

COMPENDIOSA PAPISMI REFUTATIO

A Concise Refutation of Papism by Samuel Maresius

Three years have now passed since, at Thorn in Prussia, under the authority of the Most Serene King of Poland, a friendly and so-called “Charitable Colloquium” was convened between those differing in religion, in hopes that by this means the schism among Christians might be resolved and the parties united into one body. A truly pious aim, worthy of the constant concern of truly Christian rulers, and one whose success would not be despaired of if men on both sides—pious and moderate—would set aside prejudices and passions, avoid vain and childish obstinacy in striving to defeat one another (as Augustine speaks in Epistle 174 to Pascentius), weigh everything by the balance of the sanctuary, and set before themselves God’s Word as their guiding principle, God’s glory as their goal, and the salvation of souls, peace in the Church, and its restoration to the original simplicity and truth that prevailed in the times of the Apostles and apostolic men.

But as long as one party—which, through its tyranny, idolatry, and manifold corruption, gave cause for necessary separation by others—approaches such gatherings with no other mindset than to defend all its doctrines (even the most absurd) under the presumption of infallibility, refusing to yield or improve anything for the better while oppressing its opponents with unjust accusations of heresy, non-Catholicism, and schism—such unions, no matter how they are adorned with specious names like Christian charity and peace, will come to nothing and will mock the eager expectations of the people. This was precisely why the Thorn Colloquium—summoned with such pomp and *μετα πολλῆς φαντασίας* (great fanfare)—deserved to be described by the proverb found in Athenaeus (Book 14): “The mountain labored; Jupiter feared; but it gave birth to a mouse.” For indeed, the Papists (or members of the Roman communion), led by Jesuits such as Father Schoenhoff and aided by the renegade Nigrinus, had already secretly communicated their plans to Rome to ensure that this new initiative would not offend the Pope. The Roman See always regards such endeavors as ominous for itself. Their aim was not a sincere Christian investigation of truth but partly to divide Protestants among themselves and partly to subtly impose their errors—errors which had caused their forefathers to endure so many dangers and martyrdoms—upon Protestants under false pretenses. They sought to compel Protestants to renounce their protest against Rome and return to its unreformed (as it now stands) and eternally irreformable communion.

This is clearly evident from the Acts of the Colloquium published under royal authority in Poland. Even blind men could perceive it from the propositions presented as Catholic (and thus necessarily retained) during Session XI on September 13, 1645. These propositions—mostly drawn from the decrees of the Council of Trent—contain nothing but the old errors of our adversaries. They could be briefly refuted with Jerome’s words (Epistle to Theophilus of Alexandria): “It is no great thing to pretend peace with words while destroying it with deeds; to rely on one thing while demonstrating another; to sound concord with words while demanding servitude in reality.”

We too desire peace—not only desire it but also pray for it—but we seek Christ’s peace: true peace without hostility; peace in which war is not hidden; peace that unites friends rather than subjects adversaries. Why do we call domination peace without giving each thing its proper name? These propositions (setting aside for now their lengthy preamble) will be briefly examined here. We will annotate them with short notes similar to strictures and show that they are falsely labeled Catholic. Instead of purifying or clarifying Roman doctrine—as should have been done—they are designed for its encrustation, obscuration, and deliberate complication. For here especially do Papist doctors scatter ink like cuttlefish so as not to be exposed. Yet true faith does not seek tricks or verbal arguments but pure confession, as Jerome says (Vulgate Commentary). But let us proceed directly to address these matters.

Propositions of Catholic Doctrine

On the Rule of Faith

The sole, formal, and adequate rule of faith is the entirety of God’s Word, both written and handed down, proposed and explained by the visible and infallible Church, with certain and perpetual assistance from the Holy Spirit, through the work and authority of legitimate pastors—that is, bishops—and especially the Roman Pontiff, who is the visible head of the whole Church and supreme Vicar of Christ on earth.

Catholic] By name and presumption, these propositions of the Pontifical Church are called Catholic; however, not in reality or truth—if we define as truly and properly Catholic only that which has been believed everywhere, always, and by all, according to Vincent of Lérins (Commonitorium, Part 1, Chapter 3). We are not moved by the fact that Roman partisans abusively call themselves Catholics and their doctrine Catholic. For “a name without action or office is nothing,” says Salvianus of Marseille (On the Governance of God, Book 4); nor do they possess

Peter's inheritance who do not possess Peter's faith, as Ambrose judges (On Penance, Book 1, Chapter 6). I do not inquire what you wish to be called—arrogantly usurping a name for religion—but what you are. Even in former times, as everyone knows, Arians called themselves Catholics; Orthodox believers were instead called Athanasians or Homousians. Similarly today, Papists call us Calvinists, Lutherans, Sacramentarians. And every sect of heretics (says Lactantius in Divine Institutions, Book 4, Chapter 30) considers itself to be Christian and its church to be Catholic. Wasps make their own hives; Marcionites make their own churches, as Tertullian warns (Against Marcion, Book 4). Indeed, if we consider the universality of those who profess Christ's name throughout the world, we find more dissenters from Rome than adherents to it. Therefore, if authority is sought: "The world is greater than the city," says Jerome (Letter to Evagrius). Thus we reject this presupposed Catholicism based on popular distortion of a name; instead, it must be demonstrated by the light of Scripture.

