

Eating, that almost forgotten experience, was next. They brought in buckets of soup—grass soup with a few turnips in it and lots and lots of little worms. But the only complaint we had, as one G-I remarked, was that the worms weren't fat enough. We guzzled it—and them—greedily.

(To be continued)

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THE EVIDENCE OF ROMAN PRIMACY

A power now exists in most active and manifold operation at the very centre of the Church of Christ—a supreme, controlling, harmonising, conservative, unitive, defining power, in that mighty empire of thought which our Lord has set up. Who put it there? It answers: Our Lord Himself. And it points to a great number of proofs, bearing witness to its existence, in the history of eighteen hundred years. Now these proofs are of very various cogency. No one of them perhaps defines, or could define, the whole range of the power; but one exhibits it in this particular, and another in that: for instance, one ancient saint declares: "that it is necessary that every Church should agree with the Roman, on account of its superiority of headship;" another, that "unity begins from it;" a third, that "where Peter is, there is the Church;" a fourth, that "the headship of the Apostolic Church has always flourished in it." Now it is plain that these expressions want a key. And such is supplied by the present existence of that power. The fair and candid mind will see in them much more than they at first sight convey: for it was not the purpose of the writers at that moment to *define* the power to which they were alluding, any more than those living under the supremacy of the British monarchy, in any casual reference to it, would do otherwise than refer to it as an existing thing. If such attributes, then, of the Roman See, separately mentioned by different Fathers, all fit into, and are explained by an existing power, and, when put together, here one and there another, exhibit more or less, such a power, it is fair so to interpret them, and to infer that the power which we now see existed then.

—Thomas William Allies, in *The See of Peter* (London, 1866), pp. 83 &

ANTI-CLERICALISM AND CATHOLIC UNITY

Although the attitude commonly and correctly known as anti-clericalism may seem to be neither powerful nor prevalent in our country today, and although there is no definite indication that it will become influential in the immediate future, there are ample and important reasons why our priests and our people should consider this subject carefully. Anti-clericalism is in itself an utter and unmitigated evil. It works to lessen, or even to frustrate, that unity which Our Lord willed that His Church should possess. Furthermore, it leads to evils even worse than itself. The man who is deceived into adopting the attitude of anti-clericalism is in grave danger of casting away his membership in the Church of Christ. In the past, anti-clericalism has frequently been a prelude to apostasy.

While the attitude itself shows no signs of becoming common among Catholics in the United States in the near future (and what is called anti-clericalism in the strict sense of the term can only exist among Catholics or among those who pretend to be members of the Church), there is a real danger that negligence in bringing out the truth on this subject might result in a failure on the part of some of our people to appreciate the inherent viciousness of anti-clericalism. The occasional foreign book of anti-clerical tinge brought into this country and the still more infrequent American article or book review sympathetic with anti-clericalism could, if the truth on this subject were not explained from time to time, bring some uninstructed Catholics to imagine that anti-clericalism could be consistent with a full and loyal expression of the Catholic life. The people who would fall into this delusion would, by that very fact, be blinded to Our Lord's teaching about the splendid and supernatural unity of His Mystical Body.

Strangely enough, the subject of anti-clericalism has been touched upon very little in English Catholic literature. The best-known treatise on anti-clericalism in the English language is to be found in a section of Mr. Hilaire Belloc's admirable work, *Survivals and New Arrivals*. This book of popular and historical apologetics considered anti-clericalism as one of the three movements or attitudes which, taken together, formed the main op-

position to the Catholic Church in 1929, when *Survivals and New Arrivals* first appeared.

