

# The Nature Of Roman Catholicism



Would you call this picture "Christianity"? I call it Roman paganism. The idol they are worshipping is a wafer made of flour encrusted in what's called a Monstrance which is made of gold.

By L. H. Lehmann

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*This is the first of a series of articles which we believe will reveal aspects of the Catholic church never before publicized. Subsequent articles will detail the "hierarchical" and "cosmic" structure of the church, its attitude towards economics, education, medicine, its peculiar 'moral' code and finally, its relation to the concept of Anti-Christ. When the series is concluded, these articles will be published in one pamphlet under the general title of "The True Nature and Structure of Roman Catholicism."*

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THE FAILURE OF AMERICANS to arrive at a clear and accurate estimate of the nature and structure of Roman Catholicism springs from two wrong conceptions: (1) that of certain anti-Catholics who regard the church of Rome as consciously sinister and evil, and (2) that of the over-tolerant liberals who regard its reactionary, authoritarian activities merely as an outdated carry-over from its medieval heritage. The former are convinced that Roman Catholicism is anti-Christian, anti-democratic and immoral by deliberate, diabolical intent. The latter consider it essentially good, but with a tendency to side always with the forces that are an obstacle to modern progress and human betterment.

The correct estimate is that **the Roman Catholic church as an institution is inherently evil, but not known or recognized as such even by those who direct its policies.** It is the world's great religious "delusion," which was foretold by St. Paul (2 Thess. 2:9), by which men would be so deceived "that they should believe a lie." *The present writer, who faithfully served the Roman Catholic church as a priest in trusted positions for eight years,*

*firmly convinced that its authoritarian, anti-democratic and medieval teachings were the only salvation for the ills of the world, is a witness to this fact.*

Not only have these two groups failed to correctly evaluate and check the aims and activities of the Roman Catholic church in America; they have also added further to the general confusion that has played into the hands of the church and enabled it to exercise a growing control over almost every phase of life in the United States. It is because of this confusion, for instance, that the true relationship of Roman Catholicism and Fascism has never been fully understood in this country. The extreme anti-Catholics have never doubted the identity between them, because they regard both as consciously and wholly evil. The liberals condemn Fascism as evil by nature but, because of their over-tolerant attitude toward all religions, cannot go so far as to identify Fascism with any church organization.

## **European View Of Catholicism**

European writers, on the other hand, many of whom are Roman Catholic but anti-Clerical, are more accurate in analyzing the connection between the Roman Catholic church and Fascism. They know at first hand the long history of Roman Catholic political intrigues in Europe. Among them may be mentioned the following eminent authors: Professors Salvemini, La Piana, and Borgese; Conrad Heiden and Count Carlo Sforza.<sup>1</sup> But not even these have ever been fully convinced of a fundamental affinity between Roman Catholicism and Fascism. Count Kalergi-Coudenove, on the other hand, an ardent Catholic whose crusade for Pan-Europe is pleasing to the Jesuits, comes very near to defining the true nature of Roman Catholicism when he categorically states Catholicism is the Fascist form of Christianity. The Catholic hierarchy rests fully and securely on the leadership principle with an infallible Pope in supreme command for a lifetime.”<sup>2</sup>

## **Catholic-Fascist Identity**

The fault common to all these opponents of Roman Catholicism – the liberals, violent anti-Catholics, as well as European Catholic anti-Clericals – lies in the fact that none of them realizes that neither Fascism nor Roman Catholicism is evil by sinister intent.

We know now that Fascism did not originate with Mussolini or Hitler; and that it did not cease to exist with their spectacular exit. We must also recognize that it had “moral” forces behind it. Fascism is simply the secular expression of an ideology or world philosophy which is common to both Fascist politicians and the Roman hierarchy, and which has its roots in the concept of the “perfect order,” an hierarchal, integrated, inflexible society, permanently stratified and not to be disturbed by social change. Its aim is to establish an authoritarian society of iron-bound classes, ignorant masses and a small select upper class of clergy and nobles. This has been clearly put by Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical Humanum Genus:

“Just as a perfect condition of the body results from the conjunction and composition of its various members, which though differing in form and

purpose, make, by their union and the distribution of each one to its proper place, a combination beautiful to behold, firm in strength, and necessary for use; so, in the commonwealth, there is an almost infinite dissimilarity of men, as parts of the whole. If they are to be all equal, and each is to follow his own will, the State will appear most deformed; but if, with a distinction of degrees of dignity, of pursuits and employments, all aptly conspire for the common good, they will present a natural image of a well-constituted State."

