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The

“Instaurare omnia in Christo”

# ANGELUS

THE VOICE OF TRADITIONAL CATHOLICISM

## CHRISTIANITY FROM THE FIRST TO THE SIXTH CENTURIES

Devotion to the Mother of God in the Early Church by Romanus

Dr. Louis Schwartz: A History of the Transmission of Sacred Scripture

The Roman Rite in the First Six Centuries, Fr. Ian Andrew Palko

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David Clayton on Christian Art in the Early Church

RIA VIRGO ASSVPTAE ADETBERVTLI ANI INOVA REV REGV STELLATO SEDET SOLIO





# HOW DO WE HAVE THE BIBLE?

## *A Brief History of the Transmission of Sacred Scripture with Emphasis on St. Jerome's Vulgate*

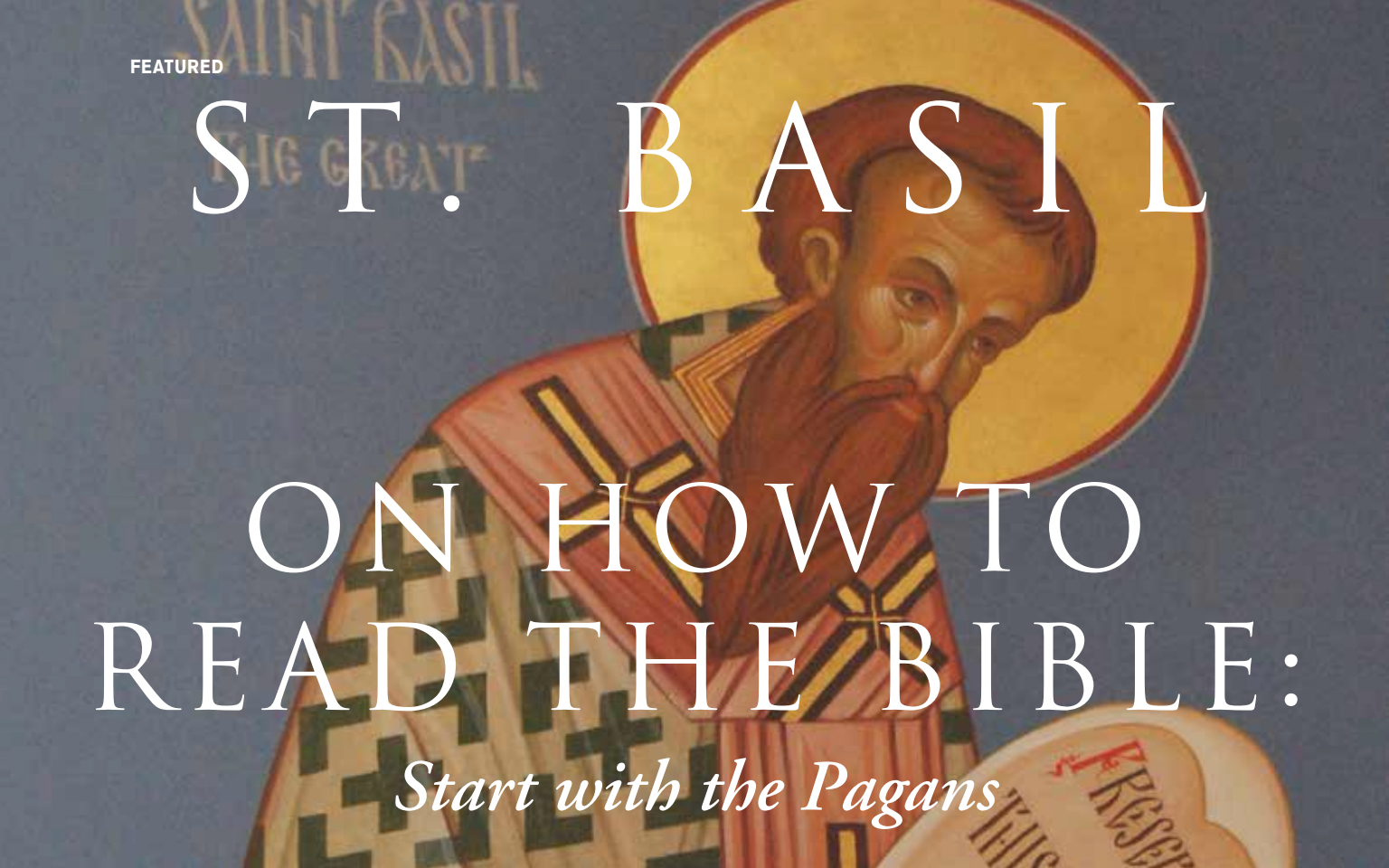
Dr. Louis Shwartz

Often termed the “Word of God,” the writings contained in the Bible form an essential part of the infallible deposit of the Faith; they pass on doctrine which God wishes humanity to learn through the ministry and interpretation of the hierarchical Church. A precious treasure ever ancient and ever new, Sacred Scripture has captivated generation after generation of readers (and listeners), calling them to sanctity, pointing out the way, the truth, and the life: Jesus Christ.

Historically, the Church has safeguarded and transmitted these most sacred texts through the papally-commissioned Latin edition compiled by St. Jerome around the year 400. Initially assembled during the fifth century, the Vulgate or “common” Bible embraces a complex history spanning thousands of years. This article seeks to highlight the key developments shaping Jerome’s great work and trace the legacy of the Vulgate in the Catholic Church to the present day.

The Bible comprises written texts preserving sacred truths revealed directly by God to chosen men which have been entrusted to his Church. The human recorders of Scripture, serving as instruments in the hand of a divine artist, faithfully transmitted God’s message—but their role as scribes is secondary while God’s role as author is primary. Commencing with Moses’s description of Creation and his record of the Old Law, concluding with St. John’s vision of the end times in the Apocalypse, and culminating in the Gospel narratives of the evangelists, the Bible contains texts spanning centuries initially composed in a variety of languages and literary styles. For example, the Psalms are Hebrew poetry while the Epistles of St. Paul are prose letters written in Greek a thousand years later. Although God is the principal author of the entire Bible, his human scribes, as secondary authors, still impart personal characteristics to their particular contributions. Thus, the Bible as a whole is a diverse and complementa-





