the hierarchy.

Indeed, the spirit of unity should be promoted in order that fraternal charity may be resplendent in the whole apostolate of the Church, common goals may be attained, and destructive rivalries avoided. For this there is need for mutual esteem among all the forms of the apostolate in the Church and, with due respect for the particular character of each organization, proper coordination.(1) This is most fitting since a particular activity in the Church requires harmony and apostolic cooperation on the part of both branches of the clergy, the Religious, and the laity.

24. The hierarchy should promote the apostolate of the laity, provide it with spiritual principles and support, direct the conduct of this apostolate to the common good of the Church, and attend to the preservation of doctrine and order.

Indeed, the lay apostolate admits of different types of relationships with the hierarchy in accordance with the various forms and objects of this apostolate. For in the Church there are many apostolic undertakings which are established by the free choice of the laity and regulated by their prudent judgment. The mission of the Church can be better accomplished in certain circumstances by undertakings of this kind, and therefore they are frequently praised or recommended by the hierarchy.(2) No project, however, may claim the name "Catholic" unless it has obtained the consent of the lawful Church authority.

Certain forms of the apostolate of the laity are given explicit recognition by the hierarchy, though in various ways.

Because of the demands of the common good of the Church, moreover, ecclesiastical authority can select and promote in a particular way some of the apostolic associations and projects which have an immediately spiritual purpose, thereby assuming in them a special responsibility. Thus, making various dispositions of the apostolate according to circumstances, the hierarchy joins some particular form of it more closely with its own apostolic function. Yet the proper nature and distinctiveness of each apostolate must be preserved, and the laity must not be deprived of the possibility of acting on their own accord. In various Church documents this procedure of the hierarchy is called a mandate.

Finally, the hierarchy entrusts to the laity certain functions which are more closely connected with pastoral duties, such as the teaching of Christian doctrine, certain liturgical actions, and the care of souls. By virtue of this mission, the laity are fully subject to higher ecclesiastical control in the performance of this work.

As regards works and institutions in the temporal order, the role of the ecclesiastical hierarchy is to teach and authentically interpret the moral principles to be followed in temporal affairs. Furthermore, they have the right to judge, after careful consideration of all related matters and consultation with experts, whether or not such works and institutions conform to moral principles and the right to decide what is required for the protection and promotion of values of the supernatural order.

25. Bishops, pastors of parishes, and other priests of both branches of the clergy should keep in mind that the right and duty to exercise this apostolate is common to all the faithful, both clergy and laity, and that the laity also have their own roles in building up the Church.(3) For this reason they should work fraternally with the laity in and for the Church and take special care of the lay persons in these apostolic works.(4)

Special care should be taken to select priests who are capable of promoting particular forms of the apostolate of the laity and are properly trained.(5) Those who are engaged in this ministry represent the hierarchy in their pastoral activity by virtue of the mission they receive from the hierarchy. Always adhering faithfully to the spirit and teaching of the Church, they should promote proper relations been laity and hierarchy. They should devote themselves to nourishing the spiritual life and an apostolic attitude in the Catholic societies entrusted to them; they should contribute their wise counsel to the apostolic activity of these associations and promote their undertakings. Through continuous dialogue with the laity, these priests should carefully investigate which forms make apostolic activity more fruitful. They should promote the spirit of unity within the association as well as between it and others.

Finally, in keeping with the spirit and norms of their societies, Religious Brothers and Sisters should value the apostolic works of the laity and willingly devote themselves to promoting lay enterprises.(6) They should also strive to support, uphold, and fulfill priestly functions.

26. In dioceses, insofar as possible, there should be councils which assist the apostolic work of the Church either in the field of evangelization and sanctification or in the charitable, social, or other spheres, and here it is fitting that the clergy and Religious should cooperate with the laity. While preserving the proper character and autonomy of each organization, these councils will be able to promote the mutual coordination of various lay associations and enterprises.(7)

Councils of this type should be established as far as possible also on the parochial, interparochial, and interdiocesan level as well as in the national or international sphere.(8)

A special secretariat, moreover, should be established at the Holy See for the service and promotion of the lay apostolate. It can serve as a well-equipped center for communicating information about the various apostolic programs of the laity, promoting research into modern problems arising in this field, and assisting the hierarchy and laity in their apostolic works with its advice. The various movements and projects of the apostolate of the laity throughout the world should also be represented in this secretariat, and here clergy and Religious also are to cooperate with the laity.

27. The quasi-common heritage of the Gospel and the common duty of Christian witness resulting from it recommend and frequently require the cooperation of Catholics with other Christians, on the part of individuals and communities within the Church, either in activities or in associations, in the national or international field.(9)

Likewise, common human values not infrequently call for cooperation between Christians pursuing apostolic aims and those who do not profess Christ's name but acknowledge these values.

By this dynamic and prudent cooperation,(10) which is of special importance in temporal activities, the laity bear witness to Christ, the Savior of the world, as well as to the unity of the human family.

CHAPTER VI

FORMATION FOR THE APOSTOLATE

28. The apostolate can attain its maximum effectiveness only through a diversified and thorough formation. This is demanded not only by the continuous spiritual and doctrinal progress of the lay person himself but also by the accommodation of his activity to circumstances varying according to the affairs, persons, and duties involved. This formation for the apostolate should rest upon those bases which have been stated and proclaimed by this most holy council in other documents.(1) In addition to the formation which is common for all Christians, many forms of the apostolate demand also a specific and particular formation because of the variety of persons and circumstances.

29. Since the laity share in their own way in the mission of the Church, their apostolic formation is specially characterized by the distinctively secular and particular quality of the lay state and by its own form of the spiritual life.

The formation for the apostolate presupposes a certain human and well-rounded formation adapted to the natural abilities and conditions of each lay person. Well-informed about the modern world, the lay person should be a member of his own community and adjusted to its culture.

However, the lay person should learn especially how to perform the mission of Christ and the Church by basing his life on belief in the divine mystery of creation and redemption and by being sensitive to the movement of the Holy Spirit who gives life to the people of God and who urges all to love God the Father as well as the world and men in Him. This formation should be deemed the basis and condition for every successful apostolate.

In addition to spiritual formation, a solid doctrinal instruction in theology, ethics, and philosophy adjusted to differences of age, status, and natural talents, is required. The importance of general culture along with practical and technical formation should also be kept in mind.

To cultivate good human relations, truly human values must be fostered, especially the art of living fraternally and cooperating with others and of striking up friendly conversation with them.

Since formation for the apostolate cannot consist in merely theoretical instruction, from the beginning of their formation the laity should gradually and prudently learn how to view, judge and do all things in the light of faith as well as to develop and improve themselves along with others through doing, thereby entering into active service to the Church.(2) This formation, always in need of improvement because of the increasing maturity of the human person and the proliferation of problems, requires an ever deeper knowledge and planned activity. In the fulfillment of all the demands of formation, the unity and integrity of the human person must be kept in mind at all times so that his harmony and balance may be safeguarded and enhanced.

In this way the lay person engages himself wholly and actively in the reality of the temporal order and effectively assumes his role in conducting the affairs of this order. At the same time, as a living member and witness of the Church, he renders the Church present and active in the midst of temporal affairs.(3)

30. The training for the apostolate should start with the children's earliest education. In a special way, however, adolescents and young persons should be initiated into the apostolate and imbued with its spirit. This formation must be perfected throughout their whole life in keeping with the demands of new responsibilities. It is evident, therefore, that those who have the obligation to provide a Christian education also have the duty of providing formation for the apostolate.

In the family parents have the task of training their children from childhood on to recognize God's love for all men. By example especially they should teach them little by little to be solicitous for the material and spiritual needs of their neighbor. The whole family in its common life, then, should be a sort of apprenticeship for the apostolate. Children must be educated, too, in such fashion that transcending the family circle, they may open their minds to both ecclesiastical and temporal communities. They should be so involved in the local community of the parish that they will acquire a consciousness of being living and active members of the people of God. Priests should focus their attention on the formation of the laity for the apostolate in their catechetics, their ministry of the word, their direction of souls, and in their other pastoral services.

Schools, colleges, and other Catholic educational institutions also have the duty to develop a Catholic sense and apostolic activity in young persons. If young people lack this formation either because they do not attend these schools or because of any other reason, all the more should parents, pastors of souls, and apostolic organizations attend to it. Teachers and educators on the other hand, who carry on a distinguished form of the apostolate of the laity by their vocation and office, should be equipped with that learning and pedagogical skill that are needed for imparting such education effectively.

Likewise, lay groups and associations dedicated to the apostolate or other supernatural goals, should carefully and assiduously promote formation for the apostolate in keeping with their purpose and condition.(4) Frequently these groups are the ordinary vehicle for harmonious formation for the apostolate inasmuch as they provide doctrinal, spiritual, and practical formation. Their members meet in small groups with their associates or friends, examine the methods and results of their apostolic activity, and compare their daily way of life with the Gospel.

Formation of this type must be so organized that it takes into account the whole lay apostolate, which must be carried on not only among the organized groups themselves but also in all circumstances throughout one's whole life, especially one's professional and social life. Indeed, everyone should diligently prepare himself for the apostolate, this preparation being the more urgent in adulthood. For the advance of age brings with it a more open mind, enabling each person to detect more readily the talents with which God has enriched his soul and to exercise more effectively those charisms which the Holy Spirit has bestowed on him for the good of his brethren.

31. Various types of the apostolate demand also a specially suitable formation.

a) In regard to the apostolate for evangelizing and sanctifying men, the laity must be specially formed to engage in conversation with others, believers, or non-believers, in order to manifest Christ's message to all men.(5)

Since in our times, different forms of materialism are spread far and wide even among Catholic, the laity should not only learn doctrine more diligently, especially those main points which are the subjects of controversy, but should also exhibit the witness of an evangelical life in contrast to all forms of materialism.

b) In regard to the Christian renewal of the temporal order, the laity should be instructed in the true meaning and value of temporal things, both in themselves and in relation to all the aims of the human person. They should be trained in the right use of things and the organization of institutions, attentive always to the common good in line with the principles of the moral and social teaching of the Church. Laymen should above all learn the principles and conclusions of the social doctrine so as to become capable of working for the development of this doctrine to the best of their ability and of rightly applying these same principles and conclusions to individual cases.(6)

c) Since the works of charity and mercy express the most striking testimony of the Christian life, apostolic formation should lead also to the performance of these works so that the faithful may learn from childhood on to have compassion for their brethren and to be generous in helping those in need.(7)

32. There are many aids for lay persons devoted to the apostolate, namely, study sessions, congresses, periods of recollection, spiritual exercises, frequent meetings, conferences, books, and periodicals directed toward the acquisition of a deeper knowledge of sacred Scripture and Catholic doctrine, the nourishment.of spiritual life, the discernment of world conditions, and the discovery and development of suitable methods.(8)

These aids in formation take into consideration the various types of the apostolate in the milieu where it is exercised.

For this purpose also centers or higher institutes have been erected, and they have already proved highly successful.

The most holy council rejoices over projects of this kind which are already flourishing in certain areas, and it desires that they may be promoted also in other areas where they may be needed. Furthermore, centers of documentation and study not only in theology but also in anthropology, psychology, sociology, and methodology should be established for all fields of the apostolate for the better development of the natural capacities of the laity-men and women, young persons and adults.

EXHORTATION

33. The most holy council, then, earnestly entreats all the laity in the Lord to answer gladly, nobly, and promptly the more urgent invitation of Christ in this hour and the impulse of the Holy Spirit. Younger persons should feel that this call has been directed to them especially and they should respond to it eagerly and generously. Through this holy synod, the Lord renews His invitation to all the laity to come closer to Him every day, recognizing that what is His is also their own (Phil. 2:5), to associate themselves with Him in His saving mission. Once again He sends them into every town and place where He will come (cf. Luke 10:1) so that they may show that they are co-workers in the various forms and modes of the one apostolate of the Church, which must be constantly adapted to the new needs of our times. Ever productive as they should be in the work of the Lord, they know that their labor in Him is not in vain (cf. 1 Cor. 15:58).

NOTES

Introduction:

1. cf. John XXIII, apostolic constitution "Humani Salutis," Dec. 25, 1961: A.A.S. 54 (1962) pp. 7-10.

2. cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Nature of the Church, nos. 33 ff.: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 39 ff.; cf; also Constitution on the Liturgy, nos. 26-40; A.A.S. 56 (1964) pp. 107- 111; cf. Decree on Instruments of Social Communication: A.A.S. 56 (1964) pp. 145-158; cf. Decree on Ecumenism: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 90-107; cf. Decree on Pastoral Duties of Bishops, nos. 16, 17, 18; cf. Declaration on Christian Education, nos. 3, 5, 7; cf. Decree on Missionary Activity of Church, nos. 15, 21, 41; cf. Decree on Priestly Life and Ministry, no. 9.

3. cf. Pius XII, allocution to cardinals, Feb. 18, 1946: A.A.S. 38 (1946) pp. 101-102; Idem., sermon to young Catholic workers, Aug. 25, 1957: A.A.S. 49 (1957) p. 843.

Chapter 1 Article 2:

1. cf. Pius XI, encyclical "Rerum Ecclesiae:" A.A.S. 18 (1926) p. 65.

2. cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Nature of the Church, no. 31: A.A.S. 57 (1965) p. 37. Article 3:

3. cf. ibid., no. 33, p. 39; cf. also no. 10, ibid., p. 14.

4. cf. ibid., no. 12, p. 16. Article 4:

5. cf. Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Liturgy, Chap. 1, no. 11: A.A.S. 56 (1964) pp. 102-103.

6. cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Nature of the Church, no. 32: A.A.S. 57 (1965) p. 38; cf. also nos. 40-41: ibid., pp. 45-47.

7. ibid., no. 62, p. 63; cf. also no. 65. ibid., pp. 64-65. CHAPTER II Article 6:

1. cf. Pius XI, encyclical "Ubi Arcano," Dec. 23, 1922: A.A.S. 14 (1922) p. 659; Pius XII, encyclical "Summi Pontificatus," Oct. 20, 1939: A.A.S. 31 (1939) pp. 442-443. Article 7:

2. cf. Leo XIII, encyclical "Rerum Novarum:" A.A.S. 23 (1890-91) p. 47; Pius XI encyclical "Quadragesimo anno:" A.A.S. 23 (1931) p 190; Pius XII, radio message of June 1, 1941: A.A.S. 33 (1941) p. 207. Article 8:

3. cf. John XXIII, encyclical "Mater et Magistra:" A.A.S. 53 (1961) p. 402.

4. cf. ibid., pp. 440-441.

5. cf. ibid., pp. 442-443.

6. cf. Pius XII, allocution to "Pax Romana" April 25, 1957: A.A.S. 49 (1957) pp. 298-299; and especially John XXIII, "Ad Conventum Consilii" Food and Agriculture Organization Nov. 10, 1959: A.A.S. 51 (1959) pp. 856-866.

Chapter III Article 10:

1. cf. St. Pius X, apostolic letter "Creationis Duarum Novarum Paroeciarum" June 1, 1905: A.A.S. 38 (1905) pp. 65-67; Pius XII, allocution to faithful of parish of St. Saba, Jan. 11, 1953: Discourses and radio messages of His Holiness Pius XII, 14 (1952-53) pp. 449- 454; John XXIII allocution to clergy and faithful of suburbicarian diocese of Albano, "Ad Arcem Gandulfi Habita," Aug. 26, 1962: A.A.S. 54 (1962) pp. 656-660.

2. cf. Leo XIII, allocution Jan. 28, 1894: Acts, 14 (1894) pp. 424- 425.

3. cf. Pius XII, allocution to pastors, etc., Feb. 6, 1951: Discourses and Radio Messages of His Holiness Pius XII, 12 (1950-51) pp. 437- 443; 852: ibid, 14 (1952-53) pp. 5-10; March 27, 1953: ibid., 15 (1953-54) pp. 27-35; Feb. 28, 1954: ibid., pp. 585-590. Article 11:

4. cf. Pius XI, encyclical "Casti Connubii:" A.A.S. 22 (1930) p. 554; Pius XII, Radio Messages, Jan. 1, 1941: A.A.S. 33 (1941) p. 203; idem., to delegates of the convention of the members of the International Union to Protect the Rights of Families, Sept. 20, 1949; A.A.S. 41 (1949) p. 552; idem., to heads of families on pilgrimage from France to Rome, Sept. 18, 1951: A.A.S. 43 (1951) p. 731, idem., Christmas Radio Message of 1952: A.A.S. 45 (1953) p. 41; John XXIII, encyclical "Mater et Magistra" May 15, 1961: A.A.S. (1961) pp. 429, 439.

5. cf. Pius XII, encyclical "Evangelii Praecones," June 2, 1951: A.A.S. 43 (1951) p. 514.

6. cf. Pius XII, to delegates to the convention of members of the International Union for the Defense of Family Rights, Sept. 20, 1949: A.A.S. 41 (1949) p. 552. Article 12:

7. cf. St. Pius X, allocution to Association of French Catholic Youth on piety, knowledge and action, Sept. 25, 1904: A.A.S. 37 (1904-05) pp. 296-300.

8. cf. Pius XII, letter "Dans Quelques Semaines" to Archbishop of Montreal, Canada, to be relayed to the Assemblies of Canadian Young Christian Workers, May 24, 1947: A.A.S. 39 (1947) p. 257; radio message to Young Christian Workers, Brussels, Sept. 3, 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950) pp. 640-641. Article 13:

9. cf. Pius XI, encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno," May 15, 1931: A.A.S. 23 (1931) pp. 225-226. Article 14:

10. cf. John XXIII, encyclical "Mater et Magistra" May 15, 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961) pp. 448-450.

Chapter IV Article 17:

1. cf. Pius XII, allocution to the first convention of laymen representing all nations on the promotion of the apostolate, Oct. 15, 1951: A.A.S. 43 (1951) p. 788. Article 18:

2. cf. Pius XII, allocution to the first convention of laymen representing all nations on the promotion of the apostolate Oct. 15, 1951: A.A.S. 43 (1951) pp. 787-788.

3. cf. Pius XII, encyclical "Le Pelerinage de Lourdes," July 2, 1957: A.A.S. 49 (1957) p. 615. Article 19:

4. cf. Pius XII, allocution to the assembly of the International Federation of Catholic Men, Dec. 8, 1956: A.A.S. 49 (1957) pp. 26- 27.

5. cf. in Chap. 5, no. 24.

6. cf. Sacred Congregation of the Council, concerning the dissolution of the Corrientes diocese in Argentina, Nov. 13, 1920: A.A.S. 13 (1921) p. 139.

7. cf. John XXIII, encyclical "Princeps Pastorum," Dec. 10, 1959: A.A.S. 51 (1959) p. 856. Article 20:

8. cf. Pius XI, letter "Quae Nobis" to Cardinal Bertram, Nov. 13, 1928: A.A.S. 20 (1928) p. 385. cf. also Pius XII, allocution to Italian Catholic Action, Sept. 4, 1940: A.A.S. 32 (1940) p. 362.

Chapter V Article 23:

1. cf. Pius XI, encyclical "Quamvis Nostra," April 30, 1936: A.A.S., 28 (1936) pp. 160-161. Article 24:

2. cf. Sacred Congregation of the Council on the dissolution of the diocese of Corrientes, Argentina, Nov. 13, 1920; A.A.S. 13 (1921) pp. 137-140. Article 25:

3. cf. Pius XII, allocution to the second convention of laymen representing all nations on the promotion of the apostolate, Oct. 5 1957: A.A.S. 49 (1957) p. 927.

4. cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Nature of the Church, no. 37. A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 442-443.

5. cf. Pius XII, apostolic exhortation "Menti Nostrae," Sept. 23 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950) p. 660.

6. cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Renovation of Religious Life, no. 8. Article 26:

7. cf. Benedict XIV, On the Diocesan Synod, I, 3, Chap. 9, no. 7.

8. cf. Pius XI, encyclical "Quamvis Nostra," April 30, l936: A.A.S. 28 (1936) pp. 160-161. Article 27:

9. cf. John XXIII, encyclical "Mater et Magistra," May 15, 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961) pp. 456-457. cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on Ecumenism, no. 12: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 99-100.

10. cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on Ecumenism, no. 12: A.A.S. 57 (1965) p. 100. Also cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Nature of the Church, no. 15: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 19-20.

CHAPTER VI Article 28:

1. cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Nature of the Church, Chaps. 2, 4 and 5: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 12- 21, 37-49; also cf. Decree on Ecumenism, nos. 4, 6, 7 and 12: A.A.S. 57 (1965) pp. 94, 96, 97, 99, 100; cf. also above, no. 4. Article 29:

2. cf. Pius XII, allocution to the first international Boy Scouts congress, June 6, 1952: A.A.S. 44 (1952) pp. 579-580; John XXIII, encyclical, "Mater et Magistra," May 15, 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961) p. 456.

3. cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Nature of the Church, p. 33: A.A.S. 57 (1965) p. 39. Article. 30:

4. cf. John XXIII, encyclical "Mater et Magistra," May 15, 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961) p. 455. Article 31:

5. cf. Pius XII, encyclical "Sertum Laetitiae," Nov. 1, 1939: A.A.S. 31 (1939) pp. 653-654; cf. idem., to graduates of Italian Catholic Action, May 24, 1953.

6. cf. Pius XII, allocution to the universal congress of the World Federation of Young Catholic Women, April 18, 1952: A.A.S. 42 (1952) pp. 414-419. cf. idem., allocution to the Christian Association of Italian Workers, May 1, 1955: A.A.S. 47 (1955) pp. 403-404.

7. cf. Pius XII, to delegates of the Assembly of Charity Associations, April 27,1952: pp.470-471.

Article 32:

8 cf. John XXIII, encyclical "Mater et Magistra," May 15 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961) p. 454.

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PRESBYTERORUM ORDINIS
Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests
Second Vatican Council

DECREE ON THE MINISTRY AND LIFE OF PRIESTS
PRESBYTERORUM ORDINIS
PROMULGATED BY HIS HOLINESS,
POPE PAUL VI
ON DECEMBER 7, 1965

PREFACE

1. The excellence of the order of priests in the Church has already been recalled to the minds of all by this sacred synod.(1) Since, however, in the renewal of Christ's Church tasks of the greatest importance and of ever increasing difficulty are being given to this order, it was deemed most useful to treat of the subject of priests at greater length and with more depth. What is said here applies to all priests, especially those devoted to the care of souls, with suitable adaptations being made for priests who are religious. Priests by sacred ordination and mission which they receive from the bishops are promoted to the service of Christ the Teacher, Priest and King. They share in his ministry, a ministry whereby the Church here on earth is unceasingly built up into the People of God, the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, in order that their ministry be carried on more effectively and their lives be better provided for, in pastoral and human circumstances which very often change so profoundly, this sacred synod declares and decrees as follows.

CHAPTER I

THE PRIESTHOOD IN THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

2. The Lord Jesus, "whom the Father has sent into the world" (Jn 10:36) has made his whole Mystical Body a sharer in the anointing of the Spirit with which he himself is anointed.(1) In him all the faithful are made a holy and royal priesthood; they offer spiritual sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ, and they proclaim the perfections of him who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light.(2) Therefore, there is no member who does not have a part in the mission of the whole Body; but each one ought to hallow Jesus in his heart,(3) and in the spirit of prophecy bear witness to Jesus.(4)

The same Lord, however, has established ministers among his faithful to unite them together in one body in which, "not all the members have the same function" (Rom 12:4). These ministers in the society of the faithful are able by the sacred power of orders to offer sacrifice and to forgive sins,(5) and they perform their priestly office publicly for men in the name of Christ. Therefore, having sent the apostles just as he himself been sent by the Father,(6) Christ, through the apostles themselves, made their successors, the bishops,(7) sharers in his consecration and mission. The office of their ministry has been handed down, in a lesser degree indeed, to the priests.(8) Established in the order of the priesthood they can be co-workers of the episcopal order for the proper fulfillment of the apostolic mission entrusted to priests by Christ.(9)

The office of priests, since it is connected with the episcopal order, also, in its own degree, shares the authority by which Christ builds up, sanctifies and rules his Body. Wherefore the priesthood, while indeed it presupposes the sacraments of Christian initiation, is conferred by that special sacrament; through it priests, by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are signed with a special character and are conformed to Christ the Priest in such a way that they can act in the person of Christ the Head.(10)

In the measure in which they participate in the office of the apostles, God gives priests a special grace to be ministers of Christ among the people. They perform the sacred duty of preaching the Gospel, so that the offering of the people can be made acceptable and sanctified by the Holy Spirit.(11) Through the apostolic proclamation of the Gospel, the People of God are called together and assembled. All belonging to this people, since they have been sanctified by the Holy Spirit, can offer themselves as "a sacrifice, living, holy, pleasing to God" (Rom 12:1). Through the ministry of the priests, the spiritual sacrifice of the faithful is made perfect in union with the sacrifice of Christ. He is the only mediator who in the name of the whole Church is offered sacramentally in the Eucharist and in an unbloody manner until the Lord himself comes.(12) The ministry of priests is directed to this goal and is perfected in it. Their ministry, which begins with the evangelical proclamation, derives its power and force from the sacrifice of Christ. Its aim is that "the entire commonwealth of the redeemed and the society of the saints be offered to God through the High Priest who offered himself also for us in his passion that we might be the body of so great a Head."(13)

The purpose, therefore, which priests pursue in their ministry and by their life is to procure the glory of God the Father in Christ. That glory consists in this-that men working freely and with a grateful spirit receive the work of God made perfect in Christ and then manifest it in their whole lives. Hence, priests, while engaging in prayer and adoration, or preaching the word, or offering the Eucharistic Sacrifice and administering the other sacraments, or performing other works of the ministry for men, devote all this energy to the increase of the glory of God and to man's progress in the divine life. All of this, since it comes from the Pasch of Christ, will be crowned by the glorious coming of the same Lord, when he hands over the Kingdom to God the Father.(14)

3. Priests, who are taken from among men and ordained for men in the things that belong to God in order to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins,(15) nevertheless live on earth with other men as brothers. The Lord Jesus, the Son of God, a Man sent by the Father to men, dwelt among us and willed to become like his brethren in all things except sin.(16) The holy apostles imitated him. Blessed Paul, the doctor of the Gentiles, "set apart for the Gospel of God" (Rom 1:1) declares that he became all things to all men that he might save all.(17) Priests of the New Testament, by their vocation and ordination, are in a certain sense set apart in the bosom of the People of God. However, they are not to be separated from the People of God or from any person; but they are to be totally dedicated to the work for which the Lord has chosen them.(18) They cannot be ministers of Christ unless they be witnesses and dispensers of a life other than earthly life. But they cannot be of service to men if they remain strangers to the life and conditions of men.(19) Their ministry itself, by a special title, forbids that they be conformed to this world;(20) yet at the same time it requires that they live in this world among men. They are to live as good shepherds that know their sheep, and they are to seek to lead those who are not of this sheepfold that they, too, may hear the voice of Christ, so that there might be one fold and one shepherd.(21) To achieve this aim, certain virtues, which in human affairs are deservedly esteemed, contribute a great deal: such as goodness of heart, sincerity, strength and constancy of mind, zealous pursuit of justice, affability, and others. The Apostle Paul commends them saying: "Whatever things are true, whatever honorable, whatever just, whatever holy, whatever loving, whatever of good repute, if there be any virtue, if anything is worthy of praise, think upon these things" (Phil 4:8).(22)

CHAPTER II

The Ministry of Priests

SECTION I
Priests' Functions

4. The People of God are joined together primarily by the word of the living God.(1) And rightfully they expect this from their priests.(2) Since no one can be saved who does not first believe,(3) priests, as co-workers with their bishops, have the primary duty of proclaiming the Gospel of God to all.(4) In this way they fulfill the command of the Lord: "Going therefore into the whole world preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mk 16:15),(5) and they establish and build up the People of God. Through the saving word the spark of faith is lit in the hearts of unbelievers, and fed in the hearts of the faithful. This is the way that the congregation of faithful is started and grows, just as the Apostle describes: "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (Rom 10:17).

To all men, therefore, priests are debtors that the truth of the Gospel(6) which they have may be given to others. And so, whether by entering into profitable dialogue they bring people to the worship of God,(7) whether by openly preaching they proclaim the mystery of Christ, or whether in the light of Christ they treat contemporary problems, they are relying not on their own wisdom for it is the word of Christ they teach, and it is to conversion and holiness that they exhort all men.(8) But priestly preaching is often very difficult in the circumstances of the modern world. In order that it might more effectively move men's minds, the word of God ought not to be explained in a general and abstract way, but rather by applying the lasting truth of the Gospel to the particular circumstances of life.

The ministry of the word is carried out in many ways, according to the various needs of those who hear and the special gifts of those who preach. In areas or communities of non-Christians, the proclaiming of the Gospel draws men to faith and to the sacraments of salvation.(9) In the Christian community, especially among those who seem to understand and believe little of what they practice, the preaching of the word is needed for the very ministering of the sacraments. They are precisely sacraments of faith, a faith which is born of and nourished by the word.(10) This is especially true of the Liturgy of the Word in the celebration of Mass, in which the proclaiming of the death and resurrection of Christ is inseparably joined to the response of the people who hear, and to the very offering whereby Christ ratified the New Testament in his blood. In this offering the faithful are united both by their dispositions and by their discernment of the sacrament.(11)

5. God, who alone is holy and who alone bestows holiness, willed to take as his companions and helpers men who would humbly dedicate themselves to the work of sanctification. Hence, through the ministry of the bishop, God consecrates priests, that being made sharers by special title in the priesthood of Christ, they might act as his ministers in performing sacred functions. In the liturgy they continue to carry on his priestly office by the action of his Spirit.(12) By Baptism men are truly brought into the People of God; by the sacrament of Penance sinners are reconciled to God and his Church; by the Anointing of the Sick, the ill are given solace; and especially by the celebration of Mass they offer sacramentally the Sacrifice of Christ. In administering all sacraments, as St. Ignatius Martyr(13) has borne witness from the early days of the Church, priests by various titles are bound together hierarchically with the bishop. And so in a certain way they make him present in every congregation.(14)

The other sacraments, as well as with every ministry of the Church and every work of the apostolate, are tied together with the Eucharist and are directed toward it.(15) The Most Blessed Eucharist contains the entire spiritual boon of the Church,(16) that is, Christ himself, our Pasch and Living Bread, by the action of the Holy Spirit through his very flesh vital and vitalizing, giving life to men who are thus invited and encouraged to offer themselves, their labors and all created things, together with him. In this light, the Eucharist shows itself as the source and the apex of the whole work of preaching the Gospel. Those under instruction are introduced by stages to a sharing in the Eucharist, and the faithful, already marked with the seal of Baptism and Confirmation, are through the reception of the Eucharist fully joined to the Body of Christ.

Thus the Eucharistic Action, over which the priest presides, is the very heart of the congregation. So priests must instruct their people to offer to God the Father the Divine Victim in the Sacrifice of the Mass, and to join to it the offering of their own lives. In the spirit of Christ the Shepherd, they must prompt their people to confess their sins with a contrite heart in the sacrament of Penance, so that, mindful of his words "Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mt 4:17), they are drawn closer to the Lord more and more each day. Priests likewise must instruct their people to participate in the celebrations of the sacred liturgy in such a way that they become proficient in genuine prayer. They must coax their people on to an ever more perfect and constant spirit of prayer for every grace and need. They must gently persuade everyone to the fulfillment of the duties of his state of life, and to greater progress in responding in a sensible way to the evangelical counsels. Finally, they must train the faithful to sing hymns and spiritual songs in their hearts to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.(17)

Priests themselves extend to the other hours of the day the praise and thanksgiving of the Eucharistic celebration in praying the Divine Office, offered in the name of the Church for all the people entrusted to their care, and indeed for the whole world.

The house of prayer in which the Most Holy Eucharist is celebrated and reserved, where the faithful gather and where the presence of the Son of God, our Savior, offered for us on the altar of sacrifice bestows strength and blessings on the faithful, must be spotless and suitable for prayer and sacred functions.(18) There pastors and the faithful are called to acknowledge with grateful heart the gift of him, Who through his humanity constantly pours divine life into the members of his Body.(19) Let priests take care so to foster a knowledge of and facility in the liturgy, that by their own liturgical ministry Christian communities entrusted to their care may ever more perfectly give praise to God, the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit.

6. Exercising the office of Christ, the Shepherd and Head, and according to their share of his authority, priests, in the name of the bishop, gather the family of God together as a brotherhood enlivened by one spirit. Through Christ they lead them in the Holy Spirit to God the Father.(20) For the exercise of this ministry, as for the other priestly duties, spiritual power is conferred upon them for the building up of the Church.(21) In building up of the Church, priests must treat all with exceptional kindness in imitation of the Lord. They should act toward men, not as seeking to please them,(22) but in accord with the demands of Christian doctrine and life. They should teach them and admonish them as beloved sons,(23) according to the words of the Apostle: "Be urgent in season, out of season, reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine" (2 Tim 4:2).(24)

Priests therefore, as educators in the faith, must see to it either by themselves or through others that the faithful are led individually in the Holy Spirit to a development of their own vocation according to the Gospel, to a sincere and practical charity, and to that freedom with which Christ has made us free.(25) Ceremonies however beautiful, or associations however flourishing, will be of little value if they are not directed toward the education of men to Christian maturity.(26) In furthering this, priests should help men to see what is required and what is God's will in the important and unimportant events of life. Also, Christians should be taught that they live not only for themselves, but, according to the demands of the new law of charity; as every man has received grace, he must administer the same to others.(27) In this way, all will discharge in a Christian manner their duties in the community of men.

Although they have obligations toward all men, priests have a special obligation to the poor and weak entrusted to them, for our Lord himself showed that he was united to them,(28) and their evangelization is mentioned as a sign of messianic activity.(29) With special diligence, attention should be given to youth and also to married people and parents. It is desirable that these join together in friendly meetings for mutual aid in leading more easily and fully and in a Christian manner a life that is often difficult. Priests should remember that all religious, both men and women, who certainly have a distinguished place in the house of the Lord, deserve special care in their spiritual progress for the good of the whole Church. Finally, and above all, priests must be solicitous for the sick and the dying, visiting them and strengthening them in the Lord.(30)

The office of pastor is not confined to the care of the faithful as individuals, but also in a true sense is extended to the formation of a genuine Christian community. Yet the spirit of the community should be so fostered as to embrace not only the local church, but also the universal Church. The local community should promote not only the care of its own faithful, but, filled with a missionary zeal, it should prepare also the way to Christ for all men. In a special way, catechumens and the newly-baptized who must be educated gradually to know and to live the Christian life are entrusted to his care.

No Christian community, however, is built up unless it has its basis and center in the celebration of the most Holy Eucharist; from this, therefore, all education to the spirit of community must take its origin.(31) This celebration, if it is to be genuine and complete, should lead to various works of charity and mutual help, as well as to missionary activity and to different forms of Christian witness.

The ecclesial community by prayer, example, and works of penance, exercise a true motherhood toward souls who are to be led to Christ. The Christian community forms an effective instrument by which the path to Christ and his Church is pointed out and made smooth for non-believers. It is an effective instrument also for arousing, nourishing and strengthening the faithful for their spiritual combat.

In building the Christian community, priests are never to put themselves at the service of some human faction of ideology, but, as heralds of the Gospel and shepherds of the Church, they are to spend themselves for the spiritual growth of the Body of Christ.

SECTION 2
Priests' Relationships with Others

7. All priests, in union with bishops, so share in one and the same priesthood and ministry of Christ that the very unity of their consecration and mission requires their hierarchical communion with the order of bishops.(32) At times in an excellent manner they manifest this communion in liturgical concelebration as joined with the bishop when they celebrate the Eucharistic Sacrifice.(33) Therefore, by reason of the gift of the Holy Spirit which is given to priests in Holy Orders, bishops regard them as necessary helpers and counselors in the ministry and in their role of teaching, sanctifying and nourishing the People of God.(34) Already in the ancient ages of the Church we find liturgical texts proclaiming this with insistence, as when they solemnly call upon God to pour out upon the candidate for priestly ordination "the spirit of grace and counsel, so that with a pure heart he may help and govern the People of God,"(35) just as in the desert the spirit of Moses was spread abroad in the minds of the seventy prudent men,(36) "and using them as helpers among the people, he easily governed countless multitudes."(37)

Therefore, on account of this communion in the same priesthood and ministry, bishops should regard priests as their brothers and friends(38) and be concerned as far as they are able for their material and especially for their spiritual well-being. For above all upon the bishops rests the heavy responsibility for the sanctity of their priests.(39) Therefore, they should exercise the greatest care in the continual formation of their priests.(40) They should gladly listen to their priests, indeed consult them and engage in dialogue with them in those matters which concern the necessities of pastoral work and welfare of the diocese. In order to put this into effect, there should be-in a manner suited to today's conditions and necessities,(41) and with a structure and norms to be determined by law-a body or senate(42) of priests representing all the priests. This representative body by its advice will be able to give the bishop effective assistance in the administration of the diocese.

Priests, never losing sight of the fullness of the priesthood which the bishops enjoy, must respect in them the authority of Christ, the Supreme Shepherd. They must therefore stand by their bishops in sincere charity and obedience.(43) This priestly obedience, imbued with a spirit of cooperation is based on the very sharing in the episcopal ministry which is conferred on priests both through the Sacrament of Orders and the canonical mission.(44)

This union of priests with their bishops is all the more necessary today since in our present age, for various reasons, apostolic undertakings must necessarily not only take on many forms but frequently extend even beyond the boundaries of one parish or diocese. No priest, therefore, can on his own accomplish his mission in a satisfactory way. He can do so only by joining forces with other priests under the direction of the Church authorities.

8. Priests by virtue of their ordination to the priesthood are united among themselves in an intimate sacramental brotherhood. In individual dioceses, priests form one priesthood under their own bishop. Even though priests are assigned to different duties, nevertheless they carry on one priestly ministry for men. All priests are sent as co-workers in the same apostolate, whether they engage in parochial or extra-parochial ministry. This is true whether they devote their efforts to scientific research or teaching, or whether by manual labor they share in the lot of the workers themselves-if there is need for this and competent authority approves-or finally whether they fulfill some other apostolic tasks or labor designed for the apostolate. All, indeed, are united in the building up of the Body of Christ which, especially in our times, requires manifold duties and new methods. It is very important that all priests, whether diocesan or religious, help one another always to be fellow workers in the truth.(45) Each one, therefore, is united in special bonds of apostolic charity, ministry and brotherhood with the other members of this priesthood. This has been manifested from ancient times in the liturgy when the priests present at an ordination are invited to impose hands together with the ordaining bishop on the new candidate, and with united hearts concelebrate the Sacred Eucharist. Each and every priest, therefore, is united with his fellow priests in a bond of charity, prayer and total cooperation. In this manner, they manifest that unity which Christ willed, namely, that his own be perfected in one so that the world might know that the Son was sent by the Father.(46)

Older priests, therefore, should receive younger priests as true brothers and help them in their first undertakings and priestly duties. The older ones should likewise endeavor to understand the mentality of younger priests, even though it be different from their own, and follow their projects with good will. By the same token, young priests should respect the age and experience of their seniors; they should seek their advice and willingly cooperate with them in everything that pertains to the care of souls. In a fraternal spirit, priests should extend hospitality,(47) cultivate kindliness and share their goods in common.(48) They should be particularly solicitous for the sick, the afflicted, those overburdened with work, the lonely, those exiled from their homeland, and those who suffer persecution.(49) They should gladly and joyfully gather together for recreation, remembering Christ's invitation to the weary apostles: "Come aside to a desert place, and rest awhile" (Mk 6:31). And further, in order that priests may find mutual assistance in the development of their spiritual and intellectual life, that they may be able to cooperate more effectively in their ministry and be saved from the dangers of loneliness which may arise, it is necessary that some kind of common life or some sharing of common life be encouraged among priests. This, however, may take many forms, according to different personal or pastoral needs, such as living together where this is possible, or having a common table, or at least by frequent and periodic meetings. One should hold also in high regard and eagerly promote those associations which, having been recognized by competent ecclesiastical authority, encourage priestly holiness in the ministry by the use of an appropriate and duly approved rule of life and by fraternal aid, intending thus to do service to the whole order of priests.

Finally, by reason of the same communion in the priesthood, priests should realize that they are obliged in a special manner toward those priests who labor under certain difficulties. They should give them timely help, and also, if necessary, admonish them discreetly. Moreover, they should always treat with fraternal charity and magnanimity those who have failed in some matters, offer urgent prayers to God for them, and continually show themselves as true brothers and friends.

9. Though priests of the New Testament, in virtue of the sacrament of Orders, exercise the most outstanding and necessary office of father and teacher among and for the People of God, they are nevertheless, together with all Christ's faithful, disciples of the Lord, made sharers in his Kingdom by the grace of God's call.(50) For priests are brothers among brothers(51) with all those who have been reborn at the baptismal font. They are all members of one and the same Body of Christ, the building up of which is required of everyone.(52)

Priests, therefore, must take the lead in seeking the things of Jesus Christ, not the things that are their own.(53) They must work together with the lay faithful, and conduct themselves in their midst after the example of their Master, who among men "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life as redemption for many" (Mt 20:28). Priests must sincerely acknowledge and promote the dignity of the laity and the part proper to them in the mission of the Church. And they should hold in high honor that just freedom which is due to everyone in the earthly city. They must willingly listen to the laity, consider their wants in a fraternal spirit, recognize their experience and competence in the different areas of human activity, so that together with them they will be able to recognize the signs of the times. While trying the spirits to see if they be of God,(54) priests should uncover with a sense of faith, acknowledge with joy and foster with diligence the various humble and exalted charisms of the laity. Among the other gifts of God, which are found in abundance among the laity, those are worthy of special mention by which not a few of the laity are attracted to a higher spiritual life. Likewise, they should confidently entrust to the laity duties in the service of the Church, allowing them freedom and room for action; in fact, they should invite them on suitable occasions to undertake worlds on their own initiative.(55)

Finally priests have been placed in the midst of the laity to lead them to the unity of charity, "loving one another with fraternal love, eager to give one another precedence" (Rom 12:10). It is their task, therefore, to reconcile differences of mentality in such a way that no one need feel himself a stranger in the community of the faithful. They are defenders of the common good, with which they are charged in the name of the bishop. At the same time, they are strenuous assertors of the truth, lest the faithful be carried about by every wind of doctrine.(56) They are united by a special solicitude with those who have fallen away from the use of the sacraments, or perhaps even from the faith. Indeed, as good shepherds, they should not cease from going out to them.

Mindful of the prescripts on ecumenism,(57) let them not forget their brothers who do not enjoy full ecclesiastical communion with us.

Finally, they have entrusted to them all those who do not recognize Christ as their Savior.