## **Fascism's 'Moral' Code**

All forms of Fascism, like the Catholic church, are based upon a "moral code" which is believed by its advocates to be a glorious heritage. Its leaders regard themselves, and are believed by their followers, to be sent by Providence. "In combating the Jews," said Hitler, in *Mein Kampf*, "I am fighting the battle of the Lord." Pope Pius XI hailed Mussolini as "a man sent by Providence."<sup>3</sup> Even the late, English Cardinal Hinsley, who was regarded as pro-democratic, openly stated: "If Fascism goes under, God's cause goes with it." To its advocates and followers, Fascism remains the only true moral order, and democracy the opposite – dis-integrative and corrupting, confused and chaotic, destructive of order, discipline and morality.

The evidence of history shows the need of people for security, both in property and person. This need has always resulted in the establishment of some system of law and order. Even in what we regard as the most cruel and depraved of societies, certain ethical, moral and legal standards were set up and maintained. In the pirate colonies of the West Indies and the Mediterranean, for instance, people bought and sold, married and reared children, cared for the old and sick, and in general obeyed the local laws and customs as though the economy of the islands was not based purely on plunder. It was a case of using every means for a supposedly good end, and the evil was mitigated and sanctioned by the ethical standards applicable within the group.

Japan to us is a bandit nation whose complete annihilation seemed the only solution of its wickedness. Yet Japan, like the Roman Catholic church, has its very strict and precise code of "morals." Carl Crow, an authority on Japan, in an article entitled "*The Jap Emperor Must Go*," in the June, 1945, issue of *Digest and Review*, explains how the Japanese are indoctrinated with their "moral" code and subjected to what he calls a "very highly organized system of thought control." He goes on to say:

"Anything that will add to the glory of the emperor or to the strength and power of the state is justified, whether it be murder, theft or betrayal of a personal friend... This so-called 'code of the samurai' which condones everything done for the glory of the emperor is not the code of anyone particular party or clique. It is not, as a great many Americans appear to believe, a code of the fanatical military party... It is taught in all of the schools where it is given much more emphasis than is accorded to purely academic subjects... The period of compulsory education lasts but a few years and is succeeded by a system of highly restricted education unlike that of

any other country in the world... the principal part of the instruction is devoted to what is called 'morals.'"

No nation or sizable human institution can be created and maintained as a band of pirates or gangsters purely for mutual gain. And for this reason alone, it can easily be seen that an institution of the immensity and cultural grandeur of the Roman Catholic church, with its centuries of philosophical continuity, its educational and charitable institutions, cannot be based upon a consciousness of evil. Excess of corruption and abuses may bring it to the verge of destruction, as happened at the time of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. But its ideology was not thereby impaired, as has been proved by its continuity in Latin-European and Latin-American countries, as well as by its rise to power even in Protestant democratic America. Likewise Mussoliniism and Hitlerism have suffered defeat in Italy and Germany, but not the ideology of Fascism which existed before them. At the very moment when their regimes were toppling to destruction under the terrific blows of the combined military might of America, Britain and Russia, Fascism under other names continued to flourish in Catholic countries such as Spain and Portugal and sprang up to full bloom next door to us in Argentina. In an uncensored dispatch transmitted by underground channels from Buenos Aires last May 30, by Arnaldo Cortesi and published in the *New York Times* June 1, 1945, we are told that "things have happened in Buenos Aires recently that exceed anything that this correspondent can remember in his seventeen years' experience in fascist Italy."

That was only a few weeks after the United States and Britain had welcomed Argentina as a member of the United Nations Conference in San Francisco.