Rule of Faith] Becanus the Jesuit (Manual Controversiarum, Book 1, Chapter 5 §105 and following) strongly emphasizes the distinction between a judge of controversies and a norm by which they must be decided. But here that distinction is indirectly removed since no mention is made of judicial authority in the Church; and with God's entire Word formally and adequately constituting the rule of faith—alongside imagined infallibility, proposition, exposition, and authority attributed to the Church—all these elements are bundled together into one package. We do not envy this approach but marvel at it.

Written, namely, and handed down] Although the Apostles once taught both by the living voice and by writing (2 Thessalonians 2:15), yet that same Gospel which they first proclaimed by the living voice, Irenaeus says (Against Heresies, book 3, chapter 1), they afterwards, by the will of God, handed down to us in the Scriptures, to be the foundation and pillar of our faith.

Therefore, in matters pertaining to the integrity of faith, the fullness of the Scriptures ought to be revered and held in honor, as Tertullian says Against Hermogenes—inasmuch as they are able to make us fully wise unto salvation (2 Timothy 3:15-17)—and nothing ought to be added to them or taken away from them (Deuteronomy 4:2; Revelation 22:18).

Hence not without good reason did Basil say (Sermon on Faith): 'It is a manifest lapse from faith and a clear fault of pride either to reject anything which Scripture contains or to introduce anything which is not written.'

Many things which might be observed in this matter, both from the Scriptures themselves and from Catholic antiquity, we intentionally omit. Let this suffice—that these men of the purple (i.e., church dignitaries), by sewing onto the pure fabric of the Scriptures (which the Ancients commend as the accurate and immovable rule of faith) the rags of unwritten traditions, truly imitate the ancient heretics. For, as

Irenaeus testifies (book 3, chapter 2), when heretics are refuted from the Scriptures, they turn the accusation back upon the very Scriptures themselves, as if they were not of authority, and because the truth cannot be found from them by those who are ignorant of tradition.

By the mouth of the visible Church] If the entirety of God's Word—which I acknowledge as nothing other than what is written—is not a formal and adequate rule of faith for me unless it is proposed and explained by the visible Church, always infallible, then:

I. If the infallibility of the Church is either absent or unknown (as neither Jews, nor Muslims, nor pagans, nor heretics acknowledge it), there would be no more reason to defer to divinely inspired Scriptures than to Aesop's fables or, as Bellarmine insinuates (*De Verbo Dei*, Book 4, Chapter 4), to Muhammad's Quran. Such a thought is impious.

II. Before I believe anything or even admit the rule of faith itself, I must nonetheless—though it is astonishing and contradictory—accept and believe all these great assumptions in advance:

1. That there exists a perpetual visible Church, even though it was not visible during the time of Elijah (1 Kings 19:10; Romans 9:2) nor will it be visible and conspicuous to all under Antichrist (Revelation 12:14; 13:3,7).

2. That this visible Church possesses infallibility from the certain and perpetual assistance of the Holy Spirit in deciding matters of faith, even though this claimed infallibility does not rest on Scriptural authority. Furthermore, there is still sharp debate within Roman communion about where this infallibility resides—whether in the Pope or in a Council. If it were granted that the Holy Spirit provides certain and perpetual assistance to confer infallibility upon this visible Church—which can assemble to render judgment on matters of faith—then each individual member of this Church would also be anamartēta (faultless) and their decrees (whether from Popes, bishops, or councils) would need to be received with equal reverence as God's own Word. However, the Sorbonists argue that Popes can err in matters of faith and Jesuits assert that even General Councils are subject to error. Both sides support their claims with numerous examples: Concerning Popes (even as such), see Simon Vigor (*On the State and Governance of the Church*, Book 2 throughout). Concerning Councils, see Bellarmine himself (*De Conciliis*, Book 1, Chapter 6; Book 2, Chapter 11).

3. The current bishops, burdened more by their insignias and titles than adorned or honored by them, are legitimate pastors of the Church: However, with the rule of faith set aside and not yet admitted, no certain criteria are provided by which either legitimate pastors can be distinguished or the true Church recognized—criteria that

must be sought from Scripture alone. This is all the more so because the true sheep of Christ are those who hear His voice (John 10:27), and the Church itself is built upon the foundation of Scripture (Ephesians 2:20), such that nothing can be laid as a foundation beneath Scripture. “God is to be judged not by others’ assertions but by His own words,” says Ambrose (On Penance, Book 1, Chapter 4).

And it is far from the case that we should seek the rule of faith—that is, God’s Word—exclusively from the mouth of the true Church. On the contrary, according to Augustine (On the Unity of the Church, Chapter 3), the Church is to be sought in the Lord’s books and demonstrated from them. Here we may appropriately apply Augustine’s words (*ibid.*, Chapter 16) to the Papists: “Let them demonstrate their Church if they can—not in the words and rumors of Africans, not in the councils of their bishops, not in the writings of any disputants, not in deceptive signs and wonders (for against these too we have been prepared and made cautious by the Word of God)—but in the prescription of the Law, in the predictions of the Prophets, in the songs of the Psalms, in the voices of the Shepherd Himself, in the preaching and labors of Evangelists; that is, in all canonical authorities of holy books.”