# ST. BASIL

## ON HOW TO READ THE BIBLE:

*Start with the Pagans*

Jonathan Wanner

Given the long-standing antagonism between Greco-Roman pagans and early Christians, it is somewhat ironic that the classical education movement, which is ever gaining momentum in Catholic circles, exalts pagan poets. How easily theologians extol sky-minded Plato and real-eyed Aristotle as precursors of Augustinian and scholastic thought, but with much greater effort must the Catholic poet muster an equal defense of Ovid and Homer. Their stories are, after all, so... *sensual*. Plato himself forewarns that his poetic peers “destroy” the soul’s “calculating part” by driving man’s passions into an irrational frenzy: “If you admit the sweetened muse in lyrics or epics,” he predicts, “pleasure and pain will jointly be kings in your city instead of law.”<sup>1</sup> Christians must agree that the pagan Muses don’t always sing a moderately-tempered tune. Homer’s Odysseus, despite his valor, commits adultery with a goddess (Calypso) and an enchantress (Circe) before returning to his

wife, Penelope; Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* catalogs an extensive index of rapes and crimes of the flesh;<sup>2</sup> and Augustine regrets that he wept over Dido’s death when he could not shed a tear for his own sins.<sup>3</sup> Not to mention the worship of many and false gods, acts of divination, and the scandal of gratuitous violence. In the face of such barbs and brambles, we might wish to pursue poetic knowledge along a less injurious footpath: Holy Scripture, saint stories, or the many Catholic lyrics and legends that never seem to make it into the Norton Anthology. Surely a nothing-but-the-truth education would be just the rudder a student needs to keep within the moorings of truth, goodness, and beauty.

As attractive as a truth-only education seems, the teacher will inevitably confront a laundry list of difficulties when conveying eternal truths to immature youths. Consider the Bible: despite being plainly written, its several interpretive senses (literal, typological, moral, and anagogical) demand both logic and faith; it features a

# THEOTOKOS

## *Devotion to the Mother of God in the Early Church*

Romanus

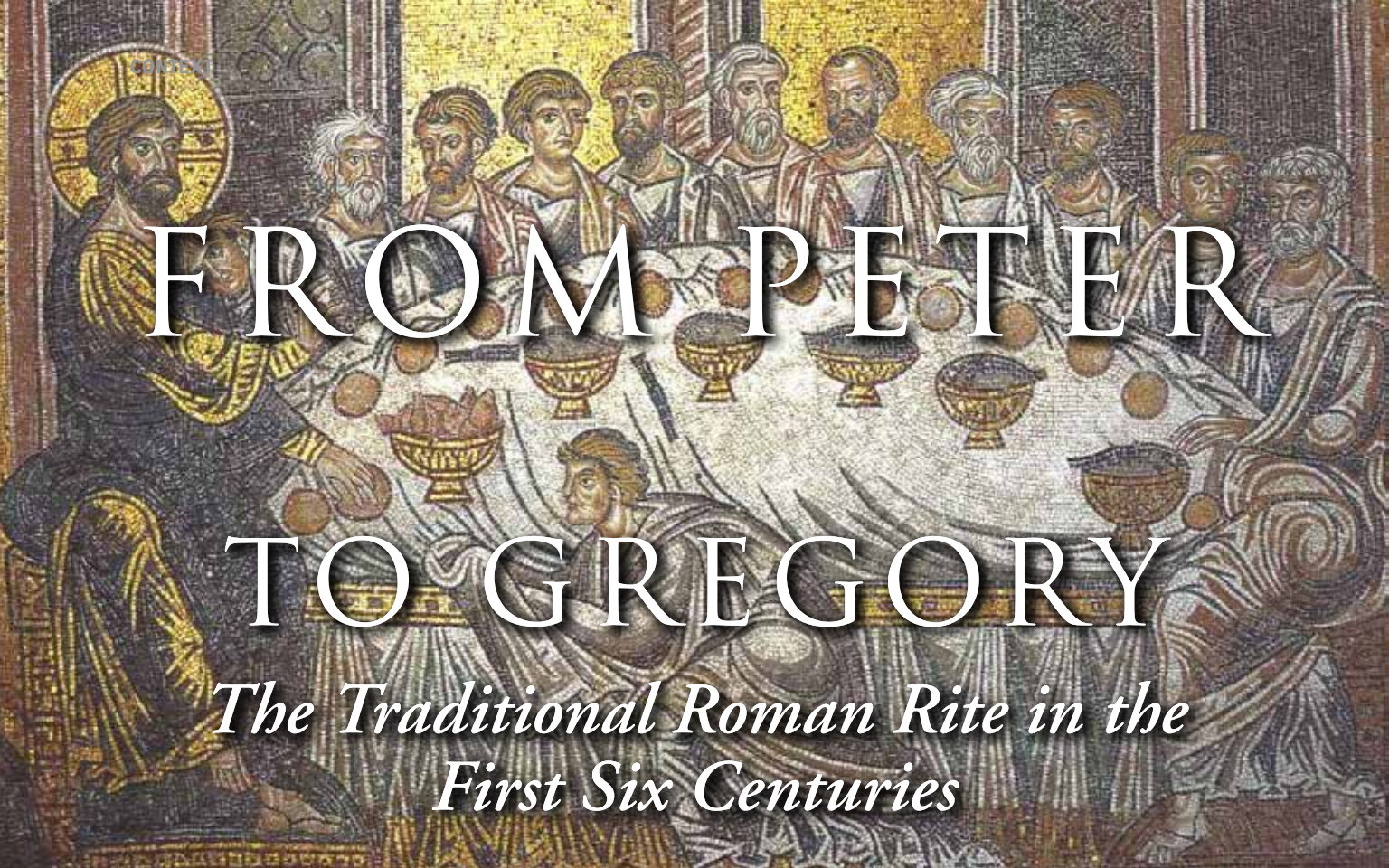
When we read attentively the Scriptures, we may be struck by the intermittent character of Our Lady's presence. At first, she appears veiled in the Old Testament prophecies, but comes into full light in the first chapters of the Gospel of St. Luke. Then, she drifts back into relative obscurity during Christ's ministry, and finally comes back into full light in the Apocalypse. This pattern of highlights and obscurities was somehow repeated in the Marian teachings of the first centuries of the Church. Why was this, considering that Revelation was complete and Mary's role in the economy of salvation was already exposed?

The Christian preaching of the one God, incarnate in Christ, both creator and redeemer, was set in opposition to the multiplicity of pagan gods. However, at the early stages of preaching, to have emphasized the person of the Virgin Mother could have created confusion among the faithful, perhaps even have led to an assimilation of Our Lady with the many "mother goddesses" of the pagan myths. Nonetheless, both the humanity and the maternity of Mary had to be emphasized to stress the reality of the Incarnation, especially against the early heresies that denied the reality of Christ's humanity.

