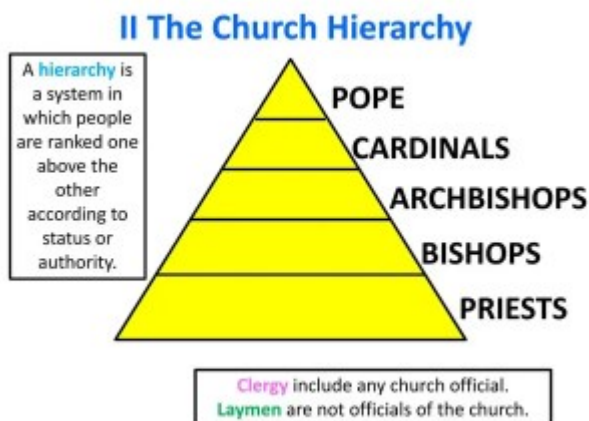


The Hierarchical Structure Of Roman Catholicism



By L. H. Lehmann

This article is from the 1944 edition of the *Converted Catholic Magazine* of which former Roman Catholic priest, Leo Herbert Lehmann (also known as L.H. Lehmann) is the editor. It was first put online in PDF format by the LutheranLibrary.org. I hope you are enjoying these articles. They add important insights of both the past and the present that I have never heard from anywhere else.

[This is the second of a series of articles on "The True Nature and Structure of Roman Catholicism."]

THE TERM HIERARCHY means "priest-rule," and is applied nowadays to forms of authoritarian government, where all the actions of a subject group are regulated by the decrees of a small ruling caste. It is the antithesis of democracy, which is "rule by the people." Fascist regimes are hierarchical, and, like the government of the Catholic church, rule by absolute decree issued by the "Leader" *Fuehrer, Duce, Caudillo, Poglovar* – and put into execution by the various "hierarchs" who hold positions of power descending by steps from the supreme power of the leader at the top.

The fundamental concept of order and authority in the Roman Catholic church is rooted in its hierarchical structure, which is as coherent and immutable as a pyramid. Other institutions outside it may come and go; but the table of basic values of the church of Rome never changes or evolves. At times during its history, the Catholic church has been subjected to very rude shocks; in temporal matters it has even made concessions, for the sake of expediency, to changing values around it. But it does not, and cannot, admit absolute progress. For the continuity of these absolute values, its fixed, hierarchical structure is essential. Hitler, who also aimed to set up a similar millennial structure of Nazism, ordered his followers to model their organization after that of the Roman Catholic church. In his *Mein Kampf* (page 882), he says:

"Here, too, one can learn from the Catholic church. Although its structure of doctrines in many instances collides, quite unnecessarily, with exact science and research, yet it is unwilling to sacrifice even one little syllable of its dogmas. It has rightly recognized that, its resistibility does not lie in a more or less great adjustment to the scientific results of the moment, which in reality are always changing, but rather in a strict adherence to dogmas, once laid down, and which alone give the entire structure the character of creed.

"Today, therefore, the Catholic church stands firmer than ever. One can prophesy that in the same measure in which appearances vanish, the Church itself, as the resting pole in the flight of appearances, will gain more and more blind adherents."

However, the Catholic church is hierarchical not only in its own organized earthly structure, but also in its spiritual and racial concepts. In its view, especially as expounded by the Jesuits, the whole cosmos is one great hierarchical structure. The church and this world of men and things are but a microscopic reflection of the greater cosmos with God at its pinnacle. On this earth, as Pope Leo XIII declared, the Pope takes the place of God. He is the supreme head of the entire earthly structure, the *Summus Pontifex* – the highest priest and absolute hierarch, whose decree is unchanging and unchangeable law.

