

**DEI FILIUS—THE DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION
ON THE CATHOLIC FAITH**

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Sessio III 24 apr. 1870	Session 3 24 April 1870
Constitutio dogmatica de fide catholica	Dogmatic constitution on the catholic faith
Pius episcopus servus servorum Dei, sacro approbante concilio, ad perpetuam rei memoriam.	Pius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the Sacred Council, for an everlasting record.
Dei Filius et generis humani Redemp- tor Dominus Noster Iesus Christus, ad Patrem caelestem rediturus, cum Ecclesia sua in terris militante omnibus	The Son of God, redeemer of the human race, our lord Jesus Christ, promised, when about to return to His heavenly Father, that He would be with this

diebus usque ad consummationem saeculi futurum se esse promisit (cf. Mt XXVIII, 20). Quare dilectae sponsae praesto esse, adsistere docenti, operanti benedicere, periclitanti opem ferre nullo unquam tempore destitit. Haec vero salutaris eius providentia, cum ex aliis beneficiis innumeris continenter apparuit, tum iis manifestissime comperta est fructibus, qui orbi christiano e Conciliis oecumenicis ac nominatim e Tridentino, iniquis licet temporibus celebrato, amplissimi provenerunt. Hinc enim sanctissima religionis dogmata pressius definita uberiusque exposita, errores damnati atque cohibiti; hinc ecclesiastica disciplina restituta firmissime sancita, promotum in Clero scientiae et pietatis studium, parata adolescentibus ad sacram militiam educandis collegia, christiani denique populi mores et accuratiore fidelium eruditione et frequentiore sacramentorum usu instaurati. Hinc praeterea arctior membrorum cum visibili Capite communio, universoque corpori Christi mystico additus vigor; hinc religiosae multiplicatae familiae, aliaeque christianae pietatis instituta; hinc ille etiam assiduus et usque ad sanguinis effusionem constans ardor in Christi regno late per orbem propagando.

Church militant upon earth all days even to the end of the world (cf. Mt 28, 20). Hence never at any time has He ceased to stand by His beloved bride, assisting her when she teaches, blessing her in her labors and bringing her help when she is in danger. Now this redemptive providence appears very clearly in unnumbered benefits, but most especially is it manifested in the advantages which have been secured for the Christian world by ecumenical councils, among which the Council of Trent requires special mention, celebrated though it was in evil days. Thence came a closer definition and more fruitful exposition of the holy dogmas of religion and the condemnation and repression of errors; thence too, the restoration and vigorous strengthening of ecclesiastical discipline, the advancement of the clergy in zeal for learning and piety, the founding of colleges for the training of the young for the service of religion; and finally the renewal of the moral life of the Christian people by a more accurate instruction of the faithful, and a more frequent reception of the sacraments. What is more, thence also came a closer union of the members with the visible head, and an increased vigor in the whole mystical body of Christ. Thence came the multiplication of religious orders and other organizations of Christian piety; thence too that determined and constant ardor for the spreading of Christ's kingdom abroad in the world, even at the cost of shedding one's blood.

Verumtamen haec aliaque insignia emolumenta, quae per ultimam maxime oecumenicam Synodum divina clementia Ecclesiae largita est, dum grato, quo par est, animo recolimus; acerbum compescere haud possumus dolorem ob mala gravissima, inde potissimum orta, quod eiusdem sacrosanctae Synodi apud permultos vel auctoritas contempta, vel sapientissima neglecta fuere Decreta.

Nemo enim ignorat, haereses, quas Tridentini Patres proscripserunt, dum, reiecto divino Ecclesiae magisterio, res ad religionem spectantes privati cuiusvis iudicio permitterentur, in sectas paullatim dissolutas esse multiplices, quibus inter se dissentientibus et concertantibus, omnis tandem in Christum fides apud non paucos labefactata est. Itaque ipsa sacra Biblia, quae antea christianae doctrinae unicus fons et iudex asserebantur, iam non pro divinis haberi, imo mythicis commentis accenseri coeperunt. Tum nata est et late nimis per orbem vagata illa rationalismi seu naturalismi doctrina, quae religioni christianae utpote supernaturali instituto per omnia adversans, summo studio molitur, ut Christo, qui solus Dominus et Salvator noster est, a mentibus humanis, a vita et moribus populorum excluso, merae quod vocant rationis vel naturae regnum stabiliatur. Relicta autem proiectaque christiana religione, negato vero Deo et Christo eius, prolapsa tandem est multorum mens in pantheismi, materialismi, atheismi barathrum, ut iam ipsam rationalem naturam, omnemque

While we recall with grateful hearts, as is only fitting, these and other outstanding gains, which the divine mercy has bestowed on the Church especially by means of the last ecumenical synod, we cannot subdue the bitter grief that we feel at most serious evils, which have largely arisen either because the authority of the sacred synod was held in contempt by all too many, or because its wise decrees were neglected.