4. The authority of the Roman Pontiff is greater than that of other bishops in establishing the rule of faith: Yet, according to Cyprian (On the Unity of the Church), “The other Apostles were what Peter was; endowed with equal fellowship in honor and power. For there is one episcopate, a part of which each holds fully.” Jerome concurs (Letter to Evagrius): “Wherever a bishop may be—whether at Rome or Eugubium, Constantinople or Rhegium, Alexandria or Tanis—he is of equal merit and priesthood. The power of wealth or humility of poverty does not make one bishop higher or lower than another. All alike are successors of the Apostles.”

5. That the same Roman Bishop is the visible head of the entire Church and the supreme Vicar of Christ on earth: Yet the Church cannot be a two-headed monster, nor can it have any other head or foundation than Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11; Ephesians 1:22–23). “The faithful are gathered into one body,” says Augustine (Epistle 57), “whose one Head is Christ.” And in Tractate 21 on John: “What is the Head and the members? Christ and the Church.” Would the Roman Pope be addressed here as Gregory I once addressed John, Bishop of Constantinople (Book 4, Epistle 30):

“What will you say to Christ, the Head of the Universal Church, who seeks to subject all His members to yourself under the title of ‘Universal’? I ask, who in this perverse term is proposed for imitation other than he who, despising the legions of angels established with him in fellowship, sought to ascend to a singular height of supremacy so that he might appear subject to none and preeminent over all?” Indeed, Christ does not require a Vicar—for a Vicar is appointed only for one who cannot oversee his own affairs. Every priest claims to be Christ’s Vicar in exercising the power of the keys, and even the Pope himself professes not to be Christ’s Vicar

but Peter's (as seen in Can. Ego Ludovicus, Distinction 63; Can. Non Quales, Cause 1, Question 1; Can. Quoties, Cause 1, Question 7). We do not see how this title fits the Roman Bishop unless perhaps insofar as he ought to profess himself Antichrist, acting in place of Christ (vice Christi), as described by Paul (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4, 7–9) and as is indeed observed in the Roman Bishop. Moreover, to set aside for now the fact that so many things—partly doubtful even among the adversaries themselves, partly evidently false, and still controversial between the parties—are required to establish the rule of faith in its formal sense, we see nothing here of the clarity and resolution that was promised with such grand words. Instead, everything is entangled and obscured by affected ambiguities. No certain criteria are proposed by which this Church, so magnificently praised, can be recognized; no evidence is provided for the privileges claimed for it; no clear seat is assigned for the infallibility attributed to it—a matter so hotly debated within Roman communion as to whether it resides in the Pope or in a Council. Thus, a distinction is made between the Visible and Infallible Church, through whose mouth the entirety of God's Word must be proposed and explained—by bishops and especially by the Roman Pontiff, whose work and authority are supposed to accomplish this—yet no clear distinction is established between this Church and these individuals. Nor can it be discerned what exactly distinguishes their proposal and explanation of God's Word from that of others who exercise similar authority and labor.

Whether much should be owed to these subtle refinements by which the bishops of the Roman communion and even the Pontiff himself are justified, let them decide for themselves.

I. On the Public Worship of God

Religious worship, as practiced in the Catholic Church, is directed primarily and ultimately to the one and only God. For even the honor given to creatures for the sake of God ultimately returns to God Himself.

Religious Worship: Since idolatry is inherently vile and sinful, even those most guilty of it attempt to excuse themselves by serving those who by nature are not gods (Galatians 4:8) and worshiping the creature rather than the Creator (Romans 1:25). This can be observed in the Roman Church, "the mother of fornications," which daily involves and pollutes itself with manifold idolatry, yet wipes its mouth and says, "I have done no wrong" (Proverbs 30:20). These propositions are intended not so much to cleanse this crime as to cover it up; but all such deceitful makeup of Jezebel will melt away under the sunlight of truth.

We pass over their claim that their worship is “the worship practiced in the Catholic Church.” For it will easily appear from what follows how far the true Church of God has always and everywhere been removed from what is now practiced in Roman communion. Suffice it to say that all religious worship must simply and absolutely be directed to the one and only God, so that it cannot, without grave sin, be shared with any other being—whether before Him or alongside Him. This is evident from Scripture (Isaiah 42:8; Matthew 4:10; Revelation 19:10; 22:9). In the axiom prefixed in Thomas Aquinas (*Summa Theologiae*, II-II, Q. 81), it is explicitly stated that religion, according to its proper and elicited acts, regards God alone. Augustine also says (*On True Religion*, Chapter 55): “Religion binds us to the one omnipotent God.” Lactantius writes (*Divine Institutes*, Book 4, Chapter 28): “The name of religion comes from the bond of piety by which God has bound man to Himself and constrained him by piety, for we must serve Him as Lord and obey Him as Father.” Thus, there is no reason for these men to propose a double object of religion: one primary and ultimate—that is, God—and another secondary and intermediate—that is, a creature. For:

1. The same distinction is used by Socinians to evade arguments proving Christ’s eternal divinity from the religious worship offered or due to Him as Savior. They claim that religious worship is given to Christ only secondarily and not ultimately but rather ultimately to God the Father.

