

UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



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# DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATIONS OF THE DOGMATIC DECREES OF  
THE COUNCIL OF TRENT, THE DECREE ON THE IMMACULATE  
CONCEPTION, THE SYLLABUS OF POPE PIUS IX, AND  
THE DECREES OF THE VATICAN COUNCIL.



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## PREFACE

**E**NGLISH versions of recent ecclesiastical decrees are easily found in pamphlet, book, or periodical. Up to the present time, however, this has not been true of earlier decrees. Those of Trent, bearing on justification, grace, the sacraments, etc., have long been out of print; so also the decree on the Immaculate Conception and the Syllabus of Pope Pius IX. It has seemed advisable, therefore, to publish in one volume, a collection of the most important dogmatic decrees from the Council of Trent down to the reign of Pope Leo XIII.

No one will fail to recognize the desirability of such a collection. In almost every doctrinal treatise or sermon some of these decrees are sure to be used. In the majority of cases the writer or preacher is unable to quote directly, because in matters so important he naturally shrinks from the responsibility of giving an exact English rendering of the

## PREFACE

original Latin. With an approved translation to guide him he will now be able to quote directly, and thus to state and explain the doctrines of the Church in her own words.

In the present volume we have used Canon Waterworth's translation for the Council of Trent; Cardinal Manning's for the Vatican Council; and for the Syllabus, the one authorized by Cardinal McCabe, Archbishop of Dublin. All of these translations have been approved by ecclesiastical authority.

*New York, 1912.*



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**THE COUNCIL OF TRENT**



# THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

## SESSION III

February 4, 1546

### DECREE TOUCHING THE SYMBOL OF FAITH

*In the Name of the Holy and Undivided  
Trinity, Father, and Son, and  
Holy Ghost*

This sacred and holy, œcumenical and general Synod of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same three legates of the Apostolic See presiding therein, considering the magnitude of the matters to be treated of, especially of those comprised under the two heads of the extirpating of heresies and the reforming of manners, for the sake of which chiefly it is assembled, and recognizing, with the Apostles, that its wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the spirits

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of wickedness in the high places,<sup>1</sup> exhorts with the same Apostle, all and each, 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 salvation, with the sword of the Spirit (which is the word of God).<sup>2</sup> Wherefore that this its pious solicitude may begin and proceed by the grace of God, it ordains and decrees that, before all other things, a confession of faith is to be set forth; following herein the examples of the Fathers, who have been wont, in the most sacred councils, at the beginning of the Actions thereof, to oppose this shield against heresies; and with this alone, at times, have they drawn the unbelieving to the faith, overthrown heretics, and confirmed the faithful. For which cause this council has thought good that the symbol of faith which the Holy Roman Church makes use of, as being that principle\* wherein all who profess the faith of Christ necessarily agree, and that firm and

<sup>1</sup> Eph. vi. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. vi. 10, 16, 17.

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alone foundation against which the gates of hell shall never prevail,<sup>3</sup> be expressed in the very same words in which it is read in all the churches. Which symbol is as follows: 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, 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 came down from the heavens, 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 rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures; and He ascended into heaven, sitteth 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 the Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xvi. 18.

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the Son; Who with the Father and the Son together is adored and glorified; Who spoke by 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.



## SESSION IV

April 8, 1546

### DECREE CONCERNING THE CANONICAL SCRIPTURES

The sacred and holy, œcumenical and general synod of Trent—lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same three legates of the Apostolic See presiding therein—keeping this always in view, that, errors being removed, the purity itself of the Gospel be preserved in the Church; which (Gospel), before promised through the prophets in the holy Scriptures, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, first promulgated with His own mouth, and then commanded to be preached by His Apostles to every creature,<sup>10</sup> as the fountain of all both saving truth and moral discipline; and seeing clearly that this truth and discipline are contained in the written books, and the unwritten

scri  
tra

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15.

↑  
no comma in original

## DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

traditions which, received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the Apostles themselves, the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down even unto us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand; (the synod), following the examples of the orthodox Fathers, receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety and reverence all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament,—seeing that one God is the author of both,—as also the said traditions, as well those appertaining to faith as to morals, as having been dictated either by Christ's own word of mouth or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession. And it has thought it meet that a list of the sacred books be inserted in this decree, lest a doubt may arise in anyone's mind which are the books that are received by this synod. They are as set down here below: of the Old Testament—the five books of Moses, to wit: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Josue; Judges; Ruth; four books of Kings; two of Paralipomenon; the first book of Esdras, and the second which is en-

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titled Nehemias; Tobias; Judith; Esther; Job; the Davidical Psalter, consisting of a hundred and fifty psalms; the Proverbs; Ecclesiastes; the Canticle of Canticles; Wisdom; Ecclesiasticus; Isaias; Jeremias, with Baruch; Ezechiel; Daniel; the twelve minor prophets, to wit: Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggæus, Zacharias, Malachias; two books of the Machabees, the first and the 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: one to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, one to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, two to Timothy, one to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews; two of Peter the Apostle; three of John the Apostle; one of the Apostle James; one of Jude the Apostle; and the Apocalypse of John the Apostle.

But if anyone receive not, as sacred and canonical, the said books entire with all their

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parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate edition; and knowingly and deliberately contemn the traditions aforesaid; let him be anathema.

Let all, therefore, understand, in what order, and in what manner, the said synod, after having laid the foundation of the confession of faith, will proceed, and what testimonies and authorities it will mainly use in confirming dogmas and in restoring morals in the Church.

### DECREE CONCERNING THE EDITION AND THE USE OF THE SACRED BOOKS

gote  
Moreover, the same sacred and holy synod—considering that no small utility may accrue to the Church of God, if it be made known which out of all the Latin editions, now in circulation, of the sacred books, is to be held as authentic—ordains and declares that the said old and Vulgate edition, which, by the lengthened usage of so many ages, has been approved of in the Church, be, in public lectures, disputations, sermons and expositions, held as

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authentic; and that no one is to dare or presume to reject it under any pretext whatever.

Furthermore, in order to restrain petulant Inter spirits, it decrees that no one, relying on his own skill, shall,—in matters of faith, and of morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine,—wresting the sacred Scripture to his own senses, presume to interpret the said sacred Scripture contrary to that sense which holy Mother Church—to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy Scriptures—hath held and doth hold; or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers; even though such interpretations were never (intended) to be at any time published. Contraveners shall be made known by their Ordinaries and be punished with the penalties by law established.

And wishing, as is just, to impose a restraint in this matter also on printers, who now without restraint—thinking, that is, that whatsoever they please is allowed them—print without the license of ecclesiastical superiors the said books of sacred Scripture and the notes Print

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and comments upon them of all persons indifferently, and with the press oftentimes unnamed, often even fictitious, and what is more grievous still, without the author's name, and also keep for indiscriminate sale books of this kind printed elsewhere, (this synod) ordains and decrees that henceforth the sacred Scripture, and especially the said old and Vulgate edition, be printed in the most correct manner possible; and that it shall not be lawful for anyone to print or cause to be printed any books whatever on sacred matters without the name of the author; nor to sell them in future or even to keep them unless they shall have been first examined and approved of by the ordinary; under pain of the anathema and fine imposed in a canon of the last council of the Lateran: and, if they be regulars, besides this examination and approval they shall be bound to obtain a license also from their own superiors, who shall have examined the books according to the form of their own statutes. As to those who lend or circulate them in manuscript without their having been first examined and approved of, they shall be subjected to the

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same penalties as printers; and they who shall have them in their possession or shall read them shall, unless they discover the authors, be themselves regarded as the authors. And the said approbation of books of this kind shall be given in writing; and for this end it shall appear authentically at the beginning of the book, whether the book be written or printed; and all this, that is, both the approbation and the examination, shall be done gratis, that so what ought to be approved may be approved, and what ought to be condemned may be condemned.

Besides the above, wishing to repress the temerity by which the words and sentences of sacred Scripture are turned and twisted to all sorts of profane uses, to wit: to things scurrilous, fabulous, vain, to flatteries, detractions, superstitions, impious and diabolical incantations, sorceries and defamatory libels, (the synod) commands and enjoins, for the doing away with this kind of irreverence and contempt, and that no one may henceforth dare in any way to apply the words of Sacred Scripture to these and such like purposes;

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Words  
Interp

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that all men of this description, profaners and violators of the word of God, be by the bishops restrained by the penalties of law and others of their own appointment.



## SESSION V

June 17, 1546

### DECREE CONCERNING ORIGINAL SIN

That our Catholic faith, without which it is impossible to please God,<sup>1</sup> may, errors being purged away, continue in its own perfect and spotless integrity, and that the Christian people may not be carried about with every wind of doctrine<sup>2</sup>; whereas that old serpent, the perpetual enemy of mankind, amongst the very many evils with which the Church of God is in these our times troubled, has also stirred up not only new but even old dissensions touching original sin and the remedy thereof; the sacred and holy, œcumenical and general synod of Trent,—lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the three same legates of the Apostolic See presiding therein, wishing now to come to the reclaiming of the erring and the confirm-

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. iv. 14.

## DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

ing of the wavering,—following the testimonies of the sacred Scriptures, of the holy Fathers, of the most approved councils and the judgment and consent of the Church itself, ordains, confesses and declares these things touching the said original sin:

1. If anyone does not confess that the first man, Adam, when he had transgressed the commandment of God in Paradise, immediately lost the holiness and justice wherein he had been constituted; and that he incurred, through the offence of that prevarication, the wrath and indignation of God, and consequently death, with which God had previously threatened him, and together with death captivity under his power who thenceforth had the empire of death, that is to say the devil,<sup>3</sup> and that the entire Adam, through that offence of prevarication, was changed in body and soul for the worse; let him be anathema.

2. If anyone asserts that the prevarication of Adam injured himself alone, and not his posterity, and that the holiness and justice, received of God, which he lost, he lost for

<sup>3</sup> Heb. ii. 14.

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himself alone, and not for us also; or that he, being defiled by the sin of disobedience, has only transfused death and pains of the body into the whole human race, but not sin also, which is the death of the soul; let him be anathema: whereas 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.”<sup>4</sup>

3. If anyone asserts that this sin of Adam—which in its origin is one, and being transfused into all by propagation, not by imitation, is in each one as his own—is taken away either by the powers of human nature, or by any other remedy than the merit of the one mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>5</sup> Who hath reconciled us to God in His own blood, made unto us justice, sanctification, and redemption;<sup>6</sup> or if he denies that the said 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

<sup>4</sup> Rom. v. 12.

<sup>5</sup> I Tim. ii. 5.

<sup>6</sup> I Cor. i. 30.

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be saved.”<sup>7</sup> Whence that voice: “Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world”;<sup>8</sup> and that other: “As many as have been baptized have put on Christ.”<sup>9</sup>

4. If anyone denies that infants, newly born from their mothers’ wombs, even though they be sprung from baptized parents, are to be baptized; or says that they are baptized indeed for the remission of sins,<sup>10</sup> but that they derive nothing of original sin from Adam which has need of being expiated by the laver of regeneration for the obtaining life everlasting, whence it follows as a consequence that in them the form of baptism, the remission of sins, is understood to be not true, but false, let him be anathema. For that which the Apostle has said, “By one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men in whom all have sinned,”<sup>11</sup> is not to be understood otherwise than as the Catholic Church spread everywhere hath always understood it. For, by

<sup>7</sup> Acts iv. 12.

<sup>8</sup> John i. 29.

<sup>9</sup> Gal. iii. 27.

<sup>10</sup> Acts ii. 38.

<sup>11</sup> Rom. v. 12.

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reason of this rule of faith, from a tradition of the Apostles, even infants, who could not as yet commit any sin of themselves, are for this cause truly baptized for the remission of sins, that in them that may be cleansed away by regeneration which they have contracted by generation. For, "unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."<sup>12</sup>

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 even asserts that the whole of that which has the true and proper nature of sin is not taken away; but says that it is only raised, or not imputed; let him be anathema. For, in those who are born again, there is nothing that God hates, because there is no condemnation to those who are truly buried together with Christ by baptism into death;<sup>13</sup> who walk not according to the flesh, but putting off the old man, and putting on the new who is created according to God,<sup>14</sup> are made innocent, immaculate, pure, harmless, and beloved of

<sup>12</sup> John iii. 5.    <sup>13</sup> Rom. viii. 1; vi. 4.    <sup>14</sup> Eph. iv. 22, 24.

## DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

God, heirs indeed of God, but joint heirs with Christ;<sup>15</sup> so that there is nothing whatever to retard their entrance into Heaven. But this holy synod confesses and is sensible that in the baptized there remains concupiscence, or an incentive (to sin); which, whereas it is left for our exercise, cannot injure those who consent not, but resist manfully by the grace of Jesus Christ; yea, he who shall have striven lawfully shall be crowned.<sup>16</sup> This concupiscence, which the Apostle sometimes calls sin,<sup>17</sup> the holy synod declares that the Catholic Church has never understood it to be called sin, as being truly and properly sin in those born again, but because it is of sin, and inclines to sin. And if anyone is of a contrary sentiment, let him be anathema.

This same holy synod doth nevertheless declare that it is not its intention to include in this decree, where original sin is treated of, the blessed and immaculate Virgin Mary, the Mother of God; but that the constitutions of Pope Sixtus IV,<sup>18</sup> of happy memory, are to be observed under the pains contained in the said constitutions, which it renews.

<sup>15</sup> Rom. viii. 17.    <sup>16</sup> II Tim. ii. 5.    <sup>17</sup> Rom. vi. 12 ff.

<sup>18</sup> "Cum præexcelsa," Feb. 28, 1476; "Grave nimis," Sept. 4, 1483.

## SESSION VI

January 13, 1547

### DECREE ON JUSTIFICATION

#### *Proem*

Whereas there is, at this time, not without the shipwreck of many souls and grievous detriment to the unity of the Church, a certain erroneous doctrine disseminated touching justification; the sacred and holy, œcumenical and general Synod of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost,—the most reverend lords, Giammaria del Monte, Bishop of Palestrina, and Marcellus of the title of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, priest, cardinals of the holy Roman Church, and legates apostolic *a latere*, presiding therein, in the name of our most Holy Father and Lord in Christ, Paul III, by the providence of God, Pope,—purposes, unto the praise and glory of Almighty

## DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

God, the tranquillizing of the Church, and the salvation of souls, to expound to all the faithful of Christ the true and sound doctrine touching the said justification; which (doctrine) the Sun of Justice, Christ Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith,<sup>1</sup> taught, which the Apostles transmitted, and which the Catholic Church, the Holy Ghost reminding her thereof,<sup>2</sup> has always retained, most strictly forbidding that any henceforth presume to believe, preach, or teach otherwise than as by this present decree is defined and declared.

### CHAPTER I.

#### *On the Inability of Nature and of the Law to Justify Man*

The holy synod declares first, that, for the correct and sound understanding of the doctrine of justification, it is necessary that each one recognize and confess that, whereas all men had lost their innocence in the prevarication of Adam,<sup>3</sup>—having become unclean,<sup>4</sup> and,

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. v. 12; I Cor. xv. 22.

<sup>2</sup> John xiv. 26.

<sup>4</sup> Is. lxiv. 6.



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as the Apostle says, by nature children of wrath,<sup>5</sup> as (this synod) has set forth in the decree on original sin,—they were so far the servants of sin,<sup>6</sup> and under the power of the devil and of death, that not the Gentiles only by the force of nature, but not even the Jews by the very letter itself of the Law of Moses, were able to be liberated, or to arise, therefrom; although free-will, attenuated as it was in its powers, and bent down, was by no means extinguished in them.

### CHAPTER II

#### *On the Dispensation and Mystery of Christ's Advent*

Whence it came to pass, that the Heavenly Father, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort,<sup>7</sup> when that blessed fullness of the time was come,<sup>8</sup> sent unto men, Jesus Christ (cf. can. i), His own Son,—Who had been, both before the Law, and during the time of

<sup>5</sup> Eph. ii. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Rom. vi. 17.

<sup>7</sup> II Cor. i. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Gal. iv. 4; Eph. i. 10.

## DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

the Law, to many of the holy Fathers, announced and promised,<sup>9</sup>—that He might both redeem the Jews who were under the Law,<sup>10</sup> and that the Gentiles, who followed not after justice, might attain to justice,<sup>11</sup> and that all men might receive the adoption of sons. Him God hath proposed as a propitiator, through faith in His blood,<sup>12</sup> for our sins, and not for our sins only, but also for those of the whole world.<sup>13</sup>

### CHAPTER III

#### *Who Are Justified Through Christ*

But, though He died for all,<sup>14</sup> yet do not all receive the benefit of His death, but those only unto whom the merit of His passion is communicated. For as in truth men, if they were not born propagated of the seed of Adam, would not be born unjust, seeing that, 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

<sup>9</sup> cf. Gen. xlix. 10, 18.

<sup>11</sup> Rom. ix. 30.

<sup>13</sup> I John ii. 2.

<sup>10</sup> Gal. iv. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Rom. iii. 25.

<sup>14</sup> II Cor. v. 15.

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never would be justified (cf. can. ii and x); seeing that, in that new birth, there is bestowed upon them, through the merit of His passion, the grace whereby they are made just. For this benefit the Apostle exhorts us evermore 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.<sup>15</sup>

### CHAPTER IV

*A Description Is Introduced of the Justification of the Impious, and of the Manner Thereof Under the Law of Grace*

By which words a description of the justification of the impious is indicated—as being a translation from that state wherein man is born a child of the first Adam to the state of grace and of the adoption of the sons of God<sup>16</sup> through the second Adam, Jesus Christ,

<sup>15</sup> Col. i. 12 ff.

<sup>16</sup> Rom. viii. 15.

## DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

our Saviour. And this translation, since the promulgation of the Gospel, cannot be effected without the laver of regeneration or the desire thereof, as it is written: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."<sup>17</sup>

### CHAPTER V

#### *On the Necessity, in Adults, of Preparation for Justification, and Whence It Proceeds*

The synod furthermore declares that in adults the beginning of the said justification is to be derived from the prevenient grace of God through Jesus Christ; that is to say, from His vocation, whereby, without any merits existing on their parts, they are called; that so they who by sins were alienated from God may be disposed through His quickening and assisting grace to convert themselves to their own justification by freely assenting to and coöperating with that said grace (cf. can. iv and v): in such sort that, while God touches

<sup>17</sup> John iii. 5.

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the heart of man by the illumination of the Holy Ghost, neither is man himself utterly without doing anything while he receives that inspiration, for as much as he is also able to reject it; yet is he not able, by his own free-will, without the grace of God, to move himself unto justice in His sight. Whence, when it is said in the sacred writings: "Turn ye to me, and I will turn to you,"<sup>18</sup> we are admonished of our liberty; and when we answer: "Convert us, O Lord, to Thee, and we shall be converted,"<sup>19</sup> we confess that we are prevented by the grace of God.

### CHAPTER VI

#### *The Manner of Preparation*

Now they (adults) are disposed unto the said justice (cf. can. vii and ix), when, excited and assisted by divine grace, conceiving faith by hearing,<sup>20</sup> they are freely moved towards God, believing those things to be true which God has revealed and promised—and

<sup>18</sup> Zach. i. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Sam. v. 21.

<sup>20</sup> Rom. x. 17.

## DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

this especially, that God justifies the impious by His grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ;<sup>21</sup> and when, understanding themselves to be sinners, they, by turning themselves from the fear of divine justice, whereby they are profitably agitated, to consider the mercy of God, are raised unto hope, confiding that God will be propitious to them for Christ's sake; and they begin to love Him as the fountain of all justice, and are therefore moved against sins by a certain hatred and detestation (can. ix), to wit: by that penitence which must be performed before baptism;<sup>22</sup> lastly, when they purpose to receive baptism, to begin a new life, and to keep the commandments of God. Concerning this disposition it is written: "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and is a rewarder to them that seek him";<sup>23</sup> and, "Be of good faith, son, thy sins are forgiven thee";<sup>24</sup> and, "The fear of the Lord driveth out sin";<sup>25</sup> and "Do penance, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remis-

<sup>21</sup> Rom. iii. 24.

<sup>23</sup> Heb. xi. 6.

<sup>22</sup> Acts ii. 38.

<sup>24</sup> Matt. ix. 2; Mark ii. 5.

<sup>25</sup> Ecclus. i. 27.

## THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

sion of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost";<sup>26</sup> and, "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost";<sup>27</sup> finally, "Prepare your hearts unto the Lord."<sup>28</sup>

### CHAPTER VII

#### *What the Justification of the Impious Is, and What Are the Causes Thereof*

This disposition, or preparation, is followed by justification itself, which is not remission of sins merely (can. xi), but also the sanctification and renewal of the inward man, through the voluntary reception of the grace and of the gifts whereby man of unjust becomes just, and of an enemy a friend, that so he may be an heir according to hope of life everlasting.<sup>29</sup>

Of this justification the causes are these: the final cause indeed is the glory of God and of Jesus Christ, and life everlasting; while the efficient cause is a merciful God who washes

<sup>26</sup> Acts ii. 38.

<sup>27</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19.

<sup>28</sup> I Kings vii. 3.

<sup>29</sup> Tit. iii. 7.

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and sanctifies<sup>30</sup> gratuitously, signing and anointing with the Holy Spirit of promise, Who is the pledge of our inheritance;<sup>31</sup> but the meritorious cause is His most beloved only-begotten, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, when we were enemies,<sup>32</sup> for the exceeding charity wherewith He loved us,<sup>33</sup> merited justification for us by His most Holy Passion on the wood of the Cross (can. x), and made satisfaction for us unto God the Father; the instrumental cause is the Sacrament of Baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which (faith) no man was ever justified;<sup>34</sup> lastly, the alone formal cause is the justice of God, not that whereby He Himself is just, but that whereby He maketh us just (can. x and xi), that, to wit, with which we being endowed are renewed in the spirit of our mind,<sup>35</sup> and we are not only reputed, but are truly called, and are, just, receiving justice within us, each one according to his own measure, which the Holy Ghost distributes to every one as He wills,<sup>36</sup> and according to each one's proper disposition

<sup>30</sup> I Cor. vi. 11.

<sup>32</sup> Rom. v. 10.

<sup>34</sup> Heb. xi.

<sup>31</sup> Eph. i. 13 f.

<sup>33</sup> Eph. ii. 4.

<sup>35</sup> Eph. iv. 23.

<sup>36</sup> I Cor. xii. 11.



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and coöperation. For, although no one can be just but he to whom the merits of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ are communicated, yet is this done in the said justification of the impious, when by the merit of that same most holy Passion, the charity of God is poured forth by the Holy Spirit in the hearts<sup>37</sup> of those that are justified and is inherent therein: whence, man, through Jesus Christ, in Whom he is ingrafted, receives, in the said justification, together with the remission of sins, all these (gifts) infused at once, faith, hope and charity. For faith, unless hope and charity be added thereto, neither unites man perfectly with Christ, nor makes him a living member of His body. For which reason it is most truly said that faith without works is dead and profitless<sup>38</sup> (can ix); and in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by charity.<sup>39</sup> This faith catechumens beg of the Church, agreeably to a tradition of the Apostles, previously to the Sacrament of Baptism, when they beg for the faith which

<sup>37</sup> Rom. v. 5.

<sup>38</sup> James ii. 20.

<sup>39</sup> Gal. v. 6; vi. 15.

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bestows life everlasting, which, without hope and charity, faith cannot bestow; whence also do they immediately hear that word of Christ: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."<sup>40</sup> (Can. xviii-xx.) Wherefore, when receiving true and Christian justice, they are bidden, immediately on being born again, to preserve it pure and spotless, as the first robe<sup>41</sup> given them through Jesus Christ in lieu of that which Adam, by his disobedience, lost for himself and for us, that so they may bear it before the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, and may have life everlasting.

### CHAPTER VIII

*In What Manner it is to be Understood that the Impious is Justified by Faith and Gratuitously*

And whereas the Apostle saith that man is justified by faith (can. ix) and freely,<sup>42</sup> those words are to be understood in that sense which the perpetual consent of the Catholic Church

<sup>40</sup> Matt. xix. 17.

<sup>41</sup> Luke xv. 22.

<sup>42</sup> Rom. iii. 22, 24.

