

Coup D'oeil sur Rome

June 1956

A Glance at Rome

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Preface

Since the creation of a center for theological studies in Paris by our Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of France and Belgium (25, avenue Henri-de-Latouche, Châtenay-Malabry, Seine), we are trying more than ever, both out of need and desire, to bring into existence a special means of expression, outside of our monthly bulletin 'Le Luthérien,' destined to make known the confessional voice of Lutheranism in our French-speaking land and to indicate the doctrinal position of our churches in view of the present day religious and theological questions.

Even though our Centre d'Etudes has as its essential purpose the looking after of the theological education and practical instruction of our future candidates for the holy ministry, as well as directing the studies of young theologians who have come to us from other church groups desiring to investigate the teachings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, we still consider the publication of a substantial documentation, with the view in mind to make known in our country the position of strict, confessional Lutheranism, as one of our more important tasks.

We believe in the future of the Lutheran Church in our French-speaking country. We believe that the lutheran doctrines and thoughts, that are so little known among us, in the same way as the worship, liturgical, and the practical life of our churches, based on the clear teachings of the Gospel, correspond perfectly to the needs of a people that has for the most part turned away

from Christianity for want of having known it in its authentic evangelical form.

Laudable efforts have been made by other lutheran churches in our country in the area of publishing lutheran documents. Thus, we have seen, in the last few years, the appearance of a series of new translations of the historical Confessions of the lutheran church. But much remains to be done in order to make accessible for the french reader the rich literary heritage of our church, beginning with the works of the reformer himself.¹

Moreover, it is necessary for the lutheran church of our day to also take up a clear position in the face of the present tendencies that are found in the christian world. Our monthly bulletin, 'Le Luthérien,' will not be sufficient for this. It is addressed to the average reader and has to be limited to its four pages in order to contain several edifying, instructive, and religiously informative articles. It lacks the space for approaching the larger topics with 'in depth' articles, and probing and complete studies on important problems.

While waiting for the appropriate time in which it will some day be possible to inaugurate the publication of a periodical 'theological review,' we will content ourselves by occasionally publishing, two or three times a year, a supplement to our monthly bulletin, 'Le Luthérien.' This supplement would be in the form of the present fascicle. A review in which we will bring together studies that one would more or less understand to concern themselves with these particular issues.

For the rest, we are persuaded that the reading that will be offered in these fascicles will most often be of interest, not

only to the 'theologians,' but also to the lay readers, and therefore all of the faithful readers of 'Le Lutherien.' In fact, theology as it is most readily understood, is not a complicated sort of science that is capable of being used by only a few specialists, but it contains the salutary truths that God has revealed in His Word, truths that He intended for all mankind. As soon as it no longer directly serves this harmony of eternal truths, then it can no longer be regarded as being true theology. Moreover, the subject matter of this first cahier will show our concern for not launching ourselves into dry studies that would not contain anything of interest for the average Christian. On the contrary, this will serve to inform in a practical way all those who are actually interested in the issue, and what Christian shouldn't be interested in such things? That is, questions concerning religion and the Christian Church in the world today.

We have, in this first cahier, approached one of the most important problems with which present-day theology in our french-speaking country is faced, i.e. the hazard that has been created for the Gospel and the divine Truth by the Roman Catholic Church. No one can deny, that in our country, which still refers to itself today as 'the eldest daughter of the Roman Catholic Church,' has become one of the most unchristian countries in the world-where 80% of the 'Christians' are non-practicing. It is important to understand the reasons for this loss of affection. We believe, and we repeat it, that our Evangelical Lutheran Church has here an immense and important task to accomplish. We know that in the area of mission outreach all of us find ourselves confronted with this Roman Church, therefore it is necessary to

know both its strengths and its weaknesses. We should, when faced with it, take up a precise and clear position, and hold high the flag of the pure Gospel; the flag that the vast majority of our fellow countrymen, as of yet, have not had the privilege of knowing.

In the first study contained in this cahier, our readers will read with interest an evaluation of the Roman Catholic's work by a former member of its clergy, who up until two years ago was still a parish priest. He was the first student at our center for theological studies and today is one of our pastors (at the Evangelical Lutheran congregation at Rouen). In the second study, Prof. G. Wolff, director of our Centre d'Etudes Théologiques at Chatenay, applies himself to demonstrating the anti-evangelical character of Rome's theology. The author of the third article, pastor of the Lutheran Church 'Saint-Sauver' in Paris, studies the Roman Catholic propaganda which supports christian unity in the fashion of Rome, that is to say a one-sided unity, a unity of error, and as a result, sterile.

We have applied ourselves to proclaiming the truth, clearly and without showing favor to any one in particular, which is the true and the best way of proclaiming the truth in true christian charity. To love your fellow man is to hate the error which threatens his soul and hinders his salvation. Love covers a multitude of sins, but it will not be able to cover either the lie or the falsification of the Gospel of Christ, which alone is capable of saving the immortal soul. It is this true love that motivates the present publication.

Paris, March 1956

F.K.

La France 'Catholique' a-t-elle besoin de l'Évangile?
'Catholic' France, does it have need of the Gospel?

Lecture held by Lucien Dhallenne during a Mission Feastival of
the Lutheran Free Church

It is not out of line on our part, in the course of such a day, that we turn our attention toward Roman Catholicism. Does it not pose a grave and pressing problem for the mission work that is being done by our churches?

Indeed, it might appear to us that in this area there is nothing that is radically new or anything particularly urgent that concerns the missionary activity of the Church. And one could again at this point reiterate the objection that is so often heard, that "one should not expect any great results from catholic soil"- -in such an attempt one risques losing a lot of time and energy, and all for nothing. We are told that it suffices to look at the great external manifestations of Catholicism- -the groupings of thousands of believers, activities so divers and so alive that affirmation of an intense religious life based on solid virtues is not lacking. All these things give us ample testimony that in spite of quite a few regrettable errors, the Roman Catholic Church still remains a very substantial christian power, the existence of which we should be pleased with in this unchristian world. Moreover, they tell us that there is still real biblical progress being carried out in the midst of this Church and that the grave abuses that brought about

the Reformation no longer exist. And even if error and superstition still do tarnish Catholicism, it nevertheless still remains true that Christ is proclaimed in her midst, baptism is administered, and her believers still hear enough of the Word of God so that that they can be saved. When faced with the vast pagan areas of the world in over-seas countries, which offer our churches such large perspectives, and when faced with the masses of our nation which Satan still holds captive with the chains of atheistic materialism, a person could ask himself if it is actually the right thing to do, to go and take the Gospel to those people who are already acquainted with it, even though it is admittedly a poor acquaintance, nevertheless it is enough to be saved. A person could ask himself if this question isn't, at least at the present time, a question of only secondary importance for the Church.

These are the thoughts that one hears expressed; they are certainly normal, but it should be mentioned that they are derived from the spirit of two categories of Christians. The first genre of Christian belongs to what one would call the 'vague' Christians, those who express indifference when confronted with the unique truth of the divine Word that we teach. For these people all religions contain something good insofar as they teach something of morality. These people are protestants because their grandparents were protestant; their religious convictions rest more on their feelings as human beings and family members than on the certitude engendered in them by the clear Word of God. Of course, for these people the Roman Church does not pose any problem whatsoever. Such a person, the pastor of a

so-called 'lutheran' church, told me that he was surprised that one would actually leave the Roman Catholic Church, a church, he said, 'so spiritually rich, possessing a type of christianity that is so alive and at the same time so human...' To all those who have left the Word of the Holy Spirit for the 'high places' where one adores such things as culture, science, reason, and for those who are 'lutheran' only insofar as their name is concerned, Catholicism, far from being an target for mission work, has become to them that which was the onions of Egypt for the people that the Lord God Almighty had hauled out of slavery.

But there is also a second category, that which is composed of authentic Christians, those who are, without any doubt, convinced by the divine Word, but who underestimate the roman question for the simple reason that they don't know enough about it. They only know the Roman Church from the exterior, not having anything to go on except certain propagandic literature that they glean from the press, the radio, or from a friendly conversation with a Catholic.

In order to grasp the full urgency, the gravity of the problem, and the job that it imposes on us, two things are necessary: 1) to have the conviction that the Word of God is the only truth, and 2) to have a sufficient knowledge of what the Roman Catholic Church teaches and practices. I am not minded here to make a complete exposé of the doctrine and life of the Roman Church: one book wouldn't be enough! But one should not forget that the roman doctrine is the fruit of an ongoing effort spanning many centuries, with the object in mind to rationalize it and make it agree with the views of the great mysteries of

fleshly wisdom concerning the divine Revelation, i.e. a know-
ledgable adaptation of the Word of God to the religious con-
ceptions of natural and unregenerated man.

In order to verify this fact, it will not be necessary
to follow the masters of catholic thinking in their subtile
doctrinal sinuosities; for us it will suffice to examine, here,
the two silver feet of this golden statue, that is to say, the
two fundamental untruths on which the Church of Rome rests all
of its doctrine and its very life itself.

- 1) The Scriptures are not the sole source and norm
for faith and life; the Scriptures are to be com-
pleted by tradition.
- 2) Man is not justified solely through faith and the
vicarious expiation of our Savior, but he contri-
butes to his own salvation with his own merits, as
well as with the merits of the saints.

With these two points we have the very heart itself of the
whole roman system. The practical consequences of these two
blasphemies make it possible for us to see how unfortunate souls,
even though they are so close to us and in a so-called christ-
ian nation, can find themselves surrounded by the darkness of
a true paganism.

According to the Word of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Scriptures
are the one and perfect source and norm of faith and life.

Here we quote Hebrews 1:1-2: "In the past God spoke to our
forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways,
but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he
appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the uni-
vers." Deut. 4:2: "Do not add to what I command you and do not
subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that

I give you." Ps. 119:105: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." John 5:39: "You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me." John 20:30-31: "Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." I Cor. 14:37: "If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's command." Gal. 1:8-9: "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!" We could continue with these quotations in which it is told us very clearly that the sole source and norm of faith and christian living is the Holy Bible.

Yet, in spite of all these affirmations by the Holy Spirit, the Church of Rome declares that the Bible is a book that is incomplete and insufficient for leading men along the way of salvation. She maintains that the teachings of the Pope and the bishops are necessary for completing and giving added clarity to the divine Revelation. So it is that we read in the Decretals of Innocent III, "that the Pope can make a dispensation contrary to the apostles and contrary to the Old Testament, because he is above the law, he could even dispense with the

Gospel while interpreting it."² And further still: "The roman Pontiff maintains on earth, not the place of a mere man, but that of the true God..."³ The Jesuit, Gregory of Valence, wrote: "The Scriptures are not the judge of every controversy of faith, because they are obscure." "The Scriptures are not a sufficient guide for faith, because they do not refer to all things..." "The Church is a norm that is more ancient, better known, and more widespread than the canonical Scriptures... Being deaf, the Scriptures cannot hear difficulties, being stupid, they cannot examine these difficulties, being mute, they cannot pronounce anything that could properly be called a decision or judgment, and as such, they are completely incapable of making known the judgments of God," declares Senarius.⁴ The cardinal, Bellarmin, wrote: "There are those traditions that are greater than the Scriptures because of the obligations that they impose... The Scriptures without traditions are simply neither necessary, nor sufficient.(De Ver. Dei, L. IV., chap. III.)" Pope Pius IV, in his Bull of March 24, 1564, writes: "The experience has been demonstrated that the reading of the holy books, which is granted to everyone, causes more harm than good because of the temerity of humanity. Henceforth, it will be up to the judgment of the bishops, following the advice of the parish priest or the confessor, to allow the reading of the Bible in the vernacular for the catholic listeners... As for monks and nuns, they should not read more than they are supposed to, nor should they buy the Scriptures without the permission of their superiors." September 8, 1713, Pope Clement XI issued

the Bull Unigenitus. Here are a few of the proposals that it condemned:

"It is useful and necessary, at all times, in all places, and for all people to study the Holy Scriptures, getting to know their spirit, piety, and mysteries. The reading of the Holy Scriptures is for everyone. To remove the New Testament from their hands is for the Christian the same thing as stopping the very mouth of Jesus Christ, or to keep the Gospel a closed secret by removing from them their means of understanding it..." Then comes the condemnation: "We (the Pope) declare with the present Constitution, which is to be in effect for ever, that we condemn and reprove each and every one of the above mentioned proposals as being false...scandalous, pernicious, injurious to the Church and its customs, seditious, impious, blasphemous, smelling of heresy...in short, for being heretical..."