2. The devil himself could have made use of this distinction had he first studied in Jesuit schools. When Christ rebuked him with Scripture (Matthew 4:10) for sacrilegiously seeking adoration due only to God, he could have replied that it was sufficient for him to remain “secondary” and that nothing would thereby be taken away from God.

3. This has always been the refuge of idolaters. They generally made their worship of idols or images relative and claimed it was ultimately directed toward God. This is evident from examples such as:

- The Israelites who erected a golden calf in honor of Jehovah in the wilderness (Exodus 32:4-5).
- Jeroboam placing calves at Dan and Bethel for worshiping the Most High God (1 Kings 12:29).
- Micah’s mother dedicating her silver to Jehovah through a graven image (Judges 17:3).
- The Jews burning incense to the bronze serpent—doubtless also in honor of Jehovah (2 Kings 18:4).

Even among pagans, those who considered themselves more refined in religion would say, “I do not worship an image or demon but contemplate through a physical representation that which I ought to worship,” as Augustine notes (*Sermon 2 on Psalm 113*). They often excused their neglect of God by saying they could approach Him through lesser gods as one approaches a king through his attendants, as Ambrose’s commentator on Romans observes.

Franciscan Ferus—well-regarded within Roman communion—testifies (On Acts 17) that although pagans set up idols for themselves, their intention was still to offer worship to the true God. Indeed, if we believe Maimonides (Moreh Nevuchim, Part I, Chapter 36), none of them ever worshiped an idol under the belief that no other god existed besides it.

4. Even within Roman Catholicism itself, creatures are worshiped not only relatively or accidentally but also directly and ultimately. Bellarmine says (On Images of Saints, Chapter 21): “The images of Christ and saints are venerated not only accidentally or improperly but also directly and properly so that they terminate veneration in themselves when considered as such—not merely as representations.” Hence Bellarmine (ibid., Chapter 20) disapproves of these verses found in Sabellicus:

- “For what the image teaches is divine; but it is not itself divine; See it with your eyes but worship with your mind what you perceive in it.”

For even honor: Religious honor belongs so exclusively to God that no creature can share in it—whether coordinately or subordinately—any more than an honorable man would allow another into his marital bed under any pretext or purpose whatsoever. An ancient author (whom Jesuits are unwilling to call Pelagius or Pelagian) speaks similarly in Ambrose’s commentary:

“Is anyone so mad or forgetful of his own salvation as to claim royal honor for a servant? Those found guilty of such an act are rightly condemned for treason. And do these people not consider themselves guilty who transfer God’s honor to a creature and forsake their Lord by adoring fellow servants—as if there were anything left reserved for God?”

Who would not detest Gabriel Vasquez’s impious statement (Commentary on Thomas Aquinas, III Q.25 Disputation 110 Chapter 2):

“Not only a painted image or an object publicly designated for divine worship but any other thing in the world—whether inanimate or irrational or rational—can rightly be adored with God as His image if scandal is avoided.”

This resembles how Egyptians absurdly venerated gods hidden in onions, garlic, or serpents. Who would not also abhor another claim by Jesuit Martin Bresser (On Confession, Book 5, Chapter 12 §99), asserting that:

- Not only can Satan be adored without sin if he appeared in the form of Christ crucified,

- But such adoration must be absolute rather than conditional (“I adore you if you truly are Christ”), citing Vasquez (On Adoration, Book 3 Disputation 1 Chapter 5) as support.

Indeed, Vasquez even stated that we must adore relics under forms like worms if we believe them divine—and that it is no sin of idolatry to adore a ray of light concealing a demon when one mistakenly thinks it is Christ.

What else could this mean but adoring Satan for God's sake? Yet Bresser himself contradicts this view elsewhere (On Confession, Book 6 Chapter 21 §284), where he says:

"Jewish ceremonies, false miracles, relics either fake or falsely attributed—all belong to false worship; exposing them for veneration constitutes mortal sin by nature—even if done with pious intent."

2. The worship alone due to God alone is called latria; dulia or hyperdulia pertains to a created supernatural excellence; whereas the worship owed to a created natural excellence is called civil worship or adoration.

The Worship Alone] There are many faults in this distinction:

I. What difference there is between dulia and hyperdulia is neither explained by those who make this distinction nor can it be explained by anyone. For worship that surpasses dulia ought to be latria and therefore cannot belong to created excellence.

II. Since dulia and hyperdulia are distinguished from civil worship, they must necessarily belong to religious worship. But it has already been proven that this belongs to God alone. Therefore, Augustine also, in On True Religion, chapter 55, denies all religious worship to any creature, however excellent it may be. He states:

"The worship of human works is not our religion; for the artisans themselves, who make such things, are better than the works, yet we must not worship them. The worship of beasts is not our religion; for the lowest of humans are better than them, yet we must not worship them. The worship of dead men is not our religion; for if they lived righteously, they do not wish to be honored in such a way, but rather that we worship Him through whom they rejoice in the light and in the fact that we are their companions in merit. They are to be honored for the sake of imitation, not worshiped for the sake of religion. If, however, they lived wickedly, they are not to be worshiped no matter where they are. The worship of demons is not our religion," etc.