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hath held and expressed; to wit, that we are therefore said to be justified by faith, because faith is the beginning of human salvation, the foundation, and the root of all justification; without which it is impossible to please God<sup>43</sup> and to come unto the fellowship of his sons; but we are therefore said to be justified freely, because that none of those things which precede justification—whether faith or works—merit the grace itself of justification. For, if it be a grace, it is not now by works; otherwise, as the same Apostle says, grace is no more grace.<sup>44</sup>

### CHAPTER IX

#### *Against the Vain Confidence of Heretics*

But, although it is necessary to believe that sins neither are remitted, nor ever were remitted save gratuitously by the mercy of God for Christ's sake, yet it is not to be said that sins are forgiven, or have been forgiven, to any one who boasts of his confidence and certainty of the remission of his sins, and rests on that

<sup>43</sup> Heb. xi. 6.

<sup>44</sup> Rom. xi. 6.

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alone; seeing that it may exist, yea does in our day exist, amongst heretics and schismatics; and with great vehemence is this vain confidence, and one alien from all godliness, preached up in opposition to the Catholic Church. But neither is this to be asserted, that they who are truly justified must needs, without any doubting whatever, settle within themselves that they are justified, and that no one is absolved from sins and justified but he that believes for certain that he is absolved and justified; and that absolution and justification are effected by this faith alone (can. xiv); as though whoso has not this belief doubts of the promises of God and of the efficacy of the death and resurrection of Christ. For even as no pious person ought to doubt of the mercy of God, of the merit of Christ, and of the virtue and efficacy of the sacraments, even so each one, when he regards himself and his own weakness and indisposition, may have fear and apprehension touching his own grace (can. xiii); seeing that no one can know with a certainty of faith, which cannot be subject to error, that he has obtained the grace of God.

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## CHAPTER X

### *On the Increase of Justification Received*

Having, therefore, been thus justified and made the friends and domestics of God,<sup>45</sup> advancing from virtue to virtue,<sup>46</sup> they are renewed, as the Apostle says, day by day;<sup>47</sup> that is, by mortifying the members of their own flesh,<sup>48</sup> and by presenting them as instruments of justice unto sanctification,<sup>49</sup> they, through the observance of the commandments of God and of the Church, faith coöperating with good works, increase in that justice which they have received through the grace of Christ, and are still further justified, as it is written: "He that is just, let him be justified still;"<sup>50</sup> and again, "Be not afraid to be justified even to death;"<sup>51</sup> and also, "Do you see that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."<sup>52</sup> And this increase of justification Holy Church

<sup>45</sup> Eph. ii. 19; John xv. 15.

<sup>46</sup> Ps. lxxxiii. 8.

<sup>47</sup> II Cor. iv. 16.

<sup>48</sup> Col. iii. 5.

<sup>49</sup> Rom. vi. 13, 19.

<sup>50</sup> Apoc. xxii. 11.

<sup>51</sup> Ecclus. xviii. 22.

<sup>52</sup> James ii. 24.

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begs, when she prays, "Give unto us, O Lord, increase of faith, hope and charity."<sup>53</sup>

### CHAPTER XI

#### *On Keeping the Commandments, and on the Necessity and Possibility Thereof*

But no one, how much soever justified, ought to think himself exempt from the observance of the commandments (can. xx); no one ought to make use of that rash saying, one prohibited by the Fathers under an anathema, that the observance of the commandments of God is impossible for one that is justified (can. xviii and xxii). For God commands not impossibilities, but, by commanding, both admonishes thee to do what thou art able, and to pray for what thou art not able (to do),<sup>54</sup> and aids thee that thou mayest be able; whose commandments are not heavy;<sup>55</sup> whose yoke is sweet, and whose burden light.<sup>56</sup> For whoso are the sons of God love Christ; but they who

<sup>53</sup> Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

<sup>54</sup> St. Augustine, "De Nat." xliii.

<sup>55</sup> I John v. 3.

<sup>56</sup> Matt. xi. 30.

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love Him keep His commandments,<sup>57</sup> as Himself testifies; which, assuredly, with the divine help, they can do. For, although, during this mortal life, men, how holy and just soever, at times fall into at least light and daily sins, which are also called venial, not therefore do they cease to be just. For that cry of the just, "forgive us our trespasses,"<sup>58</sup> is both humble and true. And for this cause the just themselves ought to feel themselves the more obliged to walk in the way of justice, in that, being already freed from sins, but made servants of God,<sup>59</sup> they are able, living soberly, justly, and godly,<sup>60</sup> to proceed onwards through Jesus Christ, by Whom they have had access unto this grace.<sup>61</sup> For God forsakes not those who have been once justified by His grace, unless He be first forsaken by them. Wherefore, no one ought to flatter himself up with faith alone (can. ix, xix, xx), fancying that by faith alone he is made an heir, and will obtain the inheritance, even

<sup>57</sup> John xiv. 15.

<sup>58</sup> Matt. vi. 12.

<sup>59</sup> Rom. vi. 22.

<sup>60</sup> Tit. ii. 12.

<sup>61</sup> Rom. v. 2.

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though he suffer not with Christ, that so he may be also glorified with Him.<sup>62</sup> For even Christ Himself, as the Apostle saith, whereas He was the son of God, learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and, being consummated, He became, to all who obey him, the cause of eternal salvation.<sup>63</sup> For which cause the same Apostle admonishes the justified, saying: "Know you not that they that 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 chastize my body, and bring it into subjection; lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway."<sup>64</sup> So also the Prince of the Apostles, Peter: "Labour 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."<sup>65</sup> From which it is plain, that those are opposed to the orthodox doctrine of religion, who assert that the just man sins, venially at least, in

<sup>62</sup> Rom. viii. 17.

<sup>63</sup> Heb. v. 8 f.

<sup>64</sup> I Cor. ix. 24, 26, 27.

<sup>65</sup> II Pet. i. 10.



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every good work (can. xxv), or, which is yet more insupportable, that he merits eternal punishments; as also those who state that the just sin in all their works (can. xxi), if, in those works, they, together with this aim principally that God may be glorified, have in view also the eternal reward (can. xxvi), in order to excite their sloth, and to encourage themselves to run in the course; whereas it is written: "I have inclined my heart to do all thy justifications for the reward;"<sup>66</sup> and concerning Moses the Apostle saith that he looked unto the reward.<sup>67</sup>

### CHAPTER XII

#### *That a Rash Presumptuousness in the Matter of Predestination is to be Avoided*

No one, moreover, so long as he is in this mortal life, ought so far to presume as regards the secret mystery of divine predestination as to determine for certain that he is assuredly in the number of the predestinate (can. xx);

<sup>66</sup> Ps. cxviii. 112.

<sup>67</sup> Heb. xi. 26.

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as if it were true that he that is justified either cannot sin any more (can. xxiii), or, if he do sin, that he ought to promise himself an assured repentance; for except by special revelation it cannot be known whom God hath chosen unto Himself (can. xvi).

### CHAPTER XIII

#### *On the Gift of Perseverance*

So also as regards the gift of perseverance (can. xvi), of which it is written: "He that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved"<sup>68</sup>—which gift cannot be derived from any other but Him, Who is able to establish him who standeth<sup>69</sup> that he stand perseveringly, and to restore him who falleth—let no one herein promise himself anything as certain with an absolute certainty; though all ought to place and repose a most firm hope in God's help. For God, unless men be themselves wanting to His grace, as He has begun the good work, so will He perfect it, working (in

<sup>68</sup> Matt. x. 22; xxiv. 13.

<sup>69</sup> Rom. xiv. 4.

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them) to will and to accomplish<sup>70</sup> (can. xxii). Nevertheless let those who think themselves to stand, take heed lest they fall,<sup>71</sup> and, with fear and trembling work out their salvation,<sup>72</sup> in labours, in watchings, in almsdeeds, in prayers and oblations, in fastings and chastity:<sup>73</sup> for, knowing that they are born again unto a hope of glory,<sup>74</sup> but not as yet unto glory, they ought to fear for the combat which yet remains with the flesh, with the world, with the devil, wherein they cannot be victorious, unless they be with God's grace 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."<sup>75</sup>

### CHAPTER XIV

#### *On the Fallen and their Restoration*

As regards those who, by sin, have fallen from the received grace of justification, they

<sup>70</sup> Phil. i. 6; ii. 13.

<sup>72</sup> Phil. ii. 12.

<sup>74</sup> I Pet. i. 3.

<sup>71</sup> I Cor. x. 12.

<sup>73</sup> II Cor. vi. 6.

<sup>75</sup> Rom. viii. 12 f.

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may be again justified (can. xxix), when, God exciting them, through the Sacrament of Penance, they shall have attained to the recovery, by the merit of Christ, of the grace lost; for this manner of justification is of the fallen the reparation, which the holy Fathers have aptly called a second plank after the shipwreck of grace lost.<sup>76</sup> For, on behalf of those who fall into sin 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."<sup>77</sup> Whence it is to be taught that the penitence of a Christian after his fall is very different from that at (his) baptism; and that therein are included not only a cessation from sins and a detestation thereof, or a contrite and humble heart,<sup>78</sup> but also the sacramental confession of the said sins—at least in desire and to be made in its season—and sacerdotal absolution; and likewise satisfaction by fasts, alms, prayers, and other pious exercises of a spiritual

<sup>76</sup> Hieronymus, "Ep. ad Demetr."

<sup>77</sup> John xx. 22, 23.

<sup>78</sup> Ps. l. 19.

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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 Spirit<sup>79</sup> and have not feared to violate the temple of God.<sup>80</sup> Concerning which penitence it is written: “Be mindful whence thou art fallen; and do penance, and do the first works.”<sup>81</sup> And again: “The sorrow that is according to God worketh penance steadfast unto salvation.”<sup>82</sup> And again: “Do penance, and bring forth fruits worthy of penance.”<sup>83</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Eph. iv. 30.

<sup>81</sup> Apoc. ii. 5.

<sup>80</sup> I Cor. iii. 17.

<sup>82</sup> II Cor. vii. 10.

<sup>83</sup> Matt. iii. 2, 8; iv. 17.

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### CHAPTER XV

#### *That by Every Mortal Sin Grace is Lost but not Faith*

In opposition also to the subtle wits of certain men who, by pleasing speeches and good works, seduce the hearts of the innocent,<sup>84</sup> it is to be maintained that the received grace of justification is lost not only by infidelity, whereby even faith itself is lost (can. xxvii), but also by any other mortal sin whatever, though faith be not lost (can. xxviii); thus defending the doctrine of the divine law, which excludes from the kingdom of God not only the unbelieving, but the faithful also (who are) fornicators, adulterers, effeminate, liars with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, railers, extortioners,<sup>85</sup> 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 separated from the grace of Christ (can. xxvii).

<sup>84</sup> Rom. xvi. 18.

<sup>85</sup> I Cor. vi. 9 f.

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### CHAPTER XVI

#### *On the Fruit of Justification, that is, on the Merit of Good Works, and on the Nature of that Merit*

Before men, therefore, who have been justified in this manner,—whether they have preserved uninterruptedly the grace received or whether they have recovered it when lost,—are to be set the words of the Apostle: “Abound in every good work, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord;”<sup>86</sup> “for God is not unjust, that He should forget your work, and the love which you have shown in His name;”<sup>87</sup> and, “Do not lose your confidence, which hath a great reward.”<sup>88</sup> And for this cause life eternal is to be proposed to those working well unto the end<sup>89</sup> and hoping in God, both as a grace mercifully promised to the sons of God through Jesus Christ and as a reward which is according to the promise of God Himself, to be faithfully rendered to their good works and

<sup>86</sup> I Cor. xv. 58.

<sup>88</sup> Ib. x. 35.

<sup>87</sup> Heb. vi. 10.

<sup>89</sup> Matt. x. 22.

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merits (can. xxvi and xxxii). For this is that crown of justice which the Apostle declared was, after his fight and course, 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.<sup>90</sup> For, whereas Jesus Christ Himself continually infuses His virtue into the said justified,—as the head into the members<sup>91</sup> and the vine into the branches,<sup>92</sup>—and this virtue always precedes, and accompanies, and follows their good works, which without it could not in any wise be pleasing and meritorious before God (can. ii), we must believe that nothing further is wanting to the justified to prevent their being accounted 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 also in its (due) time, if so be, however, that they depart in grace<sup>93</sup> (can. xxxii), seeing that Christ, our Saviour, saith: “If anyone shall drink of the water that I will give him, he shall not thirst

<sup>90</sup> II Tim. iv. 8.

<sup>91</sup> Eph. iv. 15.

<sup>92</sup> John xv. 5.

<sup>93</sup> Apoc. xiv. 13.



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forever; but it shall become in him a fountain of water springing up unto life everlasting."<sup>94</sup> Thus, neither is our own justice established as our own as from ourselves;<sup>95</sup> nor is the justice of God ignored or repudiated; for that justice which is called ours, because that we are justified from its being inherent in us (can. x and xi), that same is (the justice) of God, because that it is infused into us of God through the merit of Christ. Neither is this to be omitted, that although, in the sacred writings, so much is attributed to good works that Christ promises that even he that shall give a drink of cold water to one of His least ones shall not lose his reward;<sup>96</sup> 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;<sup>97</sup> nevertheless God forbid that a Christian should either trust or glory in himself, and not in the Lord,<sup>98</sup> whose bounty towards all men is so great that He will have the things which are

<sup>94</sup> John iv. 13 f.

<sup>96</sup> Matt. x. 42.

<sup>95</sup> Rom. x. 3.

<sup>97</sup> II Cor. iv. 17.

<sup>98</sup> cf. I Cor. i. 31; II Cor. x. 17.

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His own gifts be their merits <sup>99</sup> (can. xxxii). And forasmuch as in many things we all offend <sup>100</sup> (can. xxiii), each one ought to have before his eyes, as well the severity and judgment, as the mercy and goodness (of God); neither ought anyone to judge himself, even though he be not conscious to himself of anything;<sup>101</sup> because the whole life of man is to be examined and judged not by the judgment of men, 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,<sup>102</sup> Who, as it is written, will render to every man according to his works.<sup>103</sup>

After this Catholic doctrine on justification, which whoso receiveth not faithfully and firmly cannot be justified, it hath seemed good to the holy synod to subjoin these canons, that all may know not only what they ought to hold and follow, but also what to avoid and shun.

<sup>99</sup> Epis. Cœlest. I. c. 12 in Labbe. II. p. 1617. De qua vid. Constant. in Ep. 21. Cœlest.

<sup>100</sup> James iii. 2.

<sup>102</sup> I Cor. iv. 5.

<sup>101</sup> I Cor. iv. 3.

<sup>103</sup> Matt. xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 6.

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## ON JUSTIFICATION

Canon I. If anyone saith that man may be justified before God by his own works, whether done through the teaching of human nature or that of the law, without the grace of God through Jesus Christ; let him be anathema.

Canon II. If anyone saith that the grace of God through Jesus Christ is given only for this, that man may be able more easily to live justly and to merit eternal life, as if by free-will without grace he were able to do both, though hardly indeed and with difficulty; let him be anathema.

Canon III. If anyone saith that without the prevenient inspiration of the Holy Ghost and without His help man can believe, hope, love, or be penitent as he ought, so as that the grace of justification may be bestowed upon him; let him be anathema.

Canon IV. If anyone saith that man's free-will, moved and excited by God, by assenting to God exciting and calling, no wise coöperates towards disposing and preparing

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itself for obtaining the grace of justification; that it cannot refuse its consent, if it would, but that, as something inanimate, it does nothing whatever and is merely passive; let him be anathema.

Canon V. If anyone saith that, since Adam's sin, the free-will of man is lost and extinguished; or that it is a thing with only a name, yea, a name without a reality, a figment, in fine, introduced into the Church by Satan; let him be anathema.

Canon VI. If anyone saith that it is not in man's power to make his ways evil, but that the works that are evil God worketh as well as those that are good, not permissibly only, but properly and of Himself, in such wise that the treason of Judas is no less His own proper work than the vocation of Paul; let him be anathema.

Canon VII. If anyone saith that all works done before justification, in whatsoever way they be done, are truly sins, or merit the hatred of God; or that the more earnestly one strives to dispose himself for grace, the more grievously he sins; let him be anathema.

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Canon VIII. If anyone saith that the fear of hell, whereby, by grieving for our sins, we flee unto the mercy of God, or refrain from sinning, is a sin, or makes sinners worse; let him be anathema.

Canon IX. If anyone saith that by faith alone the impious is justified; in such wise as to mean that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to the obtaining the grace of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary that he be prepared and disposed by the movement of his own will; let him be anathema.

Canon X. If anyone saith that men are just without the justice of Christ, whereby He merited for us to be justified; or that it is by that justice itself that they are formally just; let him be anathema.

Canon XI. If anyone saith 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 and is inherent in them; or even that the grace, whereby we are justi-

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fied, is only the favour of God; let him be anathema.

Canon XII. If anyone saith that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which remits sin for Christ's sake; or that this confidence alone is that whereby we are justified; let him be anathema.

Canon XIII. If anyone saith that it is necessary for everyone, for the obtaining the remission of sins, that he believe for certain, and without any wavering arising from his own infirmity and indisposition, that his sins are forgiven him; let him be anathema.

Canon XIV. If anyone saith that man is truly absolved from his sins and justified, because that he assuredly believed himself absolved and justified; or that no one is truly justified but he who believes himself justified; and that, by this faith alone, absolution and justification are effected; let him be anathema.

Canon XV. If anyone saith that a man who is born again and justified is bound of faith to believe that he is assuredly in the number of the predestinate; let him be anathema.

Canon XVI. If anyone saith that he will

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for certain, of any absolute and infallible certainty, have that great gift of perseverance unto the end,—unless he have learned this by special revelation; let him be anathema.

Canon XVII. If anyone saith that the grace of justification is only attained to by those who are predestined unto life; but that all others who are called are called indeed, but receive not grace, as being, by the divine power, predestined unto evil; let him be anathema.

Canon XVIII. If anyone saith that the commandments of God are, even for one that is justified and constituted in grace, impossible to keep; let him be anathema.

Canon XIX. If anyone saith that nothing besides faith is commanded in the Gospel; that other things are indifferent, neither commanded nor prohibited, but free; or that the Ten Commandments no wise appertain to Christians; let him be anathema.

Canon XX. If anyone saith that the man who is justified and how perfect soever is not bound to observe the Commandments of God and of the Church, but only to believe; as if indeed the Gospel were a bare and absolute

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promise of eternal life, without the condition of observing the Commandments; let him be anathema.

Canon XXI. If anyone saith that Jesus Christ was given of God to men, as a Redeemer in whom to trust, and not also as a legislator whom to obey; let him be anathema.

Canon XXII. If anyone saith that the justified either is able to persevere without the special help of God in the justice received; or that with that help he is not able; let him be anathema.

Canon XXIII. If anyone saith that a man once justified can sin no more nor lose grace, and that therefore he that falls and sins was never truly justified; or, on the other hand, that he is able, during his whole life, to avoid all sins, even those that are venial, except by a special privilege from God, as the Church holds in regard of the Blessed Virgin; let him be anathema.

Canon XXIV. If anyone saith that the justice received is not preserved and also increased before God through good works; but that the said works are merely the fruits and



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signs of justification obtained, but not a cause of the increase thereof; let him be anathema.

Canon XXV. If anyone saith that in every good work the just sins venially at least, or, which is more intolerable still, mortally, and consequently deserves eternal punishments; and that for this cause only he is not damned: that God does not impute those works unto damnation; let him be anathema.

Canon XXVI. If anyone saith that the just ought not, for their good works done in God, to expect and hope for an eternal recompense from God, through His mercy and the merit of Jesus Christ, if so be that they persevere to the end in well-doing and in keeping the commandments; let him be anathema.

Canon XXVII. If anyone saith that there is no mortal sin but that of infidelity;<sup>1</sup> or that grace once received is not lost by any other sin, however grievous and enormous, save by that of infidelity; let him be anathema.

Canon XXVIII. If anyone saith that, grace being lost through sin, faith also is always lost with it; or that the faith which re-

<sup>1</sup> *Infidelitatis*, unbelief.

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mains, though it be not a lively faith, is not a true faith; or that he who has faith without charity is not a Christian; let him be anathema.

Canon XXIX. If anyone saith that he who has fallen after baptism is not able by the grace of God to rise again; or that he is able indeed to recover the justice which he has lost, but by faith alone without the sacrament of penance, contrary to what the holy Roman and Universal Church—instructed by Christ and His Apostles—has hitherto professed, observed, and taught; let him be anathema.

Canon XXX. If anyone saith that, after the grace of justification has been received, to every penitent sinner the guilt is remitted, and the debt of eternal punishment is blotted out in such wise that there remains not any debt of temporal punishment to be discharged either in this world, or in the next in Purgatory, before the entrance to the Kingdom of Heaven can be opened (to him); let him be anathema.

Canon XXXI. If anyone saith that the justified sins when he performs good works

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with a view to an eternal recompense; let him be anathema.

Canon XXXII. If anyone saith that the good works of one that is justified are in such manner the gifts of God, as that they are not also the good merits of him that is justified; or that the said justified, by the good works which he performs through the grace of God and the merit of Jesus Christ, whose living member he is, does not truly merit increase of grace, eternal life, and the attainment of that eternal life,—if so be, however, that he depart in grace,—and also an increase of glory; let him be anathema.

Canon XXXIII. If anyone saith that by the Catholic doctrine touching justification, set forth by this Holy Synod in this present decree, the glory of God, or the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ are in any way derogated from, and not rather that the truth of our faith and the glory in fine of God and of Jesus Christ are rendered (more) illustrious; let him be anathema.

## SESSION VII

March 3, 1547

### DECREE ON THE SACRAMENTS

#### *Proem*

For the completion of the salutary doctrine on justification, which was promulgated with the unanimous consent of the Fathers in the last preceding session, it hath seemed suitable to treat of the most holy sacraments of the Church, through which all true justice either begins, or being begun is increased, or being lost is repaired. With this view, in order to destroy the errors and to extirpate the heresies which have appeared in these our days on the subject of the said most holy sacraments,—as well those which have been revived from the heresies condemned of old by our Fathers, as also those newly invented, and which are exceedingly prejudicial to the purity of the Cath-

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olic Church and to the salvation of souls,—the sacred and holy, œcumenical and general Synod of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding therein, adhering to the doctrine of the holy Scriptures, to the Apostolic traditions, and to the consent of other councils and of the Fathers, has thought fit that these present canons be established and decreed; intending, the divine Spirit aiding, to publish later the remaining canons which are wanting for the completion of the work which it has begun.

### *On the Sacraments in General*

Canon I. If anyone saith that the sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord; or that they are more or less than seven, to wit: Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order, and Matrimony; or even that any one of these seven is not truly and properly a sacrament; let him be anathema.

Canon II. If anyone saith that these said sacraments of the New Law do not differ from

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the sacraments of the Old Law, save that the ceremonies are different, and different the outward rites; let him be anathema.

Canon III. If anyone saith that these seven sacraments are in such wise equal to each other as that one is not in any way more worthy than another; let him be anathema.

Canon IV. If anyone saith that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary unto salvation, but superfluous; and that without them, or without the desire thereof men obtain of God through faith alone the grace of justification; though all (the sacraments) are not indeed necessary for every individual; let him be anathema.

Canon V. If anyone saith that these sacraments were instituted for the sake of nourishing faith alone; let him be anathema.

Canon VI. If anyone saith 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 do not place an obstacle thereunto; as though they were merely outward signs of grace or justice received through faith, and certain marks of the Chris-

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tian profession, whereby believers are distinguished amongst men from unbelievers; let him be anathema.

Canon VII. If anyone saith that grace, as far as God's part is concerned, is not given through the said sacraments always and to all men, even though they receive them rightly, but (only) sometimes and to some persons; let him be anathema.

Canon VIII. If anyone saith that by the said sacraments of the New Law grace is not conferred through the act performed, but that faith alone in the divine promise suffices for the obtaining of grace; let him be anathema.

Canon IX. If anyone saith that in the three sacraments, Baptism, to wit, Confirmation, and Order, there is not imprinted in the soul a character, that is, a certain spiritual and indelible sign, on account of which they cannot be repeated; let him be anathema.

Canon X. If anyone saith that all Christians have power to administer the word and all the sacraments; let him be anathema.

Canon XI. If anyone saith that in ministers, when they effect and confer the sacra-

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ments, there is not required the intention at least of doing what the Church does; let him be anathema.

Canon XII. If anyone saith that a minister, being in mortal sin,—if so be that he observe all the essentials which belong to the effecting or conferring of the sacrament,—neither effects nor confers the sacrament; let him be anathema.

Canon XIII. If anyone saith that the received and approved rites of the Catholic Church, wont to be used in the solemn administration of the sacraments, may be contemned, or without sin be omitted at pleasure by the ministers, or be changed by every pastor of the churches into other new ones; let him be anathema.

### *On Baptism*

Canon I. If anyone saith that the baptism of John had the same force as the baptism of Christ; let him be anathema.

