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The Black International No. 16

The Holy Faith of Romanists

HOW CATHOLICS ARE HYPNOTIZED ABOUT THEIR
WEIRD CREED

by Joseph McCabe

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Chapter I

WHAT IS THE ROMAN CREED?

One of my readers informs me that the editor of an important and comparatively independent American daily to whom he spoke about the theme of these booklets, the conspiracy of the Black International with the Axis powers, said that I would create a sensation if I could furnish adequate evidence of it. He seemed to think that my work must be on the level of the fools who talk about a conspiracy against civilization of the Elders of Zion or at the best a strained inference of plots which from the nature of the case would be kept strictly secret. The editor did not say that he would read the ten booklets of the first series in which I gave a volume of factual evidence and unimpeachable testimony which it would take a court of law a month to examine; evidence and testimony from the published words of Popes, prelates, and Catholic newspapers, leading dailies like the *Times* and the *New York Times*, the European press as objectively reviewed in Keesing's *Contemporary Archives*, Catholic and pro-Catholic books, and official statistics. All that was new in my work was that I laboriously collected these testimonies from the records of the last ten years—in our swiftly-moving times even editors forget what they published a year ago—and arranged them in such order as to give the reader a faithful retrospect and an analysis of the present situation of the world.

Another correspondent asks me if I have worked up the material in, or intend to write, one of those three- or four-dollar books, handsomely bound which really inspire confidence in the reader. My friend is a member of one of those impressive societies of very serious men and women who are out to tell their contemporaries the full and profound truth about international happenings from month to month. It appears that they won't read ten-cent paper-covered booklets. Their library would not accept a copy of a work which was, so that any worker could buy it, split up into ten such booklets. And I reply as in the preceding paragraph. These people may or may not want to know the truth about the share of the Black International in the corruption of our age but they would not publish it in any form or under any circumstances, and most of them have a more or less conscious feeling that they would rather not see anyone give the world truth which they have not the courage to give.

Some of these folks privately wish me good-speed in my work. Some excuse themselves on the score that I am vituperative or a mere superficial collector of facts; and when one reflects on the way in which for the last ten years the "polite" writers and the "profound" writers have led the world blind-fold to the brink of the pit I welcome this description. But many feel it very difficult to believe that the Roman Church, which they thought they knew

well, is capable of this conspiracy against civilization: that is to say, a conspiracy for their own ends, no matter how they define these, of the leaders of the Church with powers which, if they succeeded, would certainly wreck civilization as we know it.

This is not now in dispute but I recommend the reading of a booklet recently published (though possibly not in America) by Prof. J. Needham, of Cambridge University, *The Nazi Attack on International Science*, in which he shows the appalling corruption of even men of science in Germany. "Blood and soil," says Prof. Kriek, Rector of Frankfort University, "are the symbols of the National-political point of view and the heroic style of life," and "What is the purpose of university education? . . . the heroic science of the soldier." But it will be enough to show the depth to which Prof. P. Lenard, one of the six greatest physical scientists of our time, has sunk. He has adopted the vile and stupid racialist creed of the Nazis and repeatedly said that the great Jewish scientists of Germany (Einstein, etc.) have merely hampered "the will for truth of the Aryan scholar, which is as boundless as it is painstaking" and "lowered the level of German science." And what these men of science, intoxicated by the Nazi poison, say in Germany is applied to all higher culture and all that is distinctively modern and promising in our civilization by the priest-ridden dictators of the dozen countries which now grovel at the feet of the Pope.

There are two possible theories as to why the leaders of the Roman Church thus allied themselves with powers that corrupt culture, suppress a freedom which it took the world a century of heroic struggle to win, and brought an incalculable misery upon the race. The first theory, which you may feel to be the natural interpretation of all the facts that I have given and the whole history of the Church, is that the Black International sought to protect the wealth and power it was rapidly losing through the advance of Socialism. The second theory is that of the Church itself as stated by the most conscientious of its apologists. You have the germ of it in these words of Cardinal Newman, the most respected and most orthodox of Catholic writers in the English language:

The Church holds that it were better for sun and moon to drop from heaven, for the earth to fail, and for all the many millions who are upon it to die of starvation in extremest agony, so far as temporal affliction goes, than that one soul, I will not say should be lost but should commit one single venial sin, should tell one wilful untruth, though it harmed no one, or steal one poor farthing without excuse (*Anglican Difficulties*, p. 190).

And if it is Catholic doctrine that it is better that all this ruin, being only material or secular, should take place than that you should tell the wife you were detained at the office when you were giving a little dinner to a stenographer, what ruin is not the Church prepared to sanction, or to cooperate in producing, rather than that tens of millions of folk should commit, or should persist in, the mortal sin of apostasy with all its sequels? Every apology for the Pope's action in Japan, Spain, Germany, Italy, Abyssinia, Brazil, etc., springs from that root. It is Catholic doctrine from *Augustine's City of God* onward.

Which theory do you prefer? If the first, the Black International is purely and simply one of the gang, to be arraigned like the others at the close of the war. If the second, it is an enemy of the human race and of civilization as we moderns understand the words. But at least do not talk to me about respecting sincerity. The head-hunters of Borneo, the thugs of India, the Aztec priests of Mexico, and the Inquisitors of Spain were sincere.

American apologists never quote this perfectly sound doctrinal statement of Newman. They talk vaguely about it being the business of the Pope or the Church to look after man's "spiritual" or "eternal" interests; and they rub the dust into your eyes by telling you in the next breath that American civilization is based upon "spiritual realities." Make no mistake about it. They mean, when they tell the truth, just what Newman said, for that is the Catholic faith. Why, then, you ask, do we not hear Protestant apologists say things of this sort since they also believe in eternal torment or eternal bliss? You will, as a matter of fact, sometimes find a fanatical Baptist preacher using equally bleak and revolting language, though in most Churches the old dogmas have been softened by modern humanism. But the chief reason is that the Black International is a professional body which is mainly concerned to use the logical implications of the creed it imposes to cover its anti-human activities.

As I said in an earlier book, it is not uncommon to find an American Catholic writer, even a bishop, loudly asserting, with a sort of strut and swagger, that if Rome ever ordered them to do or to believe anything contrary to American principles they would cut the cable. This, I explained, is a bit of forensic rhetoric or trickery. It is just to give the non-Catholic public the feeling that these apologists are so perfectly aware that there is nothing in Catholicism opposed to our principles that they can even express themselves in this melodramatic fashion. But it will be a good introduction to our subject, the real nature of the Catholic as distinct from the general Christian creed, to consider what would happen if these folk were some day called upon to make good their boast.

Obviously the Church in America would no longer be either Roman or Catholic. The loss of the first name may not seem to matter much because there is already some tendency to drop it. As I have often pointed out, the new *Encyclopedia Americana* is drenched with Catholic influence, yet if you look up "Roman Catholic Church" you are referred to "Catholic Church, Roman." It is only a few years since the Black International in Britain made a brazen attempt to get the history-books in the public schools revised in their interest, and one change they wanted was to have the word "Roman" deleted in references to the Catholic Church, and to get the Pope described as "the head of the Christian religion." It was rather amusing for those of us who knew that a few years earlier Catholics (especially in Rome) had boiled over with wrath because the (Catholic) Premier of Malta had wanted that change made in the Constitution of the island. However, you easily see what isolation from Rome would mean to the American Church. The oleographs of the Pope and St. Peter's in millions of American (Polish, Italian, etc.) homes must be burned, and try

to picture the turmoil of mind of the folk, old or young, who had listened for years or decades to services on the august authority of "the Vicar of Christ," the glories of the Papacy, the unique wisdom of the Encyclicals, etc., etc. Just bunglers after all. Leave or hand them to McCabe and Haldeman-Julius.

The word "Catholic" would, of course, go with the word Roman. It means, and most essentially implies, "universal." But every other branch of the Catholic Church would scorn this American abortion. At Detroit, Canadian Catholics would cross the river to break up meetings of these foul schismatics of the . . . I wonder what they would call it. The Church of the Stars and Stripes? The Neo-American-Medieval Church? I give it up.

But we know how bold our apologists are, so let us entertain the idea that some day the hierarchy may bring out bell, book, and candle against the Pope, and all the Papal marquises and knights will throw their decorations into the gutter, and so on. What would be the creed of the new Church, as distinguished from that of the Protestant Episcopal Church? Study the latest and most careful statement of the Catholic faith that is offered to the American public, that written by a Jesuit professor in your *Encyclopedia Americana*. Cut away the Papal part and see what is left. Practically nothing. There is a lot about sacraments (baptism, confession, communion, ordained priests, etc.) but it seems that the validity of these things depends essentially upon magical powers inherited from the apostles, to whom Christ gave them, through Peter and the Popes! These revolting bishops would throw away the dog and keep only the tail.