Likewise, "That which the highest angel worships must also be worshiped by the lowest man." And further, "We honor them—that is, the angels—out of love, not out of servitude." Similarly, "It is rightly written that the angel forbade the man to worship him, but instead to worship the one God, under whom both he and the man were fellow servants."

III. If religious worship (dulia and hyperdulia) is due to every supernatural created excellence, then it should also have been offered by ordinary believers to the prophets and apostles while they lived on earth. Yet, they rejected such worship

(Acts 10:29; 14:14). Indeed, every common person ought to religiously worship their parish priest and any other cleric in whom they recognize supernatural excellence through the sacrament of ordination.

IV. Since created excellence and uncreated excellence differ in their very nature, the same religious worship cannot befit both. Just as God alone is to be worshiped religiously, so also only civil honor—derived from the City of God—should be given to supernatural created excellence, just as civil honor from the City of the World is given to natural created excellence. For in the City of God, angels and saints are our fellow citizens (Philippians 3:20; Ephesians 2:19). And just as Augustine, in *The City of God*, Book 10, Chapter 7, rightly states that we form one City of God with the angels, so too, in *Against Faustus*, Book 20, Chapter 21, he most correctly asserts that we venerate the martyrs with the same kind of love and fellowship with which we honor holy men of God in this life.

Likewise, Origen, in *Against Celsus*, states:

“We have found that angels, by their office, are sometimes called ‘gods’ in Scripture, because of a certain divine quality they possess. But this does not mean that we are commanded to worship them or honor them with divine homage, even though they bring us gifts from God. For all vows, all intercessions, all supplications, and all thanksgivings must be directed to God, the Lord of all things, through the supreme High Priest, who is above all angels, the only Word and God.”

V. Nor did Augustine, when he sought to distinguish between *latria* and *dulia* in *Against Faustus*, Book 20, Chapter 21, and in *The City of God*, Book 10, Chapter 1, imagine a twofold religious worship. On the contrary, he intended to distinguish religious worship, which is owed to God alone, from civil worship. He states in the latter book:

“That servitude which is owed to men, according to which the Apostle commands slaves to be subject to their masters, is customarily called by another name in Greek (*dulia*). But *latria*, according to the custom of those who wrote the divine Scriptures for us, is either always or almost always used to denote the service which pertains to the worship of God.

VI.

That very distinction between *latria* and *dulia* is even disapproved by some learned men within the Roman Church; among whom may be named Martin Pérez (*De Traditionibus*, Part 3, Consultation 7) and Ludovicus Vives (on Book 10, Chapter 1 of *The City of God*). And just as Scripture repeatedly attributes *dotheia* to God (Matthew

6:24; Luke 16:13; Acts 20:19; Romans 14:18; Ephesians 6:7; Colossians 3:24; 1 Thessalonians 1:9, and very often elsewhere), so also, among the translators of the Septuagint, the term *latreuton* is used for servile work, which was forbidden on the Sabbath, a day dedicated to the worship of God (Exodus 12:16; Leviticus 23:7, 8, 21, 25, 35, 36; Numbers 28:18). And Vives demonstrates from Suidas and Xenophon that these two terms are synonymous, indeed that *latria* is defined by Suidas as *douleia estì misthō* (“servitude for hire”). And Valla, he says, teaches that *latria* and *douleia* are the same thing and both signify servitude.

VII.

Thus, the same illicit worship, which is called עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה (*avodah zarah*) among the Jews, convicts the Pontiff of guilt, since the Gentiles themselves are condemned by Paul (Galatians 4:8) for rendering *dulia* to those who are not gods by nature. Likewise, the Angel in the Apocalypse (Revelation 19:10; 22:9) rejected it on the grounds that he was a *syndoulos* (“fellow servant”) of John, who was offering it. Nor is it in any way probable, as Ribera suggests (on Apocalypse 19, §16), that John intended to render *latria* to the Angel, when he certainly knew that such adoration was due to God alone.

VIII.

If every honor given to creatures for God’s sake ultimately returns to God Himself, as the preceding proposition asserted, then all worship of creatures in the Papacy ought to be considered *latria*, since it is directed to God Himself.

IX.

Since Suarez (on the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, Disputation 5, Section 2) and countless other modern theologians, as Puteanus states (on *Summa Theologiae*, Part 3, Question 25, Article 2), declare that *latria*, *dulia*, and even *hyperdulia* all belong to one and the same species of adoration, and since the prayers by which they invoke both God and the Saints are *univocally* the same—these men were not at all moved by the authority of Bellarmine, who asserts that these types of adoration are not univocal but merely analogous (*On the Saints*, Book 1, Chapter 12). But in doing so, they implicitly admit that all distinction between them collapses: either they reserve the worship of *dulia* exclusively for God, or they render *latria* to creatures when they religiously venerate and adore them.

X.