Canon II. If anyone saith that true and natural water is not of necessity for baptism,



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and, on that account, wrests to some sort of metaphor those words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost;"<sup>1</sup> let him be anathema.

Canon III. If anyone saith 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; let him be anathema.

Canon IV. If anyone saith that the baptism which is even 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 doth, is not true baptism; let him be anathema.

Canon V. If anyone saith that baptism is free, that is, not necessary unto salvation; let him be anathema.

Canon VI. If anyone saith that one who has been baptized cannot, even if he would, lose grace, let him sin ever so much, unless he will not believe; let him be anathema.

Canon VII. If anyone saith that the baptized are by baptism itself made debtors but to

<sup>1</sup> John iii. 5.

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faith alone, and not to the observance of the whole law<sup>2</sup> of Christ; let him be anathema.

Canon VIII. If anyone saith that the baptized are freed from all the precepts, whether written or transmitted, of Holy Church, in such wise that they are not bound to observe them, unless they have chosen of their own accord to submit themselves thereunto; let him be anathema.

Canon IX. If anyone saith that the remembrance of the baptism which they have received is so to be recalled unto men, as that they are to understand that all vows made after baptism are void, in virtue of the promise already made in that baptism; as if, by those vows, they derogated both from that faith which they have professed and from that baptism itself; let him be anathema.

Canon X. If anyone saith that by the sole remembrance and the faith of the baptism which has been received all sins committed after baptism are either remitted or made venial; let him be anathema.

Canon XI. If anyone saith that baptism

<sup>2</sup> Gal. v. 3.

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which was true and rightly conferred is to be repeated for him who has denied the faith of Christ amongst infidels, when he is converted unto penitence; let him be anathema.

Canon XII. If anyone saith that no one is to be baptized save at that age at which Christ was baptized or in the very article of death; let him be anathema.

Canon XIII. If anyone saith that little children, for that they have not actual faith, are not, after having received baptism, to be reckoned amongst the faithful; and that for this cause they are to be rebaptized when they have attained to years of discretion; 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 alone of the Church; let him be anathema.

Canon XIV. If anyone saith that those who have been thus baptized when children are, when they have grown up, to be asked whether they will ratify what their sponsors promised in their names when they were baptized; and that, in case they answer that they will not, they are to be left to their own will; and are

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not to be compelled meanwhile to a Christian life by any other penalty save that they be excluded from the participation of the Eucharist and of the other sacraments until they repent; let him be anathema.

### *On Confirmation*

Canon I. If anyone saith that the confirmation of those who have been baptized is an idle ceremony, and not rather a true and proper sacrament; or that of old it was nothing more than a kind of catechism whereby they who were near adolescence gave an account of their faith in the face of the Church; let him be anathema.

Canon II. If anyone saith that they who ascribe any virtue to the sacred chrism of confirmation offer an outrage to the Holy Ghost; let him be anathema.

Canon III. If anyone saith that the ordinary minister of holy confirmation is not the bishop alone, but any simple priest soever; let him be anathema.

## SESSION XIII

October 11, 1551

### DECREE CONCERNING THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

The sacred and holy, œcumenical and general Synod of Trent,—lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legate, and nuncios of the Apostolic See presiding therein,—although the end for which it assembled, not without the special guidance and governance of the Holy Ghost, was that it might set forth the true and ancient doctrine touching faith and the sacraments, and might apply a remedy to all the heresies and the other most grievous troubles with which the Church of God is now miserably agitated and rent into many and various parts; yet, even from the outset, this especially has been the object of its desires, that it might pluck up by the roots those tares of execrable errors and schisms

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with which the enemy hath, in these our calamitous times, oversown the doctrine of the faith in the use and worship of the sacred and holy Eucharist, which our Saviour, notwithstanding, left in His Church as a symbol of that unity and charity with which He would fain have all Christians be mutually joined and united together. Wherefore, this sacred and holy synod, delivering here, on this venerable and divine sacrament of the Eucharist, that sound and genuine doctrine which the Catholic Church—instructed by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and by His Apostles, and taught by the Holy Ghost, Who day by day brings to her mind all truth<sup>1</sup>—has always retained and will preserve even to the end of the world, forbids all the faithful of Christ to presume to believe, teach, or preach henceforth concerning the holy Eucharist otherwise than as is explained and defined in this present decree.

<sup>1</sup> John xiv. 26; xvi. 13.

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## CHAPTER I

### *On the Real Presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist*

In the first place the holy synod teaches and openly and simply professes that, in the august sacrament of the holy Eucharist, after the consecration of the bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and man, is truly, really, and substantially contained under the species of those sensible things (can. i). For neither are these things mutually repugnant,—that our Saviour Himself always sitteth at the right hand of the Father in Heaven, according to the natural mode of existing, and that, nevertheless, He be, in many other places, sacramentally present to us in His own substance, by a manner of existing, which, though we can scarcely express it in words, yet can we, by the understanding illuminated by faith, conceive, and we ought most firmly to believe, to be possible unto God: for thus all our forefathers, as many as were in the true

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Church of Christ, who have treated of this most holy Sacrament have most openly professed, that our Redeemer instituted this so admirable a sacrament at the Last Supper, when, after the blessing of the bread and wine, He testified in express and clear words that He gave them His own very Body and His own Blood; words<sup>2</sup> which,—recorded by the holy Evangelists, and afterwards repeated by Saint Paul,<sup>3</sup> whereas they carry with them that proper and most manifest meaning in which they were understood by the Fathers,—it is indeed a crime the most unworthy that they should be wrested by certain contentious and wicked men to fictitious and imaginary tropes, whereby the verity 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,<sup>4</sup> has detested as satanical these inventions devised by impious men; she recognizing, with a mind ever grateful and unforgetting, this most excellent benefit of Christ.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi. 26 ff.; Mark xiv. 22 ff.; Luke xxii. 19 f.

<sup>3</sup> I Cor. xi. 23 ff.

<sup>4</sup> I Tim. iii. 15.



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## CHAPTER II

### *On the Reason of the Institution of This Most Holy Sacrament*

Wherefore, our Saviour, when about to depart out of this world to the Father, instituted this sacrament, in which He poured forth as it were the riches of His divine love towards man, making a remembrance of His wonderful works;<sup>5</sup> and He commanded us in the participation thereof to venerate His memory,<sup>6</sup> and to show forth His death until He come<sup>7</sup> to judge the world. And He would also that this sacrament should be received as the spiritual food of souls,<sup>8</sup> whereby may be fed and strengthened (can. v) those who live with His life Who said: "He that eateth me, the same also shall live by Me;"<sup>9</sup> and as an antidote, whereby we may be freed from daily faults and be preserved from mortal sins. He would, furthermore, have it be a pledge of our glory

<sup>5</sup> Ps. cx. 4.

<sup>6</sup> I Cor. xi. 24.

<sup>7</sup> Ib. 26.

<sup>8</sup> Matt. xxvi. 26.

<sup>9</sup> John vi. 58.

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to come and everlasting happiness, and thus be a symbol of that one body whereof He is the head,<sup>10</sup> and to which He would fain have us as members be united by the closest bond of faith, hope, and charity, that we might all speak the same things, and there might be no schisms amongst us.<sup>11</sup>

### CHAPTER III

#### *On the Excellency of the Most Holy Eucharist over the Rest of the Sacraments*

The most holy Eucharist has indeed this in common with the rest of the sacraments, that it is a symbol of a sacred thing and is a visible form of an invisible grace; but there is found in the Eucharist this excellent and peculiar thing, that the other sacraments have then first the power of sanctifying when one uses them, whereas in the Eucharist, before being used, there is the Author Himself of sanctity (can. iv). For the Apostles had not as yet received the Eucharist from the hand of the

<sup>10</sup> I Cor. xi. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Ib. i. 10.

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Lord,<sup>12</sup> when nevertheless Himself affirmed with truth that to be His own Body which He presented (to them). And this faith has ever been in the Church of God, that immediately after the consecration the Veritable Body of our Lord and His veritable Blood, together with His soul and divinity, are under the species of bread and wine; but the Body indeed under the species of bread, and the Blood under the species of wine, by the force of the words; but the Body itself under the species of wine, and the Blood under the species of bread, and the soul under both, by the force of that natural connexion and concomitancy whereby the parts of Christ our Lord, Who hath now risen from the dead, to die no more,<sup>13</sup> are united together; and the divinity, furthermore, on account of the admirable hypostatical union thereof with His Body and Soul. Wherefore it is most true that as much is contained under either species as under both; for Christ whole and entire is under the species of bread and under any part whatsoever of that species; likewise the whole (Christ) is under

<sup>12</sup> Matt. xxvi. 26; Mark xiv. 22.

<sup>13</sup> Rom. vi. 9.

## DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

the species of wine and under the parts thereof (can. iii).

### CHAPTER IV

#### *On Transubstantiation*

And because that Christ our Redeemer declared that which He offered under the species of bread to be truly His own Body,<sup>14</sup> therefore has it ever been a firm belief in the Church of God, and this holy synod doth now declare it anew, that by the consecration of the bread and of the wine a conversion is made 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; which conversion is by the holy Catholic Church suitably and properly called transubstantiation (can. ii).

<sup>14</sup> Matt. xxvi. 26; Mark xiv. 22; Luke xxii. 19; John vi. 48; I Cor. xi. 24.

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## CHAPTER V

### *On the Cult and Veneration to be Shown to This Most Holy Sacrament*

Wherefore, there is no room left to doubt that all the faithful of Christ may, according to the custom ever received in the Catholic Church, render in veneration the worship of *latria*, which is due to the true God, to this most holy Sacrament (can. vi). For not therefore is it the less to be adored on this account, that it was instituted by Christ the Lord in order to be received:<sup>15</sup> for we believe that same God to be present therein, of Whom the Eternal Father, when introducing Him into the world, says: "And let all the angels of God adore Him;"<sup>16</sup> Whom the Magi falling down, adored;<sup>17</sup> Who, in fine, as the Scripture testifies, was adored by the Apostles in Galilee.<sup>18</sup>

The holy synod declares, moreover, that very

<sup>15</sup> Matt. xxvi. 26.

<sup>16</sup> Ps. xcvi. 7.

<sup>17</sup> Matt. ii. 11.

<sup>18</sup> Matt. xxviii. 17.

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piously and religiously was this custom introduced into the Church, that this sublime and venerable sacrament be, with special veneration and solemnity, celebrated every year on a certain day, and that a festival; and that it be borne reverently and with honour in processions through the streets and public places. For it is most just that there be certain appointed holy days, whereon all Christians may, with a special and unusual demonstration, testify that their minds are grateful and thankful<sup>19</sup> to their common Lord and Redeemer for so ineffable and truly divine a benefit, whereby the victory and triumph of His death are represented. And so indeed did it behoove victorious truth to celebrate a triumph over falsehood and heresy, that thus her adversaries, at the sight of so much splendour, and in the midst of so great joy of the universal Church, may either pine away,<sup>20</sup> weakened and broken, or, touched with shame and confounded, at length repent.

<sup>19</sup> *memores*, unforgetful.

<sup>20</sup> Ps. cxi. 10.

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### CHAPTER VI

#### *On Reserving the Sacrament of the Sacred Eucharist and Bearing it to the Sick*

The custom of reserving the holy Eucharist in the sacrarium is so ancient that even the age of the Council of Nicæa<sup>21</sup> recognized that usage. Moreover, as to carrying the Sacred Eucharist itself to the sick, and carefully reserving it for this purpose in churches, besides that it is exceedingly conformable to equity and reason, it is also found enjoined in numerous councils,<sup>22</sup> and is a very ancient observance of the Catholic Church. Wherefore, this holy synod ordains that this salutary and necessary custom is to be by all means retained (can. vii).

### CHAPTER VII

#### *On the Preparation to be Given that One may Worthily Receive the Sacred Eucharist*

If it is unbecoming for anyone to approach to any of the sacred functions unless he ap-

<sup>21</sup> Nicæa I c. 13.

<sup>22</sup> Concil. Rhem. c. 2, 10 in Labbe, V p. 1693; Concil. Lat. IV c. 26; Concil. Ancyra. c. 6; Concil. Agathens. c. 15.

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proach holily; assuredly, the more the holiness and divinity of this heavenly sacrament are understood by a Christian, the more diligently ought he to give heed that he approach not to receive it but with great reverence and holiness (can. xi), especially as we read in the Apostle those words full of terror: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh judgment to himself."<sup>23</sup> Wherefore, he who would communicate ought to recall to mind the precept of the Apostle: "Let a man prove himself." Now, ecclesiastical usage declares that necessary proof to be that no one, conscious to himself of mortal sin, how contrite soever he may seem to himself, ought to approach to the Sacred Eucharist without previous sacramental confession. This the holy synod hath decreed is 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 do not fail them; but if, in an urgent necessity, a priest should celebrate without previous confession, let him confess as soon as possible.

<sup>23</sup> I Cor. xi. 29.



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### CHAPTER VIII

#### *On the Use of This Admirable Sacrament*

Now as to the use of this holy sacrament, our Fathers<sup>24</sup> have rightly and wisely distinguished three ways of receiving it. For they have taught that some receive it sacramentally only, to wit, sinners: others spiritually only, those, to wit, who, eating in desire that heavenly bread which is set before them, are, by a lively faith which worketh by charity,<sup>25</sup> made sensible of the fruit and usefulness thereof: whereas the third (class) receive it both sacramentally and spiritually (can. viii), and these are they who so prove and prepare themselves beforehand as to approach to this divine table clothed with the wedding-garment.<sup>26</sup> Now, as to the reception of the sacrament, it was always the custom in the Church of God that laymen should receive the communion from priests; but that priests when celebrating should communicate themselves (can. xi);

<sup>24</sup> St. Augustine, "Contra Donat.;" St. Prosper, "Lib. Sent."

<sup>25</sup> Gal. v. 6.

<sup>26</sup> Matt. xxii. 11 f.

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which custom, as coming down from an Apostolical tradition, ought with justice and reason to be retained. And finally this holy synod with true fatherly affection admonishes, exhorts, begs and beseeches, through the bowels of the mercy of our God, that all and each of those who bear the Christian name would now at length 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 the so great majesty and the so exceeding love of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave His own beloved soul as the price of our salvation and gave us His own flesh to eat,<sup>27</sup> they would believe and venerate these sacred mysteries of His Body and Blood with such constancy and firmness of faith, with such devotion of soul, with such piety and worship, as to be able frequently to receive that supersubstantial bread,<sup>28</sup> and that it may be to them truly the life of the soul and the perpetual health of their mind; that, being invigorated by the strength thereof,<sup>29</sup> they may, after the journeying of this miserable pilgrimage, be able to

<sup>27</sup> John vi. 48.

<sup>28</sup> Matt. vi. 11.

<sup>29</sup> III Kings xix. 8.

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arrive at their heavenly country, there to eat, without any veil, that same bread of angels<sup>30</sup> which they now eat under the sacred veils.

But forasmuch as it is not enough to declare the truth, if errors be not laid bare and repudiated, it hath seemed good to the holy synod to subjoin these canons, that all—the Catholic doctrine being already recognized—may now also understand what are the heresies which they ought to guard against and avoid.

### ON THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE EUCCHARIST

Canon I. If anyone denieth 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; but saith that He is only therein as in a sign, or in figure, or virtue; let him be anathema.

Canon II. If anyone saith that, in the sacred and holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, the

<sup>30</sup> Ps. lxxvii. 25.

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substance of the bread and wine remains conjointly with the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and denieth that wonderful and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the Body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the Blood—the species only of the bread and wine remaining—which conversion indeed the Catholic Church most aptly calls transubstantiation; let him be anathema.

Canon III. If anyone denieth that, in the venerable sacrament of the Eucharist, the whole Christ is contained under each species, and under every part of each species, when separated; let him be anathema.

Canon IV. If anyone saith that, after the consecration is completed, the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are not in the admirable sacrament of the Eucharist, but (are there) only during the use, whilst it is being taken, and not either 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 remaineth not; let him be anathema.

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Canon V. If anyone saith either that the principal fruit of the most holy Eucharist is the remission of sins, or that other effects do not result therefrom; let him be anathema.

Canon VI. If anyone saith that, in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is not to be adored with the worship, even external, of latria; and is, consequently, neither to be venerated with a special festive solemnity, nor to be solemnly borne about in processions, according to the laudable and universal rite and custom of Holy Church; or is not to be proposed publicly to the people to be adored, and that the adorers thereof are idolaters; let him be anathema.

Canon VII. If anyone saith that it is not lawful for the sacred Eucharist to be reserved in the sacrarium, but that, immediately after consecration, it must necessarily be distributed amongst those present; or that it is not lawful that it be carried with honour to the sick; let him be anathema.

Canon VIII. If anyone saith that Christ, given in the Eucharist, is eaten spiritually

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only, and not also sacramentally and really; let him be anathema.

Canon IX. If anyone denieth that all and each of Christ's faithful of both sexes are bound, when they have attained to years of discretion, to communicate every year, at least at Easter, in accordance with the precept of Holy Mother Church; let him be anathema.

Canon X. If anyone saith that it is not lawful for the celebrating priest to communicate himself; let him be anathema.

Canon XI. If anyone saith that faith alone is a sufficient preparation for receiving the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist; let him be anathema. And for fear lest so great a sacrament may be received unworthily, and so unto death and condemnation, this holy synod ordains and declares that sacramental confession, when a confessor may be had, is of necessity to be made beforehand, by those whose conscience is burdened with mortal sin, how contrite even soever they may think themselves. But if anyone shall presume to teach, preach, or obstinately to assert, or even in public disputation to defend the contrary, he shall be thereupon excommunicated.

## SESSION XIV.

November 25, 1551

### ON THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND EXTREME UNCTION

#### DOCTRINE ON THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

The sacred and holy, œcumenical and general Synod of Trent,—lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legate and nuncios of the holy Apostolic See presiding therein,—although, in the decree concerning justification, there has been, through a certain kind of necessity, on account of the affinity of the subjects, much discourse introduced touching the Sacrament of Penance; nevertheless, so great, in these our days, is the multitude of various errors relative to this sacrament that it will be of no small public utility to have given thereof a more exact and full definition, wherein, all errors having been, under the pro-

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tection of the Holy Ghost, pointed out and extirpated, Catholic truth may be made clear and resplendent; which (Catholic truth) this holy synod now sets before all Christians to be perpetually retained.

### CHAPTER I

#### *On the Necessity and on the Institution of the Sacrament of Penance*

If such, in all the regenerate, were their gratitude towards God as that they constantly preserved the justice received in Baptism by His bounty and grace, there would not have been need for another sacrament besides that of Baptism itself to be instituted for the remission of sins (can. ii). But because God, rich in mercy,<sup>1</sup> knows our frame,<sup>2</sup> He hath bestowed a remedy of life even on those who may, after Baptism, have delivered themselves up to the servitude of sin and the power of the devil,—the Sacrament, to wit, of Penance, by which the benefit of the death of Christ is ap-

<sup>1</sup> Eph. ii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cii. 14.



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plied to those who have fallen after Baptism. Penitence was indeed at all times necessary, in order to attain to grace and justice, for all men who had defiled themselves by any mortal sin, even for those who begged to be washed by the Sacrament of Baptism; that so, their perverseness renounced and amended, they might, with a hatred of sin and a godly sorrow of mind, detest so great an offence of God. Wherefore the Prophet says: "Be converted and do penance for all your iniquities, and iniquity shall not be your ruin."<sup>3</sup> The Lord also said: "Except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish;"<sup>4</sup> and Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, recommending penitence to sinners who were about to be initiated by Baptism, said: "Do penance, and be baptized every one of you."<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, neither before the coming of Christ was penitence a sacrament, nor is it such, since His coming, to anyone previously to Baptism. But the Lord then principally instituted the Sacrament of Penance, when, being raised from the dead, He breathed upon His disciples, saying: "Receive

<sup>3</sup> Ez. xviii. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xiii. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Acts ii. 38.

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ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.”<sup>6</sup> By which action so signal and words so clear the consent of all the Fathers has ever understood (can. iii) that the power of forgiving and retaining sins was communicated to the Apostles and their lawful successors for the reconciling of the faithful who have fallen after baptism. And the Catholic Church with great reason repudiated and condemned as heretics the Novatians, who of old obstinately denied that power of forgiving. Wherefore, this holy synod, approving of and receiving as most true this meaning of those words of our Lord, condemns the fanciful interpretation of those who, in opposition to the institution of this sacrament, falsely wrest those words to the power of preaching the word of God and of announcing the Gospel of Christ.

<sup>6</sup> John xx. 23.

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## CHAPTER II

### *On the Difference Between the Sacrament of Penance and That of Baptism*

For the rest, this sacrament is clearly seen to be different from baptism in many respects (can. ii); for besides that it is very widely different indeed in matter and form, which constitute the essence of a sacrament, it is beyond doubt certain that the minister of baptism need not be a judge, seeing that the Church exercises judgment on no one who has not entered therein through the gate of baptism. For, what have I, saith the Apostle, to do to judge them that are without?<sup>7</sup> It is otherwise with those who are of the household of the faith, whom Christ our Lord has once, by the laver of baptism, made the members of His own body;<sup>8</sup> for such, if they should afterwards have defiled themselves by any crime, He would no longer have them cleansed by a repetition of baptism—that being nowise lawful in

<sup>7</sup> I Cor. v. 12.

<sup>8</sup> I Cor. xii. 13.

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the Catholic Church—but be placed as criminals before this tribunal; that, by the sentence of the priests, they might be freed, not once, but as often as, being penitent, they should, from their sins committed, flee thereunto. Furthermore, one is the fruit of baptism, and another that of penance. For, by baptism putting on Christ,<sup>9</sup> we are made therein entirely a new creature, obtaining a full and entire remission of all sins; unto which newness and entireness, however, we are no ways able to arrive by the sacrament of Penance, without many tears and great labours on our parts, the divine justice demanding this; so that penance has justly been called by holy Fathers a laborious kind of baptism.<sup>10</sup> And this sacrament of Penance is, for those who have fallen after baptism, necessary unto salvation; as baptism itself is for those who have not as yet been regenerated (can. vi).

<sup>9</sup> Gal. iii. 27.

<sup>10</sup> Gregory of Nazianzus. Or. 39; St. John Damascene, De Fide, IV c. 10.

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### CHAPTER III

#### *On the Parts and on the Fruit of This Sacrament*

The holy synod doth furthermore teach that the form of the sacrament of Penance, wherein its force principally consists, is placed in those words of the minister, "I absolve thee, etc."; to which words indeed certain prayers are, according to the custom of holy Church, laudably joined, which nevertheless by no means regard the essence of that form, neither are they necessary for the administration of the sacrament itself. But the acts of the penitent himself, to wit, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, are as it were 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 perfect remission of sins, are for this reason called the parts of penance. But the thing signified indeed and the effect of this sacrament, as far as regards its force and efficacy, is reconciliation with God, which some-

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times, in persons who are pious and who receive this sacrament with devotion, is wont to be followed by peace and serenity of conscience with exceeding consolation of spirit. The holy synod, whilst delivering these things touching the parts and the effect of this sacrament, condemns at the same time the opinions of those who contend that the terrors which agitate the conscience, and faith, are the parts of penance.

### CHAPTER IV

#### *On Contrition and Attrition*

Contrition, which holds the first place amongst the aforesaid acts of the penitent, is a sorrow of mind and a detestation for sin committed, with the purpose of not sinning for the future. This movement of contrition was at all times necessary for obtaining the pardon of sins; and, in one who has fallen after baptism, it then at length prepares for the remission of sins, when it is united with confidence in the divine mercy, and with the desire of performing the other things which are required for

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rightly receiving this sacrament. Wherefore the holy synod declares that this contrition contains not only a cessation from sin and the purpose and the beginning of a new life, but also a hatred of the old, agreeably to that saying: "Cast away from you all your iniquities, wherein you have transgressed, and make to yourselves a new heart and a new spirit."<sup>11</sup> And assuredly he who has considered those cries of the saints: "To thee only have I sinned, and have done evil before thee," "I have labored in my groaning, every night I will wash my bed,"<sup>12</sup> "I will recount to thee all my years, in the bitterness of my soul,"<sup>13</sup> and others of this kind, will easily understand that they flowed from a certain vehement hatred of their past life and from an exceeding detestation of sins. The synod teaches, moreover, that although it sometimes happen that this contrition is perfect through charity, and reconciles man with God before this sacrament be actually received, the said reconciliation, nevertheless, is not to be ascribed to that contrition, independently of the desire of the sacrament which is

<sup>11</sup> Ez. xviii. 31.