The Christian faithful, for their part, should realize their obligations to their priests, and with filial love they should follow them as their pastors and fathers. In like manner, sharing their cares, they should help their priests by prayer and work insofar as possible so that their priests might more readily overcome difficulties and be able to fulfill their duties more fruitfully.(58)

SECTION 3
The Distribution of Priests, and Vocations to the Priesthood

10. The spiritual gift which priests receive at their ordination prepared them not for a sort of limited and narrow mission but for the widest possible and universal mission of salvation "even to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8), for every priestly ministry shares in the universality of the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles. The priesthood of Christ, in which all priests really share, is necessarily intended for all peoples and all times, and it knows no limits of blood, nationality or time, since it is already mysteriously prefigured in the person of Melchisedech.(59) Let priests remember, therefore, that the care of all churches must be their intimate concern. Hence, priests of such dioceses as are rich in vocations should show themselves willing and ready, with the permission of their own ordinaries (bishops), to volunteer for work in other regions, missions or endeavors which are poor in numbers of clergy.

Present norms of incardination and excardination should be so revised that, while this ancient institution still remains intact, they will better correspond to today's pastoral needs. Where a real apostolic spirit requires it, not only should a better distribution of priests be brought about but there should also be favored such particular pastoral works as are necessary in any region or nation anywhere on earth. To accomplish this purpose there should be set up international seminaries, special personal dioceses or prelatures (vicariates), and so forth, by means of which, according to their particular statutes and always saving the right of bishops, priests may be trained and incardinated for the good of the whole Church.

Priests should not be sent singly to a new field of labor, especially to one where they are not completely familiar with the language and customs; rather, after the example of the disciples of Christ,(60) they should be sent two or three together so that they may be mutually helpful to one another. Likewise, thoughtful care should be given to their spiritual life as well as their mental and bodily welfare; and, so far as is possible, the circumstances and conditions of labor should be adapted to individual needs and capabilities. At the same time it will be quite advantageous if those priests who go to work in a nation new to them not only know well the language of that place but also the psychological and social milieu peculiar to the people they go to serve, so that they may communicate with them easily, thus following the example of Paul the Apostle who could say of himself: "For when I was free of all I made myself the servant of all, that I might win over many. Among Jews I was a Jew that I might win over the Jews" (1 Cor 9:19-20).

11. The Shepherd and Bishop of our souls(61) so constituted his Church that the people whom he chose and acquired by his blood(62) would have its priests to the end of time, and that Christians would never be like sheep without a shepherd.(63) Recognizing Christ's desire, and at the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the apostles considered it their duty to select men "who will be capable of teaching others" (2 Tim 2:2). This duty, then, is a part of the priestly mission by which every priest becomes a sharer in the care of the whole Church, lest ministers be ever lacking for the People of God on earth. Since, however, there is common cause between the captain of a ship and the sailors,(64) let all Christian people be taught that it is their duty to cooperate in one way or another, by constant prayer and other means at their disposal,(65) that the Church will always have a sufficient number of priests to carry out her divine mission. In the first place, therefore, it is the duty of priests, by the ministry of the word and by the example of their own lives, showing forth the spirit of service and the paschal joy to demonstrate to the faithful the excellence and necessity of the priesthood; then they should see to it that young men and adults whom they judge worthy of such ministry should be called by their bishops to ordination, sparing no effort or inconvenience in helping them to prepare for this call, always saving their internal and external freedom of action. In this effort, diligent and prudent spiritual direction is of the greatest value. Parents and teachers and all who are engaged in any way in the education of boys and young men should so prepare them that they will recognize the solicitude of our Lord for his flock, will consider the needs of the Church, and will be prepared to respond generously to our Lord when he calls, saying: "Here I am Lord, send me" (Is 6:8). This voice of the Lord calling, however, is never to be expected as something which in an extraordinary manner will be heard by the ears of the future priest. It is rather to be known and understood in the manner in which the will of God is daily made known to prudent Christians. These indications should be carefully noted by priests.(66)

Works favoring vocations, therefore, whether diocesan or national, are highly recommended to the consideration of priests.(67) In sermons, in catechetical instructions, and written articles, priests should set forth the needs of the Church both locally and universally, putting into vivid light the nature and excellence of the priestly ministry, which consoles heavy burdens with great joys, and in which in a special way, as the Fathers of the Church point out, the greatest love of Christ can be shown.(68)

CHAPTER III

The Life of Priests

SECTION 1
The Vocation of Priests to the Life of Perfection

12. Priests are made in the likeness of Christ the Priest by the Sacrament of Orders, so that they may, in collaboration with their bishops, work for the building up and care of the Church which is the whole Body of Christ, acting as ministers of him who is the Head. Like all other Christians they have received in the sacrament of Baptism the symbol and gift of such a calling and such grace that even in human weakness(1) they can and must seek for perfection, according to the exhortation of Christ: "Be you therefore perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48). Priests are bound, however, to acquire that perfection in special fashion. They have been consecrated by God in a new manner at their ordination and made living instruments of Christ the Eternal Priest that they may be able to carry on in time his marvelous work whereby the entire family of man is again made whole by power from above.(2) Since, therefore, every priest in his own fashion acts in place of Christ himself, he is enriched by a special grace, so that, as he serves the flock committed to him and the entire People of God, he may the better grow in the grace of him whose tasks he performs, because to the weakness of our flesh there is brought the holiness of him who for us was made a High Priest "holy, guiltless, undefiled not reckoned among us sinners" (Heb 7:26).

Christ, whom the Father sanctified, consecrated and sent into the world,(3) "gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and cleanse for himself an acceptable people, pursuing good works" (Tt 2:14), and thus through suffering entered into his glory.(4) In like fashion, priests consecrated by the anointing of the Holy Spirit and sent by Christ must mortify the works of the flesh in themselves and give themselves entirely to the service of men. It is in this way that they can go forward in that holiness with which Christ endows them to perfect man.(5)

Hence, those who exercise the ministry of the spirit and of justice(6) will be confirmed in the life of the spirit, so long as they are open to the Spirit of Christ, who gives them life and direction. By the sacred actions which are theirs daily as well as by their entire ministry which they share with the bishop and their fellow priests, they are directed to perfection in their lives. Holiness does much for priests in carrying on a fruitful ministry. Although divine grace could use unworthy ministers to effect the work of salvation, yet for the most part God chooses, to show forth his wonders, those who are more open to the power and direction of the Holy Spirit, and who can by reason of their close union with Christ and their holiness of life say with St. Paul: "And yet I am alive; or rather, not I; it is Christ that lives in me" (Gal 2:20).

Hence, this holy council, to fulfill its pastoral desires of an internal renewal of the Church, of the spread of the Gospel in every land and of a dialogue with the world of today, strongly urges all priests that they strive always for that growth in holiness by which they will become consistently better instruments in the service of the whole People of God, using for this purpose those means which the Church has approved.(7)

13. Priests who perform their duties sincerely and indefatigably in the Spirit of Christ arrive at holiness by this very fact.

Since they are ministers of God's word, each day they read and hear the word of God, which it is their task to teach others. If at the same time they are ready to receive the word themselves they will grow daily into more perfect followers of the Lord. As St. Paul wrote to Timothy, "Let this be thy study, these thy employments, so that all may see how well thou doest. Two things claim thy attention, thyself and the teaching of the faith, spend thy care on them; so wilt thou and those who listen to thee achieve salvation" (1 Tim 4:15-16). As they seek how they may better teach others what they have learned,(8) they will better understand "the unfathomable riches of Christ" (Eph 3:8) and the manifold wisdom of God.(9) If they keep in mind that it is God who opens hearts,(10) and that power comes not from themselves but from the might of God,(11) in the very fact of teaching God's word they will be brought closer to Christ the Teacher and led by his Spirit. Thus those who commune with Christ share in God's love, the mystery of which, kept hidden from the beginning of time,(12) is revealed in Christ.

Priests act especially in the person of Christ as ministers of holy things, particularly in the Sacrifice of the Mass, the sacrifice of Christ who gave himself for the sanctification of men. Hence, they are asked to take example from that with which they deal, and inasmuch as they celebrate the mystery of the Lord's death they should keep their bodies free of wantonness and lusts.(13) In the mystery of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, in which priests fulfill their greatest task, the work of our redemption is being constantly carried on;(14) and hence the daily celebration of Mass is strongly urged, since even if there cannot be present a number of the faithful, it is still an act of Christ and of the Church.(15) Thus when priests join in the act of Christ the Priest, they offer themselves entirely to God, and when they are nourished with the body of Christ they profoundly share in the love of him who gives himself as food to the faithful. In like fashion they are united with the intention and love of Christ when they administer the sacraments. This is true in a special way when in the performance of their duty in the sacrament of Penance they show themselves altogether and always ready whenever the sacrament is reasonably sought by the faithful. In the recitation of the Divine Office, they offer the voice of the Church which perseveres in prayer in the name of the whole human race, together with Christ who "lives on still to make intercession on our behalf."

As they direct and nourish the People of God, may they be aroused by the example of the Good Shepherd that they may give their life for their sheep,(16) ready for the supreme sacrifice following the example of priests who, even in our own day, have not shrunk from giving their lives. As they are leaders in the faith and as they "enter the sanctuary with confidence, through the blood of Christ" (Heb 10:19) they approach God "with sincere hearts in the full assurance of the faith" (Heb 10:22) they set up a sure hope for their faithful,(17) that they may comfort those who are depressed by the same consolation wherewith God consoles them.(18) As leaders of the community they cultivate an asceticism becoming to a shepherd of souls, renouncing their personal convenience, seeking not what is useful to themselves but to many, for their salvation,(19) always making further progress to do their pastoral work better and, where needful, prepared to enter into new pastoral ways under the direction of the Spirit of Love, which breathes where it will.(20)

14. In the world of today, when people are so burdened with duties and their problems, which oftentimes have to be solved with great haste, range through so many fields, there is considerable danger of dissipating their energy. Priests, too, involved and constrained by so many obligations of their office, certainly have reason to wonder how they can coordinate and balance their interior life with feverish outward activity. Neither the mere external performance of the works of the ministry, nor the exclusive engagement in pious devotion, although very helpful, can bring about this necessary coordination. Priests can arrive at this only by following the example of Christ our Lord in their ministry. His food was to follow the will of him who had sent him to accomplish his work.(21)

In order to continue doing the will of his Father in the world, Christ works unceasingly through the Church. He operates through his ministers, and hence he remains always the source and wellspring of the unity of their lives. Priests, then, can achieve this coordination and unity of life by joining themselves with Christ to acknowledge the will of the Father. For them this means a complete gift of themselves to the flock committed to them.(22) Hence, as they fulfill the role of the Good Shepherd, in the very exercise of their pastoral charity they will discover a bond of priestly perfection which draws their life and activity to unity and coordination. This pastoral charity(23) flows out in a very special way from the Eucharistic sacrifice. This stands as the root and center of the whole life of a priest. What takes place on the altar of sacrifice, the priestly heart must make his own. This cannot be done unless priests through prayer continue to penetrate more deeply into the mystery of Christ.

In order to measure and verify this coordination of life in a concrete way, let priests examine all their works and projects to see what is the will of God(24)-namely, to see how their endeavors compare with the goals of the Gospel mission of the Church. Fidelity to Christ cannot be separated from faithfulness to his Church. Pastoral charity requires that priests avoid operating in a vacuum(25) and that they work in a strong bond of union with their bishops and brother priests. If this be their program, priests will find the coordination and unity of their own life in the oneness of the Church's mission. They will be joined with the Lord and through him with the Father in the Holy Spirit. This will bring them great satisfaction and a full measure of happiness.(26)

SECTION 2
Special Spiritual Requirements in the Life of a Priest

15. Among the virtues that priests must possess for their sacred ministry none is so important as a frame of mind and soul whereby they are always ready to know and do the will of him who sent them and not their own will.(27) The divine task that they are called by the Holy Spirit to fulfill(28) surpasses all human wisdom and human ability. "God chooses the weak things of the world to confound the strong" (1 Cor 1:27). Aware of his own weakness, the true minister of Christ works in humility trying to do what is pleasing to God.(29) Filled with the Holy Spirit,(30) he is guided by him who desires the salvation of all men. He understands this desire of God and follows it in the ordinary circumstances of his everyday life. With humble disposition he waits upon all whom God has sent him to serve in the work assigned to him and in the multiple experiences of his life.

However, the priestly ministry, since it is the ministry of the Church itself, can only function in the hierarchical union of the whole body. Pastoral charity, therefore, urges priests, as they operate in the framework of this union, to dedicate their own will by obedience to the service of God and their fellow men. In a great spirit of faith, let them receive and execute whatever orders the holy father, their own bishop, or other superiors give or recommend.

With a willing heart let them spend and even exhaust themselves(31) in whatever task they are given, even though it be menial and unrecognized. They must preserve and strengthen a necessary oneness with their brothers in the ministry, especially with those whom God has selected as visible rulers of his Church. For in this way they are laboring to build the Body of Christ which grows "through every gesture of service."(32) This obedience is designed to promote the mature freedom of the children of God; by its very nature it postulates that in the carrying out of their work, spurred on by charity, they develop new approaches and methods for the greater good of the Church. With enthusiasm and courage, let priests propose new projects and strive to satisfy the needs of their flocks. Of course, they must be ready to submit to the decisions of those who rule the Church of God.

By this humility and by willing responsible obedience, priests conform themselves to Christ. They make their own the sentiments of Jesus Christ who "emptied himself, taking on the form of a servant," becoming obedient even to death (Phil 2:7-9). By this obedience he conquered and made up for the disobedience of Adam, as the Apostle testifies, "for as by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners, so also by the obedience of one, many shall be made just"(Rom 5:19).

16. (Celibacy is to be embraced and esteemed as a gift). Perfect and perpetual continence for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven, commended by Christ the Lord(33) and through the course of time as well as in our own days freely accepted and observed in a praiseworthy manner by many of the faithful, is held by the Church to be of great value in a special manner for the priestly life. It is at the same time a sign and a stimulus for pastoral charity and a special source of spiritual fecundity in the world.(34) Indeed, it is not demanded by the very nature of the priesthood, as is apparent from the practice of the early Church(35) and from the traditions of the Eastern Churches. where, besides those who with all the bishops, by a gift of grace, choose to observe celibacy, there are also married priests of highest merit. This holy synod, while it commends ecclesiastical celibacy, in no way intends to alter that different discipline which legitimately flourishes in the Eastern Churches. It permanently exhorts all those who have received the priesthood and marriage to persevere in their holy vocation so that they may fully and generously continue to expend themselves for the sake of the flock commended to them.(36)

Indeed, celibacy has a many-faceted suitability for the priesthood. For the whole priestly mission is dedicated to the service of a new humanity which Christ, the victor over death, has aroused through his Spirit in the world and which has its origin "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man but of God (Jn 1:13). Through virginity, then, or celibacy observed for the Kingdom of Heaven,(37) priests are consecrated to Christ by a new and exceptional reason. They adhere to him more easily with an undivided heart,(38) they dedicate themselves more freely in him and through him to the service of God and men, and they more expeditiously minister to his Kingdom and the work of heavenly regeneration, and thus they are apt to accept, in a broad sense, paternity in Christ. In this way they profess themselves before men as willing to be dedicated to the office committed to them-namely, to commit themselves faithfully to one man and to show themselves as a chaste virgin for Christ(39) and thus to evoke the mysterious marriage established by Christ, and fully to be manifested in the future, in which the Church has Christ as her only Spouse.(40) They give, moreover, a living sign of the world to come, by a faith and charity already made present, in which the children of the resurrection neither marry nor take wives.(41)

For these reasons, based on the mystery of Christ and his mission, celibacy, which first was recommended to priests, later in the Latin Church was imposed upon all who were to be promoted to sacred orders. This legislation, pertaining to those who are destined for the priesthood, this holy synod again approves and confirms, fully trusting this gift of the Spirit so fitting for the priesthood of the New Testament, freely given by the Father, provided that those who participate in the priesthood of Christ through the sacrament of Orders-and also the whole Church-humbly and fervently pray for it. This sacred synod also exhorts all priests who, in following the example of Christ, freely receive sacred celibacy as a grace of God, that they magnanimously and wholeheartedly adhere to it, and that persevering faithfully in it, they may acknowledge this outstanding gift of the Father which is so openly praised and extolled by the Lord.(42) Let them keep before their eyes the great mysteries signified by it and fulfilled in it. Insofar as perfect continence is thought by many men to be impossible in our times, to that extent priests should all the more humbly and steadfastly pray with the Church for that grace of fidelity, which is never denied those who seek it, and use all the supernatural and natural aids available. They should especially seek, lest they omit them, the ascetical norms which have been proved by the experience of the Church and which are scarcely less necessary in the contemporary world. This holy synod asks not only priests but all the faithful that they might receive this precious gift of priestly celibacy in their hearts and ask of God that he will always bestow this gift upon his Church.

17. (Relationship to the world and temporal goods, and voluntary poverty.) In their friendly and brotherly dealings with one another and with other men, priests are able to learn and appreciate human values and esteem created goods as gifts of God. By living in the world, let priests know how not to be of the world, according to the word of our Lord and Master.(43) By using the world as those who do not use it,(44) let them achieve that freedom whereby they are free from every inordinate concern and become docile to the voice of God in their daily life. From this freedom and docility grows spiritual discretion in which is found the right relationship to the world and earthly goods. Such a right relationship is of great importance to priests, because the mission of the Church is fulfilled in the midst of the world and because created goods are altogether necessary for the personal development of man. Let them be grateful, therefore, for all that the heavenly Father has given them to lead a full life rightly, but let them see all that comes to them in the light of faith, so that they might correctly use goods in response to the will of God and reject those which are harmful to their mission.

For priests who have the Lord as their "portion and heritage," (Num 18:20) temporal goods should be used only toward ends which are licit according to the doctrine of Christ and the direction of the Church.

Ecclesiastical goods, properly so called, according to their nature and ecclesiastical law, should be administered by priests with the help of capable laymen as far as possible and should always be employed for those purposes in the pursuit of which it is licit for the Church to possess temporal goods-namely, for the carrying out of divine worship, for the procuring of honest sustenance for the clergy, and for the exercise of the works of the holy apostolate or works of charity, especially in behalf of the needy.(45) Those goods which priests and bishops receive for the exercise of their ecclesiastical office should be used for adequate support and the fulfillment of their office and status, excepting those governed by particular laws.(46) That which is in excess they should be willing to set aside for the good of the Church or for works of charity. Thus they are not to seek ecclesiastical office or the benefits of it for the increase of their own family wealth.(47) Therefore, in no way placing their heart in treasures,(48) they should avoid all greediness and carefully abstain from every appearance of business.

Priests, moreover, are invited to embrace voluntary poverty by which they are more manifestly conformed to Christ and become eager in the sacred ministry. For Christ, though he was rich, became poor on account of us, that by his need we might become rich.(49) And by their example the apostles witnessed that a free gift of God is to be freely given,(50) with the knowledge of how to sustain both abundance and need.(51) A certain common use of goods, similar to the common possession of goods in the history of the primitive Church,(52) furnishes an excellent means of pastoral charity. By living this form of life, priests can laudably reduce to practice that spirit of poverty commended by Christ.

Led by the Spirit of the Lord, who anointed the Savior and sent him to evangelize the poor,(53) priests, therefore, and also bishops, should avoid everything which in any way could turn the poor away. Before the other followers of Christ, let priests set aside every appearance of vanity in their possessions. Let them arrange their homes so that they might not appear unapproachable to anyone, lest anyone, even the most humble, fear to visit them.

SECTION THREE
Aids to the Life of Priests

18. (Aids to encourage the spiritual life.) In order that, in all conditions of life, they may be able to grow in union with Christ, priests, besides the exercise of their conscious ministry, enjoy the common and particular means, old and new, which the Spirit never ceases to arouse in the People of God and which the Church commends, and sometimes commands,(54) for the sanctification of her members. Outstanding among all these spiritual aids are those acts by which the faithful are nourished in the Word of God at the double table of the Sacred Scripture and the Eucharist.(55) The importance of frequent use of these for the sanctification of priests is obvious to all. The ministers of sacramental grace are intimately united to Christ our Savior and Pastor through the fruitful reception of the sacraments, especially sacramental Penance, in which, prepared by the daily examination of conscience, the necessary conversion of heart and love for the Father of Mercy is greatly deepened. Nourished by spiritual reading, under the light of faith, they can more diligently seek signs of God's will and impulses of his grace in the various events of life, and so from day to day become more docile to the mission they have assumed in the Holy Spirit. They will always find a wonderful example of such docility in the Blessed Virgin Mary, who was led by the Holy Spirit to dedicate herself totally to the mystery of man's redemption.(56) Let priests love and venerate with filial devotion and veneration this mother of the Eternal Highpriest, Queen of Apostles and Protector of their own ministry.

In the fulfillment of their ministry with fidelity to the daily colloquy with Christ, a visit to and veneration of the Most Holy Eucharist, spiritual retreats and spiritual direction are of great worth. In many ways, but especially through mental prayer and the vocal prayers which they freely choose, priests seek and fervently pray that God will grant them the spirit of true adoration whereby they themselves, along with the people committed to them, may intimately unite themselves with Christ the Mediator of the New Testament, and so as adopted children of God may be able to call out "Abba, Father" (Rom 8:15).

19. (Study and pastoral knowledge.) Priests are admonished by their bishop in the sacred rite of ordination that they "be mature in knowledge" and that their doctrine be "spiritual medicine for the People of God."(57) The knowledge of the sacred minister ought to be sacred because it is drawn from the sacred source and directed to a sacred goal. Especially is it drawn from reading and meditating on the Sacred Scriptures,(58) and it is equally nourished by the study of the Holy Fathers and other Doctors and monuments or tradition. In order, moreover, that they may give apt answers to questions posed by men of this age, it is necessary for priests to know well the doctrines of the magisterium and the councils and documents of the Roman pontiffs and to consult the best of prudent writers of theological science.

Since human culture and also sacred science has progressed in our times, priests are urged to suitably and without interruption perfect their knowledge of divine things and human affairs and so prepare themselves to enter more opportunely into conversation with their contemporaries.

Therefore, let priests more readily study and effectively learn the methods of evangelization and the apostolate. Let opportune aids be prepared with all care, such as the institution of courses and meetings according to territorial conditions, the erection of centers of pastoral studies, the establishment of libraries, and the qualified supervision of studies by suitable persons. Moreover, let bishops, either individually or united in groups, see to it that all their priests at established intervals, especially a few years after their ordination,(59) may be able to frequent courses in which they will be given the opportunity to acquire a fuller knowledge of pastoral methods and theological science, both in order that they may strengthen their spiritual life and mutually communicate their apostolic experiences with their brothers.(60) New pastors and those who have newly begun pastoral work, as well as those who are sent to other dioceses or nations, should be helped by these and other suitable means with special care.

Finally, the bishops will be solicitous that there will be some who dedicate themselves to a deeper study of theology, that there will not be lacking suitable teachers for the formation of clerics, that the rest of the priests and the faithful will be helped to acquire the doctrine they need, and that healthy progress will be encouraged in the sacred disciplines, so necessary for the Church.

20. (Providing equitable remuneration for priests.) As those dedicated to the service of God and the fulfillment of the office entrusted to them, priests deserve to receive an equitable remuneration, because "the laborer is worthy of his hire," (Lk 10:7)(61) and "the Lord directed that those who preach the Gospel should have their living from the Gospel" (1 Cor 9:14). Wherefore, insofar as an equitable remuneration of the priests would not be provided otherwise, the faithful themselves-that is, those in whose behalf the priest labors-are truly obliged to see to it that they can provide what help is necessary for the honorable and worthy life of the priests. The bishops, however, should admonish the faithful concerning this obligation of theirs. And they should see to if whether each individual for his own diocese or, more aptly, several together for their common territory-that norms are established according to which suitable support is rightly provided for those who do fulfill or have fulfilled a special office in the service of the People of God. The remuneration received by each one, in accord with his office and the conditions of time and place, should be fundamentally the same for all in the same circumstances and befitting his station. Moreover, those who have dedicated themselves to the service of the priesthood, by reason of the remuneration they receive, should not only be able to honorably provide for themselves but also themselves be provided with some means of helping the needy. For the ministry to the poor has always been held in great honor in the Church from its beginnings. Furthermore, this remuneration should be such that it will permit priests each year to take a suitable and sufficient vacation, something which indeed the bishops should see that their priests are able to have.

Special importance ought to be given to the office fulfilled by sacred ministers. Therefore the so-called system of benefices should be relinquished or at least so reformed that the place of the benefits, or the right to revenue from the endowment attached to an office, would be held as secondary, and the first place in law would be given to the ecclesiastical office itself. From this it should be understood that whatever office is conferred in a stable manner is to be exercised for a spiritual purpose.

21. (On setting up common funds and establishing a system of social assistance for priests.) We should always keep before our eyes the example of the faithful of the early Church in Jerusalem, who "held all things in common" (Acts 4;32) "and distribution was made to each according to each one's need" (Acts 4:35). So it is supremely fitting, at least in regions where the support of the clergy completely or largely depends on the offerings of the faithful, that their offerings for this purpose be collected by a particular diocesan institution, which the bishop administers with the help of priests and, when useful, of laymen who are expert in financial matters. Further it is hoped that insofar as is possible in individual dioceses or regions there be established a common fund enabling bishops to satisfy obligations to other deserving persons and meet the needs of various dioceses. This would also enable wealthier dioceses to help the poorer, that the need of the latter might be supplemented by the abundance of the former.(62) These common funds, even though they should be principally made up of the offerings of the faithful, also should be provided for by other duly established sources.

Moreover, in nations where social security for the clergy is not yet aptly established, let the episcopal conferences see to it that-in accord with ecclesiastical and civil laws-there may be either diocesan institutes, whether federated with one another or established for various dioceses together, or territorial associations, which under the vigilance of the hierarchy would make sufficient and suitable provision for a program of preventive medicine, and the necessary support of priests who suffer from sickness, invalid conditions or old age. Let priests share in this established institute, prompted by a spirit of solidarity with their brothers to take part in their tribulations(63) while at the same time being freed from an anxious concern for their own future so that they can cultivate evangelical poverty more readily and give themselves fully to the salvation of souls. Let those in charge of this act to bring together the institutes of various nations in order that their strength he more firmly achieved and more broadly based.

CONCLUSION AND EXHORTATION

22. Having before our eyes the joys of the priestly life, this holy synod cannot at the same time overlook the difficulties which priests experience in the circumstances of contemporary life. For we know how much economic and social conditions are transformed, and even more how much the customs of men are changed, how much the scale of values is changed in the estimation of men. As a result, the ministers of the Church and sometimes the faithful themselves feel like strangers in this world, anxiously looking for the ways and words with which to communicate with it. For there are new obstacles which have arisen to the faith: the seeming unproductivity of work done, and also the bitter loneliness which men experience can lead them to the danger of becoming spiritually depressed.

The world which today is entrusted to the loving ministry of the pastors of the Church is that which God so loved that he would give his only Son for it.(1) Truly this world, indeed weighed down with many sins but also endowed with many talents, provides the Church with the living stones(2) which are built up into the dwelling place of God in the Spirit.(3) This same Holy Spirit, while impelling the Church to open new ways to go to the world of today, suggests and favors the growth of fitting adaptations in the ministry of priests.

Priests should remember that in performing their office they are never alone, but strengthened by the power of Almighty God, and believing in Christ who called them to share in his Priesthood, they should devote themselves to their ministry with complete trust, knowing that God can cause charity to grow in them.(4) Let them be mindful of their brothers in the priesthood as well, and also of the faithful of the entire world who are associated with them. For all priests cooperate in carrying out the saving plan of God,(5) that is, the Mystery of Christ, the sacrament hidden from the ages in God, which is only brought to fulfillment little by little through the collaboration of many ministries in building up the Body of Christ until it grows to the fullness of time. All this, hidden with Christ in God,(6) can be uniquely perceived by faith. For the leaders of the People of God must walk by faith, following the example of faithful Abraham, who in faith "obeyed by going out into a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out not knowing where he was going" (Heb 11:8). Indeed, the dispenser of the mysteries of God can see himself in the man who sowed his field, of whom the Lord said: "then sleep and rise, night and day, and the seed should sprout without his knowing" (Mk 4:27). As for the rest, the Lord Jesus, who said: "Take courage, I have overcome the world," (Jn 16:33) did not by these words promise his Church a perfect victory in this world. Certainly this holy synod rejoices that the earth has been sown with the seed of the Gospel which now bears fruit in many places, under the direction of the Holy Spirit who fills the whole earth and who has stirred up a missionary spirit in the hearts of many priests and faithful. Concerning all this, this holy synod gives fervent thanks to the priests of the entire world. "Now to him who is able to accomplish all things in a measure far beyond what we ask or conceive in keeping with the power that is at work in us-to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus" (Eph 3:20-21).

NOTES

Preface

1. Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Dec. 4, 1963; AAS 56 (1964) pp 7ff; Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium Nov. 21, 1964: AAS 57 (1965) p 5ff; Decree Christus Dominus on Pastoral Duties of Bishops, Oct. 28, 1965; Decree on Priestly Training, Oct. 28, 1965.

Chapter 1

1. Cf. Mt 3:16; Lk 4:18; Acts 4:27, 10:38.

2. Cf. 1 Pt 2:5,9.

3. Cf. 1 Pt 3:15.

4.Cf. Rev 19:10; Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964, n 35: AAS 57 (1965) p 40-41.

5. Council of Trent, 23rd session, chapter 1, canon 1: Denzinger 957 and 961 (1764 and 1771).

6. Cf. Jn 20:21; Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964, n 22: AAS 57 (1965) pp 21-28.

7. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964, n 22: AAS 57 (1965) pp 33-36.

8. Cf. ibid

9. Cf. Roman Pontifical Ordination of a Priest, preface. These words are already found in the Verona Sacramentary (ed. L.C. Moehlberg, Rome 1956, p 122); also in Frankish Missal (ed. L.C. Moehlberg, Rome 1957, p 9) and in the Book of Sacramentaries of the Roman Church (ed. L.C. Moehlberg, Rome 1960, p 25) and Roman German Pontificals (ed. Vogel-Elze, Vatican City 1963, vol. I, p 34).

10. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964, n 10: AAS 57 (1965) pp 14-15.

11. Cf. Rom 15:16 (Greek).

12. Cf. 1 Cor 11:26.

13 St. Augustine, De Civitate Dei 10, 6: PL 41, 284.

14. Cf. 1 Cor 15:24.

15. Cf. Heb 5:1.

16. Cf. Heb 2:17; 4:15.

17. Cf. 1 Cor 9:19-23 (Vg.).

18. Cf. Acts 13:2.

19. Paul VI, encyclical Ecclesiam Suam, Aug.6, 1964: AAS 56 (1964), pp 627 and 638.

20. Cf. Rom 12:2.

21. Cf. Jn 10:14-16.

22. Cf. St. Polycarp, Epist. ad Philippenses, 6, 1 (ed. F.X. Funk, Apostolic Fathers, I, p 303).

Chapter 2

1. Cf. 1 Pt 1:23; Acts 6:7; 12:24. "(The apostles) preached the word of truth and founded Churches." (St. Augustine, On Psalms, 44, 23; PL 36, 508).

2. Cf. Mal 2:7; 1 Tim 4:11-13; 1 Tim 1:9.

3. Cf. Mk 16:16.

4. Cf. 2 Cor 11:7. All that has been said regarding bishops also applies to priests inasmuch as they are cooperators of the bishops. Cf. Statuta Ecclesiae Antiqua, c. 3 (ed. Ch. Munier, Paris 1960, p 79); Decree of Gracian, c. 6, D.88 (ed. Friedberg, 1, 307); Council of Trent, Decree De Reform., Session 5, c. 2, n 9 (Ecumenical Council Decrees, ed. Herder, Rome 1963, p 645); Session 24, c. 4 (p 739); Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964, n 25: AAS 57 (1965), pp 29-31.

5. Cf. Constitutiones Apostolorum II, 26, 7: "(Priests) are teachers of sacred science as the Lord himself commanded when he said: 'Going, therefore, teach, etc.'" (ed. F.X. Funk, Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum, I, Paderborn 1905, p 105); Leonine Sacramentary and other sacramentaries up to the Roman Pontifical, preface of the ordination of priests: "By this providence, Lord, you have added to the apostles of your Son fellow teachers of the faith through whom the apostles have filled the whole world with their teaching." Ordo Book of the Mozarabic Liturgy, preface to the ordination of priests: "Teacher of peoples and ruler of subjects, he keeps intact the Catholic faith and announces true salvation to all." (ed. M. Ferotin, Paris, 1904, col. 55).

6. Cf. Gal 2:5.

7. Cf. 1 Pt 2:12.

8. Cf. Rite of priestly ordination in the Alexandrian Jacobite Church: "...Gather your people to the word of doctrine like a foster-mother who nourishes her children" (H. Denzinger, Oriental Rites, Book II, Wurzburg 1863, p 14).

9. Cf. Mt 28:19; Mk 16:16; Tertullian, On Baptism, 14, 2 (The Body of Christians, Latin Series, I p 289, 11-13); St. Athanasius, Against the Arians, 2, 42 (PG 26, 237); St. Jerome, On Matthew, 28, 19 (PL 26, 218 BC): "First let them teach all nations, and then pour water on those who have learned. It cannot be that the body receive the sacrament of baptism unless the soul first has received the truth of faith;" St. Thomas, "Exposition of the first decretal," n 1: "Sending his disciples to preach, our Savior enjoined on them three things: first, that they teach the faith; second, that they confer the sacraments on believers.... (ed. Marietti, Opuscula Theologica, Taurini-Rome 1954, 1138).

10. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Dec. 4, 1963, n 35, 2: AAS 56 (1964), p 109.

11. Cf. ibid, nn 33, 35, 48, 52 (pp 108-109, 113, 114).

12. Cf. ibid, n 7 (pp 100-101); Pius XII, encyclical letter, Mystici Corporis, June 29, 1943: AAS 35 (1943), p 230.

13. St. Ignatius Martyr, Smyrn., 8, 1-2 (ed. F.X. Funk, p 282, 6-15); Constitutions of the Apostles, VIII, 12, 3 (ed. F.X. Funk, p 496); VIII,29, 2 (p 532).

14. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964, n 28: AAS 57 (1965), pp 33-36.

15. "The Eucharist indeed is a quasi consummation of the spiritual life, and the goal of all the sacraments" (St. Thomas, Summa Theol. III, q.73, a.3 c); cf. Summa Theol. III, q. 65, a. 3.

16. Cf. St. Thomas, Summa Theol. III, q. 65, a. 3, ad 1; q. 79, a.1, c. and ad 1.

17. Cf. Eph 5:19-20.

18. Cf. St. Jerome, Epistles, 114, 2 (PL 22, 934), See Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Dec. 4, 1963, nn 122-127: AAS 56 (1964), pp 130-132.

19. Paul VI, encyclical letter Mysterium Fidei, Sept. 3, 1965: AAS 57 (1965), p 771.

20. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964, n 28: AAS 57 (1965), pp 33-36.

21. Cf. 2 Cor 10:8; 13:10.

22. Cf. Gal 1:10.

23. Cf. 1 Cor 4:14.

24. Cf. Didascalia, II, 34, 3; II, 46, 6; II,47, 1; Constitutions of the Apostles, II, 47, 1 (ed. F.X. Funk, Didascalia and Constitutions, I, pp 116, 142 and 143).

25. Cf. Gal 4:3; 5:1 and 13.

26. Cf. St. Jerome, Epistles, 58, 7 (PL 22, 584).

27. Cf. 1 Pt 4:10 ff.

28. Cf. Mt 25:34-45.

29. Cf. Lk 4:18.

30. Other categories could be named, e.g. migrants, nomads, etc. The Decree on the Pastoral Duties of Bishops, Oct. 28, 1965, treats of these.

31. Cf. Didascalia, II, 59, 1-3 (ed. F.X. Funk, I, p 170); Paul VI, allocution to Italian clergy present at the 13th week-long congress at Orvieto on pastoral aggiornamento, Sept. 6, 1963: AAS 55 (1963) pp 750ff.

32. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964, n 28: AAS 57 (1965), p 35.

33. Cf. cited Ecclesiastical Constitution of the Apostles, XVIII: (ed. Th. Schermann, Die allgemeine Kirchenordnung, I, Paderborn 1914, p 26; A. Harnack, T. u. U., II, 4, p 13, nn 18 and 19); Pseudo-Jerome, The Seven Orders of the Church (ed. A.W. Kalff, Wurzburg 1937, p 45); St. Isidore of Hispali, Ecclesiastical Offices, c. VII (PL 83, 787).

34. Cf. Didascalia, II, 28, 4 (ed. F.X. Funk, p 108); Constitutions of the Apostles, II, 28, 4;II, 34, 3 (ibid., pp 109 and 117).

35. Constitutions of the Apostles, VIII, 16, 4 (ed. F.X. Funk, 1, p 522, 13); cf. Epitome of the Constitutions of the Apostles, VI (ibid., II, p 80, 3-4); Testamentum Domini, (transl. I.E. Rahmani, Moguntiae 1899, p 69). Also in Trad. Apost. (ed. B. Botte, La Tradition Apostolique, Munster, i. W. 1963, p 20).

36. Cf. Nm 11:16-25.

37. Roman Pontifical on the ordination of a priest, preface: these words are also found in the Leonine Sacramentary, the Gelasian Sacramentary and the Gregorian Sacramentary. Similar words can be found in the Oriental Liturgies: cf. Trad Apost.: (ancient Latin version of Verona, ed. B. Botte, La Tradition Apostolique de St. Hippolyte. Essai de reconstruction, Munster i. W. 1963, p 20); Constitutions of the Apostles, VIII, 16, 4 (ed. F.X. Funk, I, p 522, 16- 17); Epitome on the Constitutions of the Apostles, 6 (ed. F.X. Funk, II, p 20, 5-7); Testamentum Domini (transl. I.E. Rahmani, Moguntiae 1899, p 69); Euchologium Serapionis, XXVII (ed. F.X. Funk, Didascalia and Constitutions, II, p 190, lines 1-7); Maronite Rite of Ordination (transl. H. Denzinger, Rites of the Orientals, II, Wurzburg 1863, p. 161). Among the Fathers can be cited: Theodore of Mopsuestia, On First Timothy, 3, 8 (ed. Swete, II, pp 119-121); Theodoretus, Questions on Numbers, XVIII (PG 80, 372 b).

38. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964, n 28: AAS 57 (1965), p 35.

39. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Sacerdotii Nostri Primordia, Aug. 1, 1959: AAS 51 (1959), p 576; St. Pius X, Exhortation to the Clergy Haerent Animo, Aug. 4, 1908: Acts of St. Pius X, vol. IV (1908), pp 237 ff.

40. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Pastoral Duties of Bishops, Oct. 28, 1956 nn 15 and 16.

41. The Cathedral Chapter is already found in established law, as the "senate and assembly" of the bishop (Code of Canon Law, c.391), or if there is not one, an assembly of diocesan consultors (cf. Code of Canon Law, cc. 423-428). It is our desire to give recognition to such institutions so that modern circumstances and necessities might better be provided for. As is evident, this synod of priests forms the pastoral consilium spoken of in the Decree on the Pastoral Duties of Bishops of Oct. 28, 1965 (n.27), of which the laity can also be members, and whose function is mainly to map out a plan of action for pastoral work. Concerning priests as counselors of the bishops, one might refer to the Didascalia, II, 28, 4 (ed. F.X. Funk,II, p 108); also Constitutions of the Apostles, II 28,4 (ed. F.X. Funk, I, p 109); St. Ignatius Martyr, Magn. 6, 1 (ed. F.X. Funk, p 234, 10-16); Trall. 3, 1 (ed. F.X. Funk, p 244, 10-12); Origen, Against Celsus, 3, 30: "Priests are counselors or 'bouleytai'" (PG 11, 957 d-960 a).

42. St. Ignatius Martyr, Magn. 6, 1: (ed. F.X. Funk, p 234, 10-13); St. Ignatius Martyr, Trall., 3, 1: (ibid., p 244, 10-12); St. Jerome, On Isaiah, II, 3 (PL 24, 61 A).

43. Cf. Paul VI, allocution to the family heads of Rome and Lenten speakers, March 1, 1965, in the Sistine Hall: AAS 57 (1965), p 326.

44. Cf. Constitutions of the Apostles, VIII 47, 39: (ed. F.X. Funk, p 577).

45. Cf. 3 Jn 8.

46. Cf. Jn. 17:23.

47. Cf. Heb 13:1-2.

48. Cf. Heb 13:16.

49. Cf. Mt 5:10.

50. Cf. 1 Thes 2:12; Col 1:13.

51. Cf. Mt 23:8. Also Paul VI, encyclical letter Ecclesiam Suam, Aug. 6, 1964: AAS 58 (1964) p 647.

52. Cf. Eph 4:7 and 16; Constitutions of the Apostles, VIII, 1, 20: (ed. F.X. Funk, I, p 467).

53. Cf. Phil 2:21.

54. Cf. 1 Jn 4:1.

55. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964, n 37: AAS 57 (1965), pp 42-43.

56. Cf. Eph 4:14.

57.Cf.Second Vatican Council, Decree on Ecumenism, Nov. 21, 1964: AAS 57 (1965), pp 90ff.

58. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov 21, 1964, n 37: AAS 57 (1965), pp 42-43.

59. Cf. Heb 7:3.

60. Cf. Lk 10:1.

61. Cf. 1 Pt 2:25.

62. Cf. Acts 20:28.

63. Cf. Mt 9:36.

64. Roman Pontifical, on the ordination of a priest.

65. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on Priestly Training, Oct. 28, 1965, n 2.

66. Paul VI, allocution of May 5, 1965: L'Osservatore Romano, 5-6-65, p 1.

67. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on Priestly Training, Oct. 28, 1965, n 2.

68. The Fathers teach this in their explanations of Christ's words to Peter: "Do you love me? ...Feed my sheep." (Jn 21:17); This St. John Chrysostom, On the Priesthood, II, 1-2 (PG 47-48, 633); St.Gregory the Great, Reg. Past. Liber, P I c. 5 (PL 77, 19 a).

Chapter 3

1. Cf. 2 Cor 12:9.

2. Cf. Pius XI, encyclical letter Ad Catholici Sacerdotii, Dec. 20, 1935: AAS 28 (1936) n 10.

3. Cf. Jn 10:36.

4. Lk 24:26.

5. Cf. Eph 4:13.

6. Cf. 2 Cor 3:8-9.

7. Cf. among others: St. Pius X, exhortation to the clergy Haerent Animo, Aug. 4, 1908: St. Pius X, AAS 4 (1908), pp 237ff. Pius XI, encyclical letter Ad Catholici Sacerdotii, Dec. 20, 1935; AAS 28 (1936). Pius XII apostolic exhortation Menti nostrae, Sept. 23, 1950: AAS (1950) 657ff. John XXIII, encyclical letter Sacerdoti Nostri Primordia, Aug. 1, 1959: AAS 51 (1959) 545ff.

