



MISSIONARIES OF ST. CHARLES  
**SCALABRINIANS**  
SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO PROVINCE

## Symposium on Spirituality

### *Papers on Scalabrinian Spirituality*

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# Catholics in name and Catholics in fact

*Pastoral letter from Monsignor Bishop of Piacenza (1887)  
(Abstracts)*

## INTRODUCTION

*This pastoral letter is Bishop Scalabrini's response to a national backlash against his letter regarding reconciliation between Italy and the Vatican State. In fact, that open letter to the Italian bishops had been suggested by Leo XIII himself.*

*The holy bishop then goes on to list the fundamental values of those who believe and call themselves de facto Catholics.*

**Beloved sons, it is only in a true Catholic faithful that the two supreme loves of religion and country admirably mingle and harmonize together.** It is not enough to be a Catholic in name only, but one must also be a Catholic in fact (action).

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## PUBLIC WITNESS OF THE FAITH

**Religion is man's first need, so it is also his first duty,** because the first duty of every intelligent and free human being is to strive for his true fulfilment, and because all other duties of man derive from his relationship with God.

**Religion necessarily tends to ennoble, to divinize, in a certain way, all human faculties,** directing them to their ultimate goal. *To the intellect it is infallible light. To the will it is celestial ardor. To conscience it is a sure rule. In feelings it is a very noble passion, spiritualizing his will in all its movements.* It is a salutary brake on external powers. In a word, **it is the order, the harmony, the peace, the perfection of the whole man,** in order to God and in order to his neighbor, in order to himself; **Image of that order, of that harmony, of that peace, of that unparalleled perfection, which is prepared for him in heaven.**

And certain Christians outwardly deem themselves those who are **only in private;** in **public nothing** or almost nothing differs from the unbelievers themselves. In political and civil life, **man can only reflect outside what he is inside;** and when he could do otherwise, he doesn't do it. **This two-faced man,** who believes and doesn't believe, who loves and is indifferent, who wants and doesn't want, **is a hypocrite of the new hypocrisy of our times** but he is always a hypocrite.

Jesus, most beloved, **has not taught two morals; one public and one private,**

one for the family man, the other for the businessman. This may very well be the morality of Machiavelli but not the morality of Jesus Christ.

And this is where those other men enter who, privately and publicly, flatter themselves **that they can combine**, with the profession of sincere children of the Church, **that free thinking and living**, which fatally reigns in our day, completely different from the dictates and regulations of the Church. They would like to accord together the exercise of virtues and the practice of vice, **the love of Christ and the love of the world**, the service of God and the service of the world.

### **CANNOT BE CATHOLIC ONLY IN NAME**

Yes, we must say it without delay, albeit with deep sorrow: Catholic life languishes in many families. They are Christian families, they are Catholic families, **but often purely in name**. They leave books and papers of every worst sort circulating; the most obscene figures are often exhibited; the portraits of the most challenged enemies of Jesus Christ and of his Church were placed in a place of honor; religious duties where they are completely forgotten or kept as a very secondary thing and of appearance.

**Belonging to the Catholic Church for the only baptismal character** and for the assumed name of his children, **would be very little**; since even heretics, St. Augustine would tell us, have the name of Christians in common with us, although they are not precisely related neither by conformity of faith and doctrine, nor by unity of magisterium and regime. In order to be living and current members of the Church, that is, **true Catholics**, in addition to a reverent and invariable belief in the heavenly truths it teaches, **it is necessary that these truths form the rule of our conduct**, and with a sincere spirit of active charity they are translated into practice by each one.

What then can be said of those who, not satisfied with the part of subjects that awaits them in the church of God, **believe they can also have some in governing it?**

On this **insane pretension** they have been building a **new system of liberalism**, all the more dangerous, the more they try to dress it up in beautiful appearances; a **pharisaic system**, which unfortunately manages to seduce many simple souls, and to invade some minds that are also neither perverse, nor ungenerous; **anarchic system**, which ends up splitting our forces and throwing discord between the children of the same father, between members of the same family; **barbaric system** that does not shy away from saddening every little mortal spirits, that every seed of charity kills in the hearts of many, and that many times does not even respect the sanctity of the grave.