In other words, all this talk about defying the Pope is just trickery, probably put out with the amiable agreement of the Vatican. The opportunity to state the creed in the *Americana* was so important from the Church angle that you may certainly take the article as authoritative, and it agrees with all other short and responsible statements, as in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. It begins with the Gospels, which are said to show that Christ was God, and that he founded a Church with twelve "apostles" as its cabinet-ministers and Peter as Premier or President. That is familiar. The unique Catholic Truth comes in at the next step. It is that if not a single Gospel had been written we should still know all about it. Tradition is the great thing, greater than the Gospels; and, of course, the Church is the custodian and exponent of Tradition. This is that wonderful Catholic logic, which is so lacking in modern science. You prove from the Gospels that God (Christ) founded the Church and made its leaders infallible, so you have to listen to it. As to the little weakness that it is a most thorny question even among Christian scholars how far the Gospel-narrative is historical, when it was written, what interpolations were made, etc., the Catholic need not be troubled. The Church, with its Tradition, which is older than the Gospels, settles all these things. You prove that John Doe is an authority on economics by the authority of John Smith, and then you prove the reliability of John Smith on the authority of John Doe.

But there is method in the madness. We pass over articles of the Catholic faith which are common to that Church and the Fundamentalists. As I showed in the last book, and this latest

exposition of the creed emphatically repeats, every man who calls himself a Catholic pledges himself to a belief in the Trinity, the creation of Adam and Eve and descent of the whole race from them, the Garden of Eden, the Fall, the inherited or Original Sin, the Incarnation, the virginity of Mary, the Redemption ("by death on the cross"), the resurrection, the ascension. Any educated or liberal Catholic who tells you that the Church does not now require him to believe all these things literally, or as they were defined by the Council of Trent, lies. It is the priest who received him into the Church who whispered that to him—if he will keep his mouth closed about it. If any Catholic questions this, let him show you one line in print of a sermon, book, or Catholic paper claiming that liberty.

After this the creed again becomes distinctively Catholic, and you see the reason for the above mental gymnastic. Christ's death created an infinite store of "grace" (supernatural help) for men, and this is mostly conveyed to them by the seven Sacraments of the Roman Church. We will consider their peculiarities later. The main point is that the Church has to prove that these "sacraments," with all the weird beliefs and elaborate ritual and hierarchy they entail, were "instituted by Christ." When you contrast the anti-clerical and anti-ritual message consistently attributed to Jesus in the Gospels with the powerful hierarchy and rich ritual of the Roman Church you fancy that this will strain the resources of even the Catholic apologist. Not in the least. It is quite easy. That is where Tradition comes in. The Gospels are just unofficial collections of tit-bits. The full message and instructions of Jesus about the future life of the Church were given privately to the apostles, and Peter faithfully transmitted them to his successors in the Roman See. What these Protestant and Rationalist historians say about the early Church inventing priesthood and dogmas and the medieval Church inventing myriads of new dogmas and practices which happened to be rather profitable to it is all nonsense. The Church invented nothing. It was all there in the instructions whispered to the Galilean fishermen on the sunny slopes of the hills of Judaea. When the time for each step was ripe the Church brought out the plan from the Tradition entrusted to it.

You begin to see the wonderful simplicity of the Roman Church—or of its lay adherents. If you find it difficult to believe that a Church could get away with this Tradition theory in the 20th Century read for yourself this article in the *Americana*. When at last America was to have its own encyclopedia and not rely on these Britishers, and the Catholic Church was invited to advertise itself lavishly in its pages, you may be sure that this chief article on Catholicism was most carefully considered. It makes a very strong point of the Tradition theory. Naturally it has to be helped out by a monstrous amount of tampering with the historical evidence, but it will be enough to show this in regard to the first and principal part of the Roman creed: the part which the bishops propose to discard when that famous day comes on which they will hurl defiance at the Vatican and the greedy Italians.

Chapter II

THE POPE AND POPERY

In a sense its teaching in regard to the Pope is the only distinctive part of Roman Catholicism. The Greek and certain other oriental Churches which reject the authority of the Pope—the Roman Pope—agree in almost every other respect with Roman dogma and ritual, and until 1918 these non-Roman Catholic Churches had almost as many members as the Roman. Each of them—Greek, Russian, Bulgarian, Rumanian, Roman, Syrian, Abyssinian, etc.—called itself the Catholic (or universal) Church, and they hated each other like cold poison and snorted at the idea that they were all sound branches of a really Universal Church. Historically the Greeks, when Greece was still an Empire, massacred thousands of followers of the Pope, and the Russians carried on the gentle tradition on the Poles in the 19th Century. From 1919 to 1939 the Romanist Poles returned the compliment to the non-Romanist Russians, and today Italian and Croat Romanists use the familiar argument on non-Romanist Serbs, or Greeks. Remember that it is better that millions should die of starvation, or have their dying accelerated by a knife or a club, than that one man should commit a venial sin, much less the mortal and horrible sin of questioning that Eugenio Pacelli is the Vicar of Christ.

Each of these oriental Churches was founded by an apostle, or by a Church which had been founded by an apostle, and—if for a moment you will screw your profane mind up to seeing things on this sacred plane—it is impossible to think that Christ gave one set of instructions about the future to Peter and a different set to his cabinet-ministers. It is therefore essential for the Catholic apologists to say that in the first few centuries of the Christian Era, when the blood of the martyrs kept the Churches fragrant with virtue—this is their language, of course, not mine—and all were loyal to the message entrusted to the apostles, the supremacy of the successors of Peter in the bishopric of Rome was acknowledged; and so all the apologists, not to put too fine a point on the matter, here lie like blazes. From Duchesne, the finest and most liberal historical scholar they have had in this century, to the Jesuit writers in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, they lie.

Do not ask me to be more polite and to say only, in the words of a British statesman, that they are guilty of frigid and calculated inexactitude. Only half a dozen times in the first four centuries did the Roman Pope claim a jurisdiction outside of Italy. The evidence is therefore compact and can be studied in two or three hours by any person who reads Latin; for all the Greek documents are available in Latin (in the Migne collection). And this evidence plainly and emphatically shows that on every such occasion the other Churches vigorously, and in most cases with indignation and contempt, repudiated the claim of the Bishop of Rome. Yet in the

article on the subject in the **Catholic Encyclopedia**, one of the chief articles in this work which announces to the American public that it is the last word in Catholic scholarship and candor, the Jesuit Joyce says:

History bears complete testimony that from the very earliest times the Roman See has ever claimed the supreme leadership, and that that leadership has been freely acknowledged by the universal Church.

Duchesne himself says in the article on the Papacy in the **Encyclopedia Britannica** that its supremacy was "never questioned." Each of these statements to the public on a point of the highest importance is therefore the exact reverse of the truth. You can guess how the minor apologists talk.

The Catholic professor who writes on the Papacy in the **Encyclopedia Americana** is more diplomatic. Perhaps he has seen that in half a dozen books in the last few years I have reproduced the evidence—see especially my **True Story of the Roman Catholic Church** (I, 39-43, II 47-57)—so that even those who do not read Latin can judge for themselves. But he cannot or dare not tell the truth. He says: "It is not now maintained that the full significance of the Petrine primacy was manifest from the first in the life of Christianity." But that is exactly what the **Catholic Encyclopedia** does maintain, as I have quoted. And when this Catholic professor says that the "full significance" was not "manifest," instead of saying that it was flatly denied whenever it was asserted, he is guilty of a constructive untruth. And when he goes on to say that "critics of all shades agree that Peter was in Rome in 64" he is as bold as the others. Very few Protestant theologians and no Rationalist historians admit that Peter was ever in Rome, and I have shown that the "Letter of the Romans to the Corinthians" of the year 96 plainly proves the opposite.

I must not here be drawn into details of history, with which I have fully dealt, quoting the original Latin and Greek authorities, elsewhere. For the moment I am concerned only to point out that the most distinctive doctrine of the Roman Church, that concerning the Popes, the principal basis of the power of the Black International, is so demonstrably contrary to the evidence that the apologists, have to lie to their own people and to the general public about that evidence. Indeed, the literature they impose upon their own people—we are bound to say "impose" when they forbid them to read critics—about this important early phase of their Church and its Popes is comprehensively untruthful. In the lists of Popes nearly the whole of the first thirty are marked "Saints and Martyrs" whereas the facts are so notorious that the leading Catholic experts admit that not more than two at the most were martyrs, that the hundreds of stories of martyrs impressed upon children in Catholic schools are forgeries.