8. Cf. St. Thomas, Summa Theol. II-II, q. 188, a. 7.

9. Cf. Heb 3:9-10.

10. Acts 16:14.

11. Cf. 2 Cor 4:7.

12. Cf. Eph 3:9.

13. Cf. Roman Pontifical on the ordination of priests.

14. Cf. Roman Missal, Prayer over the Offerings of the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost.

15. Paul VI, encyclical letter Mysterium Fidei, Sept. 3, 1965: AAS 57 (1965), pp 761-762. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Dec. 4, 1963, nn 26 and 27; AAS 56 (1964), p 107.

16. Cf. Jn 10:11.

17. Cf. 2 Cor 1:7.

18. Cf. 2 Cor 1:4.

19. Cf. 1 Cor 10:33.

20. Cf. Jn 3:8.

21. Cf. Jn 4:34.

22. Cf. 1 Jn 3:16.

23. "May it be a duty of love to feed the Lord's flock" (St. Augustine, Tract on John, 123, 5: PL 35, 1967).

24. Cf. Rom 12:2.

25. Cf. Gal 2:2.

26. Cf. 2 Cor 7:4.

27. Cf. Jn 4:34; 5:30; 6:38.

28. Cf. Acts 13:2.

29. Cf. Eph 5:10.

30. Cf. Acts 20:22.

31. Cf. 2 Cor 12:15.

32. Cf. Eph 4:11-16.

33. Cf. Mt 19:22.

34. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964 n 42: AAS 57 (1965) pp 47-49.

35. Cf. 1 Tim 3:2-5: Tt 1:6.

36. Cf. Pius XI, encyclical letter Ad Catholici Sacerdotii Dec. 30, 1935: AAS 28 (1936) p 28.

37. Cf. Mt 19:12.

38. Cf. 1 Cor 7:32-34.

39. Cf. 2 Cor 11:2.

40. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964, n 42 and 44: AAS 57 (1965), pp 47-49 and 50-51; Decree on the Renewal of Religious Life, Oct. 18, 1965, n 12.

41. Cf. Lk 20:35-36; Pius XI, encyclical letter Ad Catholici Sacerdotii Dec.20, 1935, AAS 28 (1936) pp 24-28; Pius XII, encyclical letter Sacra Virginitas, March 25, 1954, AAS 46 (1954) nn 169-172.

42. Cf. Mt 19:11.

43. Cf. Jn 17:14-16.

44. Cf. 1 Cor 7:31.

45. Council of Antioch, canon 25: Mansi 2, 1328; Decree of Gratian, c. 23, C. 12 q. 1. (ed. Friedberg, 1, pp 684-685).

46. This is to be understood especially with regard to the laws and customs prevailing in the Eastern Churches.

47. Council of Paris a, 829, can 15: M.G.H. Sect. III, Concilia, t. 2, para 6 622; Council of Trent, Session XXV, De Reform., chapter 1.

48. Ps 62:11 (Vulgate 61).

49. Cf. 2 Cor 8:9.

50. Cf. Acts 8:18-25.

51. Cf. Phil 4:12.

52. Cf. Acts 2:42-47.

53. Cf. Lk 4:18.

54. Cf. Code of Canon Law, 125 ff.

55. Cf. Second Vatican Council Decree on the Renewal of Religious Life, Oct. 28, 1965, n 6; Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Nov. 18, 1965, n 21.

56. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Nov. 21, 1964, n 65: AAS 57 (1965) pp 64-65.

57. Roman Pontifical On the Ordination of Priests.

58. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Nov. 18, n 25.

59. This course is not the same as the pastoral course which is to be undertaken immediately after ordination, spoken of in the Decree on Priestly Training, Oct.28, 1965, n 22.

60. Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Pastoral Duties of Bishops. Oct.28, 1965, n 16.

61. Cf. Mt 10:10; 1 Cor 9:7; 1 Tim 5:18.

62. Cf. 2 Cor 8:14.

63. Cf. Phil 4:14.

Conclusion and exhortation

1. Cf. Jn 3:16.

2. Cf. 1 Pt 2:5.

3. Cf. Eph 2:22.

4. Cf. Roman Pontifical, on the ordination of priests.

5. Cf. Eph 3:9.

6. Cf. Col 3:3.

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AD GENTES
Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church
Second Vatican Council

DECREE
AD GENTES
ON THE MISSION ACTIVITY
OF THE CHURCH

PREFACE

1. Divinely sent to the nations of the world to be unto them "a universal sacrament of salvation,"(1) the Church, driven by the inner necessity of her own catholicity, and obeying the mandate of her Founder (cf. Mark 16:16), strives ever to proclaim the Gospel to all men. The Apostles themselves, on whom the Church was founded, following in the footsteps of Christ, "preached the word of truth and begot churches."(2) It is the duty of their successors to make this task endure "so that the word of God may run and be glorified (2 Thess. 3:1) and the kingdom of God be proclaimed and established throughout the world.

In the present state of affairs, out of which there is arising a new situation for mankind, the Church, being the salt of the earth and the light of the world (cf. Matt. 5:13-14), is more urgently called upon to save and renew every creature, that all things may be restored in Christ and all men may constitute one family in Him and one people of God.

Therefore, this sacred synod, while rendering thanks to God for the excellent results that have been achieved through the whole Church's great - hearted endeavor, desires to sketch the principles of missionary activity and to rally the forces of all the faithful in order that the people of God, marching along the narrow way of the Cross, may spread everywhere the reign of Christ, Lord and overseer: of the ages (cf. Ecc. 36:19), and may prepare the way for his coming.

CHAPTER I

PRINCIPLES OF DOCTRINE

2. The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature, since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father.(1)

This decree, however, flows from the "fount - like love" or charity of God the Father who, being the "principle without principle" from whom the Son is begotten and Holy Spirit proceeds through the Son, freely creating us on account of His surpassing and merciful kindness and graciously calling us moreover to share with Him His life and His cry, has generously poured out, and does not cease to pour out still, His divine goodness. Thus He who created all things may at last be "all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28), bringing about at one and the same time His own glory and our happiness. But it pleased God to call men to share His life, not just singly, apart from any mutual bond, but rather to mold them into a people in which His sons, once scattered abroad might be gathered together (cf. John 11:52).

3. This universal design of God for the salvation of the human race is carried out not only, as it were, secretly in the soul of a man, or by the attempts (even religious ones by which in diverse ways it seeks after God) if perchance it may contact Him or find Him, though He be not far from anyone of us (cf. Acts 17:27). For these attempts need to be enlightened and healed; even though, through the kindly workings of Divine Providence, they may sometimes serve as leading strings toward God, or as a preparation for the Gospel.(2) Now God, in order to establish peace or the communion of sinful human beings with Himself, as well as to fashion them into a fraternal community, did ordain to intervene in human history in a way both new and finally sending His Son, clothed in our flesh, in order that through Him He might snatch men from the power of darkness and Satan (cf. Col. 1:13; Acts 10:38) and reconcile the world to Himself in Him (cf. 2 Cor. 5:19). Him, then, by whom He made the world,(3) He appointed heir of all things, that in Him He might restore all (cf. Eph. 1:10).

For Jesus Christ was sent into the world as a real mediator between God and men. Since He is God, all divine fullness dwells bodily in Him (Gal. 2:9). According to His human nature, on the other hand, He is the new Adam, made head of a renewed humanity, and full of grace and of truth (John 1:14). Therefore the Son of God walked the ways of a true Incarnation that He might make men sharers in the nature of God: made poor for our sakes, though He had been rich, in order that His poverty might enrich us (2 Cor. 8:9). The Son of Man came not that He might be served, but that He might be a servant, and give His life as a ransom for the many - that is, for all (cf. Mark 10:45). The Fathers of the Church proclaim without hesitation that what has not been taken up by Christ is not made whole.(4) Now, what He took up was our entire human nature such as it is found among us poor wretches, save only sin (cf. Heb. 4:15; 9.28). For Christ said concerning Himself, He whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world (cf. John 10:36): the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He anointed me; to bring good news to the poor He sent me, to heal the broken - hearted, to proclaim to the captives release, and sight to the blind" (Luke 4:18). And again: "The Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost" (Luke 19:10).

But what the Lord preached that one time, or what was wrought in Him for the saving of the human race, must be spread abroad and published to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), beginning from Jerusalem (cf. Luke 24:27), so that what He accomplished at that one time for the salvation of all, may in the course of time come to achieve its effect in all.

4. To accomplish this, Christ sent from the Father His Holy Spirit, who was to carry on inwardly His saving work and prompt the Church to spread out. Doubtless, the Holy Spirit was already at work in the world before Christ was glorified.(5) Yet on the day of Pentecost, He came down upon the disciples to remain with them forever (cf. John 14:16). The Church was publicly displayed to the multitude, the Gospel began to spread among the nations by means of preaching, and there was presaged that union of all peoples in the catholicity of the faith by means of the Church of the New Covenant, a Church which speaks all tongues, understands and accepts all tongues in her love, and so supersedes the divisiveness of Babel.(6) For it was from Pentecost that the "Acts of the Apostles" took again, just as Christ was - conceived when the Holy Spirit came upon the Virgin Mary, and just as Christ was impelled to the work of His ministry by the same Holy Spirit descending upon Him while He prayed.(7)

Now, the Lord Jesus, before freely giving His life for the world, did so arrange the Apostles' ministry and promise to send the Holy Spirit that both they and the Spirit might be associated in effecting the work of salvation always and everywhere.(8) Throughout all ages, the Holy Spirit makes the entire Church "one in communion and in ministering; He equips her with various gifts of a hierarchical and charismatic nature," a giving life, soul - like, to ecclesiastical institutions(10) and instilling into the hearts of the faithful the same mission spirit which impelled Christ Himself. Sometimes He even visibly anticipates the Apostles' acting,(11) just as He unceasingly accompanies and directs it in different ways.(12)

5. From the very beginning, the Lord Jesus "called to Himself those whom He wished; and He caused twelve of them to be with Him, and to be sent out preaching (Mark 3:13; cf. Matt. 10:1-42). Thus the Apostles were the first budding - forth of the New Israel, and at the same time the beginning of the sacred hierarchy. Then, when He had by His death and His resurrection completed once for all in Himself the mysteries of our salvation and the renewal of all things, the Lord, having now received all power in heaven and on earth (cf. Matt. 28 18), before He was taken up into heaven (cf. Acts 1:11), founded His Church as the sacrament of salvation and sent His Apostles into all the world just as He Himself had been sent by His Father (cf. John 20:21), commanding them: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of a nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19 ff.). "Go into the whole world, preach the Gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he who does not believe, shall be condemned" (Mark 16:15ff.). Whence the duty that lies on the Church of spreading the faith and the salvation of Christ, not only in virtue of the express command which was inherited from the Apostles by the order of bishops, assisted by the priests, together with the successor of Peter and supreme shepherd of the Church, but also in virtue of that life which flows from Christ into His members; "From Him the whole body, being closely joined and knit together through every joint of the system, according to the functioning in due measure of each single part, derives its increase to the building up of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16). The mission of the Church, therefore, is fulfilled by that activity which makes her, obeying the command of Christ and influenced by the grace and love of the Holy Spirit, fully present to all men or nations, in order that, by the example of her life and by her preaching, by the sacraments and other means of grace, she may lead them to the faith, the freedom and the peace of Christ; that thus there may lie open before them a firm and free road to full participation in the mystery of Christ.

Since this mission goes on and in the course of history unfolds the mission of Christ Himself, who was sent to preach the Gospel to the poor, the Church, prompted by the Holy Spirit, must walk in the same path on which Christ walked: a path of poverty and obedience, of service and self - sacrifice to the death, from which death He came forth a victor by His resurrection. For thus did all the Apostles walk in hope, and by many trials and sufferings they filled up those things wanting to the Passion of Christ for His body which is the Church (cf. Col. 1:24). For often, the blood of Christians was like a seed.(13)

6. This duty, to be fulfilled by the order of bishops, under the successor of Peter and with the prayers and help of the whole Church, is one and the same everywhere and in every condition, even though it may be carried out differently according to circumstances. Hence, the differences recognizable in this, the Church's activity, are not due to the inner nature of the mission itself, but rather to the circumstances in which this mission is exercised.

These circumstances in turn depend sometimes on the Church, sometimes on the peoples or groups or men to whom the mission is directed. For the Church, although of itself including the totality or fullness of the means of salvation, does not and cannot always and instantly bring them all into action. Rather, she experiences beginnings and degrees in that action by which she strives to make God's plan a reality. In fact, there are times when, after a happy beginning, she must again lament a setback, or at least must linger in a certain state of unfinished insufficiency. As for the men, groups and peoples concerned, only by degrees does she touch and pervade them, and thus take them up into full catholicity. The right sort of means and actions must be suited to any state or situation.

"Missions" is the term usually given to those particular undertakings by which the heralds of the Gospel, sent out by the Church and going forth into the whole world, carry out the task of preaching the Gospel and planting the Church among peoples or groups who do not yet believe in Christ. These undertakings are brought to completion by missionary activity and are mostly exercised in certain territories recognized by the Holy See. The proper purpose of this missionary activity is evangelization, and the planting of the Church among those peoples and groups where it has not yet taken root.(14) Thus from the seed which is the word of God, particular autochthonous churches should be sufficiently established and should grow up all over the world, endowed with their own maturity and vital forces. Under a hierarchy of their own, together with the faithful people, and adequately fitted out with requisites for living a full Christian life, they should make their contribution to the good of the whole Church. The chief means of the planting referred to is the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To preach this Gospel the Lord sent forth His disciples into the whole world, that being reborn by the word of God (cf. 1 Peter 1:23), men might be joined to the Church through baptism - that Church which, as the body of the Word Incarnate, is nourished and lives by the word of God and by the eucharistic bread (cf. Acts 2:43).

In this missionary activity of the Church various stages sometimes are found side by side: first, that of the beginning or planting, then that of newness or youth. When these have passed, the Church's missionary activity does not cease, but there lies upon the particular churches already set up the duty of continuing this activity and of preaching the Gospel to those still outside.

Moreover, the groups among which the Church dwells are often radically changed, for one reason or other, so that an entirely new set of circumstances may arise. Then the Church must deliberate whether these conditions might again call for her missionary activity. Besides, circumstances are sometimes such that, for the time being, there is no possibility of expounding the Gospel directly and forthwith. Then, of course, missionaries can and must at least bear witness to Christ by charity and by works of mercy, with all patience, prudence and great confidence. Thus they will prepare the way for the Lord and make Him somehow present.

Thus it is plain that missionary activity wells up from the Church's inner nature and spreads abroad her saving Faith. It perfects her Catholic unity by this expansion. It is sustained by her apostolicity. It exercises the collegial spirit of her hierarchy. It bears witness to her sanctity while spreading and promoting it. Thus, missionary activity among the nations differs from pastoral activity exercised among the faithful as well as from undertakings aimed at restoring unity among Christians. And yet these two ends are most closely connected with the missionary zeal(15) because the division among Christians damages the most holy cause of preaching the Gospel to every creature(16) and blocks the way to the faith for many. Hence, by the very necessity of mission, all the baptized are called to gather into one flock, and thus they will be able to bear unanimous witness before the nations to Christ their Lord. And if they are not yet capable of bearing witness to the same faith, they should at least be animated by mutual love and esteem.

7. This missionary activity derives its reason from the will of God, "who wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, Himself a man, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself as a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:45), "neither is there salvation in any other" (Acts 4:12). Therefore, all must be converted to Him, made known by the Church's preaching, and all must be incorporated into Him by baptism and into the Church which is His body. For Christ Himself "by stressing in express language the necessity of faith and baptism (cf. Mark 16:16; John 3:5), at the same time confirmed the necessity of the Church, into which men enter by baptism, as by a door. Therefore those men cannot be saved, who though aware that God, through Jesus Christ founded the Church as something necessary, still do not wish to enter into it, or to persevere in it."(17) Therefore though God in ways known to Himself can lead those inculpably ignorant of the Gospel to find that faith without which it is impossible to please Him (Heb. 11:6), yet a necessity lies upon the Church (1 Cor. 9:16), and at the same time a sacred duty, to preach the Gospel. And hence missionary activity today as always retains its power and necessity.

By means of this activity, the Mystical Body of Christ unceasingly gathers and directs its forces toward its own growth (cf. Eph. 4:11-16). The members of the Church are impelled to carry on such missionary activity by reason of the love with which they love God and by which they desire to share with all men the spiritual goods of both its life and the life to come.

Finally, by means of this missionary activity, God is fully glorified, provided that men fully and consciously accept His work of salvation, which He has accomplished in Christ. In this way and by this means, the plan of God is fulfilled - that plan to which Christ conformed with loving obedience for the glory of the Father who sent Him,(18) that the whole human race might form one people of God and be built up into one temple of the Holy Spirit which, being the expression of brotherly harmony, corresponds with the inmost wishes of all men. And so at last, there will be realized the plan of our Creator who formed man to His own image and likeness, when all who share one human nature, regenerated in Christ through the Holy Spirit and beholding the glory of God, will be able to say with one accord: "Our Father."(19)

8. Missionary activity is closely bound up even with human nature itself and its aspirations. For by manifesting Christ the Church reveals to men the real truth about their condition and their whole calling, since Christ is the source and model of that redeemed humanity, imbued with brotherly love, sincerity and a peaceful spirit, to which they all aspire. Christ and the Church, which bears witness to Him by preaching the Gospel, transcend every peculiarity of race or nation and therefore cannot be considered foreign anywhere or to anybody.(20) Christ Himself is the way and the truth, which the preaching of the Gospel opens to all in proclaiming in the hearing of all these words of Christ: "Repent, and believe the Gospel" (Mark 1:15). Now, since he who does not believe is already judged (cf. John 3:18), the words of Christ are at one and the same time words of judgment and of grace, of death and of life. For it is only by putting to death what is old that we are able to approach the newness of life. This is true first of all about persons, but it holds also for the various goods of this world which bear the mark both of man's sin and of God's blessing: "For all have sinned and have need of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). No one is freed from sin by himself and by his own power, no one is raised above himself, no one is completely rid of his sickness or his solitude or his servitude.(21) On the contrary, all stand in need of Christ, their model, their mentor, their liberator, their Savior, their source of life. The Gospel has truly been a leaven of liberty and progress in human history, even in the temporal sphere, and always proves itself a leaven of brotherhood, of unity and of peace. Not without cause is Christ hailed by the faithful as "the expected of the nations, and their Savior."(22)

9. And so the time for missionary activity extends between the first coming of the Lord and the second, in which latter the Church will be gathered from the four winds like a harvest into the kingdom of God.(23) For the Gospel must be preached to all nations before the Lord shall come (cf. Mark 13:10).

Missionary activity is nothing else and nothing less than an epiphany, or a manifesting of God's decree, and its fulfillment in the world and in world history, in the course of which God, by means of mission, manifestly works out the history of salvation. By the preaching of the word and by the celebration of the sacraments, the center and summit of which is the most holy Eucharist, He brings about the presence of Christ, the author of salvation. But whatever truth and grace are to be found among the nations, as a sort of secret presence of God, He frees from all taint of evil and restores to Christ its maker, who overthrows the devil's domain and wards off the manifold malice of vice. And so, whatever good is found to be sown in the hearts and minds of men, or in the rites and cultures peculiar to various peoples, not only is not lost, but is healed, uplifted, and perfected for the glory of God, the shame of the demon, and the bliss of men.(24) Thus, missionary activity tends toward eschatological fullness.(25) For by it the people of God is increased to that measure and time which the Father has fixed in His power(cf. Acts 1:7). To this people it was said in prophecy: "Enlarge the space for your tent, and spread out your tent cloths unsparingly" (Is. 54:2).(26) By missionary activity, the mystical body grows to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ (cf. Eph. 4:13); and the spiritual temple, where God is adored in spirit and in truth (cf. John 4:23), grows and is built up upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the supreme corner stone (Eph. 2:20).

CHAPTER II

MISSION WORK ITSELF

10. The Church, sent by Christ to reveal and to communicate the love of God to all men and nations, is aware that there still remains a gigantic missionary task for her to accomplish. For the Gospel message has not yet, or hardly yet, been heard by two million human beings (and their number is increasing daily), who are formed into large and distinct groups by permanent cultural ties, by ancient religious traditions, and by firm bonds of social necessity. Some of these men are followers of one of the great religions, but others remain strangers to the very knowledge of God, while still others expressly deny His existence, and sometimes even attack it. The Church, in order to be able to offer all of them the mystery of salvation and the life brought by God, must implant herself into these groups for the same motive which led Christ to bind Himself, in virtue of His Incarnation, to certain social and cultural conditions of those human beings among whom He dwelt.

ARTICLE 1: Christian Witness

11. The Church must be present in these groups through her children, who dwell among them or who are sent to them. For all Christians, wherever they live, are bound to show forth, by the example of their lives and by the witness of the word, that new man put on at baptism and that power of the Holy Spirit by which they have been strengthened at Conformation. Thus other men, observing their good works, can glorify the Father (cf. Matt. ES:16) and can perceive more fully the real meaning of human life and the universal bond of the community of mankind.

In order that they may be able to bear more fruitful witness to Christ, let them be joined to those men by esteem and love; let them acknowledge themselves to be members of the group of men among whom they live; let them share in cultural and social life by the various. undertakings and enterprises of human living; let them be familiar with their national and religious traditions; let them gladly and reverently lay bare the seeds of the Word which lie hidden among their fellows. At the same time, however, let them look to the: profound changes which are taking place among nations, and let them exert themselves to keep modern man, intent as he is on the science and technology of today's world from becoming a stranger to things divine; rather, let them awaken in him a yearning for that truth and:charity which God has revealed. Even as Christ Himself searched the hearts of men, and led them to divine light, so also His disciples, profoundly penetrated by the Spirit of Christ, should show the people among whom they live, and should converse with them, that they themselves may learn by sincere and patient dialogue what treasures a generous God has distributed among the nations of the earth. But at the same time, let them try to furbish these treasures, set them free, and bring them under the dominion of God their Savior.

12. The presence of the Christian faithful in these human groups should be inspired by that charity with which God has loved us, and with which He wills that we should love one another (cf. 1 John 4:11). Christian charity truly extends to all, without distinction of race, creed, or social condition: it looks for neither gain nor gratitude. For as God loved us with an unselfish love, so also the faithful should in their charity care for the human person himself, loving him with the same affection with which God sought out man. Just as Christ, then, went about all the towns and villages, curing every kind of disease and infirmity as a sign that the kingdom of God had come (cf. Matt. 9:35ff; Acts 10:38), so also the Church, through her children, is one with men of every condition, but especially with the poor and the afflicted. For them, she gladly spends and is spent (cf. 2 Cor. 12:15), sharing in their joys and sorrows, knowing of their longings and problems, suffering with them in death's anxieties. To those in quest of peace, she wishes to answer in fraternal dialogue, bearing them the peace and the light of the Gospel.

Let Christians labor and collaborate with others in rightly regulating the affairs of social and economic life. With special care, let them devote themselves to the education of children and young people by means of different kinds of schools, which should be considered not only as the most excellent means of forming and developing Christian youth, but also as a valuable public service, especially in the developing nations, working toward the uplifting of human dignity, and toward better living conditions. Furthermore, let them take part in the strivings of those peoples who, waging war on famine, ignorance, and disease, are struggling to better their way of life and to secure peace in the world. In this activity, the faithful should be eager to offer prudent aid to projects sponsored by public and private organizations, by governments, by various Christian communities, and even by non - Christian religions.

However, the Church has no desire at all to intrude itself into the government of the earthly city. It claims no other authority than that of ministering to men with the help of God, in a spirit of charity and faithful service (cf. Matt. 20:26; 23:11).(1)

Closely united with men in their life and work, Christ's disciples hope to render to others true witness of Christ, and to work for their salvation, even where they are not able to announce Christ fully. For they are not seeking a mere material progress and prosperity for men, but are promoting their dignity and brotherly union, teaching those religious and moral truths which Christ illumined with His light; and in this way, they are gradually opening up a fuller approach to God. Thus they help men to attain to salvation by love for God and neighbor, and the mystery of Christ begins to shine forth, in which there appears the new man, created according to God (cf. Eph. 4:24), and in which the charity of God is revealed.

ARTICLE 2: Preaching the Gospel and Gathering together the People of God

13. Wherever God opens a door of speech for proclaiming the mystery of Christ (cf. Col. 4:3), there is announced to all men (cf. Mark 16:15; 1 Cor. 9:15; Rom. 10:14) with confidence and constancy (cf. Acts 4:13, 29, 31; 9:27, 28; 13:46; 14:3; 19:8; 26:26; 28:31; 1 Thess. 2:2; 2 Cor. 3:12; 7:4; Phil. 1:20; Eph. 3:12; 6:19, 20) the living God, and He Whom He has sent for the salvation of all, Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Thess. 1:9-10; 1 Cor. 1:18-21; Gal. 1:31; Acts 14:15-17, 17:22-31), in order that non - Christians, when the Holy Spirit opens their heart (cf. Acts 16:14), may believe and be freely converted to the Lord, that they may cleave sincerely to Him Who, being the "way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), fulfills all their spiritual expectations, and even infinitely surpasses them.

This conversion must be taken as an initial one, yet sufficient to make a man realize that he has been snatched away from sin and led into the mystery of God's love, who called him to enter into a personal relationship with Him in Christ. For, by the workings of divine grace, the new convert sets out on a spiritual journey, by means of which, already sharing through faith in the mystery of Christ's Death and Resurrection, he passes from the old man to the new one, perfected in Christ (cf. Col. 3:5-10; Eph. 4:20-24). This bringing with it a progressive change of outlook and morals, must become evident with its social consequences, and must be gradually developed during the time of the catechumenate. Since the Lord he believes in is a sign of contradiction (cf. Luke 2:34; Matt. 10:34-39), the convert often experiences an abrupt breaking off of human ties, but he also tastes the joy which God gives without measure (cf. 1 Thess. 1:6).

The Church strictly forbids forcing anyone to embrace the Faith, or alluring or enticing people by worrisome wiles. By the same token, she also strongly insists on this right, that no one be frightened away from the Faith by unjust vexations on the part of others.(2)

In accord with the Church's ancient custom, the convert's motives should be looked into, and if necessary, purified.

14. Those who, through the Church, have accepted from God a belief in Christ(3) are admitted to the catechumenate by liturgical rites. The catechumenate is not a mere expounding of doctrines and precepts, but a training period in the whole Christian life, and an apprenticeship duty drawn out, during which disciples are joined to Christ their Teacher. Therefore, catechumens should be properly instructed in the mystery of salvation and in the practice of Gospel morality, and by sacred rites which are to be held at successive intervals,(4) they should be introduced into the life of faith, of liturgy, and of love, which is led by the People of God.

Then, when the sacraments of Christian initiation have freed them from the power of darkness (cf. Col. 1:13),(5) having died with Christ been buried with Him and risen together with Him (cf. Rom. 6:4-11; Col. 2:12-13; 1 Peter 3:21-22; Mark 16:16), they receive the Spirit (cf. 1 Thess. 3:5-7; Acts 8:14-17) of adoption of sons and celebrate the remembrance of the Lord's death and resurrection together with the whole People of God.

It is to be desired that the liturgy of the Lenten and Paschal seasons should be restored in such a way as to dispose the hearts of the catechumens to celebrate the Easter mystery at whose solemn ceremonies they are reborn to Christ through baptism.

But this Christian initiation in the catechumenate should be taken care of not only by catechists or priests, but by the entire community of the faithful, so that right from the outset the catechumens may feel that they belong to the people of God. And since the life of the Church is an apostolic one, the catechumens also should learn to cooperate wholeheartedly, by the witness of their lives and by the profession of their faith, in the spread of the Gospel and in the building up of the Church.

Finally, the juridic status of catechumens should be clearly defined in the new code of Canon law. For since they are joined to the Church, they are already of the household of Christ,(7) and not seldom they are already leading a life of faith, hope, and charity.

ARTICLE 3: Forming a Christian Community

15. The Holy Spirit, who calls all men to Christ by the seeds of the word and by the preaching of the Gospel, stirs up in their hearts a submission to the faith. When in the womb of the baptismal font, He begets to a new life those who believe in Christ, He gathers them into the one People of God which is "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people" (1 Peter 2:9).(8)

Therefore, let the missionaries, God's coworkers, (cf. 1 Cor. 3:9), raise up congregations of the faithful such that, walking worthy of the vocation to which they have been called (cf. Eph. 4:1), they may exercise the priestly, prophetic, and royal office which God has entrusted to them. In this way, the Christian community will be a sign of God's presence in the world: for by reason of the eucharistic sacrifice, this community is ceaselessly on the way with Christ to the Father;(9) carefully nourished on the word of God(10) it bears witness to Christ;(11) and finally, it walks in charity and is fervent with the apostolic spirit.(12)

The Christian community should from the very start be so formed that it can provide for its own necessities insofar as this is possible.

This congregation of the faithful, endowed with the riches of its own nation's culture, should be deeply rooted in the people. Let families flourish which are imbued with the spirit of the Gospel(13) and let them be assisted by good schools; let associations and groups be organized by means of which the lay apostolate will be able to permeate the whole of society with the spirit of the Gospel. Lastly, let charity shine out between Catholics of different rites.(14)

The ecumenical spirit should be nurtured in the neophytes, who should take into account that the brethren who believe in Christ are Christ's disciples, reborn in baptism, sharers with the People of God in very many good things. Insofar as religious conditions allow, ecumenical activity - should be furthered in such a way that, excluding any appearance of indifference or confusion on the one hand, or of unhealthy rivalry on the other, Catholics should cooperate in a brotherly spirit with their separated brethren, among to the norms of the Decree on Ecumenism, making before the nations a common profession of faith, insofar as their beliefs are common, in God and in Jesus Christ, and cooperating in social and in technical projects as well as in cultural and religious ones. Let them cooperate especially for the sake of Christ, their common Lord: let His Name be the bond that unites them! This cooperation should be undertaken not only among private persons, but also, subject to approval by the local Ordinary, among churches or ecclesial communities and their works.

The Christian faithful gathered together out of all nations into the Church "are not marked off from the rest of men by their government, nor by their language, nor by their political institutions,"(15) and so they should live for God and Christ in a respectable way of their own national life. As good citizens, they should be true and effective patriots, all together avoiding racial prejudice and hypernationalism, and should foster a universal love for man.

To obtain all these things, the most important and therefore worthy of special attention are the Christian laity: namely, those who have been incorporated into Christ and live in the world. For it is up to them, imbued with the spirit of Christ, to be a leaven working on the temporal order from within, to dispose it always in accordance with Christ.(16)

But it is not enough that the Christian people be present and be organized in a given nation, nor is it enough to carry out an apostolate by way of example. They are organized for this purpose, they are present for this, to announce Christ to their non - Christian fellow - citizens by word and example, and to aid them toward the full reception of Christ.

Now, in order to plant the Church and to make the Christian community grow, various ministries are needed, which are raised up by divine calling from the midst of the faithful congregation, and are to be carefully fostered and tended to by all. Among these are the offices of priests, of deacons, and of catechists, and Catholic action. Religious men and women likewise, by their prayers and by their active work, play an indispensable role in rooting and strengthening the Kingdom of Christ in souls, and in causing it to be spread.

16. Joyfully the Church gives thanks for the priceless gift of the priestly calling which God has granted to so many youths among those nations but recently converted to Christ. For the Church drives deeper roots in any given sector of the human family when the various faithful communities all have, from among their members, their own ministers of salvation in the order of bishops, priests, and deacons, serving their own brethren, so that the young churches gradually acquire a diocesan structure with their own clergy.

What this council has decreed concerning priestly vocations and formation, should be religiously observed where the Church is first planted, and among the young churches. Of great importance are the things which are said about closely joining spiritual formation with the doctrinal and pastoral; about living a life patterned after the Gospel without looking out for ones own comfort or that of one's family; about cultivating a deep appreciation of the mystery of the Church. From all this, they will be well taught to dedicate themselves wholly to the service of the Body of Christ and to the work of the Gospel, to cleave to their own bishop as his faithful co - workers, and to cooperate with their colleagues.(17)

To attain this general end, the whole training of the students should be planned in the light of the mystery of salvation as it is revealed in the Scriptures. This mystery of Christ and of man's salvation they can discover and live in the liturgy.(18)

These common requirements of priestly training, including the pastoral and practical ones prescribed by the council(19) should be combined with an attempt to make contact with their own particular national way of thinking and acting. Therefore, let the minds of the students be kept open and attuned to an acquaintance and an appreciation of their own nation's culture. In their philosophical and theological studies, let them consider the points of contact which mediate between the traditions and religion of their homeland on the one hand and the Christian religion on the other.(20) Likewise, priestly training should have an eye to the pastoral needs of that region; and the students should learn the history, aim, and method of the Church's missionary activity, and the special social, economic, and cultural conditions of their own people. Let them be educated in the ecumenical spirit, and duly prepared for fraternal dialogue with non - Christians.(21) All this demands that studies for the priesthood be undertaken, so far as possible, in association and living together with their own people.(22) Finally, let care be taken that students are trained in ordinary ecclesiastical and financial administration.

Moreover, suitable priests should be chosen, after a little pastoral practice, to pursue higher studies in universities, even abroad and especially in Rome as well as in other institutes of learning. In this way the young churches will have at hand men from among the local clergy equipped with the learning and skill needed for discharging more difficult ecclesiastical duties.

Where episcopal conferences deem it opportune, the order of the diaconate should be restored as a permanent state of life according to the norms of the Constitution "De Ecclesia."(23) For there are men who actually carry out the functions of the deacon's office, either preaching the word of God as catechists, or presiding over scattered Christian communities in the name of the pastor and the bishop, or practicing charity in social or relief work. It is only right to strengthen them by the imposition of hands which has come down from the Apostles, and to bind them more closely to the altar, that they may carry out their ministry more effectively because of the sacramental grace of the diaconate.

17. Likewise worthy of praise are the ranks of men and women catechists, well deserving of missionary work to the nations. Imbued with the apostolic spirit, they labor much to make an outstanding and altogether necessary contribution to the spread of the Faith and of the Church.

In our time, when there are so few clerics to preach the Gospel to such great numbers and to exercise the pastoral ministry, the position of catechists is of great importance. Therefore their training must be so accomplished and so adapted to advances on the cultural level that as reliable coworkers of the priestly order, they may perform their task well, though it be weighed down with new and greater burdens.

There should therefore be an increase in the number of schools, both on the diocesan and on the regional levels, wherein future catechists may study Catholic doctrine, especially in the fields of Scripture and the liturgy, as well as catechetical method and pastoral practice; schools wherein they can develop in themselves a Christian character, and wherein they can devote themselves tirelessly to cultivating piety and sanctity of life. Moreover, conventions or courses should be held in which at certain times catechists could he refreshed in the disciplines and skills useful for their ministry and in which their spiritual life could be nourished and strengthened. In addition, for those who devote themselves entirely to this work, a decent standard of living should be provided, and social security, by paying them a just wage.(24)

It would be desirable for the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to provide special funds for the due training and support of catechists. If it seems necessary and fitting, let a special "Opus pro Catechistis" be founded.

Moreover, the churches should gratefully acknowledge the noble work being done by auxiliary catechists, whose help they will need. These preside over the prayers in their communities and teach sacred doctrine. Something suitable should be done for their doctrinal and spiritual training. Besides, it is to be hoped that, where it seems opportune, catechists who are duly trained should receive a "missio canonica" in a publicly celebrated liturgical ceremony, so that in the eyes of the people they may serve the Faith with greater authority.

18. Right from the planting stage of the Church, the religious life should be carefully fostered. This not only offers precious and absolutely necessary assistance to missionary activity, but by a more inward consecration made to God in the Church, it also clearly manifests and signifies the inner nature of the Christian calling.(25)

Religious institutes, working to plant the Church, and thoroughly Imbued with mystic treasures with which the Church's religious tradition is adorned, should strive to give expression to them and to hand them on, according to the nature and the genius of each nation. Let them reflect attentively on how Christian religious life might be able to assimilate the ascetic and contemplative traditions, whose seeds were sometimes planted by God in ancient cultures already prior to the preaching of the Gospel.

Various forms of religious life are to be cultivated in the young churches, in order that they may display various aspects of the mission of Christ and of the life of the Church, and may devote themselves to various pastoral works, and prepare their members to exercise them rightly. On the other hand, the bishops in their conference should see to it that congregations pursuing the same apostolic aims are not multiplied to the detriment of the religious life and of the apostolate.

Worthy of special mention are the various projects for causing the contemplative life to take root. There are those who in such an attempt have kept the essential element of a monastic institution, and are bent on implanting the rich tradition of their order; there are others again who are returning to the simpler forms of ancient monasticism. But all are studiously looking for a genuine adaptation to local conditions. Since the contemplative life belongs to the fullness of the Church's presence, let it be put into effect everywhere.

CHAPTER III

PARTICULAR CHURCHES

19. The work of planting the Church in a given human community reaches a certain goal when the congregation of the faithful already rooted in social life and somewhat conformed to the local culture, enjoys a certain firmness and stability. That is to say, it is already equipped with its own supple (perhaps still insufficient) of local priests, Religious, and lay men, and is endowed with these institutions and ministries which are necessary for leading and expanding the life of the people of God under the guidance of their own bishop.

In such new churches, the life of the People of God must mature in all those fields of Christian life which are to be reformed by the norms of this council. The congregations of the faithful become daily more aware of their status as communities of faith, liturgy, and love. The laity strive by their civic and apostolic activity to set up a public order based on justice and love. The means of social communication are put to wise use at the opportune time. By a truly Christian life, families become seedbeds of the lay apostolate and of vocations to the priesthood and the Religious life. Finally, the Faith is taught by an adequate catechesis; it is celebrated in a liturgy in harmony with the genius of the people, and by suitable canonical legislation, it is introduced into upright institutions and local customs.

The bishops, in turn, each one together with his own college of priests, being more and more imbued with the mind of Christ and of the Church, feel and live along with the universal Church. Let the young church keep up an intimate communion with the whole Church, whose tradition they should link to their own culture, in order to increase, by a certain mutual exchange of forces, the life of the Mystical Body.(1) Hence, stress should be laid on those theological, psychological, and human elements which can contribute to fostering this sense of communion with the universal Church.

But these churches, very often located in the poorer portions of the globe, are mostly suffering from a very serious lack of priests and of material support. Therefore, they are badly in need of the continued missionary activity of the whole Church to furnish them with those subsidies which serve for the growth of the local Church, and above all for the maturity of Christian life. This mission action should also furnish help to those churches, founded long since, which are in a certain state of regression or weakness.

Yet these churches should launch a common pastoral effort and suitable works to increase the number of vocations to the diocesan clergy and to religious institutes, to discern them more readily, and to train them more efficiently,(2) so that little by little these churches may be able to provide for themselves and to bring aid to others.

20. Since the particular church is bound to represent the universal Church as perfectly as possible, let it realize that it has been sent to those also who are living in the same territory with it, and who do not yet believe in Christ. By the life witness of each one of the faithful and of the whole community, let the particular church be a sign which points out Christ to others.

Furthermore, there is need of the ministry of the word, so that the Gospel may reach all. The bishop should be first and foremost a herald of the Faith, who leads new disciples to Christ.(3) In order that he may properly fulfill this noble task, let him thoroughly study both the conditions of his flock, and the private opinions of his countrymen concerning God, taking careful note also of those changes which urbanization, migrations, and religious indifferentism have introduced.

The local priests in the young churches should zealously address themselves to the work of spreading the Gospel, and join forces with the foreign missionaries who form with them one college of priests, united under the authority of the bishop. They should do this, not only with a view to the feeding the faithful flock, and to the celebrating of divine worship, but also to the preaching of the Gospel to those outside, let them show themselves ready, and when the occasion presents itself, let them with a willing heart offer the bishop their services for missionary work in distant and forsaken areas of their own diocese or of other dioceses.

Let religious men and women, and the laity too, show the same fervent zeal toward their countrymen, especially toward the poor.

Episcopal conferences should see to it that biblical, theological, spiritual and pastoral refresher courses are held at stated intervals with this intention, that amid all vicissitudes and changes the clergy may acquire a fuller knowledge of the theological sciences and of pastoral methods.

For the rest, those things which this council has laid down, particularly in the Decree on the Life and Work of Priests, should be religiously observed.

In order that this missionary work of the particular church may be performed, there is need of qualified ministers, who are to be prepared in due time in a way suited to the conditions of each church. Now since men are more and more banding together into associations, it is very fitting that episcopal conferences should form a common plan concerning the dialogue to be held with such associations. But if perchance in certain regions, groups of men are to be found who are kept away from embracing the Catholic Faith because they cannot adapt themselves to the peculiar form which the church has taken in there, it is hoped that this condition will be provided for in a special way,(4) until such time as all Christians can gather together in one community. Let..individual bishops call to their dioceses the missionaries whom the Holy See may have on hand for this purpose; or let them receive such missionaries glad]y, and support their undertakings effectively.

In order that this missionary zeal may flourish among those in their own homeland, it is very fitting that the young churches should participate as soon as possible in the universal missionary work of the Church, and send their own missionaries to proclaim the Gospel all over the world, even though they themselves are suffering from a shortage of clergy. For their communion with the universal Church will be somehow brought to perfection when they themselves take an active part in missionary zeal toward other nations.

21. The church has not been really founded, and is not yet fully alive, nor is it a perfect sign of Christ among men, unless there is a laity worthy of the name working along with the hierarchy. For the Gospel cannot be deeply grounded in the abilities, life and work of any people without the active presence of laymen. Therefore, even at the very founding of a Church, great attention is to be paid to establishing a mature, Christian laity.

For the lay faithful fully belong at one and the same time both to the People of God and to civil society: they belong to the nation in which they were born; they have begun to share in its cultural treasures by means of their education; they are joined to its life by manifold social ties; they are cooperating in its progress by their efforts, each in his own profession; they feel its problems to be their very own, and they are trying to solve them. They also belong to Christ, because they were regenerated in the Church by faith and by baptism, so that they are Christ's in newness of life and work (cf. 1 Cor. 15:23), in order that in Christ, all things may be made subject to God, and finally God will be all in all (cf. Cor. 15:28).