Moreover, from the very beginning, the faithful were attracted to the person of Mary and desired to know more about her life, privileged position and dignity, and virtues. Unfortunately, however, this desire, good in itself, also posed a danger, as it fostered the proliferation, in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, of a kind of "popular" literature, which sometimes did offer further insights into Mary's life, but was far too mixed with fanciful legends and erroneous assertions, often supported with the false claim of having been written by the apostles and first disciples.

It was the task of the Fathers to exercise the necessary discernment and guide and focus the





# FROM PETER

# TO GREGORY

## *The Traditional Roman Rite in the First Six Centuries*

Fr. Ian Andrew Palko, SSPX

**F**or the vast majority of Roman Catholics in 1950, the Catholic Church would have appeared as a singular entity, headed by a Pope as the Vicar of Christ and successor of St. Peter, with a singular liturgy in Latin. Leaving aside the liturgical revolution of the 1970s, even today most Latin Catholics know only a Latin Mass, and a vernacular Novus Ordo. A few may have heard of various other rites of Mass, usually through some study, or by relatives who belong to one of these other rites.

This is not very surprising, given that of the Catholic Church's 1.2 billion members, only 16 million are Eastern or Oriental Catholics. Within this small group, one finds, in fact, twenty-two particular churches, each united in the triple bond of unity that makes one Catholic: the profession of the one true Faith, the recognition of the Pope as Christ's Vicar, and a unity in the form of worship. This latter bond at first may seem difficult to assert, since these Eastern

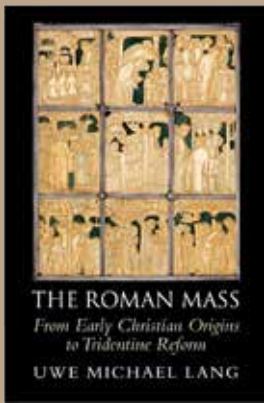
churches have a Mass and liturgy which are not merely a translation of the Latin Rite, but use significantly different ceremonies. Each has a different liturgy which developed from the Mass and ceremonies taught to and by the Apostles, adapted to the places these Apostles and their successors went, and embellished over time. The unity is had not by specific ceremonial acts, but that at their core is the same essential rite given by Our Lord to the Apostles. Each renews His bloody Sacrifice in an unbloody and sacramental manner and will contain an offertory, the consecration, and a communion, among other more specific elements.

Fr Adrian Fortescue, the great English liturgical scholar, explains that

[T]he important elements of a rite are not the things that will be noticed by a casual and ignorant onlooker—the number of candles, color of the vestments and places where the bell is rung—but just those things he would not notice, the Canon, fraction, and so on, the prayers said



# New Books in LITU



## THE ROMAN MASS

*From Early Christian Origins to Tridentine Reform*

by Fr. Uwe Michael Lang

This volume offers a new, synthetic overview of the structure and ritual shape of the Roman Mass from its formative period in late antiquity to its post-Tridentine standardization. Starting with the Last Supper and the origins of the Eucharist, Uwe Michael Lang constructs a narrative that explores the intense religious, social, and cultural transformations that shaped the Roman Mass. Lang unites classical liturgical history with insights from a variety of other disciplines that have drawn attention to the ritual performance and reception of the Mass. He also presents liturgical developments within the broader historical and theological contexts that affected the celebration and experience of the sacramental rite that is still at the heart of Catholic Christianity. Aimed at scholars from a broad swathe of subjects, including religious studies, history, art history, literature, and music, Lang's volume serves as a comprehensive history of the Roman Mass over the course of a millenium.

Cambridge University Press, Dec. 2022, 456 pp.



## A FOREST OF SYMBOLS

*The Traditional Mass and Its Meaning*

by Abbé Claude Barthe

The Christian liturgy—and the Roman liturgy in particular—developed and thrived within a tradition of commentary and meditation that was fundamental for its understanding, running parallel with the same way of approaching Scripture. The rationalist influences that led to the decline and eventual rejection of the mystical or spiritual senses of Scripture in favor of a narrowly-conceived literal sense led to a narrowing of liturgy as well, which was reduced to its material parts and their various functions. While in recent decades the importance of the spiritual sense of Scripture has been reclaimed, its liturgical equivalent remains in shadow. The present book addresses this lacuna with an easy-to-understand summary of the traditional approach to the “forest of symbols” contained in the Roman Mass.

Angelico Press, Apr. 2023, 194 pp.

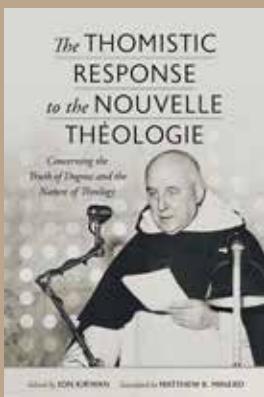


## THE ONCE AND FUTURE ROMAN RITE

*Returning to the Traditional Latin Liturgy after Seventy Years of Exile*

by Dr. Peter Kwasniewski

In his latest book, Dr. Peter Kwasniewski argues that, ever since the new liturgical books following the Second Vatican Council came into force, Roman Catholic faithful have suffered the effects of a hasty and far-reaching reform permeated with nominalism, voluntarism, Protestantism, rationalism, antiquarianism, hyperpapalism, and other modern errors. Man is not master over divine liturgy, Dr. Kwasniewski emphasizes; rather, all of us are called to be stewards of the sacred, from the lowest-ranking lay-



# REGICAL STUDIES

man to the pope himself. Dr. Kwasnieski shows that sacred Tradition is the guiding principle for all authentic Christian liturgy, which originates from Christ and is guided by the Holy Spirit throughout the life of the Church. His principal thesis in this work is that the prominent identifying traits of the classical Roman Rite—and indeed of all traditional rites, Eastern and Western—are absent from the *Novus Ordo*, estranging it from their company and making it impossible to call it “the Roman Rite.” To respond to this crisis of rupture, Dr. Kwasniewski calls for a full return to the traditional rite, the Roman Rite in its robust, perennial richness, for which no special permission is or could ever be needed—as explicated by Pope Benedict XVI. Fidelity to the traditional Latin Liturgy is, at its root, fidelity to the Roman Church and to Christ Himself, Who has lovingly inspired the growth and perfection of our religious rites for two thousand years. This awe-inspiring gift of Tradition allows us to taste, even now, the banquet of the promised land of heaven.

TAN Books, Oct. 2022, 472 pp.