<sup>12</sup> Ps. i. 6; vi. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Is. xxxviii. 15.

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included therein. And as to that imperfect contrition (can. v), which is called attrition, because that it is commonly conceived either from the consideration of the turpitude of sin or from the fear of hell and of punishment, it declares that if, with the hope of pardon, it exclude the wish to sin, it not only does not make a man a hypocrite and a greater sinner, but that it is even a gift of God and an impulse of the Holy Ghost, Who does not indeed as yet dwell in the penitent, but only moves him, whereby the penitent being assisted prepares a way for himself unto justice. And although this (attrition) cannot of itself, without the Sacrament of Penance, conduct the sinner to justification, yet does it dispose him to obtain the grace of God in the Sacrament of Penance. For, smitten profitably with this fear, the Ninivites, at the preaching of Jonas, did fearful penance and obtained mercy from the Lord. Wherefore falsely do some calumniate Catholic writers, as if they had maintained that the Sacrament of Penance confers grace without any good motion on the part of those who receive it: a thing which the Church



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of God never taught or thought: and falsely also do they assert that contrition is extorted and forced, not free and voluntary (can. v).

### CHAPTER V

#### *On Confession*

From the institution of the sacrament of penance as already explained, the universal Church has always understood that the entire confession of sins was also instituted by the Lord and is of divine right necessary for all who have fallen after baptism (can. vii); because that our Lord Jesus Christ, when about to ascend from earth to heaven, left priests, His own vicars,<sup>14</sup> as presidents and judges, unto whom all the mortal crimes, into which the faithful of Christ may have fallen, should be carried, in order that, in accordance with the power of the keys, they may pronounce the sentence of forgiveness or retention of sins. For it is manifest that priests could not have exercised this judgment without knowledge of

<sup>14</sup> Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 18; John xx. 23.

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the cause; neither indeed could they have observed equity in enjoining punishments, if the said faithful should have declared their sins in general only, and not rather specifically, and one by one. Whence it is gathered that all the mortal sins of which, after a diligent examination of themselves, they are conscious must needs be by penitents enumerated in confession, even though those sins be most hidden and committed only against the two last precepts of the decalogue<sup>15</sup>—sins which sometimes wound the soul more grievously, and are more dangerous, than those which are committed outwardly. For venial sins, whereby we are not excluded from the grace of God, and into which we fall more frequently, although they be rightly and profitably and without any presumption declared in confession, as the custom of pious persons demonstrates, yet may they be omitted without guilt and be expiated by many other remedies. But, whereas all mortal sins, even those of thought, render men children of wrath<sup>16</sup> and enemies of God, it is necessary to seek also for the pardon of them all

<sup>15</sup> Ex. xx. 17; Matt. v. 28.

<sup>16</sup> Eph. ii. 3.

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from God, with an open and modest confession. Wherefore, while the faithful of Christ are careful to confess all the sins which occur to their memory, they without doubt lay them all bare before the mercy of God to be pardoned: whereas they who act otherwise, and knowingly keep back certain sins, such set nothing before the divine bounty to be forgiven through the priest: for if the sick be ashamed to show his wound to the physician, his medical art cures not that which it knows not of. We gather, furthermore, that those circumstances which change the species of the sin are also to be explained in confession, because that, without them, the sins themselves are neither entirely set forth by the penitents, nor are they known clearly to the judges; and it cannot be that they can estimate rightly the grievousness of the crimes, and impose on the penitents the punishment which ought to be inflicted on account of them. Whence it is unreasonable to teach that these circumstances have been invented by idle men; or that one circumstance only is to be confessed, to wit, that one has sinned against a brother. But it

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is also impious to assert that confession, enjoined to be made in this manner, is impossible, or to call it a slaughter-house of consciences (can. viii) ; for it is certain that in the Church nothing else is required of penitents, but that, after each has examined himself diligently, and searched all the folds and recesses of his conscience, he confess those sins by which he shall remember that he has mortally offended his Lord and God ; whilst the other sins, which do not occur to him after diligent thought, are understood to be included as a whole in that same confession ; for which sins we confidently say with the prophet : "From my secret sins cleanse me, O Lord."<sup>17</sup> Now, the very difficulty of a confession like this, and the shame of making known one's sins, might indeed seem a grievous thing, were it not alleviated by the so many and so great advantages and consolations which are most assuredly bestowed by absolution upon all who worthily approach to this sacrament. For the rest, as to the manner of confessing secretly to a priest alone, although Christ has not forbidden that a

<sup>17</sup> Ps. xviii. 13.

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person may—in punishment of his sins, and for his own humiliation, as well for an example to others as for the edification of the Church that has been scandalized—confess his sins publicly, nevertheless this is not commanded by a divine precept; neither would it be very prudent to enjoin by any human law that sins, especially such as are secret, should be made known by a public confession (can. vi). Wherefore, whereas the secret sacramental confession, which was in use from the beginning in holy Church, and is still also in use, has always been commended by the most holy and the most ancient Fathers with a great and unanimous consent, the vain calumny of those is manifestly refuted who are not ashamed to teach that confession is alien from the divine command and is a human invention, and that it took its rise from the Fathers assembled in the Council of Lateran: for the Church did not, through the Council of Lateran, ordain that the faithful of Christ should confess (can. viii),—a thing which it knew to be necessary and to be instituted of divine right,—but that the precept of confession should be complied with, at least

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once a year, by all and each, when they have attained to years of discretion. Whence, throughout the whole Church, the salutary custom is, to the great benefit of the souls of the faithful, now observed, of confessing at that most sacred and most acceptable time of Lent, —a custom which this holy synod most highly approves of and embraces as pious and worthy of being retained.

### CHAPTER VI

#### *On the Ministry of this Sacrament and on Absolution*

But as regards the minister of this sacrament, the holy synod declares all these doctrines to be false and utterly alien from the truth of the Gospel which perniciously extend the ministry of the keys to any others soever besides bishops and priests (can. v); imagining, contrary to the institution of this sacrament, that those words of our Lord: "Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you shall

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loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven,"<sup>18</sup> and, "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained,"<sup>19</sup> were in such wise addressed to all the faithful of Christ indifferently and indiscriminately, as that every one has the power of forgiving sins,—public sins, to wit, by rebuke, provided he that is rebuked shall acquiesce, and secret sins by a voluntary confession made to any individual whatsoever. It also teaches that even priests who are in mortal sin exercise, through the virtue of the Holy Ghost which was bestowed in ordination, the office of forgiving sins, as the ministers of Christ; and that their sentiment is erroneous who contend that this power exists not in bad priests. But although the absolution of the priest is the dispensation of another's bounty, yet is it not a bare ministry only, whether of announcing the Gospel or of declaring that sins are forgiven, but is after the manner of a judicial act, whereby sentence is pronounced by the priest as by a judge (can. iv); and therefore the penitent ought not so

<sup>18</sup> Matt. xviii. 18.

<sup>19</sup> John xx. 23.

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to confide in his own personal faith as to think that—even though there be no contrition on his part, or no intention on the part of the priest of acting seriously and absolving truly—he is nevertheless truly and in God's sight absolved, on account of his faith alone. For neither would faith without penance bestow any remission of sins; nor would he be otherwise than most careless of his own salvation who, knowing that a priest but absolved him in jest, should not carefully seek for another who would act in earnest.

### CHAPTER VII

#### *On the Reservation of Cases*

Wherefore, since the nature and order of a judgment require this, that sentence be passed only on those subject (to that judicature), it has ever been firmly held in the Church of God, and this synod ratifies it as a thing most true, that the absolution which a priest pronounces upon one over whom he has not either



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an ordinary or a delegated jurisdiction ought to be of no weight whatever. And it hath seemed to our most holy Fathers to be of great importance to the discipline of the Christian people that certain more atrocious and more heinous crimes should be absolved, not by all priests, but only by the highest priests: whence the sovereign pontiffs, in virtue of the supreme power delivered to them in the universal Church, were deservedly able to reserve, for their special judgment, certain more grievous cases of crimes (can. xi). Neither is it to be doubted—seeing that all things that are from God are well ordered—but that this same may be lawfully done by all bishops, each in his own diocese, unto edification, however, not unto destruction, in virtue of the authority, above (that of) other inferior priests, delivered to them over their subjects, especially as regards those crimes to which the censure of excommunication is annexed. But it is consonant to the divine authority that this reservation of cases have effect, not merely in external polity, but also in God's sight. Nevertheless, for fear lest any may perish on this account, it has al-

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ways been very piously observed in the said Church of God that there be no reservation at the point of death, and that therefore all priests may absolve all penitents whatsoever from every kind of sins and censures whatever: and as, save at that point of death, priests have no power in reserved cases, let this alone be their endeavour, to persuade penitents to repair to superior and lawful judges for the benefit of absolution.

### CHAPTER VIII

#### *On the Necessity and on the Fruit of Satisfaction*

Finally, as regards satisfaction,—which as it is, of all the parts of penance, that which has been at all times recommended to the Christian people by our Fathers, so is it the one especially which in our age is, under the loftiest pretext of piety, impugned by those who have an appearance of godliness, but have denied the power thereof,<sup>20</sup>—the holy synod declares that it is wholly false, and

<sup>20</sup> II Tim. iii. 5.

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alien from the word of God, that the guilt is never forgiven by the Lord without the whole punishment also being therewith pardoned (can. xii and xv). For clear and illustrious examples are found in the Sacred Writings,<sup>21</sup> whereby, besides by divine tradition, this error is refuted in the plainest manner possible. And truly the nature of divine justice seems to demand that they who through ignorance have sinned before baptism be received into grace in one manner and in another those who, after having been freed 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,<sup>22</sup> and to grieve the Holy Spirit.<sup>23</sup> And it beseems the divine clemency that sins be not in such wise pardoned us without any satisfaction, as that, taking occasion therefrom, thinking sins less grievous, we, offering as it were an insult and an outrage to the Holy Ghost,<sup>24</sup> should

<sup>21</sup> Gen. iii. 16 ff.; Num. xii. 14 f.; xx. 11 f.; II Kings xii. 13 f.; etc.

<sup>22</sup> I Cor. iii. 17.

<sup>23</sup> Eph. iv. 30.

<sup>24</sup> Heb. x. 29.

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fall into more grievous sins, treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath.<sup>25</sup> For, doubtless, these satisfactory punishments greatly recall from sin and check as it were with a bridle and make penitents more cautious and watchful for the future; they are also remedies for the remains of sin, and, by acts of the opposite virtues, they remove the habits acquired by evil living. Neither indeed was there ever in the Church of God any way accounted surer to turn aside the impending chastisement of the Lord than that men should, with true sorrow of mind, practise these works of penitence.<sup>26</sup> Add to these things that, whilst we thus, by making satisfaction, suffer for our sins, we are made conformable to Jesus Christ, Who satisfied for our sins,<sup>27</sup> from Whom all our sufficiency is;<sup>28</sup> having also thereby a most sure pledge that, if we suffer with Him, we shall also be glorified with Him.<sup>29</sup> But neither is this satisfaction, which we discharge for our sins, so our own as not to

<sup>25</sup> Rom. ii. 5; James v. 3.      <sup>27</sup> Rom. v. 10; I John ii. 1 f.

<sup>26</sup> Matt. iii. 8; iv. 17; xi. 21; etc.

<sup>28</sup> II Cor. iii. 5.

<sup>29</sup> Rom. viii. 17.

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be through Jesus Christ. For we who can do nothing of ourselves, as of ourselves, can do all things, He coöperating, who strengthens us.<sup>30</sup> Thus, man has not wherein to glory, but all our glorying is in Christ:<sup>31</sup> in Whom we live; in Whom we merit;<sup>32</sup> in Whom we satisfy; bringing forth fruits worthy of penance,<sup>33</sup> which from Him have their efficacy; by Him are offered to the Father; and through Him are accepted by the Father (can. xiii). Therefore the priests of the Lord ought, as far as the Spirit and prudence shall suggest, to enjoin salutary and suitable satisfactions, according to the quality of the crimes and the ability of the penitent; lest, if haply they connive at sins and deal too indulgently with penitents, by enjoining certain very light works for very grievous crimes, they be made partakers of other men's sins. But let them have in view that the satisfaction which they impose be not only for the preservation of a new life and a medicine of infirmity, but also

<sup>30</sup> Phil. iv. 13.

<sup>31</sup> I Cor. i. 31; II Cor. x. 17; Gal. vi. 14.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Acts xvii. 28: *in quo movemur*, in whom we move.

<sup>33</sup> Luke iii. 8.

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for the avenging and punishing of past sins. For the ancient Fathers likewise both believe and teach that the keys of the priests were given, not to loose only, but also to bind<sup>24</sup> (can. xv). But not, therefore, did they imagine that the Sacrament of Penance is a tribunal of wrath or of punishments; even as no Catholic ever thought that, by this kind of satisfactions on our parts, the efficacy of the merit and of the satisfaction of our Lord Jesus Christ is either obscured or in any way lessened; which when the innovators seek to understand, they in such wise maintain a new life to be the best penance as to take away the entire efficacy and use of satisfaction (can. xiii).

### CHAPTER IX

#### *On Works of Satisfaction*

The synod teaches furthermore that so great is the liberality of the divine munificence that we are able through Jesus Christ to make satisfaction to God the Father, not only by pun-

<sup>24</sup> Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 18; John xx. 23.

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ishments voluntarily undertaken of ourselves for the punishment of sin, or by those imposed at the discretion of the priest according to the measure of our delinquency, but also, which is a very great proof of love, by the temporal scourges inflicted of God, and borne patiently by us (can. xiii).

### ON THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION

It hath also seemed good to the holy synod to subjoin to the preceding doctrine on penance the following on the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, which by the Fathers was regarded as being the completion, not only of penance, but also of the whole Christian life, which ought to be a perpetual penance. First, therefore, as regards its institution, it declares and teaches that our most gracious Redeemer, —Who would have his servants at all times provided with salutary remedies against all the weapons of all their enemies,—as in the other sacraments, He prepared the greatest aids, whereby during life Christians may preserve themselves whole from every more grievous

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spiritual evil, so did He guard the close of life, by the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, as with a firm defence (can. i). For though our adversary seeks and seizes opportunities all our life long to be able in any way to devour our souls; <sup>35</sup> yet is there no time wherein he strains more vehemently all the powers of his craft to ruin us utterly and, if he can possibly, to make us fall even from trust in the mercy of God, than when he perceives the end of our life to be at hand.

### CHAPTER I

#### *On the Institution of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction*

Now, this sacred unction of the sick was instituted by Christ our Lord as truly and properly a sacrament of the New Law, insinuated indeed in Mark,<sup>36</sup> but recommended and promulgated to the faithful by James the Apostle, and brother of the Lord (can. i). "Is any man," he saith, "sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let

<sup>35</sup> I Pet. v. 8.

<sup>36</sup> Mark vi. 13.



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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."<sup>37</sup> In which words, as the Church has learned from Apostolic tradition, received from hand to hand, he teaches the matter, the form, the proper minister and the effect of this salutary sacrament. For the Church has understood the matter thereof to be oil blessed by a bishop. For the unction very aptly represents the grace of the Holy Ghost with which the soul of the sick person is invisibly anointed; and furthermore that those words, "By this unction," etc., are the form.

### CHAPTER II

#### *On the Effect of This Sacrament*

Moreover the thing signified and the effect of this sacrament are explained in those words: "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and

<sup>37</sup> James v. 14, 15.

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if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him.”<sup>38</sup> For the thing here signified is the grace of the Holy Ghost; whose anointing cleanses away sins, if there be any still to be expiated, as also the remains of sins; and raises up and strengthens the soul of the sick person (can. ii), by exciting in him a great confidence in the divine mercy; whereby the sick being supported bears more easily the inconveniences and pains of his sickness; and more readily resists the temptations of the devil who lies in wait for his heel;<sup>39</sup> and at times obtains bodily health, when expedient for the welfare of the soul.

### CHAPTER III

#### *On the Minister of This Sacrament, and on the Time when it Ought to be Administered*

And now as to prescribing who ought to receive, and who to administer this sacrament, this also was not obscurely delivered in the words above cited. For it is there also shown

<sup>38</sup> James v. 15.

<sup>39</sup> Gen. iii. 15.

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that the proper ministers of this sacrament are the presbyters of the Church (can. iv); by which name are to be understood, in that place, not the elders by age, or the foremost in dignity amongst the people, but either bishops, or priests by bishops rightly ordained by the imposition of the hands of the priesthood<sup>40</sup> (can. iv). It is also declared that this unction is to be applied to the sick, but to those especially who lie in such danger as to seem to be about to depart this life: whence also it is called the sacrament of the departing. And if the sick should, after having received this unction, recover, they may again be aided by the succour of this sacrament, when they fall into another like danger of death. Wherefore, they are on no account to be hearkened to, who, against so manifest and clear a sentence<sup>41</sup> of the Apostle James, teach either that this unction is a human figment or is a rite received from the Fathers, which neither has a command from God, nor a promise of grace (can. i): nor those who assert that it has already ceased, as though it were

<sup>40</sup> I Tim. iv. 14.

<sup>41</sup> James v. 14.

only to be referred to the grace of healing in the primitive Church; nor those who say that the rite and usage which the holy Roman Church observes in the administration of this sacrament is repugnant to the sentiment of the Apostle James, and that it is therefore to be changed into some other: nor finally those who affirm that this Extreme Unction may without sin be contemned by the faithful (can. iii): for all these things are most manifestly at variance with the perspicuous words of so great an Apostle. Neither assuredly does the Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all other churches, observe aught in administering this unction,—as regards those things which constitute the substance of this sacrament,—but what Blessed James has prescribed. Nor indeed can there be contempt of so great a sacrament without a heinous sin and an injury to the Holy Ghost Himself.

These are the things which this holy œcumenical synod professes and teaches and proposes to all the faithful of Christ to be believed and held touching the sacraments of Penance and Extreme Unction. And it de-

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livers the following canons to be inviolably preserved, and condemns and anathematizes those who assert what is contrary thereto.

### ON THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Canon I. If anyone saith that in the Catholic Church Penance is not truly and properly a sacrament, instituted by Christ our Lord for reconciling the faithful unto God, as often as they fall into sin after baptism; let him be anathema.

Canon II. If anyone, confounding the sacraments, saith that Baptism is itself the Sacrament of Penance, as though these two sacraments were not distinct, and that therefore Penance is not rightly called a second plank after shipwreck; let him be anathema.

Canon III. If anyone saith that those words of the Lord the Saviour: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained,"<sup>42</sup> are not to be understood of the power of forgiving and of

<sup>42</sup> John xx. 22 f.

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retaining sins in the sacrament of Penance, as the Catholic Church has always from the beginning understood them; but wrests them, contrary to the institution of this sacrament, to the power of preaching the Gospel; let him be anathema.

Canon IV. If anyone denieth that, for the entire and perfect remission of sins, there are required three acts in the penitent, which are as it were the matter of the Sacrament of Penance, to wit: contrition, confession, and satisfaction, which are called the three parts of penance; or saith that there are two parts only of penance, to wit: the terrors with which the conscience is smitten upon being convinced of sin, and the faith generated by the Gospel, or by the absolution, whereby one believes that his sins are forgiven him through Christ; let him be anathema.

Canon V. If anyone saith that the contrition which is acquired by means of the examination, collection, and detestation of sins—whereby one thinks over his years in the bitterness of his soul,<sup>43</sup> by pondering on the

<sup>43</sup> Is. xxxviii. 15.

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grievousness, the multitude, the filthiness of his sins, the loss of eternal blessedness, and the eternal damnation which he has incurred, having therewith the purpose of a better life—is not a true and profitable sorrow, does not prepare for grace, but makes a man a hypocrite and a greater sinner; in fine, that this (contrition) is a forced and not free and voluntary sorrow; let him be anathema.

Canon VI. If anyone denieth either that sacramental confession was instituted, or is necessary to salvation, of divine right; or saith that the manner of confessing secretly to a priest alone, which the Church hath ever observed from the beginning, and doth observe, is alien from the institution and command of Christ, and is a human invention; let him be anathema.

Canon VII. If anyone saith that, in the sacrament of Penance, it is not necessary, of divine right, for the remission of sins, to confess all and each of the mortal sins which after due and diligent previous meditation are remembered, even those (mortal sins) which are secret, and those which are opposed to the two

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last commandments of the Decalogue, as also the circumstances which change the species of a sin; but (saith) that such confession is only useful to instruct and console the penitent, and that it was of old only observed in order to impose a canonical satisfaction; or saith that they who strive to confess all their 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 VIII. If anyone saith that the confession of all sins, such as it is observed in the Church, is impossible, and is a human tradition to be abolished by the godly; or that all and each of the faithful of Christ, of either sex, are not obliged thereunto once a year, conformably to the constitution of the great Council of Lateran, and that, for this cause, the faithful of Christ are to be persuaded not to confess during Lent; let him be anathema.

Canon IX. If anyone saith that the sacramental absolution of the priest is not a judicial act, but a bare ministry of pronouncing and declaring sins to be forgiven to him who con-



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fesses; provided only he believe himself to be absolved, or (even though) the priest absolve not in earnest, but in joke; or saith that the confession of the penitent is not required in order that the priest may be able to absolve him; let him be anathema.

Canon X. If anyone saith that priests who are in mortal sin have not the power of binding and of loosing; or that not priests alone are the ministers of absolution, but that to all and each of the faithful of Christ is it said: "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;"<sup>44</sup> and, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained";<sup>45</sup> by virtue of which words every one is able to absolve from sins, to wit, from public sins by reproof only, provided he who is reproved yield thereto, and from secret sins by a voluntary confession; let him be anathema.

Canon XI. If anyone saith that bishops have not the right of reserving cases to them-

<sup>44</sup> Matt. xviii. 18.

<sup>45</sup> John xx. 23.

## DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

selves, except as regards external polity, and that therefore the reservation of cases hinders not but that a priest may truly absolve from reserved cases; let him be anathema.

Canon XII. If anyone saith that God always remits the whole punishment together with the guilt, and that the satisfaction of penitents is no other than the faith whereby they apprehend that Christ has satisfied for them; let him be anathema.

Canon XIII. If anyone saith that satisfaction for sins, as to their temporal punishment, is nowise made to God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, by the punishments inflicted by Him, and patiently borne, or by those enjoined by the priest, nor even by those voluntarily undertaken, as by fastings, prayers, almsdeeds, or by other works also of piety; and that, therefore, the best penance is merely a new life; let him be anathema.

Canon XIV. If anyone saith that the satisfactions by which penitents redeem their sins through Jesus Christ are not a worship of God, but traditions of men, which obscure the doctrine of grace and the true worship of

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God and the benefit itself of the death of Christ; let him be anathema.

Canon XV. If anyone saith that the keys are given to the Church, only to loose, not also to bind; and that, therefore, priests act contrary to the purpose of the keys and contrary to the institution of Christ when they impose punishments on those who confess; and that it is a fiction that, after the eternal punishment has, by virtue of the keys, been removed, there remains for the most part a temporal punishment to be discharged; let him be anathema.

### ON THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION

Canon I. If anyone saith that Extreme Unction is not truly and properly a sacrament, instituted by Christ our Lord, and promulgated by the blessed Apostle James; but is only a rite received from the Fathers, or a human figment; let him be anathema.

Canon. II. If anyone saith that the sacred unction of the sick does not confer grace, nor remit sin, nor comfort the sick; but that it has already ceased, as though it were of old only

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the grace of working cures; let him be anathema.

Canon III. If anyone saith that the rite and usage of Extreme Unction, which the holy Roman Church observes, is repugnant to the sentiment of the blessed Apostle James, and that it is therefore to be changed, and may, without sin, be contemned by Christians; let him be anathema.

Canon IV. If anyone saith that the presbyters 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 cause a priest alone is not the proper minister of Extreme Unction; let him be anathema.

## SESSION XXI

June 16, 1562

The sacred and holy, œcumenical and general Synod of Trent,—lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same legates of the Apostolic See presiding therein,—whereas, touching the tremendous and most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, there are in divers places, by the most wicked artifices of the devil, spread abroad certain monstrous errors by reason of which, in some provinces, many are seen to have departed from the faith and obedience of the Catholic Church, has thought fit that what relates to Communion under both species, and the communion of infants, be in this place set forth. Wherefore it forbids all the faithful of Christ to presume henceforth to believe, teach or preach otherwise on these matters than as is in these decrees explained and defined.