Gregory XVI (in 1844) while addressing himself to the bishops in a Bull directed at the Protestant Biblical Societies, wrote: "After that, esteemed brothers, it will be up to you to remove from the hands of the believers the Bibles translated into the vernacular and published contrary to the above mentioned sanctions of the roman Pontiff."

The Council of Trent (1552-1563) (session 4, decree 1) defines in an official fashion the doctrine of the roman Church concerning traditions: "The oecumenical and general, Holy Council of Trent...considers that the truth and the norm for morals are contained in books, that are written, or in the unwritten traditions, which were received by the apostles from the very mouth

of Jesus Christ Himself, which have been left behind by the same apostles to whom the Holy Spirit had dictated them. These traditions have reached us, having been passed down from hand to hand up to the present time." According to the Bull of Pope Pius IV, all those who are to be promoted to a certain level of dignity should make the profession of faith that the formula calls for: "I firmly admit and embrace all the apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions, and all of the observations and conclusions of the Mother Church; furthermore, I admit to the Holy Scriptures, according to the sense in which they are held to and have been held to by the holy Mother Church, to which has been given the authority to judge matters pertaining to the true sense and the true interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. (Bull. November 13, 1564)"

"The Scriptures do not specifically contain all of the mysteries of religion," says Coster (Enchyridion, ch. 1), "because they were not given for that purpose, neither were they given for the purpose of stipulating an absolute form of faith, rather tradition, in and of itself, contains all truth."

We could go on and on quoting quite a number of similar attestations where it is mentioned that ecclesiastical tradition allows the roman magistrate to surpass, in practice, much of the authority of the Scriptures.⁵

So it is that the Roman Church, when it comes right down to it, rejects the Holy Scriptures as the rule and norm of faith and of the christian life. This norm is to be determined by the Church, and more specifically, since the decree of papal infallibility in 1870, by the Pope himself, to whom the Church

has attributed this role. We often hear, "Rome has spoken, the matter is decided!" It is in this way that the Pope can modify the Sacraments and establish new articles of faith--such as the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the co-redemptrice and mediator of all grace. And this they do without taking into account the Scriptures, since they feel that the Scripture itself has no authority, except for that authority that either the Church of the Pope might wish to give it!

We need not go any further in identifying the thread of ~~per-~~perdition of which Paul speaks of in II Thess. 2:4, "He opposes and exalts himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, and even sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God."

The practical result of such an attitude is easy to imagine. No longer is the whole of their theological training based on the divine Revelation, but rather on the decisions of the Church. For example, the matter of 'Purgatory'--the place of suffering where supposedly the souls of the dead believers finally expiate all of their sins before entering heaven. When the seminary students study this subject, their dogmatic professors should readily admit that they shouldn't search at great lengths for proof passages from the Holy Scriptures, because in them one finds at best a few weak references (for example I Cor. 3:15). For something like this they should search through the traditions and the decisions of the Church, because it is in them that they will find sufficient evidence for obligating their faith to accept this article as a revealed truth of which "the Church has been conscious of throughout the centuries."

It is the same thing when the Church tries to demonstrate that our Savior instituted seven sacraments, or when it comes to the whole matter of Rome's Mariology. It is of little importance if the Scriptures don't say anything at all about the matter. They say, that the Scriptures are only a small portion of the great ecclesiastical tradition. Jesus had said to His apostles, "whoever hears you, hears me." Now, popes and bishops, united with the Papacy are the successors of the apostles, therefore, they claim that everything the Pope decides, is actually as Jesus would decide it. Enough you say! But there is more; they go so far as to suggest that the apostles and the apostolic church was in a state of theological infancy. They imply that it was only through the course of centuries that the Church was able to progress, to develop itself theologically by taking notice of the numerous truths that had been passed over unperceived, and for just cause, at the time of the apostles. So it is, for example, that St. Paul can pass, in the eyes of catholic theology, as a poor theologian next to Pius XII. One day I was arguing with one of my friends, a priest and seminary professor, that the roman doctrine can't stand up for a single minute before a simple chapter of St. Paul. He answered, "The chapters of st. Paul, read outside of the Church and their historical context, have no more value than one of Pliny the Younger's (a pagan, roman author) letters. St. Paul wrote for his contemporaries and the problems that faced them, and not for us. We live in a completely different situation; his writings are letters addressed to a specific time and circumstance.

Without any doubt, every Sunday in the church the priests

read the Gospel for the day, and sacred history is occasionally taught from the Catechism. But all of this is presented in such a way that it is always the Church or the priest who is speaking, and not the Savior. Generally speaking, an ordinary roman Catholic doesn't even know what the Bible is. If asked such a question, he would answer: "It's the book of the protestants! or, 'It's an evil book.' or, he would simply say, "I don't know." For many Catholics, religious education consists of memorizing by heart a few prayes and the catechism, where there is no authority ascribed whatsoever to the Holy Scriptures. The preaching that he later hears in the Church, if he even gets to the Church, is never based on the Scriptures. Last year, in one of the dioceses of the North, the parish priests, under a bishop's initiative, had to preach for one year on the Mass. This year the subject is the family. I myself cannot remember ever having heard a sermon on Christ and Redemption that was truly apostolic and scriptural. However, there were many on the Mass, our devotion to the holy Virgin, our duties in regard to the souls in 'purgatory,' the commandments of the Church, etc. It goes without saying that with these conditions your good average Catholic knows nothing at all of the authentic and salutary christian truth.

The elite, who have passed through the colleges of the Church or who have participated in the Catholic Action movements, those who have received a religious education that was more profound, would certainly have another response for this question. They would say: "The Bible is the Word of God. It is a magnificent book, a treasury for spiritual living. It is

a book that all Christians should nourish themselves with, but watch out!- -don't forget that the Bible is not the complete Revelation. When it comes right down to it, it is not from the Bible that we learn what we must do to be saved, but from the Church which represents Our Savior Jesus Christ on earth. Catholics tell us that when the Bible is read outside of the Church it is a dead letter, and more than that, it is even capable of losing souls. We receive life, not from the Scriptures, but from the Church and the Sacraments," etc...

Today, many priests and believers read the Bible, but when read in such a state of mind what could it possibly contain that would interest them? They do not rediscover the doctrines of their Church on its pages, but more frequently the opposite is actually true! Obligated almost every few lines to run back to obscure and far-fetched commentaries, which make the Word of God say things that it quite simply does not- -no, there is no way that they appreciate this approach to 'reading' the Scriptures. With all the subjective opinions that Rome has impressed upon the Scriptures, she has obscured the very clarity of the Scriptures. In the Scriptures they feel as if they are out of their element, disturbed, shocked by the opinions of their Church. The most educated and the young specialists often base their personal devotions on the Scriptures, but only insofar as they are viewed as an 'inspired fragment of Tradition.' Any way you look at it, for them the Bible is never regarded as a book to be used for prayers and edification, and certainly not the Book in which God has revealed to men His will and His divine truth. They affirm ardently that the Bible is nothing

but a partial and very obscure revelation. That is why the priest, being a theologian, always prefers the theological writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, the decrees of the Councils, and the pontifical encyclics, where he can find everything that the Catechism taught him, while, in the Bible, he will always have the impression of finding the contrary.

I have known several old priests who didn't even have a Bible in their library, and they were proud of the fact. Those who have actually read the whole book are rare. Today in the Seminaries, the Bible is the order of the day. People talk about it quite a bit as a divine book on spirituality, and as a marvelous aid for prayer and encounter with God, but do they read it as the expression of the will of God? If, by the grace of God, it would come to be otherwise, that change would not come without grave repercussions and the result would be new restrictions and skepticism toward the Bible.⁶ Anyone who piously and seriously reads the Scriptures as being the inspired Word of God will sooner or later stand before this dilemma, either renounce the Scriptures and submit oneself to the roman doctrine, or leave Rome in order to obey God. Very often, and alas, especially when it comes to the clergy, the difficulties in leaving Rome are so great, and on the other hand, the truth is so evident, that there remains nothing more for many poor priests than to suffocate their dissatisfaction in a doctrinal, practical liberalism that ultimately promotes the doctrine of works.

The informed and practicing Catholic, if he does not go

beyond the teaching of his Church, toward the only source of truth which alone is capable of converting him, then he remains a pagan, equally far removed from the truth as a Jew or a Moslem. He knows that the holy Virgin appeared at Lourdes and at Fatima, that he has a 'mother in the sky' who intercedes for him and through whom all grace comes to him- -Christ is too inaccessible- -it is Mary who protects him from divine justice. He knows that a good Christian fasts every Friday, goes to Mass on Sunday, and that the Mass is 'the sacrifice of Calvary that is renewed every day at the altar.' He knows that when he commits a great sin, he should confess his sin in order to be pardoned, that reciting three 'Hail Marys' every evening and by wearing the scapular of Mount Carmel, one is assured morally of a good death and that the holy Virgin will come to deliver him very quickly from the flames of purgatory. And with these examples I am sparing you of those practices that have come directly from the ancient paganism and that are knowingly maintained by the clergy. These practices constitute the principal element of the average catholic's religious life. They consist of such things as the pilgrimages made for this or that saint. Recently, at Curgie near Valenciennes, a massive banner at the city's entrance said, "The Novena for St. Rita takes place here." A large crowd gathered for the celebration, there were all kinds of parades. You could have a Mass read for 250 frs., light candles, or buy little viles of oil that had been blessed for the anointing of the sick. On the final day, the clergy from the surrounding area gathered to enhance the ceremony. It goes without saying that the clergy is the first to laugh at such farces, but they wouldn't dare suppress

them for anything in the world.

But this average catholic has never heard that, and does not know that the sinner is totally condemned by the holy justice of God. Neither does he realize that Jesus by His death has accomplished everything for him so that he can be saved; and that by the means of faith he is pardoned, justified, sanctified, and all of this absolutely free of charge. He isn't aware of what Paul says: "There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that came through Jesus Christ...(Rm. 3:22b-24)" "And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.(Rm. 11:6)" "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith- -and this not from yourselves, it is a gift of God- -not by works, so that no one can boast.(Eph. 2:8-9)" Yet even with such clear evidence, the catholic never hears this preached, because it is all contrary to what he has been taught.

Special attention has to be given to the doctrine that Rome expressed in the Council of Trent(Ses. 6, Ca. 9): "If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, and such a faith that requires no cooperation in obtaining the grace of justification, and that it is not necessary for the sinner to prepare himself and get himself ready for it by the impulse of his own will, let him be accursed!" (Can. 12): "If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing other than the confidence and the divine mercy that pardons sins for the sake of Christ, or that it is by this mere confidence that we are justified, let him be

accursed!"

Here, the hoary head of the devil really show its horns, because he is using nothing less than a plain contradiction of the Word of God, the radical suppression of the Gospel in its entirety. So it is not only in the preaching, but also in the catholic's way of life that the work and the person of Jesus Himself have practically been lost in the background. The Roman Church cannot love Jesus. Far from preaching Him as their Savior, she portrays Him as a new lawgiver and judge. Mankind will never be able to feel any love for such a master! Certainly, catholicism teaches quite a bit to the effect that Jesus died for man, but when you get to the bottom of what this means for them it doesn't really mean anything at all. According to Rome mankind shouldn't trust solely in the sacrifice of Jesus. In order to make his conversion, justification, and salvation count, all depends on what he does himself: his devotion to the holy Virgin--the certain indication of his salvation, his good works, and his relation to the Church, which is represented by the priest. If a catholic commits a mortal error, for example, if he would knowingly eat meat on Friday, or if he would voluntarily think a lascivious thought he would loose 'the state of grace.' And at that point he is damned. In order to be saved and to again be able to partake of holy communion, it is necessary to possess not only a sincere regret for his sins and a firm intention not to recommit what he had done, but he is also obligated to confess these sins to the priest. Then and only then is he actually pardoned. Without the priest or without the desire

to confess his sins to a priest, it is not possible for him to be saved..., even though Jesus died for him!