What Mr. Belloc describes as anti-clericalism is, however, not the attitude taken in itself, but rather one historical manifestation of this attitude, the political mentality which went by the name of anti-clericalism in the days of France's Third Republic. He spoke of what was supposed to be the origin of this particular movement when he depicted anti-clericalism as "the spirit which is goaded into activity by the invasion of the civil province by clerical agency."¹ He was speaking of that same politico-religious phenomenon when he wrote that the anti-clericalism with which he was concerned came no longer "as a protest against extravagant clerical action, but from a conflict between two incompatible theories of the State—the Catholic and the Neutral, or Lay."² The anti-clericalism Mr. Belloc set out to describe was the attitude of those Catholics who espoused the concept of the Neutral State in a predominantly Catholic country. Such persons found themselves "inevitably allied with all forms of antagonism to the Catholic Church: with opposing religions and corporations, with all those to whom the faith is an offence."³

As a historian, Mr. Belloc dealt, as he had every right to do, with one historical aspect of anti-clericalism, with the supposed origins and with the actual development of the highly dangerous movement best known to the world two decades ago under that sad label. Unfortunately, however, his historical writing has sometimes been interpreted as an adequate and essential description of anti-clericalism. It is, of course, nothing of the kind. Basically, anti-clericalism designates any disloyal and uncharitable opposition on the part of Catholics to their own spiritual leaders. Although the individual politico-religious movement best known as anti-clericalism in continental Europe during the last part of the nineteenth century and the first part of this one may have claimed to have been "goaded into activity by the invasion of the civil province by clerical agency," there is no reason in the world to suppose that all opposition to the clergy or to the hierarchy on the part of Catholics stems or even claims

¹ *Survivals and New Arrivals* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1941), p. 160.

² *Ibid.*, p. 162.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

to stem from such a source. The movement or the attitude which Mr. Belloc set out to describe was something indigenous to countries of what he called the "Catholic tradition." He asserted that the thing with which he was dealing, this particular kind of anti-clericalism, did not come into the daily lives of English and American Catholics, although he contended that this same movement might "in the near future indirectly affect the condition of Catholics even where they are in a minority amid Protestant surroundings."⁴

THE NATURE OF ANTI-CLERICALISM

In itself, anti-clericalism is nothing more or less than antipathy or opposition on the part of Catholics to the hierarchy or the priesthood in general and to their own spiritual leaders in particular, for whatever reason such an attitude is adopted. It is essentially a fault of Catholics, although the persons guilty of it need not necessarily be laymen and certainly need not be citizens of a country predominantly Catholic in population. Attacks by outsiders against the Church, even when such attacks are directed principally against the Church's spiritual leaders, are not properly designated as anti-clerical activity.

As a matter of fact, most of the assaults and persecutions which enemies of the Church direct against it ultimately center on the hierarchy. The men who have made it their business to attempt to destroy God's kingdom on earth are quite well aware of the fact that their task would be not only possible but easy if they could succeed in getting rid of those whom God has placed as the rulers and teachers of the Church or in minimizing their influence. We have an unmistakable example of the working of this tactic in the conduct of the various Communistic dictators in eastern Europe at the present time. These dictators have made it their policy to kill or to exile the bishops and the outstanding sacerdotal leaders in the territories they have seized, and they have spared no effort to turn the Catholic populace away from those who speak in the name of Christ. Anti-clericalism represents, in the Catholic ranks, a tendency towards that very division in the Church of God which the enemies of the Church seek to bring about. It is a movement within the membership of the Church objectively

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

hostile to the Church itself, whether the individual anti-clerical realizes the import of this hostility or not. As such it differs essentially from opposition to or persecution of the Catholic clergy by those not of the Church.

The antipathy or opposition by a Catholic to his spiritual leaders, that which constitutes the essence of anti-clericalism, is a direct violation of that charity or "love of the brotherhood" which a disciple of Christ is obligated and privileged to have for his brothers in the house of God. Where charity demands a cheerful and enthusiastic participation in the corporate work of the Church under the direction of the men commissioned by Our Lord to lead the faithful, anti-clericalism offers at best only a grudging and mistrustful response to that leadership. In grumbling against the position and the leadership of the hierarchy and of the clergy in general, the anti-clerical foments discord and disunion in Christ's Mystical Body and hinders the activity of the Church militant in working for God's glory against the ever-present opposition from the City of Man.