The ideology of Clerical Fascism and anti-Semitism was rampant in parts of the United States 200 years before Hitler and Mussolini. How similar its practical application then was to what the Axis dictators put into effect in our day may be seen, for example, in the early French-Catholic history of Louisiana. Describing "The Black Code" promulgated in New Orleans by Governor Bienville in 1724, Herbert Asbury in his book, *The French Quarter*, tells us (p. 25):

"The first article of the original Black Code ordered the expulsion of all Jews from the province; and the succeeding four articles prohibited any form of worship except the Roman Catholic, made it imperative upon masters to impart (Catholic) religious instruction to their slaves, and provided for the confiscation of Blacks placed under the supervision of any person not a Catholic."

It would be the most fatal error of all that have been made so far by the opponents of Fascism to write it off now as nothing more than an attempt of a group of bandits and murderers to control the world. Yet this error is very widespread, as can be seen in the following excerpt from an editorial in the *New York Times* of June 21, 1945:

"A few years ago the Nazis appeared to be people with ideas – bad ideas, stupid ideas, cruel ideas, but still ideas. Hitler's masterpiece, 'Mein Kampf,' implied as much... Now with the collapse of their power even this last

rag is gone.”

It would be similar to the error of the extreme anti-Catholics who regard the church of Rome as purposefully established and consciously maintained for the destruction of all human progress and betterment. The reactionary medieval and authoritarian structure of the Roman Catholic church is indeed purposefully intended, but, from its point of view, with the best of motives. Its leaders and the millions of their followers have been convinced, in fact, that it was thus established by command of God, that its structure and ideology were blueprinted in the courts of heaven by Almighty God himself, and its charter delivered on earth to the first apostles by Jesus Christ in person. The Pope is believed to be the vicar of Jesus Christ and God’s mouthpiece on earth. The Japanese likewise believe their emperor to be of Divine origin and his commands as those of God. It is a blasphemy both in the eyes of a loyal Japanese and a faithful Roman Catholic even to think that anything in the teaching and practices of their respective institutions is anything but good and divinely ordained.

It should also be apparent that the attitude of the over-tolerant liberals in America toward the Catholic church is equally erroneous. Their opinion that the Vatican’s cooperation with Fascism, the backwardness, the cultural lag, the superstitious and reactionary activities of the church of Rome are merely incidental and curable in time by persuasion and education, is as fallacious as that of the Catholic-haters who view everything connected with the Roman church to be plotted for sinister purposes.

## **Means And Ends**

There is nothing incidental or accidental about the aims and activities of the Roman Catholic church. It uses expediency to gain its ultimate aims while biding its time to entrench itself in a democratic country like the United States. Pope Leo XIII set forth this expedient policy in his instructions sent to the bishops of the United States in 1888:

“Although on account of the extraordinary political condition today it may happen that the Church in certain modern countries acquiesces in certain modern liberties, not because she prefers them in themselves, but because she judges it expedient that they should be permitted, she would in happier times resume her own liberty...

The “liberty” here intended is the traditional power of the Catholic church to impose its dogmatic authority upon the entire world. Again, in his encyclical *Longinqua Oceani* (Jan. 6, 1895), Pope Leo warned the bishops of America as follows:

“It is necessary to destroy the error of those who might believe, perhaps, that the status of the Church in America is a desirable one, and also the error that in imitation of this sort of thing the separation of Church and State is legal and even convenient.”

In order to carry its ideological principles into action, the Catholic church asserts its right to use force, if feasible, when persuasion fails. Its

Inquisition lasted into the nineteenth century and was revived in all its horrors under the Nazi-Fascist dictatorships. Its right to execute heretics is officially proclaimed even in present-day America.<sup>4</sup>

## The Catholic Ideal

In order to understand the ideal concept underlying Catholic action, and how intelligent men can consider it valid, it is necessary to know the "frame of reference" set up in the mind, say, of a cardinal, a bishop or priest of the Catholic church.

That frame of reference is formed of certain fixed notions, the first of which is that this is not and never will be a perfect world, but that it must be governed and controlled by a "perfect society," with a supreme authority ordained by God, permanently established for all time, infallible in its pronouncements, and never hindered or inhibited by the clashing interests of parties or factions among the people.

In his book, *Papal Supremacy and Infallibility*, published by the Paulist Press in New York (p. 10), the Jesuit Father Sidney F. Smith quotes Bossuet as follows:

"Power given to several carries its restrictions in its division, whilst power given to one alone, and over all, and without exception, carries with it plenitude, and, not having to be divided with any other, it has no bounds save those which its terms convey."