## THE THOMISTIC RESPONSE TO THE NOUVELLE THÉOLOGIE

*Concerning the Truth of Dogma and the Nature of Theology*

by Raymond-Léopold Bruckberger, Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, Michel-Marie Labourdette and Marie-Joseph Nicolas. (Edited by Jon Kirwan, Translated by Matthew K. Miner)

*The Thomistic Response to the Nouvelle Théologie* retrieves the most important and largely forgotten exchanges in the mid-20th-century debate surrounding *ressourcement* thinkers. It makes available new translations of works by the leading Thomists in the exchange: Dominican Fathers Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, Michel Labourdette, Marie-Joseph Nicolas, and Raymond Bruckberger. In addition to a lengthy historical and theological introduction, the volume contains sixteen articles, thirteen of which have never appeared in English. All the major criti-

cal responses of the Dominican Thomists to the *nouvelle théologie* are here presented chronologically according to the primary debates carried on, respectively, in the journals *Revue Thomiste* and *Angelicum*. A lengthy introduction describes the unfolding of the entire debate, article by article, and explains and references the *ressourcement* interventions.

Unfortunately, the history of this important debate is largely surrounded by polemics, half-truths, caricatures, and journalistic soundbites. In the articles gathered in this volume, along with the accompanying introduction, the Toulouse and Roman Dominicans speak in their own voice. The central theses that define the two sides of the debate are sympathetically set forth. However, the texts gathered here show the immense lengths to which the Thomists went to initiate an authentic and fraternal theological dialogue with the *nouveaux théologiens*. Frs. Labourdette and Nicolas repeatedly argued for the importance of *ressourcement* work: they applauded its historical efforts, and they were generally sympathetic and complementary (although always pointed and persistent in gently expressing their concerns). Even Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange—whose infamous intervention is remembered as being a theological “atomic bomb”—is revealed as being no more guilty of escalation than the Dominicans’ interlocutors in their own responses to him and Fr. Labourdette.

This volume will greatly aid in the task of theological and historical reconstruction and will, undoubtedly, assist in a certain rapprochement between the two sides, as the essential texts, concerns, and theological arguments are made available in their entirety to professional and lay anglophone readers.

Catholic University of America,  
Apr. 2023, 406 pp.

Interested in reviewing one of these books for the *Angelus*? Contact our editorial team: [publishing@angeluspress.org](mailto:publishing@angeluspress.org).

# MY END IS

# MY BEGINNING

## *Early Christianity and the Grand Coalition of the Status Quo*

John Rao, D. Phil. Oxon.

**2023** marks the conclusion of the lectures on Church History that I have been delivering for the Roman Forum in New York City each September to May for the past thirty-one years. Although I am not yet certain what will replace our historical series, I do have a title for this year's last talk: "My End is My Beginning." Sadly, I find that title all too appropriate, given that there are so many problems that the Church faces in our own day that parallel those that confronted her in her infancy in the late ancient world. Prominent among such parallel problems is the unification of the contemporary enemies of the Christian Faith in an alliance that is a familiar imitation of the one that wished to crush her from the outset: a union that I like to call "The Grand Coalition of the Status Quo."

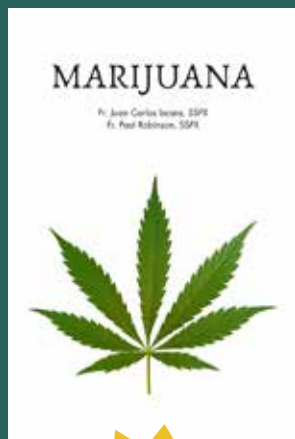
Just as in our own day, recruits for enlistment in this confederation were all too numer-

ous in the infancy of Christianity. Just as in our own day, the ancient prototype of this pestiferous league also had its "media experts," skilled in developing propaganda campaigns for the anti-Christian cause and rousing the troops to action. Finally, just as in our own day, the arguments of the anti-Christian word merchants actually worked to harm the cause they claimed to serve. For it was only through the construction of the Social Kingship of Christ that the GCSQ and its media guides loathed that the treasures of the civilization of the ancient world might not only be preserved, but also purified of their imperfections and brought to shine in their greatest splendor.

Let us begin this tripartite discussion of our early Christian mirror image by asking who it was that formed its Grand Coalition of the Status Quo. First and foremost, it included all of those endlessly varied religious and social forces in the Roman Empire that proclaimed themselves the defenders of what was solidly rooted



# NEW FROM ANGELUS PRESS



## Marijuana

By Fr. Juan Carlos Iscara, SSPX and Fr. Paul Robinson, SSPX

### Is using marijuana wrong?

The cannabis question has been the subject of debate for over sixty years. Over time the conversation has radically shifted as scientific research on the matter has developed. This short study breaks down the science and terminology surrounding marijuana and efficiently examines its effects on the mind and body. Despite the growing belief that marijuana is harmless, this booklet critically evaluates the implications of marijuana use in light of Catholic moral principles.

55 pp., Softcover booklet. STK# 8837 \$4.95

## The Life of St. Thomas Aquinas

As told by his contemporary, William of Tocco

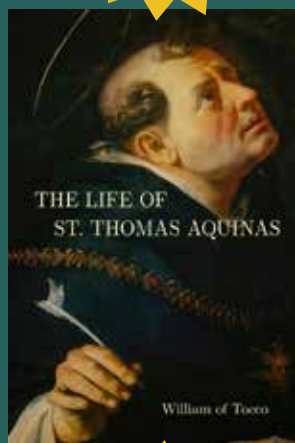
This book was used as part of the canonization process for St. Thomas Aquinas. It is published in English for the first time in history by Angelus Press and translated by David Foley.

While most Catholics are familiar with the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, little is known about the saint himself... until now. This insightful biography of St. Thomas Aquinas is now available to us after its composition seven centuries ago. Its author, Brother William of Tocco, used his own contact with the saint and interviews with many who knew him to set down his life.

In this easy-to-read translation, you will find the remarkable story of the life of the Angelic Doctor, including his imprisonment by his family; his incredible powers of abstraction and memory; his refutation of heresies and his heroic virtues; his levitation and other miracles; and his holy death.

This book gives a charming eyewitness account of the unseen life of St. Thomas Aquinas and helps us better understand the family, friends, and era that produced one of the greatest theologians of all time.

227 pp., Hardcover. STK# 8854 \$24.95



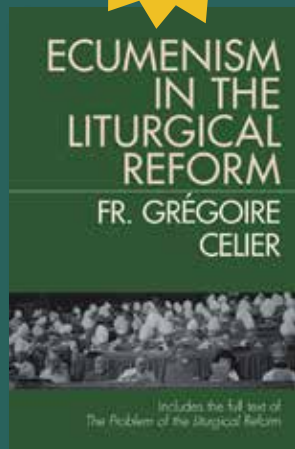
## Ecumenism in the Liturgical Reform

Includes the full text of *The Problem of the Liturgical Reform*.