Their main duty, whether they are men or women, is the witness which they are bound to bear to Christ by their life and works in the home, in their social milieu, and in their own professional circle. In them, there must appear the new man created according to God in justice and true holiness (cf. Eph. 4:24). But they must give expression to this newness of life in the social and cultural framework of their own homeland, according to their own national traditions. They must be acquainted with this culture; they must heal it and preserve it; they must develop it in accordance with modern conditions, and finally perfect it in Christ, so that the Faith of Christ and the life of the Church are no longer foreign to the society in which they live, but begin to permeate and to transform it. Let them be one with their fellow countrymen in sincere charity, so that there appears in their way of life a new bond of unity and of universal solidarity, which is drawn from the mystery of Christ. Let them also spread the Faith of Christ among those with whom they live or have professional connections - an obligation which is all the more urgent, because very many men can hear of Christ and of the Gospel only by means of the laity who are their neighbors. In fact, wherever possible, the laity should be prepared, in more immediate cooperation with the hierarchy, to fulfill a special mission of proclaiming the Gospel and communicating Christian teachings, so that they may add vigor to the nascent Church.

Let the clergy highly esteem the arduous apostolate of the laity. Let them train the laity to become conscious of the responsibility which they as members of Christ have for all men; let them instruct them deeply in the mystery of Christ, introduce them to practical methods, and be at their side in difficulties, according to the tenor of the Constitution Lumen Gentium and the Decree Apostolicam Actuositatem.

While pastors and laymen, then, retain each their own state of life and their own responsibilities, let the whole young church render one firm and vital witness to Christ, and become a shining beacon of the salvation which comes to us in Christ.

22. The seed which is the word of God, watered by divine dew, sprouts from the good ground and draws from thence its moisture, which it transforms and assimilates into itself, and finally bears much fruit. In harmony with the economy of the Incarnation, the young churches, rooted in Christ and built up on the foundation of the Apostles, take to themselves in a wonderful exchange all the riches of the nations which were given to Christ as an inheritance (cf Ps. 2:8). They borrow from the customs and traditions of their people, from their wisdom and their learning, from their arts and disciplines, all those things which can contribute to the glory of their Creator, or enhance the grace of their Savior, or dispose Christian life the way it should be.(5)

To achieve this goal, it is necessary that in each major socio - cultural area, such theological speculation should be encouraged, in the light of the universal Church's tradition, as may submit to a new scrutiny the words and deeds which God has revealed, and which have been set down in Sacred Scripture and explained by the Fathers and by the magisterium.

Thus it will be more clearly seen in what ways faith may seek for understanding, with due regard for the philosophy and wisdom of these peoples; it will be seen in what ways their customs, views on life, and social order, can be reconciled with the manner of living taught by divine revelation. From here the way will be opened to a more profound adaptation in the whole area of Christian life. By this manner of acting, every appearance of syncretism and of false particularism will be excluded, and Christian life will be accommodated to the genius and the dispositions of each culture.(6) Particular traditions, together with the peculiar patrimony of each family of nations, illumined by the light of the Gospel, can then be taken up into Catholic unity. Finally, the young particular churches, adorned with their own traditions, will have their own place in the ecclesiastical communion, saving always the primacy of Peter's See, which presides over the entire assembly of charity.(7)

And so, it is to be hoped that episcopal conferences within the limits of each major socio - cultural territory will so coordinate their efforts that they may be able to pursue this proposal of adaptation with one mind and with a common plan.

CHAPTER IV

MISSIONARIES

23. Although every disciple of Christ, as far in him lies, has the duty of spreading the Faith,(1) Christ the Lord always calls whomever He will from among the number of His disciples, to be with Him and to be sent by Him to preach to the nations (cf. Mark 3:13). Therefore, by the Holy Spirit, who distributes the charismata as He wills for the common good (1 Cor. 12:11), He inspires the missionary vocation in the hearts of individuals, and at the same time He raises up in the Church certain institutes(2) which take as their own special task the duty of preaching the Gospel, a duty belonging to the whole Church.

They are assigned with a special vocation who, being endowed with a suitable natural temperament, and being fit as regards talent and other qualities, have been trained to undertake mission work;(3) or be they autochthonous or be they foreigners: priests, Religious, or laymen. Sent by legitimate authority, they go out in faith and obedience to those who are far from Christ. They are set apart for the work for which they have been taken up (cf. Acts 13:2), as ministers of the Gospel, "that the offering up of the Gentiles may become acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 15:16).

24. Yet man must respond to God Who calls, and that in such a way, that without taking counsel with flesh and blood (Gal. 1:16), he devotes himself wholly to the work of the Gospel. This response, however can only be given when the Holy Spirit gives His inspiration and His power. For he who is sent enters upon the life and mission of Him Who "emptied Himself, taking the nature of a slave" (Phil. 2:7). Therefore, he must be ready to stay at his vocation for an entire lifetime, and to renounce himself and all those whom he thus far considered as his own, and instead to "make himself all things to all men" (1 Cor. 9:22).

Announcing the Gospel to all nations, he confidently makes known the mystery of Christ, whose ambassador he is, so that in him he dares to speak as he ought (cf. Eph. 6:19; Acts 4:31), not being ashamed of the scandal of the Cross. Following in his Master's footsteps, meek and humble of heart, he proves that His yoke is easy and His burden light (Matt. 11:29ff.) By a truly evangelical life, (4) in much patience, in long - suffering, in kindness, in unaffected love (cf. 2 Cor. 6:4ff.), he bears witness to his Lord, if need be to the shedding of his blood. He will ask of God the power and strength, that he may know that there is an overflowing of joy amid much testing of tribulation and deep poverty (2 Cor. 8:2). Let him be convinced that obedience is the hallmark of the servant of Christ, who redeemed the human race by His obedience.

The heralds of the Gospel lest they neglect the grace which is in them, should be renewed day by day in the spirit of their mind (cf. 1 Tim. 4:14; Eph. 4:23; 2 Cor. 4:16). Their Ordinaries and superiors should gather the missionaries together from time to time, that they be strengthened in the hope of their calling and may be renewed in the apostolic ministry, even in houses expressly set up for this purpose.

25. For such an exalted task, the future missionary is to be prepared by a special spiritual and moral training.(5) For he must have the spirit of initiative in beginning, as well as that of constancy in carrying through what he has begun; he must be persevering in difficulties, patient and strong of heart in bearing with solitude, fatigue, and fruitless labor. He will encounter men with an open mind and a wide heart; he will gladly take up the duties which are entrusted to him; he will with a noble spirit adapt himself to the people's foreign way of doing things and to changing circumstances; while in the spirit of harmony and mutual charity, he will cooperate with his brethren and all who dedicate themselves to the same task, so that together with the faithful, they will be one heart and one soul (cf. Acts 2:42; 4:32)(7) in imitation of the apostolic community.

These habits of mind should be earnestly exercised already in his time of training; they should be cultivated, and should be uplifted and nourished by the spiritual life. Imbued with a living faith and a hope that never fails, the missionary should be a man of prayer. Let him have an ardent spirit of power and of love and of prudence (cf. 2 Tim. 1:7). Let him learn to be self - sufficing in whatever circumstances (Phil. 4:11); always bearing about in himself the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may work in those to whom he is sent (2 Cor. 4:10ff.), out of zeal of souls, let him gladly spend all and be spent himself for souls (cf. 2 Cor. 12:15ff.), so that "by the daily practice of his duty he may grow in the love of God and neighbor."(8) Thus obedient to the will of the Father together with Christ, he will continue His mission under the hierarchical authority of the Church.

26. Those who are sent to different nations in order to be good ministers of Christ, should he nourished with the "words of faith and with good doctrine" (1 Tim. 4:6), which they should draw principally from the Sacred Scriptures, studying the mystery of Christ, whose heralds and witnesses they will be.

Therefore, all missionaries - priests, Brothers, Sisters, and lay folk - each according to their own state, should be prepared and trained, lest they be found unequal to the demands of their future work.(9) From the very beginning, their doctrinal training should be so planned that it takes in both the universality of the Church and the diversity of the world's nations. This holds for all of their studies by which they are prepared for the exercise of the ministry, as also for the other studies which it would be useful for them to learn, that they may have a general knowledge of the peoples, cultures, and religions; not only a knowledge that looks to the past, but one that considers the present time. For anyone who is going to encounter another people should have a great esteem for their patrimony and their language and their customs. It is very necessary for the future missionary to devote himself to missiological studies: that is, to know the teachings and norms of the Church concerning missionary activity, to know along what roads the heralds of the Gospel have run in the course of the centuries, and also what is the present condition of the missions, and what methods are considered more effective at the present time.(8)

But even though this entire training program is imbued with pastoral solicitude, a special and organized apostolic training ought to be given, by means of both teaching and practical exercises.(9)

Brothers and Sisters, in great numbers, should be well instructed and prepared in the catechetical art, that they may collaborate still better in the apostolate.

Even those who take part in missionary activity only for a time have to be given a training which is suited to their condition.

All these different kinds of formation should be completed in the lands to which they are sent, so that the missionaries may have a more thorough knowledge of the history, social structures, and customs of the people; that they may have an insight into their moral order and their religious precepts, and into the secret notions which, according to their sacred tradition, they have formed concerning God, the world and man.(10) Let the missionaries learn the languages to such a degree that they can use them in a fluent and polished manner, and so find more easy access to the minds and the hearts of men. (11) Furthermore, they should be properly introduced into special pastoral problems.

Some should be more thoroughly prepared in missiological institutes or in other faculties or universities, so that they may be able to discharge special duties more effectively(12) and be a help, by their learning, to other missionaries in carrying on the mission work, which especially in our time presents so many difficulties and opportunities. It is moreover highly desirable that the regional episcopal conferences should have available an abundance of such experts, and that they should make fruitful use of their knowledge and experience in the necessities of their office. Nor should there be wanting some who are perfectly skilled in the use of practical instruments and the means of social communication, the importance of which should be highly appreciated by all.

27. All these things, though necessary for everyone who is sent to the nations, can scarcely be attained to in reality by individual missionaries. Since even mission work itself, as experience teaches, cannot be accomplished by lone individuals, a common calling has gathered these individuals together into institutes, in which, with united efforts, they are properly trained and might carry out this work in the name of the Church and under the direction of the hierarchy. For many centuries, these institutes have borne the burden of the day and the heat, devoting themselves to missionary labor either entirely or in part. Often vast territories were committed to them by the Holy See for evangelization, and there they gathered together a new people for God, a local church clinging to their own shepherds. With their zeal and experience, they will serve, by fraternal cooperation either in the care of souls or in rendering special services for the common good, those churches which were founded at the cost of their sweat and even of their blood.

Sometimes, throughout the entire extent of some region, they will take certain tasks upon themselves; e.g., the evangelization of groups of peoples who perhaps for special reasons have not yet accepted the Gospel message, or who have thus far resisted it.(13)

If need be, let them be on hand to help and train, out of their own experience, those who will devote themselves to missionary activity for a time.

For these reasons, and since there are still many nations to be led to Christ, the institutes remain extremely necessary.

CHAPTER V

PLANNING MISSIONARY ACTIVITY

28. The Christian faithful, having different gifts (cf. Rom. 12:6), according to each one's opportunity, ability, charisms and ministry (cf. 1 Cor. 3:10) must all cooperate in the Gospel. Hence all alike, those who sow and those who reap (cf. John 4:37), those who plant and those who irrigate, must be one (cf. 1 Cor. 3:8), so that "in a free and orderly fashion cooperating toward the same end,"(1) they may spend their forces harmoniously for the building up of the Church.

Wherefore, the labors of the Gospel heralds and the help given by the rest of the Christian faithful must be so directed and intertwined that "all may be done in order" (1 Cor. 14:40) in all fields of missionary activity and cooperation.

29. Since the charge of proclaiming the Gospel in the whole world falls primarily on the body of bishops,(2) the synod of bishops or that "stable Council of bishops for the entire Church,"(3) among the affairs of general concern,(4) should give special consideration to missionary activity, which is the greatest and holiest task of the Church.(5)

For all missions and for the whole of missionary activity there should be only one competent office, namely that of the "Propagation of the Faith," which should direct and coordinate, throughout the world, both missionary work itself and missionary cooperation. However, the law of the Oriental Churches is to remain untouched.(6)

Although the Holy Spirit in diverse manners arouses the mission spirit in the Church of God, and oft times anticipates the action of those whose task it is to rule the life of the Church, yet for its part, this office should promote missionary vocations and missionary spirituality, zeal and prayer for the missions, and should put out authentic and adequate reports about them. Let it raise up missionaries and distribute them according to the more urgent needs of various areas. Let it arrange for an orderly plan of action, issue directives and principles adapted to evangelization, and give the impetus. Let it take care of stimulating and coordinating an effective collection of funds, which are to be distributed according to reasons of necessity and usefulness, the extent of the territory in question, the number of believers and non - believers, of undertakings and institutes, of ministers and missionaries.

In coordination with the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, let it search out ways and means for bringing about and directing fraternal cooperation as well as harmonious living with missionary undertaking of other Christian communities, that as far as possible the scandal of division may be removed.

Therefore, this office must be both an instrument of administration and an organ of dynamic direction, which makes use of scientific methods and means suited to the conditions of modern times, always taking into consideration present - day research in matters of theology, of methodology and missionary pastoral procedure.

In the direction of this office, an active role with a deliberative vote should be had by selected representatives of all those who cooperate in missionary work: that is, the bishops of the whole world (the episcopal conferences should be heard from in this regard), as well as the moderators of pontifical institutes and works, in ways and under conditions to be fixed by the Roman Pontiff. All these, being called together at stated times, will exercise supreme control of all mission work under the authority of the Supreme Pontiff. This office should have available a permanent group of expert consultors, of proven knowledge and experience, whose duty it will be, among other things to gather pertinent information about local conditions in various regions, and about the thinking of various groups of men) as well as about the means of evangelization to be used. They will then propose scientifically based conclusions for mission work and cooperation.

Institutes of religious women, regional undertakings for the mission cause, and organizations of laymen (especially international ones) should be suitably represented.

30. In order that the proper goals and results may be obtained, all missionary workers should have but "one heart and one soul" (Acts 4:32) in the actual carrying out of mission work itself.

It is the bishop's role, as the ruler and center of unity in the diocesan apostolate, to promote missionary activity, to direct it and to coordinate it but always in such a way that the zeal and spontaneity of those who share in the work may be preserved and fostered. All missionaries, even exempt Religious, are subject to his power in the various works which refer to the exercise of the sacred apostolate. (7) To improve coordination, let the bishop set up, insofar as possible, a pastoral council, in which clergy, Religious, and laity may have a part, through the medium of selected delegates. Moreover let them take care that apostolic activity be not limited to those only who have already been converted. A fair proportion of personnel and funds should be assigned to the evangelization of non - Christians.

31. Episcopal conferences should take common counsel to deal with weightier questions and urgent problems, without however neglecting local differences.(8) Lest the already insufficient supply of men and means be further dissipated, or lest projects be multiplied without necessity, it is recommended that they pool their resources to found projects which will serve the good of all as for instance, seminaries; technical schools and schools of higher learning; pastoral, catechetical, and liturgical centers; as well as the means of social communication.

Such cooperation, when indicated, should also be initiated between several different episcopal conferences.

32. It would also be good to coordinate the activities which are being carried on by ecclesiastical institutes and associations. All these, of whatever kind, should defer to the local Ordinary in all that concerns missionary activity itself. Therefore, it will be very helpful to, draw up contracts to regulate relations between local Ordinaries and the moderator of the institute.

When a territory has been committed to a certain institute, both the ecclesiastical superior and the institute will be concerned to direct everything to this end, that the new Christian community may grow into a local church, which in due time will be governed by its own pastor with his clergy.

When the commission of a certain territory expires, a new state of affairs begins. Then the episcopal conference and the institutes in joint deliberation should lay down norms governing the relations between local Ordinaries and the institutes.(9) It will be the role of Holy See to outline the general principles according to which regional and even particular contracts are to be drawn up.

Although the institutes will be prepared to continue the work which they have begun, cooperating in the ordinary ministry of the care of souls, yet when the local clergy grows numerous, it will be provided that the institute, insofar as this is in agreement with its purpose, should remain faithful to the diocese, generously taking over special works or some area in it.

33. The institutes engaged in missionary activity in the same territory should find ways and means of coordinating their work. Therefore, it will be very useful to have conferences of Religious men and unions of Religious women, in which institutes of the same country or region should take part. These conferences should ask what things can be done by combined efforts, and they should be in close touch with the episcopal conferences.

All these things, with equal reason, should be extended to include the cooperation of missionary institutes in the home lands, so that questions and joint projects can be settled with less expense, as for instance the formation of future missionaries, as well as courses for missionaries, relations with public authorities and with international or supranational organizations.

34. Since the right and methodical exercise of missionary activity requires that those who labor for the Gospel should be scientifically prepared for their task, and especially for dialogue with non - Christian religions and cultures, and also that they should be effectively assisted in the carrying out of this task, it is desired that, for the sake of the missions, there should be fraternal and generous collaboration on the part of scientific institutes which specialize in missiology and in other arts and disciplines useful for the missions, such as ethnology and linguistics, the history and science of religions, sociology, pastoral skills and the like.

CHAPTER VI

COOPERATION

35. Since the whole Church is missionary, and the work of evangelization is a basic duty of the People of God, this sacred synod invites all to a deep interior renewal; so that, having a vivid awareness of their own responsibility for spreading the Gospel, they may do their share in missionary work among the nations.

36. As members of the living Christ, incorporated into Him and made like unto Him through baptism and through confirmation and the Eucharist, all the faithful are duty - bound to cooperate in the expansion and spreading out of His Body, to bring it to fullness as soon as may be (Eph. 4:13).

Therefore, all sons of the Church should have a lively awareness of their responsibility to the world; they should foster in themselves a truly catholic spirit; they should spend their forces in the work of evangelization. And yet, let everyone know that their first and most important obligation for the spread of the Faith is this: to lead a profoundly Christian life. For their fervor in the service of God and their charity toward others will cause a new spiritual wind to blow for the whole Church, which will then appear as a sign lifted up among the nations (cf. Is. 11:12), "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14) and "the salt of the earth" (Matt. 5:13). This testimony of a good life will more easily have its effect if it is given in unison with other Christian communities, according to the norms of the Decree on Ecumenism, 12.(1) From this renewed spirit, prayer and works of penance will be spontaneously offered to God that He may fructify the missionaries' work with His grace; and then there will be missionary vocations, and the material subsidies which the missions need will be forthcoming.

But in order that each and every one of the Christian faithful may he fully acquainted with the present condition of the Church in the world, and may hear the voice of the multitudes who cry "Help us!" (cf. Acts 16:9), modern means of social communication should be used to furnish such mission information that the faithful may feel this mission work to be their very own, and may open their hearts to such vast and profound human needs, and may come to their assistance.

It is also necessary to coordinate the information, and to cooperate with national and international agencies.

37. But since the People of God lives in communities, especially in dioceses and parishes, and becomes somehow visible in them, it is also up to these to witness Christ before the nations.

The grace of renewal cannot grow in communities unless each of these extends the range of its charity to the ends of the earth, and devotes the same care to those afar off as it does to those who are its own members.

Thus the whole community prays, works together, and exercises its activity among the nations through those of its sons whom God has chosen for this most excellent task.

It will be very useful, provided the universal scope of mission work is not thereby neglected, to keep in contact with missionaries who are from one's own community, or with some parish or diocese in the missions, so that the communion between the communities may be made visible, and serve for their mutual edification.

38. All bishops, as members of the body of bishops succeeding to the College of Apostles, are consecrated not just for some one diocese, but or the salvation of the entire world. The mandate of Christ to preach the Gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15) primarily and immediately concerns them, with Peter and under Peter. Whence there arises that communion and cooperation of churches which is so necessary today for carrying on the work of evangelization. In virtue of this communion, the individual churches bear the burden of care for them all, and make their necessities known to one another, and exchange mutual communications regarding their affairs, since the extension of the Body of Christ is the duty of the whole College of Bishops.(2)

In his own diocese, with which he constitutes one unit the bishop, stimulating, promoting and directing the work for the missions, makes the mission spirit and zeal of the People of God present and as it were visible, so that the whole diocese becomes missionary.

It will be the bishop's task to raise up from among his own people, especially the sick and those oppressed by hardship, some souls to offer prayers and penance to God with a wide - open heart for the evangelization of the world. The bishop will also gladly encourage youths and clerics who have vocations to mission institutes, accepting it with a grateful spirit if God should call some of them to be employed in the missionary activity of the Church. The bishop will exhort and help the diocesan congregations to play a role of their own in the missions; he will promote the works of mission institutes among his own faithful, but most especially the papal mission works. For it is only right to give these works pride of place, since they are the means of imbuing Catholics from their very infancy with a real universal and missionary outlook; and they are also the means of making an effective collection of funds to subsidize all missions, each according to its needs.(3)

But since the need for workers in the vineyard of the Lord is growing from day to day, and diocesan priests have expressed the wish to play an ever greater part in the evangelization of the world, this sacred synod desires that the bishops considering the very serious dearth of priests which is hindering the evangelization of many areas, should send some of their better priests, who offer themselves for mission work and have received a suitable preparation, to those dioceses which are lacking in clergy, where at least for a time they will exercise their missionary ministry in a spirit of service.(4)

But in order that the missionary activity of the bishops may be exercised more effectively for the good of the whole Church, it would be expedient for the episcopal conferences to take charge of those affairs which concern the orderly cooperation of their own region.

In their own conference, the bishops should deliberate about dedicating to the evangelization of the nations some priests from among the diocesan clergy; they should decide what definite offering each diocese should be obliged to set aside annually for the work of the missions, in proportion to its own budget;(5) they should consider how to direct and control the ways and means by which the missions receive direct help; they should deal with assisting and if need be, founding, missionary institutes and seminaries for diocesan mission clergy, and the promoting of closer relations between such institutes and the dioceses.

It also pertains to the episcopal conferences to found and promote works for the brotherly reception and due pastoral care of those who immigrate from mission lands for the sake of studying or finding work. For through them, far - away peoples are sometimes made near; and an excellent opportunity is offered to communities which have long been Christian to converse with nations which have not yet heard the Gospel, and to show them in their own dutiful love and aid, the genuine face of Christ.(6)

39. Priests personally represent Christ, and are collaborators of the order of bishops in that threefold sacred task which by its very nature belongs to the mission of the Church.(7) Therefore, they should fully understand that their life is also consecrated to the service of the missions. Now because by means of their own ministry - which consists principally in the Eucharist which perfects the Church - they are in communion with Christ the Head and are leading others to this communion, they cannot help but feel how much is yet wanting to the fullness of that Body, and how much therefore must be done that it may grow from day to day. They shall therefore plan their pastoral care in such a way that it will serve to spread the Gospel among non - Christians.

In their pastoral activities, priests should stir up and preserve amid the faithful a zeal for the evangelization of the world, by instructing them in sermons and in Christian doctrine courses about the Church's task of announcing Christ to all nations; by enlightening Christian families about the necessity and the honor of fostering missionary vocations among their own sons and daughters, by promoting mission fervor in young people from the schools and Catholic associations so that among them there may arise future heralds of the Gospel. Let priests teach the faithful to pray for the missions, and let them not be ashamed to ask alms of them for this purpose, becoming like beggars for Christ and for the salvation of souls.

Professors in seminaries and universities will teach young people the true state of the world and of the Church, so that the necessity of a more intense evangelization of non - Christians will become clear to them and will nurture their zeal. In teaching the dogmatic, biblical, moral, and historical branches, they should focus attention on the missionary elements therein contained, so that in this way a missionary, awareness may be formed in future priests.

40. Religious institutes of the contemplative and of the active life have so far played, and still do play, the main role in the evangelization of the world. This sacred synod gladly acknowledges their merits and thanks God for all that they have expended for the glory of God and the service of souls while exhorting them to go on untiringly in the work which they have begun, since they know that the virtue of charity, which by reason of their vocation they are bound to practice with greater perfection, obliges and impels them to a truly catholic spirit and work.(9)

Institutes of the contemplative life, by their prayers, sufferings, and works of penance have a very great importance in the conversion of souls, because it is God who sends workers into His harvest when He is asked to do so (cf. Matt. 9:38) God who opens the minds of non - Christians to hear the Gospel (cf. Acts 16:14), and God who fructifies the word of salvation in their hearts (cf. 1 C,or. 3:7). In fact, these institutes are asked to found houses in mission areas, as not a few of them have already done, so that there, living out their lives in a way accommodated to the truly religious traditions of the people, they can bear excellent witness among non - Christians to the majesty and love of God, as well as to our union in Christ.

Institutes of the active life, whether they pursue a strictly mission ideal or not, should ask themselves sincerely in the presence of God, whether they would not be able to extend their activity for the expansion of the Kingdom of God among the nations; whether they could possibly leave certain ministries to others so that they themselves could expend their forces for the missions, whether they could possibly undertake activity in the missions, adapting their constitutions if necessary, but according to the spirit of their founder; whether their members are involved as totally as possible in the mission effort; and whether their type of life is a witness to the Gospel accommodated to the character and condition of the people.

Now since, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, secular institutes are daily increasing in the Church, their activity, under the authority of the bishop, could be fruitful in the missions in many ways as a sign of complete dedication to the evangelization of the world.

41. Laymen cooperate in the Church's work of evangelization; as witnesses and at the same time as living instruments, they share in her saving mission;(10) especially if they have been called by God and have been accepted by the bishop for this work.

In those lands which are already Christian, laymen cooperate in the work of evangelization by nurturing in themselves and in others a knowledge and love of the missions; by stimulating vocations in their own family, in Catholic associations, and in the schools; by offering subsidies of every kind, that they may offer to others that gift of Faith which they have received gratis.

But in mission lands, let laymen, whether foreigners or autochthonous, teach in schools, administer temporal goods cooperate in parish and diocesan activities, and organize and promote various forms of the lay apostolate, in order that the faithful of the young churches may be able to take part as soon as possible in the life of the Church.(11)

Lastly, let laymen gladly offer socio - economic cooperation to peoples on the way of development. This cooperation is all the more to be praised, the more it concerns itself with founding institutes which touch on the basic structures of social life, or which are oriented to the training of those who bear the responsibility for the government.

Worthy of special praise are those laymen who, in universities or in scientific institutes, promote by their historical and scientific religious research the knowledge of peoples and of religions; thus helping the heralds of the Gospel, and preparing for the dialogue with non - Christians.

They should cooperate in a brotherly spirit with other Christians, with non - Christians, and with members of international organizations, aways having before their eyes the fact that "the building up of the earthly city should have its foundation in the Lord, and should be directed towards Him."(12)

To be equal to all these tasks, laymen need the necessary technical and spiritual preparation, which should be given in institutes destined for this; so that their lives may be a witness for Christ among non - Christians, according to the words of the Apostle: "Do not be a stumbling - block to Jews and Greeks and to the Church of God, even as I myself in all things please all men, not seeking what is profitable to myself but to the many, that they may be saved." (1 Cor. 10:32-33).

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DEI VERBUM
Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation
Second Vatican Council

DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION
ON DIVINE REVELATION
DEI VERBUM
SOLEMNLY PROMULGATED
BY HIS HOLINESS
POPE PAUL VI
ON NOVEMBER 18, 1965

PREFACE

1. Hearing the word of God with reverence and proclaiming it with faith, the sacred synod takes its direction from these words of St. John: "We announce to you the eternal life which dwelt with the Father and was made visible to us. What we have seen and heard we announce to you, so that you may have fellowship with us and our common fellowship be with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:2-3). Therefore, following in the footsteps of the Council of Trent and of the First Vatican Council, this present council wishes to set forth authentic doctrine on divine revelation and how it is handed on, so that by hearing the message of salvation the whole world may believe, by believing it may hope, and by hoping it may love. (1)

CHAPTER I

REVELATION ITSELF

2. In His goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will (see Eph. 1:9) by which through Christ, the Word made flesh, man might in the Holy Spirit have access to the Father and come to share in the divine nature (see Eph. 2:18; 2 Peter 1:4). Through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God (see Col. 1;15, 1 Tim. 1:17) out of the abundance of His love speaks to men as friends (see Ex. 33:11; John 15:14-15) and lives among them (see Bar. 3:38), so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself. This plan of revelation is realized by deeds and words having in inner unity: the deeds wrought by God in the history of salvation manifest and confirm the teaching and realities signified by the words, while the words proclaim the deeds and clarify the mystery contained in them. By this revelation then, the deepest truth about God and the salvation of man shines out for our sake in Christ, who is both the mediator and the fullness of all revelation. (2)

3. God, who through the Word creates all things (see John 1:3) and keeps them in existence, gives men an enduring witness to Himself in created realities (see Rom. 1:19-20). Planning to make known the way of heavenly salvation, He went further and from the start manifested Himself to our first parents. Then after their fall His promise of redemption aroused in them the hope of being saved (see Gen. 3:15) and from that time on He ceaselessly kept the human race in His care, to give eternal life to those who perseveringly do good in search of salvation (see Rom. 2:6-7). Then, at the time He had appointed He called Abraham in order to make of him a great nation (see Gen. 12:2). Through the patriarchs, and after them through Moses and the prophets, He taught this people to acknowledge Himself the one living and true God, provident father and just judge, and to wait for the Savior promised by Him, and in this manner prepared the way for the Gospel down through the centuries.

4. Then, after speaking in many and varied ways through the prophets, "now at last in these days God has spoken to us in His Son" (Heb. 1:1-2). For He sent His Son, the eternal Word, who enlightens all men, so that He might dwell among men and tell them of the innermost being of God (see John 1:1-18). Jesus Christ, therefore, the Word made flesh, was sent as "a man to men." (3) He "speaks the words of God" (John 3;34), and completes the work of salvation which His Father gave Him to do (see John 5:36; Divine Revelation 17:4). To see Jesus is to see His Father (John 14:9). For this reason Jesus perfected revelation by fulfilling it through his whole work of making Himself present and manifesting Himself: through His words and deeds, His signs and wonders, but especially through His death and glorious resurrection from the dead and final sending of the Spirit of truth. Moreover He confirmed with divine testimony what revelation proclaimed, that God is with us to free us from the darkness of sin and death, and to raise us up to life eternal.

The Christian dispensation, therefore, as the new and definitive covenant, will never pass away and we now await no further new public revelation before the glorious manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ (see 1 Tim. 6:14 and Tit. 2:13).

5. "The obedience of faith" (Rom. 13:26; see 1:5; 2 Cor 10:5-6) "is to be given to God who reveals, an obedience by which man commits his whole self freely to God, offering the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals," (4) and freely assenting to the truth revealed by Him. To make this act of faith, the grace of God and the interior help of the Holy Spirit must precede and assist, moving the heart and turning it to God, opening the eyes of the mind and giving "joy and ease to everyone in assenting to the truth and believing it." (5) To bring about an ever deeper understanding of revelation the same Holy Spirit constantly brings faith to completion by His gifts.

6. Through divine revelation, God chose to show forth and communicate Himself and the eternal decisions of His will regarding the salvation of men. That is to say, He chose to share with them those divine treasures which totally transcend the understanding of the human mind. (6)

As a sacred synod has affirmed, God, the beginning and end of all things, can be known with certainty from created reality by the light of human reason (see Rom. 1:20); but teaches that it is through His revelation that those religious truths which are by their nature accessible to human reason can be known by all men with ease, with solid certitude and with no trace of error, even in this present state of the human race. (7)

CHAPTER II

HANDING ON DIVINE REVELATION

7. In His gracious goodness, God has seen to it that what He had revealed for the salvation of all nations would abide perpetually in its full integrity and be handed on to all generations. Therefore Christ the Lord in whom the full revelation of the supreme God is brought to completion (see Cor. 1:20; 3:13; 4:6), commissioned the Apostles to preach to all men that Gospel which is the source of all saving truth and moral teaching, (1) and to impart to them heavenly gifts. This Gospel had been promised in former times through the prophets, and Christ Himself had fulfilled it and promulgated it with His lips. This commission was faithfully fulfilled by the Apostles who, by their oral preaching, by example, and by observances handed on what they had received from the lips of Christ, from living with Him, and from what He did, or what they had learned through the prompting of the Holy Spirit. The commission was fulfilled, too, by those Apostles and apostolic men who under the inspiration of the same Holy Spirit committed the message of salvation to writing. (2)

But in order to keep the Gospel forever whole and alive within the Church, the Apostles left bishops as their successors, "handing over" to them "the authority to teach in their own place."(3) This sacred tradition, therefore, and Sacred Scripture of both the Old and New Testaments are like a mirror in which the pilgrim Church on earth looks at God, from whom she has received everything, until she is brought finally to see Him as He is, face to face (see 1 John 3:2).

8. And so the apostolic preaching, which is expressed in a special way in the inspired books, was to be preserved by an unending succession of preachers until the end of time. Therefore the Apostles, handing on what they themselves had received, warn the faithful to hold fast to the traditions which they have learned either by word of mouth or by letter (see 2 Thess. 2:15), and to fight in defense of the faith handed on once and for all (see Jude 1:3) (4) Now what was handed on by the Apostles includes everything which contributes toward the holiness of life and increase in faith of the peoples of God; and so the Church, in her teaching, life and worship, perpetuates and hands on to all generations all that she herself is, all that she believes.

This tradition which comes from the Apostles develop in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. (5) For there is a growth in the understanding of the realities and the words which have been handed down. This happens through the contemplation and study made by believers, who treasure these things in their hearts (see Luke, 2:19, 51) through a penetrating understanding of the spiritual realities which they experience, and through the preaching of those who have received through episcopal succession the sure gift of truth. For as the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfillment in her.

The words of the holy fathers witness to the presence of this living tradition, whose wealth is poured into the practice and life of the believing and praying Church. Through the same tradition the Church's full canon of the sacred books is known, and the sacred writings themselves are more profoundly understood and unceasingly made active in her; and thus God, who spoke of old, uninterruptedly converses with the bride of His beloved Son; and the Holy Spirit, through whom the living voice of the Gospel resounds in the Church, and through her, in the world, leads unto all truth those who believe and makes the word of Christ dwell abundantly in them (see Col. 3:16).

9. Hence there exists a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end. For Sacred Scripture is the word of God inasmuch as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, while sacred tradition takes the word of God entrusted by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and hands it on to their successors in its full purity, so that led by the light of the Spirit of truth, they may in proclaiming it preserve this word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known. Consequently it is not from Sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed. Therefore both sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of loyalty and reverence.(6)

10. Sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, committed to the Church. Holding fast to this deposit the entire holy people united with their shepherds remain always steadfast in the teaching of the Apostles, in the common life, in the breaking of the bread and in prayers (see Acts 2, 42, Greek text), so that holding to, practicing and professing the heritage of the faith, it becomes on the part of the bishops and faithful a single common effort. (7)

But the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, (8) has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church, (9) whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it scrupulously and explaining it faithfully in accord with a divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed.

It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, Sacred Scripture and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God's most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.

CHAPTER III

SACRED SCRIPTURE, ITS INSPIRATION AND DIVINE INTERPRETATION

11. Those divinely revealed realities which are contained and presented in Sacred Scripture have been committed to writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. For holy mother Church, relying on the belief of the Apostles (see John 20:31; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19-20, 3:15-16), holds that the books of both the Old and New Testaments in their entirety, with all their parts, are sacred and canonical because written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have God as their author and have been handed on as such to the Church herself.(1) In composing the sacred books, God chose men and while employed by Him (2) they made use of their powers and abilities, so that with Him acting in them and through them, (3) they, as true authors, consigned to writing everything and only those things which He wanted. (4)

Therefore, since everything asserted by the inspired authors or sacred writers must be held to be asserted by the Holy Spirit, it follows that the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching solidly, faithfully and without error that truth which God wanted put into sacred writings (5) for the sake of salvation. Therefore "all Scripture is divinely inspired and has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, for reformation of manners and discipline in right living, so that the man who belongs to God may be efficient and equipped for good work of every kind" (2 Tim. 3:16-17, Greek text).

12. However, since God speaks in Sacred Scripture through men in human fashion, (6) the interpreter of Sacred Scripture, in order to see clearly what God wanted to communicate to us, should carefully investigate what meaning the sacred writers really intended, and what God wanted to manifest by means of their words.

To search out the intention of the sacred writers, attention should be given, among other things, to "literary forms." For truth is set forth and expressed differently in texts which are variously historical, prophetic, poetic, or of other forms of discourse. The interpreter must investigate what meaning the sacred writer intended to express and actually expressed in particular circumstances by using contemporary literary forms in accordance with the situation of his own time and culture. (7) For the correct understanding of what the sacred author wanted to assert, due attention must be paid to the customary and characteristic styles of feeling, speaking and narrating which prevailed at the time of the sacred writer, and to the patterns men normally employed at that period in their everyday dealings with one another. (8)

But, since Holy Scripture must be read and interpreted in the sacred spirit in which it was written, (9) no less serious attention must be given to the content and unity of the whole of Scripture if the meaning of the sacred texts is to be correctly worked out. The living tradition of the whole Church must be taken into account along with the harmony which exists between elements of the faith. It is the task of exegetes to work according to these rules toward a better understanding and explanation of the meaning of Sacred Scripture, so that through preparatory study the judgment of the Church may mature. For all of what has been said about the way of interpreting Scripture is subject finally to the judgment of the Church, which carries out the divine commission and ministry of guarding and interpreting the word of God. (10)

13. In Sacred Scripture, therefore, while the truth and holiness of God always remains intact, the marvelous "condescension" of eternal wisdom is clearly shown, "that we may learn the gentle kindness of God, which words cannot express, and how far He has gone in adapting His language with thoughtful concern for our weak human nature." (11) For the words of God, expressed in human language, have been made like human discourse, just as the word of the eternal Father, when He took to Himself the flesh of human weakness, was in every way made like men.

CHAPTER IV

THE OLD TESTAMENT

14. In carefully planning and preparing the salvation of the whole human race the God of infinite love, by a special dispensation, chose for Himself a people to whom He would entrust His promises. First He entered into a covenant with Abraham (see Gen. 15:18) and, through Moses, with the people of Israel (see Ex. 24:8). To this people which He had acquired for Himself, He so manifested Himself through words and deeds as the one true and living God that Israel came to know by experience the ways of God with men. Then too, when God Himself spoke to them through the mouth of the prophets, Israel daily gained a deeper and clearer understanding of His ways and made them more widely known among the nations (see Ps. 21:29; 95:1-3; Is. 2:1-5; Jer. 3:17). The plan of salvation foretold by the sacred authors, recounted and explained by them, is found as the true word of God in the books of the Old Testament: these books, therefore, written under divine inspiration, remain permanently valuable. "For all that was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

15. The principal purpose to which the plan of the old covenant was directed was to prepare for the coming of Christ, the redeemer of all and of the messianic kingdom, to announce this coming by prophecy (see Luke 24:44; John 5:39; 1 Peter 1:10), and to indicate its meaning through various types (see 1 Cor. 10:12). Now the books of the Old Testament, in accordance with the state of mankind before the time of salvation established by Christ, reveal to all men the knowledge of God and of man and the ways in which God, just and merciful, deals with men. These books, though they also contain some things which are incomplete and temporary, nevertheless show us true divine pedagogy. (1) These same books, then, give expression to a lively sense of God, contain a store of sublime teachings about God, sound wisdom about human life, and a wonderful treasury of prayers, and in them the mystery of our salvation is present in a hidden way. Christians should receive them with reverence.

16. God, the inspirer and author of both Testaments, wisely arranged that the New Testament be hidden in the Old and the Old be made manifest in the New. (2) For, though Christ established the new covenant in His blood (see Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25), still the books of the Old Testament with all their parts, caught up into the proclamation of the Gospel, (3) acquire and show forth their full meaning in the New Testament (see Matt. 5:17; Luke 24:27; Rom. 16:25-26; 2 Cor. 14:16) and in turn shed light on it and explain it.

CHAPTER V

THE NEW TESTAMENT

17. The word God, which is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe (see Rom. 1:16), is set forth and shows its power in a most excellent way in the writings of the New Testament. For when the fullness of time arrived (see Gal. 4:4), the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us in His fullness of graces and truth (see John 1:14). Christ established the kingdom of God on earth, manifested His Father and Himself by deeds and words, and completed His work by His death, resurrection and glorious Ascension and by the sending of the Holy Spirit. Having been lifted up from the earth, He draws all men to Himself (see John 12:32, Greek text), He who alone has the words of eternal life (see John 6:68). This mystery had not been manifested to other generations as it was now revealed to His holy Apostles and prophets in the Holy Spirit (see Eph. 3:4-6, Greek text), so that they might preach the Gospel, stir up faith in Jesus, Christ and Lord, and gather together the Church. Now the writings of the New Testament stand as a perpetual and divine witness to these realities.

18. It is common knowledge that among all the Scriptures, even those of the New Testament, the Gospels have a special preeminence, and rightly so, for they are the principal witness for the life and teaching of the incarnate Word, our savior.

The Church has always and everywhere held and continues to hold that the four Gospels are of apostolic origin. For what the Apostles preached in fulfillment of the commission of Christ, afterwards they themselves and apostolic men, under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, handed on to us in writing: the foundation of faith, namely, the fourfold Gospel, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.(1)

19. Holy Mother Church has firmly and with absolute constancy held, and continues to hold, that the four Gospels just named, whose historical character the Church unhesitatingly asserts, faithfully hand on what Jesus Christ, while living among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation until the day He was taken up into heaven (see Acts 1:1). Indeed, after the Ascension of the Lord the Apostles handed on to their hearers what He had said and done. This they did with that clearer understanding which they enjoyed (3) after they had been instructed by the glorious events of Christ's life and taught by the light of the Spirit of truth. (2) The sacred authors wrote the four Gospels, selecting some things from the many which had been handed on by word of mouth or in writing, reducing some of them to a synthesis, explaining some things in view of the situation of their churches and preserving the form of proclamation but always in such fashion that they told us the honest truth about Jesus.(4) For their intention in writing was that either from their own memory and recollections, or from the witness of those who "themselves from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word" we might know "the truth" concerning those matters about which we have been instructed (see Luke 1:2-4).

20. Besides the four Gospels, the canon of the New Testament also contains the epistles of St. Paul and other apostolic writings, composed under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, by which, according to the wise plan of God, those matters which concern Christ the Lord are confirmed, His true teaching is more and more fully stated, the saving power of the divine work of Christ is preached, the story is told of the beginnings of the Church and its marvelous growth, and its glorious fulfillment is foretold.

For the Lord Jesus was with His apostles as He had promised (see Matt. 28:20) and sent them the advocate Spirit who would lead them into the fullness of truth (see John 16:13).