An open manifestation of anti-clericalism is to be found whenever and for whatever reason Catholics speak and write in such a way as to derogate from the authority and the influence of those responsible to God for the guidance of His Church in this world. Under this heading we must classify complaints about and criticisms of the clergy as a group and of particular spiritual leaders, addressed by Catholics to their fellow members of the Church, with the purpose of restraining these Catholics from the loyal and whole-hearted support due to ecclesiastical authority. Any such attitude or movement on the part of Catholics, at variance with the demands of sincere charity for the leaders of the Church militant, must be considered as a real expression of anti-clericalism.

Now, in treating of this subject, it is important to note that the generous and loyal cooperation demanded by Christian charity in the life of the Catholic Church under the direction of the actually existent hierarchy does not necessarily involve a belief on the part of the individual priest or layman that all the details of the policy of the leaders of the Church militant are theoretically the wisest that could possibly be adopted. Despite the fact that a prominent advocate of a "healthy Catholic anti-clericalism," the Englishman Edward Ingram Watkin, sees as

the alternative to his beloved system "a clericalism which dreads scandal as the worst of evils and pretends to think that whatever the action is taken by the hierarchy or even an individual prelate must be the best and the wisest,"⁵ the truth of the matter is that the charity of the house of God demands no such thing. Catholics need not believe that, in the abstract, the particular policy adopted by the ecclesiastical leaders in one locality or with regard to any individual problem is absolutely the best possible. We see the application of this truth in the fact that, time and time again during the course of the Church's history, a man who has worked sincerely and loyally under a spiritual leader for the success of an individual program has changed the details of ecclesiastical policy when he himself has been called to the leadership. Not to look too far afield for an example, we have the case of Bishop Vaughan, who gave loyal and genuine co-operation to the leadership of Cardinal Manning in such affairs as the refusal to sanction the presence of Catholic students at Oxford, and who, as Cardinal Vaughan, the successor to Cardinal Manning, adopted an entirely new policy in this regard.

But, even though an individual Catholic, priest or layman, might be able to conceive of a more effective or brilliant mode of procedure than that actually adopted by the hierarchy of his own time and of his own country, he is bound in conscience to give his loyal and whole-hearted co-operation to the work of the Church, as this work is actually being directed. The Church of Christ in this world is the Church militant. The position of the individual Catholic priest or layman is for this reason quite similar to that of the individual soldier or officer in an army engaged in battle. The individual soldier or officer might very well be convinced (perhaps with no particularly forceful reason), that the campaign in which he is fighting might have been planned more effectively by those in charge of the army as a whole. Nevertheless, the loyalty of that soldier depends directly, here and now, upon his entire willingness to do well the particular work which has been assigned to him. In the same way, the center on a football team might well imagine that the particular play called by

⁵ *The Catholic Centre* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1943), p. 148. Mr. Watkin seems to have forgotten that scandal is actually a sin against charity, and one of the very worst of evils.

his quarterback at this particular point in the game is abstractly less desirable than some other manoeuvre. Yet his value to the team depends upon his actual co-operation in the play which has been called. Should he attempt to take the part which would have been assigned to him in some other play, or should he simply neglect to do his part in the particular team work which as a matter of fact has been assigned, he can only succeed in hurting his own cause.

In precisely the same way, the direction given to the Church by the hierarchy through the Catholic priesthood constitutes the only set of orders by which the living and visible Church of Jesus Christ is to live and to act as a unit in the world, here and now. The man who gives only a grudging and minimizing obedience to these orders, or the person who tries to direct his activity in line with a policy which he imagines to be abstractly more effective than the one adopted by the hierarchy, is only hindering the corporate activity of the Church militant in the world. Or, to put the matter in another way, he succeeds only in helping the cause of that leader who is perpetually in conflict with Our Lord and with His Church, that leader whom Christ designated as "the prince of this world."

THE MOTIVES FOR ANTI-CLERICALISM

An alleged incursion by clerics into a purely civil domain, which Mr. Belloc mentioned as the original inciting cause for anti-clericalism, has had little connection with opposition to the ecclesiastical leadership on the part of misguided Catholics in countries like our own. Two causes in particular seem to have motivated the greater portion of such disloyalties among the members of the true Church. The first is an adverse judgment on the conduct or the policies of individual ecclesiastics or groups of ecclesiastics. The second is a rather manifest desire to be accepted by the anti-Catholic world.