*Ecumenism in the Liturgical Reform* was first published in 1987 in French. Now available for the first time in English, it represents a significant contribution towards understanding the role that Ecumenism played in shaping the New Mass and other post-Vatican II liturgical reforms. It relies heavily on primary sources and the words of the liturgical reformers themselves to expose just how focused they were on changing Catholic worship to make it acceptable to Protestants.

The first part examines the intentions of the reformers in general, while the second part looks at how those intentions played out in the reformulation of particular liturgical acts and prayers after Vatican II. This book is a must-read for all those looking to understand the Protestant influence on modern Catholic liturgical practice.

235 pp., Softcover. STK# 8850 \$19.95



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# EGYPTIAN GOLD OR

# GRECIAN GIFT

## *The Church Fathers and Pagan Literature*

Patrick Murtha

Two analogies seem particularly suitable to any debate over the Church Fathers' standpoint towards pagan literature. I say *debate*, for the use of pagan literature was, in the infancy of the Church, a source of some conflict, and remains the subject of a similar contest. The question was and is, should the Catholic see in pagan literature Egyptian gold or a Grecian gift? The correlation of these analogies is almost paradoxical: the first analogy, favoring Catholic use of pagan literature, resides in Sacred Scripture; and the second analogy, opposing, hails from Virgil, the second of pagan poets. In the first, God commands the Israelites, then captive in Egypt, to take the wealth of Egypt with them: "Therefore thou shalt tell all the people," says the Lord to Moses, "that every man ask of his friend, and every woman of her neighbor, vessels of silver, and of gold" (Exodus 11:2). This analogy signifies that nominally pagan or non-Catholic things are not necessarily to be rejected, but

as St. Paul says, "prove all things"—as Fr. Knox translates, "scrutinize it all carefully"—"hold fast that which is good" (I Thess. 5:21). The second analogy comes to us from Virgil: "Equo ne credite, Teucrici. / Quidquid id est, timeo Danaos et dona ferentes" (Aeneid 2.48-49: "Do not trust the horse, Teucrians! Whatever it is, I fear the Danaans and their gift-bearing.") This horse is the Trojan horse in whose belly lurks death. Can the works of the pagans be trusted? Or hidden within these seemingly innocent poetic disguise is there fire, sword, and destruction? One might ask, are the works of the pagans simply works of the pagans or truly pagan works? Such is the crux of the question.

When the wranglers in this match take to the field, the common tactic is to launch sentences from the Fathers at each other. The weightier quotes from the weightier Father win. And so, if a contender can catapult St. Augustine or St. Ambrose or St. Basil against, let us say, Firmicus or Lactantius or Arnobius, he takes





# HOW IS A TRADITION ESTABLISHED?

## *The Emerging Pattern of Christian Art in the Early Church*

Christ and the Apostles, Catacombs of Domitilla, 4th century, Rome.

Prof. David Clayton

**W**hen one has a conservative mindset, as I do, tradition plays an important part in the consideration of how things ought to be today. To my mind, traditionalists are not against change altogether—clearly we acknowledge that new challenges have to be addressed and the past cannot always give us the best answer. However, the first question that is asked when addressing any situation is, “How did people who thought like us deal with this in the past?” Then, assuming that there is no compelling reason to change, we try first the approaches used in the past.

In the context of Catholic sacred art, there are three well established traditions that have emerged since the Church was established and which I consider to be authentic styles. The first is the iconographic style, the second is the Gothic and the third is the baroque (the style of the Catholic Counter-Reformation that had its high-point in the 17th century). We live in an age in which, separated from our artistic

traditions, there is no consensus on the artistic style that is appropriate for the liturgy today. Consequently, every time art is commissioned for a church setting, a conscious choice has to be made as to what style is appropriate. Do we choose one of those from the past, or should we think about choosing a new style?

I argued in the last edition of this magazine that my personal choice in these situations, especially in America, would be a form of the Gothic style. I would like to see the development of a twenty-first century neo-Gothic culture that is driven by the wellspring of all-Catholic culture, the liturgy.

However, before making that conclusion, I did consider the possibility of something new. As a traditionalist, I must acknowledge that one of the lessons of the past is that on occasion it is appropriate to start afresh. Clearly, Catholics in the twelfth century thought so when establishing the Gothic style; just as Catholics in the sixteenth century thought so when establishing the baroque style as part of their cultural



The Sarcophagus of Junius Bassus is a marble Early Christian sarcophagus used for the burial of Junius Bassus, who died in 359. It has been described as “probably the single most famous piece of early Christian relief sculpture.” The sarcophagus was originally placed in or under Old St. Peter’s Basilica, was rediscovered in 1597, and is now below the modern basilica in the Museo Storico del Tesoro della Basilica di San Pietro (Museum of Saint Peter’s Basilica) in the Vatican. The base is approximately 4 x 8 x 4 feet. Together with the Dogmatic Sarcophagus in the same museum, this sarcophagus is one of the oldest surviving high-status sarcophagi with elaborate carvings of Christian themes, and a complicated iconographic program embracing the Old and New Testaments. [sailko, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tesoro\_di\_san\_pietro,\_sarcofago\_di\_giunio\_basso.jpg].







VSIIITADDEVM VIII KAL SEPT EVSEBIO ET YRATIO COSS



# The Au Tradi

From *The Mass of All Time*, pp. 286-289.