In the first book of this series I gave a short analysis of our actual knowledge of the character of the Popes. The character of the majority of the first eight centuries is really unknown to us, but many were rogues. It is significant that there are only two periods in the first three centuries when contemporary documents throw a light upon the character of the Popes and they

(Victor, Callistus, and Damasus) are seen to be very far from saintly. But I need not repeat the facts even in summary. When Catholics are told by their priests that their Church has been ruled by a long line of Holy Fathers, Vicars of Christ, except that for mysterious reasons God permitted "a few bad Popes" in the series, they are duped. The phrase "a few bad Popes," which occurs in all Catholic writers, is a constructive untruth. The Papacy was corrupt for whole centuries: especially from about 880 to 1050 and (with a short decent pontificate at rare intervals) 1290 to about 1660. No "primacy" in any other organized religion has so disgraceful a record. If I have any readers of this who are not familiar with my earlier work I may assure them that I have covered the entire ground in those works and quoted the contemporary documents for each age. Some day I will get out a short biographical catalogue of the Popes. The general public is today more grossly deceived than ever about the facts of Catholic history.

These facts are materially relevant to my present subject. The man who hesitates to admit that the supreme motive of the Black International is the protection and increase of its power and wealth, who is inclined to take the "spiritual" view of its activity and therefore fails to understand that activity until it is too late, has only to consult the historical facts. I have said that the longest period of degradation of the "Holy See," a period to which you will find no parallel in the history of the religions which Rome treats with such contempt, was from about 1290 to 1660. The Papal Court was almost uniformly and extraordinarily corrupt during that stretch, and the great majority of the Popes were men themselves of unworthy character or men who permitted or patronized corruption. That applies to nine-tenths of this period of nearly four centuries.

Yet this is just the period when the fires of the Inquisition burned most fiercely. The spectacle of the deeply religious and puritanical monk Savonarola butchered as a heretic at Florence under a Pope, Alexander VI, of the most cynically immoral life is not a bad symbol for the period. More cynical still in some respects, as he turned to sodomy after he became Pope, was Leo X, and this man wanted Luther burned at the stake as John Hus had been burned under that "monster of vice" (as the Council which tried him called him), John XXIII. Yet in those days the cry of the Black International was the same as now. They were, they said, moved only by thought of the horrible danger to the faithful of eternal damnation, and no bodily suffering of individual or of nation need be taken into account in their zeal to protect souls.

It is one of the paradoxes of modern times that the larger our historical knowledge has grown or the more self-conscious the world at large has become, the more the power of the Pope has grown. No Catholic writer would now dare, or be disposed, to tell the facts about the Popes of the Middle Ages as candidly as did Cardinal Baronius, the Father of Catholic History, the pride of the Roman Church in the 16th Century. A Cardinal Richelieu honestly telling the Vatican, not making an insincere brag about it to impress his own countrymen, that if the Pope does not mind his own business he will sever France from Rome is today un-

thinkable. Instead of a "Gallican Movement," which for centuries checked the Popes and their encroachments in France, we have a French hierarchy cringing to Rome though it is the ally of the brutes who drench France with shame and misery. All the Catholic anti-Papal attitudes (Febronian, etc.) of national Churches are dead, if I may use the expression, than astrology. Such a figure as Lord Acton, the last fine scholar of the Church, is no longer possible in it. There is far more deliberate untruth in Catholic literature, particularly in regard to the Popes, than there ever was before. And the literary men and sociologists who write so much and so brilliantly about the paradoxes and weaknesses of our age never notice this paradox.

The historian of the future will write delicious pages on it. The fundamental reason for this growth in modern times of what is properly called Popery—not the growth of Romanism in the world, for there is no such growth, but of the cult of the Pope in the Catholic Church—is just that spread of democracy which Rome hates so much. The Pope is the figure-head of the Italian hierarchy, which shares the vast wealth and prestige that the new Popery brings to Rome. Italy itself is too poor to give a comfortable living to the preposterous number of its bishops and priests, but Rome as the international center of the Church always redeemed the poverty of Italy, as far as the clergy are concerned, and this new glorification of the Pope everywhere, this blind adulation of his encyclicals and speeches, this pressure on the world-press to exalt him, have made it more profitable than ever; and the Black International in every country shares the prestige and prosperity and the new protection against the formidable forces which threatened the very existence of the Church.

The root of this remarkable development is, as I said, the growth of democracy. A million Catholics means a quarter or half a million votes, according to the nature of the franchise, and a political party has a profound respect for a man who can control even quarter of a million votes, not to speak of five or six millions. I am for the moment considering the world as it was before the convulsions of the last three years, though we have seen how the Vatican extracted profit from those. The Black International in each country needed no orders from Rome. They and the junta of Italians who run the Vatican had a common interest. It was to the profit of all that statesmen should begin to consult and editors to flatter "His Holiness." Catholic papers, knowing well what it all meant—Catholic support for politicians or papers—put into their mouths an elegant pretext: they were supposed to have risen superior to the narrow and poisonous prejudice against the Popes of the last century and inaugurated an era of real liberalism, tolerance, and civic cooperation.

All this reacted on the Catholic body itself and led to a meeker submission to or exaggeration of the powers of the Pope than ever before. Universal free education and the creation of a Catholic press greatly aided the clergy. Every encyclical that issued from Rome was hailed in Catholic papers and, under Catholic pressure, in other papers as a document of marvelous wisdom. As I have had occasion to point out in various books, Catholic literature still dilates in superlative language on encyclicals of Leo XIII that

were either actually reactionary or at the best contained a few outward platitudes of humanitarian Liberalism which were nicely trimmed so that no Catholic capitalist could take serious exception to them. Simple-minded Catholics expected the Pope to be asked to preside at the Versailles Conference and are today expecting President Roosevelt to secure that he will be invited to preside at the Peace Conference when the present war is over. Their Church in America published the fact that with a prodigious expenditure of money and outpour of literature and oratory it "converts" only about 25,000 of the 120,000,000 Americans every year; and it is demonstrable that it loses ten times that number every year. Yet you will find numbers of Catholic papers and books declaring that the conversion of the whole of America to this child-like allegiance to the Pope is just round the corner—as prosperity was in Hoover's day.

This second quarter of the 20th Century will be characterized by social writers of the future as the age of negroid music, tabloid newspapers, and cosmetics. In such an age any sufficiently enterprising body can do almost anything. And the Black International, with an army distributed over the earth of certainly more than a million agents (priests, monks, nuns, teachers, journalists, etc.) is an enterprising body. Even in England, where Catholics are about one-twenty-fifth of the population, it had the insolence a few years ago to approach the educational authorities of the London County Council and demand a revision—in reality, of course, a falsification—of the historical manuals used in the schools of its vast area; and these manuals are already as tame as a toothless old dog. It transpired that when, with the help of benevolent Labor majorities, they had captured the schools of London, they hoped to capture those of the whole country. Why not, they asked? They had, they said, already done this in some of the leading cities of America. And the Pope whom they expected to glorify, knowing that they would shine in the reflection of his glory, was one of the men responsible for the horrible evil which came within measurable distance of wrecking the British Empire, reducing Britain to the status of a fourth-rate power.

Chapter III

THE SYSTEM OF SACRED MAGIC

This Popery of the Roman Church is enough in itself to prevent it from ever cooperating heartily in American life. As far as I can discover no one has pointed out that these theologians (Suarez, etc.) who four centuries ago spoke about the rights of the people and the Popes who, after ignoring their political ethics for four hundred years and defending the divine right of kings, now find it expedient to recall it in their encyclicals never say what Americans think and say. No one has ever been able to quote, or ever will be able to quote, any endorsement by the Popes of the people's right to govern themselves. All that they have ever said is that the people have a right to nominate the man, king or president, to whom God will give the authority to govern them. Such words as "rule" and "govern" are in fact, obsolete to the modern mind. Within strict limits the majority which votes a "government" into "power" has the right to check the activity of individuals whose acts are prejudicial to the general good. But it is, as in the case of crime, a matter of organized administration not governing.