But who can calculate the damage that such a system has caused and is causing to the Church? If we were in the midst of an open, ferocious persecution thirsting for our blood, turning our gaze to the Cross to the agonies of Him who said to us: "I leave you but a legacy of suffering, we will feel refreshed in spirit, re-

signed, serene. No, the greatest dangers for the Church are not the violent and barbarous persecutions to which she has been accustomed for centuries, and God's mercy knows how to do it for her; they are not the discussions of enlightened reason of science, because he knows for sure that he will come out victorious. Reason, history, the divine promises are for her, in favor of her.

**Her greatest enemies, more fearsome than her, are the weaknesses of some of her gods, their mad pride, their ambitious aims, their hypocritical arts;** their bearings, their actions are far from conforming to the spirit of true and perfect Catholics, as they boast of being.

## PERSONAL APOLOGY

However, we feel we must once again raise our voice against the new manifestation of the fatal system, and once again remember: to be entirely different from the purely Catholic spirit, that undoing, as they do, **in protests of attachment and devotion Pope, at the same time that they usually fail in the respect due to the bishops united to him**, opposing their regime, with at least indirect ways and **twisting the acts and interpretations** in a sinister sense; that of **identifying themselves, so to speak, with the Holy See**, proclaiming themselves the unique defenders, the only devoted children, the only faithful spokesmen; **to mark people in authority as rebels against the Church**; that claiming the exclusive monopoly of Catholicism, changing a language of infallible teachers, **condemning and anathematizing** in the name of religion and the Pope **those who do not share their opinions**, and more often their exaggerations and extravagances; Not infrequently resorting to **clandestine publications**, to put some people in distrust and in bad sight, to mystify or terrorize others, trying to make a direction different from that of the supreme authority prevail; that collecting the **mud that the incredulous press** with its blames, and more with its praises, spreads every stroke on churchmen, even eminent ones, to throw it in their faces, under the **pretext of defending** their work and honor; likewise that claiming to resolve with more or less spontaneous plebiscites, formed by people without authority and almost always incompetent, the more complex, more arduous and more delicate questions that sometimes arise in the religious or religious scientific field; and that **never seeing anything good**, first of all bad, in what is thought or done by those who are or are supposed to be contrary to their own ideas; that propagating and magnifying evil itself and making noise about it, often causing it even to people who never took part in it.

Yes, all this in open opposition to the spirit by which the sincere Catholic must be animated, and whoever does not understand him, who does not approve him, has lost the sense of Christ.

And have we not also recently seen one of the most learned and virtuous prelates of the Italian episcopate signal the **attacks of certain so-called Catholic pretexts**? With the love of a son and with the reverence of a subject, he (*Scalabrini*) **addressed a letter to the Holy Father inspired by the noblest sentiments of**

**homeland and religious affection.** Is there something more worthy of a shepherd of souls? **The Holy Father himself is pleased to express his sovereign approval of him, praising himself at the same time as an excellent bishop and most devoted to the Apostolic See.** Yet, that wasn't enough to save him from a bad bite!

So, **will it not be more licit for a bishop to speak or write in accordance with his conscience,** the law and, more than the law, the duty dictate to him, without men repeatedly admonished, attempting to impose themselves on them? Will the bishop who is guardian of divine knowledge, as the apostolic constitutions call him, mediator between God and men, **no longer be able to exercise his ministry without fear of seeing his dignity dragged into the mud** by those who continually protest that they respect it? **Can't a bishop openly declare that he loves his homeland, that he desires it great, glorious, happy in reconciliation with the Apostolic See, without being suspected of siding with enemies?** It will not be permitted for a bishop to pray to God that the glory of accomplishing this most arduous and most necessary work of **the pacification of our country would deign to grant it to his Vicar on earth, without others reproaching him for wanting to give advice. to the Universal Master,** and to want to force his hand?

**So, is there such a temerity as to blame acts that the Supreme Pontiff himself declares to have appreciated?** Does it go so far of audacity to blame, albeit covertly, what He asserts fully in accordance with his wishes? Great God, where are we? And where are we going with this system? Woe, we will cry with the Holy Father! Woe to the Church, when the episcopate is forced to be silent.

Well, the "cor unum et anima una", which made our fathers victorious in the faith against the darkness of idolatry and the fury of barbarism, will also today be the effective if not the only means of making the present society turn towards the 'ideal of Christian society, with a supremely master plan, described by Leo XIII in his encyclical memoranda: "Immortale Dei Opus"?