CHAPTER VI

SACRED SCRIPTURE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

21. The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates the body of the Lord, since, especially in the sacred liturgy, she unceasingly receives and offers to the faithful the bread of life from the table both of God's word and of Christ's body. She has always maintained them, and continues to do so, together with sacred tradition, as the supreme rule of faith, since, as inspired by God and committed once and for all to writing, they impart the word of God Himself without change, and make the voice of the Holy Spirit resound in the words of the prophets and Apostles. Therefore, like the Christian religion itself, all the preaching of the Church must be nourished and regulated by Sacred Scripture. For in the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven meets His children with great love and speaks with them; and the force and power in the word of God is so great that it stands as the support and energy of the Church, the strength of faith for her sons, the food of the soul, the pure and everlasting source of spiritual life. Consequently these words are perfectly applicable to Sacred Scripture: "For the word of God is living and active" (Heb. 4:12) and "it has power to build you up and give you your heritage among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32; see 1 Thess. 2:13).

22. Easy access to Sacred Scripture should be provided for all the Christian faithful. That is why the Church from the very beginning accepted as her own that very ancient Greek translation; of the Old Testament which is called the septuagint; and she has always given a place of honor to other Eastern translations and Latin ones especially the Latin translation known as the vulgate. But since the word of God should be accessible at all times, the Church by her authority and with maternal concern sees to it that suitable and correct translations are made into different languages, especially from the original texts of the sacred books. And should the opportunity arise and the Church authorities approve, if these translations are produced in cooperation with the separated brethren as well, all Christians will be able to use them.

23. The bride of the incarnate Word, the Church taught by the Holy Spirit, is concerned to move ahead toward a deeper understanding of the Sacred Scriptures so that she may increasingly feed her sons with the divine words. Therefore, she also encourages the study of the holy Fathers of both East and West and of sacred liturgies. Catholic exegetes then and other students of sacred theology, working diligently together and using appropriate means, should devote their energies, under the watchful care of the sacred teaching office of the Church, to an exploration and exposition of the divine writings. This should be so done that as many ministers of the divine word as possible will be able effectively to provide the nourishment of the Scriptures for the people of God, to enlighten their minds, strengthen their wills, and set men's hearts on fire with the love of God. (1) The sacred synod encourages the sons of the Church and Biblical scholars to continue energetically, following the mind of the Church, with the work they have so well begun, with a constant renewal of vigor. (2)

24. Sacred theology rests on the written word of God, together with sacred tradition, as its primary and perpetual foundation. By scrutinizing in the light of faith all truth stored up in the mystery of Christ, theology is most powerfully strengthened and constantly rejuvenated by that word. For the Sacred Scriptures contain the word of God and since they are inspired really are the word of God; and so the study of the sacred page is, as it were, the soul of sacred theology. (3) By the same word of Scripture the ministry of the word also, that is, pastoral preaching, catechetics and all Christian instruction, in which the liturgical homily must hold the foremost place, is nourished in a healthy way and flourishes in a holy way.

25. Therefore, all the clergy must hold fast to the Sacred Scriptures through diligent sacred reading and careful study, especially the priests of Christ and others, such as deacons and catechists who are legitimately active in the ministry of the word. This is to be done so that none of them will become "an empty preacher of the word of God outwardly, who is not a listener to it inwardly" (4) since they must share the abundant wealth of the divine word with the faithful committed to them, especially in the sacred liturgy. The sacred synod also earnestly and especially urges all the Christian faithful, especially Religious, to learn by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures the "excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:8). "For ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ."(5) Therefore, they should gladly put themselves in touch with the sacred text itself, whether it be through the liturgy, rich in the divine word, or through devotional reading, or through instructions suitable for the purpose and other aids which, in our time, with approval and active support of the shepherds of the Church, are commendably spread everywhere. And let them remember that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that God and man may talk together; for "we speak to Him when we pray; we hear Him when we read the divine saying." (6)

It devolves on sacred bishops "who have the apostolic teaching"(7) to give the faithful entrusted to them suitable instruction in the right use of the divine books, especially the New Testament and above all the Gospels. This can be done through translations of the sacred texts, which are to be provided with the necessary and really adequate explanations so that the children of the Church may safely and profitably become conversant with the Sacred Scriptures and be penetrated with their spirit.

Furthermore, editions of the Sacred Scriptures, provided with suitable footnotes, should be prepared also for the use of non-Christians and adapted to their situation. Both pastors of souls and Christians generally should see to the wise distribution of these in one way or another.

26. In this way, therefore, through the reading and study of the sacred books "the word of God may spread rapidly and be glorified" (2 Thess. 3:1) and the treasure of revelation, entrusted to the Church, may more and more fill the hearts of men. Just as the life of the Church is strengthened through more frequent celebration of the Eucharistic mystery, similar we may hope for a new stimulus for the life of the Spirit from a growing reverence for the word of God, which "lasts forever" (Is. 40:8; see 1 Peter 1:23-25).

NOTES

Preface

Article 1:

1. cf. St. Augustine, "De Catechizandis Rudibus," C.IV 8: PL. 40, 316.

Chapter I

Article 2:

2. cf. Matt. 11:27; John 1:14 and 17; 14:6; 17:1-3; 2 Cor 3:16 and 4, 6; Eph. 1, 3-14.

Article 4:

3. Epistle to Diognetus, c. VII, 4: Funk, Apostolic Fathers, I, p. 403.

Article 5:

4. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 3, "On Faith:" Denzinger 1789 (3008).

5. Second Council of Orange, Canon 7: Denzinger 180 (377); First Vatican Council, loc. cit.: Denzinger 1791 (3010).

Article 6:

6. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 2, "On Revelation:" Denzinger 1786 (3005).

7. Ibid: Denzinger 1785 and 1786 (3004 and 3005).

Chapter II

Article 7:

1. cf. Matt. 28:19-20, and Mark 16:15; Council of Trent, session IV, Decree on Scriptural Canons: Denzinger 783 (1501).

2. cf. Council of Trent, loc. cit.; First Vatican Council, session III, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 2, "On revelation:" Denzinger 1787 (3005).

3. St. Irenaeus, "Against Heretics" III, 3, 1: PG 7, 848; Harvey, 2, p. 9.

Article 8:

4. cf. Second Council of Nicea: Denzinger 303 (602); Fourth Council of Constance, session X, Canon 1: Denzinger 336 (650-652).

5. cf. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 4, "On Faith and Reason:" Denzinger 1800 (3020).

Article 9:

6. cf. Council of Trent, session IV, loc. cit.: Denzinger 783 (1501).

Article 10:

7. cf. Pius XII, apostolic constitution, "Munificentissimus Deus," Nov. 1, 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950) p. 756; Collected Writings of St. Cyprian, Letter 66, 8: Hartel, III, B, p. 733: "The Church [is] people united with the priest and the pastor together with his flock."

8. cf. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 3 "On Faith:" Denzinger 1792 (3011).

9. cf. Pius XII, encyclical "Humani Generis," Aug. 12, 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950) pp. 568-69: Denzinger 2314 (3886).

Chapter III

Article 11:

1. cf. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 2 "On Revelation:" Denzinger 1787 (3006); Biblical Commission, Decree of June 18,1915: Denzinger 2180 (3629): EB 420; Holy Office, Epistle of Dec. 22, 1923: EB 499.

2. cf. Pius XII, encyclical "Divino Afflante Spiritu," Sept. 30, 1943: A.A.S. 35 (1943) p. 314; Enchiridion Bible. (EB) 556.

3. "In" and "for" man: cf. Heb. 1, and 4, 7; ("in"): 2 Sm. 23,2; Matt.1:22 and various places; ("for"): First Vatican Council, Schema on Catholic Doctrine, note 9: Coll. Lac. VII, 522.

4. Leo XIII, encyclical "Providentissimus Deus," Nov. 18, 1893: Denzinger 1952 (3293); EB 125.

5. cf. St. Augustine, "Gen. ad Litt." 2, 9, 20:PL 34, 270-271; Epistle 82, 3: PL 33, 277: CSEL 34, 2, p. 354. St. Thomas, "On Truth," Q. 12, A. 2, C. Council of Trent, session IV, Scriptural Canons: Denzinger 783 (1501). Leo XIII, encyclical "Providentissimus Deus:" EB 121, 124, 126-127. Pius XII, encyclical "Divino Afflante Spiritu:" EB 539.

Article 12:

6. St. Augustine, "City of God," XVII, 6, 2: PL 41, 537: CSEL. XL, 2, 228.

7. St. Augustine, "On Christian Doctrine" III, 18, 26; PL 34, 75-76.

8. Pius XII, loc. cit. Denziger 2294 (3829-3830); EB 557-562.

9. cf. Benedict XV, encyclical "Spiritus Paraclitus" Sept. 15, 1920:EB 469. St. Jerome, "In Galatians' 5, 19-20: PL 26, 417 A.

10. cf. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chapter 2, "On Revelation:" Denziger 1788 (3007).

Article 13:

11. St. John Chrysostom "In Genesis" 3, 8 (Homily l7, 1): PG 53, 134; "Attemperatio" [in English "Suitable adjustment"] in Greek "synkatabasis."

Chapter IV

Article 15:

1. Pius XI, encyclical 'Mit Brennender Sorge," March 14, 1937: A.A.S. 29 (1937) p. 51.

Article 16:

2. St. Augustine, "Quest. in Hept." 2,73: PL 34,623.

3. St. Irenaeus, "Against Heretics" III, 21,3: PG 7,950; (Same as 25,1: Harvey 2, p. 115). St. Cyril of Jerusalem, "Catech." 4,35; PG 33,497. Theodore of Mopsuestia, "In Soph." 1,4-6: PG 66, 452D-453A.

Chapter V

Article 18:

1. cf. St. Irenaeus, "Against Heretics" III, 11; 8: PG 7,885, Sagnard Edition, p. 194.

Article 19:

(Due to the necessities of translation, footnote 2 follows footnote 3 in text of Article 19.)

2. cf. John 14:26; 16:13.

3. John 2:22; 12:16; cf. 14:26; 16:12-13; 7:39.

4. cf. instruction "Holy Mother Church" edited by Pontifical Consilium for Promotion of Bible Studies; A.A.S. 56 (1964) p. 715.

Chapter VI

Article 23:

1. cf. Pius XII, encyclical "Divino Afflante Spiritu:" EB 551, 553, 567. Pontifical Biblical Commission, Instruction on Proper Teaching of Sacred Scripture in Seminaries and Religious Colleges, May 13, 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950) pp. 495-505.

2. cf. Pius XII, ibid: EB 569.

Article 24:

3. cf. Leo XIII, encyclical "Providentissmus Deus:" EB 114; Benedict XV, encyclical "Spiritus Paraclitus:" EB 483.

Article 25:

4. St. Augustine Sermons, 179,1: PL 38,966.

5. St. Jerome, Commentary on Isaiah, Prol.: PL 24,17. cf. Benedict XV, encyclical "Spiritus Paraclitus:" EB 475-480; Pius XII, encyclical "Divino Afflante Spiritu:" EB 544.

6. St. Ambrose, On the Duties of Ministers I, 20,88: PL l6,50.

7. St. Irenaeus, "Against Heretics" IV, 32,1: PG 7, 1071; (Same as 49,2) Harvey, 2, p. 255.

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Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World
Second Vatican Council

PASTORAL CONSTITUTION
ON THE CHURCH IN THE
MODERN WORLD
GAUDIUM ET SPES
PROMULGATED BY
HIS HOLINESS, POPE PAUL VI
ON DECEMBER 7, 1965

PREFACE

1. The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community composed of men. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the Kingdom of their Father and they have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for every man. That is why this community realizes that it is truly linked with mankind and its history by the deepest of bonds.

2. Hence this Second Vatican Council, having probed more profoundly into the mystery of the Church, now addresses itself without hesitation, not only to the sons of the Church and to all who invoke the name of Christ, but to the whole of humanity. For the council yearns to explain to everyone how it conceives of the presence and activity of the Church in the world of today.

Therefore, the council focuses its attention on the world of men, the whole human family along with the sum of those realities in the midst of which it lives; that world which is the theater of man's history, and the heir of his energies, his tragedies and his triumphs; that world which the Christian sees as created and sustained by its Maker's love, fallen indeed into the bondage of sin, yet emancipated now by Christ, Who was crucified and rose again to break the strangle hold of personified evil, so that the world might be fashioned anew according to God's design and reach its fulfillment.

3. Though mankind is stricken with wonder at its own discoveries and its power, it often raises anxious questions about the current trend of the world, about the place and role of man in the universe, about the meaning of its individual and collective strivings, and about the ultimate destiny of reality and of humanity. Hence, giving witness and voice to the faith of the whole people of God gathered together by Christ, this council can provide no more eloquent proof of its solidarity with, a, well as its respect and love for the entire human family with which it is bound up, than by engaging with it in conversation about these various problems. The council brings to mankind light kindled from the Gospel, and puts at its disposal those saving resources which the Church herself, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, receives from her Founder. For the human person deserves to be preserved; human society deserves to be renewed. Hence the focal point of our total presentation will be man himself, whole and entire, body and soul, heart and conscience, mind and will.

Therefore, this sacred synod, proclaiming the noble destiny of man and championing the Godlike seed which has been sown in him, offers to mankind the honest assistance of the Church in fostering that brotherhood of all men which corresponds to this destiny of theirs. Inspired by no earthly ambition, the Church seeks but a solitary goal: to carry forward the work of Christ under the lead of the befriending Spirit. And Christ entered this world to give witness to the truth, to rescue and not to sit in judgment, to serve and not to be served.(2)

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT THE SITUATION OF MEN IN THE MODERN WORLD

4. To carry out such a task, the Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. Thus, in language intelligible to each generation, she can respond to the perennial questions which men ask about this present life and the life to come, and about the relationship of the one to the other. We must therefore recognize and understand the world in which we live, its explanations, its longings, and its often dramatic characteristics. Some of the main features of the modern world can be sketched as follows.

Today, the human race is involved in a new stage of history. Profound and rapid changes are spreading by degrees around the whole world. Triggered by the intelligence and creative energies of man, these changes recoil upon him, upon his decisions and desires, both individual and collective, and upon his manner of thinking and acting with respect to things and to people. Hence we can already speak of a true cultural and social transformation, one which has repercussions on man's religious life as well.

As happens in any crisis of growth, this transformation has brought serious difficulties in its wake. Thus while man extends his power in every direction, he does not always succeed in subjecting it to his own welfare. Striving to probe more profoundly into the deeper recesses of his own mind, he frequently appears more unsure of himself. Gradually and more precisely he lays bare the laws of society, only to be paralyzed by uncertainty about the direction to give it.

Never has the human race enjoyed such an abundance of wealth, resources and economic power, and yet a huge proportion of the worlds citizens are still tormented by hunger and poverty, while countless numbers suffer from total illiteracy. Never before has man had so keen an understanding of freedom, yet at the same time new forms of social and psychological slavery make their appearance. Although the world of today has a very vivid awareness of its unity and of how one man depends on another in needful solidarity, it is most grievously turn into opposing camps by conflicting forces. For political, social, economic, racial and ideological disputes still continue bitterly, and with them the peril of a war which would reduce everything to ashes. True, there is a growing exchange of ideas, but the very words by which key concepts are expressed take on quite different meanings in diverse ideological systems. Finally, man painstakingly searches for a better world, without a corresponding spiritual advancement.

Influenced by such a variety of complexities, many of our contemporaries are kept from accurately identifying permanent values and adjusting them properly to fresh discoveries. As a result, buffeted between hope and anxiety and pressing one another with questions about the present course of events, they are burdened down with uneasiness. This same course of events leads men to look for answers; indeed, it forces them to do so.

5. Today's spiritual agitation and the changing conditions of life are part of a broader and deeper revolution. As a result of the latter, intellectual formation is ever increasingly based on the mathematical and natural sciences and on those dealing with man himself, while in the practical order the technology which stems from these sciences takes on mounting importance.

This scientific spirit has a new kind of impact on the cultural sphere and on modes of thought. Technology is now transforming the face of the earth, and is already trying to master outer space. To a certain extent, the human intellect is also broadening its dominion over time: over the past by means of historical knowledge; over the future, by the art of projecting and by planning.

Advances in biology, psychology, and the social sciences not only bring men hope of improved self-knowledge; in conjunction with technical methods, they are helping men exert direct influence on the life of social groups.

At the same time, the human race is giving steadily-increasing thought to forecasting and regulating its own population growth. History itself speeds along on so rapid a course that an individual person can scarcely keep abreast of it. The destiny of the human community has become all of a piece, where once the various groups of men had a kind of private history of their own.

Thus, the human race has passed from a rather static concept of reality to a more dynamic, evolutionary one. In consequence there has arisen a new series of problems, a series as numerous as can be, calling for efforts of analysis and synthesis.

6. By this very circumstance, the traditional local communities such as families, clans, tribes, villages, various groups and associations stemming from social contacts, experience more thorough changes every day.

The industrial type of society is gradually being spread, leading some nations to economic affluence, and radically transforming ideas and social conditions established for centuries.

Likewise, the cult and pursuit of city living has grown, either because of a multiplication of cities and their inhabitants, or by a transplantation of city life to rural settings.

New and more efficient media of social communication are contributing to the knowledge of events; by setting off chain reactions they are giving the swiftest and widest possible circulation to styles of thought and feeling.

It is also noteworthy how many men are being induced to migrate on various counts, and are thereby changing their manner of life. Thus a man's ties with his fellows are constantly being multiplied, and at the same time "socialization" brings further ties, without however always promoting appropriate personal development and truly personal relationships.

This kind of evolution can be seen more clearly in those nations which already enjoy the conveniences of economic and technological progress, though it is also astir among peoples still striving for such progress and eager to secure for themselves the advantages of an industrialized and urbanized society. These peoples, especially those among them who are attached to older traditions, are simultaneously undergoing a movement toward more mature and personal exercise of liberty.

7. A change in attitudes and in human structures frequently calls accepted values into question, especially among young people, who have grown impatient on more than one occasion, and indeed become rebels in their distress. Aware of their own influence in the life of society, they want a part in it sooner. This frequently causes parents and educators to experience greater difficulties day by day in discharging their tasks. The institutions, laws and modes of thinking and feeling as handed down from previous generations do not always seem to be well adapted to the contemporary state of affairs; hence arises an upheaval in the manner and even the norms of behavior.

Finally, these new conditions have their impact on religion. On the one hand a more critical ability to distinguish religion from a magical view of the world and from the superstitions which still circulate purifies it and exacts day by day a more personal and explicit adherence to faith. As a result many persons are achieving a more vivid sense of God. On the other hand, growing numbers of people are abandoning religion in practice. Unlike former days, the denial of God or of religion, or the abandonment œe them, are no longer unusual and individual occurrences. For today it is not rare for such things to be presented as requirements of scientific progress or of a certain new humanism. In numerous places these views are voiced not only in the teachings of philosophers, but on every side they influence literature, the arts, the interpretation of the humanities and of history and civil laws themselves. As a consequence, many people are shaken.

8. This development coming so rapidly and often in a disorderly fashion, combined with keener awareness itself of the inequalities in the world beget or intensify contradictions and imbalances.

Within the individual person there develops rather frequently an imbalance between an intellect which is modern in practical matters and a theoretical system of thought which can neither master the sum total of its ideas, nor arrange them adequately into a synthesis. Likewise an imbalance arises between a concern for practicality and efficiency, and the demands of moral conscience; also very often between the conditions of collective existence and the requisites of personal thought, and even of contemplation. At length there develops an imbalance between specialized human activity and a comprehensive view of reality.

As for the family, discord results from population, economic and social pressures, or from difficulties which arise between succeeding generations, or from new social relationships between men and women.

Differences crop up too between races and between various kinds of social orders; between wealthy nations and those which are less influential or are needy; finally, between international institutions born of the popular desire for peace, and the ambition to propagate one's own ideology, as well as collective greeds existing in nations or other groups.

What results is mutual distrust, enmities, conflicts and hardships. Of such is man at once the cause and the victim.

9. Meanwhile the conviction grows not only that humanity can and should increasingly consolidate its control over creation, but even more, that it devolves on humanity to establish a political, social and economic order which will growingly serve man and help individuals as well as groups to affirm and develop the dignity proper to them.

As a result many persons are quite aggressively demanding those benefits of which with vivid awareness they judge themselves to be deprived either through injustice or unequal distribution. Nations on the road to progress, like those recently made independent, desire to participate in the goods of modern civilization, not only in the political field but also economically, and to play their part freely on the world scene. Still they continually fall behind while very often their economic and other dependence on wealthier nations advances more rapidly.

People hounded by hunger call upon those better off. Where they have not yet won it, women claim for themselves an equity with men before the law and in fact. Laborers and farmers seek not only to provide for the necessities of life, but to develop the gifts of their personality by their labors and indeed to take part in regulating economic, social, political and cultural life. Now, for the first time in human history all people are convinced that the benefits of culture ought to be and actually can be extended to everyone.

Still, beneath all these demands lies a deeper and more widespread longing: persons and societies thirst for a full and free life worthy of man; one in which they can subject to their own welfare all that the modern world can offer them so abundantly. In addition, nations try harder every day to bring about a kind of universal community.

Since all these things are so, the modern world shows itself at once powerful and weak, capable of the noblest deeds or the foulest; before it lies the path to freedom or to slavery, to progress or retreat, to brotherhood or hatred. Moreover, man is becoming aware that it is his responsibility to guide aright the forces which he has unleashed and which can enslave him or minister to him. That is why he is putting questions to himself.

10. The truth is that the imbalances under which the modern world labors are linked with that more basic imbalance which is rooted in the heart of man. For in man himself many elements wrestle with one another. Thus, on the one hand, as a creature he experiences his limitations in a multitude of ways; on the other he feels himself to be boundless in his desires and summoned to a higher life. Pulled by manifold attractions he is constantly forced to choose among them and renounce some. Indeed, as a weak and sinful being, he often does what he would not, and fails to do what he would.(1) Hence he suffers from internal divisions, and from these flow so many and such great discords in society. No doubt many whose lives are infected with a practical materialism are blinded against any sharp insight into this kind of dramatic situation; or else, weighed down by unhappiness they are prevented from giving the matter any thought. Thinking they have found serenity in an interpretation of reality everywhere proposed these days, many look forward to a genuine and total emancipation of humanity wrought solely by human effort; they are convinced that the future rule of man over the earth will satisfy every desire of his heart. Nor are there lacking men who despair of any meaning to life and praise the boldness of those who think that human existence is devoid of any inherent significance and strive to confer a total meaning on it by their own ingenuity alone.

Nevertheless, in the face of the modern development of the world, the number constantly swells of the people who raise the most basic questions of recognize them with a new sharpness: what is man? What is this sense of sorrow, of evil, of death, which continues to exist despite so much progress? What purpose have these victories purchased at so high a cost? What can man offer to society, what can he expect from it? What follows this earthly life?

The Church firmly believes that Christ, who died and was raised up for all,(2) can through His Spirit offer man the light and the strength to measure up to his supreme destiny. Nor has any other name under the heaven been given to man by which it is fitting for him to be saved.(3) She likewise holds that in her most benign Lord and Master can be found the key, the focal point and the goal of man, as well as of all human history. The Church also maintains that beneath all changes there are many realities which do not change and which have their ultimate foundation in Christ, Who is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever.(4) Hence under the light of Christ, the image of the unseen God, the firstborn of every creature,(5) the council wishes to speak to all men in order to shed light on the mystery of man and to cooperate in finding the solution to the outstanding problems of our time.

PART I

THE CHURCH AND MAN'S CALLING

11. The People of God believes that it is led by the Lord's Spirit, Who fills the earth. Motivated by this faith, it labors to decipher authentic signs of God's presence and purpose in the happenings, needs and desires in which this People has a part along with other men of our age. For faith throws a new light on everything, manifests God's design œr man's total vocation, and thus directs the mind to solutions which are fully human.

This council, first of all, wishes to assess in this light those values which are most highly prized today and to relate them to their divine source. Insofar as they stem from endowments conferred by God on man, these values are exceedingly good. Yet they are often wrenched from their rightful function by the taint in man's heart, and hence stand in need of purification.

What does the Church think of man? What needs to be recommended for the upbuilding of contemporary society? What is the ultimate significance of human activity throughout the world? People are waiting for an answer to these questions. From the answers it will be increasingly clear that the People of God and the human race in whose midst it lives render service to each other. Thus the mission of the Church will show its religious, and by that very fact, its supremely human character.

CHAPTER I

THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

12. According to the almost unanimous opinion of believers and unbelievers alike, all things on earth should be related to man as their center and crown.

But what is man? About himself he has expressed, and continues to express, many divergent and even contradictory opinions. In these he often exalts himself as the absolute measure of all things or debases himself to the point of despair. The result is doubt and anxiety. The Church certainly understands these problems. Endowed with light from God, she can offer solutions to them, so that man's true situation can be portrayed and his defects explained, while at the same time his dignity and destiny are justly acknowledged.

For Sacred Scripture teaches that man was created "to the image of God," is capable of knowing and loving his Creator, and was appointed by Him as master of all earthly creatures(1) that he might subdue them and use them to God's glory.(2) "What is man that you should care for him? You have made him little less than the angels, and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him rule over the works of your hands, putting all things under his feet" (Ps. 8:5-7).

But God did not create man as a solitary, for from the beginning "male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:27). Their companionship produces the primary form of interpersonal communion. For by his innermost nature man is a social being, and unless he relates himself to others he can neither live nor develop his potential.

Therefore, as we read elsewhere in Holy Scripture God saw "all that he had made, and it was very good" (Gen. 1:31).

13. Although he was made by God in a state of holiness, from the very onset of his history man abused his liberty, at the urging of the Evil One. Man set himself against God and sought to attain his goal apart from God. Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, but their senseless minds were darkened and they served the creature rather than the Creator.(3) What divine revelation makes known to us agrees with experience. Examining his heart, man finds that he has inclinations toward evil too, and is engulfed by manifold ills which cannot come from his good Creator. Often refusing to acknowledge God as his beginning, man has disrupted also his proper relationship to his own ultimate goal as well as his whole relationship toward himself and others and all created things.

Therefore man is split within himself. As a result, all of human life, whether individual or collective, shows itseLf to be a dramatic struggle between good and evil, between light and darkness. Indeed, man finds that by himself he is incapable of battling the assaults of evil successfully, so that everyone feels as though he is bound by chains. But the Lord Himself came to free and strengthen man, renewing him inwardly and casting out that "prince of this world" (John 12:31) who held him in the bondage of sin.(4) For sin has diminished man, blocking his path to fulfillment.

The call to grandeur and the depths of misery, both of which are a part of human experience, find their ultimate and simultaneous explanation in the light of this revelation.

14. Though made of body and soul, man is one. Through his bodily composition he gathers to himself the elements of the material world; thus they reach their crown through him, and through him raise their voice in free praise of the Creator.(6) For this reason man is not allowed to despise his bodily life, rather he is obliged to regard his body as good and honorable since God has created it and will raise it up on the last day. Nevertheless, wounded by sin, man experiences rebellious stirrings in his body. But the very dignity of man postulates that man glorify God in his body and forbid it to serve the evil inclinations of his heart.

Now, man is not wrong when he regards himself as superior to bodily concerns, and as more than a speck of nature or a nameless constituent of the city of man. For by his interior qualities he outstrips the whole sum of mere things. He plunges into the depths of reality whenever he enters into his own heart; God, Who probes the heart,(7) awaits him there; there he discerns his proper destiny beneath tho eyes of God. Thus, when he recognizes in himself a spiritual and immortal soul, he is not being mocked by a fantasy born only of physical or social influences, but is rather laying hold of the proper truth of the matter.

15. Man judges rightly that by his intellect he surpasses the material universe, for he shares in the light of the divine mind. By relentlessly employing his talents through the ages he has indeed made progress in the practical sciences and in technology and the liberal arts. In our times he has won superlative victories, especially in his probing of the material world and in subjecting it to himself. Still he has always searched for more penetrating truths, and finds them. For his intelligence is not confined to observable data alone, but can with genuine certitude attain to reality itself as knowable, though in consequence of sin that certitude is partly obscured and weakened.

The intellectual nature of the human person is perfected by wisdom and needs to be, for wisdom gently attracts the mind of man to a quest and a love for what is true and good. Steeped in wisdom. man passes through visible realities to those which are unseen.

Our era needs such wisdom more than bygone ages if the discoveries made by man are to be further humanized. For the future of the world stands in peril unless wiser men are forthcoming. It should also be pointed out that many nations, poorer in economic goods, are quite rich in wisdom and can offer noteworthy advantages to others.

It is, finally, through the gift of the Holy Spirit that man comes by faith to the contemplation and appreciation of the divine plan.(8)

16. In the depths of his conscience, man detects a law which he does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience. Always summoning him to love good and avoid evil, the voice of conscience when necessary speaks to his heart: do this, shun that. For man has in his heart a law written by God; to obey it is the very dignity of man; according to it he will be judged.(9) Conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of a man. There he is alone with God, Whose voice echoes in his depths.(10) In a wonderful manner conscience reveals that law which is fulfilled by love of God and neighbor.(11) In fidelity to conscience, Christians are joined with the rest of men in the search for truth, and for the genuine solution to the numerous problems which arise in the life of individuals from social relationships. Hence the more right conscience holds sway, the more persons and groups turn aside from blind choice and strive to be guided by the objective norms of morality. Conscience frequently errs from invincible ignorance without losing its dignity. The same cannot be said for a man who cares but little for truth and goodness, or for a conscience which by degrees grows practically sightless as a result of habitual sin.

17. Only in freedom can man direct himself toward goodness. Our contemporaries make much of this freedom and pursue it eagerly; and rightly to be sure. Often however they foster it perversely as a license for doing whatever pleases them, even if it is evil. For its part, authentic freedom is an exceptional sign of the divine image within man. For God has willed that man remain "under the control of his own decisions,"(12) so that he can seek his Creator spontaneously, and come freely to utter and blissful perfection through loyalty to Him. Hence man's dignity demands that he act according to a knowing and free choice that is personally motivated and prompted from within, not under blind internal impulse nor by mere external pressure. Man achieves such dignity when, emancipating himself from all captivity to passion, he pursues his goal in a spontaneous choice of what is good, and procures for himself through effective and skilful action, apt helps to that end. Since man's freedom has been damaged by sin, only by the aid of God's grace can he bring such a relationship with God into full flower. Before the judgement seat of God each man must render an account of his own life, whether he has done good or evil.(13)

18. It is in the face of death that the riddle a human existence grows most acute. Not only is man tormented by pain and by the advancing deterioration of his body, but even more so by a dread of perpetual extinction. He rightly follows the intuition of his heart when he abhors and repudiates the utter ruin and total disappearance of his own person. He rebels against death because he bears in himself an eternal seed which cannot be reduced to sheer matter. All the endeavors of technology, though useful in the extreme, cannot calm his anxiety; for prolongation of biological life is unable to satisfy that desire for higher life which is inescapably lodged in his breast.

Although the mystery of death utterly beggars the imagination, the Church has been taught by divine revelation and firmly teaches that man has been created by God for a blissful purpose beyond the reach of earthly misery. In addition, that bodily death from which man would have been immune had he not sinned(14) will be vanquished, according to the Christian faith, when man who was ruined by his own doing is restored to wholeness by an almighty and merciful Saviour. For God has called man and still calls him so that with his entire being he might be joined to Him in an endless sharing of a divine life beyond all corruption. Christ won this victory when He rose to life, for by His death He freed man from death. Hence to every thoughtful man a solidly established faith provides the answer to his anxiety about what the future holds for him. At the same time faith gives him the power to be united in Christ with his loved ones who have already been snatched away by death; faith arouses the hope that they have found true life with God.

19. The root reason for human dignity lies in man's call to communion with God. From the very circumstance of his origin man is already invited to converse with God. For man would not exist were he not created by Gods love and constantly preserved by it; and he cannot live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and devotes himself to His Creator. Still, many of our contemporaries have never recognized this intimate and vital link with God, or have explicitly rejected it. Thus atheism must be accounted among the most serious problems of this age, and is deserving of closer examination.

The word atheism is applied to phenomena which are quite distinct from one another. For while God is expressly denied by some, others believe that man can assert absolutely nothing about Him. Still others use such a method to scrutinize the question of God as to make it seem devoid of meaning. Many, unduly transgressing the limits of the positive sciences, contend that everything can be explained by this kind of scientific reasoning alone, or by contrast, they altogether disallow that there is any absolute truth. Some laud man so extravagantly that their faith in God lapses into a kind of anemia, though they seem more inclined to affirm man than to deny God. Again some form for themselves such a fallacious idea of God that when they repudiate this figment they are by no means rejecting the God of the Gospel. Some never get to the point of raising questions about God, since they seem to experience no religious stirrings nor do they see why they should trouble themselves about religion. Moreover, atheism results not rarely from a violent protest against the evil in this world, or from the absolute character with which certain human values are unduly invested, and which thereby already accords them the stature of God. Modern civilization itself often complicates the approach to God not for any essential reason but because it is so heavily engrossed in earthly affairs.

Undeniably, those who willfully shut out God from their hearts and try to dodge religious questions are not following the dictates of their consciences, and hence are not free of blame; yet believers themselves frequently bear some responsibility for this situation. For, taken as a whole, atheism is not a spontaneous development but stems from a variety of causes, including a critical reaction against religious beliefs, and in some places against the Christian religion in particular. Hence believers can have more than a little to do with the birth of atheism. To the extent that they neglect their own training in the faith, or teach erroneous doctrine, or are deficient in their religious, moral or social life, they must be said to conceal rather than reveal the authentic face of God and religion.

20. Modern atheism often takes on a systematic expression which, in addition to other causes, stretches the desires for human independence to such a point that it poses difficulties against any kind of dependence on God. Those who profess atheism of this sort maintain that it gives man freedom to be an end unto himself, the sole artisan and creator of his own history. They claim that this freedom cannot be reconciled with the affirmation of a Lord Who is author and purpose of all things, or at least that this freedom makes such an affirmation altogether superfluous. Favoring this doctrine can be the sense of power which modern technical progress generates in man.

Not to be overlooked among the forms of modern atheism is that which anticipates the liberation of man especially through his economic and social emancipation. This form argues that by its nature religion thwarts this liberation by arousing man's hope for a deceptive future life, thereby diverting him from the constructing of the earthly city. Consequently when the proponents of this doctrine gain governmental rower they vigorously fight against religion, and promote atheism by using, especially in the education of youth, those means of pressure which public power has at its disposal.

21. In her loyal devotion to God and men, the Church has already repudiated(16) and cannot cease repudiating, sorrowfully but as firmly as possible, those poisonous doctrines and actions which contradict reason and the common experience of humanity, and dethrone man from his native excellence.

Still, she strives to detect in the atheistic mind the hidden causes for the denial of God; conscious of how weighty are the questions which atheism raises, and motivated by love for all men, she believes these questions ought to be examined seriously and more profoundly.

The Church holds that the recognition of God is in no way hostile to man's dignity, since this dignity is rooted and perfected in God. For man was made an intelligent and free member of society by God Who created him, but even more important, he is called as a son to commune with God and share in His happiness. She further teaches that a hope related to the end of time does not diminish the importance of intervening duties but rather undergirds the acquittal of them with fresh incentives. By contrast, when a divine instruction and the hope of life eternal are wanting, man's dignity is most grievously lacerated, as current events often attest; riddles of life and death, of guilt and of grief go unsolved with the frequent result that men succumb to despair.

Meanwhile every man remains to himself an unsolved puzzle, however obscurely he may perceive it. For on certain occasions no one can entirely escape the kind of self-questioning mentioned earlier, especially when life's major events take place. To this questioning only God fully and most certainly provides an answer as He summons man to higher knowledge and humbler probing.

The remedy which must be applied to atheism, however, is to be sought in a proper presentation of the Church's teaching as well as in the integral life of the Church and her members. For it is the function of the Church, led by the Holy Spirit Who renews and purifies her ceaselessly,(17) to make God the Father and His Incarnate Son present and in a sense visible. This result is achieved chiefly by the witness of a living and mature faith, namely, one trained to see difficulties clearly and to master them. Many martyrs have given luminous witness to this faith and continue to do so. This faith needs to prove its fruitfulness by penetrating the believer's entire life, including its worldly dimensions, and by activating him toward justice and love, especially regarding the needy. What does the most reveal God's presence, however, is the brotherly charity of the faithful who are united in spirit as they work together for the faith of the Gospel(18) and who prove themselves a sign of unity.

While rejecting atheism, root and branch, the Church sincerely professes that all men, believers and unbelievers alike, ought to work for the rightful betterment of this world in which all alike live; such an ideal cannot be realized, however, apart from sincere and prudent dialogue. Hence the Church protests against the distinction which some state authorities make between believers and unbelievers, with prejudice to the fundamental rights of the human person. The Church calls for the active liberty of believers to build up in this world God's temple too. She courteously invites atheists to examine the Gospel of Christ with an open mind.

Above all the Church known that her message is in harmony with the most secret desires of the human heart when she champions the dignity of the human vocation, restoring hope to those who have already despaired of anything higher than their present lot. Far from diminishing man, her message brings to his development light, life and freedom. Apart from this message nothing will avail to fill up the heart of man: "Thou hast made us for Thyself," O Lord, "and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee."(19)

22. The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light. For Adam, the first man, was a figure of Him Who was to come,(20) namely Christ the Lord. Christ, the final Adam, by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and His love, fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear. It is not surprising, then, that in Him all the aforementioned truths find their root and attain their crown.

He Who is "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15),(21) is Himself the perfect man. To the sons of Adam He restores the divine likeness which had been disfigured from the first sin onward. Since human nature as He assumed it was not annulled,(22) by that very fact it has been raised up to a divine dignity in our respect too. For by His incarnation the Son of God has united Himself in some fashion with every man. He worked with human hands, He thought with a human mind, acted by human choice(23) and loved with a human heart. Born of the Virgin Mary, He has truly been made one of us, like us in all things except sin.(24)

As an innocent lamb He merited for us life by the free shedding of His own blood. In Him God reconciled us(25) to Himself and among ourselves; from bondage to the devil and sin He delivered us, so that each one of us can say with the Apostle: The Son of God "loved me and gave Himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20). By suffering for us He not only provided us with an example for our imitation,(26) He blazed a trail, and if we follow it, life and death are made holy and take on a new meaning.

The Christian man, conformed to the likeness of that Son Who is the firstborn of many brothers,(27) received "the first-fruits of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:23) by which he becomes capable of discharging the new law of love.(28) Through this Spirit, who is "the pledge of our inheritance" (Eph. 1:14), the whole man is renewed from within, even to the achievement of "the redemption of the body" (Rom. 8:23): "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the death dwells in you, then he who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will also bring to life your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who dwells in you" (Rom. 8:11).(29) Pressing upon the Christian to be sure, are the need and the duty to battle against evil through manifold tribulations and even to suffer death. But, linked with the paschal mystery and patterned on the dying Christ, he will hasten forward to resurrection in the strength which comes from hope.(30)

All this holds true not only for Christians, but for all men of good will in whose hearts grace works in an unseen way.(31) For, since Christ died for all men,(32) and since the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery.

Such is the mystery of man, and it is a great one, as seen by believers in the light of Christian revelation. Through Christ and in Christ, the riddles of sorrow and death grow meaningful. Apart from His Gospel, they overwhelm us. Christ has risen, destroying death by His death; He has lavished life upon us(33) so that, as sons in the Son, we can cry out in the Spirit; Abba, Father(34)

CHAPTER II

THE COMMUNITY OF MANKIND

23. One of the salient features of the modern world is the growing interdependence of men one on the other, a development promoted chiefly by modern technical advances. Nevertheless brotherly dialogue among men does not reach its perfection on the level of technical progress, but on the deeper level of interpersonal relationships. These demand a mutual respect for the full spiritual dignity of the person. Christian revelation contributes greatly to the promotion of this communion between persons, and at the same time leads us to a deeper understanding of the laws of social life which the Creator has written into man's moral and spiritual nature.

Since rather recent documents of the Church's teaching authority have dealt at considerable length with Christian doctrine about human society,(1) this council is merely going to call to mind some of the more basic truths, treating their foundations under the light of revelation. Then it will dwell more at length on certain of their implications having special significance for our day.

24. God, Who has fatherly concern for everyone, has willed that all men should constitute one family and treat one another in a spirit of brotherhood. For having been created in the image of God, Who "from one man has created the whole human race and made them live all over the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26), all men are called to one and the same goal, namely God Himself.

For this reason, love for God and neighbor is the first and greatest commandment. Sacred Scripture, however, teaches us that the love of God cannot be separated from love of neighbor: "If there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.... Love therefore is the fulfillment of the Law" (Rom. 13:9-10; cf. 1 John 4:20). To men growing daily more dependent on one another, and to a world becoming more unified every day, this truth proves to be of paramount importance.

Indeed, the Lord Jesus, when He prayed to the Father, "that all may be one. . . as we are one" (John 17:21-22) opened up vistas closed to human reason, for He implied a certain likeness between the union of the divine Persons, and the unity of God's sons in truth and charity. This likeness reveals that man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself.(2)

25. Man's social nature makes it evident that the progress of the human person and the advance of society itself hinge on one another. For the beginning, the subject and the goal of all social institutions is and must be the human person which for its part and by its very nature stands completely in need of social life.(3) Since this social life is not something added on to man, through his dealings with others, through reciprocal duties, and through fraternal dialogue he develops all his gifts and is able to rise to his destiny.

Among those social ties which man needs for his development some, like the family and political community, relate with greater immediacy to his innermost nature; others originate rather from his free decision. In our era, for various reasons, reciprocal ties and mutual dependencies increase day by day and give rise to a variety of associations and organizations, both public and private. This development, which is called socialization, while certainly not without its dangers, brings with it many advantages with respect to consolidating and increasing the qualities of the human person, and safeguarding his rights.(4)

But if by this social life the human person is greatly aided in responding to his destiny, even in its religious dimensions, it cannot be denied that men are often diverted from doing good and spurred toward and by the social circumstances in which they live and are immersed from their birth. To be sure the disturbances which so frequently occur in the social order result in part from the natural tensions of economic, political and social forms. But at a deeper level they flow from man's pride and selfishness, which contaminate even the social sphere. When the structure of affairs is flawed by the consequences of sin, man, already born with a bent toward evil, finds there new inducements to sin, which cannot be overcome without strenuous efforts and the assistance of grace.

26. Every day human interdependence grows more tightly drawn and spreads by degrees over the whole world. As a result the common good, that is, the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfillment, today takes on an increasingly universal complexion and consequently involves rights and duties with respect to the whole human race. Every social group must take account of the needs and legitimate aspirations of other groups, and even of the general welfare of the entire human family.(5)

At the same time, however, there is a growing awareness of the exalted dignity proper to the human person, since he stands above all things, and his rights and duties are universal and inviolable. Therefore, there must be made available to all men everything necessary for leading a life truly human, such as food, clothing, and shelter; the right to choose a state of life freely and to found a family, the right to education, to employment, to a good reputation, to respect, to appropriate information, to activity in accord with the upright norm of one's own conscience, to protection of privacy and rightful freedom. even in matters religious.