Thus, while the essential feature of democracy, as we understand it, is freedom, the operative word in this revived Catholic political ethic is "authority." It dropped from the lips of Popes more and more frequently when there seemed to be a prospect of Nazism conquering the world. Petain dribbles it in Vichy every week. Franco, Salazar, Vargas, and the whole brood of puppet dictators under clerical guidance agree that the cause of the world's malady is the decay of authority and the remedy is the restoration of authority. A few days before I wrote this the German-inspired Swiss and Swedish press said that Hitler was going to make a sensational announcement "and that this would be a declaration that the Catholic League (Spain, France, Portugal, etc.) had agreed to adhere formally to the Axis. The sensational announcement proved to be a pitiful exhibition of carpet-chewing, but the contemptible Catholic dictators continue to mumble about authority. We know what they mean by authority: abject submission to rulers in the choice of whom the people have no share, or the exact opposite of the American Constitution.

This is the fundamental principle of the Papal Constitution, and it is all the more repugnant to the modern mind when we contrast the story of its actual historical development with the Catholic theory of it. The idea that Jesus took Peter and his friends aside and instructed them how they and their successors during centuries were to build up and equip the Church is a very feeble sort of fairy-tale. That such an idea should be offered to the American public in what purports to be its most up-to-date and most important work of reference shows only to what an extent the

Church has already put a blight upon American culture. I suppose this new encyclopedia is in the historical school of all American universities, and I wonder if any professor dare warn his pupils that, not only is the idea in itself too absurd to be put before an adult person, not only is Jesus described in the oldest portion of the earliest Gospel as convinced that the world would come to an end within fifty years, but that the historical influence and conditions which explain the evolution of the Papal power are as fully known as the causes of the feudal system or the Renaissance.

We will glance at these in the next chapter. Let us first consider the next distinctive element of the Catholic scheme. To the man in the street it probably seems that there is a gulf between the Catholic and the Protestant Church, but my readers know differently. Practically all branches of the Christian Church east of a line from Northern Yugo-Slavia to the Russian frontier of Poland agree entirely with the Romanists except that they scorn the Pope, allow married men to become priests, and differ on one insignificant detail of the doctrine of the Trinity. Then there is the "Catholic" wing of the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church of America. In any case, you can simplify the apparently bewildering Romanist system by dividing it into two parts. There is the doctrine of the authority of priests and hierarchies with all its disciplinary consequences, and there is the doctrine of "grace" which is the basis of the whole scheme of ritual and dependence on the priests.

I am afraid my readers are a very profane lot, and I almost despair of explaining to them what this "grace" means. I might make short work of the job and say that it is just supernatural magic and the priest is the magician, but your Catholic friends would not admit that. It is fundamental to the whole Catholic system, yet all these pro-Catholic writers and journalists fight shy of it as nervously as they do of the chastity of a nun. The nearest thing to it in the world of reality is *mana*. The Melanesians, who are almost at the lowest section of savage life, believe that a mysterious power pervades nature and is especially stored in certain persons and objects. Every native is on the lookout for more *mana*, which means more strength, bravery, defiance of evil spirits. He looks for unusual objects—shells, stones, etc.—in nature or eats dead men who had been strong and bold. It is fairly equivalent to the medieval idea of magical power, and it is analogous in a sense to that supernatural influence or "grace" which Catholics are so keen to get.

Do not ask me to go into the psychology of it. Catholic doctrines, and especially this basic doctrine, can no more be fitted to modern psychology than the grass-skirt of some fat old Maori woman could be fitted on a slim blond stenographer. Catholic theology still talks about man's "free will" as the basis of moral judgment. Most of my readers will know that no modern psychologist even notices the antiquated belief in free will, and four manuals out of five say that there is no such thing as will. But even if there were, the cooperation of this "grace" with it would be as mysterious as the Trinity. However, there it is. Since the Fall of man the human will has been so enfeebled in face of temptation

that it needs this magical strengthening or grace. Is a girl going to a dance? Has a youth to sit in an office with wicked non-Catholic youths? Does a man's business afford illicit opportunities? And so on. You remember how we saw that the Catholic is assured that the rest of us are so fearfully wicked that every hour he is in more danger—because the penalty of yielding is eternal—than if he were in a Florida swamp or a small-pox area of a Mexican town. Grace is what he needs: the great evil-tonic with magical qualities.

The next step is that the Roman Church has an unlimited supply on tap, and other Churches have none or a very poor and uncertain supply. You may find this exposition rather tedious but on reflection you will admit that you now begin to see why the Catholic talks about his unique Church, outside which salvation is at least so risky that no Insurance Corporation in Chicago would take it on. This grace has to be conveyed by "channels" for some reason or other (doubtless on those secret instructions given to Peter in his fisherman's cottage), and the main channels are the Seven Sacraments: Baptism, Penance (Confession and Absolution), Confirmation, the eucharist, Holy Orders, Marriage, and Extreme Unction. And by what you may or may not choose to regard as a remarkable coincidence each of these channels is controlled and opened by a priest. You may, of course, get grace by praying for it, as the devil does not always give you fair warning to get official assistance. You may see a man drop a five-spot on the pavement before you, the sun shining through a girl's translucent skirt, an unexpectedly bold picture at the cinema, one of McCabe's books lying about . . . Then pray for grace. But the surest and broadest of all channels are the confessional and that priceless advantage of Catholics, the "real presence" of Christ, in the consecrated wafer and the various rites (communion, the mass, etc.) based upon it.

These two threads will take you through almost the entire labyrinth of the Catholic scheme of services and practices for defeating those deadly, restless, voracious, and intensely spiteful enemies of yours: the world, the flesh, and the devil. I am not going through the labyrinth with you. I have a touch of lumbago just now, and my sense of humor is under eclipse. But I must say a few words on each "sacrament", for there are writers who may try to persuade you that they are just pretty symbolic arches under which the happy Catholic passes as he hurries from the cradle to the grave, baptism in infancy, confession at the age of seven (when you first become liable for hell), communion at nine or so, confirmation at thirteen or fourteen when the spring-tide of the hormones rises, marriage or holy orders when the contest becomes tougher, extreme unction in the last lap.

There is nothing symbolic about baptism. It is stern Catholic dogma—and if any man professes to be a Catholic, and does not admit it he is not honest for he dare not openly say so—that every human being inherits the eternal punishment imposed for the sin of Adam and Eve, and baptism is the one cleansing fluid for this liability. In the early Church baptism was generally administered late in life, and the idea of all children, if not half the Christian body, to say nothing of the pagan millions, being sent to hell for

all eternity was so revolting to the few educated pagans who took any interest in the new religion that a compromise was effected. Eternal torture, as I explained in the last book, has two aspects: the loss of the vision of God and "sensory pain." So theologians worked out—I mean found amongst the blue-prints entrusted to Peter in Galilee—that besides hell and heaven there is Limbo or Purgatory, a spirit-world with a salubrious temperature and whatever sports and entertainment spirits indulge in, but no vision of God . . .

I had better keep off these more delicate aspects of the Catholic faith, as this pen of mine runs to ribaldry. It is enough that not one of us, from the new-born babe to the centenarian, will go to heaven unless he has been baptized. In America apologists dupe the general public by saying that it is no longer Catholic doctrine that "outside the Church there is no salvation." I have shown that this is false if by salvation is meant admission to heaven, but theologians are good enough to allow that baptism in Protestant Churches may be valid. There are, however, so many conditions for validity that it is always doubtful, and a convert to the Roman Church is always "conditionally" baptized.

Doubtless all this sounds very silly, if not a little nauseating, to most of my readers, but it is an essential part of the theory to which the Black International appeals to justify its intrigues, its encroachments on the liberties of non-Catholics, and its endorsement of such policies as the alliance with the Axis powers. By the "spiritual interests" which, the apologist says, the Church must consider above all other matters, he means something totally different from what a religious statesman or a puritanical essayist means when he uses that expression. He is referring to this monstrous doctrine of eternal punishment and the claim of the Roman Church to possess the only really safe means of dodging it.

At seven the normal child is introduced to the sacrament of Penance. The basis of this practice again is revolting. It is that a child usually reaches "the age of reason" at that age and may incur eternal damnation. They are all treated as junior Dead-End Kids. The child is confronted with a list of the more serious sins—I regret that I do not remember from 67 years ago whether it contained fornication, adultery, etc., as it does in the Prayer Book which older children consult—which it may have committed up to the age of seven. Less serious sins (lies, quarrels, petty thefts, etc.) a Catholic is not bound to confess as the penalty is not hell. I have not patience to discuss it, but when you read one of those books in which it is said that the Catholic Church has, from its long experience, a marvelous understanding of and sympathy with human nature, think of these boys and girls of seven to ten being taught to brood over their sins and hell and the devil.