Because of this, catastrophic situations can result, having no other solution than the folly of despair and spiritual torment, or false and proud, pharisaical security. In getting down to the essentials, one finds two easily recognizable groups in the body of those who practice catholicism. In the first category we have to put those who see God as a "good father," one who does not demand too much from us, and who contents Himself mankind's good will. For these, sin is a rare thing, at least the sins that merit eternal punishment. They claim that God is not all that demanding, and for them there is hardly a sin that a person could actually consider as being bad. They come and confess their sins habitually, but it is only for telling the priest: "Father, I have not committed any serious sins. I come to Mass every chance that I get, I am a good father (or mother), I help my neighbors, and I never do anything to harm anyone."- -Very well, Jesus didn't die for these; they are without sin.- -Or seen differently, they are the innumeral, superficial believers who knowingly transgress the clearest commandments of the Decalogue and the regulations of the Church, thinking to themselves: "Well, considering the circumstances and the intention, these were only venial sins." or "They shouldn't be considered as possessing the gravity of a sin." These "believers" go on searching for a "good absolution," something that stills their doubts so that they can be sure of their salvation. It goes without saying that all those who find themselves in this category feel quite at home in catholicism.

But there is also the other group, those with delicate and sincere souls who are convinced of their sin and of their not being able to accomplish the authentic will of God. They promise God, time after time, that they will try to do what the law demands of them. But an hour later, they have to admit that they have lied to God. Continually they are asking themselves if they are sinners or not, if they are in the 'state of grace' or the 'state of sin.' (It shouldn't be overlooked that according to the teaching of the Church of Rome, a person is still in the 'state of grace' if the coveting wasn't 'voluntary'; only 'involuntary' coveting(!) can be pardoned without confessing it specifically to the priest, while all 'voluntary' coveting excludes a person from the 'state of grace' and damns him until the sinner opens up to the confessor and receives the absolution for his sin.) Because of our natural corruption, these poor souls continually interrogate themselves and are never completely sure whether this or that act of coveting came 'voluntarily' or 'involuntarily' from their heart. Was it accepted and conscious on their part or unconscious... How will they ever know for sure?... When such is the case, they feel that they are damned. For them Christ, far from being their Savior, condemns them; are they excluded? They leave to confess their sins, but can't fully enumerate them before the confessor and so they are never really sure of their pardon. And then, no sooner do they leave, than another evil thought enters their head; and they wouldn't dare return and take more of the confessor's time, just because they remembered that they had forgotten this or that sin... Well then, am I in the 'state of

grace,' or am I still damned in spite of all my efforts? And with that thought in mind, what about communion...in order to be communed a person has to be in the 'state of grace,' otherwise the communion is nothing more than a horrid sacrilege! So those who find themselves in this second group are those who find themselves in a continual state of despair. As a soul who looks at himself in the light of the divine law he has to come to the realization that there is nothing in him except sin. Therefore, such a person will continually be worried about his having committed this sacrilege while communing (notice the irony, despairing while receiving the body of the Savior who died for him). Everyday, and sometimes twice a day, these souls come to confess in order to purify themselves. But for nothing! So they mortify the flesh, torment themselves, and deprive the body of what it needs by excessive fasting. Add to this the obligations of absolute chastity and communal living for the clergy and those in the religious orders, and such anguish results that the suffering at times resembles a prelude to hell.⁷

The more these poor souls pray, mortify themselves, and run to devotions, the less they are assured of their salvation! They are convinced that it is up to them to earn, not only their own salvation, but even that of others. They have to cooperate in their redemption, and yet every day they see more clearly that it just can't be done. In fact, the opposite proves itself to be true, they find themselves sinning in spite of themselves. Ultimately they grow weary. God becomes for them an object of hatred, and they throw themselves body and soul into evil, but this time they are free from all thoughts of giving spiritual living another try.

Sometimes these people will join the ranks of the first group that was mentioned, those whose practice is superficial and indifferent, those who are jealous of the peace and tranquility that they do not possess. There are also those who by their ascetic living manage to tame their bodily desires. At this point they imagine that they have finally mastered their sin, and thanks to their prayers and their efforts they have 'achieved their salvation' and now 'they are working to redeem the rest of the world.' This is a sin that is no more terrible and more shocking than all of the others- -spiritual pride, it gets hold of these and irretrievably separates them from the Savior.

That is one of the short cuts that we find in the clergy, in the convents, and also in the parishes; for these poor people, Christ did not die for the remission of their sins, He did not die to save them, they have been told that they have to work toward their own salvation, using everything that is within their means. And even after all of that the result is not guaranteed! When lived in this way, the life of a Christian becomes a torture. That is why the catholics search for help, not from Christ, but from the Saints, and particularly the Virgin Mary. For the catholic, she is the symbol of a human's cooperation in his salvation, she softens the demands placed on them and facilitates the obtaining of their salvation. "One could go so far as to say," says R. P. Nicolas (a dominican) (Revue Thom., March '46), "that without the merits of the Virgin something would be lacking for our redemption..." "Mary protects us, if one would dare say, against her Son! (Sertilange, La Vie Catholique)" "...By this union of suffering and will

between Mary and Christ, she deserves to become the redemptrice of the lost world. (Pius X, Reparatix)" "...It was she, who, free from all error and closely united with her Son, presented Him to His Father at Golgotha, thereby joining in the sacrifice of His debt. (Pius XII, Mystica Corporis, 1943)"

So already at the time of his tenderest infancy, a catholic has learned that he is saved by means of his own works, his salvation depends on his own efforts, and the practices of piety and the worship of Mary are indispensable in this effort (and I won't elaborate on the novenas, the medallions of indulgence, which they boast contain merits and are truly efficacious!)

A single word from the apostle suffices in clarifying that this is purely roman doctrine: "I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing! (Gal. 2:21)" It should also be mentioned that the doctrinal system of roman catholicism is no longer christian, no more so than that of Judaism or Buddhism. In fact it is even worse, because it is a counterfeit of the Gospel by the devil. Impossible to reveal unless one has received the witness of the Holy Spirit in the Word. And this should be enough for us to recognize our duty.

Do you know that the authentic lutheran doctrine, that is to say the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, has never really been preached in France? For the great majority, the works of lutheran theology have remained something completely unknown up until our very day...can't we take that as being a sign?

In our cities and villages the most whimsical of all sects,

such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, find listeners and disciples. And it is not always among the fanatics, but also among those people, who having read the Scriptures, discovered the true face of Rome, and wish to shake themselves free of its yolk. They don't find the evangelical church, they don't even know that it exists. And then, for want of something better, they join these sects and jump out of the frying pan and into the fire. I myself know two farmers, a bus driver, and a policeman in a village not far from mine, all rational men to whom this has happened. Isn't the success of these sects due to the devil who profits from this situation? For even though one finds quite a few enthusiasts in their midst, one also finds quite a few people, who because of what they read in the Scriptures, know that the authority of Rome is not something that was established by Christ, and not knowing where to turn, they turn toward those who happened on the scene one day and tried to reveal the Bible to them. Unfortunately, they have been scooped up by a papacy of another sort. And why? Because the pure preaching of the divine Word is almost nonexistent in France.

Nevertheless, people tell me that there are protestant churches in France! Without a doubt. However, it is necessary to say that these churches never preach the Word of God, but rather the words of man. Moreover, when it comes to dealing with catholicism, they seem to have forgotten their mission. Many pastors go so far as to fraternize with them. Certain of them will even tell you that the situation that necessitated the Reformation has changed and that, since Luther, the Roman Church has regained her self-control. They say this, even though it is the exact opposite of what is actually

happening! At the time of Luther, the Pope had not yet been declared infallible! Salvation by grace alone had not yet been officially declared a heresy! The few shaky bridges that, at the time of Luther, would still have permitted the Church of Rome a salutary retreat back to the Word of God, have been destroyed by the Council of Trent. The Council in which the sin against the Holy Spirit was, without a doubt, committed by this church, which everyday plunged itself deeper and deeper into darkness.

But how will these churches learn to realize this, when they themselves are detached from both the Scriptures and from the free salvation that comes through faith in Christ Jesus? How can these churches, who, in their midsts, support doctors and professors who deny the divine inspiration of the Scriptures and the vicarious satisfaction of Jesus Christ, know how to denounce the Church of the Antichrist, whose sister they have become? How is it possible for a catholic who has been converted by the Word to take these sermons seriously which often reveal nothing more than human philosophy and the morality of the bourgeoisie? And how can they appreciate the services, during the course of which, the Holy Communion is celebrated with fruit juice so that the partakers won't succumb to 'alcoholism'(legalism!)? As long as these things remain true aren't these individuals still well within the Pope's gallery?

A great disillusion lies in wait for the catholic who leaves his church believing to find, within the confines of modern protestantism, the preaching of the authentic Word of God. Under new forms, that are externally completely different, he finds the same rationalistic foundation- -which he takes in at his easy along with the

Word and which clouds over the great truth of the certitude of salvation by grace. I am speaking here from my personal experience: in the midst of what is known as protestantism I have found many small popes; one denies Baptism, another the virgin birth, another salvation by grace, another the real presence of the body and the blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, and still another pastor denies the second coming of the Savior in the scriptural sense of the words. And when I informed them of my surprise, they responded that these differences of opinion, these variances are a good thing and that they don't hinder a certain 'unity in charity,' 'as the oecumenicalism of today is in the process of proving.'

It is not possible to deny the evidence, with such an attitude toward the Word of God and the salvation that it provides us with, these churches have lost the preoccupation of their fathers who preached the Reformation, and in a general fashion, they don't even think of it anymore. During the years, when I was still a member of the catholic clergy, I studied the epistles of Paul, and after that all of the writings of Luther that I was able to get my hands on, as well as those of Calvin and others. When it came to the divine Word and the preaching of the integral truth, only one came to the foreground as a true Reformer- -Luther, the only one who truly let the Word of God speak, and nothing but the Word, without letting his ideas and conceptions come between the Word and men.

I thank God for having led me to the Evangelical Lutheran Church. It is the Church of the Word, because it teaches the true christian doctrine...

It can never be said clearly enough: Catholic France is most assuredly mission country, most of which has of yet not heard this

authentic and true preaching of the Gospel. When faced with this fact we cannot remain indifferent. "The harvest is great, but there are few workers. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send workers out into the harvest."

Our Savior Jesus Christ said in the Sermon on the Mount: "In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.(Matt. 5:16)" We do not have the right to keep this certainty of salvation which is granted to us by the pure preaching of the Gospel only for ourselves! God gave it to us for the benefit of those who live around us. We cannot remain silent when confronted with these errors that are being spread by certain churches-- churches that even claim to be working under the name of Christ. Nor can we tolerate that the Word of God is being falsified and treated lightly. Is it possible to remain indifferent when we see the Church of Rome holding so many thirsty souls in ignorance about the certitude and the consolation of their salvation, while she throws her anathemas precisely at the doctrine of the sinner's free and total justification by grace alone through the means of faith, hence, against the very certainty of our salvation itself? That is why Luther was ^o correct when he said: "Even if in the Church of the Pope everything else were correct, there would remain this monster of uncertainty, more shocking than all the other monstrosities. We too should thank God that we have been delivered from this monster of 'uncertainty'..."

Le caractere anti-evangelique de la theologie romaine
The anti-evangelical character of roman theology

by Guillaume Wolff

WE POSE THE QUESTION:

What is the purpose of the theological teaching that is taught in the Roman Catholic Church? Is this teaching capable of preparing a man for the functions of the pastoral ministry that Christ entrusted to His Church, for "being shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood?(Acts 20:28)"

This teaching, can it enable a man to stir true repentance in his listeners, a preliminary and indispensable condition for faith that saves, faith that leads to the recognition and confession of not only present sins, but also to the total corruption of man's nature, of sinful flesh? Can they say with the apostle: "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.(Rm. 7:18)" and "Because the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.(Rm. 8:7)"?

This teaching, can it enable a man to bring about faith in Jesus Christ in the hearts of repentant sinners, the only faith with which it is possible to obtain salvation for their souls, pardon, and eternal life? The kind of faith that caused the apostle to say: "We know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by

observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified(Gal 2:16)"?

And this teaching, can it enable a man to produce in the hearts of believing and justified, repentant sinners the new life of filial and joyful obedience toward the Savior Jesus Christ? The kind of life that caused the apostle to say: "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me(Gal. 2:20)"?

In order to be able to respond to these questions we will examine that which Roman Catholic theology teaches concerning sin, Justification, and good works. The basic text that we will use is the "Précis de Théologie Dogmatique," edited by monseigneur Bernard Bartmann, papal prelate and professor of theology(edition no. 7, two volumes).

The Roman Catholic Teaching concerning: the idea of sin.