Everybody knows that those heresies, condemned by the fathers of Trent, which rejected the divine magisterium of the Church and allowed religious questions to be a matter for the judgment of each individual, have gradually collapsed into a multiplicity of sects, either at variance or in agreement with one another; and by this means a good many people have had all faith in Christ destroyed. Indeed even the Holy Bible itself, which they at one time claimed to be the sole source and judge of the Christian faith, is no longer held to be divine, but they begin to assimilate it to the inventions of myth. Thereupon there came into being and spread far and wide throughout the world that doctrine of rationalism or naturalism—utterly opposed to the Christian religion, since this is of supernatural origin—which spares no effort to bring it about that Christ, who alone is our lord and savior, is shut out from the minds of people and the moral life of nations. Thus they would establish what they call the rule of simple reason or nature. The abandonment and rejection of the Christian

iusti rectique normam negantes, ima humanae societatis fundamenta diruere connitantur. Hac porro impietate circum quaque grassante, infeliciter contigit, ut plures etiam e catholicae Ecclesiae filiis a via verae pietatis aberrarent, in iisque, diminutis paullatim veritatibus, sensus catholicus attenuaretur. Variis enim ac peregrinis doctrinis abducti (cf. Heb XIII, 9), naturam et gratiam, scientiam humanam et fidem divinam perperam commiscentes, genuinum sensum dogmatum, quem tenet ac docet Sancta Mater Ecclesia, depravare, integritatemque et sinceritatem fidei in periculum adducere comperiuntur.

Quibus omnibus perspectis, fieri qui potest, ut non commoveantur intima Ecclesiae viscera? Quemadmodum enim Deus *vult omnes homines salvos fieri, et ad agnitionem veritatis venire* (1 Tm II, 4); quemadmodum Christus *venit, ut saluum faceret, quod perierat* (Lc XIX, 10), et *filios Dei, qui erant dispersi, congregaret in unum* (Io XI, 52): ita Ecclesia, a Deo populorum mater et magistra constituta, omnibus debitorum se novit, ac lapsos erigere, labantes sustinere, revertentes amplecti, confirmare bonos et ad meliora provchere parata semper et intenta est. Quapropter nullo tempore a Dei veritate, quae sanat omnia (cf. Sap XVI, 12), testanda et

religion, and the denial of God and His Christ, has plunged the minds of many into the abyss of pantheism, materialism and atheism, and the consequence is that they strive to destroy rational nature itself, to deny any criterion of what is right and just, and to overthrow the very foundations of human society. With this impiety spreading in every direction, it has come about, alas, that many even among the children of the Catholic Church have strayed from the path of genuine piety, and as the truth was gradually diluted in them, their Catholic sensibility was weakened. Led away by diverse and strange teachings (cf. Heb 13, 9), and confusing nature and grace, human knowledge and divine faith, they are found to distort the genuine sense of the dogmas which Holy mother Church holds and teaches, and to endanger the integrity and genuineness of the faith.

At the sight of all this, how can the inmost being of the Church not suffer anguish? For just as God *wills all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth* (1 Tm 2, 4), just as Christ *came to save what was lost* (Lk 19, 10) and to *gather into one the children of God who were scattered abroad* (Jn 11, 52), so the Church, appointed by God to be mother and mistress of nations, recognizes her obligations to all and is always ready and anxious to raise the fallen, to steady those who stumble, to embrace those who return, and to strengthen the good and urge them on to what is better. Thus she can never cease from witnessing to the truth of God which heals all (cf. Wis

praedicanda quiescere potest, sibi dictum esse non ignorans: *Spiritus meus, qui est in te, et verba mea, quae posui in ore tuo, non recedent de ore tuo amodo et usque in sempiternum (Is. LIX, 21)*. Nos itaque, inherentes Praedecessorum Nostrorum vestigiis, pro supremo Nostro Apostolico munere veritatem catholicam docere ac tueri, perversasque doctrinas reprobare numquam intermisimus. Nunc autem sedentibus Nobiscum et iudicantibus universi orbis Episcopis, in hanc oecumenicam Synodum auctoritate Nostra in Spiritu sancto congregatis, innixi Dei verbo scripto et tradito, prout ab Ecclesia catholica sancte custoditum et genuine expositum accepimus, ex hac Petri Cathedra in conspectu omnium salutarem Christi doctrinam profiteri et declarare constituimus, adversis erroribus potestate nobis a Deo tradita proscriptis atque damnatis.

16, 12) and from declaring it, for she knows that these words were directed to her: *My spirit which is upon you, and my words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth from this time forth and for evermore (Is 59, 21)*. And so we, following in the footsteps of our predecessors, in accordance with our supreme apostolic office, have never left off teaching and defending Catholic truth and condemning erroneous doctrines. But now it is our purpose to profess and declare from this chair of Peter before all eyes the saving teaching of Christ, and, by the power given us by God, to reject and condemn the contrary errors. This we shall do with the bishops of the whole world as our co-assessors and fellow-judges, gathered here as they are in the Holy Spirit by our authority in this ecumenical council, and relying on the word of God in Scripture and tradition as we have received it, religiously preserved and authentically expounded by the Catholic Church.

CAPUT I DE DEO RERUM OMNIUM CREATORE

Sancta Catholica Apostolica Romana Ecclesia credit et confitetur, unum esse Deum verum et vivum, Creatorem ac Dominum caeli et terrae, omnipotentem, aeternum, immensum, in comprehensibilem, intellectu ac voluntate omnique perfectione infinitum: qui cum sit una singularis, simplex omnino et incommutabilis substantia spiritualis, praedicandus

CHAPTER 1 ON GOD THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS

The Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church believes and acknowledges that there is one true and living God, creator and lord of heaven and earth, almighty, eternal, immeasurable, incomprehensible, infinite in will, understanding and every perfection. Since He is one, singular, completely simple and unchangeable spiritual

est re et essentia a mundo distinctus, in se et ex se beatissimus, et super omnia quae praeter ipsum sunt et concipi possunt, ineffabiliter excelsus. Hic solus verus Deus bonitate sua et omnipotenti virtute non ad augendam suam beatitudinem, nec ad acquirendam, sed ad manifestandam perfectionem suam per bona, quae creaturis impertitur, liberimo consilio simul ab initio temporis utramque de nihilo condidit creaturam, spirituales et corporales, angelicas videlicet et mundanas, ac deinde humanam quasi communem ex spiritu et corpore constitutam (**Conc. Later. IV c. 1, *Firmiter***). Universa vero, quae condidit, Deus providentia sua tuetur atque gubernat, *attingens a fine usque ad finem fortiter, et disponens omnia suaviter* (**Sap VIII, 1**). *Omnia enim nuda et aperta sunt oculis eius* (**cf. Heb IV, 13**), ea etiam, quae libera creaturarum actione futura sunt.