So begins the life-long comedy of the confessional. From the age of seven to death the Catholic must go to confession at least once a year, and the societies and confraternities which most of them are bullied into joining make the obligation monthly. It is rather surprising that the Church does not make it weekly. It must harrow a priest's feelings to think of his men and women, youths and maids, boys and girls over the age of seven, frivolling about the parish or the city for three weeks or so under the

sentence of so savage a punishment that the practices of the Nazis in Poland and Russia or of the Japs in China are pleasantries in comparison. Is it necessary again to remind you that this is indispensable Catholic belief on which no gloss whatever is permitted?

The moral aspect I have considered in an earlier book. To talk about the rare cases in which a woman of severe character goes to the priest for "spiritual advice" is like saying that war is a fine moral tonic because a few are braced or purified by their sufferings. Let us keep to plain English. The crowd you will see on any Saturday night in a Catholic Church awaiting their turn to confess is enough to make you despair of modern intelligence in the mass. There are social moralists who shed tears over the crowds at baseball games or in cinemas. They would do better to be concerned about the intellectual level betrayed in these scenes in Catholic churches. Remember that I was once a father-confessor. They just reel off mechanically a list of lies, quarrels, thefts, drinking, etc. and in almost every case a few points about sex; for the Church tells them that not merely every act of touch or exhibition but every thought or word about sex comes under the damnation clause. And for every woman or girl who sincerely wants guidance there are fifty who just love the intimate talk about sex that is permitted with the priest in the confessional; and, to crown the infamy, there is not a more transparently priest-made doctrine in the whole of religion than this sacrament of penance. That it promotes morals and reduces crime is bunk. The one object of it is to consolidate the power of the priest over the laity.

I pass over the sacrament of confirmation, which is as idle a ceremony as taking the oath when you are elected to Congress, and the next sacrament, the Eucharist, the chief glory and pride of the Church, is intellectually quite the most repellent of the lot. "Eating the God"—that is to say, eating food in which the God is believed to be present so that some mysterious power or influence (grace) passes to the eater—is so natural a stage in the development of ritual religion that the Spanish missionaries who came out to convert the Aztecs found that they had that ceremony in a form that was weirdly like their own. It was common in Greece—in the cult of Ceres (the spirit of the corn) and Bacchus (the spirit of the vine)—and was found in the Persian and Mithraic, and Manichæan religions. Thus a sacred supper of bread and wine was very well known in all those cities of the Mediterranean coast in which Christianity arose. In the great rivals of Christianity during the first three centuries of its life, Mithraism and Manicheanism, the similarity to the Christian practice was so close that one Father of the Church was inspired with the theory that the devil had tried to spoil the Church's game by anticipating it, and Augustine tried to discredit the Manichæan sacrament by assuring his followers that the Manichæan priests made their wafer from a fluid and in a manner even the vaguest description of which would, if I gave it here, secure a year's rest in a Penitentiary for Halde-man-Julius; and Augustine was an ex-Manichæan!

Whether this common practice of "communion" had anything to do with the appearance of the "last supper" story of the Gospels

we cannot consider here, nor can we linger to trace how the "eucharist" grew out of this. But the fully developed dogma is so starkly incredible that, although there is no obscurity whatever about the statement of it I have often described it, I wonder if any non-Catholic reader fully realizes what the Catholic believes and would be expelled from the Church if he did not quite literally believe. The "bread" used in the sacrament is, as most people know, a thin round wafer or cracker made from flour and water: the wine, as a rule, a light Rhenish wine mixed with water. And the dogma is that when, in the mass, the priest breathes over these the Latin for "This is my body" (*Hoc est corpus meum*, which the wicked Reformers shortened to Hocus-pocus) and "This is my blood," they are in the most literal sense converted into the living personality (body, mind, and divinity) of Jesus Christ. Theologians take advantage of a fanciful distinction which Aristotle made—it is, of course, quite meaningless in modern science—between the "substance" of a thing and its "accidents." In the case of a wafer or a glass of wine these "accidents" are the color, shape, weight, taste, etc. The Catholic dogma is that in every Catholic chapel every morning there is the prodigious miracle, at the priest's words, of the living personality of Christ taking the place of the substance (by transubstantiation) of the bread and wine while the "accidents" (or qualities, if you like) of the bread and wine remain!

Of course, you say, educated Catholics do not believe this . . . (supply your own expletive). If any educated Catholic does not literally believe it he dare not say so except in private conversation with some other person who thinks it honest to profess to be a Catholic and to deny a dogma on which the Church insists as sternly as it insists on the existence of God. Every proposal to give it a figurative or symbolical interpretation has been condemned as heresy, a mortal sin to hold even in your own mind, a sure ticket to Gehenna. But you have not yet heard the half of it.

As the "accidents" of the wafer and the wine can be divided into crumbs or drops, the theologian has to say that the living body of Christ is in each crumb or drop: the entire physical body, with heart beating, lungs working, blood flowing—from hair to toe-nails. Ask any Catholic if you still believe that I am pulling your leg. Count Hoensbroech, the German ex-Jesuit, tells us from his personal experience of a woman who after receiving the sacrament (consecrated wafer) in communion reflected that she had Christ's organs in her mouth, and she spat it into her handkerchief and brought it to him. I advise you to get that point clearly. It is heresy and a moral sin in Catholic theology to say even in your own mind, as Protestants say in regard to their Lord's Supper, that there is just a special presence or influence of God in the consecrated elements. The doctrine of the Real Presence of which Catholic (domestic) literature talks so much, means that Christ's physical living body—you remember that it "ascended" alive into heaven—is present in every crumb of the consecrated wafer—if one is badly made and a crumb falls off Christ is in it—and every drop of the consecrated wine.

By this time some of my readers will be saying: Oh, quit it and pass on to something that we can at least read. But if you want to understand the Catholic's pride in his unique faith and especially

his belief that cruelty, intrigue, and mendacity are justified in the work of bringing the world to so beautiful and salutary a faith, you had better hear the whole of it.

There are, I take it—I won't stop to work it out—quarter of a million altars at which this miracle occurs every morning, with Christ in each crumb. But besides the larger wafer which the priest swallows—often with much effort, for I can assure you that those "accidents" of the bread remain pretty tough in a dry throat—he occasionally "consecrates" hundreds of smaller wafers in a separate vessel for the laity to receive in what is called communion. These are stored in that highly decorated safe which you will find in the centre of every Catholic altar. That is why a lamp burns before it and the Catholic bends his knee on entering or raises his hat on passing a church. If a bedridden invalid wants to communicate in his home, the priest takes a wafer in a silver box in his vest pocket. In Catholic countries, where there are no ribald scoffers a procession warns Catholic wayfarers, who fall on their knees, and even in America the priest wears a half-hidden "stole" on such occasions so that the first parishioner he meets will not stop him to tell the latest funny story or offer him a cigarette. Did it ever occur to you that many a time when you met a black-clad priest round Fourth Avenue he had Jesus Christ in his vest pocket?

If you like large sums in arithmetic you may care to estimate in round numbers in how many crumbs of how many wafers (allow, say, a hundred wafers to each church) in how many churches throughout the world Jesus Christ is physically present without leaving heaven: I haven't time. You may wonder also what happens when a burglar opens the safe (tabernacle) for the silver cups and scatters the consecrated wafers ("hosts") on the street, or a bomb buries it until the "accidents" putrefy—all theologians admit that they will—and so on. All that is carefully worked out in theology and was doubtless included in the blue-prints entrusted to Peter. It is disputed whether Christ remains when these wicked Satanists, who are as real to Catholics as vampyres are to a Bulgar peasant, steal a "host" for very naughty purposes. It is generally held that he does, and there are lots of edifying stories in circulation in the Church about how the blood spurted from the host when the wicked Freemason or Satanist stuck a dagger in it. A church in America can hardly prosecute a man for stealing Christ, but theft is not necessary. Every apostate priest, even Joseph McCabe, retains the power to work this transubstantiation. I must say that no Satanists have ever offered me a dime for my services.

I could fill a book with interesting features of this dogma and of the practices which it inspires, but must confine myself to one more. This belief is the care of the Catholic Sunday just as it is the central and most tremendous and precious dogma of the whole system. In the "mass" on the Sunday morning the priest consecrates the "host" and under pain of hell every Catholic who is not seriously ill (tiredness or a cold or toothache won't do) must be present at least at one of the "low masses (without singing). The priest does his best for the people, gabbing his addresses and prayers, in Latin, to the Almighty at 200 to 300 words a minute, so as to get through in 25 minutes, or there will be much grumbling.