Hence, the social order and its development must invariably work to the benefit of the human person if the disposition of affairs is to be subordinate to the personal realm and not contrariwise, as the Lord indicated when He said that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.(6)

This social order requires constant improvement It must be founded on truth, built on justice and animated by love; in freedom it should grow every day toward a more humane balance.(7) An improvement in attitudes and abundant changes in society will have to take place if these objectives are to be gained.

God's Spirit, Who with a marvelous providence directs the unfolding of time and renews the face of the earth, is not absent from this development. The ferment of the Gospel too has aroused and continues to arouse in man's heart the irresistible requirements of his dignity.

27. Coming down to practical and particularly urgent consequences, this council lays stress on reverence for man; everyone must consider his every neighbor without exception as another self, taking into account first of all His life and the means necessary to living it with dignity,(8) so as not to imitate the rich man who had no concern for the poor man Lazarus.(9)

In our times a special obligation binds us to make ourselves the neighbor of every person without exception. and of actively helping him when he comes across our path, whether he be an old person abandoned by all, a foreign laborer unjustly looked down upon, a refugee, a child born of an unlawful union and wrongly suffering for a sin he did not commit, or a hungry person who disturbs our conscience by recalling the voice of the Lord, "As long as you did it for one of these the least of my brethren, you did it for me" (Matt. 25:40).

Furthermore, whatever is opposed to life itself, such as any type of murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia or wilful self-destruction, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torments inflicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where men are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed. They poison human society, but they do more harm to those who practice them than those who suffer from the injury. Moreover, they are supreme dishonor to the Creator.

28. Respect and love ought to be extended also to those who think or act differently than we do in social, political and even religious matters. In fact, the more deeply we come to understand their ways of thinking through such courtesy and love, the more easily will we be able to enter into dialogue with them.

This love and good will, to be sure, must in no way render us indifferent to truth and goodness. Indeed love itself impels the disciples of Christ to speak the saving truth to all men. But it is necessary to distinguish between error, which always merits repudiation, and the person in error, who never loses the dignity of being a person even when he is flawed by false or inadequate religious notions.(10) God alone is the judge and searcher of hearts, for that reason He forbids us to make judgments about the internal guilt of anyone.(11)

The teaching of Christ even requires that we forgive injuries,(12) and extends the law of love to include every enemy, according to the command of the New Law: "You have heard that it was said: Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy. But I say to you: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you" (Matt. S:43-44).

29. Since all men possess a rational soul and are created in God's likeness, since they have the same nature and origin, have been redeemed by Christ and enjoy the same divine calling and destiny, the basic equality of all must receive increasingly greater recognition.

True, all men are not alike from the point of view of varying physical power and the diversity of intellectual and moral resources. Nevertheless, with respect to the fundamental rights of the person, every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, color, social condition, language or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent. For in truth it must still be regretted that fundamental personal rights are still not being universally honored. Such is the case of a woman who is denied the right to choose a husband freely, to embrace a state of life or to acquire an education or cultural benefits equal to those recognized for men.

Therefore, although rightful differences exist between men, the equal dignity of persons demands that a more humane and just condition of life be brought about. For excessive economic and social differences between the members of the one human family or population groups cause scandal, and militate against social justice, equity, the dignity of the human person, as well as social and international peace.

Human institutions, both private and public, must labor to minister to the dignity and purpose of man. At the same time let them put up a stubborn fight against any kind of slavery, whether social or political, and safeguard the basic rights of man under every political system. Indeed human institutions themselves must be accommodated by degrees to the highest of all realities, spiritual ones, even though meanwhile, a long enough time will be required before they arrive at the desired goal.

30. Profound and rapid changes make it more necessary that no one ignoring the trend of events or drugged by laziness, content himself with a merely individualistic morality. It grows increasingly true that the obligations of justice and love are fulfilled only if each person, contributing to the common good, according to his own abilities and the needs of others, also promotes and assists the public and private institutions dedicated to bettering the conditions of human life. Yet there are those who, while possessing grand and rather noble sentiments, nevertheless in reality live always as if they cared nothing for the needs of society. Many in various places even make light of social laws and precepts, and do not hesitate to resort to various frauds and deceptions in avoiding just taxes or other debts due to society. Others think little of certain norms of social life, for example those designed for the protection of health, or laws establishing speed limits; they do not even avert to the fact that by such indifference they imperil their own life and that of others.

Let everyone consider it his sacred obligation to esteem and observe social necessities as belonging to the primary duties of modern man. For the more unified the world becomes, the more plainly do the offices of men extend beyond particular groups and spread by degrees to the whole world. But this development cannot occur unless individual men and their associations cultivate in themselves the moral and social virtues, and promote them in society; thus, with the needed help of divine grace men who are truly new and artisans of a new humanity can be forthcoming

31. In order for individual men to discharge with greater exactness the obligations of their conscience toward themselves and the various group to which they belong, they must be carefully educated to a higher degree of culture through the use of the immense resources available today to the human race. Above all the education of youth from every social background has to be undertaken, so that there can be produced not only men and women of refined talents, but those great-souled persons who are so desperately required by our times.

Now a man can scarcely arrive at the needed sense of responsibility, unless his living conditions allow him to become conscious of his dignity, and to rise to.(15) destiny by spending himself for God and for others. But human freedom is often crippled when a man encounters extreme poverty just as it withers when he indulges in too many of life's comforts and imprisons himself in a kind of splendid isolation. Freedom acquires new strength, by contrast, when a man consents to the unavoidable requirements of social life, takes on the manifold demands of human partnership, and commits himself to the service of the human community.

Hence, the will to play one's role in common endeavors should be everywhere encouraged. Praise is due to those national procedures which allow the largest possible number of citizens to participate in public affairs with genuine freedom. Account must be taken, to be sure, of the actual conditions of each people and the decisiveness required by public authority. If every citizen is to feel inclined to take part in the activities of the various groups which make up the social body, these must offer advantages which will attract members and dispose them to serve others. We can justly consider that the future of humanity lies in the hands of those who are strong enough to provide coming generations with reasons for living and hoping.

32. As God did not create man for life in isolation, but for the formation of social unity, so also "it has pleased God to make men holy and save them not merely as individuals, without bond or link between them, but by making them into a single people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness."(13) So from the beginning of salvation history He has chosen men not just as individuals but as members of a certain community. Revealing His mind to them, God called these chosen ones "His people" (Ex. 3:7-12), and even made a covenant with them on Sinai.(14)

This communitarian character is developed and consummated in the work of Jesus Christ. For the very Word made flesh willed to share in the human fellowship. He was present at the wedding of Cana, visited the house of Zacchaeus, ate with publicans and sinners. He revealed the love of the Father and the sublime vocation of man in terms of the most common of social realities and by making use of the speech and the imagery of plain everyday life. Willingly obeying' the laws of his country He sanctified those human ties, especially family ones, which are the source of social structures. He chose to lead the life proper to an artisan of His time and place.

In His preaching He clearly taught the sons of God to treat one another as brothers. In His prayers He pleaded that all His disciples might be "one." Indeed as the redeemer of all, He offered Himself for all even to point of death. "Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). He commanded His Apostles to preach to all peoples the Gospel's message that the human race was to become the Family of God, in which the fullness of the Law would be love.

As the firstborn of many brethren and by the giving of His Spirit, He founded after His death and resurrection a new brotherly community composed of all those who receive Him in faith and in love. This He did through His Body. which is the Church. There everyone, as members one of the other. would render mutual service according to the different gifts bestowed on each.

This solidarity must be constantly increased until that day on which it will be brought to perfection. Then, saved by grace, men will offer flawless glory to God as a family beloved of God and of Christ their Brother.

CHAPTER III

MAN'S ACTIVITY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

33. Through his labors and his native endowments man has ceaselessly striven to better his life. Today, however, especially with the help of science and technology, he has extended his mastery over nearly the whole of nature and continues to do so. Thanks to increased opportunities for many kinds of social contact among nations, a human family is gradually recognizing that it comprises a single world community and is making itself so. Hence many benefits once looked for, especially from heavenly powers, man has now enterprisingly procured for himself

In the face of these immense efforts which already preoccupy the whole human race, men agitate numerous questions among themselves. What is the meaning and value of this feverish activity? How should all these things be used? To the achievement of what goal are the strivings of individuals and societies heading? The Church guards the heritage of God's word and draws from it moral and religious principles without always having at hand the solution to particular problems. As such she desires to add the light of revealed truth to mankind's store of experience. so that the path which humanity has taken in recent times will not be a dark one.

34. Throughout the course of the centuries, men have labored to better the circumstances of their lives through a monumental amount of individual and collective effort. To believers, this point is settled: considered in itself, this human activity accords with God's will. For man, created to God's image, received a mandate to subject to himself the earth and all it contains, and to govern the world with justice and holiness;(1) a mandate to relate himself and the totality of things to Him Who was to be acknowledged as the Lord and Creator of all. Thus, by the subjection of all things to man, the name of God would be wonderful in all the earth.(2)

This mandate concerns the whole of everyday activity as well. For while providing the substance of life for themselves and their families, men and women are performing their activities in a way which appropriately benefits society. They can justly consider that by their labor they are unfolding the Creator's work, consulting the advantages of their brother men, and are contributing by their personal industry to the realization history of the divine plan.(3)

Thus, far from thinking that works produced by man's own talent and energy are in opposition to God's power, and that the rational creature exists as a kind of rival to the Creator, Christians are convinced that the triumphs of the human race are a sign of God's grace and the flowering of His own mysterious design. For the greater man's power becomes, the farther his individual and community responsibility extends. Hence it is clear that men are not deterred by the Christian message from building up the world, or impelled to neglect the welfare of their fellows, but that they are rather more stringently bound to do these very things.(4)

35. Human activity, to be sure, takes its significance from its relationship to man. Just as it proceeds from man, so it is ordered toward man. For when a man works he not only alters things and society, he develops himself as well. He learns much, he cultivates his resources, he goes outside of himself and beyond himself. Rightly understood this kind of growth is of greater value than any external riches which can be garnered. A man is more precious for what he is than for what he has.(5) Similarly, all that men do to obtain greater justice, wider brotherhood, a more humane disposition of social relationships has greater worth than technical advances. For these advances can supply the material for human progress, but of themselves alone they can never actually bring it about.

Hence, the norm of human activity is this: that in accord with the divine plan and will, it harmonize with the genuine good of the human race, and that it allow men as individuals and as members of society to pursue their total vocation and fulfill it.

36. Now many of our contemporaries seem to fear that a closer bond between human activity and religion will work against the independence of men, of societies, or of the sciences.

If by the autonomy of earthly affairs we mean that created things and societies themselves enjoy their own laws and values which must be gradually deciphered, put to use, and regulated by men, then it is entirely right to demand that autonomy. Such is not merely required by modern man, but harmonizes also with the will of the Creator. For by the very circumstance of their having been created, all things are endowed with their own stability, truth, goodness, proper laws and order. Man must respect these as he isolates them by the appropriate methods of the individual sciences or arts. Therefore if methodical investigation within every branch of learning is carried out in a genuinely scientific manner and in accord with moral norms, it never truly conflicts with faith, for earthly matters and the concerns of faith derive from the same God. (6) Indeed whoever labors to penetrate the secrets of reality with a humble and steady mind, even though he is unaware of the fact, is nevertheless being led by the hand of God, who holds all things in existence, and gives them their identity. Consequently, we cannot but deplore certain habits of mind, which are sometimes found too among Christians, which do not sufficiently attend to the rightful independence of science and which, from the arguments and controversies they spark, lead many minds to conclude that faith and science are mutually opposed.(7)

But if the expression, the independence of temporal affairs, is taken to mean that created things do not depend on God, and that man can use them without any reference to their Creator, anyone who acknowledges God will see how false such a meaning is. For without the Creator the creature would disappear. For their part, however, all believers of whatever religion always hear His revealing voice in the discourse of creatures. When God is forgotten, however, the creature itself grows unintelligible.

37. Sacred Scripture teaches the human family what the experience of the ages confirms: that while human progress is a great advantage to man, it brings with it a strong temptation. For when the order of values is jumbled and bad is mixed with the good, individuals and groups pay heed solely to their own interests, and not to those of others. Thus it happens that the world ceases to be a place of true brotherhood. In our own day, the magnified power of humanity threatens to destroy the race itself.

For a monumental struggle against the powers of darkness pervades the whole history of man. The battle was joined from the very origins of the world and will continue until the last day, as the Lord has attested.(8) Caught in this conflict, man is obliged to wrestle constantly if he is to cling to what is good, nor can he achieve his own integrity without great efforts and the help of God's grace.

That is why Christ's Church, trusting in the design of the Creator, acknowledges that human progress can serve man's true happiness, yet she cannot help echoing the Apostle's warning: "Be not conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2). Here by the world is meant that spirit of vanity and malice which transforms into an instrument of sin those human energies intended for the service of God and man.

Hence if anyone wants to know how this unhappy situation can be overcome, Christians will tell him that all human activity, constantly imperiled by man's pride and deranged self-love, must be purified and perfected by the power of Christ's cross and resurrection. For redeemed by Christ and made a new creature in the Holy Spirit, man is able to love the things themselves created by God, and ought to do so. He can receive them from God and respect and reverence them as flowing constantly from the hand of God. Grateful to his Benefactor for these creatures, using and enjoying them in detachment and liberty of spirit, man is led forward into a true possession of them, as having nothing, yet possessing all things.(9) "All are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3:22-23).

38. For God's Word, through Whom all things were made, was Himself made flesh and dwelt on the earth of men.(10) Thus He entered the world's history as a perfect man, taking that history up into Himself and summarizing it.(11) He Himself revealed to us that "God is love" (1 John 4:8) and at the same time taught us that the new command of love was the basic law of human perfection and hence of to worlds transformation.

To those, therefore, who believe in divine love, He gives assurance that the way of love lies open to men and that the effort to establish a universal brotherhood is not a hopeless one. He cautions them at the same time that this charity is not something to be reserved for important matters, but must be pursued chiefly in the ordinary circumstances of life. Undergoing death itself for all of us sinners,(12) He taught us by example that we too must shoulder that cross which the world and the flesh inflict upon those who search after peace and justice. Appointed Lord by His resurrection and given plenary power in heaven and on earth,(13) Christ is now at work in the hearts of men through the energy of His Holy Spirit, arousing not only a desire for the age to come, but by that very fact animating, purifying and strengthening those noble longings too by which the human family makes its life more human and strives to render the whole earth submissive to this goal.

Now, the gifts of the Spirit are diverse: while He calls some to give clear witness to the desire for a heavenly home and to keep that desire green among the human family, He summons others to dedicate themselves to the earthly service of men and to make ready the material of the celestial realm by this ministry of theirs. Yet He frees all of them so that by putting aside love of self and bringing all earthly resources into the service of human life they can devote themselves to that future when humanity itself will become an offering accepted by God.(14)

The Lord left behind a pledge of this hope and strength for life's journey in that sacrament of faith where natural elements refined by man are gloriously changed into His Body and Blood, providing a meal of brotherly solidarity and a foretaste of the heavenly banquet.

39. We do not know the time for the consummation of the earth and of humanity,(15) nor do we know how all things will be transformed. As deformed by sin, the shape of this world will pass away;(16) but we are taught that God is preparing a new dwelling place and a new earth where justice will abide,(17) and whose blessedness will answer and surpass all the longings for peace which spring up in the human heart.(18) Then, with death overcome, the sons of God will be raised up in Christ, and what was sown in weakness and corruption will be invested with incorruptibility.(19) Enduring with charity and its fruits,(20) all that creation(21) which God made on man's account will be unchained from the bondage of vanity.

Therefore, while we are warned that it profits a man nothing if he gain the whole world and lose himself,(22) the expectation of a new earth must not weaken but rather stimulate our concern for cultivating this one. For here grows the body of a new human family, a body which even now is able to give some kind of foreshadowing of the new age.

Hence, while earthly progress must be carefully distinguished from the growth of Christ's kingdom, to the extent that the former can contribute to the better ordering of human society, it is of vital concern to the Kingdom of God.(23)

For after we have obeyed the Lord, and in His Spirit nurtured on earth the values of human dignity, brotherhood and freedom, and indeed all the good fruits of our nature and enterprise, we will find them again, but freed of stain, burnished and transfigured, when Christ hands over to the Father: "a kingdom eternal and universal, a kingdom of truth and life, of holiness and grace, of justice, love and peace."(24) On this earth that Kingdom is already present in mystery. When the Lord returns it will be brought into full flower.

CHAPTER IV
THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD

40. Everything we have said about the dignity of the human person, and about the human community and the profound meaning of human activity, lays the foundation for the relationship between the Church and the world, and provides the basis for dialogue between them.(1) In this chapter, presupposing everything which has already been said by this council concerning the mystery of the Church, we must now consider this same Church inasmuch as she exists in the world, living and acting with it.

Coming forth from the eternal Father's love,(2) founded in time by Christ the Redeemer and made one in the Holy Spirit,(3) the Church has a saving and an eschatological purpose which can be fully attained only in the future world. But she is already present in this world, and is composed of men, that is, of members of the earthly city who have a call to form the family of God's children during the present history of the human race, and to keep increasing it until the Lord returns. United on behalf of heavenly values and enriched by them, this family has been "constituted and structured as a society in this world"(4) by Christ, and is equipped "by appropriate means for visible and social union."(5) Thus the Church, at once "a visible association and a spiritual community,"(6) goes forward together with humanity and experiences the same earthly lot which the world does. She serves as a leaven and as a kind of soul for human society(7) as it is to be renewed in Christ and transformed into God's family.

That the earthly and the heavenly city penetrate each other is a fact accessible to faith alone; it remains a mystery of human history, which sin will keep in great disarray until the splendor of God's sons, is fully revealed. Pursuing the saving purpose which is proper to her, the Church does not only communicate divine life to men but in some way casts the reflected light of that life over the entire earth, most of all by its healing and elevating impact on the dignity of the person, by the way in which it strengthens the seams of human society and imbues the everyday activity of men with a deeper meaning and importance. Thus through her individual matters and her whole community, the Church believes she can contribute greatly toward making the family of man and its history more human.

In addition, the Catholic Church gladly holds in high esteem the things which other Christian Churches and ecclesial communities have done or are doing cooperatively by way of achieving the same goal. At the same time, she is convinced that she can be abundantly and variously helped by the world in the matter of preparing the ground for the Gospel. This help she gains from the talents and industry of individuals and from human society as a whole. The council now sets forth certain general principles for the proper fostering of this mutual exchange and assistance in concerns which are in some way common to the world and the Church.

41. Modern man is on the road to a more thorough development of his own personality, and to a growing discovery and vindication of his own rights. Since it has been entrusted to the Church to reveal the mystery of God, Who is the ultimate goal of man, she opens up to man at the same time the meaning of his own existence, that is, the innermost truth about himself. The Church truly knows that only God, Whom she serves, meets the deepest longings of the human heart, which is never fully satisfied by what this world has to offer.

She also knows that man is constantly worked upon by God's spirit, and hence can never be altogether indifferent to the problems of religion. The experience of past ages proves this, as do numerous indications in our own times. For man will always yearn to know, at least in an obscure way, what is the meaning of his life, of his activity, of his death. The very presence of the Church recalls these problems to his mind. But only God, Who created man to His own image and ransomed him from sin, provides the most adequate answer to the questions, and this Ho does through what He has revealed in Christ His Son, Who became man. Whoever follows after Christ, the perfect man, becomes himself more of a man. For by His incarnation the Father's Word assumed, and sanctified through His cross and resurrection, the whole of man, body and soul, and through that totality the whole of nature created by God for man's use.

Thanks to this belief, the Church can anchor the dignity of human nature against all tides of opinion, for example those welch undervalue the human body or idolize it. By no human law can the personal dignity and liberty of man be so aptly safeguarded as by the Gospel of Christ which has been entrusted to the Church. For this Gospel announces and proclaims the freedom of the sons of God, and repudiates all the bondage which ultimately results from sin.(8) (cf. Rom. 8:14-17); it has a sacred reverence for the dignity of conscience and its freedom of choice, constantly advises that all human talents be employed in God's service and men's, and, finally, commends all to the charity of all (cf. Matt. 22:39).(9)

This agrees with the basic law of the Christian dispensation. For though the same God is Savior and Creator, Lord of human history as well as of salvation history, in the divine arrangement itself, the rightful autonomy of the creature, and particularly of man is not withdrawn, but is rather re-established in its own dignity and strengthened in it.

The Church, therefore, by virtue of the Gospel committed to her, proclaims the rights of man; she acknowledges and greatly esteems the dynamic movements of today by which these rights are everywhere fostered. Yet these movements must be penetrated by the spirit of the Gospel and protected against any kind of false autonomy. For we are tempted to think that our personal rights are fully ensured only when we are exempt from every requirement of divine law. But this way lies not the maintenance of the dignity of the human person, but its annihilation.

42. The union of the human family is greatly fortified and fulfilled by the unity, founded on Christ,(10) of the family of God's sons.

Christ, to be sure, gave His Church no proper mission in the political, economic or social order. The purpose which He set before her is a religious one.(11) But out of this religious mission itself come a function, a light and an energy which can serve to structure and consolidate the human community according to the divine law. As a matter of fact, when circumstances of time and place produce the need, she can and indeed should initiate activities on behalf of all men, especially those designed for the needy, such as the works of mercy and similar undertakings.

The Church recognizes that worthy elements are found in today's social movements, especially an evolution toward unity, a process of wholesome socialization and of association in civic and economic realms. The promotion of unity belongs to the innermost nature of the Church, for she is, "thanks to her relationship with Christ, a sacramental sign and an instrument of intimate union with God, and of the unity of the whole human race."(12) Thus she shows the world that an authentic union, social and external, results from a union of minds and hearts, namely from that faith and charity by which her own unity is unbreakably rooted in the Holy Spirit. For the force which the Church can inject into the modern society of man consists in that faith and charity put into vital practice, not in any external dominion exercised by merely human means.

Moreover, since in virtue of her mission and nature she is bound to no particular form of human culture, nor to any political, economic or social system, the Church by her very universality can be a very close bond between diverse human communities and nations, provided these trust her and truly acknowledge her right to true freedom in fulfilling her mission. For this reason, the Church admonishes her own sons, but also humanity as a whole, to overcome all strife between nations and race in this family spirit of God's children, an in the same way, to give internal strength to human associations which are just.

With great respect, therefore, this council regards all the true, good and just elements inherent in the very wide variety of institutions which the human race has established for itself and constantly continues to establish. The council affirms, moreover, that the Church is willing to assist and promote all these institutions to the extent that such a service depends on her and can be associated with her mission. She has no fiercer desire than that in pursuit of the welfare of all she may be able to develop herself freely under any kind of government which grants recognition to the basic rights of person and family, to the demands of the common good and to the free exercise of her own mission.

43. This council exhorts Christians, as citizens of two cities, to strive to discharge their earthly duties conscientiously and in response he Gospel spirit. They are mistaken who, knowing that we have here no abiding city but seek one which is to come,(13) think that they may therefore shirk their earthly responsibilities. For they are forgetting that by the faith itself they are more obliged than ever to measure up to these duties, each according to his proper vocation.(14) Nor, on the contrary, are they any less wide of the mark who think that religion consists in acts of worship alone and in the discharge of certain moral obligations, and who imagine they can plunge themselves into earthly affairs in such a way as to imply that these are altogether divorced from the religious life. This split between the faith which many profess and their daily lives deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age. Long since, the Prophets of the Old Testament fought vehemently against this scandal(15) and even more so did Jesus Christ Himself in the New Testament threaten it with grave punishments.(16) Therefore, let there be no false opposition between professional and social activities on the one part, and religious life on the other. The Christian who neglects his temporal duties, neglects his duties toward his neighbor and even God, and jeopardizes his eternal salvation. Christians should rather rejoice that, following the example of Christ Who worked as an artisan, they are free to give proper exercise to all their earthly activities and to their humane, domestic, professional, social and technical enterprises by gathering them into one vital synthesis with religious values, under whose supreme direction all things are harmonized unto God's glory.

Secular duties and activities belong properly although not exclusively to laymen. Therefore acting as citizens in the world, whether individually or socially, they will keep the laws proper to each discipline, and labor to equip themselves with a genuine expertise in their various fields. They will gladly work with men seeking the same goals. Acknowledging the demands of faith and endowed with its force, they will unhesitatingly devise new enterprises, where they are appropriate, and put them into action. Laymen should also know that it is generally the function of their well-formed Christian conscience to see that the divine law is inscribed in the life of the earthly city; from priests they may look for spiritual light and nourishment. Let the layman not imagine that his pastors are always such experts, that to every problem which arises, however complicated, they can readily give him a concrete solution, or even that such is their mission. Rather, enlightened by Christian wisdom and giving close attention to the teaching authority of the Church,(17) let the layman take on his own distinctive role.

Often enough the Christian view of things will itself suggest some specific solution in certain circumstances. Yet it happens rather frequently, and legitimately so, that with equal sincerity some of the faithful will disagree with others on a given matter. Even against the intentions of their proponents, however, solutions proposed on one side or another may be easily confused by many people with the Gospel message. Hence it is necessary for people to remember that no one is allowed in the aforementioned situations to appropriate the Church's authority for his opinion. They should always try to enlighten one another through honest discussion, preserving mutual charity and caring above all for the common good.

Since they have an active role to play in the whole life of the Church, laymen are not only bound to penetrate the world with a Christian spirit, but are also called to be witnesses to Christ in all things in the midst of human society.

Bishops, to whom is assigned the task of ruling the Church of God, should, together with their priests, so preach the news of Christ that all the earthly activities of the faithful will be bathed in the light of the Gospel. All pastors should remember too that by their daily conduct and concern(18) they are revealing the face of the Church to the world, and men will judge the power and truth of the Christian message thereby. By their lives and speech, in union with Religious and their faithful, may they demonstrate that even now the Church by her presence alone and by all the gifts which she contains, is an unspent fountain of those virtues which the modern world needs the most.

By unremitting study they should fit themselves to do their part in establishing dialogue with the world and with men of all shades of opinion. Above all let them take to heart the words which this council has spoken: "Since humanity today increasingly moves toward civil, economic and social unity, it is more than ever necessary that priests, with joint concern and energy, and under the guidance of the bishops and the supreme pontiff, erase every cause of division, so that the whole human race may be led to the unity of God's family."(19)

Although by the power of the Holy Spirit the Church will remain the faithful spouse of her Lord and will never cease to be the sign of salvation on earth, still she is very well aware that among her members,(20) both clerical and lay, some have been unfaithful to the Spirit of God during the course of many centuries; in the present age, too, it does not escape the Church how great a distance lies between the message she offers and the human failings of those to whom the Gospel is entrusted. Whatever be the judgement of history on these defects, we ought to be conscious of them, and struggle against them energetically, lest they inflict harm on spread of the Gospel. The Church also realizes that in working out her relationship with the world she always has great need of the ripening which comes with the experience of the centuries. Led by the Holy Spirit, Mother Church unceasingly exhorts her sons "to purify and renew themselves so that the sign of Christ can shine more brightly on the face

44. Just as it is in the world's interest to acknowledge the Church as an historical reality, and to recognize her good influence, so the Church herself knows how richly she has profited by the history and development of humanity.

The experience of past ages, the progress of the sciences, and the treasures hidden in the various forms of human culture, by all of which the nature of man himself is more clearly revealed and new roads to truth are opened, these profit the Church, too. For, from the beginning of her history she has learned to express the message of Christ with the help of the ideas and terminology of various philosophers, and has tried to clarify it with their wisdom, too. Her purpose has been to adapt the Gospel to the grasp of all as well as to the needs of the learned, insofar as such was appropriate. Indeed this accommodated preaching of the revealed word ought to remain the law of all evangelization. For thus the ability to express Christ's message in its own way is developed in each nation, and at the same time there is fostered a living exchange between the Church and' the diverse cultures of people.(22) To promote such exchange, especially in our days, the Church requires the special help of those who live in the world, are versed in different institutions and specialties, and grasp their innermost significance in the eyes of both believers and unbelievers. With the help of the Holy Spirit, it is the task of the entire People of God, especially pastors and theologians, to hear, distinguish and interpret the many voices of our age, and to judge them in the light of the divine word, so that revealed truth can always be more deeply penetrated, better understood and set forth to greater advantage.

Since the Church has a visible and social structure as a sign of her unity in Christ, she can and ought to be enriched by the development of human social life, not that there is any lack in the constitution given her by Christ, but that she can understand it more penetratingly, express it better, and adjust it more successfully to our times. Moreover, she gratefully understands that in her community life no less than in her individual sons, she receives a variety of helps from men of every rank and condition, for whoever promotes the human community at the family level, culturally, in its economic, social and political dimensions, both nationally and internationally, such a one, according to God's design, is contributing greatly to the Church as well, to the extent that she depends on things outside herself. Indeed, the Church admits that she has greatly profited and still profits from the antagonism of those who oppose or who persecute her.(23)

45. While helping the world and receiving many benefits from it, the Church has a single intention: that God's kingdom may come, and that the salvation of the whole human race may come to pass. For every benefit which the People of God during its earthly pilgrimage can offer to the human family stems from the fact that the Church is "the universal sacrament of salvation",(24) simultaneously manifesting and a rising the mystery of God's love.

For God's Word, by whom all things were made, was Himself made flesh so that as perfect man He might save all men and sum up all things in Himself. The Lord is the goal of human history, the focal point of the longings of history and of civilization, the center of the human race, the joy of every heart and the answer to all its yearnings.(25) He it is Whom the Father raised from the dead, lifted on high and stationed at His right hand, making Him judge of the living and the dead. Enlivened and united in His Spirit, we journey toward the consummation of human history, one which fully accords with the counsel of God's love: "To reestablish all things in Christ, both those in the heavens and those on the earth" (Eph. 11:10).

The Lord Himself speaks: "Behold I come quickly And my reward is with me, to render to each one according to his works. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, tho beginning and the end (Act;. 22;12-13).

PART II

SOME PROBLEMS OF SPECIAL URGENCY

46. This council has set forth the dignity of the human person, and the work which men have been destined to undertake throughout the world both as individuals and as members of society. There are a number of particularly urgent needs characterizing the present age, needs which go to the roots of the human race. To a consideration of these in the light of the Gospel and of human experience, the council would now direct the attention of all.

Of the many subjects arousing universal concern today, it may be helpful to concentrate on these: marriage and the family, human progress, life in its economic, social and political dimensions, the bonds between the family of nations, and peace. On each of these may there shine the radiant ideals proclaimed by Christ. By these ideals may Christians be led, and all mankind enlightened, as they search for answers to questions of such complexity.

CHAPTER I

FOSTERING THE NOBILITY OF MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

47. The well-being of the individual person and of human and Christian society is intimately linked with the healthy condition of that community produced by marriage and family. Hence Christians and all men who hold this community in high esteem sincerely rejoice in the various ways by which men today find help in fostering this community of love and perfecting its life, and by which parents are assisted in their lofty calling. Those who rejoice in such aids look for additional benefits from them and labor to bring them about.

Yet the excellence of this institution is not everywhere reflected with equal brilliance, since polygamy, the plague of divorce, so-called free love and other disfigurements have an obscuring effect. In addition, married love is too often profaned by excessive self-love, the worship of pleasure and illicit practices against human generation. Moreover, serious disturbances are caused in families by modern economic conditions, by influences at once social and psychological, and by the demands of civil society. Finally, in certain parts of the world problems resulting from population growth are generating concern.

All these situations have produced anxiety of consciences. Yet, the power and strength of the institution of marriage and family can also be seen in the fact that time and again, despite the difficulties produced, the profound changes in modern society reveal the true character of this institution in one way or another.

Therefore, by presenting certain key points of Church doctrine in a clearer light, this sacred synod wishes to offer guidance and support to those Christians and other men who are trying to preserve the holiness and to foster the natural dignity of the married state and its superlative value.

48. The intimate partnership of married life and love has been established by the Creator and qualified by His laws, and is rooted in the jugal covenant of irrevocable personal consent. Hence by that human act whereby spouses mutually bestow and accept each other a relationship arises which by divine will and in the eyes of society too is a lasting one. For the good of the spouses and their off-springs as well as of society, the existence of the sacred bond no longer depends on human decisions alone. For, God Himself is the author of matrimony, endowed as it is with various benefits and purposes.(1) All of these have a very decisive bearing on the continuation of the human race, on the personal development and eternal destiny of the individual members of a family, and on the dignity, stability, peace and prosperity of the family itself and of human society as a whole. By their very nature, the institution of matrimony itself and conjugal love are ordained for the procreation and education of children, and find in them their ultimate crown. Thus a man and a woman, who by their compact of conjugal love "are no longer two, but one flesh" (Matt. 19:ff), render mutual help and service to each other through an intimate union of their persons and of their actions. Through this union they experience the meaning of their oneness and attain to it with growing perfection day by day. As a mutual gift of two persons, this intimate union and the good of the children impose total fidelity on the spouses and argue for an unbreakable oneness between them.(2)

Christ the Lord abundantly blessed this many-faceted love, welling up as it does from the fountain of divine love and structured as it is on the model of His union with His Church. For as God of old made Himself present(3) to His people through a covenant of love and fidelity, so now the Savior of men and the Spouse(4) of the Church comes into the lives of married Christians through the sacrament of matrimony. He abides with them thereafter so that just as He loved the Church and handed Himself over on her behalf,(6) the spouses may love each other with perpetual fidelity through mutual self-bestowal.

Authentic married love is caught up into divine love and is governed and enriched by Christ's redeeming power and the saving activity of the Church, so that this love may lead the spouses to God with powerful effect and may aid and strengthen them in sublime office of being a father or a mother.(6) For this reason Christian spouses have a special sacrament by which they are fortified and receive a kind of consecration in the duties and dignity of their state.(7) By virtue of this sacrament, as spouses fulfil their conjugal and family obligation, they are penetrated with the spirit of Christ, which suffuses their whole lives with faith, hope and charity. Thus they increasingly advance the perfection of their own personalities, as well as their mutual sanctification, and hence contribute jointly to the glory of God.

As a result, with their parents leading the way by example and family Prayer, children and indeed everyone gathered around the family hearth will find a readier path to human maturity, salvation and holiness. Graced with the dignity and office of fatherhood and motherhood, parents will energetically acquit themselves of a duty which devolves primarily on them, namely education and especially religious education.

As living members of the family, children contribute in their own way to making their parents holy. For they will respond to the kindness of their parents with sentiments of gratitude, with love and trust. They will stand by them as children should when hardships overtake their parents and old age brings its loneliness. Widowhood, accepted bravely as a continuation of the marriage vocation, should be esteemed by all.(8) Families too will share their spiritual riches generously with other families. Thus the Christian family, which springs from marriage as a reflection of the loving covenant uniting Christ with the Church,(9) and as a participation in that covenant, will manifest to all men Christ's living presence in the world, and the genuine nature of the Church. This the family will do by the mutual love of the spouses, by their generous fruitfulness, their solidarity and faithfulness, and by the loving way in which all members of the family assist one another.

49. The biblical Word of God several times urges the betrothed and the married to nourish and develop their wedlock by pure conjugal love and undivided affection.(10) Many men of our own age also highly regard true love between husband and wife as it manifests itself in a variety of ways depending on the worthy customs of various peoples and times.

This love is an eminently human one since it is directed from one person to another through an affection of the will; it involves the good of the whole person, and therefore can enrich the expressions of body and mind with a unique dignity, ennobling these expressions as special ingredients and signs of the friendship distinctive of marriage. This love God has judged worthy of special gifts, healing, perfecting and exalting gifts of grace and of charity. Such love, merging the human with the divine, leads the spouses to a free and mutual gift of themselves, a gift providing itself by gentle affection and by deed, such love pervades the whole of their lives:(11) indeed by its busy generosity it grows better and grows greater. Therefore it far excels mere erotic inclination, which, selfishly pursued, soon enough fades wretchedly away.

This love is uniquely expressed and perfected through the appropriate enterprise of matrimony. The actions within marriage by which the couple are united intimately and chastely are noble and worthy ones. Expressed in a manner which is truly human, these actions promote that mutual self-giving by which spouses enrich each other with a joyful and a ready will. Sealed by mutual faithfulness and be allowed above all by Christs sacrament, this love remains steadfastly true in body and in mind, in bright days or dark. It will never be profaned by adultery or divorce. Firmly established by the Lord, the unity of marriage will radiate from the equal personal dignity of wife and husband, a dignity acknowledged by mutual and total love. The constant fulfillment of the duties of this Christian vocation demands notable virtue. For this reason, strengthened by grace for holiness of life, the couple will painstakingly cultivate and pray for steadiness of love, large heartedness and the spirit of sacrifice.

Authentic conjugal love will be more highly prized, and wholesome public opinion created about it if Christian couples give outstanding witness to faithfulness and harmony in their love, and to their concern for educating their children also, if they do their part in bringing about the needed cultural, psychological and social renewal on behalf of marriage and the family. Especially in the heart of their own families, young people should be aptly and seasonably instructed in the dignity, duty and work of married love. Trained thus in the cultivation of chastity, they will be able at a suitable age to enter a marriage of their own after an honorable courtship.

50. Marriage and conjugal love are by their nature ordained toward the begetting and educating of children. Children are really the supreme gift of marriage and contribute very substantially to the welfare of their parents. The God Himself Who said, "it is not good for man to be alone" (Gen. 2:18) and "Who made man from the beginning male and female" (Matt. 19:4), wishing to share with man a certain special participation in His own creative work, blessed male and female, saying: "Increase and multiply" (Gen. 1:28). Hence, while not making the other purposes of matrimony of less account, the true practice of conjugal love, and the whole meaning of the family life which results from it, have this aim: that the couple be ready with stout hearts to cooperate with the love of the Creator and the Savior. Who through them will enlarge and enrich His own family day by day.

Parents should regard as their proper mission the task of transmitting human life and educating those to whom it has been transmitted. They should realize that they are thereby cooperators with the love of God the Creator, and are, so to speak, the interpreters of that love. Thus they will fulfil their task with human and Christian responsibility, and, with docile reverence toward God, will make decisions by common counsel and effort. Let them thoughtfully take into account both their own welfare and that of their children, those already born and those which the future may bring. For this accounting they need to reckon with both the material and the spiritual conditions of the times as well as of their state in life. Finally, they should consult the interests of the family group, of temporal society, and of the Church herself. The parents themselves and no one else should ultimately make this judgment in the sight of God. But in their manner of acting, spouses should be aware that they cannot proceed arbitrarily, but must always be governed according to a conscience dutifully conformed to the divine law itself, and should be submissive toward the Church's teaching office, which authentically interprets that law in the light of the Gospel. That divine law reveals and protects the integral meaning of conjugal love, and impels it toward a truly human fulfillment. Thus, trusting in divine Providence and refining the spirit of sacrifice,(12) married Christians glorify the Creator and strive toward fulfillment in Christ when with a generous human and Christian sense of responsibility they acquit themselves of the duty to procreate. Among the couples who fulfil their God-given task in this way, those merit special mention who with a gallant heart and with wise and common deliberation, undertake to bring up suitably even a relatively large family.(13)

Marriage to be sure is not instituted solely for procreation; rather, its very nature as an unbreakable compact between persons, and the welfare of the children, both demand that the mutual love of the spouses be embodied in a rightly ordered manner, that it grow and ripen. Therefore, marriage persists as a whole manner and communion of life, and maintains its value and indissolubility, even when despite the often intense desire of the couple, offspring are lacking.

51. This council realizes that certain modern conditions often keep couples from arranging their married lives harmoniously, and that they find themselves in circumstances where at least temporarily the size of their families should not be increased. As a result, the faithful exercise of love and the full intimacy of their lives is hard to maintain. But where the intimacy of married life is broken off, its faithfulness can sometimes be imperiled and its quality of fruitfulness ruined, for then the upbringing of the children and the courage to accept new ones are both endangered.

To these problems there are those who presume to offer dishonorable solutions indeed; they do not recoil even from the taking of life. But the Church issues the reminder that a true contradiction cannot exist between the divine laws pertaining to the transmission of life and those pertaining to authentic conjugal love.

For God, the Lord of life, has conferred on men the surpassing ministry of safeguarding life in a manner which is worthy of man. Therefore from the moment of its conception life must be guarded with the greatest care while abortion and infanticide are unspeakable crimes. The sexual characteristics of man and the human faculty of reproduction wonderfully exceed the dispositions of lower forms of life. Hence the acts themselves which are proper to conjugal love and which are exercised in accord with genuine human dignity must be honored with great reverence. Hence when there is question of harmonizing conjugal love with the responsible transmission of life, the moral aspects of any procedure does not depend solely on sincere intentions or on an evaluation of motives, but must be determined by objective standards. These, based on the nature of the human person and his acts, preserve the full sense of mutual self-giving and human procreation in the context of true love. Such a goal cannot be achieved unless the virtue of conjugal chastity is sincerely practiced. Relying on these principles, sons of the Church may not undertake methods of birth control which are found blameworthy by the teaching authority of the Church in its unfolding of the divine law.(14)

All should be persuaded that human life and the task of transmitting it are not realities bound up with this world alone. Hence they cannot be measured or perceived only in terms of it, but always have a bearing on the eternal destiny of men.

52. The family is a kind of school of deeper humanity. But if it is to achieve the full flowering of its life and mission, it needs the kindly communion of minds and the joint deliberation of spouses, as well as the painstaking cooperation of parents in the education of their children. The active presence of the father is highly beneficial to their formation. The children, especially the younger among them, need the care of their mother at home. This domestic role of hers must be safely preserved, though the legitimate social progress of women should not be underrated on that account.

Children should be so educated that as adults they can follow their vocation, including a religious one, with a mature sense of responsibility and can choose their state of life; if they marry, they can thereby establish their family in favorable moral, social and economic conditions. Parents or guardians should by prudent advice provide guidance to their young with respect to founding a family, and the young ought to listen gladly. At the same time no pressure, direct or indirect, should be put on the young to make them enter marriage or choose a specific partner.

Thus the family, in which the various generations come together and help one another grow wiser and harmonize personal rights with the other requirements of social life, is the foundation of society. All those, therefore, who exercise influence over communities and social groups should work efficiently for the welfare of marriage and the family. Public authority should regard it as a sacred duty to recognize, protect and promote their authentic nature, to shield public morality and to favor the prosperity of home life. The right of parents to beget and educate their children in the bosom of the family must be safeguarded. Children too who unhappily lack the blessing of a family should be protected by prudent legislation and various undertakings and assisted by the help they need.