CAPUT II DE REVELATIONE

Eadem Sancta Mater Ecclesia tenet et docet, Deum, rerum omnium principium et finem, naturali humanae rationis lumine e rebus creatis certo cognosci posse; *invisibilia enim ipsius, a creatura mundi, per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta, conspiciuntur* (**Rm I, 20**): attamen

substance, He must be declared to be in reality and in essence, distinct from the world, supremely happy in Himself and from Himself, and inexpressibly loftier than anything besides Himself which either exists or can be imagined. This one true God, by His goodness and almighty power, not with the intention of increasing His happiness, nor indeed of obtaining happiness, but in order to manifest His perfection by the good things which He bestows on what He creates, by an absolutely free plan, together from the beginning of time brought into being from nothing the twofold created order, that is the spiritual and the bodily, the angelic and the earthly, and thereafter the human which is, in a way, common to both since it is composed of spirit and body (**Lateran Council IV, constitution 1**). Everything that God has brought into being He protects and governs by His providence, which *reaches from one end of the earth to the other and orders all things well* (**Wis 8, 1**). *All things are open and laid bare to his eyes* (**cf. Heb 4, 13**), even those which will be brought about by the free activity of creatures.

CHAPTER 2 ON REVELATION

The same Holy mother Church holds and teaches that God, the source and end of all things, can be known with certainty from the consideration of created things, by the natural power of human reason: *ever since the creation of the world, his invisible nature has been*

placuisse eius sapientiae et bonitati, alia, eaque supernaturali via se ipsum ac aeterna voluntatis suae decreta humano generi revelare, dicente Apostolo: *Multifariam, multisque modis olim Deus loquens patribus in Prophetis: novissime, diebus istis locutus est nobis in Filio* (**Heb I, 1-2**).

Huic divinae revelationi tribuendum quidem est, ut ea, quae in rebus divinis humanae rationi per se impervia non sunt, in praesenti quoque generis humani conditione ab omnibus expedite, firma certitudine et nullo admixto errore cognosci possint. Non hac tamen de causa revelatio absolute necessaria dicenda est, sed quia Deus ex infinita bonitate sua ordinavit hominem ad finem supernaturalem, ad participanda scilicet bona divina, quae humanae mentis intelligentiam omnino superant; siquidem *oculus non vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quae praeparavit Deus iis, qui diligunt illum* (**1 Cor. II, 9**). Haec porro supernaturalis revelatio, secundum universalis Ecclesiae fidem, a sancta Tridentina Synodo declaratam, continetur in libris scriptis et sine scripto traditionibus, quae ipsius Christi ore ab Apostolis acceptae, aut ab ipsis Apostolis Spiritu sancto dictante quasi per manus traditae, ad nos usque pervenerunt (**Conc. Trid. sess. IV decr. de can. script.**). Qui quidem veteris et novi Testamenti libri integri cum omnibus suis partibus, prout in eiusdem Concilii Decreto recensentur, et in

clearly perceived in the things that have been made (**Rm 1, 20**). It was, however, pleasing to His wisdom and goodness to reveal Himself and the eternal laws of His will to the human race by another, and that a supernatural, way. This is how the Apostle puts it: *In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son* (**Heb 1, 1-2**).

It is indeed thanks to this divine revelation, that those matters concerning God which are not of themselves beyond the scope of human reason, can, even in the present state of the human race, be known by everyone without difficulty, with firm certitude and with no intermingling of error. It is not because of this that one must hold revelation to be absolutely necessary; the reason is that God directed human beings to a supernatural end, that is a sharing in the good things of God that utterly surpasses the understanding of the human mind; indeed *eye has not seen, neither has ear heard, nor has it come into our hearts to conceive what things God has prepared for those who love him* (**1 Cor 2, 9**). Now this supernatural revelation, according to the belief of the universal Church, as declared by the sacred Council of Trent, is contained in written books and unwritten traditions, which were received by the apostles from the lips of Christ Himself, or came to the apostles by the dictation of the Holy Spirit, and were passed on as it were from hand to hand until they reached us (**Council of Trent, session 4, 1st decree**). The

veteri vulgata latina editione habentur, pro sacris et canonicis suscipiendi sunt. Eos vero Ecclesia pro sacris et canonicis habet, non ideo quod sola humana industria concinnati, sua deinde auctoritate sint approbati; nec ideo dumtaxat, quod revelationem sine errore contineant; sed propterea quod Spiritu Sancto inspirante conscripti Deum habent auctorem, atque ut tales ipsi Ecclesiae traditi sunt.

Quoniam vero, quae sancta Tridentina Synodus de interpretatione divinae Scripturae ad coercenda petulantia ingenia salubriter decrevit, a quibusdam hominibus prave exponuntur, Nos, idem Decretum renovantes, hanc illius mentem esse declaramus, ut in rebus fidei et morum, ad aedificationem doctrinae Christianae pertinentium, is pro vero sensu sacrae Scripturae habendus sit, quem tenuit ac tenet Sancta Mater Ecclesia, cuius est iudicare de vero sensu et interpretatione Scripturarum sanctarum; atque ideo nemini licere contra hunc sensum, aut etiam contra unanimem consensum Patrum ipsam Scripturam sacram interpretari.

complete books of the old and the new Testament with all their parts, as they are listed in the decree of the said Council and as they are found in the old Latin Vulgate edition, are to be received as sacred and canonical. These books the Church holds to be sacred and canonical not because she subsequently approved them by her authority after they had been composed by unaided human skill, nor simply because they contain revelation without error, but because, being written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have God as their author, and were as such committed to the Church.