What is the teaching of catholic theology on the subject of sin, in particular on the corruption of the human nature by sin? Catholic theology defends itself energetically against making an open declaration of the total corruption of the human nature by sin, such as was consented to by the Reformers. They consider righteousness and original sanctity as supernatural gifts which were superadded to the human nature at creation and which were not essential parts of man's natural makeup; therefore, even though, through the fall of the first man these supernatural gifts were lost, the human nature is not totally corrupt, but it is merely wounded, corrupted, impaired, etc. "Through original sin man was

diminished in body and soul.(Bartmann, vol. I, p. 333, par. 80)"

The loss of these supernatural gifts of righteousness and sanctity have however, not introduced a total corruption to the nature, but only a diminishment or an impairment, and this impairment consists of the loss of several of the essential parts of the nature, which are: 1) the exemption of concupiscence; 2) the exemption of corporal death; 3) insensibility (not having the capacity for suffering); 4) the gift of wisdom (bart. I, p.317-8).

Bartmann observes concerning the position of the protestants:

"If one would consider the gifts of integrity as being natural (protestants, jansenists), then one could consider original sin as the loss of essential, natural parts. In the place of these excellent gifts, the evil ones have arrived unexpectedly, being equally as essential as the first: the loss of liberty, concupiscence, the inclination to sin and even the necessity of committing it.(Bart. I, p. 328, par. 78)"

Now concupiscence, according to catholic theology, "is not a sin in itself, no more so than mortality.(Bart. I, p. 317)" It only becomes a sin through the free and conscious consent of the human will. "The original protestants saw in original sin, concupiscence, that which was condemned by the Council of Trent..." "The protestant conception has been eliminated since the Council of Trent, the Council which safe/gaurds the essential parts of the human nature, reason and liberty, even after the fall, and declares that the concupiscence of the one being baptised is not guilty in and of itself.(Bart. I, p.327-8)" "When regarding concupiscence one can have differing opinions; but it is acknowledged that it has to be taken in the sense of post-Trent theology. According to this theology, con-

cupiscence was not born with original sin, but it is part of the nature; moreover, it was decreed by a grace of God that existed outside of nature and subjected to reason. Through the fall of Adam, this corporal and psychical integrity was lost; concupiscence became animated and, in general, became an important element of sin, so much so that St. Paul and Augustine saw original sin in it. By unleashing concupiscence, the intelligence and will were also affected. In the meantime, the evil passion and the weakness of the psychical forces should not be considered as a sensual element, as an evil disposition, an evil foundation within man, nor as an actual function; for in this last case, it is a personal sin which should be expiated personally. For it would only be for this that it would be beneficial to insist on the loss of grace and not on concupiscence.(Bart. p.330)"

The Council of Trent decreed in its fifth session that which follows concerning concupiscence: "The Holy Synod admits that concupiscence or the enticement to sin remains in those who have not been baptised; the remaining elements of sin have 'struggle' as their goal, but are incapable of standing in the way of those who do not consent, and who oppose them valiantly with the grace that is ours through Jesus Christ... Even though the apostle on several occasions calls this concupiscence 'sin,' the Holy Synod declares that the Catholic Church has never believed that it could be called sin, insofar as it is truly and properly sin in the person who has been regenerated, but because it is the result of sin and the inclination to sin.(our translation of the Latin)"

So it is that catholic theology safe/guards, in a way that is

entirely antisciptural, the essential integrity of mankind before the fall. Accordingly, that which was lost was never part of the nature itself but of the 'supernature'; and even though with the loss of the supernatural gifts, the nature did not remain completely intact, it has, nevertheless, remained intact in its essence. According to Rome, concupiscence, the evil inclination or disposition was not in itself a sin and therefore did not subject man to eternal condemnation, i.e. the torments of hell. Compare this fact with what Bartmann says (I, p.334): "The negative pain, resulting from the privation of the beatific vision (poena damni), but not the positive pain of chastisement (poena sensus) corresponds to the essence of original sin." Concupiscence only becomes sin if the will consents to it; therefore, the human will is not totally opposed to God, desiring to do only evil, but it can resist this enticement to sin, that which is concupiscence. In order to reinforce this negation of sin in the human nature, they add the assertion of that which, in the eyes of catholic theology, remains good in the human nature; the liberty of the human will, the libre arbitre. The Council of Trent, as one saw above, safeguards these essential aspects of the human nature, reason and liberty, even after the fall. (Bart. I, p. 328)" It decreed (Ses. VI, Can. V): "If anyone asserts that after the sin of Adam, the libre arbitre was totally lost and destroyed, even though it is a presumptuous claim to which no reality corresponds, and even though it is a contrived fiction of Satan, introduced by him into the Church, let him be accursed." Catholicism admits, of course, that the will has been weakened, and that now it is more difficult

for it to choose the good and reject the evil; but it maintains that it is not totally incapable of making this choice.

Catholic theology claims the freedom of the will as the essential foundation for both the idea of sin and for that of merit. Without this freedom, it feels that it would not be able to talk about sin on the part of man. In order for an act to be qualified as sin, implicating the responsibility of man and meriting the punishment of the divine law, it is necessary that it be committed in total freedom, without any kind of exterior coercion or internal necessity; it is necessary that has the possibility of doing otherwise. But Scripture affirms the total inability of natural man to do what is right and it points out his complete servitude to sin and the power of Satan. It takes from him all freedom to decide in favor of what is good. It affirms that he sins, and certainly not because of any external coercion, but because of internal necessity, i.e. because of his total corruption. "As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desired and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.(Eph. 2:1-3)" "I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin.(Rm. 7:14b)" Therefore, according to catholic theology, this natural corruption cannot be qualified as sin, man does not carry any of the responsibility and cannot be subjected to any punishment, since he does not possess

the freedom to do anything other than sin. "Without freedom there is no virtue, no sin, no recompense, no possible punishment.(Bart. II, p. 138)" Thus we see that catholic theology rejects this spiritual truth concerning the total corruption of the human nature and the serf arbitre.

However, on the other hand, catholic theology has need of the libre arbitre for establishing their idea of merit and the cooperation of the human will with grace for the obtaining of salvation. "The freedom should be a complete freedom, exempting the external coercion as well as the internal necessity. This is the obvious postulate for merit.(Bart. II, p. 138)" Obviously, without grace, the human will wouldn't be able to accomplish the necessary works for meriting salvation, for that reason it is necessary to have the help of divine grace. But, "the human will, under the influence of this grace, maintains its complete freedom.(Bart. II, p.79)" "If the nature was entirely evil...then grace wouldn't have anything to attach itself to, it would have to stop before the nature as before an instrument without life, and in such a case there would be no cooperation possible between grace and freedom.(Bart. II, p. 53)" "The question about the cooperation between grace and freedom...does not exist for those who accord to this factor of grace such a preponderance of the human will that it no longer enters into consideration as a free factor. Such is the case with the Reformers- -Luther, Melanchton, and above all Calvin.(Bart. II, p. 79)" According to Luther, man has lost his freedom for doing anything good. Grace alone is active...in the producing of works for salvation and it serves man as an in-

strument without freedom... By a logical consequence they (the Reformers) deny all merit, because salvation comes from God alone. (Bart. II, p. 80)"

In a 'Pasoral Letter from the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church,' the difference between the biblical conception of the human nature and that of the catholic church was set forth very precisely in this way: "The roman conception of man, with its distinction of a superior element, which was to have been lost, and the nature, which although affected, was nevertheless preserved, opposes the most explicit affirmations from Scripture that God has given us. With a vigorous and rugged determination, roman authority constantly rises up against Luther, Calvin, Baius, Jansenius and others, who based on Scripture and also under the influence of Augustine, spoke up against the adoption of similar distinctions. On all sides, people were very aware of the fact that they were digging an abyss. And that was precisely the case. We are not at all suprised that the roman distinction between the nature and the supernature led to a conception of man that is much more liberal and much less radical than that of Scripture. In this conception, the seperation from God is considered as a return to human nature, a loss, a despoiling much more than as a positive corruption... The essential fact of the fall, according to Rome, is not that man lost his humanity, the bad part is that he can never become anything but a man. That which Scripture decrees as being an infringement of the boundry that man will never be able to surmount (Gen. 3:5), is changed to the return to the interior limits of the original 'nature,' a word which the roman

church employs but in a sense that the Bible does not recognize. Therefore, the re^stablishment of man ceases to be conceived of as a conversion, a radical change, a regeneration; one speaks of it as an exaltation, an 'elevation,'-- a term which is very dear to the roman theologians. In this way, all the biblical preac^hing is scrutinized under a genre of lighting that renders the appearance of everything as being much softer than it really is. (Revue Reformee, No. 11/12, 1952, p. 27-28)"

We can go even further and say that this roman concept of the human nature destroys the foundation of the christian religion. It makes repentance and faith in Jesus Christ impossible in the biblical sense. If a man still possesses a free will and is capable of deciding, what is is right, of cooperating with grace, and if concupiscence isn't a sin in itself, one sees no reason for a man to humble himself before God. A person has no reason for recognizing the fact that he does nothing but sin and that he merits divine wrath and eternal condemnation. One does not see the necessity of a Redeemer who shouldered the burden of this punishment and the condemnation that had drawn upon himself. For them the way of salvation does not consist in the accepting, by faith, of the pardon and eternal life merited by Christ. For them it consist of man's elevation to the state of the super-nature, to the state that he has been deprived of as a result of the first man's fall. This elevation is achieved by his free will's cooperating with the aid granted by divine grace.

The Roman Catholic Conception of: salvation

While looking at Rome's concept of man's nature, we also

noticed that roman theology also has a different conception of the work of the redemption that was accomplished by Christ Jesus. The object of this redemption is not the man who is completely sinful, a slave of the devil and written off to eternal damnation, but the man who has only lost his supernature, the result being that his nature has been weakened. Consequently, redemption for them isn't a work in which Christ accomplished for sinful and lost mankind something which he was incapable of doing, and in the process obtaining for him complete and perfect salvation, total pardon, and the inheritance of heaven, gifts that are entirely free and that the sinner receives by faith, without works on his part. For them, redemption, rather than being complete and perfect deliverance, is reduced to a sort of first aid or an initial impetus that God grants to fallen man that he might be able to cooperate with divine grace and recover his lost 'supernature' by overcoming the weaknesses of his nature. This is precisely the role of the work of redemption in the catholic theology. It is not the accomplishment of everything that has to do with our salvation. It is merely the beginning, something which has to be complemented throughout our life by our works and efforts of sanctification, so that ultimately, after our death, we might finally possess the salvation that we will merit.

It is in this way that catholic theology despoils the work of redemption of the essential elements which constitute the completion of salvation accomplished by Christ. These elements do not need to be completed with human works, because this would deny the total inability of man and leave room for human merit. At the same

time that they assert that Christ died for our sins and that He made satisfaction for our sins because of the justice of God, they eliminate the work of Christ: 1) His active obedience, which consists of the accomplishment of the Law in the place of man, and which, according to the Bible, is imputed to sinners as righteousness and serves as the basis of our justification; 2) it denies that redemption is called the 'satispassion,' that is to say, the scriptural fact that Christ suffered, without any doubt and totally all of the punishments that sinners had drawn upon themselves by the stirring up of God's anger; and, 3) the principal effect of the work of redemption: the complete reconciliation on the part of God, involving the fact that God granted pardon for all sins and life eternal, freely, without demanding any work or merit.

When talking about the effect of the death of Christ, the catholic theologian, monseigneur Bartmann, is searching to defend the christian doctrine of satisfaction against the objections of the unbelievers. But in his 'refutation' of these objections, we can't help but seeing what catholic theology itself believes concerning the work of redemption of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as well as that which it thinks concerning the goal and signification of the life, suffering and death of the Savior. The result is most lamentable and antisciptural:

First of all he says that the objections raised against the doctrine of Christ's sanctification "understand the protestant idea of satisfaction, which consists of the mechanical transfer of our punishment unto Christ, a punishment, which according to Calvin, consisted of enduring the very pains of hell. The protest-

ant theory also lends itself to criticism in making the Savior accomplish the divine moral law by His active obedience, in order to buy back and externally attribute to the believers the righteousness that was both fulfilled and proven in this way (justitia imputata). This mechanical conception of the work of salvation was certainly demanded by the whole system of imputation. (Bart. II, p. 437)"

Human reason has always raised objections about the satisfaction by substitution. It cannot justify the transfer of the guilty person's debt unto an innocent person, in turn punishing that innocent person and not the guilty one. Here, catholic theology again betrays its rationalistic character in suppressing the satisfaction of Christ in its doctrine, this element which shocks human reason. In doing this, it is suppressing the very essence itself of the vicarious satisfaction of Christ, depriving souls which are afflicted because of their sins from that which is their sole consolation and the foundation of the hope of their salvation, i.e. knowing that "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us (II Cor. 5:21a)" and "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. (Gal. 3:13a)"

Bartmann continues and concerns himself with this objection raised by the unbelievers: "But isn't it a contradiction to punish the innocent in the place of the guilty? Isn't that, they accuse, like the medieval theory of the 'boy who is chosen to receive the blows?'"