Spiritual-Racial Hierarchy

So intertwined are the spiritual and racial concepts in Roman Catholic ideology, that it is difficult to explain one without the other. According to Jesuit teaching a man is in some way actually born into his fixed place in the spiritual world. If he is born a Jew, for instance, then even if he becomes a Roman Catholic he can never become a "good Catholic" – in the sense that he cannot be trusted with the direction of the policy of the church. It is for this reason that the *Constitutions* of the Jesuit Order itself make Jewish descent, up to the fifth generation, an impediment to membership. This was confirmed in the Fifth General Congregation of the Order in 1593, since Jews and Moors (Negroes) were held to be "infamous" (*infamies habentur*).¹ If, by special dispensation, a converted Jew is admitted, this rule prevents his "radiation" in the higher degrees of the Order. Polanco, a friend and coworker of Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, was of Jewish descent and for this reason was barred from the generalship of the Order.

For the same reason, boys born of Protestant parents can only enter the Roman Catholic priesthood by special dispensation, and are never entrusted with confidential positions in the priesthood or hierarchy. But not only race and heretical taint are obstacles to the reception of certain spiritual benefits in the Catholic church. Sex, too, makes a difference. Women are definitely excluded from the priesthood – the first requirement of which is the male sex. The reason given is that the spiritual "power" of the priesthood, along with the choice privileges and high honors that go with it in the spiritual hierarchy, in this world and the next, does not "take" in a woman.

The Jesuit Order is itself constituted on the same authoritarian, hierarchical basis as the greater organization of the Catholic church which

it controls. The Jesuits for this reason for centuries have bitterly opposed other Orders in the church, such as the Benedictines, because their constitutions are too democratic. In modern times, however, religious orders like the Benedictines, whose abbots are elected by all the members, have lost their primitive democratic setup and have been whipped into the church's authoritarian scheme by Jesuit overlordship. Some latitude providing opportunity for dissent and free action existed in the Catholic church before the Jesuits came. Now, because of their intense centralization of power and their dogma of papal infallibility, the Jesuits have made the structure of the Catholic church more hierarchical than even that of their own Order.

Jesuit Racial Concept

In the Jesuit view of mankind, the races constitute the rungs of an hierarchical ladder in a vast cosmic system that stretches from hell to heaven, with earth between as a testing ground. Each one is fixed from eternity in his "natural" place in this cosmic pyramid. He is predestined to it and cannot leave it, even though he may make efforts and appear to do so in this earthly life. The Fifth General Congregation of the Order declared: "Though we may be satisfied with a man as to himself, still he may be disagreeable to us on account of what he has inherited from his fathers."²

In their view, any effort to serve God in ways different to those taught by the Roman Catholic church is called "heresy," a crime in Catholic teaching that is punishable by death. Any attempt to serve God according to one's individual conscience is regarded as a rebellion against, being fixed in one's "natural" place in the great cosmic scheme of God's universe. It is useless, however, to try to change one's place in this cosmic scheme, and all heresies, whether by individuals, or movements such as the Protestant Reformation, are looked upon as mere temporary disturbances. Thus, when a Roman Catholic becomes a Protestant, he is regarded by the Catholic church as merely attempting to stray, in the flesh, from his natural place in the fixed cosmic sphere. It is taken as a foregone conclusion that he will come back – if not in his own life, then by a kind of reincarnation process in the person of his descendants. A Roman Catholic priest today by the name of Father Paul Luther; a direct descendant of Martin Luther, is given as an example of how Catholics who break away from the church of Rome "always come back to the church." Likewise, the Catholic church had a priest (he was killed in the war) by the name of Father George Washington, who is claimed to have been descended from the first President of the United States, and who is pointed to as proof that George Washington has, through this descendant, come back to the Roman Catholic church.

In fact, every "convert" from Protestantism to Roman Catholicism today is looked upon as merely, returning to the "faith of his fathers," thus making up for the temporary upset caused by his ancestors in the cosmic structure of the spiritual universe as conceived by the Catholic church. The Jesuits were specially founded in the sixteenth century for this work of "counter-Reformation," and the whole machinery of the post-Reformation Catholic church is geared for this task of undoing the work of the Reformation – in the social as well as the spiritual order – and of restoring the balance that was

upset in the cosmic sphere by the Protestant Reformation of Martin Luther and his associates in the sixteenth century. The first Protestants were all Roman Catholics, and it is the boast of Catholic propagandists today that it will not be long till the last vestiges of Protestantism will be wiped out and the descendants of the first Protestant heretics will return to the Roman Catholic church.