Now since the decree on the interpretation of Holy Scripture, profitably made by the Council of Trent, with the intention of constraining rash speculation, has been wrongly interpreted by some, we renew that decree and declare its meaning to be as follows: that in matters of faith and morals, belonging as they do to the establishing of Christian doctrine, that meaning of Holy Scripture must be held to be the true one, which Holy mother Church held and holds, since it is her right to judge of the true meaning and interpretation of Holy Scripture. In consequence, it is not permissible for anyone to interpret Holy Scripture in a sense contrary to this, or indeed against the unanimous consent of the fathers.

CAPUT III DE FIDE

Quum homo a Deo tamquam Creatore et Domino suo totus dependeat, et ratio creata increatae Veritati penitus subiecta sit, plenum revelanti Deo intellectus et voluntatis obsequium fide praestare tenemur. Hanc vero fidem, quae humanae salutis initium est, Ecclesia catholica profitetur, virtutem esse supernaturalem, qua, Dei aspirante et adiuvante gratia, ab eo revelata vera esse credimus, non propter intrinsicam rerum veritatem naturali rationis lumine perspectam, sed propter auctoritatem ipsius Dei revelantis, qui nec falli nec fallere potest. *Est enim fides, testante Apostolo, sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium* (Heb XI, 1).

Ut nihilominus fidei nostrae obsequium rationi consentaneum esset, voluit Deus cum internis Spiritus Sancti auxiliis externa iungi revelationis suae argumenta, facta scilicet divina, atque imprimis miracula et prophetias, quae cum Dei omnipotentiam et infinitam scientiam luculenter commonstrent, divinae revelationis signa sunt certissima et omnium intelligentiae accommodata. Quare tum Moyses et Prophetiae, tum ipse maxime Christus Dominus multa et manifestissima miracula et prophetias ediderunt; et de Apostolis legimus: *Illi autem profecti praedicaverunt ubique, domino cooperante, et*

CHAPTER 3 ON FAITH

Since human beings are totally dependent on God as their creator and lord, and created reason is completely subject to uncreated truth, we are obliged to yield to God the revealer full submission of intellect and will by faith. This faith, which is the beginning of human salvation, the Catholic Church professes to be a supernatural virtue, by means of which, with the grace of God inspiring and assisting us, we believe to be true what He has revealed, not because we perceive its intrinsic truth by the natural light of reason, but because of the authority of God Himself, who makes the revelation and can neither deceive nor be deceived. *Faith, declares the Apostle, is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen* (Heb 11, 1).

Nevertheless, in order that the submission of our faith should be in accordance with reason, it was God's will that there should be linked to the internal assistance of the Holy Spirit outward indications of His revelation, that is to say divine acts, and first and foremost miracles and prophecies, which clearly demonstrating as they do the omnipotence and infinite knowledge of God, are the most certain signs of revelation and are suited to the understanding of all. Hence Moses and the prophets, and especially Christ our lord Himself, worked many absolutely clear miracles and delivered prophecies; while of the

sermonem confirmante, sequentibus signis (**Marc XVI, 20**). Et rursum scriptum est: *Habemus firmiorem propheticum sermonem, cui bene facitis attendentes quasi lucernae lucenti in caliginoso loco* (**2 Pt. I, 19**). Licet autem fidei assensus nequaquam sit motus animi caecus: nemo tamen evangelicae praedicationi consentire potest, sicut oportet ad salutem consequendam, absque illuminatione et inspiratione Spiritus sancti, qui dat omnibus suavitatem in consentiendo et credendo veritati (**Conc. Araus. II (529), can. 7**). Quare fides ipsa in se, etiamsi per charitatem non operetur, donum Dei est, et actus eius est opus ad salutem pertinens, quo homo liberam praestat ipsi Deo obedientiam, gratiae eius, cui resistere posset, consentiendo et cooperando.

Porro fide divina et catholica ea omnia credenda sunt, quae in verbo Dei scripto vel tradito continentur, et ab Ecclesia sive solemnii iudicio sive ordinario et universali magisterio tamquam divinitus revelata credenda proponuntur. Quoniam vero *sine fide impossibile est placere Deo* (Heb 11, 6), et ad filiorum eius consortium pervenire; ideo nemini umquam sine illa contigit iustificatio, nec ullus, nisi in ea perseveraverit usque in finem, vitam aeternam assequetur. Ut autem officium veram fidem amplectendi, in eaque constanter perseverandi satisfacere possemus, Deus per Filium

apostles we read: *And they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it* (**Mk 16, 20**). Again it is written: *We have the prophetic word made more sure; you will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place* (**2 Pt 1, 19**). Now, although the assent of faith is by no means a blind movement of the mind, yet no one can accept the gospel preaching in the way that is necessary for achieving salvation without the inspiration and illumination of the Holy Spirit, who gives to all facility in accepting and believing the truth (**Council of Orange II [529], canon 7**). And so faith in itself, even though it may not work through charity, is a gift of God, and its operation is a work belonging to the order of salvation, in that a person yields true obedience to God Himself when he accepts and collaborates with His grace which he could have rejected.