What is regarded as improper conduct on the part of individual ecclesiastics or groups of ecclesiastics is objectively no sort of excuse for the adoption of an anti-clerical attitude. If there is one basic fact of which the Catholic is made very plainly aware, through the various Parables of the Kingdom used in the Gospels for different Sundays during the year, it is the truth that the

Church of God in this world is made up of both good and bad members. If the individual person is disposed to obey the hierarchy and to reverence the clergy only on the condition that the members of these orders are all living lives of real perfection, then that person is acting in accordance with a radically heretical postulate. It is, we might say, the central point in the mystery of the Church that the Mystical Body of Christ, the house and the family of the living God, is, in this world, a visible and organized society, within which, until the end of time, bad members will be mingled with the good. It is this society, and only this society, with its good and bad members, for which the sacerdotal prayer of Our Lord Himself was offered. By its divine constitution it is so visibly one in itself and with Him that men can see, from an examination of the Church itself, the character of its members as disciples of Christ and Christ's own status as the authentic bearer of the message from His Father. Within this society alone men are to find the fellowship and the company of Christ in this world. Thus it is the divinely appointed and sole recipient of our corporate social and supernatural loyalty to Christ. The fact that there are imperfect members of Christ both among the laity and among the clergy of the Catholic Church in no way cancels out the debt of loyalty and charity which the disciples of Christ owe to that society and to its leadership.

Furthermore, a belief on the part of an individual priest or layman that the policy of the ecclesiastical leaders in their actual direction of the Church might possibly be improved upon in no way exempts that priest or layman from the fundamental Christian duty of entering whole-heartedly into the activity of the Church according to the instructions being given here and now by the hierarchy as leaders of the Church. The infallibility which God has given to His Church in no wise guarantees that the appointment of this particular pastor, the direction of this particular school system, or the making of this particular Concordat is theoretically the best step for the well being of the Mystical Body as a whole. Nevertheless the rule of the Ordinaries of the Catholic Church here and now is the rule of Our Lord Himself. He wills that His disciples should show their obedience and loyalty to Him by living the life of grace within His Church, under the actual direction and commands of the men who rule by His authority. The misguided writer who tries to persuade his fellow

Catholics to look upon their clergy and hierarchy as salt that has lost its savor, or who implies that the teaching Church and the accredited teachers who act as instruments of the teaching Church have lost their competence to give instruction in the spiritual life, works truly, though perhaps unwittingly, against the living authority of Christ in His kingdom.

A great deal of what may be called modern anti-clerical writing seems to stem from a more or less conscious urge on the part of some lesser Catholic writers to win acclaim from the non-Catholic literary world. The Catholic author who is truly master of his craft (Chesterton might be taken as a shining example) seems never even tempted in this direction. Yet, in the main at least, conditions have not changed a great deal in the line of the reception an anti-clerical can expect from the non-Catholic or anti-Catholic world since Cardinal Manning remarked on the anti-clerical activity of Acton and his like, then busily engaged in their task of trying to discredit Pope Pius IX and the great majority of the Catholic hierarchy.

The anti-Catholic press has eagerly encouraged this school of thought. If a Catholic can be found out of tune with authority by half a note, he is at once extolled for unequalled learning and irrefragable logic. The anti-Catholic journals are at his service, and he vents his opposition to the common opinions of the Church by writing against them anonymously. Sad as this is, it is not formidable.⁶

Today, when learning and logic are held in somewhat lighter account, the world opposed to Christ prefers to hail the anti-clerical writer as "far-seeing," or as "progressive." It may even give him its highest accolade and dub him "Liberal," and give him not inconsiderable temporal rewards. In any event, the temptation to seek the approval of the non-Catholic world in this comparatively easy way is real and dangerous to the individual writer. It is something against which Catholics of literary bent should be forewarned.