Not only the spiritual position of individuals and races is fixed in this Jesuit hierarchical pyramid, but also their economic standing. Pope Leo XIII, in his much-vaunted Encyclical on Labor (*Rerum Novarum*), categorically states:

“Let it be laid down, in the first place, that humanity must remain as it is... unequal fortune is a result of inequality in condition.”

The late Pope Pius XI, in his encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* (“Forty Years After”) implemented Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical on Labor and subtitled it “On the *Reconstruction of the Social Order*,” to make it conform – to Mussolini’s Fascist teachings on the corporative State. Stressing the need of doing away with democracy and of reestablishing the hierarchical order of things, he says:

“Let those in power, therefore, be convinced that the more faithfully this principle be followed, and a graded, hierarchical order exist between the various subsidiary organizations, the more excellent will be both the authority and efficiency of the social organization as a whole, and the happier and more prosperous the condition of the State.”

The influential Jesuit magazine *America*, in its issue of April 13, 1940, when the Axis dictators were crushing out democracy from all of Europe, also sounded the call for “a return to an integral social order, the principles of which are still preserved in our languid memory of the great medieval experiment.” In the introduction, to his textbook on the encyclical “*Quadragesimo Anno*,” published by the Paulist Press in New York, the Jesuit Father Gerald C. Treacy states: “There was a real social order in the days when Europe was Catholic. Everyone believed in God and His Church.”

There is no way out, therefore, in Catholic teaching for absolute progress for mankind on this earth, whether in the spiritual, racial or economic spheres. Everything is fixed for us in these three fields in the cosmic scheme of things.

Heretical ‘Disharmony’

The outstanding exponent of the Catholic church’s spiritual-racial teachings is the well-known German Jesuit Hermann Muckermann, formerly director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for the study of anthropology, heredity and eugenics at Berlin-Dahlem. It was he, in fact, who supplied Hitler with his Nazi ‘master-race’ theories, which were carried to their terrible extremes in the ruthless annihilation of Jews and other “slave races” in the horror camps of Nazi-occupied Europe. Father Muckermann’s voluminous works expounding these spiritual-racial theories are to be found in the larger libraries of the

United States. Chief among them is his textbook on racial eugenics, entitled *Volkstum, Staat und Nation – Eugenisch Gesehen* ("The People, the State and the Nation – from the Eugenic Viewpoint"). Next in importance is his Catholic theological work entitled, *Die Sieben Sakramente* ("The Seven Sacraments"), in which he applies to the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic ritual his theories of race and heredity. This work shows realistically that the Jesuits have been endeavoring to elevate their teachings on racism to the position of a religious dogma. The Swiss Catholic magazine *Vaterland*, in its issue of July 17, 1936, praised this latest work of Muckermann as "both original and justified."³

The Jesuit teaching on race, according to Muckermann, centers around the principle that mixture of races produces "disharmony" among their descendants, who evidence great difficulty in integrating themselves in the totality of a nation, or the church. It is well known that strong individuals result from the mixture of races, and the Jesuit fear of the "disharmony" which such mixtures cause can easily be understood. Such "disharmony" makes for disturbance in society and heresy in religion. The Catholic church, in order to gain its ends, works for a static condition of society similar to that of the Fascist corporative State. It cannot countenance society as a living, vibrant unity of autonomous individuals forever progressing in spiritual and physical matters. Society according to the Catholic church should be a physical and spiritual organism already completely fixed and static, in which each one, like a cell in a body, has his "organic place," which is determined for him at the moment of his birth. No one can change this place for another, no more than a cell can abandon the place it occupies in a body. This is the way the Jesuit Father Muckermann explains it in his above-mentioned book, *Volkstum, Staat und Nation*, page 36 and following. He says:

"The position of the cells is determined by their natural aptitudes and their natural position in the entire body, and not from any other point of view. Happy is the State which in this way resembles an organism. Happy the citizens who integrate themselves in such a State in a manner so perfect that they find their own place, in keeping with their particular aptitudes, where they will be able to serve the group. No plowman or factory worker, fulfilling his own particular and irreplaceable functions, can suddenly, like a brain cell, take over the supreme governing of a people."