Wherefore, by divine and Catholic faith all those things are to be believed which are contained in the word of God as found in Scripture and tradition, and which are proposed by the Church as matters to be believed as divinely revealed, whether by her solemn judgment or in her ordinary and universal magisterium. Since, then, *without faith it is impossible to please God* (Heb 11, 6), and reach the fellowship of His sons and daughters, it follows that no one can ever achieve justification without it, neither can anyone attain eternal life unless he or she perseveres in it to the end.

suum unigenitum Ecclesiam instituit, suaeque institutionis manifestis notis instruxit, ut ea tamquam custos et magistra verbi revelati ab omnibus posset agnosci. Ad solam enim catholicam Ecclesiam ea pertinent omnia, quae ad evidentem fidei christianae credibilitatem tam multa et tam mira divinitus sunt disposita. Quin etiam Ecclesia per se ipsa, ob suam nempe admirabilem propagationem, eximiam sanctitatem et inexhaustam in omnibus bonis fecunditatem, ob catholicam unitatem, invictamque stabilitatem, magnum quoddam et perpetuum est motivum credibilitatis et divinae suae legationis testimonium irrefragabile.

Quo fit, ut ipsa veluti signum levatum in nationes (**Is. XI, 12**), et ad se invitet, qui nondum crediderunt, et filios suos certiores faciat, firmissimo niti fundamento fidem, quam profitentur. Cui quidem testimonio efficax subsidium accedit ex superna virtute. Etenim benignissimus Dominus et errantes gratia sua excitat atque adiuvat, ut ad agnitionem veritatis venire possint (cf. 1 Tm II, 4); et eos, quos de tenebris transtulit in admirabile lumen suum (cf. 1 Pt II, 9; Col I, 13), in hoc eodem lumine ut perseverent, gratia sua confirmat, non deserens, nisi deseratur. Quocirca minime par est conditio eorum, qui per caeleste fidei donum catholicae veritati adhaeserunt, atque eorum, qui ducti

So that we could fulfill our duty of embracing the true faith and of persevering unwaveringly in it, God, through His only begotten Son, founded the Church, and He endowed His institution with clear notes to the end that she might be recognized by all as the guardian and teacher of the revealed word. To the Catholic Church alone belong all those things, so many and so marvelous, which have been divinely ordained to make for the manifest credibility of the Christian faith. What is more, the Church herself by reason of her astonishing propagation, her outstanding holiness and her inexhaustible fertility in every kind of goodness, by her Catholic unity and her unconquerable stability, is a kind of great and perpetual motive of credibility and an incontrovertible evidence of her own divine mission.

So it comes about that, like a standard lifted up for the nations (cf. **Is 11, 12**), she both invites to herself those who have not yet believed, and likewise assures her sons and daughters that the faith they profess rests on the firmest of foundations. To this witness is added the effective help of power from on high. For, the kind Lord stirs up those who go astray and helps them by His grace so that they may come to the knowledge of the truth (cf. 1 Tm 2, 4); and also confirms by His grace those whom He has translated into His admirable light (cf. 1 Pt 2, 9; Col 1, 13), so that they may persevere in this light, not abandoning them unless He is first abandoned. Consequently, the situation of those,

opinionibus humanis, falsam religionem sectantur; illi enim, qui fidem sub Ecclesiae magisterio susceperunt, nullam umquam habere possunt iustam causam mutandi, aut in dubium idem eandem revocandi. Quae cum ita sint, *gratias agentes Deo Patri, qui dignos nos fecit in partem sortis sanctorum in lumine* (Col I, 12), tantam ne negligamus salutem (cf. Heb II, 3), *sed aspicientes in auctorem fidei et consummatorem Iesum* (Heb XII, 2), *teneamus spei nostrae confessionem indeclinabilem* (Heb X, 23).

CAPUT IV DE FIDE ET RATIONE

Hoc quoque perpetuus Ecclesiae catholicae consensus tenuit et tenet, duplicem esse ordinem cognitionis, non solum principio, sed obiecto etiam distinctum: principio quidem, quia in altero naturali ratione, in altero fide divina cognoscimus; obiecto autem, quia praeter ea, ad quae naturalis ratio pertingere potest, credenda nobis proponuntur mysteria in Deo abscondita, quae nisi revelata divinitus, innotescere non possunt. Quocirca Apostolus, qui a gentibus Deum per ea, quae facta sunt, cognitum esse testatur (cf. Rm 1,20), disserens tamen de gratia et veritate, quae per Iesum Christum facta est (Io I, 17), pronuntiat: *Loquimur Dei sapientiam in mysterio, quae abscondita est, quam praedestinavit Deus ante saecula in gloriam nostram, quam meno principum huius saeculi cognovit:*

who by the heavenly gift of faith have embraced the Catholic truth, is by no means the same as that of those who, led by human opinions, follow a false religion; for those who have accepted the faith under the guidance of the Church can never have any just cause for changing this faith or for calling it into question. This being so, *giving thanks to God the Father who has made us worthy to share with the saints in light* (Col 1, 12) let us not neglect so great a salvation (cf. Heb 2, 3), *but looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith* (Heb 12, 2), *let us hold the unshakable confession of our hope* (Heb 10, 23).

CHAPTER 4 ON FAITH AND REASON

The perpetual agreement of the Catholic Church has maintained and maintains this too: that there is a twofold order of knowledge, distinct not only as regards its source, but also as regards its object. With regard to the source, we know at the one level by natural reason, at the other level by divine faith. With regard to the object, besides those things to which natural reason can attain, there are proposed for our belief mysteries hidden in God which, unless they are divinely revealed, are incapable of being known.