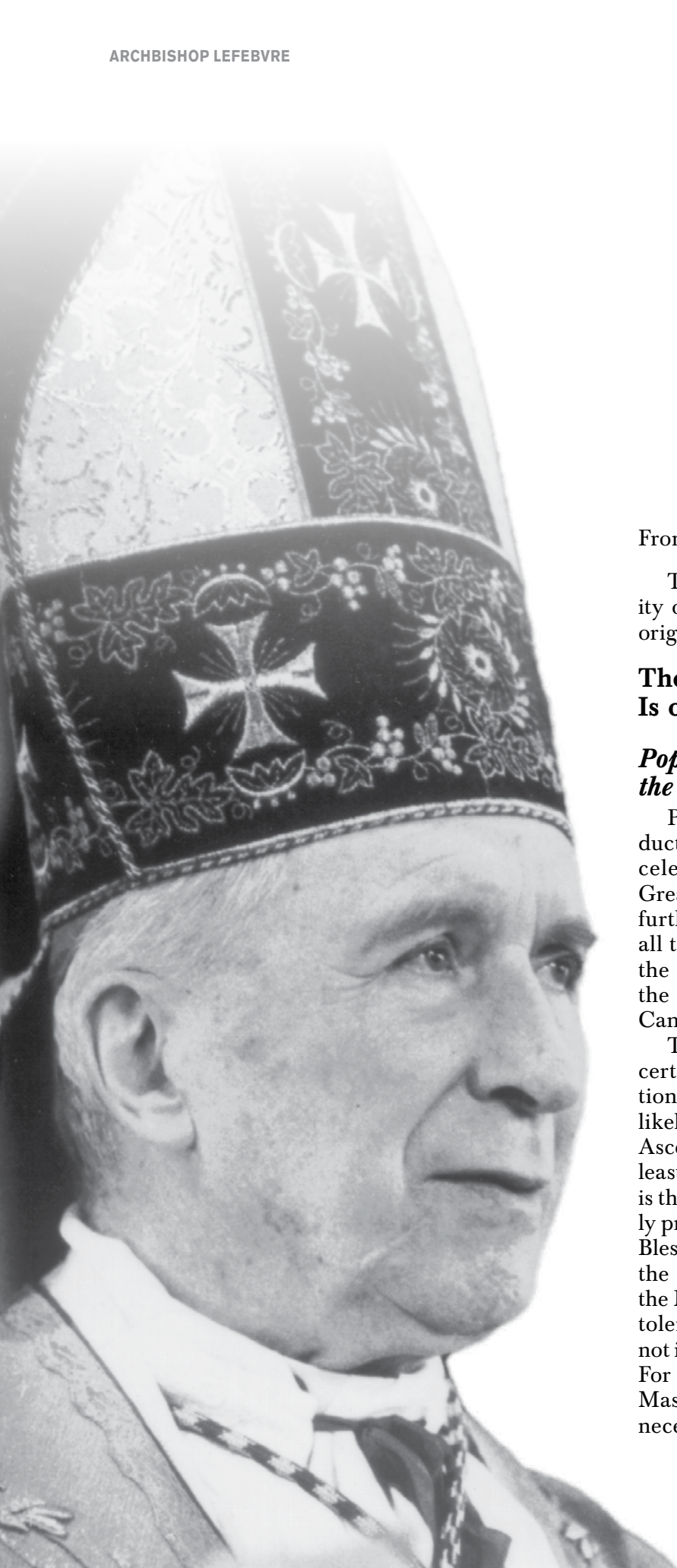
Two considerations spotlight the authority of the so-called Mass of St. Pius V: its origin and the unique privilege it possesses.

## **The Traditional Rite Is of Apostolic Origin**

### ***Pope Paul VI acknowledged the antiquity of the traditional Mass***

Pope Paul VI himself says in his introduction to the new rite that the Mass we celebrate goes back to St. Gregory the Great.<sup>1</sup> But it can be said that it goes back further than St. Gregory the Great; it goes all the way to the Apostles. The decrees of the Council of Trent say very clearly that the prayers of the Mass, in particular the Canon, probably go back to the Apostles.<sup>2</sup>

The words of the Canon of the Mass are certainly the most venerable of our traditions. According to Dom Pace,<sup>3</sup> it is very likely that during the forty days before His Ascension, Our Lord taught the Apostles at least the words of the Consecration. And it is these precious words that were assiduously preserved in the Latin Church. The most Blessed Virgin received Communion from the hands of St. John after the sacrifice of the Mass was offered. She would never have tolerated that words be spoken that were not identical to those Our Lord had spoken. For years, she attended the sacrifice of the Mass; she received Holy Communion. It is necessary to think about all this. And the





# thority of the tional Rite

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre

Apostles were indefectible, they were inspired. All that is Tradition.<sup>4</sup>

## ***St. Pius V restored the rite “to the pristine norm of the Holy Fathers”***

In the Bull of St. Pius V, which he published at the restoration of the veritable rite of Mass, the Pope says of the commission of Cardinals he had assembled to restore the Mass: “They restored the Missal itself and the ritual to the pristine (original) norm of the Holy Fathers.” What does St. Pius V mean by this restoration according to the norm of the Holy Fathers? He is speaking of the Fathers of the first centuries who were our fathers in the Faith. Thus St. Pius V has no intention of establishing a new Mass, but of restoring the Mass according to the principles and the form it had in the first centuries. He desires to restore the Mass that originated with our holy Fathers, *sanctorum Patrum*, our Fathers in faith, our Fathers in Tradition. He wants to restore the holy mysteries that Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself instituted and that our holy Fathers transcribed integrally and with doctrinal precision, in the different prayers that they received either from Our Lord, or from the Apostles, or from the first Fathers.<sup>5</sup>

It is impossible to read without emotion what the Council of Trent has to say about [the traditional rite of Mass]: “As it is meet that holy things should be given holy treatment and as this sacrifice is the most holy of all, the Catholic Church, so that it may be offered and received with due dignity and reverence, instituted centuries ago, the holy Canon, so free from all error

that it holds nothing save what breathes holiness and outward devotion and whatsoever lifts to God the minds of those who offer it. It is, indeed, made up of Our Lord’s own words, the traditions of the Apostles, and the pious teachings of Sovereign Pontiffs.”<sup>6,7</sup>

It is quite understandable that the prayers that were surely composed by the Apostles were carefully preserved by the Christians, by the priests who handed them down faithfully one after the other in order to preserve them. That is why all the texts that speak about the Latin Mass always refer to it as the Mass of Apostolic Tradition.<sup>8</sup>

There are publishing houses in Austria that have made wonderful reproductions of the ancient Sacramentaries. And in these Sacramentaries quite often one finds, sometimes from the Offertory, but in any case from the Canon, the prayers of the Roman rite. These books are wonders of illumination. They have been marvelously photographed with modern methods. And you can see that it is exactly the same Canon as the one we use! All the Signs of the Cross, all the genuflections are identical to what we do. And some of these Sacramentaries date back to the eighth century. And there is not any change. That is what the saints, the popes, all those who followed the Roman rite said for centuries.<sup>9</sup>

## ***St. Pius V did not elaborate a new Mass***

The so-called Mass of St. Pius V thus is not a new Mass. St. Pius V did not say: “For the sake of conforming ourselves to the spirit of our time, to the spirit of modern man, we are making a Mass that will be called the Mass of



# MY PATH TO TRADITION

Tom Aspinwall

**1. Tell us a little about yourself. Where did you grow up, and what was your level of exposure to Catholicism as a child and as a young adult?**

I grew up in a middle-class home. My mother was a Catholic, and I received the foundation of my faith from her. Her faith was in the small things, like praying to St. Anthony to find the car keys. A favorite saying of hers was to “give it up for the poor souls in Purgatory.” I have three brothers and four sisters, so our home was busy and noisy as large families are. I received my first communion at the age of seven and felt holy and content, due in large part to the Sisters who taught me. As part of catechism, I remember Fr. Alamena, teaching us never to touch the Host, and I never forgot that. I didn’t attend many other Catholic activities after my First Communion, other than Sunday Mass. I did serve Mass at St. Andrew Avellino Seminary in Denver for a short time. I remember studying the Latin responses on Saturday morning—and how the text in the book was strikingly beautiful to me. I thought at that time that I might have vocation to the priesthood. I attended public grade school and, so I didn’t have the kind of exposure to the Church that traditional families have. I was confirmed at the age of 13 and still remember clearly the preparation classes and the ceremony.