Christians, redeeming the present time(13) and distinguishing eternal realities from their changing expressions, should actively promote the values of marriage and the family, both by the examples of their own lives and by cooperation with other men of good will. Thus when difficulties arise, Christians will provide, on behalf of family life, those necessities and helps which are suitably modern. To this end, the Christian instincts of the faithful, the upright moral consciences of men, and the wisdom and experience of persons versed in the sacred sciences will have much to contribute.

Those too who are skilled in other sciences, notably the medical, biological, social and psychological, can considerably advance the welfare of marriage and the family along with peace of conscience if by pooling their efforts they labor to explain more thoroughly the various conditions favoring a proper regulation of births.

It devolves on priests duly trained about family matters to nurture the vocation of spouses by a variety of pastoral means, by preaching God's word, by liturgical worship, and by other spiritual aids to conjugal and family life; to sustain them sympathetically and patiently in difficulties, and to make them courageous through love, so that families which are truly illustrious can be formed.

Various organizations, especially family associations, should try by their programs of instruction and action to strengthen young people and spouses themselves, particularly those recently wed, and to train them for family, social and apostolic life.

Finally, let the spouses themselves, made to the image of the living God and enjoying the authentic dignity of persons, be joined to one another(16) in equal affection, harmony of mind and the work of mutual sanctification. Thus, following Christ who is the principle of life,(17) by the sacrifices and joys of their vocation and through their faithful love, married people can become witnesses of the mystery of love which the Lord revealed to the world by His dying and His rising up to life again.(18)

CHAPTER II

THE PROPER DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURE

53. Man comes to a true and full humanity only through culture, that is through the cultivation of the goods and values of nature. Wherever human life is involved, therefore, nature and culture are quite intimately connected one with the other.

The word "culture" in its general sense indicates everything whereby man develops and perfects his many bodily and spiritual qualities; he strives by his knowledge and his labor, to bring the world itself under his control. He renders social life more human both in the family and the civic community, through improvement of customs and institutions. Throughout the course of time he expresses, communicates and conserves in his works, great spiritual experiences and desires, that they might be of advantage to the progress of many, even of the whole human family.

Thence it follows that human culture has necessarily a historical and social aspect and the word "culture" also often assumes a sociological and ethnological sense. According to this sense we speak of a plurality of cultures. Different styles of life and multiple scales of values arise from the diverse manner of using things, of laboring, of expressing oneself, of practicing religion, of forming customs, of establishing laws and juridic institutions of cultivating the sciences, the arts and beauty. Thus the customs handed down to it form the patrimony proper to each human community. It is also in this way that there is formed the definite, historical milieu which enfolds the man oœ every nation and age and from which he draws the values which permit him to promote civilization.

SECTION 1
The Circumstances of Culture in the World Today

54. The circumstances of the life of modern man have been so profoundly changed in their social and cultural aspects, that we can speak of a new age of human history.(1) New ways are open, therefore, for the perfection and the further extension of culture. These ways have been prepared by the enormous growth of natural, human and social sciences, by technical progress, and advances in developing and organizing means whereby men can communicate with one another. Hence the culture of today possesses particular characteristics: sciences which are called exact greatly develop critical judgment; the more recent psychological studies more profoundly explain human activity; historical studies make it much easier to see things in their mutable and evolutionary aspects, customs and usages are becoming more and more uniform; industrialization, urbanization, and other causes which promote community living create a mass-culture from which are born new ways of thinking, acting and making use of leisure. The increase of commerce between the various nations and human groups opens more widely to all the treasures of different civilizations and thus little by little, there develops a more universal form of human culture, which better promotes and expresses the unity of the human race to the degree that it preserves the particular aspects of the different civilizations.

55. From day to day, in every group or nation, there is an increase in the number of men and women who are conscious that they themselves are the authors and the artisans of the culture of their community. Throughout the whole world there is a mounting increase in the sense of autonomy as well as of responsibility. This is of paramount importance for the spiritual and moral maturity of the human race. This becomes more clear if we consider the unification of the world and the duty which is imposed upon us, that we build a better world based upon truth and justice. Thus we are witnesses of the birth of a new humanism, one in which man is defined first of all by this responsibility to his brothers and to history.

56. In these conditions, it is no cause of wonder that man, who senses his responsibility for the progress of culture, nourishes a high hope but also looks with anxiety upon many contradictory things which he must resolve:

What is to be done to prevent the increased exchanges between cultures, which should lead to a true and fruitful dialogue between groups and nations, from disturbing the life of communities, from destroying the wisdom received from ancestors, or from placing in danger the character proper to each people?

How is the dynamism and expansion of a new culture to be fostered without losing a living fidelity to the heritage of tradition. This question is of particular urgency when a culture which arises from the enormous progress of science and technology must be harmonized with a culture nourished by classical studies according to various traditions.

How can we quickly and progressively harmonize the proliferation of particular branches of study with the necessity of forming a synthesis of them, and of preserving among men the faculties of contemplation and observation which lead to wisdom?

What can be done to make all men partakers of cultural values in the world, when the human culture of those who are more competent is constantly becoming more refined and more complex?

Finally how is the autonomy which culture claims for itself to be recognized as legitimate without generating a notion of humanism which is merely terrestrial, and even contrary to religion itself.

In the midst of these conflicting requirements, human culture must evolve today in such a way that it can both develop the whole human person and aid man in those duties to whose fulfillment all are called, especially Christians fraternally united in one human family.

SECTION 2
Some Principles for the Proper Development of Culture

57. Christians, on pilgrimage toward the heavenly city, should seek and think of these things which are above(2) This duty in no way decreases, rather it increases, the importance of their obligation to work with all men in the building of a more human world. Indeed, the mystery of the Christian faith furnishes them with an excellent stimulant and aid to fulfill this duty more courageously and especially to uncover the full meaning of this activity, one which gives to human culture its eminent place in the integral vocation of man.

When man develops the earth by the work of his hands or with the aid of technology, in order that it might bear fruit and become a dwelling worthy of the whole human family and when he consciously takes part in the life of social groups, he carries out the design of God manifested at the beginning of time, that he should subdue the earth, perfect creation and develop himself. At the same time he obeys the commandment of Christ that he place himself at the service of his brethren.

Furthermore, when man gives himself to the various disciplines of philosophy, history and of mathematical and natural science, and when he cultivates the arts, he can do very much to elevate the human family to a more sublime understanding of truth, goodness, and beauty, and to the formation of considered opinions which have universal value. Thus mankind may be more clearly enlightened by that marvelous Wisdom which was with God from all eternity, composing all things with him, rejoicing in the earth, delighting in the sons of men.(4)

In this way, the human spirit, being less subjected to material things, can be more easily drawn to the worship and contemplation of the Creator. Moreover, by the impulse of grace, he is disposed to acknowledge the Word of God, Who before He became flesh in order to save all and to sum up all in Himself was already "in the world" as "the true light which enlightens every man" (John 1:9-10).(5)

Indeed today's progress in science and technology can foster a certain exclusive emphasis on observable data, and an agnosticism about everything else. For the methods of investigation which these sciences use can be wrongly considered as the supreme rule of seeking the whole truth. By virtue of their methods these sciences cannot penetrate to the intimate notion of things. Indeed the danger is present that man, confiding too much in the discoveries of today, may think that he is sufficient unto himself and no longer seek the higher things.

Those unfortunate results, however, do not necessarily follow from the culture of today, nor should they lead us into the temptation of not acknowledging its positive values. Among these values are included: scientific study and fidelity toward truth in scientific inquiries, the necessity of working together with others in technical groups, a sense of international solidarity, a clearer awareness of the responsibility of experts to aid and even to protect men, the desire to make the conditions of life more favorable for all, especially for those who are poor in culture or who are deprived of the opportunity to exercise responsibility. All of these provide some preparation for the acceptance of the message of the Gospel a preparation which can be animated by divine charity through Him Who has come to save the world.

58. There are many ties between the message of salvation and human culture. For God, revealing Himself to His people to the extent of a full manifestation of Himself in His Incarnate Son, has spoken according to the culture proper to each epoch.

Likewise the Church, living in various circumstances in the course of time, has used the discoveries of different cultures so that in her preaching she might spread and explain the message of Christ to all nations, that she might examine it and more deeply understand it, that she might give it better expression in liturgical celebration and in the varied life of the community of the faithful.

But at the same time, the Church, sent to all peoples of every time and place, is not bound exclusively and indissolubly to any race or nation, any particular way of life or any customary way of life recent or ancient. Faithful to her own tradition and at the same time conscious of her universal mission, she can enter into communion with the various civilizations, to their enrichment and the enrichment of the Church herself.

The Gospel of Christ constantly renews the life and culture of fallen man, it combats and removes the errors and evils resulting from the permanent allurement of sin. It never eases to purify and elevate the morality of peoples. By riches coming from above, it makes fruitful, as it were from within, the spiritual qualities and traditions of every people md of every age. It strengthens, perfects and restores(6) them in Christ. Thus the Church, in the very fulfillment of her own function,(7) stimulates and advances human and civic culture; by her action, also by her liturgy, she leads them toward interior liberty.

59. For the above reasons, the Church recalls to the mind of all that culture is to be subordinated to the integral perfection of the human person, to the good of the community and of the whole society. Therefore it is necessary to develop the human faculties in such a way that there results a growth of the faculty of admiration, of intuition, of contemplation, of making personal judgment, of developing a religious, moral and social sense.

Culture, because it flows immediately from the spiritual and social character of man, has constant need of a just liberty in order to develop; it needs also the legitimate possibility of exercising its autonomy according to its own principles. It therefore rightly demands respect and enjoys a certain inviolability within the limits of the common good, as long, of course, as it preserves the rights of the individual and the community, whether particular or universal.

This Sacred Synod, therefore, recalling the teaching of the first Vatican Council, declares that there are "two orders of knowledge" which are distinct, namely faith and reason; and that the Church does not forbid that "the human arts and disciplines use their own principles and their proper method, each in its own domain"; therefore "acknowledging this just liberty," this Sacred Synod affirms the legitimate autonomy of human culture and especially of the sciences.(8)

All this supposes that, within the limits of morality and the common utility, man can freely search for the truth, express his opinion and publish it; that he can practice any art he chooses: that finally, he can avail himself of true information concerning events of a public nature.(9)

As for public authority, it is not its function to determine the character of the civilization, but rather to establish the conditions and to use the means which are capable of fostering the life of culture among an even within the minorities of a nation.(10) It is necessary to do everything possible to prevent culture from being turned away from its proper end and made to serve as an instrument of political or economic power.

SECTION 3
Some More Urgent Duties of Christians in Regard to Culture

60. It is now possible to free most of humanity from the misery of ignorance. Therefore the duty most consonant with our times, especially for Christians, is that of working diligently for fundamental decisions to be taken in economic and political affairs, both on the national and international level which will everywhere recognize and satisfy the right of all to a human and social culture in conformity with the dignity of the human person without any discrimination of race, sex, nation, religion or social condition. Therefore it is necessary to provide all with a sufficient quantity of cultural benefits, especially of those which constitute the so-called fundamental culture lest very many be prevented from cooperating in the promotion of the common good in a truly human manner because of illiteracy and a lack of responsible activity.

We must strive to provide for those men who are gifted the possibility of pursuing higher studies; and in such a way that, as far as possible, they may occupy in society those duties, offices and services which are in harmony with their natural aptitude and the competence they have acquired.(11) Thus each man and the social groups of every people will be able to attain the full development of their culture in conformity with their qualities and traditions.

Everything must be done to make everyone conscious of the right to culture and the duty he has of developing him self culturally and of helping others. Sometimes there exist conditions of life and of work which impede the cultural striving of men and destroy in them the eagerness for culture. This is especially true of farmers and workers. It is necessary to provide for them those working conditions which will not impede their human culture but rather favor it. Women now work in almost all spheres. It is fitting that they are able to assume their proper role in accordance with their own nature. It will belong to all to acknowledge and favor the proper and necessary participation of women in the cultural life.

61. Today it is more difficult to form a synthesis of the various disciplines of knowledge and the arts than it was formerly. For while the mass and the diversity of cultural factors are increasing, there is a decrease in each man's faculty of perceiving and unifying these things, so that the image of "universal man" is being lost sight of more and more. Nevertheless it remains each man's duty to retain an understanding of the whole human person in which the values of intellect, will, conscience and fraternity are preeminent. These values are all rooted in God the Creator and have been wonderfully restored and elevated in Christ.

The family is, as it were, the primary mother and nurse of this education. There, the children, in an atmosphere of love, more easily learn the correct order of things, while proper forms of human culture impress themselves in an almost unconscious manner upon the mind of the developing adolescent.

Opportunities for the same education are to be found also in the societies of today, due especially to the increased circulation of books and to the new means of cultural and social communication which can foster a universal culture. With the more or less generalized reduction of working hours, the leisure time of most men has increased. May this leisure be used properly to relax, to fortify the health of soul and body through spontaneous study and activity, through tourism which refines man's character and enriches him with understanding of others, through sports activity which helps to preserve equilibrium of spirit even in the community, and to establish fraternal relations among men of all conditions, nations and races. Let Christians cooperate so that the cultural manifestations and collective activity characteristic of our time may be imbued with a human and a Christian spirit.

All these leisure activities however are not able to bring man to a full cultural development unless there is at the same time a profound inquiry into the meaning of culture and science for the human person.

62. Although the Church has contributed much to the development of culture, experience shows that, for circumstantial reasons, it is sometimes difficult to harmonize culture with Christian teaching. These difficulties do not necessarily harm the life of faith, rather they can stimulate the mind to a deeper and more accurate understanding of the faith. The recent studies and findings of science, history and philosophy raise new questions which effect life and which demand new theological investigations. Furthermore, theologians, within the requirements and methods proper to theology, are invited to seek continually for more suitable ways of communicating doctrine to the men of their times; for the deposit of Faith or the truths are one thing and the manner in which they are enunciated, in the same meaning and understanding, is another.(12) In pastoral care, sufficient use must be made not only of theological principles, but also of the findings of the secular sciences, especially of psychology and sociology, so that the faithful may be brought to a more adequate and mature life of faith.

Literature and the arts are also, in their own way, of great importance to the life of the Church. They strive to make known the proper nature of man, his problems and his experiences in trying to know and perfect both himself and the world. They have much to do with revealing mans place in history and in the world; with illustrating the miseries and joys, the needs and strengths of man and with foreshadowing 1 better life for him. The they are able to elevate human life, expressed in multifold forms according to various times and regions.

Efforts must be made so that those who foster these arts feel that the Church recognizes their activity and so that, enjoying orderly liberty, they may initiate more friendly relations with the Christian community. The Church acknowledges also new forms of art which are adapted to our age and are in keeping with the characteristics of various nations and regions. They may be brought into the sanctuary since they raise the mind to God, once the manner of expression is adapted and they are conformed to liturgical requirements (13)

Thus the knowledge of God is better manifested and the preaching of the Gospel becomes clearer to human intelligence and shows itself to be relevant to man's actual conditions of life.

May the faithful, therefore, live in very close union with the other men of their time and may they strive to understand perfectly their way of thinking and judging, as expressed in their culture. Let them blend new sciences and theories and the understanding of the most recent discoveries with Christian morality and the teaching of Christian doctrine, so that their religious culture and morality may keep pace with scientific knowledge and with the constantly progressing technology. Thus they will be able to interpret and evaluate all things in a truly Christian spirit.

Let those who teach theology in seminaries and universities strive to collaborate with men versed in the other sciences through a sharing of their resources and points of view. Theological inquiry should pursue a profound understanding of revealed truth; at the same time it should not neglect close contact with its own time that it may be able to help these men skilled in various disciplines to attain to a better understanding of the faith. This common effort will greatly aid the formation of priests, who will be able to present to our contemporaries the doctrine of the Church concerning God, man and the world, in a manner more adapted to them so that they may receive it more willingly.(14) Furthermore, it is to be hoped that many of the laity will receive a sufficient formation in the sacred sciences and that some will dedicate themselves professionally to these studies, developing and deepening them by their own labors. In order that they may fulfill their function, let it be recognized that all the faithful, whether clerics or laity, possess a lawful freedom of inquiry, freedom of thought and of expressing their mind with humility and fortitude in those matters on which they enjoy competence. (16)

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE

63. In the economic and social realms, too, the dignity and complete vocation of the human person and the welfare of society as a whole are to be respected and promoted. For man is the source, the center, and the purpose of all economic and social life.

Like other areas of social life, the economy of today is marked by man's increasing domination over nature, by closer and more intense relationships between citizens, groups, and countries and their mutual dependence, and by the increased intervention of the state. At the same time progress in the methods of production and in the exchange of goods and services has made the economy an instrument capable of better meeting the intensified needs of the human family.

Reasons for anxiety, however, are not lacking. Many people, especially in economically advanced areas, seem, as it were, to be ruled by economics, so that almost their entire personal and social life is permeated with a certain economic way of thinking. Such is true both of nations that favor a collective economy and of others. At the very time when the development of economic life could mitigate social inequalities (provided that it be guided and coordinated in a reasonable and human way), it is often made to embitter them; or, in some places, it even results in a decline of the social status of the underprivileged and in contempt for the poor. While an immense number of people still lack the absolute necessities of life, some, even in less advanced areas, live in luxury or squander wealth. Extravagance and wretchedness exist side by side. While a few enjoy very great power of choice, the majority are deprived of almost all possibility of acting on their own initiative and responsibility, and often subsist in living and working conditions unworthy of the human person.

A similar lack of economic and social balance is to be noticed between agriculture, industry, and the services, and also between different parts of one and the same country. The contrast between the economically more advanced countries and other countries is becoming more serious day by day, and the very peace of the world can be jeopardized thereby.

Our contemporaries are coming to feel these inequalities with an ever sharper awareness, since they are thoroughly convinced that the ampler technical and economic possibilities which the world of today enjoys can and should correct this unhappy state of affairs. Hence, many reforms in the socioeconomic realm and a change of mentality and attitude are required of all. For this reason the Church down through the centuries and in the light of the Gospel has worked out the principles of justice and equity demanded by right reason both for individual and social life and for international life, and she has proclaimed them especially in recent times. This sacred council intends to strengthen these principles according to the circumstances of this age and to set forth certain guidelines, especially with regard to the requirements of economic development.(1)

SECTION 1
Economic Development

64. Today more than ever before attention is rightly given to the increase of the production of agricultural and industrial goods and of the rendering of services, for the purpose of making provision for the growth of population and of satisfying the increasing desires of the human race. Therefore, technical progress, an inventive spirit, an eagerness to create and to expand enterprises, the application of methods of production, and the strenuous efforts of all who engage in production-in a word, all the elements making for such development-must be promoted. The fundamental finality of this production is not the mere increase of products nor profit or control but rather the service of man, and indeed of the whole man with regard for the full range of his material needs and the demands of his intellectual, moral, spiritual, and religious life; this applies to every man whatsoever and to every group of men, of every race and of every part of the world. Consequently, economic activity is to be carried on according to its own methods and laws within the limits of the moral order," so that God's plan for mankind may be realized.(3)

65. Economic development must remain under man's determination and must not be left to the judgment of a few men or groups possessing too much economic power or of the political community alone or of certain more powerful nations. It is necessary, on the contrary, that at every level the largest possible number of people and, when it is a question of international relations, all nations have an active share in directing that development. There is need as well of the coordination and fitting and harmonious combination of the spontaneous efforts of individuals and of free groups with the undertakings oœ public authorities.

Growth is not to be left solely to a kind of mechanical course of the economic activity of individuals, nor to the authority of government. For this reason, doctrines which obstruct the necessary reforms under the guise of a false liberty, and those which subordinate the basic rights of individual persons and groups to the collective organization of production must be shown to be erroneous.(4)

Citizens, on the other hand, should remember that it is their right and duty, which is also to be recognized by the civil authority, to contribute to the true progress of their own community according to their ability. Especially in underdeveloped areas, where all resources must urgently be employed, those who hold back their unproductive resources or who deprive their community of the material or spiritual aid that it needs-saving the personal right of migration-gravely endanger the common good.

66. To satisfy the demands of justice and equity, strenuous efforts must be made, without disregarding the rights of persons or the natural qualities of each country, to remove as quickly as possible the immense economic inequalities, which now exist and in many cases are growing and which are connected with individual and social discrimination. Likewise, in many areas, in view of the special difficulties of agriculture relative to the raising and selling of produce, country people must be helped both to increase and to market what they produce, and to introduce the necessary development and renewal and also obtain a fair income. Otherwise, as too often happens, they will remain in the condition of lower-class citizens. Let farmers themselves, especially young ones, apply themselves to perfecting their professional skill, for without it, there can be no agricultural advance.(5)

Justice and equity likewise require that the mobility, which is necessary in a developing economy, be regulated in such a way as to keep the life of individuals and their families from becoming insecure and precarious. When workers come from another country or district and contribute to the economic advancement of a nation or region by their labor, all discrimination as regards wages and working conditions must be carefully avoided. All the people, moreover, above all the public authorities, must treat them not as mere tools of production but as persons, and must help them to bring their families to live with them and to provide themselves with a decent dwelling; they must also see to it that these workers are incorporated into the social life of the country or region that receives them. Employment opportunities, however, should be created in their own areas as far as possible.

In economic affairs which today are subject to change, as in the new forms of industrial society in which automation, for example, is advancing, care must be taken that sufficient and suitable work and the possibility of the appropriate technical and professional formation are furnished. The livelihood and the human dignity especially of those who are in very difficult conditions because of illness or old age must be guaranteed.

SECTION 2
Certain Principles Governing Socio-Economic Life as a Whole

67. Human labor which is expended in the production and exchange of goods or in the performance of economic services is superior to the other elements of economic life, for the latter have only the nature of tools.

This labor, whether it is engaged in independently or hired by someone else, comes immediately from the person, who as it were stamps the things of nature with his seal and subdues them to his will. By his labor a man ordinarily supports himself and his family, is joined to his fellow men and serves them, and can exercise genuine charity and be a partner in the work of bringing divine creation to perfection. Indeed, we hold that through labor offered to God man is associated with the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, Who conferred an eminent dignity on labor when at Nazareth He worked with His own hands. From this there follows for every man the duty of working faithfully and also the right to work. It is the duty of society, moreover, according to the circumstances prevailing in it, and in keeping with its role, to help the citizens to find sufficient employment. Finally, remuneration for labor is to be such that man may be furnished the means to cultivate worthily his own material, social, cultural, and spiritual life and that of his dependents, in view of the function and productiveness of each one, the conditions of the factory or workshop, and the common good.(6)

Since economic activity for the most part implies the associated work of human beings, any way of organizing and directing it which may be detrimental to any working men and women would be wrong and inhuman. It happens too often, however, even in our days, that workers are reduced to the level of being slaves to their own work. This is by no means justified by the so-called economic laws. The entire process of productive work, therefore, must be adapted to the needs of the person and to his way of life, above all to his domestic life, especially in respect to mothers of families, always with due regard for sex and age. The opportunity, moreover, should be granted to workers to unfold their own abilities and personality through the performance of their work. Applying their time and strength to their employment with a due sense of responsibility, they should also all enjoy sufficient rest and leisure to cultivate their familial, cultural, social and religious life. They should also have the opportunity freely to develop the energies and potentialities which perhaps they cannot bring to much fruition in their professional work.

68. In economic enterprises it is persons who are joined together, that is, free and independent human beings created to the image of God. Therefore, with attention to the functions of each-owners or employers, management or labor-and without doing harm to the necessary unity of management, the active sharing of all in the administration and profits of these enterprises in ways to be properly determined is to be promoted.(7) Since more often, however, decisions concerning economic and social conditions, on which the future lot of the workers and of their children depends, are made not within the business itself but by institutions on a higher level, the workers themselves should have a share also in determining these conditions-in person or through freely elected delegates.

Among the basic rights of the human person is to be numbered the right of freely founding unions for working people. These should be able truly to represent them and to contribute to the organizing of economic life in the right way. Included is the right of freely taking part in the activity of these unions without risk of reprisal. Through this orderly participation joined to progressive economic and social formation, all will grow day by day in the awareness of their own function and responsibility, and thus they will be brought to feel that they are comrades in the whole task of economic development and in the attainment of the universal common good according to their capacities and aptitudes.

When, however, socio-economic disputes arise, efforts must be made to come to a peaceful settlement. Although recourse must always be had first to a sincere dialogue between the parties, a strike, nevertheless, can remain even in presentday circumstances a necessary, though ultimate, aid for the defense of the workers' own rights and the fulfillment of their just desires. As soon as possible, however, ways should be sought to resume negotiation and the discussion of reconciliation.

69. God intended the earth with everything contained in it for the use of all human beings and peoples. Thus, under the leadership of justice and in the company of charity, created goods should be in abundance for all in like manner.(8) Whatever the forms of property may be, as adapted to the legitimate institutions of peoples, according to diverse and changeable circumstances, attention must always be paid to this universal destination of earthly goods. In using them, therefore, man should regard the external things that he legitimately possesses not only as his own but also as common in the sense that they should be able to benefit not only him but also others.(9) On the other hand, the right of having a share of earthly goods sufficient for oneself and one's family belongs to everyone. The Fathers and Doctors of the Church held this opinion, teaching that men are obliged to come to the relief of the poor and to do so not merely out of their superfluous goods.(10) If one is in extreme necessity, he has the right to procure for himself what he needs out of the riches of others.(11) Since there are so many people prostrate with hunger in the world, this sacred council urges all, both individuals and governments, to remember the aphorism of the Fathers, "Feed the man dying of hunger, because if you have not fed him, you have killed him,"(12) and really to share and employ their earthly goods, according to the ability of each, especially by supporting individuals or peoples with the aid by which they may be able to help and develop themselves.

In economically less advanced societies the common destination of earthly goods is partly satisfied by means of the customs and traditions proper to the community, by which the absolutely necessary things are furnished to each member. An effort must be made, however, to avoid regarding certain customs as altogether unchangeable, if they no longer answer the new needs of this age. On the other hand, imprudent action should not be taken against respectable customs which, provided they are suitably adapted to present-day circumstances, do not cease to be very useful. Similarly, in highly developed nations a body of social institutions dealing with protection and security can, for its own part, bring to reality the common destination of earthly goods. Family and social services, especially those that provide for culture and education, should be further promoted. When all these things are being organized, vigilance is necessary to present the citizens from being led into a certain inactivity vis-a-vis society or from rejecting the burden of taking up office or from refusing to serve.

70. Investments, for their part, must be directed toward procuring employment and sufficient income for the people both now and in the future. Whoever makes decisions concerning these investments and the planning of the economy-whether they be individuals or groups of public authorities-are bound to keep these objectives in mind and to recognize their serious obligation of watching, on the one hand, that provision be made for the necessities required for a decent life both of individuals and of the whole community and, on the other, of looking out for the future and of establishing a right balance between the needs of present-day consumption, both individual and collective, and the demands of investing for the generation to come. They should also always bear in mind the urgent needs of underdeveloped countries or regions. In monetary matters they should beware of hurting the welfare of their own country or of other countries. Care should also be taken lest the economically weak countries unjustly suffer any loss from a change in the value of money.

71. Since property and other forms of private ownership of external goods contribute to the expression of the personality, and since, moreover, they furnish one an occasion to exercise his function in society and in the economy, it is very important that the access of both individuals and communities to some ownership of external goods be fostered

Private property or some ownership of external goods confers on everyone a sphere wholly necessary for the autonomy of the person and the family, and it should be regarded as an extension of human freedom. Lastly, since it adds incentives for carrying on one's function and charge, it constitutes one of the conditions for civil liberties.(13)

The forms of such ownership or property are varied today and are becoming increasingly diversified. They all remain, however, a cause of security not to be underestimated, in spite of social funds, rights, and services provided by society. This is true not only of material property but also of immaterial things such as professional capacities.

The right of private ownership, however, is not opposed to the right inherent in various forms of public property. Goods can be transferred to the public domain only by the competent authority, according to the demands and within the limits of the common good, and with fair compensation. Furthermore, it is the right of public authority to prevent anyone from abusing his private property to the detriment of the common good.(14)

By its very nature private property has a social quality which is based on the law of the common destination of earthly goods.(15) If this social quality is overlooked, property often becomes an occasion of passionate desires for wealth and serious disturbances, so that a pretext is given to the attackers for calling the right itself into question.

In many underdeveloped regions there are large or even extensive rural estates which are only slightly cultivated or lie completely idle for the sake of profit, while the majority of the people either are without land or have only very small fields, and, on the other hand, it is evidently urgent to increase the productivity of the fields. Not infrequently those who are hired to work for the landowners or who till a portion of the land as tenants receive a wage or income unworthy of a human being, lack decent housing and are exploited by middlemen. Deprived of all security, they live under such personal servitude that almost every opportunity of acting on their own initiative and responsibility is denied to them and all advancement in human culture and all sharing in social and political life is forbidden to them. According to the different cases, therefore, reforms are necessary: that income may grow, working conditions should be improved, security in employment increased, and an incentive to working on one's own initiative given. Indeed, insufficiently cultivated estates should be distributed to those who can make these lands fruitful; in this case, the necessary things and means, especially educational aids and the right facilities for cooperative organization, must be supplied. Whenever, nevertheless, the common good requires expropriation, compensation must be reckoned in equity after all the circumstances have been weighed.

72. Christians who take an active part in present-day socio-economic development and fight for justice and charity should be convinced that they can make a great contribution to the prosperity of mankind and to the peace of the world. In these activities let them, either as individuals or as members of groups, give a shining example. Having acquired the absolutely necessary skill and experience, they should observe the right order in their earthly activities in faithfulness to Christ and His Gospel. Thus their whole life, both individual and social, will be permeated with the spirit of the beatitudes, notably with a spirit of poverty.

Whoever in obedience to Christ seeks first the Kingdom of God, takes therefrom a stronger and purer love for helping all his brethren and for perfecting the work of justice under the inspiration of charity.(16)

CHAPTER IV

THE LIFE OF THE POLITICAL COMMUNITY

73. In our day, profound changes are apparent also in the structure and institutions of peoples. These result from their cultural, economic and social evolution. Such changes have a great influence on the life of the political community, especially regarding the rights and duties of all in the exercise of civil freedom and in the attainment of the common good, and in organizing the relations of citizens among themselves and with respect to public authority.

The present keener sense of human dignity has given rise in many parts of the world to attempts to bring about a politico-juridical order which will give better protection to the rights of the person in public life. These include the right freely to meet and form associations, the right to express one's own opinion and to profess one's religion both publicly and privately. The protection of the rights of a person is indeed a necessary condition so that citizens, individually or collectively, can take an active part in the life and government of the state.

Along with cultural, economic and social development, there is a growing desire among many people to play a greater part in organizing the life of the political community. In the conscience of many arises an increasing concern that the rights of minorities be recognized, without any neglect for their duties toward the political community. In addition, there is a steadily growing respect for men of other opinions or other religions. At the same time, there is wider cooperation to guarantee the actual exercise of personal rights to all citizens, and not only to a few privileged individuals.

However, those political systems, prevailing in some parts of the world are to be reproved which hamper civic or religious freedom, victimize large numbers through avarice and political crimes, and divert the exercise of authority from the service of the common good to the interests of one or another faction or of the rulers themselves.

There is no better way to establish political life on a truly human basis than by fostering an inward sense of justice and kindliness, and of service to the common good, and by strengthening basic convictions as to the true nature of the political community and the aim, right exercise, and sphere of action of public authority.

74. Men, families and the various groups which make up the civil community are aware that they cannot achieve a truly human life by their own unaided efforts. They see the need for a wider community, within which each one makes his specific contribution every day toward an ever broader realization of the common good.(1) For this purpose they set up a political community according to various forms. The political community exists, consequently, for the sake of the common good, in which it finds its full justification and significance, and the source of its inherent legitimacy. Indeed, the common good embraces the sum of those conditions of the social life whereby men, families and associations more adequately and readily may attain their own perfection.(2)

Yet the people who come together in the political community are many and diverse, and they have every right to prefer divergent solutions. If the political community is not to be torn apart while everyone follows his own opinion, there must be an authority to direct the energies of all citizens toward the common good, not in a mechanical or despotic fashion, but by acting above all as a moral force which appeals to each one's freedom and sense of responsibility.

It is clear, therefore, that the political community and public authority are founded on human nature and hence belong to the order designed by God, even though the choice of a political regime and the appointment of rulers are left to the free will of citizens.(3)

It follows also that political authority, both in the community as such and in the representative bodies of the state, must always be exercised within the limits of the moral order and directed toward the common good-with a dynamic concept of that good-according to the juridical order legitimately established or due to be established. When authority is so exercised, citizens are bound in conscience to obey.(4) Accordingly, the responsibility, dignity and importance of leaders are indeed clear.

But where citizens are oppressed by a public authority overstepping its competence, they should not protest against those things which are objectively required for the common good; but it is legitimate for them to defend their own rights and the rights of their fellow citizens against the abuse of this authority, while keeping within those limits drawn by the natural law and the Gospels.

According to the character of different peoples and their historic development, the political community can, however, adopt a variety of concrete solutions in its structures and the organization of public authority. For the benefit of the whole human family, these solutions must always contribute to the formation of a type of man who will be cultivated, peace-loving and well-disposed towards all his fellow men.

75. It is in full conformity with human nature that there should be juridico-political structures providing all citizens in an ever better fashion and without discrimination the practical possibility of freely and actively taking part in the establishment of the juridical foundations of the political community and in the direction of public affairs, in fixing the terms of reference of the various public bodies and in the election of political leaders.(5) All citizens, therefore, should be mindful of the right and also the duty to use their free vote to further the common good. The Church praises and esteems the work of those who for the good of men devote themselves to the service of the state and take on the burdens of this office.

If the citizens' responsible cooperation is to produce the good results which may be expected in the normal course of political life, there must be a statute of positive law providing for a suitable division of the functions and bodies of authority and an efficient and independent system for the protection of rights. The rights of all persons, families and groups, and their practical application, must be recognized, respected and furthered, together with the duties binding on all citizen.(6) Among the latter, it will be well to recall the duty of rendering the political community such material and personal service as are required by the common good. Rulers must be careful not to hamper the development of family, social or cultural groups, nor that of intermediate bodies or organizations, and not to deprive them of opportunities for legitimate and constructive activity; they should willingly seek rather to promote the orderly pursuit of such activity. Citizens, for their part, either individually or collectively, must be careful not to attribute excessive power to public authority, not to make exaggerated and untimely demands upon it in their own interests, lessening in this way the responsible role of persons, families and social groups.

The complex circumstances of our day make it necessary for public authority to intervene more often in social, economic and cultural matters in order to bring about favorable conditions which will give more effective help to citizens and groups in their free pursuit of man's total well-being. The relations, however, between socialization and the autonomy and development of the person can be understood in different ways according to various regions and the evolution of peoples. But when the exercise of rights is restricted temporarily for the common good, freedom should be restored immediately upon change of circumstances. Moreover, it is inhuman for public authority to fall back on dictatonal systems or totalitarian methods which violate the rights of the person or social groups.

Citizens must cultivate a generous and loyal spirit of patriotism, but without being narrow-minded. This means that they will always direct their attention to the good of the whole human family, united by the different ties which bind together races, people and nations.

All Christians must be aware of their own specific vocation within the political community. It is for them to give an example by their sense of responsibility and their service of the common good. In this way they are to demonstrate concretely how authority can be compatible with freedom, personal initiative with the solidarity of the whole social organism, and the advantages of unity with fruitful diversity. They must recognize the legitimacy of different opinions with regard to temporal solutions, and respect citizens, who, even as a group, defend their points of view by honest methods. Political parties, for their part, must promote those things which in their judgement are required for the common good; it is never allowable to give their interests priority over the common good.

Great care must be taken about civic and political formation, which is of the utmost necessity today for the population as a whole, and especially for youth, so that all citizens can play their part in the life of the political community. Those who are suited or can become suited should prepare themselves for the difficult, but at the same time, the very noble art of politics,(8) and should seek to practice this art without regard for their own interests or for material advantages. With integrity and wisdom, they must take action against any form of injustice and tyranny, against arbitrary domination by an individual or a political party and any intolerance. They should dedicate themselves to the service of all with sincerity and fairness, indeed, with the charity and fortitude demanded by political life.

76. It is very important, especially where a pluralistic society prevails, that there be a correct notion of the relationship between the political community and the Church, and a clear distinction between the tasks which Christians undertake, individually or as a group, on their own responsibility as citizens guided by the dictates of a Christian conscience, and the activities which, in union with their pastors, they carry out in the name of the Church.

The Church, by reason of her role and competence, is not identified in any way with the political community nor bound to any political system. She is at once a sign and a safeguard of the transcendent character of the human person.

The Church and the political community in their own fields are autonomous and independent from each other. Yet both, under different titles, are devoted to the personal and social vocation of the same men. The more that both foster sounder cooperation between themselves with due consideration for the circumstances of time and place, the more effective will their service be exercised for the good of all. For man's horizons are not limited only to the temporal order; while living in the context of human history, he preserves intact his eternal vocation. The Church, for her part, founded on the love of the Redeemer, contributes toward the reign of justice and charity within the borders of a nation and between nations. By preaching the truths of the Gospel, and bringing to bear on all fields of human endeavor the light of her doctrine and of a Christian witness, she respects and fosters the political freedom and responsibility of citizens.

The Apostles, their successors and those who cooperate with them, are sent to announce to mankind Christ, the Savior. Their apostolate is based on the power of God, Who very often shows forth the strength of the Gospel on the weakness of its witnesses. All those dedicated to the ministry of God's Word must use the ways and means proper to the Gospel which in a great many respects differ from the means proper to the earthly city.

There are, indeed, close links between earthly things and those elements of man's condition which transcend the world. The Church herself makes use of temporal things insofar as her own mission requires it. She, for her part, does not place her trust in the privileges offered by civil authority. She will even give up the exercise of certain rights which have been legitimately acquired, if it becomes clear that their use will cast doubt on the sincerity of her witness or that new ways of life demand new methods. It is only right, however, that at all times and in all places, the Church should have true freedom to preach the faith, to teach her social doctrine, to exercise her role freely among men, and also to pass moral judgment in those matters which regard public order when the fundamental rights of a person or the salvation of souls require it. In this, she should make use of all the means-but only those-which accord with the Gospel and which correspond to the general good according to the diversity oœ times and circumstances.

While faithfully adhering to the Gospel and fulfilling her mission to the world, the Church, whose duty it is to foster and elevate(9) all that is found to be true, good and beautiful in the human community, strengthens peace among men for the glory of God.(10)

CHAPTER V

THE FOSTERING OF PEACE AND THE PROMOTION OF A COMMUNITY OF NATIONS

77. In our generation when men continue to be afflicted by acute hardships and anxieties arising from the ravages of war or the threat of it, the whole human family faces an hour of supreme crisis in its advance toward maturity. Moving gradually together and everywhere more conscious already of its unity, this family cannot accomplish its task of constructing for all men everywhere a world more genuinely human unless each person devotes himself to the cause of peace with renewed vigor. Thus it happens that the Gospel message, which is in harmony with the loftier strivings and aspirations of the human race, takes on a new luster in our day as it declares that the artisans of peace are blessed "because they will be called the sons of God" (Matt. 5:9).

Consequently, as it points out the authentic and noble meaning of peace and condemns the frightfulness of war, the Council wishes passionately to summon Christians to cooperate, under the help of Christ the author of peace, with all men in securing among themselves a peace based on justice and love and in setting up the instruments of peace.

78. Peace is not merely the absence of war; nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies; nor is it brought about by dictatorship Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called an enterprise of justice. Peace results from that order structured into human society by its divine Founder, and actualized by men as they thirst after ever greater justice. The common good of humanity finds its ultimate meaning in the eternal law. But since the concrete demands of this common good are constantly changing as time goes on, peace is never attained once and for all, but must be built up ceaselessly. Moreover, since the human will is unsteady and wounded by sin, the achievement of peace requires a constant mastering of passions and the vigilance of lawful authority.

But this is not enough. This peace on earth cannot be obtained unless personal well-being is safeguarded and men freely and trustingly share with one another the riches of their inner spirits and their talents. A firm determination to respect other men and peoples and their dignity, as well as the studied practice of brotherhood are absolutely necessary for the establishment of peace. Hence peace is likewise the fruit of love, which goes beyond what justice can provide.

That earthly peace which arises from love of neighbor symbolizes and results from the peace of Christ which radiates from God the Father. For by the cross the incarnate Son, the prince of peace reconciled all men with God. By thus restoring all men to the unity of one people and one body, He slew hatred in His own flesh; and, after being lifted on high by His resurrection, He poured forth the spirit of love into the hearts of men.

For this reason, all Christians are urgently summoned to do in love what the truth requires, and to join with all true peacemakers in pleading for peace and bringing it about.

Motivated by this same spirit, we cannot fail to praise those who renounce the use of violence in the vindication of their rights and who resort to methods of defense which are otherwise available to weaker parties too, provided this can be done without injury to the rights and duties of others or of the community itself.

Insofar as men are sinful, the threat of war hangs over them, and hang over them it will until the return of Christ. But insofar as men vanquish sin by a union of love, they will vanquish violence as well and make these words come true: "They shall turn their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into sickles. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaias 2:4).

SECTION 1
The Avoidance of War

79. Even though recent wars have wrought physical and moral havoc on our world, the devastation of battle still goes on day by day in some part of the world. Indeed, now that every kind of weapon produced by modern science is used in war, the fierce character of warfare threatens to lead the combatants to a savagery far surpassing that of the past. Furthermore, the complexity of the modern world and the intricacy of international relations allow guerrilla warfare to be drawn out by new methods of deceit and subversion. In many causes the use of terrorism is regarded as a new way to wage war.

Contemplating this melancholy state of humanity, the council wishes, above all things else, to recall the permanent binding force of universal natural law and its all-embracing principles. Man's conscience itself gives ever more emphatic voice to these principles. Therefore, actions which deliberately conflict with these same principles, as well as orders commanding such actions are criminal, and blind obedience cannot excuse those who yield to them. The most infamous among these are actions designed for the methodical extermination of an entire people, nation or ethnic minority. Such actions must be vehemently condemned as horrendous crimes. The courage of those who fearlessly and openly resist those who issue such commands merits supreme commendation.

On the subject of war, quite a large number of nations have subscribed to international agreements aimed at making military activity and its consequences less inhuman. Their stipulations deal with such matters as the treatment of wounded soldiers and prisoners. Agreements of this sort must be honored. Indeed they should be improved upon so that the frightfulness of war can be better and more workably held in check. All men, especially government officials and experts in these matters, are bound to do everything they can to effect these improvements. Moreover, it seems right that laws make humane provisions for the case of those who for reasons of conscience refuse to bear arms, provided however, that they agree to serve the human community in some other way.