Wherefore, when the Apostle, who witnesses that God was known to the gentiles from created things (cf. Rm 1, 20), comes to treat of the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ (Jn 1, 17), he declares: *We impart a*

nobis autem revelavit Deus per Spiritum suum: Spiritus enim omnia scrutatur, etiam profunda Dei (1 Cor II, 7-8, 10).

Et ipse Unigenitus confitetur Patri, quia abscondit haec a sapientibus, et prudentibus, et revelavit ea parvulis (cf. **Mt XI, 25**).

Ac ratio quidem, fide illustrata, cum sedulo, pie et sobrie quaerit, aliquam, Deo dante, mysteriorum intelligentiam eamque fructuosissimam assequitur, tum ex eorum, quae naturaliter cognoscit, analogia, tum e mysteriorum ipsorum nexu inter se et cum fine hominis ultimo, numquam tamen idonea redditur ad ea perspicenda instar veritatum, quae proprium ipsius obiectum constituunt. Divina enim mysteria suapte natura intellectum creatum sic excedunt, ut etiam revelatione tradita et fide suscepta ipsius tamen fidei velamine contexta et quadam quasi caligine obvoluta manean, quamdiu in hac mortali vita peregrinamur a Domino: *per fidem enim ambulamus, et non per speciem (2 Cor V, 6-7)*.

Verum etsi fides sit supra rationem, nulla tamen umquam inter fidem et rationem vera dissensio esse potest: cum idem Deus, qui mysteria revelat et

secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glorification. None of the rulers of this age understood this. God has revealed it to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God (1 Cor 2, 7-8, 10). And the Only-begotten Himself, in His confession to the Father, acknowledges that the Father has hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to the little ones (cf. **Mt 11, 25**).

Now reason, if it is enlightened by faith, does indeed when it seeks persistently, piously and soberly, achieve by God's gift some understanding, and that most profitable, of the mysteries, whether by analogy from what it knows naturally, or from the connection of these mysteries with one another and with the final end of humanity; but reason is never rendered capable of penetrating these mysteries in the way in which it penetrates those truths which form its proper object. For the divine mysteries, by their very nature, so far surpass the created understanding that, even when a revelation has been given and accepted by faith, they remain covered by the veil of that same faith and wrapped, as it were, in a certain obscurity, as long as in this mortal life *we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, and not by sight (2 Cor 5, 6-7)*.

Even though faith is above reason, there can never be any real disagreement between faith and reason, since it is the same God who reveals the

fidem infundit, animo humano rationis lumen indiderit; Deus autem negare seipsum non possit, nec verum vero umquam contradicere. Inanis autem huius contradictionis species inde potissimum oritur, quod vel fidei dogmata ad mentem Ecclesiae intellecta et exposita non fuerint, vel opinionum commenta pro rationis effatis habeantur. Omnem igitur assertionem veritati illuminatae fidei contrariam omnino falsam esse definimus (**Conc. Lat. V sess. VIII, bulla Apostolici regimis**). Porro Ecclesia, quae una cum apostolico munere docendi, mandatum accepit, fidei depositum custodiendi, ius etiam et officium divinitus habet falsi nominis scientiam proscribendi, ne quis decipiatur per philosophiam, et inanem fallaciam (**Col II, 8**). Quapropter omnes christiani fideles huiusmodi opiniones, quae fidei doctrinae contrariae esse cognoscuntur, maxime si ab Ecclesia reprobatae fuerint, non solum prohibentur tamquam legitimas scientiae conclusiones defendere, sed pro erroribus potius, qui fallacem veritatis speciem prae se ferant, habere tenentur omnino.

Neque solum fides et ratio inter se dissidere nunquam possunt, sed opem quoque sibi mutuam ferunt, cum recta ratio fidei fundamenta demonstret, eiusque lumine illustrata rerum divinarum scientiam excolat; fides vero rationem ab erroribus liberet ac tueatur, eamque multiplici cognitione instruat. Quapropter tantum

mysteries and infuses faith, and who has endowed the human mind with the light of reason. God cannot deny Himself, nor can truth ever be in opposition to truth. The appearance of this kind of specious contradiction is chiefly due to the fact that either the dogmas of faith are not understood and explained in accordance with the mind of the Church, or unsound views are mistaken for the conclusions of reason. Therefore we define that every assertion contrary to the truth of enlightened faith is totally false (**Lateran Council V, session 8**). Furthermore the Church which, together with its apostolic office of teaching, has received the charge of preserving the deposit of faith, has by divine appointment the right and duty of condemning what wrongly passes for knowledge, lest anyone be led astray by philosophy and empty deceit (**Col 2, 8**). Hence all faithful Christians are forbidden to defend as the legitimate conclusions of science those opinions which are known to be contrary to the doctrine of faith, particularly if they have been condemned by the Church; and furthermore they are absolutely bound to hold them to be errors which wear the deceptive appearance of truth.