This Jesuit teaching is also applied to the various groupings of professional and other workers in the State. These are also likened to organic groups of cells, which reproduce themselves apart from the others, and the fruits of whose labors must be applied entirely to the group to which they belong. Races must follow the same pattern, and are regarded also as groups of cells in a superior organism. Thus humanity as a whole, as Pope Leo XIII decreed, "must remain as it is," with no changeover from one class to another. Each individual is forbidden to abandon his "natural place," in which he has been fixed by birth and race. States, likewise, have each their own niche in the cosmic scale, and perpetuate themselves by "endogamy," that is, the descendants of the various racial groups must not intermarry but remain fixed in their organic place. Muckermann explains this in detail as follows (p.

37):

"The cells of the skin cannot be transplanted to the brain and the cells of the brain can serve no purpose by being grafted on to the muscles, if the harmony of the entire body is to be maintained. Similarly, it is not desirable that the workers in a State become part of the brain cell of its government. For the same reason, the cellular groups of different races cannot be allowed to mix in with one another."

It can thus be easily seen how, in the Jesuit cosmic scheme, each individual, each profession, and each race forms a rank in the hierarchical pyramid, each in its own place, and each with its own particular value. Certain individuals, therefore, are destined to rule over others; certain races also are destined to hold others in subjection. All in turn are topped and bound together by the spiritual power of the Roman Catholic religion. The "mystic" seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic church are taught to be the only channels through which this power of grace flows down through all the steps of this cosmic pyramid. As the Catholic catechism teaches, only priests, properly ordained by the church of Rome, are the dispensers of this grace upon which the whole society of mankind depends.

Describing this hierarchical set-up in heaven, in the church and in civil society, Pope Leo XIII, in his encyclical, *Quod Apostolici Muneris*, says:

"As the Almighty willed that in the heavenly kingdom itself the choirs of angels should be of different ranks, subordinated the one to the other; and as in the Church, God has established different grades of orders with diversity of function, so also He has established In Civil Society many orders of varying dignity, right and power. And this to the end that the State, like the Church, should form one body comprising many members, some excelling others in rank and importance, but all alike necessary to one another and solicitous for the common good."

It is only in the light of the importance, in the Jesuit-Catholic view, of this scheme of things, that a non-Catholic can understand, for instance, how the death penalty for "heresy" is justified. The "heretic" is one who deliberately creates "disharmony" in this cosmic scheme of God. The Catholic Brooklyn Tablet of November 5, 1938, explains Catholic teaching on the point, as follows:

"Heresy is an awful crime, and those who start a heresy are more guilty than they who are traitors to the civil government."

It was in this light that the Nazi-Fascist hierarchs, standing trial at Nuremberg as this is being written, justified the ruthless extermination of Jews and others who dared to create "disharmony" in the organic, static system of society that Hitler vowed to set up for the next thousand years.

From the above it can be seen at a glance how this spiritual and racial scheme of things as outlined by the Jesuits differs from, the Protestant conception of equality and freedom in religion, race and sex. Led by Luther and Calvin, the Protestant Reformation swept away the foundations of Roman

Catholic authoritarianism and placed all men in direct contact with God. Their interpretation of the Christian teaching made unnecessary the hierarchical steps of a cosmic pyramid, and made the grace of full salvation available to all races and grades of society, and equally attainable by both sexes. Their Evangelical teaching made it imperative to reject the folly of racism, since the Gospel teaches that all may become the children of God. True Protestantism must defend for all, in order to safeguard equality and liberty for itself, the same equality and liberty for all others. A priest, in the Protestant concept, is as much a sinner needing salvation as the rest of mankind. It does not admit any special privileges in the order of sanctification, nor endow any ruler, in church or State, with power that is not delegated by the general body of believers.