CHAPTER I

*That Laymen, and Clerics when not Sacrificing, are not Bound, of Divine Right, to Communion under Both Species*

Wherefore, this holy synod—instructed by the Holy Spirit, Who is the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of godliness,<sup>1</sup> and following the judgment and usage of the Church itself—declares and teaches that laymen, and clerics when not consecrating, are not obliged, by any divine precept, to receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist under both species; and that neither can it by any means be doubted, without injury to faith, that communion under either species is sufficient for them unto salvation. For, although Christ, the Lord, in the Last Supper, instituted and delivered to the Apostles<sup>2</sup> this venerable sacrament in the species of bread and wine, not therefore do that institution and de-

<sup>1</sup> Is. xi. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi. 26; Mark xiv. 22; Luke xxii. 19; I Cor. xi. 24 f.

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livery tend thereunto, that all the faithful of Christ be bound, by the institution of the Lord, to receive both species (can. i and ii). But neither is it rightly gathered from that discourse which is in the sixth of John—however, according to the various interpretations of holy Fathers and Doctors it be understood—that the communion of both species was enjoined by the Lord (can. iii); 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” (verse 54), also said: “He that eateth this bread shall live forever” (verse 59); and He Who said: “He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life” (verse 55), also said: “The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world” (verse 52); and, in fine, He Who said: “He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him” (verse 57), said nevertheless: “He that eateth this bread shall live forever” (verse 59).

## CHAPTER II

*The Power of the Church as regards the Dispensation of the Sacrament of the Eucharist*

It furthermore declares that this power has ever been in the Church, that, in the dispensation of the sacraments, their substance being untouched, it may ordain, or change, what things soever it may judge most expedient, for the profit of those who receive, or for the veneration of the said sacraments, according to the difference of circumstances, times and places. And this the Apostle seems not obscurely to have intimated, when he says: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God."<sup>3</sup> And indeed it is sufficiently manifest that he himself exercised this power, as in many other things, so in regard of this very sacrament; when, after having ordained certain things touching the use thereof, he says: "The rest I

<sup>3</sup> I Cor. iv. 1.



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will set in order when I come.” Wherefore, holy Mother Church, knowing this her authority in the administration of the sacraments, although the use of both species has, from the beginning of the Christian religion, not been unfrequent, yet, in progress of time, that custom having been already very widely changed, she, induced by weighty and just reasons, has approved of this custom of communicating under one <sup>4</sup> species,<sup>5</sup> and decreed that it was to be held as a law; which it is not lawful to reprobate, or to change at pleasure, without the authority of the Church itself (can. ii).

### CHAPTER III

*That Christ Whole and Entire and a True Sacrament are Received under Either Species*

It moreover declares that although, as hath been already said, our Redeemer, in that last supper, instituted, and delivered to the Apos-

<sup>4</sup> *altera.*

<sup>5</sup> Council of Constance, Sess. XIII.

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bles, this sacrament in two species, yet it is to be acknowledged that Christ whole and entire and a true sacrament are received under either species alone; and that therefore, as regards the fruit thereof, they who receive one species alone are not defrauded of any grace necessary to salvation (can. iii).

### CHAPTER IV

#### *That Little Children are not Bound to Sacramental Communion*

Finally, this same holy synod teaches that little children who have not attained to the use of reason are not by any necessity obliged to the sacramental communion of the Eucharist (can. iv): forasmuch as, having been regenerated by the laver of baptism,<sup>6</sup> and being incorporated with Christ, they cannot at that age lose the grace which they have already acquired of being the sons of God. Not, therefore, however, is antiquity to be condemned, if, in some places, it, at one time, ob-

<sup>6</sup> Tit. iii. 5.

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served that custom; for as those most holy Fathers had a probable cause for what they did in respect of their times, so, assuredly, is it to be believed without controversy that they did this without any necessity thereof unto salvation.

### ON COMMUNION UNDER BOTH SPECIES AND ON THE COMMUNION OF INFANTS

Canon I. If anyone saith that by the precept of God, or by necessity of salvation, all and each of the faithful of Christ ought to receive both species of the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist; let him be anathema.

Canon II. If anyone saith that the Holy Catholic Church was not induced, by just causes and reasons, to communicate laymen, and also clerics when not consecrating, under the species of bread only, or that she erred in this; let him be anathema.

Canon III. If anyone denieth that Christ whole and entire—the fountain and author of all graces—is received under the one species of bread, because that—as some falsely assert

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—He is not received, according to the institution of Christ Himself, under both species; let him be anathema.

Canon IV. If anyone saith that the communion of the Eucharist is necessary for little children, before they have arrived at years of discretion; let him be anathema.

As regards, however, those two articles, proposed on another occasion, but which have not as yet been discussed; to wit, whether the reasons by which the Holy Catholic Church was led to communicate under the one species of bread only, laymen, and also priests when not celebrating, are in such wise to be adhered to, as that on no account is the use of the chalice to be allowed to anyone soever; and, whether, in case that, for reasons beseeming and consonant with Christian charity, it appears that the use of the chalice is to be granted to any nation or kingdom, it is to be conceded under certain conditions; and what are those conditions; this same holy synod reserves the same to another time—for the earliest opportunity that shall present itself—to be examined and defined.

## SESSION XXII

September 17, 1562

### DOCTRINE ON THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

The sacred and holy, œcumenical and general Synod of Trent,—lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same Legates of the Apostolic See presiding therein,—to the end that the ancient, complete and in every part perfect faith and doctrine touching the great mystery of the Eucharist may be retained in the holy Catholic Church; and may, all errors and heresies being repelled, be preserved in its own purity; (the synod) instructed by the illumination of the Holy Ghost, teaches, declares and decrees what follows to be preached to the faithful on the subject of the Eucharist, considered as being a true and singular sacrifice.

# DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

## CHAPTER I

### *On the Institution of the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*

Forasmuch as, under the former Testament, according to the testimony of the Apostle Paul, there was no perfection, because of the weakness of the Levitical priesthood;<sup>1</sup> there was need, God, the Father of mercies, so ordaining, that another priest should rise, according to the order of Melchisedech,<sup>2</sup> our Lord Jesus Christ, who might consummate and lead to what is perfect as many as were to be sanctified.<sup>3</sup> He, therefore, our God and Lord, though He was about to offer Himself once on the altar of the Cross unto God the Father, by means of His death, there to operate an eternal redemption;<sup>4</sup> nevertheless, because that His priesthood was not to be extinguished by His death, in the Last Supper, on the night in which He was betrayed,—that He might leave, to His own beloved Spouse

<sup>1</sup> Heb. vii. 11, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. x. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. ix. 12 ff.

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the Church, a visible sacrifice (can. i), such as the nature of man requires, whereby that bloody sacrifice, once to be accomplished on the Cross, might be represented, and the memory thereof remain even unto the end of the world,<sup>5</sup> and its salutary virtue be applied to the remission of those sins which we daily commit,—declaring Himself constituted a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedech,<sup>6</sup> He offered up to God the Father His own Body and Blood under the species of bread and wine; and, under the symbols of those same things, He delivered (His own body and blood) to be received by His Apostles, whom He then constituted priests of the New Testament; and by those words, “Do this in commemoration of me,”<sup>7</sup> He commanded them and their successors in the priesthood to offer (them); even as the Catholic Church has always understood and taught (can. ii). For, having celebrated the ancient Passover, which the multitude of the children of Israel immolated in memory of their going out of Egypt,<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> I Cor. xi. 24.

<sup>6</sup> Ps. cix. 4.

<sup>7</sup> I Cor. xi. 24.

<sup>8</sup> Ex. xii, xiii.

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He instituted the new Passover (to wit), Himself to be immolated, under visible signs, by the Church through (the ministry of) priests, in memory of His own passage from this world unto the Father, when by the effusion of His own Blood He redeemed us, and delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into His kingdom.<sup>9</sup> And this is indeed that clean oblation, which cannot be defiled by any unworthiness or malice of those that offer (it); which the Lord foretold by Malachias was to be offered in every place, clean to his name, which was to be great amongst the Gentiles;<sup>10</sup> and which the Apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, has not obscurely indicated, when he says that they who are defiled by the participation of the table of devils cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord,<sup>11</sup> by the table meaning in both places the altar. This, in fine, is that oblation which was prefigured by various types of sacrifices,<sup>12</sup> during the period of nature and of the law; inasmuch as it comprises all the good things

<sup>9</sup> Col. i. 13.

<sup>10</sup> Mal. i. 11.

<sup>11</sup> I Cor. x. 21.

<sup>12</sup> Gen. iv. 4; viii, 20; etc.



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signified by those sacrifices, as being the consummation and perfection of them all.

### CHAPTER II

*That the Sacrifice of the Mass is Propitiatory  
both for the Living and the Dead*

And forasmuch as, in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, that same Christ is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner, Who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross; the holy synod teaches that this sacrifice is truly propitiatory (can. vi), and that by means thereof this is effected that we obtain mercy, and find grace in seasonable aid,<sup>13</sup> if we draw nigh unto God, contrite and penitent, with a sincere heart and upright faith, with fear and reverence. For the Lord, appeased by the oblation thereof and granting the grace and gift of penitence, forgives even heinous crimes and sins. For the victim is one and the same, the same now offering by the ministry of

<sup>13</sup> Heb. iv. 16.

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priests, who then offered Himself on the cross, the manner alone of offering being different. The fruits indeed of which oblation, of that bloody one, to wit, are received most plentifully through this unbloody one; so far is this (latter) from derogating in any way from that (former oblation) (can. iv). Wherefore, not only for the sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities of the faithful who are living, but also for those who are departed in Christ, and who are not as yet fully purified, is it rightly offered, agreeably to a tradition of the Apostles (can. iii).

### CHAPTER III

#### *On Masses in Honour of the Saints*

And although the Church has been accustomed at times to celebrate certain Masses in honour and memory of the saints; not therefore, however, doth she teach that sacrifice is offered unto them, but unto God alone, Who crowned them (can. v); whence neither is the priest wont to say, "I offer sacrifice to thee,

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Peter, or Paul;”<sup>14</sup> but, giving thanks to God for their victories, he implores their patronage, that they may vouchsafe to intercede for us in heaven, whose memory we celebrate upon earth.

### CHAPTER IV

#### *On the Canon of the Mass*

And whereas it beseemeth that holy things be administered in a holy manner, and of all holy things this sacrifice is the most holy; to the end that it might be worthily and reverently offered and received, the Catholic Church instituted, many years ago, the sacred Canon, so pure from every error, that nothing is contained therein which does not in the highest degree savour of a certain holiness and piety, and raise up unto God the minds of those that offer. For it is composed out of the very words of the Lord, the traditions of the Apostles, and the pious institutions also of holy pontiffs.

<sup>14</sup> St. Augustine, “De Civ. Dei,” L. viii. 57.

## CHAPTER VI

*On the Solemn Ceremonies of the Sacrifice of  
the Mass*

And whereas such is the nature of man that, without external helps, he cannot easily be raised to the meditation of divine things; therefore has holy Mother Church instituted certain rites, to wit, that certain things be pronounced in the Mass in a low (can. ix), and others in a louder, tone. She has likewise employed ceremonies (can. vii), such as mystic benedictions, lights, incense, vestments and many other things of this kind, derived from an apostolical discipline and tradition, whereby both the majesty of so great a sacrifice might be recommended, and the minds of the faithful be excited, by those visible signs of religion and piety, to the contemplation of those most sublime things which are hidden in this sacrifice.

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## CHAPTER VI

### *On Mass wherein the Priest alone Communicates*

The sacred and holy synod would fain indeed that, at each Mass, the faithful who are present should communicate, not only in spiritual desire, but also by the sacramental participation of the Eucharist, that thereby a more abundant fruit might be derived to them from this most holy sacrifice: but not, therefore, if this be not always done, does it condemn, as private and unlawful (can. viii), but approves of and therefore commends those Masses in which the priest alone communicates sacramentally; since those Masses also ought to be considered as truly common; partly because the people communicate spiritually thereat; 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

*On the Water That is to be Mixed with the Wine to be Offered in the Chalice*

The holy synod notices, in the next place, that it has been enjoined by the Church on priests to mix water with the wine that is to be offered in the chalice<sup>16</sup> (can. ix); as well because it is believed that Christ the Lord did this, as also because from His side there came out blood and water;<sup>17</sup> the memory of which mystery is renewed by this commixture; and, whereas in the apocalypse of blessed John the peoples are called waters,<sup>18</sup> the union of that faithful people with Christ their head is hereby represented.

<sup>16</sup> Synod. Quinisext. cap. 32; Conc. Carthag. iii. c. 24; Concil. Flor.

<sup>17</sup> John xix. 34.

<sup>18</sup> Apoc. xvii. 15.

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## CHAPTER VIII

*On not Celebrating the Mass everywhere in the Vulgar Tongue; the Mysteries of the Mass to be explained to the People*

Although the Mass contains great instruction for the faithful people, nevertheless, it has not seemed expedient to the Fathers that it should be everywhere (can. ix) celebrated in the vulgar tongue. Wherefore, the ancient usage of each Church, and the rite approved of by the holy Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all churches, being in each place retained; and, that the sheep of Christ may not suffer hunger, nor the little ones ask for bread and there be none to break it unto them,<sup>19</sup> the holy synod charges pastors, and all who have the cure of souls, that they frequently, during the celebration of the Mass, expound, either by themselves or others, some portion of those things which are read at Mass, and that, amongst the rest, they explain some

<sup>19</sup> Lam. iv. 4.

## DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

mystery of this most holy sacrifice, especially on the Lord's days and festivals.

### CHAPTER IX

#### *Preliminary Remark on the Following Canons*

And because that many errors are at this time disseminated and many things are taught and maintained by divers persons, in opposition to this ancient faith, which is based on the sacred Gospel, the traditions of the Apostles, and the doctrine of the holy Fathers; the sacred and holy synod, after many and grave deliberations maturely had touching these matters, has resolved, with the unanimous consent of all the Fathers, to condemn and to eliminate from holy Church, by means of the canons subjoined, whatsoever is opposed to this most pure faith and sacred doctrine.

#### ON THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

Canon I. If anyone saith that in the Mass a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to



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God; or that to be offered is nothing else but that Christ is given us to eat; let him be anathema.

Canon II. If anyone saith that by those words, "Do this for the commemoration of Me,"<sup>20</sup> Christ did not institute the Apostles priests; or did not ordain that they and other priests should offer His own body and blood; let him be anathema.

Canon III. If anyone saith that the sacrifice of the Mass is only a sacrifice of praise and of thanksgiving; or that it is a bare commemoration of the sacrifice consummated on the Cross, but not a propitiatory sacrifice; or that it profits him only who receives; and that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead for sins, pains, satisfactions and other necessities; let him be anathema.

Canon IV. If anyone saith that, by the sacrifice of the Mass, a blasphemy is cast upon the most holy sacrifice of Christ consummated on the Cross; or that it is thereby derogated from; let him be anathema.

Canon V. If anyone saith that it is an im-

<sup>20</sup> I Cor. xi. 24; Luke xxii. 19.

## DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

posture to celebrate Masses in honour of the saints, and for obtaining their intercession with God, as the Church intends; let him be anathema.

Canon VI. If anyone saith that the canon of the Mass contains errors, and is therefore to be abrogated; let him be anathema.

Canon VII. If anyone saith that the ceremonies, vestments and outward signs which the Catholic Church makes use of in the celebration of Masses are incentives to impiety, rather than offices of piety; let him be anathema.

Canon VIII. If anyone saith that Masses wherein the priest alone communicates sacramentally are unlawful, and are therefore to be abrogated; let him be anathema.

Canon IX. If anyone saith 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 vulgar tongue only; or that water ought not to be mixed with the wine that is to be offered in the chalice, for that it is contrary to the institution of Christ; let him be anathema.

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### *Decree Concerning the Things to be Observed, and to be Avoided, in the Celebration of the Mass*

What great care is to be taken that the sacred and holy Sacrifice of the Mass be celebrated with all religious service and veneration, each one may easily imagine, who considers that in Holy Writ he is called accursed who doth the work of God negligently;<sup>21</sup> and if we must needs confess that no other work can be performed by the faithful so holy and divine as this tremendous mystery itself, wherein that life-giving Victim, by which we were reconciled to the Father, is daily immolated on the altar by priests, it is also sufficiently clear that all industry and diligence is to be applied to this end, that it be performed with the greatest possible inward cleanness and purity of heart, and outward show of devotion and piety. Whereas, therefore, either through the wickedness of the times, or through the carelessness and corruption of men, many things seem already to have crept in which are alien from the

<sup>21</sup> Jer. xlvi. 10.

## DOGMATIC CANONS AND DECREES

dignity of so great a sacrifice; to the end that the honour and cult due thereunto may, for the glory of God and the edification of the faithful people, be restored; the holy synod decrees that the ordinary bishops of places shall take diligent care and be bound to prohibit and abolish all those things which either covetousness, which is a serving of idols,<sup>22</sup> or irreverence, which can hardly be separated from impiety, or superstition, which is a false imitation of true piety, may have introduced. And that many things may be comprised in a few words: first, as relates to covetousness: they shall wholly prohibit all manner of conditions and bargains for recompenses, and whatsoever is given for the celebration of new Masses;<sup>23</sup> as also those importunate and illiberal demands, rather than requests, for alms and other things of the like sort, which are but little removed from a simoniacal taint, or, at all events, from filthy lucre.

In the next place, that irreverence may be

<sup>22</sup> Eph. v. 5.

<sup>23</sup> *pro missis novis*, probably first masses; or, maybe, masses newly appointed.

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avoided, each, in his own diocese, shall forbid that any wandering or unknown priest be allowed to celebrate Mass. Furthermore, they shall not allow anyone who is publicly and notoriously stained with crime either to minister at the holy altar, or to assist at the sacred services; nor shall they suffer the holy sacrifice to be celebrated, either by any seculars or regulars whatsoever, in private houses; or, at all, out of the church and those oratories which are dedicated solely to divine worship, and which are to be designated and visited by the said ordinaries; and not then unless those who are present shall have first shown, by their decently composed outward appearance, that they are there not in body only, but also in mind and devout affection of heart. They shall also banish from churches all those kinds of music in which, whether by the organ or in the singing, there is mixed up anything lascivious or impure, as also all secular actions, vain and therefore profane conversations, all walking about, noise and clamour, that so the house of God may seem to be, and may be called truly a house of prayer.

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Lastly, that no room may be left for superstition, they shall by ordinance and under given penalties provide that priests do not celebrate at other than due hours; nor employ other rites or other ceremonies and prayers, in the celebration of Masses, besides those which have been approved of by the Church, and have been received by a frequent and praiseworthy usage. They shall wholly banish from the Church the observance of a fixed number of certain Masses and of candles, as being the invention of superstitious worship, rather than of true religion; and they shall instruct the people what is, and whence especially is derived, the fruit so precious and heavenly of this most holy sacrifice. They shall also admonish their people to repair frequently to their own parish churches, at least on the Lord's days and the greater festivals. All, therefore, that has been briefly enumerated is in such wise propounded to all ordinaries of places, as that, by the power given them by this sacred and holy synod, and even as delegates of the Apostolic See, they may prohibit, ordain, reform and establish not only

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the things aforesaid, but also whatsoever else shall seem to them to have relation hereunto; and may compel the faithful people inviolably to observe them, by ecclesiastical censures and other penalties which at their pleasure they may appoint; any privileges, exemption, appeals and customs whatsoever to the contrary notwithstanding.

## SESSION XXIII

July 15, 1563

The true and Catholic doctrine, touching the sacrament of order, decreed and published by the holy Synod of Trent, in the seventh session, in condemnation of the errors of our time.

### CHAPTER I

#### *On the Institution of the Priesthood of the New Law*

Sacrifice and priesthood are, by the ordinance of God, in such wise conjoined, as that both have existed in every law. Whereas, therefore, in the New Testament, the Catholic Church has received, from the institution of Christ, the holy visible Sacrifice of the Eucharist; it must needs also be confessed that there is, in that Church, a new, visible and



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external priesthood (can. i), into which the old has been translated.<sup>1</sup> And the Sacred Scriptures show, and the tradition of the Catholic Church has always taught, that this priesthood was instituted by the same Lord our Saviour (can. iii), and that to the Apostles and their successors in the priesthood was the power delivered of consecrating, offering and administering His Body and Blood, as also of forgiving and retaining sins (can. i).

### CHAPTER II

#### *On the Seven Orders*

And whereas the ministry of so holy a priesthood is a divine thing; to the end that it might be exercised in a more worthy manner, and with greater veneration, it was suitable that, in the most well-ordered settlement of the Church, there should be several and diverse orders of ministers to minister to the priesthood by virtue of their office;<sup>2</sup> orders so dis-

<sup>1</sup> Heb. vii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xvi. 19; Luke xxii. 19; John xx. 22.

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tributed as that those already marked with the clerical tonsure should ascend through the lesser to the greater orders. For the Sacred Scriptures make open mention not only of priests, but also of deacons;<sup>3</sup> and teach, in words the most weighty, what things are especially to be attended to in the ordination thereof; and, from the very beginning of the Church, the names of the following orders, and the ministrations proper to each one of them, are known to have been in use; to wit, those of sub-deacon, acolyth, exorcist, lector and doorkeeper; though these were not of equal rank: for the sub-deaconship is classed among the greater orders by the Fathers and sacred councils, wherein also we very often read of the inferior orders.

### CHAPTER III

#### *That Order is Truly and Properly a Sacrament*

Whereas, by the testimony of Scripture, by Apostolic tradition and the unanimous consent

<sup>3</sup> Acts vi. 5; xxi. 8; I Tim. iii. 8.

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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 (can. iii). 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 hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sobriety."<sup>4</sup>

### CHAPTER IV

#### *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy and on Ordination*

But, forasmuch as in the Sacrament of Order, as also in Baptism and Confirmation, a character is imprinted, which can neither be effaced nor taken away; the holy synod with reason condemns the opinion of those who assert that the priests of the New Testament have only a temporary power; and that those who have once been rightly ordained can again

<sup>4</sup> II Tim. i. 6, 7; I Tim. iv. 14.

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become laymen, if they do not exercise the ministry of the word of God (can. i). And if anyone affirm that all Christians indiscriminately are priests of the New Testament, or that they are all mutually endowed with an equal spiritual power, he clearly does nothing but confound the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which is as an army set in array;<sup>5</sup> (can. iv); as if, contrary to the doctrine of blessed Paul, all were Apostles, all prophets, all evangelists, all pastors, all doctors.<sup>6</sup> Wherefore, the holy synod declares that, besides the other ecclesiastical degrees, bishops, who have succeeded to the place of the Apostles, principally belong to this hierarchical order; that they are placed, as the same Apostle says, by the Holy Ghost, to rule the Church of God;<sup>7</sup> that they are superior to priests; administer the Sacrament of Confirmation; ordain the ministers of the Church; and that they can perform very many other things; over which functions others of an inferior order have no power (can. vii). Furthermore, the sacred and holy synod teaches that, in the ordination of bishops,

<sup>5</sup> Cant. vi. 3.

<sup>6</sup> I Cor. xii. 29.

<sup>7</sup> Acts xx. 28.

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priests and of the other orders, neither the consent, nor vocation, nor authority, whether of the people or of any civil power or magistrate whatsoever, is required in such wise as that, without this, the ordination is invalid; yea rather doth it decree that all those who, being only called and instituted by the people, or by the civil power and magistrate, ascend to the exercise of these ministrations, and those who of their own rashness assume them to themselves, are not ministers of the Church, but are to be looked upon as thieves and robbers who have not entered by the door<sup>8</sup> (can. viii). These are the things which it hath seemed good to the sacred synod to teach the faithful of Christ, in general terms, touching the Sacrament of Order. But it hath resolved to condemn whatsoever things are contrary thereunto, in express and specific canons, in the manner following; in order that all men, with the help of Christ, using the rule of faith, may, in the midst of the darkness of so many errors, more easily be able to recognize and to hold Catholic truth.

<sup>8</sup> John x. 1.

ON THE SACRAMENT OF ORDER

Canon I. If anyone saith that there is not in the New Testament a visible and external priesthood; or that there is not any power of consecrating and offering the true Body and Blood of the Lord and of forgiving and retaining sins; but only an 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 II. If anyone saith that, besides the priesthood, there are not in the Catholic Church other orders, both greater and minor, by which, as by certain steps, advance is made unto the priesthood; let him be anathema.

Canon III. If anyone saith that Order, or sacred ordination, is not truly and properly a sacrament instituted by Christ the Lord; or that it is a kind of human figment devised by men unskilled in ecclesiastical matters; or that it is only a kind of rite for choosing ministers of the word of God and of the sacraments; let him be anathema.