## GUIDELINES FOR A GOOD CATHOLIC

However, it is essential that everyone is well penetrated by **the idea of what the profession of Christian Catholic wants to be,** and never lose sight of the obligations and commitments that this high and glorious profession entails.

And in the end, we want to refer to you here some very precious documents, which the reigning Pontiffs himself left written on the subject with that clarity, precision and majesty of speech which are his own, **even before** he was called by Divine Providence to govern the Universal Church.

You do well to consider them:

1. **A Catholic Christian is one who professes the true faith and law of Christ Jesus.** The only custodian and infallible teacher of this faith and this law is the **Roman Catholic Apostolic Church.**
2. **It is not enough to believe in the secret of the heart the revealed truths of**

**God** just as it is not enough to adhere to the Church with only the inside of the soul; **but it is indispensable that the faith be made clear and operative even outside**, and that the religious profession appear and dominate in all the internal and external acts of the sincere believer.

3. Assured of the **divinity of his faith, the true Catholic believes the truths which it teaches**, although superior to his intelligence; he believes them even when he finds them contradicted by someone who has the name of wise man in the world; he believes them all without excepting any; he believes them more firmly than other things seen with his own eyes, or he has learned by man's authority.
4. **It regards his faith as a celestial gift**, an inextinguishable treasure, which far transcends all earthly good, because it raises man to the knowledge of God, and assures him of his ultimate end.
5. **He abominates and rejects today's formulas of the unbelievers**: that is, that every religion is good for salvation, that hell is a bogeyman, that the heart's faith alone is enough for eternal health, and very many others of a similar fantasies, which they ring in the ear. And he rejects them because he knows one being God one is the truth, and therefore one must be faith, one religion and these cannot be modeled by the talent and opinion of man, but only by the revealed authority of God.
6. Jealous of his own faith, the Catholic is **segregated from the consortium of the proud**, who clearly oppose him; and he also keeps himself vigilant from the wiles of those who sneak up on her.
7. He is **terrified of reading bad books**, deeming **poison** as pernicious to the spirit as to the body.; he shrinks from receiving them, and having possessed them, he promptly repudiates them.
8. He recognizes the **Catholic Church**, which was constituted by Jesus Christ, **as a perfect society with the authority to make laws, and to punish the guilty, and to expel the rebels from its own bosom**: therefore, he professes it in all sweetness and obedience.
9. Knowing that some divine sources of heavenly graces belong to the Catholic Church, which **are the sacraments**, he feels gratitude to God, who in his mercy wanted to institute them, and he tries, with every care, to take advantage of them to his advantage; and he deeply grieves for the blindness of those wretches who spite them or have no value on them.
10. **Individually he holds in value the sacraments of confession and communion**; since in his is found the remedy for one's faults, and the refreshment of one's infirmities; and from this he draws the most efficacious comforts of virtue.
11. The sincere Catholic is also discerned by the **reverent and devout demeanor in the holy temple**.
12. It knows that there exists in the Catholic Church **a priestly order to which Je-**



**Jesus Christ**, the eternal Pontiff, has entrusted and handed down the sublime power of **consecrating** and offering the divine sacrifice, of dispensing his holy sacraments, and of **guarding and preaching** his heavenly doctrine. He therefore regards **priests as ministers and ambassadors of God** themselves,

13. It then recognizes that the priestly order, divinely disposed **in hierarchical degrees**, is responsible for governing and tending the Christian flock **with that authority** which Christ bestowed on Peter and the apostles and passed on to their **legitimate successors**. Above all he demonstrates his vow and **obedience to the vicar of Jesus Christ**, the Roman Pontiff, father of universal majesty
14. **HE also recognizes the infallibility of the magisterium** which, by virtue of the unfailing assistance of the Holy Spirit, the Church exercises in matters of **faith, worship and morals**; therefore, with respect and docility he accepts the decisions of the supreme chair, and conforms to them the dictates and thoughts of her.
15. Mindful that the true Christian must profess not only the faith, but the law of Jesus Christ, **he applies himself with effective study to learning all the duties that bind him to God**, and all the **precepts and documents** that the Redeemer dictated in his holy gospel.
16. Faithful to this law, **he loves creatures, he loves his relatives, he loves his country**, but with **due order and proportion**; loving above all other God who is the first and highest of precepts; and putting His honor and service before everything.
17. **The holy days are for him days of God**. Who expressly reserved them for his honor and made them a solemn command in the old law, and confirmed it in the new; threatening punishments to transgressors, and promising ample providence to those who faithfully observe them.
18. **He respects his parents, superiors and bosses**, because he remembers that he resists God himself, whoever resists authority: he obeys in everything that does not displease God, the Father, supreme and universal Lord of all creatures
19. In the second precept of Christian charity: **you will love your neighbor as yourself**, he will recognize God's command, that one does to others what he would like to be done to himself, and that one regards one's neighbors as so many children of the Heavenly Father himself.
20. There is also the **divine prohibition to do to others what one does not like**; not to offend the neighbor in person, honor, and property. He therefore respects the people and property of others.
21. **He regards one's body as a temple of the Holy Spirit**, because it welcomes a soul regenerated by the grace of God and called to a heavenly inheritance.