This democratic view of religion and the social order that Protestantism brought into being by the Reformation led to the sovereignty of the people. It gave Jews, for the first time in history, equal rights with Christians in the social order, and paved the way for the "four freedoms" now held to be the hope of the world. But this democratic scheme of things is violently attacked by the Catholic church as the breeder of Godlessness in education, of secularization of the State, of the revolt of the masses against feudal labor conditions, of disregard for hierarchical authority, and of Freemasonry. All of this, in the eyes of the Roman Catholic church, is the direct result of the appalling heresy of Protestantism which destroyed the organic, hierarchic, static, integralist society of the Middle Ages, and paved the way for the disintegralist, but dynamic, free, democratic society, in defense of which World War II was fought at the expense of a tremendous outpouring of blood and money.

In his very first encyclical (*Summi Pontificatus*), the present Pope Pius XII laid the blame for all the ills of modern society on the Protestant revolt against the hierarchical power of the Roman Catholic church. "The denial of the fundamentals of morality," he declared, "had its origin in Europe in the abandonment of that Christian teaching, of which the Chair of Peter is the sole depository and exponent." That was in October, 1939, a month after World War II began, and on November 16, Cardinal Villeneuve of Canada came to Washington, D. C., and repeated the same accusation in a speech before the National Press Club. According to the Catholic Register of November 30, 1939, he said:

"When four centuries ago, certain nations in the North and West of Europe had rejected the authority of the Catholic Church as a divine teacher, they immediately began to examine the human evidence upon which the doctrines of Christianity reposed... One can see no hope for the Christian civilization of the world, unless men turn back again to the true foundation of Christian society and acknowledge that this dark and bitter period of wars and rumor of wars has sprung from a rising against the authority of the Church of God."

This turning back to an hierarchical society would mean the abandonment of the sovereignty of the people, the democratic principle of authority, which Pope Leo XIII openly condemns in his encyclical *Immortale Dei* as follows:

"The sovereignty of the people, however, and this without any reference to

God, is held to reside in the multitude; which is doubtless a doctrine exceedingly well calculated to flatter and inflame many passions, but which lacks all reasonable proof, and all power of insuring public safety and preserving order. Indeed, from the prevalence of this teaching, things have come to such a pass that many hold as an axiom of civil jurisprudence that seditions may be rightfully fostered. For the opinion prevails that princes are nothing more than delegates chosen to carry out the will of the people; whence it necessarily follows that all things are as changeable as the will of the people, so that risk of public disturbance is hanging over our heads."

The Catholic church now goes further in its accusation and states that socialism and communism are the logical and inevitable end results of the Protestant heresy. In this, Catholic thought parallels the Marxist theory that Protestantism and democracy bear within themselves the seeds of their own destruction; that individual autonomy is just a passing phase. With both, the hope is father to the thought that, after the Protestant democratic way of life has disappeared, their particular form of collectivism will inherit the earth.

But Protestant Americans should not be frightened into believing that the only choice now is between Clerical-Fascism and Marxian Communism.

[Further articles of this series will reveal the full significance of Catholic plans to reconstruct religion and the social order after the pattern of its "great medieval experiment."]

1. "Qui etiam juxta Constitutiones titulo infamiae admitti non possunt." Ct. Steinmetz' *History of the Jesuits*, Vol. II, p. 19. See also E. Boyd Barrett, *The Jesuit Enigma*, p. 42.↵

2. Cf. Steinmetz, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 140.↵

3. After the collapse of Nazi Germany last summer, the Catholic *Brooklyn Tablet* of September 18, 1945, reported in an official N.G.W.O. dispatch from Berlin of August 20, 1945, that: "Rev. Hermann Muckermann, S.J., one of Europe's most eminent Catholic scholars and former head of the Imperial Institute of Biology here is safe in his home."↵

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