

The Papal System – XLI. Conclusion



Continued from [The Papal System – XL. The Jesuits.](#)

Romanism never showed such symptoms of approaching dissolution as it exhibits at this moment (in 1872). With the exception of England and the United States, ruin threatens the papal system everywhere. Irish emigration into Britain gives Catholicism the appearance of progress in Scotland and England. Germany and Ireland are rapidly increasing the Romanists in these States. And yet, what population north and south Britain and the United States gain, Ireland and Germany lose. It is but a transfer of papal forces, and not an augmentation of the army of the pontiff. So far from that, every year emigration sets thousands at liberty from priestly chains among ourselves, who, had they remained in the countries of their nativity, would have been bound still.

But in all the world besides, in what a sorry state the infallible Church is? The scepter of the king priest is broken in Italy, and his triple crown destined for some antiquarian collection. And never was there a ruler over whose dethronement his subjects had greater joy. His spiritual authority is barely tolerated in that Italy where it received adoration for centuries, and where Protestant churches are now springing up in scores; and will soon rise up in thousands. In France the women respect his holiness; the children obey him; and the men smile at his chattering claims to infallibility; in Spain, the dominion of the popes has reached the last stage of decay; and soon it will utterly perish in the land which gave birth to St. Dominic of inquisitorial fame; in Austria, the House of Hapsburgh has left the Roman bishop to support his tottering spiritual empire himself; and it has given full permission to his enemies to make war upon his ancient and iniquitous rule; in Germany, neither Catholic nor Protestant pays him the customary reverence; and the principles of Dollinger threaten to snatch from his priestly sovereignty the last section of that mighty nation whose destinies Luther did so much to shape.

The paramount influence of the Jesuits over the pope has weakened the bonds by which the great body of liberal priests and people throughout the world were united to the "Holy Father." The preposterous dogma of infallibility, known by hosts of priests to be false in its application to Pius IX., and known by a smaller and more learned number to be equally destitute of truth in reference to any of his predecessors, is tossing the papal ship furiously;

and will yet open her seams and plunge her beneath the billows of destruction.

An elderly lady of the Catholic faith, some months since in Europe, in speaking of the calamities of the poor old pope, told a gentleman that she intended to leave the Church of Rome, "*For God Almighty was evidently becoming a Protestant.*" If he was ever anything else, it is clear that the whole energies of his government are in that direction now, and that the papacy must soon vanish from the earth.

The Roman bishops have built a mountain of superstitions upon the gospel; the mountain is broad as the Catholic world, and high enough to insult the angels and defy the Almighty; but that gospel is volcanic in its nature; it cannot be kept quiet; already the mountain heaves and labors; and soon the gigantic power of the cross underneath it will tear the mountain to pieces, scatter it to the four winds of heaven, and send its doctrines of burning love all over the earth.

The popes have erected a vast temple, in which they have enthroned the Roman Dagon; it has mighty walls, and many worshipers; and TRUTH, like Samson, has been there for ages, blind, it was supposed, and certainly a prisoner; but Truth has now seized the principal pillar of that idol temple, with the strength of omnipotence; it totters; the whole building trembles; and soon, amid the songs of angels, the jubilant shouts of holy men, and the blessings of Immanuel, Truth will hurl that temple from its foundations, and fling its fragments into the abyss; then—

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run,
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
'Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

APPENDIX.

THE CREED OF POPE PIUS IV.; THE FORM OF FAITH BINDING ON ALL THE CLERGY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

In the preface to the bull enjoining this celebrated standard of doctrine, Pius orders it to be received by "All who may happen henceforward to be placed over cathedral and superior churches, or who may have to take care respecting their dignities, canonries, and any other ecclesiastical benefices whatsoever, having the cure of souls;" and by "all persons who shall have charge of monasteries, convents, houses, and any other places, of all regular orders, even of military ones, under whatever name or title."

THE CREED.

"I, N. (the person's name), with steadfast faith, believe and profess all and every particular contained in the symbol of faith, which the Holy Roman Church uses, to wit:

"'I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker 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, very God of very God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father; by whom all things were made: who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnated of the Holy Spirit from the Virgin Mary, and was made man, was crucified also for us, under Pontius Pilate, suffered and was buried; and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and will again come with glory to judge the living and the dead, of whose kingdom there will not be an end; and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who, together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified; who spake through the prophets; and one Catholic and Apostolic Church. I confess one baptism *for the remission of sins*, and I await the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.'