22. After the **divine commandments he is solicitous not to fail those of the Church** as well, because he recalls the sentence of the Redeemer: whoever listens to you, listens to Me; whoever despises you, despises Me. Therefore, he never neglects to **listen to Holy Mass on all holidays and listens to it with reverence and devotion**
23. **He makes a worthy concept of Christian piety**, which informs man to lofty senses and prepares him for noble enterprises. He keeps the seeds of devotion received in his early age, from which as the years grow, he draws the fruits of sincere religion and **mature virtue**.
24. **Finally, never forget these three truths**, which must form the guide and protection of the true Christian in every event:
- Sin is the true evil, which must always be feared.
  - God's grace is the true good, which must always be esteemed.
  - The salvation of the soul is the supreme interest to which one must always attend.

God and his Church, the Gospel and his morals, here, here alone is the brake and government of the human passions that upset the world, here only his salvation, his peace.

May this spirit be reawakened and redoubled in all! The **imminent Lent** also gives you the opportunity with his healthy practices. Always, dearly beloved, but especially in this time, you must **make known that you are not Christians and Catholics only in appearance and in name**, but that you are and **want to be so also in mind, heart, and deeds**. Pray dear brothers and children, pray with faith, humility, and perseverance.

Trusting the power of prayer, let us wait for her, like a celestial dew, to descend from above to soften the hardest hearts of her with the mild bath. We pray, we work and we hope.

May the God of mercy deign to grant **peace to the Church**, and in the meantime, through the merits of his Son, long preserve for the good of her and of civil society the glorious Pope Leo XIII, true father of kings, and peoples.

We bless with all the outpouring of the heart in the name of the Father of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

*Piacenza, from our bishop's palace,  
on the day of Saint Ignatius bishop in Antioch  
February 1, 1887*

**John Baptist, bishop**



# The glories of the Pope in the Vatican Council

*Thoughts and reflections on the First Constitution  
about the Church explained the people in the cathedral of Como  
by the priest Joe Battista Scalabrini, parish priest and prior  
of San Bartolomeo, now bishop of Piacenza.  
Fourth edition. Piacenza 1877.*

## Historical background of the Vatican Ecumenical Council

The first chapter deals with the many activities organized by the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IX, in favor of the universal church.

In particular, various encyclicals, allocations, briefs and above all the **centenary of St. Peter** and the election of **St. Joseph as patron saint of the Catholic Church** are to be mentioned, the establishment of new seminaries and the definition of the **dogma of the Immaculate Conception**. The greatest work of the long and extraordinary pontificate of Pius IX, without a doubt, **is the Vatican Ecumenical Council**.

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### HISTORY OF THE COUNCIL

As early as 1864, the Pope began speaking about the Council to some cardinals who resided in Rome, forcing them to study the grandiose design devised and then report what each one believed to be appropriate and necessary for the glory of Jesus Christ

Having received the answers of the princes of the church, he wanted to ask the opinion of other important bishops of the various parts of Europe and the most eminent prefect of Propaganda Fide and other oriental bishops.

In 1867 the Holy Father notified the world of his intentions, manifesting to the bishops, gathered in Rome for the centenary of St. Peter's in the locution of 26 June 1867.

At that time various texts were prepared with various themes, including "The Church, the holy mission entrusted by Christ the Redeemer, its organic form, its qualities, its intangible rights, the primacy and prerogatives of the Roman Pontiff, the reform of the customs of the clergy and people.