The ancient Catholics called the Nestorians *Anthropolaters* because they worshiped Christ as a man while denying His divinity, and they called the Arians *Idolaters* because they rendered religious worship (albeit secondary and below today's *latria*) to our Lord Jesus Christ, whom they refused to acknowledge as the supreme God by nature. How, then, can today's pseudo-Catholics escape the charge of idolatry, when they openly profess to render *douleia*, as the Gentiles once did (Galatians 4:8), τοῖς μὴ φύσει οὐσιν θεοῖς ("to those who are not gods by nature"), and to bestow it upon creatures in a special manner (*spezialiter*)—even though the Apostle teaches that it is not to be granted even to Angels (Colossians 2:18)?

XI.

But they so openly render *latria* to creatures that they seek refuge in these most subtle distinctions in vain—distinctions which, as Bellarmine himself says (De Imaginibus, Chapter 22), not even the learned fully understand, let alone the ignorant masses. If one considers the practice in general, Vives (on The City of God, Book 6, Chapter 27) acknowledges that many in that communion venerate male and female saints no differently than God Himself. "Nor do I see," he says, "in many cases what difference exists between their opinion of the saints and what the Gentiles believed about their gods."

In particular, they define that the Sacrament of the Eucharist must be adored with the external *latria* worship due to the true God, as decreed by their Council of Trent (Session 13, Chapter 5 and Canon 6), where the proskynesis (προσκύνησις) is evident. Furthermore, Gretser (De Sancta Cruce, Book 1, Chapter 49) holds that the Cross of the Lord—not only the one on which He hung, but also any image of it and of Christ crucified—ought to be venerated with *latria*. He asserts that this is the more common and widely accepted opinion in the Schools, to which St. Thomas and most of his followers subscribe, including Cajetan, Capreolus, Gregory of Valencia, and many others. Puteanus (Summa Theologiae, Part 3, Question 25, Articles 3 & 4) likewise argues the same, based on the reasoning that the same motion directed toward an image is directed toward the thing represented.

Nor should one overlook Thomas's own argument proving from the public worship of the Roman Church that the cross must be adored with *latria*: namely, that *latria* is given to that in which we place our hope of salvation. But we place our hope of salvation in the cross of Christ, as the Church sings:

"O crux, ave, spes unica, hoc passionis tempore,
Auge piis justitiam, reisque dona veniam."

("Hail, O Cross, our only hope, in this time of passion, increase righteousness in the pious and grant pardon to sinners.")

Therefore, the Cross of Christ must be adored with the adoration of *latria*.

This, then, is the pious doctrine of the Papists, for which Thomas was supposedly rewarded when Christ Himself, appearing to him crucified in Naples, said: “Thou hast written well of me, Thomas; what reward dost thou seek?”

And although Bellarmine (*De Imaginibus*, Chapter 20) does not wish it to be said—especially in sermons to the people—that any images should be adored with latria, yet in truth he acknowledges that images are in fact worshipped with latria, at least incidentally and improperly. So little do these *Staurolatras* heed the warning of Ambrose (*Oratio de Obitu Theodosii*), where he recounts how Helena, upon finding the Lord’s cross, “found the inscription, and adored the King—not the wood itself, of course, for that would be the error of the pagans and the vanity of the impious, but rather Him who hung on the wood, as inscribed on the title.”

Similarly, they want to venerate with latria, without distinction from the adoration of Christ Himself, His foreskin (which is displayed both in Antwerp and in Rome), and whatever is claimed to be His blood on earth—whether gathered from what He shed on the cross, or from the consecrated chalice, or from hosts punctured and bleeding, as extensively discussed by Martin Bresser (*De Consecratione*, Book 6, Chapter 23).

Now, latria—which is due to God alone—especially pertains to sacrifice and the things related to it, such as temples, altars, and priesthoods, as Bellarmine (*De Beatificatione Sanctorum*, Chapter 12) proves from both Scripture and the Fathers. Thomas (*Summa Theologiae*, II-II, Question 85, Article 2) asserts the same, along with additional support from Question 88, Article 5, and *Inramenta*, Question 89, Article 4. Yet all this worship is offered to creatures in the Papacy: it is customary there to swear “by God and the Saints”; and the Roman Catechism (Part 3, Chapter 3, §26), while declaring that one swears falsely who swears by false gods, nevertheless in §8 maintains that it is lawful to swear by the Saints—contrary to the explicit command of Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:13; Jeremiah 4:2; Isaiah 65:16).

Bellarmin (*De Cultu Sanctorum*, Chapter 9) also defends offering vows to the Saints on the grounds that they are “gods by participation”—in defiance of Scripture (Psalm 50:16). Likewise, in the Papacy, creatures are worshipped with altars and temples. Martin Bresser (*De Consecratione*, Book 6, Chapter 21, §302) defines the peculiar worship of canonized Saints as including the erection of altars in their honor and the offering of sacrifices. Similarly, Hermann Hugo, another Jesuit, (*Obsidio Bredana*, p. 8) describes how, while Spinola was traveling through a rugged hill where the famous shrine of the Virgin Mother stands—renowned throughout the world for its miracles—he first completed the Christian religious rites and made vows at Mary’s altar, then led some on foot and others on horseback in a procession.