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Canon IV. If anyone saith that, by sacred ordination, the Holy Ghost is not given; and that vainly therefore do the bishops say: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" or that a character is not imprinted by that ordination; or that he who has once been a priest can again become a layman; let him be anathema.

Canon V. If anyone saith that the sacred unction which the Church uses in holy ordination is not only not required, but is to be despised and is pernicious, as likewise are the other ceremonies of order; let him be anathema.

Canon VI. If anyone saith that in the Catholic Church there is not a hierarchy by divine ordination instituted, consisting of bishops, priests and ministers; let him be anathema.

Canon VII. If anyone saith that bishops are not superior to priests; or that they have not the power of confirming and ordaining; or that the power which they possess is common to them and to priests; or that orders, conferred by them, without the consent or vocation of the people, or of the secular power, are

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invalid; or that those who have neither been rightly ordained, nor sent, by ecclesiastical and canonical power, but come from elsewhere, are lawful ministers of the word and of the sacraments; let him be anathema.

Canon VIII. If anyone saith that the bishops who are assumed by authority of the Roman pontiff are not legitimate and true bishops, but are a human figment; let him be anathema.



## SESSION XXIV

November 11, 1563

### DOCTRINE ON THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

The first parent of the human race, under the influence of the Divine Spirit, pronounced the bond of matrimony perpetual and indissoluble, when 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."<sup>1</sup> But that by this bond two only are united and joined together our Lord taught more plainly when, rehearsing those last words as having been uttered by God, he said: "Therefore now they are not two, but one flesh";<sup>2</sup> and straightway confirmed the firmness of that tie, proclaimed so long before by Adam, by these words: "What therefore God hath

<sup>1</sup> Gen. ii. 23 f.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xix. 6; Mark x. 8.

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joined together, let no man put asunder.”<sup>3</sup> But the grace which might perfect that natural love and confirm that indissoluble union and sanctify the married, Christ Himself, the institutor and perfector of the venerable sacraments, merited for us by His passion; as the Apostle Paul intimates, saying: “Husbands love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered himself up for it;” adding shortly after: “This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church.”<sup>4</sup> Whereas therefore matrimony, in the evangelical law, excels in grace, through Christ, the ancient marriages; with reason have our holy Fathers, the councils and the tradition of the universal Church always taught that it is to be numbered amongst the sacraments of the New Law; against which, impious men of this age, raging, have not only had false notions touching this venerable sacrament, but, introducing according to their wont, under the pretext of the Gospel, a carnal liberty, they have by word and writing asserted, not without great injury to the faithful of Christ, many

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xix. 6; Mark x. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. v. 25, 32.

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things alien from the sentiment of the Catholic Church and from the usage approved of since the times of the Apostles; the holy and universal synod, wishing to meet the rashness of these men, has thought it proper, lest their pernicious contagion may draw more after it, that the more remarkable heresies and errors of the above-named schismatics be exterminated by decreeing against the said heretics and their errors the following anathemas:

### ON THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Canon I. If anyone saith that matrimony is not truly and properly one of the seven sacraments of the evangelic law, (a sacrament) instituted by Christ the Lord; but that it has been invented by men in the Church; and that it does not confer grace; let him be anathema.

Canon II. If anyone saith that it is lawful for Christians to have several wives at the same time and that this is not prohibited by any divine law; let him be anathema.

Canon III. If anyone saith that those degrees only of consanguinity and affinity which

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are set down in Leviticus can hinder matrimony from being contracted; and dissolve it when contracted; and that the Church cannot dispense in some of those degrees or establish that others may hinder and dissolve it; let him be anathema.

Canon IV. If anyone saith that the Church could not establish impediments dissolving marriage; or that she has erred in establishing them; let him be anathema.

Canon V. If anyone saith that on account of heresy, or irksome cohabitation, or the affected<sup>5</sup> absence of one of the parties the bond of matrimony may be dissolved; let him be anathema.

Canon VI. If anyone saith that matrimony contracted, but not consummated, is not dissolved by the solemn profession of religion by one of the married parties; let him be anathema.

Canon VII. If anyone saith that the Church has erred in that she hath taught, and doth teach, in accordance with the evangelical and Apostolical doctrine,<sup>6</sup> that the bond of

<sup>5</sup> *Affectatam*, designed, voluntary. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xix.; I Cor. vii.

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matrimony cannot be dissolved on account of the adultery of one of the married parties; and that both, or even the innocent one who gave not occasion to the 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 take another wife, as also she, who, having put away the adulterer, shall take another husband; let him be anathema.

Canon VIII. If anyone saith that the Church errs in that she declares that, for many causes, a separation may take place between husband and wife, in regard of bed, or in regard of cohabitation, for a determinate or for an indeterminate period; let him be anathema.

Canon IX. If anyone saith that clerics constituted in sacred orders, or regulars who have solemnly professed chastity, are able to contract marriage, and that being contracted it is valid, notwithstanding the ecclesiastical law or vow; and that the contrary is nothing else than to condemn marriage; and that all who do not feel that they have the gift of chastity, even though they have made a vow thereof, may

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contract marriage; let him be anathema; seeing that God refuses not that gift to those who ask for it rightly, neither does he suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able.<sup>7</sup>

Canon X. If anyone saith that the marriage state is to be placed above the state of virginity or of celibacy, and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in virginity or in celibacy than to be united in matrimony; let him be anathema.

Canon XI. If anyone saith 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; or condemn the benedictions and other ceremonies which the Church makes use of therein; let him be anathema.

Canon XII. If anyone saith that matrimonial causes do not belong to ecclesiastical judges; let him be anathema.

<sup>7</sup> I Cor. x. 13.

## SESSION XXV

December 3 and 4, 1563

### DECREE CONCERNING PURGATORY

Whereas the Catholic Church, instructed by the Holy Ghost, has, from the Sacred Writings and the ancient tradition of the Fathers, taught in sacred councils, and very recently in this œcumenical synod<sup>1</sup> that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls there detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but principally by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar; the holy synod enjoins on bishops that they diligently endeavour that the sound doctrine concerning Purgatory, transmitted by the holy Fathers and sacred councils, be believed, maintained, taught and everywhere proclaimed by the faithful of Christ. But let the more difficult and subtle questions, and

<sup>1</sup> See Sess. VI can. XXX; Sess. XXII cap. II and III.

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which tend not to edification,<sup>2</sup> and from which for the most part there is no increase of piety, be excluded from popular discourses before the uneducated multitude. In like manner such things as are uncertain, or which labour under an appearance of error, let them not allow to be made public and treated of. While those things which tend to a certain kind of curiosity or superstition, or which savour of filthy lucre, let them prohibit as scandals and stumbling-blocks of the faithful. But let the bishops take care that the suffrages of the faithful who are living, to wit, the sacrifices of Masses, prayers, alms and other works of piety, which have been wont to be performed by the faithful for the other faithful departed, be piously and devoutly performed, in accordance with the institutes of the Church; and that whatsoever is due on their behalf, from the endowments of testators, or in other way, be discharged, not in a perfunctory manner, but diligently and accurately, by the priests and ministers of the Church, and others who are bound to render this (service).

<sup>2</sup> cf. I Tim. i. 4.



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### ON THE INVOCATION, VENERATION, AND RELICS OF SAINTS AND ON SACRED IMAGES

The holy synod enjoins on all bishops and others who sustain the office and charge of teaching that, agreeably to the usage of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, received from the primitive times of the Christian religion, and agreeably to the consent of the holy Fathers, and to the decrees of sacred councils, they especially instruct the faithful diligently concerning the intercession and invocation of saints; the honour (paid) to relics; and the legitimate use of images; teaching them that the saints, who reign together with Christ, offer up their own prayers to God for men; that it is good and useful suppliantly to invoke them, and to have recourse to their prayers, aid and help for obtaining benefits from God, through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who is our alone Redeemer and Saviour; but that they think impiously who deny that the saints, who enjoy eternal happiness in Heaven, are to be invocated; or who assert either that

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they do not pray for men; or that the invocation of them to pray for each of us even in particular is idolatry; or that it is repugnant to the Word of God; and is opposed to the honour of the one mediator of God and men, Christ Jesus;<sup>3</sup> or that it is foolish to supplicate vocally or mentally those who reign in Heaven. Also that the holy bodies of holy martyrs, and of others now living with Christ, which bodies were the living members of Christ and the temple of the Holy Ghost,<sup>4</sup> and which are by Him to be raised unto eternal life and to be glorified, are to be venerated by the faithful, through which (bodies) many benefits are bestowed by God on men; so that they who affirm that veneration and honour are not due to the relics of saints; or that these and other sacred monuments are uselessly honoured by the faithful; and that the places dedicated to the memory of the saints are in vain visited with the view of obtaining their aid, are wholly to be condemned, as the Church has already long since condemned, and now also condemns them.

<sup>3</sup> I Tim. ii. 5.

<sup>4</sup> I Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19; II Cor. vi. 16.

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Moreover, that the images of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God, and of the other saints are to be had and to be retained particularly in temples, and that due honour and veneration are to be given them; not that any divinity or virtue is believed to be in them, on account of which they are to be worshipped; or that anything is to be asked of them; or that trust is to be reposed in images, as was of old done by the Gentiles who placed their hope in idols; but because the honour which is shown them is referred to the prototypes which those images represent; in such wise that by the images which we kiss, and before which we uncover the head, and prostrate ourselves, we adore Christ; and we venerate the saints whose similitude they bear; as, by the decrees of councils, and especially the second Synod of Nicæa, has been defined against the opponents of images.

And the bishops shall carefully teach this, that by means of the histories of the mysteries of our Redemption, portrayed by paintings or other representations, the people are instructed and confirmed in (the habit of) remembering

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and continually revolving in mind the articles of faith; as also that great profit is derived from all sacred images, not only because the people are thereby admonished of the benefits and gifts bestowed upon them by Christ, but also because the miracles which God has performed by means of the saints and their salutary examples are set before the eyes of the faithful; that so they may give God thanks for those things; may order their own lives and manners in imitation of the saints; and may be excited to adore and love God, and to cultivate piety. But if anyone shall teach or entertain sentiments contrary to these decrees; let him be anathema.

And if any abuses have crept in amongst these holy and salutary observances, the holy synod ardently desires that they be utterly abolished; in such wise that no images (suggestive) of false doctrine and furnishing occasion of dangerous error to the uneducated be set up. And if at times, when expedient for the unlettered people, it happen that the facts and narratives of Sacred Scripture are portrayed and represented, the people shall be

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taught that not thereby is the divinity represented, as though it could be seen by the eyes of the body, or be portrayed by colours or figures.

Moreover, in the invocation of saints, the veneration of relics and the sacred use of images, every superstition shall be removed, all filthy lucre be abolished; finally, all lasciviousness be avoided; in such wise that figures shall not be painted or adorned with a beauty exciting to lust; nor the celebration of the saints and the visitation of relics be by any perverted into revelings and drunkenness, as if festivals are celebrated to the honour of the saints by luxury and wantonness.

In fine, let so great care and diligence be used herein by bishops as that there be nothing seen that is disorderly or that is unbecomingly or confusedly arranged, nothing that is profane, nothing indecorous, seeing that holiness becometh the house of God.<sup>5</sup>

And that these things may be the more faithfully observed, the holy synod ordains that no one be allowed to place; or cause to be placed,

<sup>5</sup> Ps. xcii. 5.

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any unusual image, in any place, or church, howsoever exempted, except that image have been approved of by the bishop; also that no new miracles are to be acknowledged, or new relics recognized, unless the said bishop has taken cognizance and approved thereof; who, as soon as he has obtained some certain information in regard of these matters, shall, after having taken the advice of theologians and of other pious men, act therein as he shall judge to be consonant with truth and piety. But if any doubtful or difficult abuse has to be extirpated; or, in fine, if any more grave question shall arise touching these matters, the bishop, before deciding the controversy, shall await the sentence of the metropolitan and of the bishops of the province in a provincial council; yet so that nothing new, or that previously has not been usual in the Church, shall be resolved on without having first consulted the most holy Roman pontiff.

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### DECREE CONCERNING INDULGENCES

Whereas the power of conferring indulgences was granted by Christ to the Church; and she has, even in the most ancient times, used the said power,<sup>6</sup> delivered unto her of God; the sacred, holy synod teaches and enjoins that the use of indulgences for the Christian people, most salutary and approved of by the authority of sacred councils, is to be retained in the Church; and it condemns with anathema those who either assert that they are useless, or who 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 excessive facility, ecclesiastical discipline be enervated. And being desirous that the abuses which have crept therein, and by occasion of which this honorable name of indulgences is blasphemed by heretics, be amended and corrected, it ordains generally by this decree that all evil gains for the obtaining thereof—

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xvi. 19; John xx. 23.

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whence a most prolific cause of abuses amongst the Christian people has been derived—be wholly abolished. But as regards the other abuses which have proceeded from superstition, ignorance, irreverence, or from whatsoever other source, since, by reason of the manifold corruptions in the places and provinces where the said abuses are committed, they cannot conveniently be specially prohibited, it commands all bishops diligently to collect, each in his own church, all abuses of this nature, and to report them in the first provincial synod; that, after having been reviewed by the opinions of the other bishops also, they may forthwith be referred to the sovereign Roman pontiff, by whose authority and prudence that which may be expedient for the universal Church will be ordained; that thus the gift of holy indulgences may be dispensed to all the faithful, piously, holily and incorruptly.



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### PROFESSION OF THE TRIDENTINE FAITH

FROM THE BULLS OF POPE PIUS IV,

“INJUNCTUM NOBIS,” NOVEMBER 13, 1564,  
AND “IN SACROSANCTA,” DECEMBER 9, 1564

I. I, . . . . ., with a firm faith believe and profess all and every one of the things contained in that creed which the holy Roman Church makes use of:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and 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 came down 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 again on

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the third day, according to the Scriptures; and He ascended into heaven, sitteth 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 the Giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; Who with the Father and the Son together is adored and glorified; Who spoke by 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.

II. I most steadfastly admit and embrace Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions, and all other observances and constitutions of the same Church.

III. I also admit the Holy Scriptures, according to that sense which our holy mother Church has held and does hold, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures; neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers,

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IV. I also profess that there are truly and properly seven sacraments of the New Law, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and necessary for the salvation of mankind, though not all for every one, to wit: Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony; and that they confer grace; and that of these Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders cannot be reiterated without sacrilege. I also receive and admit the received and approved ceremonies of the Catholic Church, used in the solemn administration of the aforesaid sacraments.

V. I embrace and receive all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared in the holy Council of Trent concerning original sin and justification.

VI. I profess, likewise, 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 is made a change of the whole

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essence of the bread into the body, and of the whole essence of the wine into the blood; which change the Church calls transubstantiation.

VII. I also confess that under either kind alone Christ is received whole and entire, and a true sacrament.

VIII. I firmly hold that there is a purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful. Likewise, that the saints reigning with Christ are to be honoured and invoked, and that they offer up prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be had in veneration.

IX. I most firmly<sup>7</sup> assert that the images of Christ, and of the perpetual Virgin, the Mother of God, and also of other saints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration are to be given them. I also affirm that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in the Church and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people.

X. I acknowledge the holy Catholic Apostolic Roman Church for the mother and mis-

<sup>7</sup> Bullarium Rom., *firmiter*.

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tress of all churches; and I promise and swear true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, successor to St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles and Vicar of Jesus Christ.

XI. I likewise undoubtingly receive and profess all other things delivered, defined and declared by the Sacred Canons and General Councils, and particularly by the Holy Council of Trent; and I condemn, reject and anathematize all things contrary thereto, and all heresies which the Church has condemned, rejected and anathematized.

XII. I do, by this present, freely profess and truly hold this true Catholic faith, without which no one can be saved; and I promise most constantly to retain and confess the same entire and inviolate<sup>s</sup> with God's assistance to the end of my life. And I will take care, as far as in me lies, that it shall be held, taught and preached by my subjects, or by those the care of whom shall appertain to me in my office. This I, . . . . ., promise, vow and swear—so help me God, and these holy Gospels of God.

<sup>s</sup> Bullarium Rom., *immaculatam*.



**THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**





# THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

## DECREE OF POPE PIUS IX ON THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

*From the Bull "Ineffabilis Deus," Dec. 8, 1854*

Since We have never ceased in humility and fasting to offer up Our prayers and those of the Church to God the Father through His Son, that He might deign to direct and confirm Our mind by the power of the Holy Ghost, after imploring the protection of the whole celestial court, and after invoking on Our knees the Holy Ghost the Paraclete, under His inspiration We pronounce, declare and define, unto the glory of the holy and indivisible Trinity, the honour and ornament of the holy virgin, the Mother of God, for the exaltation of the Catholic Faith and the increase of the Christian religion by the authority of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and in Our own authority, that the doctrine which holds the

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Blessed Virgin Mary to have been, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of Almighty God, in view of the merits of Christ Jesus the Saviour of mankind, preserved free from all stain of original sin, was revealed by God, and is, therefore, to be firmly and constantly believed by all the faithful. Therefore, if some should presume to think in their hearts otherwise than We have defined (which God forbid), they shall know and thoroughly understand that they are by their own judgment condemned, have made shipwreck concerning the Faith, and fallen away from the unity of the Church; and, moreover, that they by this very act subject themselves to the penalties ordained by law, if by word, or writing, or any other external means, they dare to signify what they think in their hearts.

**THE SYLLABUS OF PIUS IX**



## THE SYLLABUS OF PIUS IX

Syllabus of the principal errors of our time, which are censured in the consistorial Allocutions, Encyclical and other Apostolical Letters of our Most Holy Lord, Pope Pius IX.

### I

#### PANTHEISM, NATURALISM AND ABSOLUTE RATIONALISM

1. There exists no Supreme, all-wise, all-provident Divine Being, distinct from the universe, and God is identical with the nature of things, and is, therefore, subject to changes. In effect, God is produced in man and in the world, and all things are God and have the very substance of God, and God is one and the same thing with the world, and, therefore, spirit with matter, necessity with liberty, good with evil, justice with injustice.—*Allocution "Maxima quidem," June 9, 1862.*

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2. All action of God upon man and the world is to be denied.—*Ibid.*

3. Human reason, without any reference whatsoever to God, is the sole arbiter of truth and falsehood, and of good and evil; it is law to itself, and suffices, by its natural force, to secure the welfare of men and of nations.—*Ibid.*

4. All the truths of religion proceed from the innate strength of human reason; hence reason is the ultimate standard by which man can and ought to arrive at the knowledge of all truths of every kind.—*Ibid.*, and *Encyclical "Qui pluribus," Nov. 9, 1846*, etc.

5. Divine revelation is imperfect, and therefore subject to a continual and indefinite progress, corresponding with the advancement of human reason.—*Ibid.*

6. The faith of Christ is in opposition to human reason, and divine revelation not only is not useful, but is even hurtful to the perfection of man.—*Ibid.*

7. The prophecies and miracles set forth and recorded in the Sacred Scriptures are the fiction of poets, and the mysteries of the

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Christian faith the result of philosophical investigations. In the books of the Old and the New Testament there are contained mythical inventions, and Jesus Christ is Himself a myth.—*Ibid.*

### II

#### MODERATE RATIONALISM

8. As human reason is placed on a level with religion itself, so theological must be treated in the same manner as philosophical sciences.—*Allocution "Singulari quadam," Dec. 9, 1854.*

9. All the dogmas of the Christian religion are indiscriminately the object of natural science or philosophy; and human reason, enlightened solely in an historical way, is able, by its own natural strength and principles, to attain to the true science of even the most abstruse dogmas; provided only that such dogmas be proposed to reason itself as its object.—*Letters to the Archbishop of Munich, "Gravissimas inter," Dec. 11, 1862, and "Tuas libenter," Dec. 21, 1863.*

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10. As the philosopher is one thing, and philosophy another, so it is the right and duty of the philosopher to subject himself to the authority which he shall have proved to be true; but philosophy neither can nor ought to submit to any such authority.—*Ibid.*, Dec. 11, 1862.

11. The Church not only ought never to pass judgment on philosophy, but ought to tolerate the errors of philosophy, leaving it to correct itself.—*Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1863.

12. The decrees of the Apostolic See and of the Roman congregations impede the true progress of science.—*Ibid.*

13. The method and principles by which the old scholastic doctors cultivated theology are no longer suitable to the demands of our times and to the progress of the sciences.—*Ibid.*

14. Philosophy is to be treated without taking any account of supernatural revelation.—*Ibid.*

N. B. To the rationalistic system belong in great part the errors of Anthony Günther, condemned in the letter to the Cardinal Arch-



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bishop of Cologne, "Eximiam tuam," June 15, 1857, and in that to the Bishop of Breslau, "Dolore haud mediocri," April 30, 1860.

### III

#### INDIFFERENTISM. LATITUDINARIANISM

15. Every man is free to embrace and profess that religion which, guided by the light of reason, he shall consider true.—*Allocution "Maxima quidem," June 9, 1862; Damnatio "Multiplices inter," June 10, 1851.*

16. Man may, in the observance of any religion whatever, find the way of eternal salvation, and arrive at eternal salvation.—*Encyclical "Qui pluribus," Nov. 9, 1846.*

17. Good hope at least is to be entertained of the eternal salvation of all those who are not at all in the true Church of Christ.—*Encyclical "Quanto conficiamur," Aug. 10, 1863, etc.*

18. Protestantism is nothing more than another form of the same true Christian religion, in which form it is given to please God equally as in the Catholic Church.—*Encyclical "Noscitis," Dec. 8, 1849.*

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### IV

#### SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM, SECRET SOCIETIES, BIBLICAL SOCIETIES, CLERICO-LIB- ERAL SOCIETIES

Pests of this kind are frequently reprobated in the severest terms in the Encyclical "Qui pluribus," Nov. 9, 1846, Allocution "Quibus quantisque," April 20, 1849, Encyclical "Noscitis et nobiscum," Dec. 8, 1849, Allocution "Singulari quadam," Dec. 9, 1854, Encyclical "Quanto conficiamur," Aug. 10, 1863.

### V

#### ERRORS CONCERNING THE CHURCH AND HER RIGHTS

19. The Church is not a true and perfect society, entirely free; nor is she endowed with proper and perpetual rights of her own, conferred upon her by her Divine Founder; but it appertains to the civil power to define what

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are the rights of the Church, and the limits within which she may exercise those rights.—*Allocution "Singulari quadam," Dec. 9, 1854,* etc.