The "high" mass is the same ceremony with singing, commonly a choir of non-Catholic professionals who happily, do not understand in the least what is going on, and the best music (Beethoven, Mozart, Cherabini, etc.) has been written by skeptics and apostates, as I will tell in a later book. The evening service is optional to Catholics, but again the chief part of it is based upon this dogma. A consecrated wafer in a silver-gilt and glass receptacle, is exhibited amidst a blaze of candles and flowers for the adoration of the people. This doctrine of the eucharist, in other words, is the chief source of the priest prestige—he alone can create and handle "the Blessed Sacrament"—and the possession of so unique and priceless a thing puts the Catholic faith incomparably higher than any other religion.

After this I need not waste time on the other sacraments and all the devices piously supplied by the Church for a small consideration, for defeating this desperate conspiracy of the world (you and me), the flesh, the devil against the souls of Catholics. Matrimony is a peculiar sacrament—No, not on the ground that you think I mean but because, on theological principles, the parties administer it to themselves by marrying. But you may be sure the priest is not out of it. As I have shown in an earlier booklet it is part of Rome's sheer defiance of civil law in any modern civilization that it declares the marriage invalid if the priest is not present and valid if he is although the ceremony is (contrary to civil law) kept secret. The real reason why in this case the priest is not said to be the minister of the sacrament is because any Catholic can find out that until the 12th Century a Catholic did not need to be married by a priest.

"Holy Orders" is the channel by which a very special "grace"—the power of transubstantiate bread, to absolute sins, and to sustain a vow of chastity so heroically as priests do—is conveyed. Extreme Unction, or the Last Anointing, is a development of a pre-Christian medical practice of rubbing with oil, men who were very ill. It became a symbolical ceremony of touching with oil the parts of the body with which a man or woman had sinned. It was, however, apparently provided in the original blue-prints that when our wicked age supervened the anointing of "the loins" might be omitted. In the delicate and virtuous Middle Ages they just lifted up the dying person's smock and—Well, it is not clear in the ritual books what exactly the priest anointed. Holy Water is not a sacrament but is very valuable. It is water from which a priest has, with a pinch of salt—I was never clear whether or no this was meant for the devil's tail—and various incantations driven out the devil, and he so dreads it ever after that the Catholic makes lavish use of it in church; where, Catholic practice suggests—women still wear their hats to keep the devil from entering by their ears—evil spirits are strangely numerous. Then there are the numerous objects (medals, etc.) blessed by the priest, the bishop, or the Pope to be worn next the skin. These are the cheapest of all means of fighting the world, the flesh, and the devil and getting one's "time" in purgatory reduced. But these simple reflections on the main features of the Catholic system must suffice.

Chapter IV

HOW THE DOCTRINES WERE FABRICATED

That very persuasive and very popular and magnificently audacious American apologist Dr. Fulton Sheen published a work entitled *Old Errors and New Labels* (1931). It is as boring and as far from reality as Hilaire Belloc on the same theme (*Arrivals and New Arrivals*). The burden of the first chapter is a complaint—a complaint, mind you—that nobody ever attacks his Church today. It has “never before in the whole history of Christianity been so intellectually impoverished for want of good sound intellectual opposition” (p. 7). Phew! I will not attempt to reply that I have myself written about 100 books and booklets (besides the present series) on the Roman Church and never seen a word of reply, because, of course, I am not at all on the same intellectual level as Fulton Sheen. He would at once tell you that. So would I. What he means is, he says, that the apologist wants “a foeman worthy of his steel”—like Hitler looking round Europe for little men until he stupidly attacked Russia. The Church, he says, “asks her children to think hard and think clean,” and a really powerful opposition helps this. But the intellectuals of America are afraid to venture upon criticism. And so on.

That is the sort of stuff that Catholics read. It does not occur to them that they are forbidden to read critics anyway, or that to explain the “intellectual impoverishment” of their literature in his fashion is much like a junior baseball team saying that it is kept down because the Giants won’t meet it. The reverend sophist also sublimely ignores the fact that his Church in America has a tremendous organization for preventing the publication or circulation of any criticism of itself and trying to bring economic ruin upon any professor or professional writer who dare attempt it.

But we might overlook all that. What will at once occur to the reader, after the preceding chapter, is the question: How in heck does a Catholic expect modern scientists, philosophers, or historians to sit down and write serious criticisms of that bewildering tissue of puerilities and dupery? Even the modern astrologer or palmist puts up a better show. If Dr. Sheen literally believes that stuff, as he certainly professes to do, he might as well expect Mencken to criticize the kiddies’s section of the Sunday Supplement, or a Carnegie Foundation to issue a learned treatise on the longevity of the patriarchs. To talk about the intellectual impoverishment of his Church is superfluous, but for a man who accepts all this medieval trash to turn round on our age with its monumental intellectual and practical achievements and tell us that we are “spineless” and “afraid of truth” is too funny to be a good joke.

I have written this lengthy chapter on what the Fulton Sheens and Ryans and J. J. Walshes believe not because it is stuff that is worthy of the reader’s consideration but because he ought to

know exactly what Popes and apologists mean when they say that those "higher interests" of men which they have to consult justify them in ignoring those "lower interests" (peace, prosperity, freedom, etc.) which we moderns think paramount. Now you know just what they mean. But the cream of this very bad joke is that these doctrines and practices which they are going to fasten upon more millions of men at the cost of appalling war and suffering were quite transparently and, in the world of scholarship, notoriously fabricated by the Black International itself.

I have shown this in chapter II as regards the first distinctive leading Catholic doctrine, the power and peculiar inspiration of the Pope. In the first reliable Roman document, which was written by the Roman Christians themselves in the year 96, their bishops is not mentioned. He is just one of the bunch. A hundred years later his successor claims authority over communities in Asia Minor, and the bishops "bitterly reproached Victor" (the Pope) for his insolence, the first ecclesiastical historian, Bishop Eusebius, tells us (v. 24) and the African Fathers joined in and heavily castigated him. In short, as I said, though the claim of authority began to be treasured in Rome itself after A.D. 150—the blue-print given to Peter on this point seems to have been lost for a century and a half, and all copies in the case were lost—Popes ventured to assert it only five or six times in four centuries and were mercilessly snubbed every time. Their opportunity came in the 5th Century when the Goths and Vandals wrecked the Empire and left no bishop of any strength to oppose Rome, and Europe sank to an abysmal ignorance. The Greek Churches, though on Catholic theory they had the same instructions or tradition as Rome, continued to tell the Pope what he could do with his claims, and even in the Darkest Europe of the Dark Age it took the Popes eight further centuries—culminating in the monstrous claims of Innocent III (1198-1216)—to build up that power which, the world is solemnly informed in the 20th Century—it would have laughed even in the 10th—Christ prescribed to the apostles. And this power was, Catholic historians admit, in large part based upon a mass of forgeries, the False Decretals, that are still basic documents of the Canon Law.

Reflect again on the fact, which I proved, that the Catholics of our time are more subservient to the Pope than Catholics ever were before. The Popes had to wait until 1870 to get themselves declared infallible, as they had always claimed to be, and they had a deuce of a time in getting the bishops to declare it. A Republican or Democratic Convention for nominating a candidate for the presidency has nothing on the Vatican Council of 1870. Catholic schools had exposed in the 15th Century the lies on which the claims of jurisdiction and the temporal power of the Popes were based. Catholic France loudly defied the Pope even in the time of Louis XIV. Now American and British bishops laud his serene wisdom and divine majesty even while he is, they know, conspiring with the bitter enemies of their countries and of civilization. Do you want further proof of the common interest of the Black International and of the fact that that interest is economic?

Not less demonstrable is the fabrication of those dogmas and practices which, the apologists blandly say, Christ sketched to the

apostles. (Incidentally, what an encyclopedia these illiterate fishermen must have compiled?) The "eucharist," of course, is ancient enough. As I explained, a sacred supper of bread and wine in which a god was somehow incorporated was one of the chief features of the leading religions of the Greek-Roman world, as the Fathers admit. The pagans taunted them with having borrowed it. But what exactly it meant to Christians in the first and second centuries we do not know, and how it became "the mass" (borrowing the very word from the Mithraists, according to many) in the 3rd Century, and how the doctrine of transubstantiation was slowly elaborated we cannot consider here. It was that towering genius Thomas Aquinas who fully worked out the theory of the "accidents" (color, shape, weight, smell, liability to putrify or intoxicate, etc.) of the bread and wine remaining when the "substance" disappeared.