I attended the Holy Cross Abbey school in Canon City, Colorado for one year as a sophomore in 1967, which was an influential social experience, but not really a religious one. We attended Sunday Mass, which was always celebrated, and even though there were many Benedictine Monks and Sisters at the Abbey, I didn’t feel particularly religious. I did not return

to the Abbey after that year and returned to public high school.

Sometime during the late 1960’s, although I wasn’t told at the time, my mother was offended by the treatment of one of her friends at our local parish. So, our family began to look for another church to attend. I remember going to different Catholic churches like St. Andrew Avellino Seminary where my brother and I served Mass. At some time after that, my mother began to attend Pentecostal services without the rest of the family. Since there was no influential person encouraging me to go to Mass on Sunday, and without really noticing it, I lost interest in the Catholic faith.

In college and as an adult I was completely absorbed by the popular culture. I did not return to the church until I was about to be married, much later in my life.

I returned to the faith mostly with the help of my lovely wife. While we were dating, the subject of marriage became more and more important. My wife, who was not Catholic at the time, was influenced by an older faithful Catholic woman who made rosaries for distribution. And because of her influence, my wife was inspired to join the Church. Since I had told my wife that I was raised as a Catholic, I soon found myself attending marriage counseling with her in front of Fr. James Purfield, the pastor at a local parish. And the rest is history.

**2. What experience first piqued your interest in Tradition?**

My wife and I have always wanted to attend a church that gave us a sense of Tradition and belonging. We had chosen to attend a local parish just on the basis of the architecture of the



# MEDITATIONS



## ON ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL

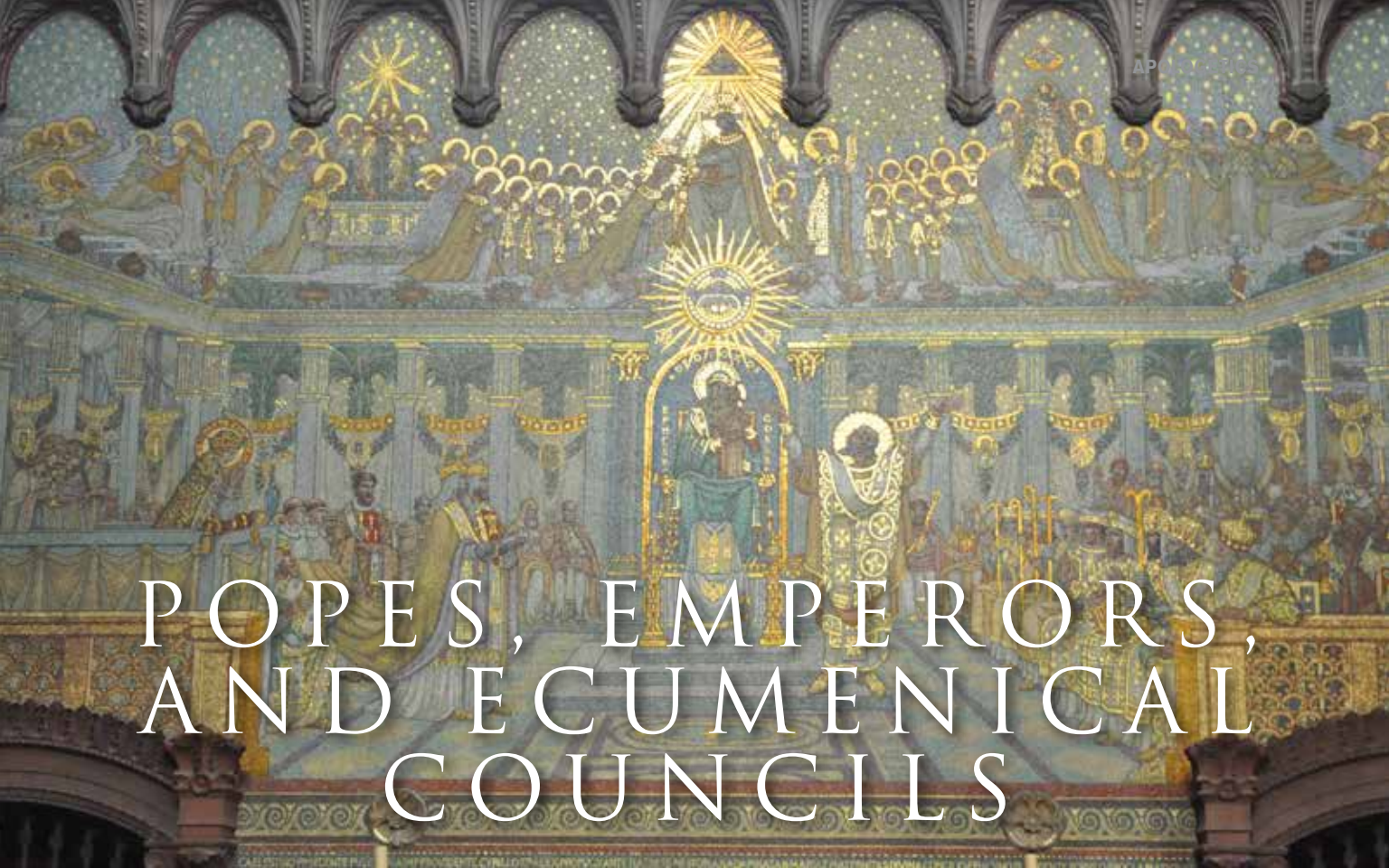
*Chapter Nineteen*

Pater Inutilis

Pilate would like to free Jesus. The freeing of a criminal for them at the Pasch (18:39) failed: they chose Barabbas (18:40). He will now have Jesus punished beyond His deserts that they may say, “Enough. Let him go,”<sup>1</sup> when shown them, “Ecce homo” (vs. 5). The soldiers, therefore, have free rein to hurt Him, and they begin by scourging Him fearfully (vs. 1).<sup>2</sup> But, His claim to kingship being now very clear, but ridiculous in the eyes of these unbelievers, they amuse themselves by giving Him a coronation ceremony. He is clothed with the “royal” purple, given a crown, made of thorns, and obeisance, “Hail, king of the Jews; and they gave him blows” (vs. 2f). Thus He is presented to the chief priests and the people, “Behold the Man” (vs. 5). This expedient does not work either: “Crucify him, crucify him” (vs. 6). All this introduces us to a second interrogation of Jesus by Pilate, noted only by St. John. Here it is no longer just a question of a possible temporal dominion that might challenge Rome—which Pilate knows to be false.