20. The ecclesiastical power ought not to exercise its authority without the permission and assent of the civil government.—*Allocution "Meminit unusquisque," Sept. 30, 1861.*

21. The Church has not the power of defining dogmatically that the religion of the Catholic Church is the only true religion.—*Damnatio "Multiplices inter," June 10, 1851.*

22. The obligation by which Catholic teachers and authors are strictly bound is confined to those things only which are proposed to universal belief as dogmas of faith by the infallible judgment of the Church.—*Letter to the Archbishop of Munich, "Tuas libenter," Dec. 21, 1863.*

23. Roman pontiffs and œcumenical councils have wandered outside the limits of their powers, have usurped the rights of princes, and have even erred in defining matters of faith and morals.—*Damnatio "Multiplices inter," June 10, 1851.*

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24. The Church has not the power of using force, nor has she any temporal power, direct or indirect.—*Apostolic Letter "Ad Apostolicæ," Aug. 22, 1851.*

25. Besides the power inherent in the episcopate, other temporal power has been attributed to it by the civil authority, granted either explicitly or tacitly, which on that account is revocable by the civil authority whenever it thinks fit.—*Ibid.*

26. The Church has no innate and legitimate right of acquiring and possessing property.—*Allocution "Nunquam fore," Dec. 15, 1856; Encyclical "Incredibili," Sept. 7, 1863.*

27. The sacred ministers of the Church and the Roman pontiff are to be absolutely excluded from every charge and dominion over temporal affairs.—*Allocution "Maxima quidem," June 9, 1862.*

28. It is not lawful for bishops to publish even letters Apostolic without the permission of Government.—*Allocution "Nunquam fore," Dec. 15, 1856.*

29. Favours granted by the Roman pontiff ought to be considered null, unless they have

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been sought for through the civil government.  
—*Ibid.*

30. The immunity of the Church and of ecclesiastical persons derived its origin from civil law.—*Damnatio "Multiplices inter," June 10, 1851.*

31. The ecclesiastical forum or tribunal for the temporal causes, whether civil or criminal, of clerics, ought by all means to be abolished, even without consulting and against the protest of the Holy See.—*Allocution "Nunquam fore," Dec. 15, 1856; Allocution "Acerbissimum," Sept. 27, 1852.*

32. The personal immunity by which clerics are exonerated from military conscription and service in the army may be abolished without violation either of natural right or equity. Its abolition is called for by civil progress, especially in a society framed on the model of a liberal government.—*Letter to the Bishop of Monreale "Singularis nobisque," Sept. 29, 1864.*

33. It does not appertain exclusively to the power of ecclesiastical jurisdiction by right, proper and innate, to direct the teach-

ing of theological questions.—*Letter to the Archbishop of Munich, "Tuas libenter," Dec. 21, 1863.*

34. The teaching of those who compare the Sovereign Pontiff to a prince, free and acting in the universal Church, is a doctrine which prevailed in the Middle Ages.—*Apostolic Letter "Ad Apostolicæ," Aug. 22, 1851.*

35. There is nothing to prevent the decree of a general council, or the act of all peoples, from transferring the supreme pontificate from the bishop and city of Rome to another bishop and another city.—*Ibid.*

36. The definition of a national council does not admit of any subsequent discussion, and the civil authority can assume this principle as the basis of its acts.—*Ibid.*

37. National churches, withdrawn from the authority of the Roman pontiff and altogether separated, can be established.—*Allocution "Multis gravibusque," Dec. 17, 1860.*

38. The Roman pontiffs have, by their too arbitrary conduct, contributed to the division of the Church into Eastern and Western.—

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*Apostolic Letter "Ad Apostolicæ," Aug. 22, 1851.*

### VI

#### ERRORS ABOUT CIVIL SOCIETY, CONSIDERED BOTH IN ITSELF AND IN ITS RELATION TO THE CHURCH

39. The State, as being the origin and source of all rights, is endowed with a certain right not circumscribed by any limits.—*Allocution "Maxima quidem," June 9, 1862.*

40. The teaching of the Catholic Church is hostile to the well-being and interests of society.—*Encyclical "Qui pluribus," Nov. 9, 1846; Allocution "Quibus quantisque," April 20, 1849.*

41. The civil government, even when in the hands of an infidel sovereign, has a right to an indirect negative power over religious affairs. It therefore possesses not only the right called that of *exsequatur*, but also that of appeal, called *appellatio ab abusu*.—*Apostolic Letter "Ad Apostolicæ," Aug. 22, 1851.*

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42. In the case of conflicting laws enacted by the two powers, the civil law prevails.—*Ibid.*

43. The secular power has authority to rescind, declare and render null, solemn conventions, commonly called concordats, entered into with the Apostolic See, regarding the use of rights appertaining to ecclesiastical immunity, without the consent of the Apostolic See, and even in spite of its protest.—*Allocution "Multis gravibusque," Dec. 17, 1860; Allocution "In consistoriali," Nov. 1, 1850.*

44. The civil authority may interfere in matters relating to religion, morality and spiritual government: hence, it can pass judgment on the instructions issued for the guidance of consciences, conformably with their mission, by the pastors of the Church. Further, it has the right to make enactments regarding the administration of the divine sacraments, and the dispositions necessary for receiving them.—*Allocutions "In consistoriali," Nov. 1, 1850, and "Maxima quidem," June 9, 1862.*

45. The entire government of public schools in which the youth of a Christian state is edu-



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cated, except (to a certain extent) in the case of episcopal seminaries, may and ought to appertain to the civil power, and belong to it so far that no other authority whatsoever shall be recognized as having any right to interfere in the discipline of the schools, the arrangement of the studies, the conferring of degrees, in the choice or approval of the teachers.—*Allocutions "Quibus luctuosissimis," Sept. 5, 1851, and "In consistoriali," Nov. 1, 1850.*

46. Moreover, even in ecclesiastical seminaries, the method of studies to be adopted is subject to the civil authority.—*Allocution "Nunquam fore," Dec. 15, 1856.*

47. The best theory of civil society requires that popular schools open to children of every class of the people, and, generally, all public institutes intended for instruction in letters and philosophical sciences and for carrying on the education of youth, should be freed from all ecclesiastical authority, control and interference, and should be fully subjected to the civil and political power at the pleasure of the rulers, and according to the standard of the prevalent opinions of the age.—*Epistle to the*

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*Archbishop of Freiburg, "Cum non sine," July 14, 1864.*

48. Catholics may approve of the system of educating youth, unconnected with Catholic faith and the power of the Church, and which regards the knowledge of merely natural things, and only, or at least primarily, the ends of earthly social life.—*Ibid.*

49. The civil power may prevent the prelates of the Church and the faithful from communicating freely and mutually with the Roman pontiff.—*Allocution "Maxima quidem," June 9, 1862.*

50. Lay authority possesses of itself the right of presenting bishops, and may require of them to undertake the administration of the diocese before they receive canonical institution, and the Letters Apostolic from the Holy See.—*Allocution "Nunquam fore," Dec. 15, 1856.*

51. And, further, the lay government has the right of deposing bishops from their pastoral functions, and is not bound to obey the Roman pontiff in those things which relate to the institution of bishoprics and the appoint-

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ment of bishops.—*Allocution "Acerbissimum,"* Sept. 27, 1852; *Damnatio "Multiplices inter,"* June 10, 1851.

52. Government can, by its own right, alter the age prescribed by the Church for the religious profession of women and men; and may require of all religious orders to admit no person to take solemn vows without its permission.—*Allocution "Nunquam fore,"* Dec. 15, 1856.

53. The laws enacted for the protection of religious orders and regarding their rights and duties ought to be abolished; nay, more, civil Government may lend its assistance to all who desire to renounce the obligation which they have undertaken of a religious life, and to break their vows. Government may also suppress the said religious orders, as likewise collegiate churches and simple benefices, even those of advowson, and subject their property and revenues to the administration and pleasure of the civil power.—*Allocutions "Acerbissimum,"* Sept. 27, 1852; "*Probe meminertis,*" Jan. 22, 1855; "*Cum saepe,*" July 26, 1855.

54. Kings and princes are not only exempt

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from the jurisdiction of the Church, but are superior to the Church in deciding questions of jurisdiction.—*Damnatio "Multiplices inter,"* June 10, 1851.

55. The Church ought to be separated from the State, and the State from the Church.—*Allocution "Acerbissimum,"* Sept. 27, 1852.

## VII

### ERRORS CONCERNING NATURAL AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS

56. Moral laws do not stand in need of the divine sanction, and it is not at all necessary that human laws should be made conformable to the laws of nature, and receive their power of binding from God.—*Allocution "Maxima quidem,"* June 9, 1862.

57. The science of philosophical things and morals and also civil laws may and ought to keep aloof from divine and ecclesiastical authority.—*Ibid.*

58. No other forces are to be recognized except those which reside in matter, and all

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the rectitude and excellence of morality ought to be placed in the accumulation and increase of riches by every possible means, and the gratification of pleasure.—*Ibid.*; *Encyclical "Quanto conficiamur," Aug. 10, 1863.*

59. Right consists in the material fact. All human duties are an empty word, and all human facts have the force of right.—*Allocution "Maxima quidem," June 9, 1862.*

60. Authority is nothing else but numbers and the sum total of material forces.—*Ibid.*

61. The injustice of an act when successful inflicts no injury on the sanctity of right.—*Allocution "Iamdudum cernimus," March 18, 1861.*

62. The principle of non-intervention, as it is called, ought to be proclaimed and observed.—*Allocution "Novos et ante," Sept. 28, 1860.*

63. It is lawful to refuse obedience to legitimate princes, and even to rebel against them.—*Encyclical "Qui pluribus," Nov. 9, 1864; Allocution "Quibusque vestrum," Oct. 4, 1847; "Noscitis et Nobiscum," Dec. 8, 1849; Letter Apostolic "Cum Catholica."*

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64. The violation of any solemn oath, as well as any wicked and flagitious action repugnant to the eternal law, is not only not blamable but is altogether lawful and worthy of the highest praise when done through love of country.—*Allocution "Quibus quantisque," April 20, 1849.*

### VIII

#### ERRORS CONCERNING CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

65. The doctrine that Christ has raised marriage to the dignity of a sacrament cannot be at all tolerated.—*Apostolic Letter "Ad Apostolicæ," Aug. 22, 1851.*

66. The Sacrament of Marriage is only a something accessory to the contract and separate from it, and the sacrament itself consists in the nuptial benediction alone.—*Ibid.*

67. By the law of nature, the marriage tie is not indissoluble, and in many cases divorce properly so called may be decreed by the civil authority.—*Ibid.; Allocution "Acerbissimum," Sept. 27, 1852.*

68. The Church has not the power of es-

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establishing diriment impediments of marriage, but such a power belongs to the civil authority by which existing impediments are to be removed.—*Damnatio* “*Multiplices inter,*” *June 10, 1851.*

69. In the dark ages the Church began to establish diriment impediments, not by her own right, but by using a power borrowed from the State.—*Apostolic Letter* “*Ad Apostolicæ,*” *Aug. 22, 1851.*

70. The canons of the Council of Trent, which anathematize those who dare to deny to the Church the right of establishing diriment impediments, either are not dogmatic, or must be understood as referring to such borrowed power.—*Ibid.*

71. The form of solemnizing marriage prescribed by the Council of Trent, under pain of nullity, does not bind in cases where the civil law lays down another form, and declares that when this new form is used the marriage shall be valid.—*Ibid.*

72. Boniface VIII was the first who declared that the vow of chastity taken at ordination renders marriage void.—*Ibid.*

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73. In force of a merely civil contract there may exist between Christians a real marriage, and it is false to say either that the marriage contract between Christians is always a sacrament, or that there is no contract if the sacrament be excluded.—*Ibid.*; *Letter to the King of Sardinia, Sept. 9, 1852*; *Allocutions "Acerbissimum," Sept. 27, 1852*; "*Multis gravibusque*," *Dec. 17, 1860*.

74. Matrimonial causes and espousals belong by their nature to civil tribunals.—*Encyclical "Qui pluribus," Nov. 9, 1846*; *Damnation "Multiplices inter," June 10, 1851*; "*Ad Apostolicæ*," *Aug. 22, 1851*; *Allocution "Acerbissimum," Sept. 27, 1852*.

N. B.—To the preceding questions may be referred two other errors regarding the celibacy of priests and the preference due to the state of marriage over that of virginity. These have been stigmatized: the first in the Encyclical "*Qui pluribus*," *Nov. 9, 1846*; the second, in the Letter Apostolic "*Multiplices inter*," *June 10, 1851*.



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### IX

#### ERRORS REGARDING THE CIVIL POWER OF THE SOVEREIGN PONTIFF

75. The children of the Christian and Catholic Church are divided amongst themselves about the compatibility of the temporal with the spiritual power.—“*Ad Apostolicæ,*” *Aug. 22, 1851.*

76. The abolition of the temporal power of which the Apostolic See is possessed would contribute in the greatest degree to the liberty and prosperity of the Church.—*Allocutions “Quibus quantisque,” April 20, 1849; “Si semper antea,” May 20, 1850.*

N. B.—Besides these errors, explicitly censured, very many others are implicitly condemned by the doctrine propounded and established, which all Catholics are bound most firmly to hold touching the temporal sovereignty of the Roman pontiff. This doctrine is clearly stated in the Allocutions “*Quibus quantisque,*” April 20, 1849, and “*Si semper*

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antea," May 20, 1850; Letter Apostolic "Cum Catholica ecclesia," March 26, 1860; Allocutions, "Noves et antea," Sept. 28, 1860; "Iamdudum cernimus," March 18, 1861; "Maxima quidem," June 9, 1862.

### X

#### ERRORS HAVING REFERENCE TO MODERN LIBERALISM

77. In the present day it is no longer expedient that the Catholic religion should be held as the only religion of the State, to the exclusion of all other forms of worship.—*Allocution "Nemo vestrum," July 26, 1855.*

78. Hence it has been wisely decided by law, in some Catholic countries, that persons coming to reside therein shall enjoy the public exercise of their own peculiar worship.—*Allocution "Acerbissimum," Sept. 27, 1852.*

79. Moreover, it is false that the civil liberty of every form of worship, and the full power, given to all, of overtly and publicly manifesting any opinions whatsoever and

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thoughts, conduce more easily to corrupt the morals and minds of the people, and to propagate the pest of indifferentism.—*Allocution "Nunquam fore," Dec. 15, 1856.*

80. The Roman Pontiff can, and ought to, reconcile himself, and come to terms with progress, liberalism and modern civilization.—*Allocution "Iamdudum cernimus," March 18, 1861.*



**THE VATICAN COUNCIL**



THE VATICAN COUNCIL

SESSION III

April 24, 1870

DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION ON  
THE CATHOLIC FAITH

PIUS, BISHOP,

SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD, WITH  
THE APPROVAL OF THE SACRED  
COUNCIL, FOR PERPETUAL  
REMEMBRANCE

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the son of God, and Redeemer of mankind, before returning to His Heavenly Father, promised that He would be with the Church Militant on earth all days, even to the consummation of the world. Therefore he has never ceased to be present with His beloved Spouse, to assist her when teaching, to bless her when at work, and

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to aid her when in danger. And this His salutary providence, which has been constantly displayed by other innumerable benefits, has been most manifestly proved by the abundant good results which Christendom has derived from œcumenical councils, and particularly from that of Trent, although it was held in evil times. For, as a consequence, the sacred doctrines of the Faith have been defined more closely and set forth more fully; errors have been condemned and restrained; ecclesiastical discipline has been restored and more firmly secured; the love of learning and of piety has been promoted among the clergy; colleges have been established to educate youth for the sacred warfare; and the morals of the Christian world have been renewed by the more accurate training of the faithful and by the more frequent use of the sacraments. Moreover, there has resulted a closer communion of the members with the visible head and an increase of vigour in the whole mystical body of Christ; the multiplication of religious congregations and of other institutions of Christian piety; and such ardour in extending the kingdom of



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Christ throughout the world, as constantly endures, even to the sacrifice of life itself.

But while we recall with due thankfulness these and other signal benefits which the divine mercy has bestowed on the church, especially by the last œcumenical council, we cannot restrain our bitter sorrow for the grave evils which are due principally to the fact that the authority of that sacred synod has been contemned, or its wise decrees neglected, by many.

No one is ignorant that the heresies proscribed by the Fathers of Trent, by which the divine teaching (*magisterium*) of the Church was rejected, and all matters regarding religion were surrendered to the judgment of each individual, gradually became dissolved into many sects, which disagreed and contended with one another, until at length not a few lost all faith in Christ. Even the Holy Scriptures, which had previously been declared the sole source and judge of Christian doctrine, began to be held no longer as divine, but to be ranked among the fictions of mythology.

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Then there arose, and too widely overspread the world, that doctrine of rationalism, or naturalism, which opposes itself in every way to the Christian religion as a supernatural institution, and works with the utmost zeal in order that, after Christ, our sole Lord and Saviour, has been excluded from the minds of men, and from the life and moral acts of nations, the reign of what they call pure reason or nature may be established. And after forsaking and rejecting the Christian religion, and denying the true God and His Christ, the minds of many have sunk into the abyss of Pantheism, Materialism and Atheism, until, denying rational nature itself, and every sound rule of right, they labour to destroy the deepest foundations of human society.

Unhappily, it has yet further come to pass that, while this impiety prevailed on every side, many, even of the children of the Catholic Church, have strayed from the path of true piety; and by the gradual diminution of the truths they held, the Catholic sense has become weakened in them. For led away by various and strange doctrines, wrongly confu-

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sing nature and grace, human science and divine faith, they are found to deprave the true sense of the doctrines which our holy Mother Church holds and teaches, and to endanger the integrity and the soundness of the Faith.

Considering these things, how can the Church fail to be deeply stirred? For, even as God wills all men to be saved, and to arrive at the knowledge of the truth; even as Christ came to save what had perished and to gather together the children of God who had been dispersed, so the Church, constituted by God the mother and teacher of all nations, knows its own office as debtor to all, and is ever ready and watchful to raise the fallen, to support those who are falling, to embrace those who return, to confirm the good and to carry them on to better things. Hence it can never forbear from witnessing to and proclaiming the truth of God, which heals all things, knowing the words addressed to it: "My Spirit that is in thee, and my words that I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, from henceforth and forever."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Is. lix. 21.

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We, therefore, following the footsteps of our predecessors, have never ceased, as becomes our supreme apostolic office, from teaching and defending Catholic truth, and condemning doctrines of error. And now, with the bishops of the whole world assembled round us and judging with us, congregated by our authority and in the Holy Spirit in this œcumenical council, We, supported by the Word of God written and handed down, as We have received it from the Catholic Church, preserved with sacredness and set forth according to truth, have determined to profess and declare the salutary teaching of Christ from this Chair of Peter, and in sight of all, proscribing and condemning, by the power given to Us by God, all errors contrary thereto.

### CHAPTER I

#### *Of God the Creator of All Things*

The Holy Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church believes and confesses that there is one true and living God, Creator and Lord of

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heaven and earth, almighty, eternal, immense, incomprehensible, infinite in intelligence, in will and in all perfection, who, as being one, sole, absolutely simple and immutable spiritual substance, is to be declared as really and essentially distinct from the world, of supreme beatitude in and from Himself, and ineffably exalted above all things beside Himself which exist or are conceivable (can. i-iv).

This one, only, true God, of His own goodness and almighty power, not for the increase of His own happiness, nor to acquire but to manifest His perfection by the blessings which He bestows on creatures, with absolute freedom of counsel, created out of nothing, from the beginning of time, both the spiritual and corporeal creature, to wit, the angelic and the mundane; and afterwards the human creature, as partaking, in a sense, of both, consisting of spirit and of body.<sup>2</sup> God protects and governs by His providence all things which He hath made, reaching from end to end mightily, and ordering all things sweetly.<sup>3</sup> For all things

<sup>2</sup> Fourth Lateran Council. cap. 1. *de Fide Catholica*.

<sup>3</sup> Wis. viii. 1.

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are naked and open to His eyes,<sup>4</sup> even those which are yet to be by the free action of creatures.

### CHAPTER II

#### *Of Revelation*

The same holy Mother Church holds and teaches that God, the beginning and end of all things, may be certainly known by the natural light of human reason by means of created things—for the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made;<sup>5</sup> but that it pleased His wisdom and bounty to reveal Himself, and the eternal decrees of His will to mankind by another and supernatural way, as the Apostle says: God, having spoken on divers occasions and in many ways in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days, hath spoken to us by His Son<sup>6</sup> (can. i).

It is to be ascribed to this divine revelation that such truths among things divine as of

<sup>4</sup> Heb. iv. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Romans i. 20.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. i. 1 f.

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themselves are not beyond human reason can, even in the present condition of mankind, be known by every one with facility, with firm assurance, and with no admixture of error.<sup>7</sup> This, however, is not the reason why revelation is to be called absolutely necessary; but because God of His infinite goodness, has ordained man to a supernatural end, viz., to be a sharer of divine blessings which utterly exceed the intelligence of the human mind; for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him.<sup>8</sup> (Can. ii and iii.)

Further, this supernatural revelation, according to the universal belief of the Church, declared by the sacred Synod of Trent, is contained in the written books and unwritten traditions which, received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the Apostles themselves, by the dictation of the Holy Spirit, transmitted, as it were, from hand to hand, have come down even to us.<sup>9</sup> And

<sup>7</sup> Summa Theol. 2 a 2 æ, ii. 4.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Council of Trent. Sess. IV, *de Can. Script.*

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these books of the Old and New Testaments are to be received as sacred and canonical in their integrity, with all their parts, as they are enumerated in the decree of the said council, and are contained in the ancient Latin edition of the Vulgate. These the Church holds to be sacred and canonical; not because, having been carefully composed by mere human industry, they were afterward approved by her authority; not because they contain revelation, with no admixture of error; but because, having been written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their author, and have been delivered as such to the Church itself (can. iv).

And as the things which, in order to curb rebellious spirits, the holy Synod of Trent decreed for the good of souls concerning the interpretation of Divine Scripture have been wrongly explained by some, We, renewing the said decree, declare this to be its meaning: that, in matters of faith and morals, appertaining to the building up of Christian doctrine, that is to be held as the true sense of Holy Scripture which our holy Mother



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Church hath held and holds, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures; and, therefore, that it is permitted to no one to interpret the Sacred Scripture contrary to this sense or likewise contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.

### CHAPTER III

#### *Of Faith*

Man being wholly dependent upon God, as upon his Creator and Lord, and created reason being absolutely subject to uncreated truth, we are bound to yield to God, by faith in His revelation, the full obedience of our intelligence and will. And the Catholic Church teaches that this faith, which is the beginning of man's salvation, is a supernatural virtue, whereby, inspired and assisted by the grace of God, we believe that the things which He has revealed are true; not because the intrinsic truth of the things is plainly perceived by the natural light of reason, but because of the authority of God Himself, Who reveals them,

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and Who can neither be deceived nor deceive (can. ii). For faith, as the Apostle testifies, is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not.<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, in order that the obedience of our faith might be in harmony with reason,<sup>11</sup> God willed that to the interior help of the Holy Spirit there should be joined exterior proofs of His revelation, to wit, divine facts, and especially miracles and prophecies, which, as they manifestly display the omnipotence and infinite knowledge of God, are most certain proofs of His divine revelation adapted to the intelligence of all men (can. iii and iv). Wherefore, both Moses and the Prophets, and most especially Christ our Lord Himself, showed forth many and most evident miracles and prophecies, and of the Apostles we read: "But they, going forth, preached everywhere, the Lord working withal, and confirming the word with signs that followed."<sup>12</sup> And again it is written: "We have the more firm prophetic word, whereunto you do well to attend, as to a light that shineth in a dark place."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Heb. xi. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Mark xvi. 20.

<sup>11</sup> cf. Rom. xii. 1.

<sup>13</sup> II Pet. i. 19.

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But though the assent of faith is by no means a blind action of the mind, still no man can assent to the Gospel teaching, as is necessary to obtain salvation, without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Who gives to all men sweetness in assenting to and believing in the truth.<sup>14</sup> Wherefore faith itself, even when it does not work by charity,<sup>15</sup> is in itself a gift of God, and the act of faith is a work appertaining to salvation, by which man yields voluntary obedience to God Himself, by assenting to and coöperating with His grace, which he is able to resist (can. v). Further, all those things are to be believed with divine and Catholic faith which are contained in the Word of God, written or handed down, and which the Church, either by a solemn judgment or by her ordinary and universal teaching (*magisterium*), proposes for belief as having been divinely revealed.

And since without faith it is impossible to please God,<sup>16</sup> and to attain to the fellowship

<sup>14</sup> Second Council of Orange, confirmed by Pope Boniface II A.D. 529, against the Semipelagians, can. vii.

<sup>15</sup> cf. Gal. v. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Heb. xi. 6.

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of His children, therefore without faith no one has ever attained justification; nor will anyone obtain eternal life, unless he shall have persevered in faith unto the end.<sup>17</sup> And that we may be able to satisfy the obligation of embracing the true faith and of constantly persevering in it, God has instituted the Church through his only-begotten Son, and has bestowed on it manifest marks of that institution, that it may be recognized by all men as the guardian and teacher of the revealed Word; for to the Catholic Church alone belong all those many and admirable tokens which have been divinely established for the evident credibility of the Christian Faith. Nay, more, the Church itself, by reason of its marvellous extension, its eminent holiness and its inexhaustible fruitfulness in every good thing, its Catholic unity and its invincible stability, is a great and perpetual motive of credibility, and an irrefutable witness of its own divine mission.

And thus, like a standard set up unto the nations,<sup>18</sup> it both invites to itself those who do

<sup>17</sup> Matt. x. 22; xxiv. 13.

<sup>18</sup> Is. xi. 12.

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not yet believe, and assures its children that the faith which they profess rests on the most firm foundation. And its testimony is efficaciously supported by a power from on high. For our most merciful Lord gives His grace to stir up and to aid those who are astray, that they may come to a knowledge of the truth;<sup>19</sup> and to those whom He has brought out of darkness into His own admirable light, He gives His grace to strengthen them to persevere in that light, deserting none who desert not Him. Therefore there is no parity between the condition of those who have adhered to the Catholic truth by the heavenly gift of faith, and of those who, led by human opinions, follow a false religion; for those who have received the faith under the teaching (*magisterio*) of the Church can never have any just cause for changing or doubting that faith (can. vi). Therefore give thanks to God the Father, who has made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light;<sup>20</sup> let us not neglect so great a salvation, but with our eyes fixed on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, let

<sup>19</sup> I. Tim. ii. 4.

<sup>20</sup> Col. i. 12.