"The apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions and the other observances and constitutions of the same Church I most steadfastly admit and embrace. I likewise admit the Holy Scripture according to that sense which our Holy Mother Church has held and does hold, whose province it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures. Nor will I ever understand or interpret it except according to *the unanimous consent of the holy fathers*." [This doctrine would remove all understanding of Scripture out of the Catholic Church.] "I also profess that there are truly and properly seven sacraments of the new law instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, and necessary for the salvation of mankind, though not all necessary for each individual, to wit: Baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders (clerical), and matrimony, and that they confer grace, and that of these, baptism, confirmation and orders cannot be repeated without sacrilege. I also receive and admit all the received and approved ceremonies of the Catholic Church in the solemn administration of all the above-mentioned sacraments. I embrace and receive all and everything which in the Holy Synod of Trent has been defined and declared concerning original sin and justification. I profess, likewise, that in the mass 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 a *conversion of the entire substance of the bread into the body and of the entire substance of the wine into the blood*, which conversion the Catholic Church calls transubstantiation. I also confess that under one kind alone, *Christ is taken whole and entire*, and a true sacrament. I steadfastly hold that there exists a purgatory, and that the *souls there detained are assisted by the suffrages of the faithful*; in like manner also that *the saints reigning along with Christ are to be venerated and invoked*, and that they offer up prayers for us, and that their relics are to be venerated. I steadfastly assert that the images of Christ and of the ever *Virgin Mother of God*, and in like manner of other saints are to be kept and retained, and that *due honor and veneration are to be awarded to them*. I also maintain that the power of indulgences has been left by Christ in his Church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to the Christian people. I recognize the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church as the mother" [several churches were founded earlier] "and mistress

of all churches, and I promise and swear true obedience to the Roman Pontiff, successor of St. Peter prince of apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ. All other things also delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and ecumenical councils, and particularly by the holy Synod of Trent, I undoubtingly receive and profess, and at the same time all things contrary, and all heresies whatsoever condemned by the Church, and rejected and anathematized I in like manner condemn, reject, and anathematize. This true Catholic faith, outside of which no one can be saved, which at present I readily profess and truly hold, I. N., promise, vow and swear, that I will most steadfastly retain and confess the same entire and undefiled to the last breath of life (with God's help), and that I will take care, as far as shall be in my power, that it be held, taught, and preached by my subjects, or those whose charge shall devolve on me in virtue of my office. So help me God, and these Holy Gospels of God.

"But we will that the present letter be read according to custom in our Apostolic Chancery. And that they may the more readily be open to all, let them be written out in its Quinternum (a volume named after the number of its leaves), and also be printed.

"Be it, therefore, lawful for no person whatever to infringe this page of our will and command, or to contravene it by any rash daring. But if any one 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 of the incarnation of our Lord, 1564, on the ides of November, and in the fifth year of our pontificate.

"Fed, Cardinal Caesius,
"Coe. Glorierius."

THE OATH OF A MODERN CATHOLIC BISHOP AT HIS CONSECRATION.

"I, N., elected to the church of N., will from this time henceforth, be faithful and obedient to the blessed apostle Peter, and to the Holy Roman Church and to our lord N., Pope N., and to his canonical successors. I will not aid by advice or consent or deed, in any injury to them in life or limb; or to their arrest, or to any violence being in any way offered to them; or any injuries, under any pretext whatsoever. I will not knowingly reveal to any one, to their injury, the advice which they shall commit to me by themselves or their messengers, or by letter. Saving my order, I will assist in retaining and defending the Roman Papacy, and the royalties of St. Peter against everyone. I will honorably deal with the legate of the Apostolic See in going and returning; and will assist him in his need. I will take care to preserve, defend, increase, and advance the rights, honors, privileges, and authority of the Holy Roman Church, of our lord the pope, and his aforesaid successors. Nor will I assist by counsel, deed or treaty, in any machinations against our lord himself, or the same Roman Church, which may be evil or prejudicial to their persons, right, honor, state, and power. And if I shall know of any such attempts being treated of, or set on foot, by any persons whatsoever, I will hinder them to the utmost of my power; and as soon as I possibly can, will signify it to the same our lord, or to some other who shall be able to give him information. I will, with all my power, observe,

and cause others to observe the rules of the holy fathers, the apostolic decrees, ordinances, or dispositions, provisions, and commands. *To the utmost of my power I will persecute and attack* (pro posse persequar et impugnabo) *heretics, schismatics, and rebels against the same our lord, and his aforesaid successors.* When called to a synod I will come, unless prevented by some canonical hindrance. Every three years I will, in my own person, visit the threshold of the apostles; and I will give to our lord and his successors aforesaid an account of my whole pastoral office, and of all things in any way concerning the state of my church, the discipline of the clergy and people, and the salvation of the souls which are committed to my trust; and on the other hand I will humbly receive, and with the utmost diligence obey the apostolic (papal) commands. But if I shall be detained by lawful hindrance, I will fulfill all that is above mentioned by an appointed messenger, having special charge of this matter, from among my chapter or some other ecclesiastical dignitary, or person of station; or in failure of these, by a priest of the diocese; and in failure of all the clergy, by some other presbyter, secular or regular, of respectable honesty and piety, fully instructed in all things aforesaid. But I will give information concerning any hindrances of this kind, by lawful proofs to be transmitted by said messenger to the cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, who presides in the congregation of the sacred council.

“I will neither sell nor give, nor pawn the possessions belonging to my table; nor will I enfeoff (give possessions in exchange for a service) them anew, nor alienate them in any manner, even with the consent of the chapter of my church, without the advice of the Roman Pontiff. And if I shall in any way proceed to alienate them, I am willing in reality to incur the penalties contained in a certain constitution passed upon this subject. So help me God, and the Holy Gospels of God.”

THE END.

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