Not only can faith and reason never be at odds with one another but they mutually support each other, for on the one hand right reason established the foundations of the faith and, illuminated by its light, develops the science of divine things; on the other hand, faith delivers reason from errors and protects it and

abest, ut Ecclesia humanarum artium et disciplinarum culturae obsistat, ut hanc multis modis iuvet atque promoveat. Non enim commoda ab iis ad hominum vitam dimanantia aut ignorat aut despicit; fatetur imo, eas, quemadmodum a Deo scientiarum Domino profectae sunt, ita si rite pertractentur, ad Deum, iuvante eius gratia, perducere. Nec sane ipsa vetat, ne huiusmodi disciplinae in suo quaque ambitu propriis utantur principiis et propria methodo; sed iustam hanc libertatem agnoscens, id sedulo cavet, ne divinae doctrinae repugnando errores in se suscipiant, aut fines proprios transgressae, ea, quae sunt fidei, occupent et perturbent. Neque enim fidei doctrina, quam Deus revelavit, velut philosophicum inventum proposita est humanis ingeniis perficienda, sed tamquam divinum depositum Christi Sponsae tradita, fideliter custodienda et infallibiliter declaranda. Hinc sacrorum quoque dogmatum is sensus perpetuo est retinendus, quem semel declaravit Sancta Mater Ecclesia, nec umquam ab eo sensu, altioris intelligentiae specie et nomine, recedendum. Crescat igitur et multum vehementerque proficiat, tam singulorum, quam omnium, tam unius hominis, quam totius Ecclesiae, aetatum ac saeculorum gradibus, intelligentia, scientia, sapientia; sed in suo dumtaxat genere, in eodem scilicet dogmate, eodem sensu, eademque sententia (**Vincentius Lerinensis, *Commonitorium*, 28 [PL 50, 668]**).

furnishes it with knowledge of many kinds. Hence, so far is the Church from hindering the development of human arts and studies, that in fact she assists and promotes them in many ways. For she is neither ignorant nor contemptuous of the advantages which derive from this source for human life, rather she acknowledges that those things flow from God, the lord of sciences, and, if they are properly used, lead to God by the help of His grace. Nor does the Church forbid these studies to employ, each within its own area, its own proper principles and method: but while she admits this just freedom, she takes particular care that they do not become infected with errors by conflicting with divine teaching, or, by going beyond their proper limits, intrude upon what belongs to faith and engender confusion. For the doctrine of the faith which God has revealed is put forward not as some philosophical discovery capable of being perfected by human intelligence, but as a divine deposit committed to the spouse of Christ to be faithfully protected and infallibly promulgated. Hence, too, that meaning of the sacred dogmas is ever to be maintained which has once been declared by Holy mother Church, and there must never be any abandonment of this sense under the pretext or in the name of a more profound understanding. May understanding, knowledge and wisdom increase as ages and centuries roll along, and greatly and vigorously flourish, in each and all, in the individual and the whole Church: but this only in its own proper kind,

that is to say, in the same doctrine, the same sense, and the same understanding (Vincent of Lérins, *Communitorium*, 28 [*Patrologia Latina* 50, 668]).

CANONES

I. De Deo rerum omnium creatore

1. Si quis unum verum Deum visibillum et invisibillum Creatorem et Dominum negaverit; anathema sit.
2. Si quis praeter materiam nihil esse affirmare non erubuerit; anathema sit.
3. Si quis dixerit, unam eandemque esse Dei et rerum omnium substantiam vel essentiam; anathema sit.
4. Si quis dixerit, res finitas, tum corporeas tum spirituales, aut saltem spirituales, e divina substantia emanasse; aut divinam essentiam sui manifestatione vel evolutione fieri omnia; aut denique Deum esse ens universale seu indefinitum, quod sese determinando constituat rerum universitatem in genera, species et individua distinctam; anathema sit.
5. Si quis non confiteatur, mundum, resque omnes, quae in eo continentur, et spirituales et materiales, secundum totam suam substantiam a Deo ex nihilo esse productas; aut Deum dixerit non voluntate ab omni necessitate libera, sed tam necessario creasse, quam necessario amat seipsum; aut mundum ad Dei gloriam conditum esse negaverit: anathema sit.

CANONS

1. On God the creator of all things

1. If anyone denies the one true God, creator and lord of things visible and invisible: let him be anathema.
2. If anyone is so bold as to assert that there exists nothing besides matter: let him be anathema.
3. If anyone says that the substance or essence of God and that of all things are one and the same: let him be anathema.
4. If anyone says that finite things, both corporal and spiritual, or at any rate, spiritual, emanated from the divine substance; or that the divine essence, by the manifestation and evolution of itself becomes all things or, finally, that God is a universal or indefinite being which by self determination establishes the totality of things distinct in genera, species and individuals: let him be anathema.
5. If anyone does not confess that the world and all things which are contained in it, both spiritual and material, were produced, according to their whole substance, out of nothing by God; or holds that God did not create by His will free from all necessity, but as necessarily as He necessarily loves Himself; or denies that the world was created for the glory of God: let him be anathema.

II. De Revelatione

1. Si quis dixerit, Deum unum et verum, Creatorem et Dominum nostrum, per ea, quae facta sunt, naturali rationis humanae lumine certo cognosci non posse; anathema sit.
2. Si quis dixerit, fieri non posse, aut non expedire, ut per revelationem divinam homo de Deo, cultuque ei exhibendo edoceatur; anathema sit.
3. Si quis dixerit, hominem ad cognitionem et perfectionem, quae naturalem superet, divinitus evehi non posse, sed ex seipso ad omnis tandem veri et boni possessionem iugi profectu pertingere posse et debere; anathema sit.
4. Si quis sacrae Scripturae libros integros cum omnibus suis partibus, prout illos sancta Tridentina Synodus recensuit, pro sacris et canonicis non susceperit, aut eos divinitus inspiratos esse negaverit; anathema sit.

III. De fide

1. Si quis dixerit, rationem humanam ita independentem esse, ut fides ei a Deo imperari non possit; anathema sit.
2. Si quis dixerit, fidem divinam a naturali de Deo et rebus moralibus scientia non distingui, ac propterea ad fidem divinam non requiri, ut revelata veritas propter auctoritatem Dei revelantis credatur; anathema sit.
3. Si quis dixerit, revelationem divinam externis signis credibilem fieri non posse, ideoque sola interna cuiusque experientia aut inspiratione privata homines ad fidem moveri debere; anathema sit.