THE THEORETICAL BASIS FOR ANTI-CLERICALISM

A Catholic writer can slip into the attitude of anti-clericalism if he is misinformed or ill-instructed about the nature and the

⁶ *The Vatican Decrees in their Bearing on Civil Allegiance* (New York, 1875), p. 27.

unity of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is a supernatural society, the company of the disciples of Jesus Christ, held together by His commanding presence in this society as its Head and by the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity within it. In this world it is fiercely opposed, not merely by human powers and contrivings, but by all of the power and bitterness of the leader of God's enemies, the "prince of this world." A Catholic who has allowed himself to grow lax in the practices of his religion can blind himself to these essential and paramount truths about his Church, and can come to think about it as something merely on a par with other organizations he meets in the course of his daily life. He may bring himself to imagine that the Church of Christ is a sort of glorified Republican party. He observes that an enrolled Republican or Democrat (though, of course, not an enrolled Communist) may openly disagree with the policies of party leaders, may criticize these leaders and refuse to co-operate in certain tentatives of the party, and still be not a whit a worse man or less a party man. If he has failed to realize the special and supernatural unity of the Catholic Church, he may delude himself into imagining that the Catholic Church has no greater practical claim upon its members than has the Republican Party upon its enrollees.

Actually, the anti-clerical attitude is completely incompatible with that unity which God Himself has instituted and sustained within the Catholic Church. As the Church of the promises, and thus as the recipient of Our Lord's promise of indefectibility, the Catholic Church will never be destroyed and will never be essentially damaged by anti-clericalism among its children. Yet, although this attitude is not formidable to the Church, it is destructive of the spiritual life in the Catholic who is beguiled into adopting it, and it can be a source of profound disedification and even of ruin to others who fall under his influence. It is a dire spiritual disease, and the doctrinal specific which can overcome it can be found in an examination of true Catholic unity.

THE CAUSES OF CATHOLIC UNITY

The members of the Catholic Church, gathered together as the disciples of Christ and in His company, are united with each other by special ties. Scholastic ecclesiology has long since de-

scribed and defined these bonds of Catholic unity, and classified them within two general groups. The present Holy Father's masterly encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, utilizing as it does the ecclesiological teachings of St. Robert Bellarmine, has brought this scholastic classification into the official teaching of the Catholic Church. As external, visible, corporeal, or juridical bonds of union in the Church, the traditional scholastic ecclesiologists and the *Mystici Corporis* list three factors: the profession of the same Christian faith, the communion of the same Christian sacraments, and subjection to legitimate ecclesiastical pastors, particularly and ultimately the Roman Pontiff, Christ's Vicar on earth. As internal or spiritual bonds of union within the Catholic fellowship we find enumerated the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity.⁷ In other words, according to God's own revelation and His authority, the unity of Catholic communion among the members of the Church and with Our Lord is one necessarily involving the profession before the world of baptismal faith, the admission to the sacraments, and eventually of course to the Eucharist, the banquet table of Christ in the House of God which is the Church, and unified corporate activity under the direction of the men whom God has appointed and commissioned to speak by the power and with the authority of His Son. This unity, to be complete, furthermore, demands the actual possession of faith, hope, and charity on the part of those whom God has called into this glorious company.

The highly complex and supernatural oneness of Christ's kingdom is actually brought about by causes which are themselves in the order of the intrinsically supernatural. The first of these causes is the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity within this visible society which is the true Church of God. This is the indwelling which is appropriated to the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. It is the indwelling according to which the Blessed Trinity is present in a special and supernatural fashion in souls in the state of sanctifying grace. According to this indwelling, God exists in the souls of those men to whom He is known supernaturally, that is, as He is in Himself, rather than merely as He is knowable as the First Cause of creatures. Present

⁷ Cf. *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* XXXV, 7 (July 20, 1943), 225 ff.