To which he answers: "A person could make this accusation against the protestants' theory of the 'satispassion,' but not against the catholic doctrine of satisfaction. According to the

catholic doctrine, Christ was not punished purely and simply for the guilty, being superficially loaded with the debt of unrighteous sinners' sins, but, being the head of our race, He set out on this path of suffering voluntarily and with as immense love for us became our Mediator, satisfying the demands of divine justice with His supreme love and supreme obedience. With that, He acquired for Himself the highest merit and brought about redemption for His brothers; far from committing an error against the divine moral order, He achieved the most intense and highest realization of it. It is true, by the redemptive act of Christ, we are in principle redeemed. But we are only factually redeemed if we, as members of His mystical body, redeem ourselves, through faith and repentance, in love and obedience to our chief, appropriating for ourselves His sentiments.⁸ It is always necessary, before speaking about the judicial and the penal side of Christ's saving act, to talk about its moral side. It would be an error to picture Christ being burdened passively and in spite of Himself⁹ with the blame and the pain of the sins of humanity, as was the scape goat in the Old Testament¹⁰. It is also exaggerated and contrary to the truth to imagine the soul of the Savior filled with images of terror and anguish for all sinful humans and agitated, in spite of His purity, as if He had to test all feelings of despair and remorse of the greatest criminals. Such a conception leads ultimately to the assertion of Calvin, according to which Christ should have had to experience the spiritual torments of hell."
(But then what is the significance of Ps. 22:2-3, Jn. 12:27, Matt. 27:37, 38, 39, 46?)

Bartmann strives to establish "the precise catholic conception

of the moral character of Christ's obedient death, which is quite different from the unilateral, judicial and penal concept of the protestants," by saying the following about the satisfaction by substitution: "Certainly, this should not be understood as the simple transfer of a debt. In the case of material debts, the purely external mediation of a stranger is possible. But, when one is dealing with an offense, the expiation and satisfaction can only be made on the condition that the offender changes his inner feelings. A stranger isn't able to make up this deficiency. Anyone who wants to know the catholic doctrine on this point has only to read the teachings of the Council of Trent on the necessity of preparing oneself for justification and on the work of personal satisfaction in receiving the sacrament of penitence. In the last passage, it is indicated that this conforms to the divine justice and even the clemency of God, i.e. that the sinner perform works for his own satisfaction for which he receives the personal assurance that he will be spared divine punishment: "to that it adds that by our atoning sufferings for our sins, we become more and more like Christ Jesus who made satisfaction for our sins and from whom proceeds all of this capacity in us. This is our surest indicator that if we suffer with Christ, we will also be glorified with Him. But this satisfaction that we pay for our sins cannot exist without Christ Jesus, because we are not capable of anything in and of ourselves, but by one's cooperation with Him, a cooperation which comforts us, we can do anything." And Bartmann concludes:

One has to understand that according to the doctrine of the

Church and the Scriptures, the satisfaction by substitution is first a personal expiatory act of Christ--the God-man, but then, also and immediately, it is the same act for the whole of humanity and particularly for the believers, who are reunited to their Master and accomplish in Him, each for his own record, the suppression of the disobedience of which the first head of humanity was guilty. In this respect, one will never be able to conceive a way in which this intimate connection with Christ can ever be close enough.

Another of the unbelieving world's objections to the redemption brought about by Christ's satisfaction is this: "The doctrine of satisfaction by substitution contradicts the immutability and the goodness of God."

Monseigneur Bartmann, in trying to 'refute' this objection, is of the opinion that: "This doctrine should be explained in such a way that these two fundamental attributes of God are not affected. It is certain that God is immutable in His feelings as well as in His Being. One cannot acknowledge any speculative explanation of dogma that speaks of a 'change in sentiments' on the part of God and in the favor of man, who He first of all hated and pursued with His wrath. One should, rather, consider the relation that sin produced between God and man as being a hostile relationship(Rm. 5:10). It is impossible for man to obtain his main and final purpose, that of union with God. One can, by reversing the terms, call this state an aversion of God to man, and characterize it in an imagined manner as the 'wrath' of God (Rm. 5:9). By the redemptive act of Christ, this negative relationship was modified by a change in those who were redeemed and

not in God Himself. God is, in His Being as well as in His sentiments, immutably inclined toward well being and holiness, just as He has an aversion for evil and impiety. If a man leaves the sphere of impiety in order to enter that of holiness, the love of God envelops him, just as he was previously enveloped by His vindictive justice. The man changes his position when confronted with God. God always remains the same insofar as He eternally loves the good and hates the evil. (Bart. I, par. 102, p. 438-440)"

Directly opposed to these speculations of catholic theology, Scripture bases the necessity of Christ's work of redemption precisely on man's total inability to the commands of divine justice, accomplish the commandments of the law, obliterate this debt by our sufferings, works of satisfaction and expiation. Natural man is flesh, and as such an enemy of God, incapable of submitting himself to the law of God (Jn. 3:6, Rm. 8:7). He is an infant of wrath (Eph. 2:3) and under the curse (Gal. 3:10,13). "Because by observing the law no one will be justified, (Gal. 3:16)" The work of redemption consists precisely in this that the Son of God has accomplished that which man was not able to accomplish. He was, "born under the law, to redeem those under the law, (Gal. 4:4-5)" His righteousness- -His perfect accomplishment of the law replaced, before God, the righteousness- -the accomplishment of the law which the sinners were lacking and weren't capable of attaining: "Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. (Rm. 10:4)" "Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification

that brings life for all men.(Rm. 5:18)" Christ has shouldered the debt, the punishment, the sinners' curse, and made a complete expiation. "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.(Is. 53:5)" "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. (Gal. 3:13a)" "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us.(II Cor. 5:21)" And the purpose, the effect, the result of this work of redemption isn't, as roman theology holds, that man himself can now do works of satisfaction and expiation, obtaining pardon and eternal life by changing from the impious to the holy. This is exactly contrary to the truth that God has declared Himself satisfied, reconciled, and has granted pardon to the sinner, righteousness and eternal life, freely, without any work on his part, but, because of the redemptive work of Christ and only because of this work. The judgment of condemnation has been replaced by the judgment of absolution, pardon, and justification: "Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.(Rm. 5:18)" "They are justified freely through the redemption that came by Jesus Christ. (Rm. 3:24)"

Scripture goes further yet, it slaps an anathema on all those who want to justify themselves before God and expiate their sins by means of their own works: "All those who rely on observing the law are under a curse.(Gal. 3:10)" "You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.(Gal. 5:4)"

According to catholic theology Christ only began the work of our redemption and it is up to us to continue and ultimately achieve it by means of our own expiatory acts and satisfaction; redemption is, 'in the first place, an expiatory act of Christ'...'but also and immediately then...the same act for the whole of humanity.' By joining together then, two acts that mutually exclude themselves, the expiation of Christ and the expiation of man, the catholic theology has completely destroyed the consolation for the contrite sinner that he should be able to draw from the expiatory act of Christ. An incomplete expiation, one which requires the complement of human works, is of no use to us, since we will always be incapable of coming up with the appropriate complement, which, according to catholicism is necessary in order to obtain salvation. So, by its sophisticated rationalizations, catholic theology has achieved the destruction of the satisfaction by substitution, while still maintaining the external and verbal form. Even the Reformers had to continually stand firm against this sophisticated perversion of redemption, as is proven by this passage from the Apology: "Our adversaries understand that, if Christ is our Redeemer, it is because He has acquired for us the gift of love. And with that in mind, they throw it aside and imagine that, from now on, we have access to the Father by our works, that this gift of love constitutes a merit, and that it is our love which procures our salvation for us. (Apology, Art. II)"

In asserting that the redemption of Christ necessitates the complement of human works, catholic theology has laid the necessary foundation for its doctrine of justification, which is a justification by works: Christ has redeemed us in 'principle' by His act

of redemption, but we are only redeemed in 'reality' by our justification. "The Council of Trent describes justification as the 'passage' of sinful man, from the state of unrighteousness and divine wrath, to the state of grace and divine sonship. (Trid., Ses. 6, Can. 4) (Bartm. II, p. 92)" Let us look at the teaching of catholic theology on the subject of this justification, the passage of sinful man from the state of wrath to the state of grace:

1) First of all, we have to state that there is a complete deformation of the biblical conception in the usage of the terms 'remission of sins' and 'justification.' The remission of sins, according to catholic theology, is not only a declaration by which God announces to the sinner that because of the satisfaction of Christ his sins have been pardoned, a declaration of the non-imputation of sins that the sinner should accept through faith¹¹, but a real and total suppression sin as it affects the inner nature. (Concupiscence, which remains in the nature, is not in itself a sin!) To the same point, according to Rome, justification is not only a declaration on the part of God by which He declares all sinners just by imputing to them the righteousness of Christ and His perfect accomplishment of the Law¹², but justification according to Rome is a real and interior sanctification of the nature, by the infusion of a quality or habitus(capacity) for righteousness. Justification and sanctification are, in catholic theology, one and the same action. And in the same way, remission and justification are two different aspects of one and the same action; remission being the negative side, i.e. the suppression of sin in the nature,

and justification or sanctification, constituting the positive side, i.e. the infusion of righteousness in the nature.

Bartmann's manuel on dogmatics (II, p. 92) under the title: 'Justification as the remission of sins,' presents the following thesis: "In justification the sins are not covered by God, but are really and truly wiped out." So it that we arrive at the following explanation: "The Council of Trent decrees justification as being the passage of sinful man, from the state of unrighteousness and divine wrath, to the state of grace and divine sonship. Therefore, justification contains a double element, a negative element--the remission of sins, and a positive element--sanctification."

"All else," claims Bartmann, "is the idea of justification as the protestants see it, i.e. they see in this idea the essence of their faith. According to them, justification consists solely in the remission of sins; there is no such thing as positive sanctification¹³. But, even with this negative element they still differ with the catholic doctrine, because for them, it is not dealing with the actual suppression of sin, but simply a merciful covering. For them, justification is brought about only by an exterior act and divine verdict(justificatio externa et foransis) or a declaration of impunity. A declaration through which, without any doubt, the exterior relations between sinful man and God are modified, but not his inner state. This idea of justification as well as the way in which it is understood is false, i.e. that man possessed original righteousness and that it was essentially corrupted by original sin."

"The Council of Trent opposes the protestant understanding

with a whole series of declarations, the principal ones are as follows: It teaches that 'justification is not only the remission of sins, but moreover, the sanctification and renewal of the inner man through the voluntary acceptance of grace and its gifts.(Can. 7, Denz. 799)' It explains, concerning the remission of sins: 'Si quis per Jesu Christi Domini nostri gratiam, quae in baptisate confertur, reatum peccati originalis remitti negat, aut etiam asserit, non tolli totum id, quod veram et propriam peccati rationem habet, sed illud tantum radi aut non imputari, anathema sit.'(Ses. 5, Can. 5, Denz. 792)"

It is interesting to observe the kind of scriptural proofs that catholic theology searches out for trying to support this theory of the total and real suppression of the inner human nature by the remission of sins. We also have here a typical example of catholic exegesis, which gives doctrinal errors the semblance of agreeing with the Scriptures, by twisting the sense of the Bible passages and making them say that which they do not, and by silencing those passages which are directly contrary to the assertions made by catholic theology. For example, among the passages given as proof for their theory on the suppression of sin, we read: "That sin is really destroyed and that man is delivered from it, that refers clearly to the sixth chapter of Romans, where the apostle compares baptism, the great sacrament of remission, with the death of Christ and equates baptism with the resurrection: both 'walk in a new life.'(Rm. 6:1-6) (Bart. II, p. 94)" But the deliverance from sin and the new life that it brings nowhere signifies a total suppression of sin. The

justified believer is not delivered from sin in the sense that his inner nature doesn't possess any more sin or that he is completely holy, but in the sense that he is delivered from the domination of the sin which is still in him; and that he has received a new life which struggles against that sin which is still in him, and it struggles victoriously. The seventh chapter, which Bartmann passes over in silence, completes the thought of the sixth. In this seventh chapter, Paul clearly teaches that sinful flesh is still present in the Christian: "it is the sin living in me;" "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is in my sinful nature(vv. 17-18)" and that it fights against the spirit, the new nature of the Christian. And, moreover, Paul says: "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus(Rm. 8:1)," not because of the supposed 'suppression,' but because of the non-imputation of sin.