The sacraments of penance (confession) and matrimony, which are the richest sources of the power of the priests over the laity, are, on the other hand, quite obvious and late bits of priestcraft. A practice of voluntarily confessing sins was, as I have previously said, inherited from the pre-Christian world, but it was not until after the year 200 that the Roman Church, under a Pope of disreputable character (Callistus), discovered that the power to bind and loose, which Christ was supposed to have given to the apostles (Matt. XVI:19), meant that the bishop could absolve from grave sins that were confessed to him, and other Churches pronounced this a scandalous misinterpretation of the Scriptures in the interest of the Roman clergy. Again the apostolic blue-prints seem to have been lost. In the Dark Age, naturally, the clergy made headway with their ambition to enslave the laity—even Havelock Ellis and Bloch do not seem to have read the lists of sins that survive from that appalling age—but it still took centuries to get obligatory confession extended to the clergy, monks, and nuns. The laity remained refractory until the most powerful and most arrogant of the Popes, Innocent III, imposed the obligation of annual confession upon the entire Church (1215). It was, of course, those marvelously modern schoolmen, Aquinas and his contemporaries, who worked out the theory of it, and instead of it proving the moral discipline which some historians, eager to oblige the Church, now profess to find it, the law was followed by quite the most immoral and vicious period in the history of Europe (1200-1550). After this long and picturesque history the Council of Trent declared it a "sacrament."

Holy Orders (or ordination) is a magical ceremony of which the clergy very gradually increased the solemnity and complexity in order to mark off their sacred caste from the laity and enhance their own prestige. From the Pauline Epistles and the earliest Christian documents we gather that each "Church," which means "assembly," was a very democratic community of a few dozen or score, vague "followers of Christ." The only distinction recognized amongst them in the last decade of the 1st Century according to the Letter of the Romans to the Corinthians is that they have presidents (bishops) and helpers (deacons). As these things usually go, they probably had annual elections at which Brother and Sister So-and-so contrived to get on the committee and Brother or Father So-

and-so, probably the old fellow with the longest beard and the longest purse, became chairman or overseer. A century later, when a squabble for the leadership of the Roman community led to one, and much the better, of the rivals writing a book which we still have, we find that the original weekly or monthly supper is now a sacred event and round it is gathered a group of clergy who are definitely cut off as a higher caste. In the squabble an astute ex-slave got the bishopric, and this unscrupulous adventurer made a considerable advance in marking off the clergy from the laity and opened a modest chapel—a room over a deserted pub according to one contemporary version—in which doubtless the strict dividing line of the sanctuary was drawn. All this was already done in the Mithraic temples, one of which was a stone's throw from the Christian conventicle in Rome, so we do not need to think of hidden Protocols.

We cannot follow here the slow growth of this arrangement and of the elaborate consecrating ceremonies, to impress the laity, which became the Sacrament of Holy Orders. I will add only one detail. Although the Popes of the 5th Century, finding Europe in ruins and sinking into profound ignorance, were now able to assert (with the help of the imperial police—this is a literal truth) the sovereignty they had long claimed, they were very small cheese compared with the Popes of a later date. When one died the people helped themselves to his table-silver, wines, and anything else worth looting and then joined the clergy in a new election. On many such occasions the records tell, the church in which the election-meetings were held swam with blood. At the election of "St." Damasus, the darling of the women-voters, the "butcher's bill" was nearly 200. However, the people continued to have the chief vote, since the election was carried by acclamation, in the election of a Pope until the 11th Century. The priests then had the assistance of a German army in putting the Roman laity in their place and making a holier business of the election of a Pope: in theory, that is to say, like all things Catholic, for the history of Papal elections during the next five centuries was amazing and it continued to this day to be an orgy of intrigue and rival ambitions.

But the historical details do not matter. It is more interesting that, as in the case of confession and matrimony, the elevation of ordination to the rank of a sacrament or "channel of grace" had in actual fact, as revealed in all contemporary chronicles, not the least moral result. I am often accused even by skeptics who fancy themselves far superior to me in emotional delicacy and intellectual poise of being unable to see or unwilling to acknowledge "the good side" of these things. To which I reply that I would rather be truthful than dainty and I am convinced that it is immeasurably better for the world to ascertain and tell the facts than to refuse to read the facts so as to be able to say smooth and conciliatory things. In 1937 I published in Britain a book titled **The Papacy in Politics Today**, plainly showing the Vatican intrigues to that date and warning folk about the future. In the organ of a group of these superior non-Christian folk the book was dismissed as "lamentable" and not worth reading. I doubt if even today they have read a line of the evidence I have published of the conspiracy of

the Black International. There are thousands of them in America.

As far as my present subject is concerned these highly respectable folk say that even if "grace" as a supernatural entity does not exist the Catholic scheme of special channels of it and impressive ceremonies for the young men who are taking the clerical vow of celibacy and the married couples who are swearing loyalty to each other for life is admirable and may psychologically have excellent results. There their knowledge of the matter ends. People who argue in this way are on exactly the same level of mischievousness as those who five or six years ago argued that Fascism and Nazism, with all their faults, were doing good. The world wants or needs the truth-facts. And the truth is, and every year of extension of my fifty years study of history makes it plainer, that the fabrication of these sacraments by the clergy of the Roman Church was followed by a more vicious general life in Europe than we find over an equal period of several centuries in any earlier civilization. Penance, holy orders, and matrimony were not dogmatically declared sacraments until the 16th Century. But in practice they were enforced as such and the basis of them was constructed by the Schoolmen, in the 13th Century. That century and the following two are the most vicious period in civilized history. Sacraments are medieval fabrications of the Black International to dupe and further enslave the laity.

There is the same evidence of deliberate priestly fabrication in every part of the distinctively Catholic structure of doctrine and practice. One of the next most prominent features is the cult of Mary and the saints and martyrs. As late as the end of the 4th Century we find the greatest of the Fathers, Augustine, protesting against this cult, which was then beginning in the Roman Church; though he did not know that, as Catholic authorities admit today, the new cult of martyrs was based upon a mass of audacious foreigners by the Roman priests. They had their revenge on Augustine. They forged sermons on Mary in his name, and some of these are incorporated in the Catholic ritual today.

The cult of Mary is one of the most glaring innovations of the latter part of the 4th Century, when the pagans were being forced by law into the Church. They wanted a goddess, so the mother of Jesus, who is given less prominence than Mary Magdalene in the Gospels and was not honored even in the Roman community for more than 300 years after her death—when the supposed tradition ought to have been freshest—was decked in all the dazzling robes and epithets of the old pagan goddesses (Ceres, Ishtar, Anaita, etc.). When, after an almost unparalleled period of artistic desolation, art was cultivated once more in Europe, this cult of "the Madonna" proved a splendid asset to the Church of Rome, and the great age of Mariolatry opened. As if in unconscious mockery of the theory of Tradition it got worse in modern times. Apologists profess that while doctrines certainly "developed" there is in this no inconsistency with their theory of Tradition or "a deposit of faith" (kept, doubtless, in the Sacred Archives of the Vatican). Any man who is not under the hypnotic influence of the Catholic atmosphere smiles. The purer Christianity of the first three centuries and the Reformed Christianity which returned to the Gospels in the 16th Century rejected the cult. It began as a concession to pagan-

ism, it developed more richly in the Middle Ages as a concession to the weird mixture of paganism and Christianity in the art of the Middle Ages, and it was encouraged to develop still more in modern times because it appeals to the imagination of the emotions as few other dogmas do. The language used in the hymns to Mary today surpasses that of hymns and prayers to the old pagan goddesses, and grown-up men in New York and Boston lustily sing such things as "when wicked men blaspheme thee, I'll lay me down and die," while frivolous city stenographers and store assistants sing: "Holy Mary, let me come soon to be with thee in thy home." It is part of the doctrine that when Mary died her body was physically transported by angels into heaven (now called the stratosphere—but I suppose that is blasphemy, so I must look out for pious gunmen). The "rosary," a string of 50 small and 5 large beads, to count 50 prayers to Mary and 5 to God, became in the modern world one of the chief symbols of "the pure religion of Jesus." Bogus shrines like Lourdes in France and St. Annes in Canada attracted millions—to the great profit of the Black International.

I have no space to trace even in the same very brief manner all the other peculiarities of "the Holy Faith." The upshot is the same. Doctrine and practice "developed" in exactly the same way as a great store like Marshall Fields developed. New attractions were required to sustain or to increase profits. Age by age the gothic structure of the faith, with its gargoyles and its buttresses, its dark corners and its theatrical mummery, was built up, and on every stone of the structure is stamped the word "Priestcraft." That the American public should in the fourth decade of the 20th Century and in its chief work of reference be confronted with a solemn statement that all this was done in conformity with unwritten instructions given to Peter 1900 years ago is an insult to its intelligence: that the Fulton Sheens should be in a position to claim blandly over the ether that the structure is so chaste, so graceful, so logical that no "foeman worthy of their steel" will venture to criticize it, while all the world knows what funds and organizations they have for stifling criticism, is a menace and disgrace.