It a question of Jesus Christ claiming also to be the “Son of God” (vs. 7). This was clear to Our Lord’s Jewish enemies (5:18; 10:33); and they are guilty for not taking this claim seriously, despite Our Lord’s many miracles (9:32f & 41; 10:37f; 12:37-41). Unlike the Jews, “When Pilate had heard this saying, he feared the more” (vs. 8). He was aware of Christ’s renown as a wonder-worker; and maybe the tribune reporting back after Jesus’s arrest had told him of Malchus’s healing (though probably not of their falling down). The Romans had many gods, but none who could do what Jesus did. Pilate now has power over Jesus, yes, but this too was given from above (vs. 11) and so to be exercised as God would have it, justly. The Jews, having greater light in things religious, are more guilty than this pagan; but Pilate now knows enough and is far from blameless, “He that hath delivered me to thee hath the greater sin” (vs. 11).<sup>3</sup> Wanting still to let Jesus go, Pilate doesn’t, fearing more the emperor and what he might think of the Jewish accusations against Jesus. “If thou release





# POPE S, EMPERORS, AND ECUMENICAL COUNCILS

Pauper Peregrinus

“I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy.” These mysterious words spoken by Jesus Christ to St. John in the Book of the Apocalypse (11:3) may be understood in various ways, for example of Peter and Paul or of Enoch and Elias. But when one reads the history of the Church, one may wonder whether perhaps they apply most of all to the Pope of Rome and the Roman emperor.

At first sight this may seem a surprising suggestion, given that for almost three centuries, Christians were sporadically but bloodily persecuted under the authority of the emperor. Yet it was the first of the line, Augustus Caesar, who put into motion the events leading to the birth of the incarnate Word in Bethlehem, when he decreed that the whole world should be enrolled. As if in reward for that imperial decree, divine providence seems to have given to the Roman emperors, after their conversion to the gospel, a special role in protecting the word of God on earth by their temporal power.

Indeed, many of the Church fathers held that the Roman empire was the great ‘restrainer,’ of which St. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, which would first have to be taken out of the way, before the final enemy of Christ could appear.

However that may be, it is certain that the Christian emperors took seriously their responsibility not just for the external peace, but also for the spiritual health, of their realms. Indeed, they deemed the latter to be the best guarantor of the former. Does not God promise in the gospel: *Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be yours as well?* Nowhere was their concern for the twin welfare of Church-and-empire more evident than in their summoning of ecumenical councils in times of crisis.

Again, this may surprise a modern reader: isn’t it the *pope’s* business to call councils? Certainly, the pope’s right to do so has long been a part of canon law, and more importantly it follows from the fact that, as the Council of Florence defined in 1439, “to him in blessed





Fr. Juan Carlos Iscara, SSPX

## 1. What other acts must the penitent perform in order to receive the sacrament of penance?

The second act which the penitent must perform is the confession of his sins to the legitimate minister of Jesus Christ.

Although of less importance and necessity than contrition for sins (since in special circumstances—such as the complete unavailability of a confessor—the salvation of the sinner is possible without confession, but never without contrition), it forms an intrinsic and essential part of the sacrament.

## 2. What do we mean by “sacramental confession”?

Sacramental confession means the penitent’s voluntary accusation of the sins he has committed after baptism, done to a legitimate priest, in order to obtain absolution of those sins by virtue of the power of the keys.

It is an *accusation*—that is, not a simple historical narrative of sins committed, or an attempt to excuse oneself from them, or to flaunt them, but the manifestation by which the sinner declares his sins as a convict to the legitimate judge, which implies the reproach of self and the willingness to accept punishment or reparation.

*Voluntary*—that is, spontaneous, not forced or imposed, as confessions made in the external forum are.

Of the *sins committed after baptism*, because original sin or personal sins committed before baptism are blotted out by baptism itself.





# THE LAST WORD

**Fr. David Sherry**  
District Superior of Canada

Dear Reader,

There is a difference between the imaginative and the imaginary. That at least was the opinion of C.S. Lewis. Both are the work of the imagination, but whereas ‘imaginary’ literature does not describe reality, ‘imaginative’ literature does. Macbeth, stricken by guilt for the sin of murder is imaginative; Father Rodrigues in the movie *Silence* being encouraged by God to apostatise is imaginary.

You would reckon then that any work of literature based on a *true* story would be imaginative, not imaginary. You might be wrong. I recently came across an advertisement for *The Pope’s Exorcist*. It says that the movie is “inspired by the actual files of Father Gabriele Amorth, Chief Exorcist of the Vatican as he investigates a young boy’s terrifying possession.” Excellent, I thought, I remember reading those memoirs. Provided Hollywood hasn’t snuck in some gratuitous glorification of sin or immodesty which makes it an occasion of sin, this could be a good movie. I read on. “Amorth ends up uncovering a centuries-old conspiracy the Vatican has desperately tried to keep hidden.” Ah, of course. The Vatican conspiracy. I somehow couldn’t

recall reading that in the memoirs. Perhaps I was distracted by my simultaneous perusal of one of Dan Brown’s *chefs d’oeuvre*.

Another drama “based on a true story” is *Doctor Faustus* by Goethe. The doctor, tired of boring science (who isn’t?), turns to the devil and sells his soul for magical power and worldly pleasure, accompanied no doubt by despair and hatred and presumably ending with eternal fire. Among other crimes, the medic turned magician seduces a virgin and leads her into sin. The true story that episode is based on? That would be the story of a fourth century magician of Antioch called Cyprian. He used his magical powers to get money and to serve his ambitions and passions. He was indeed smitten by a beautiful virgin and sought to deploy his spells to get her. But it was not the old magician who seduced the virgin; it was she who converted him. And Saints Cyprian and Justina went together to meet the bridegroom on September 26th 304. Imagine that.

Fr. David Sherry

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