2. On revelation

1. If anyone says that the one, true God, our creator and lord, cannot be known with certainty from the things that have been made, by the natural light of human reason: let him be anathema.
2. If anyone says that it is impossible, or not expedient, that human beings should be taught by means of divine revelation about God and the worship that should be shown Him : let him be anathema.
3. If anyone says that a human being cannot be divinely elevated to a knowledge and perfection which exceeds the natural, but of himself can and must reach finally the possession of all truth and goodness by continual development: let him be anathema.
4. If anyone does not receive as sacred and canonical the complete books of Sacred Scripture with all their parts, as the holy Council of Trent listed them, or denies that they were divinely inspired: let him be anathema.

3. On faith

1. If anyone says that human reason is so independent that faith cannot be commanded by God: let him be anathema.
2. If anyone says that divine faith is not to be distinguished from natural knowledge about God and moral matters, and consequently that for divine faith it is not required that revealed truth should be believed because of the authority of God who reveals it: let him be anathema.
3. If anyone says that divine revelation cannot be made credible by external signs, and that therefore men and

4. Si quis dixerit, miracula nulla fieri posse, proindeque omnes de iis narrationes, etiam in sacra Scriptura contentas, inter fabulas vel mythos ablegandas esse: aut miracula certo cognosci numquam posse, nec iis divinam religionis christianae originem rite probari; anathema sit.
5. Si quis dixerit, assensum fidei christianae non esse liberum, sed argumentis humanae rationis necessario produci; aut ad solam fidem vivam, quae per charitatem operatur, gratiam Dei necessariam esse; anathema sit.
6. Si quis dixerit, parem esse conditionem fidelium atque eorum, qui ad fidem unice veram nondum pervenerunt, ita ut catholici iustam causam habere possint, fidem, quam sub Ecclesiae magisterio iam susceperunt, assensu suspensio in dubium vocandi, donec demonstrationem scientificam credibilitatis et veritatis fidei suae absolverint; anathema sit.

IV. De fide et ratione

1. Si quis dixerit, in revelatione divina nulla vera et proprie dicta mysteria contineri, sed universa fidei dogmata posse per rationem rite excultam e naturalibus principiis intelligi et demonstrari; anathema sit.
2. Si quis dixerit, disciplinas humanas ea cum libertate tractandas esse, ut earum assertiones, etsi doctrinae revelatae adversentur tanquam verae retineri,

- women ought to be moved to faith only by each one's internal experience or private inspiration: let him be anathema.
4. If anyone says that all miracles are impossible, and that therefore all reports of them, even those contained in Sacred Scripture, are to be set aside as fables or myths; or that miracles can never be known with certainty, nor can the divine origin of the Christian religion be proved from them: let him be anathema.
5. If anyone says that the assent to Christian faith is not free, but is necessarily produced by arguments of human reason; or that the grace of God is necessary only for living faith which works by charity: let him be anathema.
6. If anyone says that the condition of the faithful and those who have not yet attained to the only true faith is alike, so that Catholics may have a just cause for calling in doubt, by suspending their assent, the faith which they have already received from the teaching of the Church, until they have completed a scientific demonstration of the credibility and truth of their faith: let him be anathema.

4. On faith and reason

1. If anyone says that in divine revelation there are contained no true mysteries properly so-called, but that all the dogmas of the faith can be understood and demonstrated by properly trained reason from natural principles: let him be anathema.
2. If anyone says that human studies are to be treated with such a degree of liberty that their assertions may be

neque ab Ecclesia proscribi possint; anathema sit.

3. Si quis dixerit, fieri posse, ut dogmatibus ab Ecclesia propositis, aliquando secundum progressum scientiae sensus tribuendus sit alius ab eo, quem intellexit et intelligit Ecclesia; anathema sit. Itaque supremi pastoralis Nostri officii debitum exsequentes, omnes Christi fideles, maxime vero eos, qui praesunt vel docendi munere funguntur, per viscera Iesu Christi obtestamur, nec non eiusdem Dei et Salvatoris nostri auctoritate iubemus, ut ad hos errores a Sancta Ecclesia arcendos et eliminandos, atque purissimae fidei lucem pandendam studium et operam conferant.

Quoniam vero satis non est, haereticam pravitatem devitare, nisi ii quoque errores diligenter fugiantur, qui ad illam plus minusve accedunt; omnes officii monemus, servandi etiam Constitutiones et Decreta, quibus pravae eiusmodi opiniones, quae istic diserte non enumerantur, ab hac Sancta Sede proscriptae et prohibitae sunt.

maintained as true even when they are opposed to divine revelation, and that they may not be forbidden by the Church: let him be anathema.

3. If anyone says that it is possible that at some time, given the advancement of knowledge, a sense may be assigned to the dogmas propounded by the Church which is different from that which the Church has understood and understands: let him be anathema.

And so in the performance of our supreme pastoral office, we beseech for the love of Jesus Christ and we command, by the authority of Him who is also our God and savior, all faithful Christians, especially those in authority or who have the duty of teaching, that they contribute their zeal and labor to the warding off and elimination of these errors from the Church and to the spreading of the light of the pure faith. But since it is not enough to avoid the contamination of heresy unless those errors are carefully shunned which approach it in greater or less degree, we warn all of their duty to observe the constitutions and decrees in which such wrong opinions, though not expressly mentioned in this document, have been banned and forbidden by this Holy See.