in this supernatural manner in the soul, God acts as the cause of the life of grace, and as the object of sincere charity, according to which He is loved because He is known supernaturally. Thus, God is present in Catholics to bind them by love within His society, and in non-Catholics to move them to enter the Church. The life of divine grace and of charity is corporate and social as well as individual in its implications. The love with which God wills to be loved by the creatures whom He has raised to the supernatural level is meant to be, not merely the act of an individual person, but the act of a real and organized society. Thus, it is perfectly true to say that God dwells in this supernatural way in the one society which He has instituted as the vehicle of His Son's message and life. The corporate activity of this society is, whatever the spiritual condition of any of its members or groups of members may be, the social expression of the life of grace. The man who is favored by God with membership in the Catholic Church is, by that very fact, engaged in a company within which God Himself dwells to hold the members together in their corporate work of charity, of prayer, and of sacrifice. Both the internal and the external bonds of unity within the Catholic Church depend directly upon the real and supernatural presence of God within it. The Catholic who allows himself to be deluded into adopting an anti-clerical attitude is frustrating in his own life that movement towards unity with His fellow Catholics which comes from the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity within the Church.

Furthermore, the real union of the members of the Catholic Church among themselves and with Christ is something due to the actual presence of Our Lord within the Church as its Head, as its Founder, its Sustainer, and its Saviour. Our people profess the same faith and possess the other bonds of unity, not because of any naturally explicable social cause, but solely because they constitute the assembly of the disciples of Christ, the assembly of men and women whom Our Lord has chosen and called to be with Him. The power and the grace by which they are enabled to overcome the adverse forces of the world, and to remain gathered in the unity of Christ come from Him alone. By reason of His presence, and by reason of the grace which He gives, His followers constitute among themselves and with Him a true and perfect society, a social unit to which respect and obedience are due, a

social unit more important and vital than any other assembly into which men may be called. The man who is ungrateful enough to attempt the discrediting of the visible agents of social unity within the Catholic Church tries, in so far as he is able, to undo Our Lord's own work within His kingdom.

THE EXTERNAL BONDS OF UNITY

The outward bonds of unity within the Church of God are the profession of the same Christian faith, the communion of the same sacraments, and subjection to legitimate ecclesiastical authority. Theologically, these external ties of fellowship within the Church differ sharply in their function from the inward or spiritual bonds. A man becomes and remains a member of the Church of Jesus Christ in this world essentially and solely through the possession of these outward bonds of unity. The Catholic Church in this world is actually the congregation of men and women who possess these visible bonds of union with our God and with each other. The inward bonds, faith, hope, and charity exist and operate in the Church. They are the sources of that life which finds its corporate expression in this world only in the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, possession of these qualities is not the factor which renders a man a member of the society of Christ. It is true that no one in this world can possess charity without either being a member of the Catholic Church or sincerely intending to enter this society. Nevertheless, a man becomes and remains a member of the Church only by the baptismal profession of divine Christian faith never publicly recalled, by the fact of his admission to the sacraments, and by his willing subjection to legitimate ecclesiastical authority. Each one of these bonds constitutes a force uniting the members of the Catholic Church with Our Lord and with each other. The spirit of anti-clericalism is, in the last analysis, a tentative running counter to the direction of these forces.

Catholics are formed into one body and joined to one another by reason of their profession of the same Christian faith. In this world they are the group or the unity explicitly accepting as true and as a real and supernatural communication from God the truths which Our Lord Himself teaches in the world as divinely revealed. There can be, of course, and there really are, persons

not members of the Church and yet possessing true divine faith. This class of persons would include catechumens or individuals desiring to enter the Church, excommunicated persons and schismatics who have not sinned against the faith. Yet the one society which authentically and correctly professes this faith is the Catholic Church, the company of Our Lord's disciples within which He lives and teaches. The teaching of Christ, the message of the living God, comes to the members of the Church through the voice of the Catholic Church's hierarchy, the *ecclesia docens*. The man who adopts or who encourages an attitude of opposition to or mistrust of the hierarchy thus, in effect, works to separate Our Lord's disciples from His teaching. Furthermore, since the profession of the true Christian faith is always and necessarily something effected in this world only in the face of a highly formidable opposition, the Catholic who sets out to oppose his own spiritual leaders or who encourages others to do so is definitely giving aid and comfort to the spiritual enemy of Christ. The true and baptismal profession of the Christian faith is, by its very nature, a force which should draw Catholics together in the face of a world which opposes Our Lord's doctrine. It tends essentially and necessarily to attach Catholics to their clergy and to their hierarchy by bonds of loyal reverence and affection.