The following paragraph (par. 126) from the dogmatics manual speaks about the positive element of justification which is the complement of the suppression of sin. It bears the title: 'Justification as sanctification' and expounds the thesis: 'Justification doesn't only consist of the remission of sins, but also in a true inner renewal and sanctification.'

"Explanation: The Council of Trent has to insist on this positive element when encountering the Protestants, who desire to see only the negative element. It declares: 'If anyone asserts that men are justified only by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ or the remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and love that are poured out and inherent in the heart

because of the work of the Holy Spirit, or because the grace by which we are justified is solely the favor of God, let him be accursed!" So it is that the celebrated protestant theory of imputation, according to which Christ is not only the meritorious cause (causa meritoria), but also the formel cause (causa formalis) of our justification, is condemned."

The formel cause indicates what the righteousness, which renders us just before God, actually consists of. Concerning this (causa formalis) the Council of Trent teaches: "The only formel cause (of our justification) is the righteousness of God, not that by which He Himself is righteous, but that by which He renders us just. Therefore, having received this righteousness from Him, we are renewed in our inner spirit. As such we are not only considered righteous, but we are actually called just, having ourselves received the righteousness that every individual receives according to the measure that the Holy Spirit has portioned out for him, that portion being based on a person's disposition and cooperation.(Bart. II, p. 95)"

While reading what catholic theology teaches on justification, a person always has to remember that it is dealing with this 'passage of sinful man, from the state of unrighteousness and divine wrath, to the state of grace and divine sonship.' According to catholic theology this is the result of an inner renewal, the creation of an inner righteousness, and by the complete suppression of sin; therefore, by the works of the law. Certainly, Scripture also teaches an inner justification or sanctification, but it doesn't attribute to it the function of

saving us, i.e. of causing us to pass from the state of wrath to that of grace, making us the children of God and heirs of eternal glory! According to the Scriptures, God accepts the sinner as he is; He announces to him that his sins are pardoned, and that all of the punishment and condemnation has been lifted by the expiatory suffering and death of Christ; and He declares them righteous by imputing to them the perfect righteousness of Christ. It is only by faith in this declaration of God that the sinner enters into the state of grace and divine sonship, receiving eternal life as his inheritance. This is the essence of the sublime miracle of the grace of God and the only consolation for the contrite and repentant sinner. On the other hand, catholic theology deprives the sinner of this consolation and changes the grace of God into a form of assistance that God grants to man in his effort to procure this divine sonship and eternal life by means of his own righteousness and holiness. Here too, we see the rationalistic character of catholic theology. Human reason finds it impossible for God to declare those just who are not just. "The holy God, just and free, cannot declare just the person who is not. (Bart. II, p. 100)" Father Lagrange asserts the same thing in his commentary on Romans (p. 129): "If God declares Himself as Judge, it is absolutely impossible for Him to declare just, someone, who in reality is not."

2) Since, according to catholic theology, there is no complete reconciliation on the part of God before the sinner has changed his unrighteousness into holiness and accomplished works of sanctification; seeing that Christ has not done away with all punishment and has not acquired a perfect righteousness; seeing

that there is no simple remission of sins in the form of a mere declaration of impunity, nor an imputation of the righteousness of Christ; therefore, it logically results that it is not possible to have faith in the biblical sense of the word, as being a confidence in the reconciliation, pardon, and the imputation of righteousness as the only way of salvation. Catholic theology completely suppresses fiducial-justifying faith. For them, faith lacks the confidence in the remission of sins and eternal life, granted freely through the redemption of Christ. It remains nothing more than an adhesion to the truths revealed and taught by the church. It is thought of, not as a means of obtaining salvation, but as a preparatory virtue necessary for the inner infusion of righteousness.

That which catholic theology teaches about faith is found in the chapter of the dogmatics manual that talks about the 'Preparation for justification.(Bart. II, p. 101f.)' Paragraph 127 contains the thesis: "Without any doubt, justification is an act of divine grace, but, for adults, it is conditioned by the moral preparation of the individual." Paragraph 128 asserts: "Faith is the first and principal disposition for justification." And, "For justification fiducial faith is neither required nor sufficient, but theological faith is necessary." Bartmann explains his theory in this way:

"Explanation: In this thesis the difference between the catholics' and the protestants' concepts of justifying faith is explained. The confessions of the two...distinguish themselves in that the catholic doctrine understands this faith as a dogmatic belief (fides theologica), as an adhesion to the revealed truths

of God, while protestants only view it as being a confidence (fiducia) in the grace and mercy manifested in Christ, through which the remission of sins is offered to us (fides feducialis). Another important difference exists in that the catholic doctrine, in addition to faith demands another series of moral acts. On the other hand, the protestants considered faith (trust) as sufficient in itself (fides sola justificat). The Council of Trent rejected the simple feducial faith with the threat of an anathema: "If anyone holds that justifying faith is nothing other than the confidence and the divine grace which remits sins because of Christ, or that it is by this confidence alone that we are justified, let him be accursed!"

Another thesis claims that: "In addition to faith, other acts of virtue are demanded of the adult for justification, faith alone does not justify."

"Explanation: The Council of Trent indicates that faith is, in the first place, the fear of divine justice by which the sinner is beneficially shaken; then, it is seen as the appeal to mercy in hope; and finally, it is the fact that God might be favorable to the sinner because of Christ, so that the initial love of God, insofar as it is the source of all righteousness, as well as the resolution to partake of the sacrament by which the grace of justification is received, is conferred.(Ses. 6, Can. 6, Denz. 797)"

"The catholics violently oppose the Reformers on this point, by faith alone (sola fides); this faith, according to them, is nothing more than the hand of the begger which grabs hold of justification. They say that one should watch out, least he attribute to himself any kind of moral worth, because that would be to wrong

grace. It is on this doctrine of 'by faith alone' that they rest their precious certainty of salvation (certitudo salutis). They reproach the catholic doctrine of the preparation for justification as being 'work righteousness,' 'judaism,' and 'pelagianism.' The Council of Trent declared (Ses. 6, Can. 9, Denz. 819): "If anyone says that the impious person is justified by faith alone, and if he understands that in the sense that nothing else is required for cooperating in obtaining the grace of justification, and that it is in no way necessary that he prepare himself or be inclined by an impulse of his own will, let him be accursed!"

So a man can and should, before his justification, that is to say, before passing from the state of wrath to the state of grace and divine sonship, prepare himself to receive this justification: 1) by adhering to the revealed truths; 2) by the fear of divine justice; 3) by the hope in the mercy of God; 4) by the initial love of God; and, 5) by the resolution to receive the sacrament. Of course, man is supposedly capable of doing all of this before his justification! Yet, even if he believes in the divine truths, fears the wrath of God, hopes in His mercy, already possesses the beginnings of love toward God and desires to be baptized, in spite of all of this, he is still not justified! He still hasn't passed from the state of wrath to the state of grace, he is still in the preparation process! Catholic theology understands very well that this preparation theory is incompatible with the doctrine of the total corruption of the human nature: "According to the Reformers, such a preparation for justification on the part of the sinner would be absolutely impossible. According to their idea of the human nature's complete corruption and the radical

destruction of his moral dispositions as a result of the fall of Adam, the sinner can only behave in a purely passive manner in matters concerning his justification.(Bart. II, p. 102)" But instead of yielding to this truth that is clearly scriptural, Rome persists in its error. The theory of preparation is also a cruel lie of Satan which was contrived for the eternal loss of souls, because it confirms carnal and impenitent man in the good opinion that he has of himself; and in the other extreme, it plunges the afflicted souls into despair, because the sinner who feels oppressed by the anger of God and his sins is incapable of even the least little spark of love toward God and of hope in His mercy.

The following chapter talks about "Justification as a state (Bartmann II, p. 112)": "The essence of the grace of justification, according to the doctrine of the Scriptures and the Fathers, is the grace of justification that consists of a vital internal and supernatural force which the Holy Spirit operates in us through baptism.(Bart. II, p. 112, par. 129)" "The sanctifying grace is a physically permanent quality, inherent in the soul in the form of a habitus.(Bart. II, p. 113)" "Although all of the theologians agree and see in sanctifying grace an internal and infused physical quality which adheres to the soul in the form of a habitus, a certain number deviate from St. Thomas and his School in objectively identifying sanctifying grace and charity.(Bart. II, p. 117)" "It is obvious that we can better understand the essence of theological charity than that of sanctifying grace. This idea of love, that all men understand naturally without any need of explanation, is perfect, therefore, for explaining to people

and to the students in the primary schools, concisely in an intelligible and concrete manner, this reality of which one can never talk about too much. They are mainly pedagogical and practical reasons that necessitate our explaining sanctifying grace by charity to the children and simple people. (Bart. II, p. 117)" "The idea that we dwell on mostly in the essence of justifying grace is that of the participation with the divine nature (consortium divinae naturae). (Bart. II, p. 118)"

In summing things up, catholic theology admits that it doesn't exactly know what this justifying and sanctifying grace really is. This grace which causes us to pass from the state of wrath to the state of grace and divine sonship: "The initial response given to this question on the essence of justifying grace can only be, as is true with all other processes of justification...that it is a mystery... In the meantime, the speculation of faith has tried to illuminate the mystery somewhat. The Scriptures and the doctrine of the Fathers give us a number of guidelines to follow in this. (Bart. II, p. 112)" "One still doesn't find in the Fathers anything on the specific nature of justifying grace. It is only with the Scholastics that a doctrine starts to take shape, but they all explain their views on this subject differently... Concerning this essence of sanctifying grace, there has always been, before the Council of Trent as well as after, difference of opinion between theologians. That is why the Council didn't formally treat the question, because it dealt with a subject that was contested by the different schools. (Bart. II, p. 114)"

The manual explains 'the effects of sanctifying grace (par. 130, p. 120f.)', in the following way: "Among these effects we

note: 1) 'The first immediate effect of sanctifying grace is the actual suppression of sins, and formal sanctification. This was already explained previously while discussing the protestant theory of imputation.(p. 120)' 2) 'The adoptive sonship and the inheritance of heaven': 'The divine adoption...consists in the communication of a new nature, like that of God, adopted by means of a new birth.(p. 121)"

It is, therefore, absolutely clear that according to catholic theology, we receive the adoption of sons and inherit heaven, not by having faith in Jesus Christ, who pardoned our sins and whose righteousness has been imputed to us, but because of our efforts in sanctification, i.e. by the creation in us of love and of a new nature that resembles the divine nature.

The catholic doctrine of justification consists of the idea of merit. In virtue of this justifying and sanctifying grace, the man who is justified and sanctified in this way can and should produce good works which contain the meritory value toward the obtaining of eternal life; they are meritory, not because they have been produced by grace alone, but by the cooperation of man's free will with grace that has been infused into him. "The good works that the one who is justified accomplishes with grace, are meritory before God.(Bart. II, p. 131)" "The just person merits, by his good works, eternal life and glory.(Bart. p. 140, par. 136)" "The protestants," says Bartmann, "use quite a bit of energy in denying the meritory character of good works. It is obvious to see that the Council of Trent condemned the protestants' theory, according to which 'the one who is justified sins when he does something good in order to receive eternal recompense.(Ses.6, Can.

31, Denz. 841)"; then it defines merit(Can. 32, Denz. 841): "If anyone asserts that the good works which justify are the gifts of God, in such a way that they are not at the same time merits of the justified person himself; or that the justified person does not really merit the increase in grace, eternal life, and, foreseen that he remains in the state of grace, the obtaining of eternal life itself and also an increase in glory, because of the good works which he accomplished by virtue of the grace and the merit of Jesus Christ, of whom he is a living member, let him be accursed!"

Conclusion:

And so it is that catholic theology presents us with a complete distortion of the essential truths as they pertain to the sinner's salvation. This is the result of the millennial efforts of scholasticism, which transform the biblical concepts of sin, redemption, grace, faith, justification, etc. and then using these deformed concepts creates a system of doctrine which directs a person to look for his salvation in the cooperation and the merit of man, and not solely by faith in Christ's work of satisfaction and the imputation of His righteousness.

So the total corruption of man's nature is reduced to a mere imperfection which does not remove from man all capacity for preparing himself for and for meriting salvation.