Certainly, war has not been rooted out of human affairs. As long as the danger of war remains and there is no competent and sufficiently powerful authority at the international level, governments cannot be denied the right to legitimate defense once every means of peaceful settlement has been exhausted. State authorities and others who share public responsibility have the duty to conduct such grave matters soberly and to protect the welfare of the people entrusted to their care. But it is one thing to undertake military action for the just defense of the people, and something else again to seek the subjugation of other nations. Nor, by the same token, does the mere fact that war has unhappily begun mean that all is fair between the warring parties.

Those too who devote themselves to the military service of their country should regard themselves as the agents of security and freedom of peoples. As long as they fulfill this role properly, they are making a genuine contribution to the establishment of peace.

80. The horror and perversity of war is immensely magnified by the addition of scientific weapons. For acts of war involving these weapons can inflict massive and indiscriminate destruction, thus going far beyond the bounds of legitimate defense. Indeed, if the kind of instruments which can now be found in the armories of the great nations were to be employed to their fullest, an almost total and altogether reciprocal slaughter of each side by the other would follow, not to mention the widespread deviation that would take place in the world and the deadly after effects that would be spawned by the use of weapons of this kind.

All these considerations compel us to undertake an evaluation of war with an entirely new attitude.(1) The men of our time must realize that they will have to give a somber reckoning of their deeds of war for the course of the future will depend greatly on the decisions they make today.

With these truths in mind, this most holy synod makes its own the condemnations of total war already pronounced by recent popes,(2) and issues the following declaration.

Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation.

The unique hazard of modern warfare consists in this: it provides those who possess modem scientific weapons with a kind of occasion for perpetrating just such abominations; moreover, through a certain inexorable chain of events, it can catapult men into the most atrocious decisions. That such may never truly happen in the future, the bishops of the whole world gathered together, beg all men, especially government officials and military leaders, to give unremitting thought to their gigantic responsibility before God and the entire human race.

81. To be sure, scientific weapons are not amassed solely for use in war. Since the defensive strength of any nation is considered to be dependent upon its capacity for immediate retaliation, this accumulation of arms, which increases each year, likewise serves, in a way heretofore unknown, as deterrent to possible enemy attack. Many regard this procedure as the most effective way by which peace of a sort can be maintained between nations at the present time.

Whatever be the facts about this method of deterrence, men should be convinced that the arms race in which an already considerable number of countries are engaged is not a safe way to preserve a steady peace, nor is the so-called balance resulting from this race a sure and authentic peace. Rather than being eliminated thereby, the causes of war are in danger of being gradually aggravated. While extravagant sums are being spent for the furnishing of ever new weapons, an adequate remedy cannot be provided for the multiple miseries afflicting the whole modern world. Disagreements between nations are not really and radically healed; on the contrary, they spread the infection to other parts of the earth. New approaches based on reformed attitudes must be taken to remove this trap and to emancipate the world from its crushing anxiety through the restoration of genuine peace.

Therefore, we say it again: the arms race is an utterly treacherous trap for humanity, and one which ensnares the poor to an intolerable degree. It is much to be feared that if this race persists, it will eventually spawn all the lethal ruin whose path it is now making ready. Warned by the calamities which the human race has made possible, let us make use of the interlude granted us from above and for which we are thankful to become more conscious of our own responsibility and to find means for resolving our disputes in a manner more worthy of man. Divine Providence urgently demands of us that we free ourselves from the age-old slavery of war. If we refuse to make this effort, we do not know where we will be led by the evil road we have set upon.

It is our clear duty, therefore, to strain every muscle in working for the time when all war can be completely outlawed by international consent. This goal undoubtedly requires the establishment of some universal public authority acknowledged as such by all and endowed with the power to safeguard on the behalf of all, security, regard for justice, and respect for rights. But before this hoped for authority can be set up, the highest existing international centers must devote themselves vigorously to the pursuit of better means for obtaining common security. Since peace must be born of mutual trust between nations and not be imposed on them through a fear of the available weapons, everyone must labor to put an end at last to the arms race, and to make a true beginning of disarmament, not unilaterally indeed, but proceeding at an equal pace according to agreement, and backed up by true and workable safeguards.(3)

82. In the meantime, efforts which have already been made and are still underway to eliminate the danger of war are not to be underrated. On the contrary, support should be given to the good will of the very many leaders who work hard to do away with war, which they abominate. These men, although burdened by the extremely weighty preoccupations of their high office, are nonetheless moved by the very grave peacemaking task to which they are bound, even if they cannot ignore the complexity of matters as they stand. We should fervently ask God to give these men the strength to go forward perseveringly and to follow through courageously on this work of building peace with vigor. It is a work of supreme love for mankind. Today it certainly demands that they extend their thoughts and their spirit beyond the confines of their own nation, that they put aside national selfishness and ambition to dominate other nations, and that they nourish a profound reverence for the whole of humanity, which is already making its way so laboriously toward greater unity.

The problems of peace and of disarmament have already been the subject of extensive, strenuous and constant examination. Together with international meetings dealing with these problems, such studies should be regarded as the first steps toward solving these serious questions, and should be promoted with even greater urgency by way of yielding concrete results in the future.

Nevertheless, men should take heed not to entrust themselves only to the efforts of some, while not caring about their own attitudes. For government officials who must at one and the same time guarantee the good of their own people and promote the universal good are very greatly dependent on public opinion and feeling. It does them no good to work for peace as long as feelings of hostility, contempt and distrust, as well as racial hatred and unbending ideologies, continue to divide men and place them in opposing camps. Consequently there is above all a pressing need for a renewed education of attitudes and for new inspiration in public opinion. Those who are dedicated to the work of education, particularly of the young, or who mold public opinion, should consider it their most weighty task to instruct all in fresh sentiments of peace. Indeed, we all need a change of heart as we regard the entire world and those tasks which we can perform in unison for the betterment of our race.

But we should not let false hope deceive us. For unless enmities and hatred are put away and firm, honest agreements concerning world peace are reached in the future, humanity, which already is in the middle of a grave crisis, even though it is endowed with remarkable knowledge, will perhaps be brought to that dismal hour in which it will experience no peace other than the dreadful peace of death. But, while we say this, the Church of Christ, present in the midst of the anxiety of this age, does not cease to hope most firmly. She intends to propose to our age over and over again, in season and out of season, this apostolic message: "Behold, now is the acceptable time for a change of heart; behold! now is the day of salvation."(4)

SECTION II
Setting Up An International Community

83. In order to build up peace above all the causes of discord among men, especially injustice, which foment wars must be rooted out. Not a few of these causes come from excessive economic inequalities and from putting off the steps needed to remedy them. Other causes of discord, however, have their source in the desire to dominate and in a contempt for persons. And, if we look for deeper causes, we find them in human envy, distrust, pride, and other egotistical passions. Man cannot bear so many ruptures in the harmony of things. Consequently, the world is constantly beset by strife and violence between men, even when no war is being waged. Besides, since these same evils are present in the relations between various nations as well, in order to overcome or forestall them and to keep violence once unleashed within limits it is absolutely necessary for countries to cooperate more advantageously and more closely together and to organize together international bodies and to work tirelessly for the creation of organizations which will foster peace.

84. In view of the increasingly close ties of mutual dependence today between all the inhabitants and peoples of the earth, the apt pursuit and efficacious attainment of the universal common good now require of the community of nations that it organize itself in a manner suited to its present responsibilities, especially toward the many parts of the world which are still suffering from unbearable want.

To reach this goal, organizations of the international community, for their part, must make provision for men's different needs, both in the fields of social life-such as food supplies, health, education, labor and also in certain special circumstances which can crop up here and there, e.g., the need to promote the general improvement of developing countries, or to alleviate the distressing conditions in which refugees dispersed throughout the world find themselves, or also to assist migrants and their families.

Already existing international and regional organizations are certainly well-deserving of the human race. These are the first efforts at laying the foundations on an international level for a community of all men to work for the solution to the serious problems of our times, to encourage progress everywhere, and to obviate wars of whatever kind. In all of these activities the Church takes joy in the spirit of true brotherhood flourishing between Christians and non-Christians as it strives to make ever more strenuous efforts to relieve abundant misery.

85. The present solidarity of mankind also calls for a revival of greater international cooperation in the economic field. Although nearly all peoples have become autonomous, they are far from being free of every form of undue dependence, and far from escaping all danger of serious internal difficulties.

The development of a nation depends on human and financial aids. The citizens of each country must be prepared by education and professional training to discharge the various tasks of economic and social life. But this in turn requires the aid of foreign specialists who, when they give aid, will not act as overlords, but as helpers and fellow-workers. Developing nations will not be able to procure material assistance unless radical changes are made in the established procedures of modern world commerce. Other aid should be provided as well by advanced nations in the form of gifts, loans or financial investments. Such help should be accorded with generosity and without greed on the one side, and received with complete honesty on the other side.

If an authentic economic order is to be established on a world-wide basis, an end will have to be put to profiteering, to national ambitions, to the appetite for political supremacy, to militaristic calculations, and to machinations for the sake of spreading and imposing ideologies.

86. The following norms seem useful for such cooperation:

a) Developing nations should take great pains to seek as the object for progress to express and secure the total human fulfillment of their citizens. They should bear in mind that progress arises and grows above all out of the labor and genius of the nations themselves because it has to be based, not only on foreign aid, but especially on the full utilization of their own resources, and on the development of their own culture and traditions. Those who exert the greatest influence on others should be outstanding in this respect.

b) On the other hand, it is a very important duty of the advanced nations to help the developing nations in discharging their above-mentioned responsibilities. They should therefore gladly carry out on their own home front those spiritual and material readjustments that are required for the realization of this universal cooperation.

Consequently, in business dealings with weaker and poorer nations, they should be careful to respect their profit, for these countries need the income they receive on the sale of their homemade products to support themselves.

c) It is the role of the international community to coordinate and promote development, but in such a way that the resources earmarked for this purpose will be allocated as effectively as possible, and with complete equity. It is likewise this community's duty, with due regard for the principle of subsidiarity, so to regulate economic relations throughout the world that these will be carried out in accordance with the norms of justice.

Suitable organizations should be set up to foster and regulate international business affairs, particularly with the underdeveloped countries, and to compensate for losses resulting from an excessive inequality of power among the various nations. This type of organization, in unison with technical cultural and financial aid, should provide the help which developing nations need so that they can advantageously pursue their own economic advancement.

d) In many cases there is an urgent need to revamp economic and social structures. But one must guard against proposals of technical solutions that are untimely. This is particularly true of those solutions providing man with material conveniences, but nevertheless contrary to man's spiritual nature and advancement. For "not by bread alone does man live, but by every word which proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). Every sector of the family of man carries within itself and in its best traditions some portion of the spiritual treasure entrusted by God to humanity, even though many may not be aware of the source from which it comes.

87. International cooperation is needed today especially for those peoples who, besides facing so many other difficulties, likewise undergo pressures due to a rapid increase in population. There is an urgent need to explore, with the full and intense cooperation of all, and especially of the wealthier nations, ways whereby the human necessities of food and a suitable education can be furnished and shared with the entire human community. But some peoples could greatly improve upon the conditions of their life if they would change over from antiquated methods of farming to the new technical methods, applying them with needed prudence according to their own circumstances. Their life would likewise be improved by the establishment of a better social order and by a fairer system for the distribution of land ownership.

Governments undoubtedly have rights and duties, within the limits of their proper competency, regarding the population problem in their respective countries, for instance, in the line of social and family life legislation, or regarding the migration of country-dwellers to the cities, or with respect to information concerning the condition and needs of the country. Since men today are giving thought to this problem and are so greatly disturbed over it, it is desirable in addition that Catholic specialists, especially in the universities, skillfully pursue and develop studies and projects on all these matters.

But there are many today who maintain that the increase in world population, or at least the population increase in some countries, must be radically curbed by every means possible and by any kind of intervention on the part of public authority. In view of this contention, the council urges everyone to guard against solutions, whether publicly or privately supported, or at times even imposed, which are contrary to the moral law. For in keeping with man's inalienable right to marry and generate children, a decision concerning the number of children they will have depends on the right judgment of the parents and it cannot in any way be left to the judgment of public authority. But since the judgment of the parents presupposes a rightly formed conscience, it is of the utmost importance that the way be open for everyone to develop a correct and genuinely human responsibility which respects the divine law and takes into consideration the circumstances of the situation and the time. But sometimes this requires an improvement in educational and social conditions, and, above all, formation in religion or at least a complete moral training. Men should discreetly be informed, furthermore, of scientific advances in exploring methods whereby spouses can be helped in regulating the number of their children and whose safeness has been well proven and whose harmony with the moral order has been ascertained.

88. Christians should cooperate willingly and wholeheartedly in establishing an international order that includes a genuine respect for all freedoms and amicable brotherhood between all. This is all the more pressing since the greater part of the world is still suffering from so much poverty that it is as if Christ Himself were crying out in these poor to beg the charity of the disciples. Do not let men, then, be scandalized because some countries with a majority of citizens who are counted as Christians have an abundance of wealth, whereas others are deprived of the necessities of life and are tormented with hunger, disease, and every kind of misery. The spirit of poverty and charity are the glory and witness of the Church of Christ.

Those Christians are to be praised and supported, therefore, who volunteer their services to help other men and nations. Indeed, it is the duty of the whole People of God, following the word and example of the bishops, to alleviate as far as they are able the sufferings of the modern age. They should do this too, as was the ancient custom in the Church, out of the substance of their goods, and not only out of what is superfluous.

The procedure of collecting and distributing aids, without being inflexible and completely uniform, should nevertheless be carried on in an orderly fashion in dioceses, nations, and throughout the entire world. Wherever it seems convenient, this activity of Catholics should be carried on in unison with other Christian brothers. For the spirit of charity does not forbid, but on the contrary commands that charitable activity be carried out in a careful and orderly manner. Therefore, it is essential for those who intend to dedicate themselves to the services of the developing nations to be properly trained in appropriate institutes,

89. Since, in virtue of her mission received from God, the Church preaches the Gospel to all men and dispenses the treasures of grace, she contributes to the ensuring of peace everywhere on earth and to the placing of the fraternal exchange between men on solid ground by imparting knowledge of the divine and natural law. Therefore, to encourage and stimulate cooperation among men, the Church must be clearly present in the midst of the community of nations both through her official channels and through the full and sincere collaboration of all Christians-a collaboration motivated solely by the desire to be of service to all.

This will come about more effectively if the faithful themselves, conscious of their responsibility as men and as Christians will exert their influence in their own milieu to arouse a ready willingness to cooperate with the international community. Special care must be given, in both religious and civil education, to the formation of youth in this regard.

90. An outstanding form of international activity on the part of Christians is found in the joint efforts which, both as individuals and in groups, they contribute to institutes already established or to be established for the encouragement of cooperation among nations. There are also various Catholic associations on an international level which can contribute in many ways to the building up of a peaceful and fraternal community of nations. These should be strengthened by augmenting in them the number of well qualified collaborators, by increasing needed resources, and by advantageously fortifying the coordination of their energies. For today both effective action and the need for dialogue demand joint projects. Moreover, such associations contribute much to the development of a universal outlook-something certainly appropriate for Catholics. They also help to form an awareness of genuine universal solidarity and responsibility.

Finally, it is very much to be desired that Catholics, in order to fulfill their role properly in the international community, will seek to cooperate actively and in a positive manner both with their separated brothers who together with them profess the Gospel of charity and with all men thirsting for true peace.

The council, considering the immensity of the hardships which still afflict the greater part of mankind today, regards it as most opportune that an organism of the universal Church be set up in order that both the justice and love of Christ toward the poor might be developed everywhere. The role of such an organism would be to stimulate the Catholic community to promote progress in needy regions and international social justice.

91. Drawn from the treasures of Church teaching, the proposals of this sacred synod look to the assistance of every man of our time, whether he believes in God, or does not explicitly recognize Him. If adopted, they will promote among men a sharper insight into their full destiny, and thereby lead them to fashion the world more to man's surpassing dignity, to search for a brotherhood which is universal and more deeply rooted, and to meet the urgencies of our ages with a gallant and unified effort born of love.

Undeniably this conciliar program is but a general one in several of its parts; and deliberately so, given the immense variety of situations and forms of human culture in the world. Indeed while it presents teaching already accepted in the Church, the program will have to be followed up and amplified since it sometimes deals with matters in a constant state of development. Still, we have relied on the word of God and the spirit of the Gospel. Hence we entertain the hope that many of our proposals will prove to be of substantial benefit to everyone, especially after they have been adapted to individual nations and mentalities by the faithful, under the guidance of their pastors.

92. By virtue of her mission to shed on the whole world the radiance of the Gospel message, and to unify under one Spirit all men of whatever nation, race or culture, the Church stands forth as a sign of that brotherhood which allows honest dialogue and gives it vigor.

Such a mission requires in the first place that we foster within the Church herself mutual esteem, reverence and harmony, through the full recognition of lawful diversity. Thus all those who compose the one People of God, both pastors and the general faithful, can engage in dialogue with ever abounding fruitfulness. For the bonds which unite the faithful are mightier than anything dividing them. Hence, let there be unity in what is necessary; freedom in what is unsettled, and charity in any case.

Our hearts embrace also those brothers and communities not yet living with us in full communion; to them we are linked nonetheless by our profession of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and by the bond of charity. We do not forget that the unity of Christians is today awaited and desired by many, too, who do not believe in Christ; for the farther it advances toward truth and love under the powerful impulse of the Holy Spirit, the more this unity will be a harbinger of unity and peace for the world at large. Therefore, by common effort and in ways which are today increasingly appropriate for seeking this splendid goal effectively, let us take pains to pattern ourselves after the Gospel more exactly every day, and thus work as brothers in rendering service to the human family. For, in Christ Jesus this family is called to the family of the sons of God.

We think cordially too of all who acknowledge God, and who preserve in their traditions precious elements of religion and humanity. We want frank conversation to compel us all to receive the impulses of the Spirit faithfully and to act on them energetically.

For our part, the desire for such dialogue, which can lead to truth through love alone, excludes no one, though an appropriate measure of prudence must undoubtedly be exercised. We include those who cultivate outstanding qualities of the human spirit, but do not yet acknowledge the Source of these qualities. We include those who oppress the Church and harass her in manifold ways. Since God the Father is the origin and purpose of all men, we are all called to be brothers. Therefore, if we have been summoned to the same destiny, human and divine, we can and we should work together without violence and deceit in order to build up the world in genuine peace.

93. Mindful of the Lord's saying: "by this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35), Christians cannot yearn for anything more ardently than to serve the men of the modern world with mounting generosity and success. Therefore, by holding faithfully to the Gospel and benefiting from its resources, by joining with every man who loves and practices justice, Christians have shouldered a gigantic task for fulfillment in this world, a task concerning which they must give a reckoning to to Him who will judge every man on the last of days.

Not everyone who cries, "Lord, Lord," will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but those who do the Father's will by taking a strong grip on the work at hand. Now, the Father wills that in all men we recognize Christ our brother and love Him effectively, in word and in deed. By thus giving witness to the truth, we will share with others the mystery of the heavenly Father's love. As a consequence, men throughout the world will be aroused to a lively hope-the gift of the Holy Spirit-that some day at last they will be caught up in peace and utter happiness in that fatherland radiant with the glory of the Lord.

Now to Him who is able to accomplish all things in a measure far beyond what we ask or conceive, in keeping with the power that is at work in us-to Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus, down through all the ages of time without end. Amen. (Eph. 3:20-21).

NOTES

Preface

1. The Pastoral Constitution "De Ecclesia in Mundo Huius Temporis" is made up of two parts; yet it constitutes an organic unity. By way of explanation: the constitution is called "pastoral" because, while resting on doctrinal principles, it seeks to express the relation of the Church to the world and modern mankind. The result is that, on the one hand, a pastoral slant is present in the first part, and, on the other hand, a doctrinal slant is present in the second part. In the first part, the Church develops her teaching on man, on the world which is the enveloping context of man's existence, and on man's relations to his fellow men. In part two, the Church gives closer consideration to various aspects of modern life and human society; special consideration is given to those questions and problems which, in this general area, seem to have a greater urgency in our day. As a result in part two the subject matter which is viewed in the light of doctrinal principles is made up of diverse elements. Some elements have a permanent value; others, only a transitory one. Consequently, the constitution must be interpreted according to the general norms of theological interpretation. Interpreters must bear in mind-especially in part two-the changeable circumstances which the subject matter, by its very nature, involves.

2. Cf. John 18:37; Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45.

Introduction

1. Cf. Rom. 7:14 ff.

2. Cf. 2 Cor. 5:15.

3. Cf. Acts 4:12.

4. Cf. Heb. 13:8.

5. Cf. Col. 1:15.

PART I

Chapter I

1. Cf. Gen. 1:26, Wis. 2;23.

2. Cf. Sir. 17:3-10.

3. Cf. Rom. 1:21-25.

4. Cf. John 8:34.

5. Cf. Dan. 3:57-90.

6. Cf. 1 Cor. 6:13-20.

7. Cf. 1 Kings 16:7; Jer. 17:10.

8. Cf. Sir. 17:7-8.

9. Cf. Rom. 2:15-16.

10. Cf. Pius XII, radio address on the correct formation of a Christian conscience in the young, March 23, 1952: AAS (1952), p. 271.

11. Cf. Matt. 22:37-40; Gal. 5:14.

12. Cf. Sir. 15:14.

13 Cf. 2 Cor. 5:10.

14 Cf. Wis. 1:13; 2:23-24; Rom. 5:21; 6:23; Jas. 1:15.

15. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:56-57.

16. Cf. Pius XI, encyclical letter Divini Redemptoris, March 19, 1937: AAS 29 (1937), pp. 65-106; Pius XII, encyclical letter Ad Apostolorum Principis, June 29, 1958: AAS 50 (1958) pp. 601-614; John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra May 15, 1961: AAS 53 (1961), pp. 451-453; Paul VI, encyclical Ecclesiam Suam, Aug. 6, 1964: AAS 56 (1964), pp. 651-653.

17. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter I, n. 8: AAS 57 (1965), p. 12.

18 Cf. Phil. 1:27.

19. St. Augustine, Confessions I, 1: PL 32, 661.

20. Cf. Rom. 5: 14. Cf. Tertullian, De carnis resurrectione 6: "The shape that the slime of the earth was given was intended with a view to Christ, the future man.": P. 2, 282; CSEL 47, p. 33, 1. 12-13.

21. Cf. 2 Cor. 4:4.

22. Cf. Second Council of Constantinople, canon 7: "The divine Word was not changed into a human nature, nor was a human nature absorbed by the Word." Denzinger 219 (428); Cf. also Third Council of Constantinople: "For just as His most holy and immaculate human nature, though deified, was not destroyed (theotheisa ouk anerethe), but rather remained in its proper state and mode of being": Denzinger 291 (556); Cf. Council of Chalce, don:" to be acknowledged in two natures, without confusion change, division, or separation." Denzinger 148 (302).

23. Cf. Third Council of Constantinople: "and so His human will, though deified, is not destroyed": Denzinger 291 (556).

24. Cf. Heb. 4:15.

25. Cf. 2 Cor. 5:18-19; Col. 1:2O-22.

26. Cf. 1 Pet. 2:21; Matt. 16:24; Luke 14:27.

27. Cf. Rom. 8:29; Col. 3:10-14.

28. Cf. Rom. 8:1-11.

29. Cf. 2 Cor. 4:14.

30. Cf. Phil. 3:19; Rom. 8:17.

31. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 2, n. 16: AAS 57 (1965), p. 20.

32. Cf. Rom. 8:32.

33. Cf. The Byzantine Easter Liturgy.

34. Cf. Rom. 8:15 and Gal. 4:6; cf. also John 1:22 and John 3:1-2.

Chapter 2

1. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter, Mater et Magistra, May 15, 1961: AAS 53 (1961), pp. 401-464, and encyclical letter Pacem in Terris, April 11, 1963: AAS 55 (1963), pp. 257-304; Paul VI encyclical letter Ecclesiam Suam, Aug. 6, 1964: AAS 54 (1864) pp. 609-659.

2. Cf. Luke 17:33.

3. Cf. St. Thomas, 1 Ethica Lect. 1.

4. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (1961), p. 418. Cf. also Pius XI, encyclical letter Quadragesimo Anno: AAS 23 (1931), p. 222 ff.

5. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (1961) .

6. Cf. Mark 2:27.

7. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Pacem in Terris: AAS 55 (1963), p. 266.

8. Cf. Jas. 2, 15-16.

9. Cf. Luke 16:18-31.

10. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Pacem in Terris: AAS 55 (1963), p. 299 and 300.

11. Cf. Luke 6:37-38; Matt. 7:1-2; Rom. 2:1-11; 14:10 14: 10-12.

12. Cf. Matt. 5:43-47.

13. Cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter II, n. 9: AAS 57 (1965). pp. 12-13.

14. Cf. Exodus 24:1-8.

Chapter 3

1. Cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 9:3; Wis. 9:3.

2. Cf. Ps. 8:7 and 10.

3. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Pacem in Terris: AAS 55 (1963), p. 297.

4. Cf. message to all mankind sent by the Fathers at the beginning of the Second Vatican Council, Oct. 20, 1962: AAS 54 (1962), p. 823.

5. Cf. Paul VI, address to the diplomatic corps Jan 7 1965: AAS 57 (1965), p. 232.

6. Cf. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chapter III: Denz. 1785-1186 (3004-3005).

7. Cf. Msgr. Pio Paschini, Vita e opere di Galileo Galilei, 2 volumes, Vatican Press (1964).

8. Cf. Matt. 24:13; 13:24-30 and 36-43.

9. Cf. 2 Cor. 6:10.

10. Cf. John 1:3 and 14.

11. Cf. Eph. 1:10.

12. Cf. John 3:16; Rom. 5:8.

13. Cf. Acts 2:36; Matt. 28:18.

14. Cf. Rom. 15:16.

15. Cf. Acts 1:7.

16. Cf. 1 Cor. 7:31; St. Irenaeus, Adversus haereses, V, 36, PG, VIII, 1221.

17. Cf. 2 Cor. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:13.

18. Cf. 1 Cor. 2:9; Apoc. 21:4-5.

19. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:42 and 53.

20. Cf. 1 Cor. 13:8; 3:14.

21. Cf. Rom. 8:19-21.

22. Cf. Luke 9:25.

23. Cf. Pius XI, encyclical letter Quadragesimo Anno: AAS 23 (1931), p. 207.

24. Preface of the Feast of Christ the King.

Chapter 4

1. Cf. Paul VI, encyclical letter Ecclesiam suam, III: AAS 56 (1964), pp. 637-659.

2. Cf. Titus 3:4: "love of mankind."

3. Cf. Eph. 1:3; 5:6; 13-14, 23.

4. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter I, n. 8: AAS 57 (1965), p. 12.

5. Ibid., Chapter II, no. 9: AAS 57 (1965), p. 14; Cf. n. 8: AAS loc. cit., p. 11.

6. Ibid., Chapter I, n. 8: AAS 57 (1965), p. 11.

7. Cf. ibid., Chapter IV, n. 38: AAS 57 (1965), p. 43, with note 120.

8. Cf. Rom. 8:14-17.

9. Cf. Matt. 22:39.

10. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter II, n. 9: AAS 57 (1965), pp. 12-14.

11. Cf. Pius XII, Address to the International Union of Institutes of Archeology, History and History of Art, March 9, 1956: AAS 48 (1965), p. 212: "Its divine Founder, Jesus Christ, has not given it any mandate or fixed any end of the cultural order. The goal which Christ assigns to it is strictly religious. . . The Church must lead men to God, in order that they may be given over to him without reserve.... The Church can never lose sight of the strictly religious, supernatural goal. The meaning of all its activities, down to the last canon of its Code, can only cooperate directly or indirectly in this goal."

12. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter I, n. 1: AAS 57 (1965), p. 5.

13. Cf. Heb. 13:14.

14. Cf. 2 Thess. 3:6-13; Eph. 4:28.

15 Cf. Is. 58: 1-12.

16 Cf. Matt. 23:3-23; Mark 7: 10-13.

17. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra, IV: AAS 53 (1961), pp. 456-457; cf. I: AAS loc. cit., pp. 407, 410-411.

18. Cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter III, n. 28: AAS 57 (1965), p. 35.

19. Ibid., n. 28: AAS loc. cit. pp. 35-36.

20. Cf. St. Ambrose, De virginitate, Chapter VIII, n. 48: ML 16, 278.

21. Cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter II, n. 15: AAS 57 (1965) p. 20.

22. Cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter II, n. 13: AAS 57 (1965), p. 17.

23. Cf. Justin, Dialogus cum Tryphene, Chapter 110; MG 6, 729 (ed. Otto), 1897, pp. 391-393: ". . .but the greater the number of persecutions which are inflicted upon us, so much the greater the number of other men who become devout believers through the name of Jesus." Cf. Tertullian, Apologeticus, Chapter L, 13: "Every time you mow us down like grass, we increase in number: the blood of Christians is a seed!" Cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter II, no. 9: AAS 57 (1965), p. 14.

24. Cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter II n. 15: AAS 57 (1965), p. 20.

25. Cf. Paul VI, address given on Feb. 3, 1965.

PART II

Chapter 1

1. Cf. St. Augustine, De Bene coniugali PL 40, 375-376 and 394, St. Thomas, Summa Theologica, Suppl. Quaest. 49, art. 3 ad 1, Decretum pro Armenis: Denz.-Schoen. 1327; Pius XI, encyclical letter Casti Connubii: AAS 22 (1930, pp. 547-548; Denz.-Schoen. 3703-3714.

2. Cf. Pius XI, encyclical letter Casti Connubii: AAS 22 (1930), pp. 546-547; Denz.-Schoen. 3706.

3. Cf. Osee 2; Jer. 3:6-13; Ezech. 16 and 23; Is. 54.

4. Cf. Matt. 9: 15; Mark 2: 19-20; Luke 5:34-35; John 3:29; Cf. also 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:27; Apoc. 19:7-8; 21:2 and 9.

5. Cf. Eph. 5:25.

6. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: AAS 57 (1965), pp. 15-16; 40-41; 47.

7. Pius XI, encyclical letter Casti Connubii: AAS 22 (1930), p. 583.

8. Cf. 1 Tim. 5:3.

9. Cf. Eph. 5:32.

10. Cf. Gen. 2:22-24, Prov. 5:15-20; 31:10-31; Tob. 8:4-8; Cant. 1:2-3; 1:16; 4:16-5, 1; 7:8-14; 1 Cor. 7:3-6; Eph 5:25-33.

11. Cf. Pius XI, encyclical letter Casti Connubii: AAS 22 (1930), p. 547 and 548; Denz.-Schoen. 3707.

12. Cf. 1 Cor. 7:5.

13. Cf. Pius XII, Address Tra le visite, Jan. 20, 1958: AAS 50 (1958), p. 91.

14. Cf. Pius XI, encyclical letter Casti Connubii: AAS 22 (1930): Denz.-Schoen. 3716-3718, Pius XII, Allocutio Conventui Unionis Italicae inter Obstetrices, Oct. 29, 1951: AAS 43 (1951), pp. 835-854, Paul VI, address to a group of cardinals, June 23 1964: AAS 56 (1964), pp. 581-589. Certain questions which need further and more careful investigation have been handed over, at the command of the Supreme Pontiff, to a commission for the study of population, family, and births, in order that, after it fulfills its function, the Supreme Pontiff may pass judgment. With the doctrine of the magisterium in this state, this holy synod does not intend to propose immediately concrete solutions.

15. Cf. Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5.

16. Cf. Sacramentarium Gregorianum: PL 78, 262.

17. Cf. Rom. 5:15 and 18; 6:5-11; Gal. 2:20.

18. Cf. Eph. 5:25-27.

Chapter 2

1. Cf. Introductory statement of this constitution, n. 4 ff.

2. Cf. Col. 3:2.

3. Cf. Gen. 1:28.

4. Cf. Prov. 8:30-31.

5. Cf. St. Irenaeus, Adversus haereses. III, 11, 8 (ed. Sagnard p. 200; cf. ibid., 16, 6: pp. 290-292; 21, 10-22: pp. 370-372; 22 3: p. 378; etc.)

6. Cf. Eph. 1:10.

7. Cf. the words of Pius XI to Father M. D. Roland-Gosselin "It is necessary never to lose sight of the fact that the objective of the Church is to evangelize, not to civilize. If it civilizes, it is for the sake of evangelization." (Semaines sociales de France, Versailles, 1936, pp. 461-462).

8. First Vatican Council, Constitution on the Catholic Faith: Denzinger 1795, 1799 (3015, 3019). Cf. Pius XI, encyclical letter Quadragesimo Anno: AAS 23 (1931), p. 190.

9. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Pacem in Terris: AAS 55 (1963), p. 260.

10. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Pacem in Terris: AAS 55 (1963), p. 283; Pius XII, radio address, Dec. 24, 1941: AAS 34 (1942), pp. 16-17.

11. John XXIII, encyclical letter Pacem in Terris: AAS 55 (1963), p. 260.

12. Cf. John XXIII, prayer delivered on Oct. 11, 1962, at the beginning of the council: AAS 54 (1962), p. 792.

13. Cf. Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, n. 123: AAS 56 (1964), p. 131; Paul VI, discourse to the artists of Rome: AAS 56 (1964), pp. 439-442.

14. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on Priestly Training and Declaration on Christian Education.

15. Cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter IV, n. 37: AAS 57 (1965), pp. 42-43.

Chapter 3

1. Cf. Pius XII, address on March 23, 1952: AAS 44 (1953), p. 273; John XXIII, allocution to the Catholic Association of Italian Workers, May 1, 1959: AAS 51 (1959), p. 358.

2. Cf. Pius XI, encyclical letter Quadragesimo Anno: AAS 23 (1931), p. 190 ff; Pius XII, address of March 23, 1952: AAS 44 (1952), p. 276 ff; John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (19ffl), p. 450; Vatican Council II, Decree on the Media of Social Communication, Chapter I, n. 6 AAS 56 (1964), p. 147.

3. Cf. Matt. 16:26, Luke 16:1-31, Col. 3:17.

4. Cf. Leo XIII, encyclical letter Libertas, in Acta Leonis XIII, t. VIII, p. 220 ff; Pius XI, encyclical letter Quadragesimo Anno: AAS 23 (1931), p. 191 ff; Pius XI, encyclical letter Divini Redemptoris: AAS 39 (1937), p. 65 ff; Pius XII, Nuntius natalicius 1941: AAS 34 (1942), p. 10 ff: John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (1961), pp. 401-464.

5. In reference to agricultural problems cf. especially John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (1961),

6. Cf. Leo XIII, encyclical letter Rerum Novarum: AAS 23 (1890-91), p. 649, p. 662; Pius XI, encyclical letter Quadragesimo Anno: AAS 23 (193-1), pp. 200-201; Pius XI, encyclical letter Divini Redemptoris: AAS 29 (1937), p. 92; Pius XII, radio address on Christmas Eve 1942: AAS 35 (1943) p. 20; Pius XII, allocution of June 13, 1943: AAS 35 (1943), p. 172; Pius XII, radio address to the workers of Spain, March 11, 1951: AAS 43 (1951), p. 215; John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (1961), p. 419.

7. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (1961), pp. 408, 424, 427; however, the word "curatione" has been taken from the Latin text of the encyclical letter Quadragesimo Anno: AAS 23 (1931) p. 199. Under the aspect of the evolution of the question cf. also: Pius XII, allocution of June 3, 1950: AAS 42 (1950) pp. 485-488; Paul VI, allocution of June 8, 1964: AAS 56 (1964), pp. 573-579.

8. Cf. Pius XII, encyclical Sertum Laetitiae: AAS 31 (1939), p. 642, John XXIII, consistorial allocution: AAS 52 (1960), pp. 5-11; John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (1961), p. 411.

9. Cf. St. Thomas, Summa Theologica: II-II, q. 32, a. 5 ad 2; Ibid. q. 66, a. 2: cf. explanation in Leo XIII, encyclical letter Rerum Novarum: AAS 23 (1890-91) p. 651; cf. also Pius XII allocution of June 1, 1941: AAS 33 (1941), p. 199; Pius XII, birthday radio address 1954: AAS 47 (1955), p. 27.

10. Cf. St. Basil, Hom. in illud Lucae "Destruam horrea mea," n. 2 (PG 31, 263); Lactantius, Divinarum institutionum, lib. V. on justice (PL 6, 565 B); St. Augustine, In Ioann. Ev. tr. 50, n. 6 (PL 35, 1760); St. Augustine, Enarratio in Ps. CXLVII, 12 (PL 37, 192); St. Gregory the Great, Homiliae in Ev., hom. 20 (PL 76, 1165); St. Gregory the Great, Regulae Pastoralis liber, pars III c. 21 (PL 77 87); St. Bonaventure, In III Sent. d. 33, dub. 1 (ed Quacracchi, III, 728); St. Bonaventure, In IV Sent. d. 15, p. II, a. a q. 1 (ed. cit. IV, 371 b); q. de superfluo (ms. Assisi Bibl. Comun. 186, ff. 112a-113a); St. Albert the Great, In III Sent., d. 33, a.3, sol. 1 (ed. Borgnet XXVIII, 611); Id. In IV Sent. d. 15, a. 1 (ed. cit. XXIX, 494-497). As for the determination of what is superfluous in our day and age, cf. John XXIII, radio-television message of Sept. 11, 1962: AAS 54 (1962) p. 682: "The obligation of every man, the urgent obligation of the Christian man, is to reckon what is superfluous by the measure of the needs of others, and to see to it that the administration and the distribution of created goods serve the common good."

11. In that case, the old principle holds true: "In extreme necessity all goods are common, that is, all goods are to be shared." On the other hand, for the order, extension, and manner by which the principle is appplied in the proposed text, besides the modern authors: cf. St. Thomas, Summa Theologica II-II, q. 66, a. 7. obviously, for the correct application of the principle, all the conditions that are morally required must be met.

12. Cf. Gratiam, Decretum, C. 21, dist. LXXXVI (ed. Friedberg I, 302). This axiom is also found already in PL 54, 591 A (cf. in Antonianum 27 (1952) 349-366)i.

13. Cf. Leo XIII, encyclical letter Rerum Novarum: AAS 23 (1890-91) pp. 643-646, Pius XI, encyclical letter Quadragesimo Anno: AAS 23 (1931) p. 191; Pius XII, radio message of June 1, 1941: AAS 33 (1941), p. 199; Pius XII, radio message on Christmas Eve 1942: AAS 35 (1943), p. 17; Pius XII, radio message of Sept. 1, 1944: AAS 36 (1944) p. 253; John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (1961) pp. 428-429.

14. Cf. Pius XI, encyclical letter Quadragesimo Anno: AAS 23 (1931) p. 214; John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (1961), p. 429.

15. Cf. Pius XII, radio message of Pentecost 1941: AAS 44 (1941) p. 199, John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (1961) p. 430.

16. For the right use of goods according to the doctrine of the New Testament, cf. Luke 3:11, 10:30 ff; 11:41; 1 Pet. 5:3, Mark 8:36; 12:39-41; Jas. 5:1-6; 1 Tim. 6:8; Eph. 1:28; a Cor. 8:13; 1 John 3:17 ff.

Chapter 4

1. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (1961), p. 417.

2. Cf. John XXIII, ibid.

3. Cf. Rom. 13:1-5.

4. Cf. Rom. 13:5.

5. Cf. Pius XII, radio message, Dec. 24, 1942: AAS 35 (1943) pp. 9-24; Dec. 24, 1944: AAS 37 (1945), pp. 11-17; John XXIII encyclical letter Pacem In Terris: AAS 55 (1963), pp. 263, 271 277 and 278.

6. Cf. Pius XII, radio message of June 7, 1941: AAS 33 (1941) p. 200: John XXIII, encyclical letter Pacem In Terris: 1.c., p. 273 and 274.

7. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Mater et Magistra: AAS 53 (1961), p. 416.

8. Pius XI, allocution "Ai dirigenti della Federazione Universitaria Cattolica". Discorsi di Pio XI (ed. Bertetto), Turin, vol. 1 (1960), p. 743.

9. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, n. 13: AAS 57 (1965), p. 17.

10. Cf. Luke 2:14.

Chapter 5

1. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Pacem in Terris, April 11, 1963: AAS 55 (1963), p. 291; "Therefore in this age of ours which prides itself on its atomic power, it is irrational to believe that war is still an apt means of vindicating violated rights."

2. Cf. Pius XII, allocution of Sept. 30, 1954: AAS 46 (1954) p. 589; radio message of Dec. 24, 1954: AAS 47 (1955), pp. 15 ff, John XXIII, encyclical letter Pacem in Terris: AAS 55 (1963), pp. 286-291; Paul VI, allocution to the United Nations, Oct. 4, 1965.

3. Cf. John XXIII, encyclical letter Pacem in Terris, where reduction of arms is mentioned: AAS 55 (1963), p. 287.

4. Cf. 2 Cor. 2:6.

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The 16 Documents

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1. ***Sacrosanctum concilium*, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 1963.**
English Latin

2. ***Inter Mirifica*, Decree On the Means of Social Communication, 1963.**
English Latin

3. ***Lumen Gentium*, Dogmatic Constitution On the Church, 1964.**
English Latin

4. ***Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, Decree On the Catholic Churches of the Eastern Rite,1964.**
English Latin

5. ***Unitatis Redintegratio*, Decree on Ecumenism, 1964.**
English Latin

6. ***Christus Dominus*, Decree Concerning the Pastoral Office of Bishops In the Church, 1965.** English Latin

7. ***Perfectae Caritatis*, Decree On Renewal of Religious Life, 1965.**
English Latin

8. ***Optatam Totius*, Decree On Priestly Training, 1965.**
English Latin

9. ***Gravissimum Educationis*, Declaration On Christian Education, 1965.**
English Latin

10. ***Nostra Aetate*, Declaration On the Relation Of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, 1965.** English Latin

11. ***Dei Verbum*, Dogmatic Constitution On Divine Revelation, 1965.**
English Latin

12. ***Apostolicam Actuositatem*, Decree On the Apostolate of the Laity, 1965.**
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13. ***Dignitatis Humanae*, Declaration On Religious Freedom, 1965.**
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14. ***Ad Gentes*, Decree On the Mission Activity of the Church, 1965.**
English Latin

15. ***Presbyterorum Ordinis*, Decree On the Ministry and Life of Priests, 1965.**
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16. ***Gaudium et Spes*, Pastoral Constitution On the Church In the Modern World,1965.**
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