Thus, we arrive at **29 June 1868** when the bull appears: "**Aeterni Patris**" which called the council for **8 December 1869**, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. More than 750 pastors came from all over the Catholic world

**The council was suspended on July 18, 1870** after having published two apostolic constitutions: the first: "De Fide Cattolica" in the third session of the council on April 24; and the second: "De Ecclesia Christi" in the fourth session, held on July 18, 1870.

On July 18, 1870, the Vatican ecumenical council was suspended for a great discussion on the **infallibility of the Pope**. The majority of the bishops wanted to introduce this discussion, stopping the regular process of the council.

**Various tendencies were against the promulgation of this dogma of the infallibility of the Supreme Pontiff.** There were many opponents and many bishops also opposed it; in particular also many who adhered to Liberalism, Gallicanism and Atheism, creating a **violent reaction** against the theme that was proposed to the council. **There was talk of a conspiracy** against the dreaded definition of infallibility. After various reactions from France and Germany, the great coup de scene came from Monsignor Dupanloup, bishop of Orleans, with the letter to the clergy of his diocese, in which all the arguments against pontifical infallibility were collected, although the famous monsignor seemed wanting to fight the opportunity of the moment, more than the validity to treat such a point of doctrine. From that moment on the struggle became more fervent and controversies multiplied; the uproar grew louder every day; the perfidious slanders gave rise to deplorable differences, sowed discord among Catholics, disturbed for some time the serenity of good people and some prelates.

It was therefore necessary to bring this state of affairs to an end as soon as possible; therefore 500 fathers begged the Supreme Pontiff to introduce the examination of such a truth at once in the council and before any other. The commission for petitions accepted and approved the proposal and on March 7, sacred to the memory of St. Thomas Aquinas, it was announced to the fathers that, after the publication of the first constitution, the scheme in which the prerogatives of Peter of his successors that were proposed, would be examined.

**The sacrilegious breach of the conciliar secret by one**, already an apostate at heart, revealed to the world what was being done and seemed **to unleash hell**; with unusual anger against the work of the Lord, the Freemasons, the unbelievers, the Protestants, the schismatics and, unfortunately, Catholics (and still not a few) have thrown their stone. The associations have attacked the council, the universities as well in the name of science, the parliament in the name of the nations, the cabinets in the name of the civil powers; heresy and schism in the name of antiquity and symbol; a modern school in the name of prudence; another ancient animated by modern passions, and the daily press continued such a great uproar of rumors.

**But the sacred council** with the calm of one who knows he is fulfilling the duties from Heaven **did not allow himself to be moved**. The discussion proceeded live-

ly. The writing, the tradition of the churches and of the centuries were consulted, examined, clarified perfectly; the objections, the historical facts that cast some shadows fully dissolved and elucidated by 121 speakers

Once the amendments presented in the Congregation of 11<sup>th</sup> of July were voted, and then the entire constitution as a whole in that of the 13<sup>th</sup>, it was established that **the fourth public session would be held on the 18th, to solemnly promulgate the “First Dogmatic Constitution of the Church of Christ”**. There were 535 fathers who attended on July 18<sup>th</sup> and **all responded with approval; only two excepted**.

**The Holy Father then with proper formula, defined and approved with apostolic authority the decrees and canons, as they had been read.** This constitution was opposed by several bishops, who refrained from attending the public session; **but all, however, and may God be praised most, sincerely adhered to it and promulgated the conciliar decrees in their dioceses**, showing once again, that if the pastors may have different views, in the case of things not yet defined, the truth of the Lord, as soon as receives the seal of supreme authority, unites them all in one spirit of whole and perfect submission. The Holy Spirit has spoken through the supreme teaching authority of the Church; whoever does not submit without reservation to the infallible teaching of the church is a heretic.

The church of the living God, column, foundation, and support of the truth is governed and informed by the Holy Spirit, who is its soul and heart, precisely in the same way that the soul supports and informs the body.

Hence it happens that She keeps the sacred deposit of revealed truths whole in its primitive purity, keeps it free from error, propagates it, spreads it to the ends of the earth with divine authority.

The spirit of truth sheds its supreme light upon the teaching Church composed of bishops in communion with their head, the Roman Pontiff.

The teaching Church, therefore, always alive and infallible, is none other than the effect of the perpetual dwelling of Jesus Christ in her; of the supernatural and special assistance of the Holy Spirit, who is the inner teacher, who suggests its truth, who speaks infallibly through fallible men.