The communication of the divine sacraments, the second of those forces which are listed together as the external bonds of unity within the Catholic Church has precisely the same effect. The sacramental system centers around the Blessed Eucharist. The members of the Catholic Church, enjoying the communication of the sacraments, is one of the holy assembly, the royal priesthood, united to Christ and with Him offering to God the eternal sacrifice of the New Testament. That sacrifice is the sign of Christian prayer and devotion, the inward sacrifice to God. Prayer is the expression of Christian faith and of Christian hope. It is meant to be and it should be the manifestation of true Christian charity.

In the sacrificial Eucharistic act, the members of the Church are bound together among themselves and with Our Lord in the strongest possible ties. It is the highest social act of worship, the act in which we manifest and increase our love for God and for one another. Any tendency to separate the members of the Catholic Church into mutually hostile divisions, and particularly any attempt to engender antagonism in the Church towards

the group whom Our Lord Himself has made the active ministers of the great sacrifice is thus manifestly counter to the intention of God Almighty. To attempt to turn Catholics against each other along other lines, racial or local for instance, is evil enough. But to use the distinction of the laity and the hierarchy, a distinction inherent in the Church by the very will of Christ, as an instrument for antagonism in the society of the disciples constitutes a perversion of what is in itself a means for unity and sanctification.

Considering the Eucharist as a sacrament, the communion which is essential to membership in the Church of Christ means admission to the banquet table of the Lord in the house of God. Those who are really members of the Church and disciples of Christ are the men and women whom He described as His brothers and His sisters. It is the express command of Christ that, within the house of God, His members should love one another. To violate the love of Christian charity with respect to the men from whom the membership of the Church must receive the Eucharistic banquet is thus, in a special way, to oppose the will of Christ.

By the fact that a man is a Catholic, he professes, and he is obliged to give, a real and sincere subjection to legitimate ecclesiastical pastors. Anti-clericalism, as it actually exists, is based upon a misunderstanding or a distortion of this essential element of life in Christ's Mystical Body. The Catholic hierarchy, the Pope and the residential bishops, and all of the ecclesiastical superiors who rule their flocks by legitimate ecclesiastical delegation, can issue commands which their subjects must obey under penalty of mortal sin. The Holy Father and the residential bishops can and do make real laws. These laws and the precepts and commands legitimate ecclesiastical superiors issue in virtue of their office come to Catholics as orders from Our Lord Himself. They are the ordinances by which the Church of Jesus Christ lives and acts as a visible society in this world, proclaiming the faith of Christ and doing His work in the face of all the opposition which can be brought to bear against Our Lord by the prince of this world. Those who profess the divine faith and who are privileged to dwell in the house of God as the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ are bound to give the orders of ecclesiastical superiors enthusiastic and loyal obedience, the response which is due to the orders of Our Lord Himself. The man who adopts an

anti-clerical attitude, and who thus brings himself to offer only a grudging and mistrustful subjection to competent ecclesiastical authority, by that very fact cuts himself off from the fullness of his connection with Jesus Christ.

The anti-clerical attitude is based, to a great extent, on a misunderstanding of the nature of ecclesiastical authority. The man who is deluded into adopting that attitude is prone to admit the function of the clergy and of the hierarchy in dispensing the sacramental means of grace. He is also prepared to admit the teaching power of the hierarchy. What he fails to appreciate, however, is the basic and essential fact that the ecclesiastical hierarchy of jurisdiction has received from Our Lord a real power of rule, so that it can issue orders to the faithful by the power and with the authority of Our Lord Himself. When, for instance, a residential bishop forbids his subjects to read a certain paper, the effectiveness of that order definitely does not depend upon the presence within that paper of heretical views and teachings. Like any other real superior, the ecclesiastical authority is not obliged to give the reasons for his command in the command itself. The power to issue a definite command is something quite different from a mere competence to persuade. In many instances the anti-clerical seems to imagine that the position of the ecclesiastical superior is merely that of an older brother, who has the authority to reason with a younger and to try to bring him to adopt a different mode of activity, but who lacks the power to issue a definite command. Undoubtedly there is a tendency on the part of the ill-instructed Catholic to think of the Church in terms of the many social organizations in our own time which have no power to bind their members in conscience. To make such a mistake about the Church is, however, to misunderstand the nature of Christ's Mystical Body in this world. To act on such a misunderstanding is to frustrate the life of Christ in His disciple.