Such a mind cannot conceive of a satisfactory government of religion or society that has to work through democratic systems of government. Although a major plan is desired, there is no authority to command its perfect execution. The plan is torn to shreds by opposing interests, and when it emerges from the democratic mill it has lost its original form' and is often scrapped for another that is less perfect. Such a process, the Catholic church holds, in common with Fascism, must necessarily fail in efficiency and integration. If a plan is necessary, good and desired, they say, it should not be impeded or whittled down by the personal interests of petty people.

There should be an authority (they hold) who is supreme and in a position to ignore the demands of all groups, factions and interests in matters which, in the opinion of the authority, are above such concerns. It is the authority that matters, not discussion. If the governing authority is perfect, not only will there be no need for discussion of a plan, but the plan itself will be perfectly executed.

Implicit in this is the idea that the people, as such, are incapable of acting for the interests of society as a whole. In his book, *Petit Manuel des Questions Contemporaines*, translated by Henry R. Burke, and published by the Paulist Press in New York in 1939, Cardinal Verdier, Archbishop of Paris, has the following:

"When parties come into power they must remember that their programs, and the promises which they made to the voter, can and ought to be carried out only

in so far as they contribute to the common good.”

The Catholic church has never favored the giving of power to the masses of the people. Only last March 11, Pope Pius XII warned the world of the danger in what he called “the overwhelming strength of organized masses,” which, he went on to say, “use their power to the detriment of justice and the rights of others.”

The supreme authority in the Catholic church is the Pope, who is above all question. He is chosen by God and speaks for God. All he does, therefore, is of God. His control of all moral action and principles is supreme and universal for all men, everywhere and for all time. Discussion of what he desires and plans is useless. It is destructive of 'good, disruptive of God's will, and cannot produce necessary discipline, order and efficiency. The same Jesuit Father Smith in his above-mentioned book (p. 7) says:

“A ruler's office is well described as that of holding together the social organization: remove him, and the parts disintegrate into fragments. To a ruler again belongs the power to admit into and to banish from the kingdom, as also that of making laws for those who are admitted.”

This is the basic Fascist principle of “authority tied to a leader.”

## **Hierarchical Structure**

The essential characteristics of the Catholic church's plan for world government is its hierarchical structure, which is blueprinted not merely for this earth, but is projected into eternity. In fact, its cosmic aspect is more important, since the Catholic church claims exclusive control over all traffic in souls from this earth to heaven and hell. Everything in its teaching is referred to as *sub specie aeternitatis* (“under the aspect of eternity”). In this Catholic scheme of things the individual counts only as a soul, not as a person. It is his citizenship in the next life, not in this, that matters. Cardinal Newman puts it thus:

“The Catholic Church holds it is better for the sun and moon to drop from heaven, for the earth to fall, and for the many millions on it to die of starvation in extreme agony, as far as temporal affliction goes, than that one soul, I will not say should be lost, but should commit one single venial sin, should tell one willful untruth, or should steal one poor farthing without excuse.”

The Pope and his bishops and priests are engrossed completely in the machinery of the church's hierarchical government. It is the project that counts. There is no concern for the ages of human suffering and misery on earth that have resulted from keeping the machinery running. As the late Pope Pius XI declared, “the Catholic church is prepared to make a deal with the devil himself if it helps its interests.”

[The next article of this series will give a detailed description of the hierarchical structure of the Catholic church and how it is projected into eternity .]

1. See Salvémini-La Piana's *"What To Do With Italy;"* Heiden's *"Der Fuehrer;"* Sforza's *"Contemporary Italy;"*↵
2. *Crusade for Pan-Europe*, by Kalergi-Coudenove, p. 173.↵
3. This statement of Pope Pius XI hailing Mussolini as "sent by Providence," is confirmed by Don Luigi Sturzo, liberal Catholic priest-leader who is obviously not anticlerical. It may be seen in his book, *Italy and the New World Order*, 1943, page 158.↵
4. See the Catholic Brooklyn Tablet for Nov. 5, 1938.↵

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