**The teaching church therefore is the supreme authority** to which the assistance of the Holy Spirit is promised and granted; **it is the living mouth of Jesus Christ**, who says: “He who hears you hears me; who despises then despises me. And whoever despises me despises him who sent me.”

## **BUT DID THIS INFALLIBLE TEACHING CHURCH FIND ITSELF GATHERED IN THE VATICAN COUNCIL?**

Let us return to contemplate the most solemn and extraordinary event of our century.

Here we see Peter in Pius IX, the doctor of doctors, the judge of judges, the light of lights, the bishop of bishops, the immovable foundation, unshaken stone, the

prince, the column, the support of the Church, the solid and impregnable tower, the port of faith, the teacher, the marvel of the whole universe.

There we find the true Vicar of Christ, Pius IX, the head of the whole Church, the father and doctor of all Christians, to whom in the person of Blessed Peter, our Lord Jesus Christ communicated to him the full power to shepherd, to hold and govern the universal Church.

There we find the successors of the apostles, who bring to the foot of his glorious chair the beliefs of the nations of Europe, the Orient, Asia, the Americas, Africa, the Far North, Canada, Australia, of the islands of the furthest seas; they are the pastors placed by the Holy Spirit to govern the church of God.

All this is a lot, but it is not all. Here above the Pope and the bishops is Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of the living God, the wisdom of the Father, the way, the truth, the life, the source, the root of authority, of infallibility, all spiritual power, who in his vicar, with his vicar, for his vicar convenes presides directs confirmation.

Here is the Holy Spirit, the soul, the light, the life of the Council, who descends from above upon this magisterial body to defend it from errors, to fertilize it, to teach it the truth.

Jesus Christ therefore who directs and governs, the Holy Spirit who invisibly instructs and inspires, Peter who visibly presides and speaks in Pius IX, the apostles who in the bishops sit with him, judge with him; here is the more than human, divine, **celestial spectacle** that is the Vatican Ecumenical Council.

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## UNANIMITY OF THE VOTE

But **was this teaching the church represented in the session of July 18, 1870**, in which the doctrine of papal infallibility was defined and finally proclaimed, since unanimity was not obtained?

In all times I will tell you, with the illustrious Helvetic Episcopate, **nothing was overlooked** within the councils to obtain this unanimity of the fathers, so desirable in the definitions of the dogmas of faith. **But this unanimity has never been considered as an absolute condition, as a rule without exceptions**; otherwise, it would only rarely, if ever, have been possible to arrive at any definitive decision through the councils.

From the first centuries the councils decided questions of faith with moral unanimity when **the majority of the Fathers were headed by the Roman Pontiff**, the successor of St. Peter. It is the supreme teaching authority of the Church, it is the visible body of the Church united to its Head, who himself is the center of the unity of the faith and of the whole body of the Church; it is, in a word, the infallible church of Jesus Christ.

**It is true that 88 bishops** outside the Vatican Council have spoken out against the draft definition; but this dissent, which mainly concerned the **advisability of**

**the solemn definition** and promulgation of this dogma in the current troubled times, cannot alter either the full canonical legitimacy or the ecumenical character of the Vatican Council, **because in the councils only the members present have the right to vote and take part in decisions.** The fathers, therefore, who to the painful surprise of the Catholics absented themselves on the eve of the session of 18<sup>th</sup> of July, **spontaneously renounced the right to vote**, but nevertheless remained united to the faith of the church and all, having made the definition, which they did not want, manifested their full adhesion and their perfect submission to the decree of the teaching, infallible church. And the council is infallible for reasons of its head; **the church is there, where Peter is**, on whom it was founded by Christ. The bishops in the council are true judges, but the Roman Pontiff in pronouncing his sentence **is not obliged to follow and approve their doctrine as much as possible.** The supreme judgment was of Christ entrusted his vicar on earth and he was commissioned to call his faithful back to the true faith.

Example: Eugene the 4<sup>th</sup> of the General Council of Florence used the word "definire" when he wrote: "I Eugene bishop of the Catholic Church thus defined and signed;" instead the other bishops do not use this word.