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us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering.<sup>21</sup>

### CHAPTER IV

#### *Of Faith and Reason*

The Catholic Church, with one consent, has also ever held, and does hold, that there is a twofold order of knowledge, distinct both in principle and in object: in principle, because our knowledge in the one is by natural reason, and in the other by divine faith; in object, because, besides those things to which natural reason can attain, there are proposed to our belief mysteries hidden in God, which, unless divinely revealed, cannot be known (can. i). Wherefore the Apostle, who testifies that God is known by the Gentiles through created things,<sup>22</sup> still, when discoursing of the grace and truth which come by Jesus Christ,<sup>23</sup> says: "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, a wisdom which is hidden, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none

<sup>21</sup> Heb. xii. 2; x. 23.

<sup>22</sup> Rom. i. 20.

<sup>23</sup> John i. 17.

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of the princes of this world knew; . . . but to us God hath revealed them by His Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."<sup>24</sup> And the Only-begotten Son Himself gives thanks to the Father, because He has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them to little ones.<sup>25</sup>

Reason, indeed, enlightened by faith, when it seeks earnestly, piously and calmly, attains by a gift from God some, and that a very fruitful, understanding of mysteries; partly from the analogy of those things which it naturally knows, partly from the relations which the mysteries bear to one another and to the last end of man: but reason never becomes capable of apprehending mysteries as it does those truths which constitute its proper object. For the divine mysteries by their own nature so far transcend the created intelligence that, even when delivered by revelation and received by faith, they remain covered with a veil of faith itself, and shrouded in a certain degree of darkness, so long as we are pilgrims in this mortal

<sup>24</sup> I Cor. ii. 7 ff.

<sup>25</sup> Matt. xi. 25.

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life, not yet with God: for we walk by faith, and not by sight.<sup>26</sup>

But although faith is above reason, there can never be any real discrepancy between faith and reason; since the same God Who reveals mysteries and infuses faith has bestowed the light of reason on the human mind, and God cannot deny Himself, nor can truth ever contradict truth. The false appearance of such a contradiction is mainly due, either to the dogmas of faith not having been understood and expounded according to the mind of the Church, or to the inventions of opinion having been taken for the verdicts of reason. We define, therefore, that every assertion contrary to a truth of enlightened faith is utterly false.<sup>27</sup> Further, the Church, which, together with the apostolic office of teaching, has received a charge to guard the deposit of faith, derives from God the right and the duty of proscribing false science, lest any should be deceived by

<sup>26</sup> II Cor. v. 7.

<sup>27</sup> From the Bull of Pope Leo X, "Apostolici regiminis," read in Session VIII of the Fifth Lateran Council, A.D. 1513. See Labbe's *Councils*, vol. xix, p. 842, Venice, 1732.



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philosophy and vain deceit<sup>28</sup> (can. ii). Therefore all faithful Christians are not only forbidden to defend as legitimate conclusions of science such opinions as are known to be contrary to the doctrines of faith, especially if they have been condemned by the Church, but are altogether bound to account them as errors which put on the fallacious appearance of truth.

And not only can faith and reason never be opposed to one another, but they are of mutual aid one to the other: for right reason demonstrates the foundations of faith, and, enlightened by its light, cultivates the science of things divine; while faith frees and guards reason from errors, and furnishes it with manifold knowledge. So far, therefore, is the Church from opposing the cultivation of human arts and sciences, that it in many ways helps and promotes it. For the Church neither ignores nor despises the benefits to human life which result from the arts and sciences, but confesses that, as they came from God, the Lord of all science, so, if they be rightly used, they lead

<sup>28</sup> Col. ii. 8.

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to God by the help of His grace. Nor does the Church forbid that each of these sciences in its sphere should make use of its own principles and its own method; but, while recognizing this just liberty, it stands watchfully on guard, lest sciences, setting themselves against the divine teaching, or transgressing their own limits, should invade and disturb the domain of faith.

For the doctrine of faith which God has revealed has not been proposed, like a philosophical invention, to be perfected by human ingenuity; but has been delivered as a divine deposit to the Spouse of Christ, to be faithfully kept and infallibly declared. Hence, also, that meaning of the sacred dogmas is perpetually to be retained which our holy Mother the Church has once declared; nor is that meaning ever to be departed from, under the pretence or pretext of a deeper comprehension of them (can. iii). Let then the intelligence, science and wisdom of each and all, of individuals and of the whole Church, in all ages and all times, increase and flourish in abundance and vigour; but simply in its own proper

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kind, that is to say, in one and the same doctrine, one and the same judgment.<sup>29</sup>

### CANONS

#### OF GOD THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS

I. If anyone shall deny One true God, Creator and Lord of things visible and invisible; let him be anathema.

II. If anyone shall not be ashamed to affirm that, except matter, nothing exists; let him be anathema.

III. If anyone shall say that the substance and essence of God and of all things is one and the same; let him be anathema.

IV. If anyone shall say that finite things, both corporeal and spiritual, or at least spiritual, have emanated from the divine substance; or that the divine essence by the manifestation and evolution of itself becomes all things; or, lastly, that God is universal or indefinite being, which by determining itself constitutes the universality of things, distinct

<sup>29</sup> Vincent of Lerins, *Common.* n. 28.

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according to genera, species and individuals; let him be anathema.

V. If anyone confess not that the world, and all things which are contained in it, both spiritual and material, have been, in their whole substance, produced by God out of nothing; or shall say that God created, not by His will, free from all necessity, but by a necessity equal to the necessity whereby He loves Himself; or shall deny that the world was made for the glory of God; let him be anathema.

### OF REVELATION

I. If anyone shall say that the One true God our Creator and Lord, cannot be certainly known by the natural light of human reason through created things; let him be anathema.

II. If anyone shall say that it is impossible or inexpedient that man should be taught by the divine revelation concerning God and the worship to be paid by him; let him be anathema.

III. If anyone shall say that man cannot

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be raised by divine power to a higher than natural knowledge and perfection, but can and ought, by a continuous progress, to arrive at length of himself to the possession of all that is true and good; let him be anathema.

IV. If anyone shall not receive as sacred and canonical the books of Holy Scripture, entire with all their parts, as the holy Synod of Trent has enumerated them, or shall deny that they have been divinely inspired; let him be anathema.

### OF FAITH

I. If anyone shall say that human reason is so independent that faith cannot be enjoined upon it by God; let him be anathema.

II. If anyone shall say that divine faith is not distinguished from natural knowledge of God and of moral truths, and therefore that it is not requisite for divine faith that revealed truth be believed because of the authority of God who reveals it; let him be anathema.

III. If anyone shall say that divine revelation cannot be made credible by outward signs,

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and therefore that men ought to be moved to faith solely by the internal experience of each, or by private inspiration; let him be anathema.

IV. If anyone shall say that miracles are impossible, and therefore that all the accounts regarding them, even those contained in Holy Scripture, are to be dismissed as fabulous or mythical; or that miracles can never be known with certainty, and that the divine origin of Christianity is not rightly proved by them; let him be anathema.

V. If anyone shall say that the assent of Christian faith is not a free act, but necessarily produced by the arguments of human reason; or that the grace of God is necessary for that living faith only which worketh by charity; let him be anathema.

VI. If anyone shall say that the condition of the faithful and of those who have not yet attained to the only true faith is on a par, so that Catholics may have just cause for doubting, with suspended assent, the faith which they have already received under the teaching (*maggisterio*) of the Church, until they shall have obtained a scientific demonstration of the

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credibility and truth of their faith; let him be anathema.

### OF FAITH AND REASON

I. If anyone shall say that in divine revelation there are no mysteries, truly and properly so called, but that all the doctrines of faith can be understood and demonstrated from natural principles by properly cultivated reason; let him be anathema.

II. If anyone shall say that human sciences are to be so freely treated, that their assertions, although opposed to revealed doctrine, can be held as true, and cannot be condemned by the Church; let him be anathema.

III. If anyone shall assert it to be possible that sometimes, according to the progress of science, a sense is to be given to doctrines propounded by the Church different from that which the Church has understood and understands; let him be anathema.

Therefore, fulfilling the duty of Our supreme pastoral office by the mercies of Jesus

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Christ, We entreat, and by the authority of the same our God and Saviour We command all the faithful of Christ, and especially those who are set over others or are charged with the office of instruction, that they earnestly and diligently apply themselves to ward off and eliminate these errors from Holy Church, and to spread the light of pure faith.

And since it is not sufficient to shun heretical pravity, unless those errors also be diligently avoided which more or less nearly approach it, We admonish all men of the further duty of observing the constitutions and decrees by which such erroneous opinions as are not here expressly enumerated have been proscribed and condemned by the Holy See.

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 twenty-fourth day of April, in the twenty-fourth year of Our Pontificate.

In conformity with the original.

JOSEPH, BISHOP OF ST. POLTEN,  
Secretary to the Vatican Council.



## SESSION IV

July 18, 1870

### FIRST DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION ON THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

PIUS, BISHOP,

SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD, WITH THE  
APPROVAL OF THE SACRED COUN-  
CIL FOR PERPETUAL RE-  
MEMBRANCE

The Eternal Pastor and Bishop of our souls, in order to continue for all time the life-giving work of His Redemption, determined to build up the Holy Church, wherein, as in the house of the living God, all who believe might be united in the bond of one faith and one charity. Wherefore, before He entered into His glory, He prayed unto the Father, not for the Apostles only, but for those also who through their preaching should come to believe in Him, that

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all might be one, even as He the Son and the Father are one.<sup>1</sup> As then He sent the Apostles whom He had chosen to Himself from the world, as He Himself had been sent by the Father;<sup>2</sup> so He willed that there should ever be pastors and teachers in His Church to the end of the world. And in order that the episcopate also might be one and undivided, and that by means of a closely united priesthood the multitude of the faithful might be kept secure in the oneness of faith and communion, He set Blessed Peter over the rest of the Apostles, and fixed in him the abiding principle of this twofold unity and its visible foundation, in the strength of which the everlasting temple should arise, and the Church in the firmness of that faith should lift her majestic front to heaven.<sup>3</sup> And seeing that the gates of hell with daily increase of hatred are gathering their strength on every side to upheave

<sup>1</sup> John xvii. 20 f.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. xx. 21.

<sup>3</sup> From Sermon iv, chap. ii, of St. Leo the Great, A.D. 440, vol. 1, p. 17, of edition of Ballerini, Venice, 1753; read in the eighth lection on the feast of St. Peter's Chair at Antioch, February 22.

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the foundation laid by God's own hand, and so, if that might be, to overthrow the Church: We, therefore, for the preservation, safe-keeping, and increase of the Catholic flock, with the approval of the Sacred Council, do judge it to be necessary to propose to the belief and acceptance of all the faithful, in accordance with the ancient and constant faith of the universal Church, the doctrine touching the institution, perpetuity and nature of the sacred Apostolic Primacy, in which is found the strength and solidity of the entire Church; and at the same time to proscribe and condemn the contrary errors so hurtful to the flock of Christ.

### CHAPTER I

#### *On the Institution of the Apostolic Primacy in Blessed Peter*

We therefore teach and declare that, according to the testimony of the Gospel, the primacy of jurisdiction over the universal Church of God was immediately and directly promised, and given to Blessed Peter the

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Apostle by Christ the Lord. For it was to Simon alone, to whom He had already said: "Thou shalt be called Cephas,"<sup>4</sup> that the Lord, after the confession made by him, saying, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," addressed these solemn words, "Blessed art thou, Simon, Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood have not revealed it to thee, but my Father, who is in heaven. And I say to thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."<sup>5</sup> And it was upon Simon alone that Jesus, after His resurrection, bestowed the jurisdiction of Chief Pastor and Ruler over all His fold in the words, "Feed My lambs, feed My sheep."<sup>6</sup> At open variance with this clear doctrine of Holy Scripture, as it has ever been understood by the Catholic Church, are the perverse opinions of those who, while they

<sup>4</sup> John i. 42.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xvi. 16 ff.

<sup>6</sup> John xxi. 15, 17.

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distort the form of government established by Christ the Lord in His Church, deny that Peter in his simple person preferably to all the other Apostles, whether taken separately or together, was endowed by Christ with a true and proper primacy of jurisdiction; or of those who assert that the same primacy was not bestowed immediately and directly upon Blessed Peter himself, but upon the Church, and through the Church on Peter as her minister.

(*Canon*) If anyone, therefore, shall say that Blessed Peter the Apostle was not appointed the Prince of the Apostles and the visible head of the whole Church Militant, or that the same directly and immediately received from the same our Lord Jesus Christ a primacy of honour only, and not of true and proper jurisdiction; let him be anathema.

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### CHAPTER II

#### *On the Perpetuity of the Primacy of Blessed Peter in the Roman Pontiffs*

That which the Prince of Shepherds and great shepherd of the sheep, Jesus Christ our Lord, established in the person of the Blessed Apostle Peter to secure the perpetual welfare and lasting good of the Church, must, by the same institution, necessarily remain unceasingly in the Church, which, being founded upon the Rock, will stand firm to the end of the world. For none can doubt, and it is known to all ages, that the holy and Blessed Peter, the Prince and chief of the Apostles, the pillar of the faith and foundation of the Catholic Church, received the keys of the kingdom from our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind, and lives, presides and judges to this day, always in his successors the Bishops of the Holy See of Rome, which was founded by Him and consecrated by His

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Blood.<sup>7</sup> Whence, whosoever succeeds to Peter in this see does by the institution of Christ Himself obtain the primacy of Peter over the whole Church. The disposition made by Incarnate Truth (*dispositio veritatis*) therefore remains, and Blessed Peter, abiding in the rock's strength which he received (*in accepta fortitudine petræ perseverans*), has not abandoned the direction of the Church.<sup>8</sup> Wherefore it has at all times been necessary that every particular Church—that is to say, the faithful throughout the world—should come to the Church of Rome on account of the greater principedom which it has received; that all being associated in the unity of that see whence the rights of venerable communion spread to all, might grow together as members of one head in the compact unity of the body.<sup>9</sup> (*Canon*) If, then, anyone shall say

<sup>7</sup> From the Acts (session third) of the Third General Council, namely, that of Ephesus, A.D. 431, Labbe's *Councils*, vol. viii, p. 1154, Venice edition of 1728. See also letter of St. Peter Chrysologus to Eutyches, in life prefixed to his works, p. 13, Venice, 1750.

<sup>8</sup> From Sermon III, chap. iii, of St. Leo the Great, vol. I, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> From St. Irenæus *against Heresies*, book III, cap. iii, p.

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that it is not by the institution of Christ the Lord, or by divine right, that Blessed Peter has a perpetual line of successors in the primacy over the universal Church; or that the Roman Pontiff is not the successor of Blessed Peter in this primacy; let him be anathema.

### CHAPTER III

#### *On the Power and Nature of the Primacy of the Roman Pontiff*

Wherefore, resting on plain testimonies of the Sacred Writings, and adhering to the plain and express decrees both of Our predecessors the Roman pontiffs, and of the general councils, We renew the definition of the œcumenical Council of Florence, by which all the faithful of Christ must believe that the Holy Apostolic See and the Roman pontiff possesses the primacy over the whole world; and that the Roman pontiff is the successor of Blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and is true

175, Benedictine edition, Venice, 1734; and Acts of Synod of Aquileia, A.D. 381, Labbe's *Councils*, vol. ii, p. 1185, Venice, 1721.



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Vicar of Christ, and Head of the whole Church, and Father and teacher of all Christians; and that full power was given to him in Blessed Peter, by Jesus Christ our Lord, to rule, feed and govern the universal Church: as is also contained in the Acts of the œcumenical councils and in the sacred canons.

Hence We teach and declare that by the appointment of our Lord the Roman Church possesses a sovereignty of ordinary power over all other Churches, and that this power of jurisdiction of the Roman pontiff, which is truly episcopal, is immediate; to which all, of whatsoever rite and dignity, both pastors and faithful, both individually and collectively, are bound, by their duty of hierarchical subordination and true obedience, to submit, not only in matters which belong to faith and morals, but also in those that appertain to the discipline and government of the Church throughout the world; so that the Church of Christ may be one flock under one supreme pastor, through the preservation of unity, both of communion and of profession of the same faith, with the Roman pontiff. This is the

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teaching of Catholic truth, from which no one can deviate without loss of faith and of salvation.

But so far is this power of the supreme pontiff from being any prejudice to that ordinary and immediate power of episcopal jurisdiction, by which bishops, who have been set by the Holy Ghost to succeed and hold the place of the Apostles,<sup>10</sup> feed and govern each his own flock, as true pastors, that this same power is really asserted, strengthened and protected by the supreme and universal pastor; in accordance with the words of St. Gregory the Great, "My honour is the honour of the whole Church. My honour is the firm strength of my brethren. Then am I truly honoured, when the honour due to each and all is not withheld."<sup>11</sup>

Further, from this supreme power possessed by the Roman Pontiff of governing the universal Church, it follows that, in the exercise of this office, he has the right of free communi-

<sup>10</sup> Council of Trent. Sess. XXXIII. c. iv; Acts xx. 28.

<sup>11</sup> From the *Letters of St. Gregory the Great*, book VIII, 30, vol. II, p. 919, Benedictine edition, Paris, 1705.

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cation with the pastors of the whole Church, and with their flocks, that they may be taught and ruled by him in the way of salvation. Wherefore We condemn and reprobate the opinions of those who hold that the communication between the supreme Head and the pastors and their flocks can lawfully be impeded; or who make this communication subject to the will of the secular power, so as to maintain that whatever is done by the Apostolic See, or by its authority, for the government of the Church, cannot have force or value unless it be confirmed by the assent of the secular power.

And since, by the divine right of Apostolic primacy, one Roman pontiff is placed over the universal Church, We further teach and declare that he is the supreme judge of the faithful,<sup>12</sup> and that in all causes the decision of which belongs to the Church recourse may be had to his tribunal,<sup>13</sup> but that none may reopen the judgment of the Apostolic See, than whose authority there is no greater, nor can

<sup>12</sup> From a Brief of Pius VI, *Super soliditate*, of November 28, 1786.

<sup>13</sup> From the Acts of the Fourteenth General Council (Second of Lyons), A.D. 1274. Labbe's *Councils*, vol. xiv, p. 512.

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any lawfully review its judgment.<sup>14</sup> Wherefore they err from the right path of truth who assert that it is lawful to appeal from the judgments of the Roman pontiffs to an œcumenical council, as to an authority higher than that of the Roman pontiff.

(*Canon*) If then any shall say that the Roman pontiff has the office merely of inspection or direction, and not full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the universal Church, not only in things which belong to faith and morals, but also in those things which relate to the discipline and government of the Church spread throughout the world; or assert that he possesses merely the principal part, and not all the fullness of this supreme power; or that this power which he enjoys is not ordinary and immediate, both over each and all the Churches and over each and all the pastors of the faithful; let him be anathema.

<sup>14</sup> From Letter VIII of Pope Nicholas I, A.D. 858, to the Emperor Michael, in Labbe's *Councils*, vol. IX, pp. 1339 and 1570.

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### CHAPTER IV

#### *Concerning the Infallible Teaching of the Roman Pontiff*

Moreover, that the supreme power of teaching (*magisterii*) is also included in the Apostolic primacy, which the Roman pontiff, as the successor of Peter, Prince of the Apostles, possesses over the whole Church, this Holy See has always held, the perpetual practice of the Church confirms, and œcumenical councils also have declared, especially those in which the East with the West met in the union of faith and charity. For the Fathers of the Fourth Council of Constantinople, following in the footsteps of their predecessors, gave forth this solemn profession: The first condition of salvation is to keep the rule of the true faith. And because the sentence of our Lord Jesus Christ cannot be passed by, Who said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church,"<sup>15</sup> these things which have been said are proved by events, because in the Apostolic See the Catholic religion has always

<sup>15</sup> Matt. xvi. 18.

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been kept undefiled, and her well-known doctrine has been kept holy. Desiring, therefore, not to be in the least degree separated from the faith and doctrine of this see, we hope that we may deserve to be in the one communion, which the Apostolic see preaches, in which is the entire and true solidity of the Christian religion.<sup>16</sup>

And, with the approval of the Second Council of Lyons, the Greeks professed that: "the holy Roman Church enjoys supreme and full primacy and principedom over the whole Catholic Church, which it truly and humbly acknowledges that it has received with the plenitude of power from our Lord Himself in the person of Blessed Peter, Prince and Head of the Apostles, whose successor the Roman pontiff is; and as the Apostolic see is bound before all others to defend the truth of faith, so also, if any questions regarding faith shall arise, they must be defined by its judgment."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> From the Formula of St. Hormisdas, subscribed by the Fathers of the Eighth General Council (Fourth of Constantinople), A.D. 869. Labbe's *Councils*, vol. v, pp. 583, 622.

<sup>17</sup> From the Acts of the Fourteenth General Council (Second of Lyons), A.D. 1274. Labbe, vol. xiv, p. 512.

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Finally, the Council of Florence defined that:<sup>18</sup> “the Roman Pontiff is the true Vicar of Christ, and the head of the whole Church and the father and teacher of all Christians; and that to him in Blessed Peter was delivered by our Lord Jesus Christ the full power of feeding, ruling and governing the whole Church.”

To satisfy this pastoral duty, our predecessors ever made unwearied efforts that the salutary doctrine of Christ might be propagated among all the nations of the earth, and with equal care watched that it might be preserved genuine and pure where it had been received. Therefore the bishops of the whole world, now singly, now assembled in synod, following the long-established custom of Churches<sup>19</sup> and the form of the ancient rule,<sup>20</sup> sent word to this Apostolic See of those dangers especially which sprang up in matters of faith, that there

<sup>18</sup> From the Acts of the Seventeenth General Council (that of Florence), A.D. 1438; Labbe, vol. xviii, p. 526.

<sup>19</sup> From a letter of St. Cyril of Alexandria to Pope St. Celestine I, A.D. 422, vol. vi, p. 36, Paris edition of 1638.

<sup>20</sup> From a rescript of St. Innocent I to the Council of Milevis, A.D. 402. Labbe, vol. iii, p. 47.

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the losses of faith might be most effectually repaired where the faith cannot fail.<sup>21</sup> And the Roman pontiffs, according to the exigencies of times and circumstances, sometimes assembling œcumenical councils, or asking for the mind of the Church scattered throughout the world, sometimes by particular synods, sometimes using other helps which divine Providence supplied, defined as to be held those things which with the help of God they had recognized as conformable with the sacred Scriptures and Apostolic traditions. For the Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter, that by His revelation they might make known new doctrine, but that by His assistance they might inviolably keep and faithfully expound the revelation or deposit of faith delivered through the Apostles. And indeed all the venerable Fathers have embraced and the holy orthodox Doctors have venerated and followed their apostolic doctrine; knowing most fully that this See of Saint Peter remains ever free from all blem-

<sup>21</sup> From a letter of St. Bernard to Pope Innocent II, A.D. 1130; Epist. 191, vol. iv, p. 433, Paris edition of 1742.



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ish of error, according to the divine promise of the Lord Our Saviour made to the Prince of His disciples: "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren."<sup>22</sup>

This gift, then, of truth and never-failing faith was conferred by Heaven upon Peter and his successors in this Chair, that they might perform their high office for the salvation of all; that the whole flock of Christ, kept away by them from the poisonous food of error, might be nourished with the pasture of heavenly doctrine; that, the occasion of schism being removed, the whole Church might be kept one, and resting in its foundation, might stand firm against the gates of hell.

But since in this very age, in which the salutary efficacy of the Apostolic office is most of all required, not a few are found who take away from its authority, We judge it altogether necessary solemnly to assert the prerogative which the Only-begotten Son of God

<sup>22</sup> Luke xxii. 32. See also the Acts of the Sixth General Council, A.D. 680; Labbe, vol. vii, p. 659.

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vouchsafed to join with the supreme pastoral office.

Therefore, faithfully adhering to the tradition received from the beginning of the Christian faith, for the glory of God our Saviour, the exaltation of the Catholic religion, and the salvation of Christian people, with the approval of the sacred council, // We teach and define that it is a dogma divinely revealed: that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when, in discharge of the office of pastor and teacher of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal Church, is, by the divine assistance promised to him in Blessed Peter, possessed of that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be endowed in defining doctrine regarding faith or morals; and that, therefore, such definitions of the Roman pontiff are of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church, irreformable.<sup>23</sup> //

<sup>23</sup> In the words used by Pope Nicholas I, note 13, and in the Synod of Quedlinburg, A.D. 1085, "It is allowed to none to

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But if anyone—which may God avert!—presume to contradict this our definition, 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.

revise its judgment, and to sit in judgment upon what it has judged.”—Labbe, vol. xii, p. 679.



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