The redemptive work is mutilated and His perfection is denied in order to make possible and necessary the works of salvation and expiation on the part of man. Reconciliation is not a reconciliation

with a sinful world ("That God was reconciling the world unto himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation.(II Cor. 5:19)"), they see it as those who have 'changed their feelings' or as those who have 'left the sphere of impiety in order to enter into that of holiness.'

The passage from the state of wrath to the state of grace and divine sonship, according to Rome, is not based on faith in God, which declares those who are not righteous as being righteous, imputing to them the righteousness of Christ and pardoning their sins. This passage is based on the infusion of righteousness, the renewing of man's nature, the creation of an inner sanctity, and as such it is based on the works of the law, because it is the law which demands inner sanctity. But, according to the Bible, it is first of all necessary that the condemnation which burdens the sinner and which prohibits him from being able to commune with God, be lifted; it is necessary, before God can renew his nature, that man be adopted as a child of God by faith in Christ.

According to the Scriptures, the renewal of the nature and sanctification are the fruit and the consequence of justification through faith(Gal 2:16-20). Therefore, by suppressing justification through faith, catholic theology isn't only suppressing the only and true way of salvation, the only passage from the state of wrath to the state of grace, but also true sanctification. Grace, as seen by Rome, is not at all the favor of God that declares the sinner righteous because of the merits of Christ, but the action of God that infuses in man the necessary righteousness and holiness so that he can collaborate with God in producing

meritortory good works for the procuring of eternal life. In trying to combine grace and works in this way, in order to save the sinner, catholic theology succeeds in destroying the two, the grace as well as the good works. A grace which needs the cooperation of works for obtaining salvation is no longer grace. The grace and the works end up excluding one another in the work of salvation. "And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.(Rm. 11:6)" And on the other hand, the works which have as their goal the cooperation with grace for the obtaining of salvation, are not good works--the fruits of true sanctification, but the fruits of pride, and as such sins which destroy grace. "And if by good works, then it is no longer by grace; if it were, good works would no longer be good works.(Rm. 11:6)" For "All who rely on observing the law are under a curse(Gal. 3:10)" and "we know that a man is not justified by observing the law.(Gal. 2:16)" "You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.(Gal. 5:4)"

In summing things up, catholic theology transforms salvation by grace through faith, which is based on the merit of Christ and not on human works, into a salvation that is brought about by the efforts of man. Anyone who is saturated with this theology is incapable of leading sinners to repentance. He will never be able to convince them of the deep and total corruption of their nature, and as a result, will never be able to lead them to despair in their efforts, and get them to search for their salvation solely in Christ. It attributes to human nature forces that it does not possess and demands from it that which it cannot do, leading some to despair and

others to revel in their carnal pride. Since catholic theology neither recognizes redemption nor true faith, it will never produce true, saving faith, faith in the perfect redemption accomplished by Christ and announced in the gospel of reconciliation. It will never invite the sinner who is terrified because of his sins and the wrath of God to believe that his sins are expiated by the death of Christ, that God has indeed reconciled him and that pardon, the adoption of sons, and the inheritance of eternal life have been granted to him freely through the promises of the Gospel; rather it will lead him to procure for himself, by means of the church's sacraments, this infused grace which is supposed to suppress sin in him and produce holiness and meritory works. It tells him that these works constitute the efficaciousness of the grace in his heart, therefore, he can be certain that the life which they cause him to lead will attain for him eternal life! Thus, the impenitent sinners, who believe that they are sufficiently righteous, will be confirmed in their proud impenitence and the confidence of their own righteousness and merit. Meanwhile, the contrite sinner will never discover, in his heart, the so-called suppression of sin, love, and holiness that roman theology proposes; he will never see anything there except sin and never feel anything but the wrath of God and his hostility toward Him, and so he will inevitably plunge into despair. Finally, it is evident that this theology can never lead to a true sanctification, filial obedience, and joy toward the law of God, which is the exclusive fruit of true faith.

Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for a theologian who is truly christian and biblical, to vigorously attach himself to the Scriptures and not permit the deceptive logic of his human reason to

wander. It is due to rationalistic causes that catholic theology rejects the total corruption of the human nature, the satisfaction of Christ in the biblical sense, and the justification by faith alone. It is strongly rationalistic, and sorry to say, in its rationalism it agrees with the modern liberal theology of the protestants. It is this rationalistic character that explains its power and influence in the world. True biblical doctrine is directly opposed to perverted human reason. It is a folly and scandal to the world, but the power of God to those who are saved (I Cor. 1:18,23,24). With the doctrine of Scripture we will never be able to erect a powerful kingdom like that of the church of Rome, because "men loved darkness instead of light(Jn. 3:19); but there will always be some who will be saved, because the truth of biblical salvation 'by faith alone' is the only way to salvation, a way that is certain and unfailing.

Les Catholiques face à l'Unité
Catholics and Unity

by Frederic Kreiss

I have before me the parish bulletin 'La Voix de nos Clochers (The Voice of our Church Bells)', a bulletin distributed in the Roman Catholic parishes around Paris. This particular number that attracted my attention is that of January 1956, (an edition by the parish of Notre-Dame du Rosaire, Les Lilas(Seine). The edition is consecrated to the 'Week of Prayer for the Unity of the Christian Church.' This week is observed traditionally at the same time every year in the month of January. It is observed not only by the protestant churches who are part of the oecumenical movement, who originally launched the idea, but also by the catholic world.

That which for some time now interested the roman church in this movement, is that it is becoming very evident that modern protestantism is inclined toward a union of christian churches that overlooks the doctrinal and confessional barriers. Certain catholic specialists on this 'reconciliation,' such as R.P. Congar and the Abt Couturier with whom we are familiar even though they are no longer with us today, have followed the evolution of this neoprotestant nostalgia for 'christian unity' with great attention and a passionate interest. They started to notice that this movement was showing some promise. After all, Rome represents the most important numerical force in the christian world, a force

that is better organized and disciplined than any of the protestant denominations. Rome figures if this current enthusiastic protestant oecumenism remains doctrinally indifferent and superficial, it might be possible to skillfully secularize it and change its direction toward the mills of the Roman Catholic Church. In view of the spiritual stagnation which is gradually overcoming the western world; and in view of the threat of materialistic ideologies which are trying to overwhelm the 'christian' world; Rome does not at all despair in seeing the mass of 'schismatic' churches rally themselves for their ultimate reintegration into the cradle of the church guided by the Holy Father and the Vicar of Christ on earth. Because of this hope, certain intellectual roman catholics haven't hesitated in promoting, even in their own churches, the 'Week of Unity' movement. Very often, during this week of prayer for the unity of the churches, they even participate together with the pastors of protestant groups in the oecumenical celebrations.

While reading all of this literature on the prayer week, protestant as well as catholic, one is often touched by the moving tone - and why not believe it? Some of the authors are sincere in their concern and appeal for christian unity, demanding that an end finally be made to the scandal in the eyes of the pagan world, i.e. the division of christianity. All that would be very well and good if one were able to prove that what people actually wanted was the sincere search for the unity in the very TRUTH itself. Truth that is founded in the common obedience to the Word of God as the one and only norm and guide for faith, as well as the life of the church. But, already, we would be searching in vain among

the fans of modern oecumenism for those who envision such a goal; and we would find even fewer yet among the roman catholic promoters of christian unity. For each group, it is not the quest for scriptural truth that counts, but the union in one visible and powerful body.

But there is one major difference, while the protestant adherents of unity desire a powerful church in the midst of which all opinions would be liberally tolerated, Rome sees things differently. She is more logical. She wants one church that is actually united in one common sense of being! Sure, she is in a good position to grant quite a few concessions, and not only in the area of biblical exegesis¹⁵, but also when it comes to RITUALS. From our above-mentioned bulletin, we read several reflexions that are very significant in this matter: "We can all be guilty of sinning by committing nationalism...(we should learn)...to go beyond our particular deeprootedness and not confuse the Church with the church in our village, the respect that we give to one or another of its teachers, this or that particular gesture, a specific language or concept of life, social habits, styles of dress--even if they are religious, etc...in the church, the presence of such rites is significant--be they syro-malabar, moronite, rumainian, greco-melchite, etc.

To be sure, in the area of rites and customs, the Roman Church will be most agreeable in adding different regional or ethnic rites to the number of those that have already been admitted; even if it means adding a 'lutheran' or a 'calvinistic' rite. It will certainly tolerate those additions that would prove helpful in reconstructing a 'christian unity.' Such additions might be the establishment in her midst of a diocese that would be permitted to

have a married clergy or communion in two kinds wherever it might be desired. Who knows what she wouldn't permit to future 'Catholics of the Reformed rite' in order that they could still claim to possess their denuded temples as being their own. They could even keep the bans intact on all of the statues of the Saints and the Virgin, on the condition that neither the Mariology that is practiced by their brothers in the 'latin rite,' nor their prayers addressed to the Saints be condemned.

But, what is most important to realize is that Rome will not change and cannot change without the pain of seeing the essence of its very system self-destruct! That is something that is rigorously admitted to by the whole roman catholic concept of the CHURCH; the recognition that the universal Church, which is the body of Christ, is a VISIBLE entity and organized on the earth under the sovereign and indisputable authority of one man, the VISIBLE HEAD who is the vicar of Christ on earth, and who cannot be anyone except the Pope in Rome. That is the one and the only way that Rome understands the words of Jesus that He spoke in His high priestly prayer: "so that they may be one...(Jn. 17:11)," as well as His promise that "there shall be one flock and one shepherd.(Jn. 10:16)" This lone shepherd is not the Christ in the skies, who is ruling over all true believers wherever they are found in the world, but, he is the 'Christ represented by His vicar on earth--the Pope.' And this single flock of sheep is not the sum and total of all believers, who are known by faith to God alone, but it is the mass of humanity that is united and grouped under the authority of the visible head who sits in the Vatican.

Under the title 'Les Catholiques face à l'Unité -Intrangeance

ou Ouverture(Catholics and Unity- -strict or open),' Pierre Baubin writes, in the bulletin that has already been quoted, these appropriate lines: "The return to unity cannot take place in the form of a compromise in which the Truth is not taken into account..." We were ready to applaud- -but alas, the author wanted to sing another tune! Because in continuing he clarified for us what he understood to be meant by the word 'Truth.' Don't deceive yourselves, he wasn't talking about the truth of the Holy Scriptures! What he was referring to was much less complicated; it has to do with a very precise, a particular 'Truth,' "...a fundamental truth. The Church of Rome is the heir of the apostolic tradition, since the time of St. Peter- -the first Pope. No power in the world can change this fact..." "Hopefully, terms won't cause us to make a mistake here; people talk about the protestant church, the orthodox church, however, there is in reality only one CHURCH, that of Rome." And there you have it! The 'Truth' is very simple. Pierre Baubin continues with: "Having too much ignored (that there exists no church outside of that of Rome) is without a doubt one of the principle causes for the rupture in unity. Luther and Calvin were first of all catholics who had the capacity to speak against the abuses of christianity, but because they were misjudged by the church they lost sight of her meaning... So it is important to understand that the first condition for unity in the christian world, not taking into the prayer that was spoken of elsewhere, is the power and the purity of the catholics' faith in the church of Rome"(note well: "the faith in the church of Rome,"- -here, it is not a question of faith in Jesus Christ and salvation by grace, but of blind and submissive faith in this visible entity, which is the Roman Catholic Church!)

The basic premise which one has to understand as the sine qua non condition of all christian unity is, therefore, the intangible and essential truth that there is no Church possible outside of the Roman Church.