We read in history that in the First Council of Constantinople, 30 bishops left precisely on the eve of the definition, which it was desired and had been determined to do; that 40 fathers of the Council of Ephesus spitefully abandoned the council hall by denying their suffrage to the vote of the others; yet, the definitions of those Councils, confirmed by the Pope, were **and are revered by the Church like the Holy Gospel.**

**The infallible magisterium of the Roman Pontiff is therefore a truth revealed by God and is part of the Catholic faith** and anyone who does not believe it from the bottom of his heart and does not confess it publicly before men is a heretic and has already been condemned.

And the war against God's church is nearly universal. Prussia, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Russia, Austria, Bavaria, Turkey, and many states of Europe form such a gigantic struggle capable of overcoming the Church if it were not divine. But anyone who thinks that this fire was ignited by the definition of infallibility would be mistaken, **it was only the pretext.** The struggle against Church authority is as old as the Church itself

To create disagreements between the State and the Church, the idea of **infallibility** was distorted, and it was presented to confuse it with **pontifical authority**; but one thing is very different from the other. Here is how the Pontiff himself speaks of it: "*Among other errors, most of all malicious is that which would like to include in infallibility the right to depose sovereigns and free peoples from the obligation of loyalty. This right has sometimes, in supreme circumstances, been exercised by the popes, but it has nothing to do with papal infallibility. Its source was not infallibility, but papal authority. According to public law then in force and with the agreement of the Christian nations, which revered the Pope as the supreme judge of Christianity, this also extended to civil judgment of princes and*



*individual states. At all different from those are the present conditions and only malice can confuse such different things and times, as if the infallible judgment around a principle of revelation has any affinity with a right that the Popes, called by the vote of the peoples, had to exercise when the common good demanded it. the Pope was in those times the natural protector of peoples; public law and all of Christendom applauded that supreme protectorate of the nations, natural scion of the supreme Pastor of the Church, who if in the Middle Ages raised the papacy to the pinnacle of human power and greatness, was nonetheless of immense advantage to Christian society and saving the world from the barbarians and preparing it for the freedom and civilization of the future"*

**The Holy Roman Empire had privileges granted by the benevolence of the Holy See;** the empire perished and with him all its prerogatives became extinct.

It originated at Christmas of the year 800 when Leo III placed the imperial crown on the head of **Charlemagne** and ended with **Francis I**, who left the glorious title of Roman Emperor to assume that of Emperor of Austria.

Leo III intended not only to reward the services of that prince rendered to religion, but also **to create a lasting institution in defense of the Holy See, of the Roman Church, of its possessions and of all catholicity**; an institution of great necessity when the ancient empire was defeated, the great movement of the barbarian invasions put down, **Christian Europe had to recompose itself**, unify itself, as a true civilization, under the guidance of the supreme pastor of the Church. **The Holy Roman Empire had been formed as the defender of the Holy Roman Church.** That empire therefore had great duties and high rights and privileges annexed by the free will of the popes, who had created it; when the worldly spirit invaded Europe and the empire ceased, its prerogatives ceased. God does not want his Holy Church to be defended by those who shamefully chain it.

Socialism, communism no longer yearn for partial triumphs, but to overthrow all the authorities and to erase even their name from the earth.

**The cause of civil society is therefore inseparable from the cause of the church.**

**All authority derives from God, of whom the Church is juridically and historically the guardian and safeguard.** All authority appeared on earth with the creation of the first man, who saw the birth of the family and the state within him, as the **first principle of authority**, which directs paternal authority and political authority and must submit to all the old institutions who have life in supernatural principles. If the political powers are weak and vacillating, it is because they have allowed the authority of the Church to be attacked, trampled on, repeatedly setting a sad example of themselves.

**In vain do secular authorities long for stability if they do not respect and enforce the superior rights of God, of Jesus Christ and of his Church.**



Moreover, a sincere Catholic, when he reflects that the ecumenical council is particularly directed and assisted by the Holy Spirit, who knows better than men, the times, and opportune moments for the promulgation of the truth and the condemnation of errors, **cannot cast doubt on** the usefulness and necessity of the Vatican definitions, without committing a grave fault. The Spirit of God who assists and directs the Church, can only suggest what is useful, opportune, and necessary for it.

*(Saint Scalabrini, after having demonstrated that the Council “: was not the work of a party”, ends this first part by recalling the request of an illustrious Vatican prelate who asked him to reprint this booklet and to procure the maximum diffusion among the people of God. Something that Scalabrini did as soon as he entered his diocese of Piacenza.)*