Erasmus also noted in the margin of Augustine (*Contra Maximinum*, Book 1) that temples are now built for every Saint. Moreover, every Saint has his own special Mass—that is, in the papal sense, his own most august sacrifice celebrated in his honor. Becanus (*De Sacramentis*, Chapter 25, Question 18, §2) argues that although the sacrifice of the Mass is offered primarily and in itself for the honor of God, it can nevertheless secondarily and consequently pertain to the worship and honor of the Saints. Candles are offered to their images and consumed before them; incense and other fragrant offerings are presented before their images and relics—just as Marcellina, a woman of the Carpocratian sect, used to do before images of Jesus, Paul, Homer, and Pythagoras, by adoring them and offering incense, as Augustine (*De Haeresibus*, Chapter 7) both records and condemns.

Indeed, even the most holy and august sacrifice, which is preeminently found in the New Testament as the supreme act of prayer and thanksgiving, is offered by these men to creatures, and they thereby venerate them with the highest form of adoration—just as Bellarmine acknowledges that religious invocation (*invocatio religiosa*) pertains to this kind of worship (*Disputationes Contra* 4).

XII.

Finally, how little defense the Roman Idolaters truly have in this distinction is evident from the very conscience of the Spanish Inquisitors themselves. For in their Expurgatory Index, they sought to expunge from good authors any statements that in any way placed the worship of the one true God in its rightful place. Thus, from the indexes of Athanasius and Augustine, they wanted to delete such statements as:

- “To be adored belongs to God alone, and no creature is to be adored.”
- “Saints are to be honored by imitation, not by adoration.”
- “Against those who say, ‘I do not worship images, but through them I am led to what I ought to worship.’”

Similarly, in Polydore Vergil, a Papist writer (*De Rerum Inventoribus*, Book 5, Chapter 9), they sought to remove the words in which he had explicitly expressed the Second Commandment: “You shall not worship any carved image.

[The Mass is] The name *Missa* is new and improper; and it is not of either Greek origin, as Coarruvias imagined in Becanus, nor of Hebrew origin, as Baronius and, following him, Gualterius in *The Truth of the First Century*, §15, with many others cited there (since neither the Greeks nor the Syrians have ever used it); but it is a barbarous Latinism, from the verb *mitto* (“I send”), because the faithful people were not dismissed until the end of the Synaxis—as is acknowledged by Lindanus in

Panoplia, Book 4, Chapter 30; Bellarmine in *On the Mass*, Book 1, Chapter 1; and from both of them, Becanus, in *On the Sacraments*, Chapter 25, Question 1.

Hence, the Canon of the Mass is concluded with the clause: *Ite, missa est* (“Go, it is the dismissal”); and it is evident from the ancients that the *Mass of the Catechumens*—that is, their dismissal—took place *before* the celebration of the Synaxis, and the *Mass of the Faithful* after it. From this arose the practice that in former times the whole *liturgy*, or the entire public worship, began to be called by the ancients not *Missa* in the singular, but *Missae* in the plural, because of this twofold and distinct dismissal of Catechumens and of the Faithful.

But when Becanus tries to apply to each of these dismissals two parts of his Missatic Canon, he raves sweetly; for nowadays no one is dismissed before the *Offertory*, as they say, nor is anyone detained as formerly, not to depart before Communion—since most Masses are celebrated in corners, with no one either present or communicating. Rome has so far forgotten its own Canon, 10th Distinction, Book 2 *On Consecration*: “After the consecration has been completed, let all communicate who do not wish to be shut out from the threshold of the Church.” For so the Apostles decreed, and so the Holy Roman Church holds.

Because the Saints] Since in Articles I and II of this Title we have sufficiently discharged the accusation of Rome for her manifold idolatry, there is no need that I linger long upon these remaining three. Truly, the real Saints do now reign with Christ in heaven. But:

I. Many are venerated as Saints in the Papacy, concerning whose sanctity and blessedness no one can be certainly persuaded. For besides the fact that not all who are publicly venerated have been canonized by the Pope (since the Pope only about five hundred years ago began to claim this right exclusively for himself, as Puteanus notes on 3 Th. quæst. 25. dub. 2.), it is plainly uncertain that the Pope and the Church cannot err in such canonizations; for indeed Melchior Canus *Loc. Com.* b. 5. c. 5., relying on Thomas and Antoninus whom he cites in support, denies either that the Church’s judgment in this matter is infallible, or that it would even be heretical to deny the Church’s infallibility on this point. Hence not without cause did Cardinal Bessarion, as Bodin reports in *Method. Histor.* c. 4., when he saw Rome enrolling with a certain foolish ἀπωθίσαις (“deification by thrusting in”) very many among the gods whose lives he had condemned, say that he greatly doubted whether the things handed down by the ancients about such Saints were true.

II. And even though the heavenly Saints reign with Christ, that is, enjoy eternal glory and felicity, nevertheless they do not share with Him the government and administration of the universe; as if this one should guard that province, city, or art,

and that one another: as if Dionysius presided over France, James over Spain; Cosmas and Damian over physicians, Nicholas over sailors, Hubert over hunters, Catherine over students, Julian over harpists, Mary Magdalene over harlots, Lazarus over lepers; Anthony should be set over swine, Urban over vineyards, Eligius over horses, and so forth — leaving nothing at all to Christ Himself for Him thereafter to care for and manage.