THE INTERNAL BONDS OF UNITY

The internal bonds of unity within the Catholic Church, faith, hope, and charity, likewise are such as to bring Catholics to give their spiritual leaders ungrudging and loyal co-operation in the work of Christ. But, where the external bonds of unity demand such loyal union, the internal bonds actually bring it about. A

man who has true Catholic faith is, by that very fact, unhesitatingly by the side of the *ecclesia docens*. Christian hope, of itself, brings a man to desire God as his own good, as the Reward and the Happiness of the individual member of the Church and of the Church as a whole. Christian charity is an act of love for God, and for all men in God. By charity we love our fellow-Catholics as our brothers in God's house, and we manifest the sincerity of our love for non-Catholics by our prayers and our other efforts to bring them into the society of Christ.

Basically and essentially, anti-clericalism is a violation of this Christian charity. It represents an attitude quite contrary to the demands of charity on the part of Catholics towards religious superiors. A Catholic does not manifest the true love of the brotherhood unless he shows to his superiors and to the clergy in general the sincere affection dictated by love.

CATHOLIC LOYALTY AND COMMUNIST UNANIMITY

Despite the somewhat bungling pronouncement of Mr. Reinhold Niebuhr, the fullness of loyalty demanded by the Catholic Church from its own children does not make Catholics and Communists "rival absolutists"⁸ in the modern world. It is perfectly true that the Communist Party demands and receives from its own members an obedience within the bounds of absolute servility. The Communist Party member is quite ready to give his enthusiastic support to the Kremlin platform as it stands. The fact that this platform, here and now, involves a complete contradiction of what was asserted by the same authorities last week or last month will never dampen the enthusiasm of the Communist.

In the last analysis the unity of the Communist Party is that of a giant conspiracy against the liberty of man and the rights of God. The Party holds its members together with the closest ties simply because it realizes the simple fact that no corporate action can be effective in the world without the complete and whole-hearted co-operation of the members of the group. The purpose of Communism is entirely contrary to the purpose of the Church.

⁸ Cf. *Christianity and Power Politics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), p. 113.

The ties of fear and cupidity which bind the individual Communist to his party and to his fellow-Communists are utterly different from the bonds which hold Catholics in the unity of Christ's kingdom. Yet the adherence of the Catholic to his Church should be at least as visibly loyal and enthusiastic as is the attachment of the Communist to his party. Our bonds of union are different, but they are not weaker. The indwelling of the Holy Ghost within the Catholic Church, together with the various bonds of unity resultant from this indwelling, demand of their very nature a social solidarity within the Catholic Church more perfect and more powerful than the group unity within any lesser organization. Thus there is no possibility of giving a sincere love and loyalty to Our Lord, as He lives in and rules over the Church militant, without, at the same time manifesting a genuine and sovereign loyalty to the Church itself and to those Church leaders through whom the teachings and the command of Christ come to us.

The loyalty to the Church which God demands of Catholics is certainly not of the type destructive of or harmful to perfect freedom on the part of the individual Catholic. The society to which Our Lord commands us to render the service of loyalty is that which contains and preaches the divine truth through which alone men are made free. It does not carry with it any obligation to follow the leaders of the Church when they speak other than as rulers in Christ's kingdom. In questions merely civil or political, when they speak as private citizens, they are to be heard and respected with the charity that is their due, but they are not necessarily to be followed. But, when they speak in the name of Christ, to teach or to command the faithful of Christ, then, by the will of God Himself, they are to be accorded the ungrudging and unhesitating obedience that results from the unity of the Catholic Church. In that unity, through their endeavors to forward the cause of Christ, Catholics are called by God to exercise their freedom. If Catholics advert to the nature and the unity of that society within which they dwell as the brothers of Jesus Christ, they will certainly never be tempted into the disloyalty of anti-clericalism.

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