When 'abuses' arise within this church (and notice that no one ever says 'errors'),--and one admits this voluntarily, yet, as does Pierre Baudin, one usually says that these things have to do with the 'abuses of christianity.' (Without naming the church, reread the preceding line.) Of course, one admits that Luther and Calvin were right in fighting these 'abuses.' But, what is intolerable in what they did, is that they elevated themselves against the authority of the visible church of the Pope and his rule, and then they dared to hold the 'Church' responsible for these abuses. Worst of all, they ultimately separated themselves from the 'Church.' In the eyes of Rome, to separate oneself from the Church of Rome, no matter what the reason may be, is to separate oneself from the Church of Christ and the Apostles: "The only hope of being in the true Church is to be linked with the apostles by the continuous line of their successors--the bishops and the popes. That a particular pope has done this or that does not change anything. That Alexander Borgia VI wasn't a model of holiness, or that the tenth century was called the Century of Iron, does not hinder the Church from being the people of God.(Pierre Baubin)" One notices that in all of this never once is there any question of admitting that there was ever or that there still might be up to the present time any doctrinal heresy within the teachings of the Church of Rome. In the bulletin which speaks so amply about these questions, one looks in vain for

the least little indication of an avowel of this sort. At the very most it speaks about the 'abuses of christianity.' In a 'Chronologie de nos Divisions: Chronology of our Divisions,' which is published in the bulletin that we have before us, J. Corne reminds us of what happened in 1517: "When faced with the inactivity of the clergy, Luther allowed himself to go not only to the point of combatting the 'abuses,' but the very Church herself, being persuaded that these were confusing it with the essence of the roman church." Then in the year 1520: "Luther broke with Rome." One forgets however, no stronger yet, one hides from the catholic people that these accusations of the Reformer against the Church of Rome do not simply concern the 'abuses' in church life or practices, but extremely grave doctrinal errors--fundamental heresies. These are matters that disrupt from top to bottom the salutary truth of the entire Gospel, to the point where they render impossible the salvation of the sinner. These are heresies that the roman church hasn't ever wanted to recognize for what they really are, to the point of stubbornly maintaining them until the present day.

One hushes up the fact that Luther's struggle had to do with the very foundation of the christian faith--the justification of a sinner before God. Luther accused the church of Rome of teaching justification by works, the exact opposite of that which the eternal Gospel teaches. Paul declares that those who attach themselves to this disastrous doctrine "have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.(Gal. 5:4)" There you have it, the principle 'abuse' against which the Reformer raised his voice. It is because he protested until the end against this roman heresy

that Luther was excommunicated. But wasn't it Rome who caused the 'break' by condemning with a bloody frenzy the Gospel of salvation by grace alone through faith in Christ Jesus and His merit? Wasn't it she who had made it clear that 'she had confused these 'abuses with the very essence of the Roman Church?' Not to mention all of the other errors and fabrications of roman catholic theology, which all flow from its false concept of salvation by works: the doctrines of the Mass, purgatory, the intercession of the Saints, indulgences, and Rome's Mariolotry, which far from being abandoned, just keeps on developing.

One should not be deceived, when Rome talks about the re-union of the different factions of christianity, it is talking about a movement in only one direction; the return of the non-catholic christians to the Church of Rome. The church which does not change, which cannot change, which is infailible! It will suffice for us to read in our celebrated parish bulletin that is consecrated to the idea of Unity, the 'Petit Lexique à l'usage des Lecteurs: Small readers Lexicon,' which explains to the readers what they should be understanding with certain terms that continually come up in this debate. For example: what is a SCHISM?- "The situation that is created by refusing to recognize the authority of the Pope, and holding the organization of the Church to be separate from that of Rome." What is a HERESY?- "Refusing to accept certain truths that are taught by the Catholic Church."

Such a 'lexicon' greatly simplifies the problem of christian unity. Consequently, the poor schismatic protestants, who suffer at seeing christianity so lamentably divided, should take inventory

of their own doctrines which separate them from Rome and appropriately throw them all overboard; renounce them without further action or examination, and the result will be, only one shepherd and one flock. Because Rome, for her part, has no intention of recognizing herself as being guilty of any heresy. She can't give in; because if she would start with questioning just one little point of her theology, the building that was so laboriously built over the course of centuries of apostasy, would collapse with a single blow. ROMA SEMPER EADEM, ROMA AETERNA- -under the condition that she always remain the same. That is to say that she is a power, both human and visible, built on the myth of her usurped authority, and on the blind and unconditional obedience of her believers in the visible rule of this 'Church.'

That protestants would deplore the violent persecutions that the catholics directed toward them in certain latin american areas¹⁶ up to the present time, and see this as an obstacle to the realization of their dream of oecumenical unity, is entirely natural.

As for ourselves, we are of the opinion that it is not these persecutions in themselves which constitute the most serious barrier that exists between Rome and ourselves- -at least between Rome and this group of Lutherans. That which separates us is the doctrine of salvation; the false roman theology that is the exact opposite of the truth which found in the Scriptures. As long as Rome does not confess that she is guilty of heresy with her anti-christian dogma of salvation by works and by human collaboration, there will never be any hope of catholics and authentic lutherans coming together. Rome can make any other sort of concession, but on this point she cannot give in the least little bit without con-

denning herself; because she is founded 100% upon this anti-christian error.

It is true--and Rome knows it--yet, that does not hinder many of the numerous protestant denominations from being brought together again with the Roman Church. It is no longer a matter of theological preoccupations that separate them, but merely questions on authority, discipline, ecclesiastical organization, and the worship service. The theology of salvation by human works is the natural religion of the human heart. It is very easy for men to come to an agreement with each other in this domain when the Spirit of God no longer breathes on a church and it can no longer say as did the apostle Paul: "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

(II Cor. 10:5)"

It is for the purpose of reminding our readers of these fundamental findings, that we have seen fit, in the preceding studies, to again point out the antisciptural iniquity of the theological system that the Church of Rome obstinately holds on to. It is not only permitted, but necessary to pray for true christian unity, and we should work without ceasing for such a noble task. However, it is necessary that we see clearly the abyss which separates the churches. Jumping into an abyss with closed eyes, while telling yourself that it is only a small ditch, is not an act of charity, but of suicide.

Notes:

1. Up to the present, our own effort in this area includes the publication of several brochures, as well as an explanation of Luther's Small Catechism along with the Augsburg Confession, a profession of faith, a brief summary of the causes and effects of the Lutheran Reformation, etc. Within a short time we expect the completion of a dogmatical work-- 'The Christian Doctrine' by Dr. J. T. Mueller. It is possible to obtain these writings by getting in touch with the printer of this journal.
2. Canon Lector distinct. 34 in glossa. Innocent III, Decr. de Concess. Praehend., Tit. 8, Caput Proposuit.
3. Book I of the Decr. of Gregory IX, Tit. 7, Caput Quanto personam.
4. Senarius, Proleg. VI, Question 2.
5. For the summary of this doctrine see the Synopsis Dogmaticae de Tanqueray, ed. 31, no. 308.
6. It is true, at present, that Rome is no longer afraid of seeing her believers read the Bible, because she stresses the pontifical encouragements of her biblical propaganda. We find the reason for this security in the introductions, notes, and commentaries of these biblical editions, where the Word is suffocated beneath the floral additions. For our own edification, we read what Dom Célestin Charlier wrote in his Introduction to the Bible. After he said that the Scriptures used to be the 'breviary for all christian doctrine' for the Church Fathers, he continues, 'Moreover one should not allow himself to be fooled by the absolute expressions of this exceptional esteem... They never dreamed that one would understand this as a deification of a Book, as it is taken materially. Their confidence in the Bible is identified together with their faith in the Church. They didn't think of the Bible as existing outside of the Church. It would not be possible to render the exact nuance of their thoughts unless one said that they subjected the Bible to the Tradition of the Church; no, the connection between the Bible, tradition, and the Church were much closer for them. The Bible that they exalted above everything as the sole norm of faith and life, is the living Bible, i.e. living through the traditions, living in the Church. Outside of the Spirit, who communicates the Church (sic), the Bible is only a letter that kills. This letter is therefore not a criterion for faith, but rather the Spirit living in the present day consciousness of the Church. (La Lecture Chrétienne de la Bible Maredsous, ed. 4, 1951, p. 25)'

The epistles of Paul can no longer condemn the decisions of the Council of Trent, since, according to R.P. Prat, 'Paul

didn't write as he preached, he didn't write what he preached; his letters are often dominated by controversial necessities, and all controversy perverts the givens, certain traits are exaggerated to the detriment of others. (La Théologie de St. Paul, part I, ed. 4, p. 3)'

So it is that one strangles the Word of God.

7. One could object, saying that this concerns itself with the problems of doubt. But doubt in this case is futile and doesn't concern itself with the whole law. As for the rest, this unhealthy doubt, which has nothing in common with the true concern that should dwell in the heart of every sincere Christian, finds in the set up of morality based catholicism a magnificent soil in which it can develop.
8. We are the ones who put the stress on the word 'feelings' or 'sentiments' here and in the following references. G.W.
9. Have the protestants ever insisted that Christ was charged with the punishment of our sins 'in spite of Himself?' This would render all of His suffering useless and ineffective, ref. Jn. 10:18: "No one takes it(my life) from me, but I lay it down of my own accord."
10. But who is being pictured in the Old Testament by the scape goat, if not Christ? Heb. 9:13,14.
11. "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered, Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him.(Rm. 4:7,8)" "...not counting men's sins against them.(II Cor. 5:19)"
12. "David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works.(Rm. 4:6)"
13. Protestants teach and demand, of themselves also, a positive sanctification, but they make a clear distinction between justification and sanctification, attributing the function of the means of salvation solely to justification and not to sanctification(God imputes righteousness without works, Rm. 4:6; justified by faith without the works of the law, Rm. 3:28); and they consider sanctification not as a means of obtaining salvation but as a fruit and a consequence of salvation that has already been obtained(Created in Christ Jesus to do good works: Eph. 2:10).
14. "If anyone asserts that, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ conferred in baptism, the guilt of original sin is not remitted, or, all that is truly and correctly called sin, is not lifted but only crossed out or not imputed, let him be accursed!"
15. One could certainly, as does Daniel Rops (the great 'defender' of catholicism and bullier of the protestant Reformers in his The Lives of Luther and Calvin) believe that the human race evolved from animals, in spite of the clear account that we have in Genesis concerning the Creation(Paris-Presses-Intransigeant,

15. "Devant un silex taillé" March 8,9, 1956; cf. Le Luthérien, April 1956.)

16. cf. see final note.

17. In an article entitled "Terrorisme Catholique Romain S.O.S.," 'Christianisme au XX^e Siècle' Feb. 16, 1956, retraces the cruel transgressions committed under the auspices of the roman clergy in Columbia in the past few years, burning the protestant churches, destruction by dynamiting, bloody terrorism, etc. Let's quote by pointing to the example of what happened in the area of Palmira, following the preaching of hatred toward the protestants, last Dec, 13, excited catholics put the temple of Agnachica to flame, a building that was built through the piety and the generosity of the believers. It was the 46th sanctuary that was either dynamited or burned since 1948. The priest, Jaramilla, does not hesitate to lead the 'raid' against our coreligionists. In the state of Valle del Cauca, the pastor, Zapata, was summoned to leave the country or face the death penalty. Shortly after his departure, his house was raided and seven protestants were assassinated, and a few days before that a young member of the congregation had his throat cut.

It is like Algeria, where the colonists live in fear; in several regions of Columbia the protestants are frightened into abandoning their possessions and fleeing with their families.

These facts, and still others, were exposed in 'Presbyterian Life' which sums up the situation thus... "According to the news that arrived from only two areas of the vast territory of Columbia, nine persons were recently assassinated, a missionary was seriously wounded, and numerous families left their homes and land because of their faith."

Who raised his voice against these odious persecutions? With the exception of the protestants who are informed by their own unrestrained press, no one else in the world even knows about these cruel transgressions.

And if a voice would be raised, whose would it be, and what authority would it possess?

It is only natural that one turns to the Pope himself, of whom it is said that he is the uncontested chief of the millions of catholics who are subjected to his authority. And he doesn't have a single word to say in order that these priests would cool their zeale to persecute.

No, he doesn't give the word. A person cannot always appeal, as did Mauriac 'L'absence du Père,' or declare as the Action Française, after his condemnation; he was wrong about the Papacy! We know that the Vatican is a source of information that is second to none. The humblest of bishops in the humblest of bishoprics has to periodically report to the Vatical, all facts, happenings, and occurrences in his area. One of the predecessors

of Pius XII, Alexander (VIII we believe) wrote, "One knows very well that the Pope is perfectly well informed of all that happens in state affairs and that it is not possible to hide anything from him."

So, if the Pope keeps his peace, it is because he either approves of the persecutions or he doesn't dare avow them. In the second case, he would be contradicting his predecessors, and in particular the one, who in 1910 prefaced with praise a writing of the Jesuit father, Lépiciier, in which it was said that the putting to death of a heretic was a legitimate cause. (Le Christianisme au XX^e Siecle)"

As for ourselves, we are not at all surprised at the fact that the Pope does nothing at all in publically condemning such excesses, and even less that he doesn't protest against the closing of the Protestant Faculty at the University of Madrid, which took place several weeks ago...during the very week of prayer for christian unity. It is always the same logic when it comes to promoting christian unity for Rome; as far as they are concerned, it would be advantageous to close all the theological faculties that are not roman, and not only those in Spain, but in the whole world. F.K.