Not only do they know] But indeed, this knowledge is denied to all, even the most godly, after death in the Scriptures: *Eccl.* ix, 5. *John* xiv, 21. *2 Kings* xxii, 20. Neither does the blessedness of the Saints imply omniscience, or knowledge of the heart (which belongs to God alone, *1 Kings* viii, 39. *Acts* i, 24.), any more than it implies ubiquity or omnipotence. Nay, Augustine, *De cura pro mortuis*, cap. 13, testifies: “The spirits of the dead are there where they do not see whatever things are done or happen in this life among men.” And a little earlier in the same work: “Assuredly what the sacred Psalm expresses is true: ‘For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord has taken me up.’ If therefore our fathers have forsaken us, how are they partakers in our cares and affairs? If parents are not partakers, who among the dead knows what we do or suffer? For Thou art our Father; for Abraham has not known us, and Israel has not acknowledged us. If such great Patriarchs were ignorant of what befell the people sprung from them — a people promised to them because of their faith in God — how are the dead mingled in the knowing and aiding of the things and deeds of the living? How do we say that counsel has been sought of them who died before the evils came which followed upon their death, if even after death they sense whatever calamities in human life occur? Or perhaps do we say these things in error, and think them troubled whom we suppose to be at rest? What then is that great benefit which God promised to the most godly king Josiah, namely, that he should die before he should see the evils that were to come upon that place and people, if also after death he would sense whatsoever calamities befall human life?” Nor should these men so liberally derive this knowledge of our affairs from the essential blessedness of the Saints, since Bellarmine himself, *De Sanctorum Beatitudine* cap. 20, makes the more probable opinion to be that the Saints see all things from the beginning of their blessedness that in some way pertain to them, and therefore also our prayers directed to them; yet he nonetheless presents another opinion as more fitting to convince heretics, which holds that the Saints do not see our prayers in the Word from the beginning of their blessedness, but that only then are our prayers revealed to them by God when we utter them. In that case, truly, it would not be the Saints who intercede for us with God, but God with them. Thus the Adversaries have nothing certain here on which they may rest.

But also by their patronage] Yet we have one patron and intercessor, that is, mediator, Christ Himself (*1 Tim.* ii, 5. *1 John* ii, 1–2. *Eph.* iii, 12. *Heb.* vii, 25. *Rev.* viii, 3). “Christ Himself,” says Ambrose, *De Isaac*, c. 8., “is our mouth through which we

speak to the Father, our eye through which we behold the Father, our right hand through which we offer ourselves to the Father.” And a prayer that is not made through Christ not only cannot blot out sin, but itself becomes sin, says Augustine on *Psalm* 108. “And whither do we go, except to Him? and by what way, except through Him?” as he also says, *Tract.* 69 on John. For your Savior says to you: “There is no whither you may go except to Me; no way by which you may go except through Me.” *Tract.* 22 on John. Likewise, *Contra Epist. Parmen.* lib. 2. c. 8.: “If Paul were a mediator, then surely the other co-apostles would be also, and so there would be many mediators; nor would Paul himself have been consistent in saying, ‘For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.’” We do not wish to deny that the Saints, by the charity which they have, rightly pray for their living brethren still militant on earth, even if they know not where they are or what they are doing (to use Augustine’s phrase, *De cura pro mortuis*, c. 16). But we deny that they either particularly know what is being done here on earth, or that they are everywhere present and at hand to those invoking them in the Papacy, or that they undertake the intercession and patronage of individuals.

Wherefore it is not strange] but absurd. For prayers among the living are mutual, but not between the living here and the blessed in heaven. Likewise, there is mutual intercourse among the living, which ceases between survivors and the dead. Nor does any sane man commend himself to the prayers of another pious man except he either addresses him present by voice, or by letters written to him; whereas, on the contrary, the Adversaries would have it that the heavenly Saints can be invoked by the mere motion of the heart. And if the cult of religious invocation, as Bellarmine himself says, is an eminent kind of adoration, and is due to the Saints as an appendix of their blessedness, then it certainly cannot be rendered to the godly still living on earth. Otherwise — which is refuted by its own absurdity — Paul himself must be judged to have rendered that eminent kind of adoration to the godly of his time, and to have worshiped them either with *dulia* or *latria*, since he so often commended himself to their prayers. Finally, how great the difference is between the religious invocation of deceased Saints and the address of the living, that they may help us with their prayers, even Thomas himself hints, *Summa Theologiæ* II-II, quæst. 83, art. 4, ad 3., when he says that those in purgatory do not implore our suffrages by praying, but ask them of the living by direct entreaty.

Without any idolatry] Nay, here idolatry is manifest; since the worship of adoration and religious invocation is due to God alone (*Ps.* 50:15. *Matt.* iv, 10. *Rom.* x, 17.), nor can the calves of the lips be offered to the Saints, nor the incense of prayers burned to them, without their thereby being reckoned omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, and immense — able in a moment to be present to all who invoke them, in various places, on various matters, and by a mere motion of the heart. So that here is most true what once the heathen poet Martial said:

He who fashions holy faces of gold or marble does not make gods; he who worships them makes them.