Chapter V

HOW THE GENERAL PUBLIC IS DUPED

This situation would make the social student and the reformer wonder, if they ever candidly confronted it, whether a very large part of the public is not kept in a mental atmosphere which must have a dangerous effect on its attitude to more practical problems; and the ease with which the entire population has been led during years into a poisonous swamp, the mischievous action to the last moment of American Catholics, and the stubborn adherence even now of Canadian Catholics to that policy show that in fact this doping of the Catholic mind by the priests is a real national and international evil. But how do they succeed in drugging some 15,000,000 people in a country that spends more on education and cultural establishments than any other country in the world? And how is it that the general public is so far deceived that few recognize the intellectual insipidity of the creed and the scheming of the priesthood?

The first question requires a thorough reply, and this will be provided in the next book, but let me recall several elements of the reply that I have already given. The Catholic body may be predominantly urban, but it has not the psychological features of urban life. Instead of being stimulated by community life it is taught to regard the community as evil and free discussion as a sin. It is composed to an extraordinary extent of immigrants from the rural regions of less-educated countries (Poland, Slovakia, Eire, Italy, etc.) and their families, and the priests take care that in the matter of religion they shall still have a link with the motherland. The bulk of the remainder are folk who, since they are taught to regard as particularly sinful the reading of any literature that might unsettle their faith and assured that the writers are conscious or unconscious agents of the devil, might almost as well live still in Kerry or Apulia for all the influence of modern culture on them.

As to the "educated" Catholics we saw what such education is. Everybody knows that many of them do defy the Church and read modern books without troubling to get the priest's permission and are healthily skeptical about much that the Church teaches. If you bear in mind that the Church does not merely forbid such reading but dogmatically teaches that it is a mortal sin like fornication, you see that these men and women, while professing to be members of the Church, must repudiate its authority, when it suits them, to say what is or is not a sin and thus reject a fundamental part of the creed. They formally remain in the Church for reasons which it drastically condemns. The mortal sin of heresy is not merely to say but to believe in one's own mind that a dogma of the faith is not literally true. The amiable writers who speculate on the Church of Rome from without and think that it is just as

easy for Catholics to take their peculiar doctrines figuratively as it is for members of the Episcopal Church do not know what they are talking about. And where these "liberal" Catholics are "converts" you will be interested to know that before they were received into the Church they made a solemn declaration of literal acceptance, not of the religion as a whole, but of each one, individually, of a long and complete list of the dogmas which was presented to them to recite.

I will tell the sad story of Catholic Modernism in the next book and will add only one further point here. It would be a reflection on the intelligence of one-sixth of the American people if we were to suppose that, even taking into account their vast funds and powerful organization, the priests actually hold the loyalty of 20,000,000 to 25,000,000 people, according to their various estimates, to this weird synthetic creed. We saw that, on the contrary, the leakage is enormous, and that even when they give the figure of 18,000,000 they include, and on the law of their Church must include, people who have quit it. Another striking proof of this reaches me as I write this book.

It is announced in some of the papers—most of them, as usual, suppress the news as "offensive to Catholics"—that the religious census compiled by the military authorities from the interrogation of recruits show that 31 percent of the men were baptized Roman Catholics. This means that about 40,000,000 of the present inhabitants of the United States had Catholic baptism and are in the canonical sense Catholics. There is no ground whatever to suggest that the recruits were in any large proportion taken from the Catholic more than the Protestant body, and it is clear that more than half these men, though still fairly young, left the Church so long ago that it is unknown to the priests of the districts in which they live that they are really "subjects of the Pope." They mainly represent that drift from the faith of boys who have left the Catholic primary school, a drift which some Catholic authorities estimate at between 60 and 80 percent of the whole. It is a nice reflection on that "statistical" work, which I examined in the second book, in which Fr. Shaugnessy learnedly proves that there is no drift whatever! It seems to be about twice as bad as even I estimated, and it is fairly certain that there are at all events not more than 15,000,000 actual Catholics, half of whom are children and most of the remainder peculiarly ignorant, in the United States.

This at once gives us one of the ways in which the general public are duped. According to the statistics of religion which are given in all reference books the Roman Church has twice as many members as any other Church in America or more than one-third of the Christians of the country. The meaning of this—the heavy Catholic immigration from backward countries—is, of course, never pointed out in the papers, and the naturally large increase of such a body at each decennial census is not explained. In fact the government officials who publish the figures generally make remarks about the "extraordinary increase"—no one knows better than they that the increase is not as great as that of the general population—and, while they are quite scientific in their analyses of and notes on the figures in all other respects they never warn the readers that, unlike other Churches, the Roman Church does not admit that seceders have seceded from it.

The net result is that the general public are grossly deceived about the largeness and growth of the Romanist body, and this makes them very receptive to Catholic propaganda of the broader kind: the sort of propaganda that does not make you eager to enter the Church and endorse its creed but disposes you to look upon the Roman Church as a really unique body and superior to other Churches. Skeptics of the last century, and far too many even in our time, had a theory that the Roman Church has a far better chance of survival than its rivals. If in this they were regarding the wealth and power of its organization and the unscrupulousness of its methods we could see nothing more than an exaggerated estimate in the theory but they meant and mean, much more than this. They meant that the doctrinal structure of the Roman Church was less likely than that of other Churches to be affected by the corrosive forces of the new age. Their idea of the difference is summed up in the phrase "Rome or Reason." The world of the future was to be divided between those who admitted the exercise of reason on religious matters and would all become Rationalists and those who repudiated the application of reason and based their faith upon authority.

I have elsewhere shown that there is no such fundamental distinction between the Catholic and Protestant Churches. We have, in fact, seen repeatedly in these pages that Catholic writers claim that they alone in the modern world are logical and that what they want to face is "intellectual" opposition. But it suits their purpose to make use of the conclusion to which this Rome-or-Reason theory leads, and they freely quote predictions of future triumphs of their Church. They still drag out periodically and polish up the famous prediction of Macaulay—never mentioning, of course, that he had a profound contempt for the doctrines and brutal methods of Rome—that the rule of the Vatican would still spread over the earth when tourists from the other side of the world came to see the melancholy ruins of London (which to Macaulay, as a good Englishman, meant thousands of years in the future). They quote Wells (whom they hate) telling, amongst his anticipations, how monks with shaven polls will be conspicuous figures in the scientific cities of the future, or Bodley, who at one time had a high reputation in America, predicting that by the end of the present century there would be 70,000,000 Catholics in the United States and a corresponding increase of the Catholic population all over the world. If these critical writers—two Protestants and one Rationalist—so candidly admit the triumphant progress of the Roman Church it must, the general public think, really have something of the unique nature and unconquerable spirit which it claims.

A good journalist would, of course, riddle these predictions with his shot in ten minutes. Macaulay was more rhetorical than scientific in his essays, and he rather lazily suggested that a Church which had survived all the onslaughts of seventeen centuries—he quite admitted that it was by the use of violent and unscrupulous methods—would probably continue to survive. Wells had the wrong idea that Catholic faith was based upon an emotional trust in authority: which his particular opponent, Hilaire Belloc, would have described as the sloppy Protestant idea of faith. Bodley estimated that there would be 70,000,000 Catholics in America at the

end of this century because he calculated that the total population would be 400,000,000: which would leave the proportion of Catholic to general population just the same as Bodley understood it to be at the time when he wrote. This critical journalist would further point out that a Church which claims only to make 20,000 to 25,000 converts a year and admits a serious leakage does not show any promise of fulfilling these predictions, and that in point of fact even the figures supplied by the Catholic hierarchy to the authorities at each decennial census show, when the birth-rate is taken into account (to say nothing of fresh immigration and a claim of 250,000 converts a decade), not an increase in the number of Catholics but a very notable decrease. He would, in fine, easily learn that the Catholic figures grossly deceive the general public because while a Protestant minister may hopefully include in his list folk in his parish who have ceased to attend his church, the Catholic priest includes such seceders on principle and denies their right to secede from the Church.

But there is no such journalist in America (or Britain). No paper would print such material. Any editor who ventured to do so would lose his job. Not only would his circulation and his revenue from advertisements be threatened but to an unknown extent the Church buys up shares in American papers. Lecturing—not on religion or the Roman Church—in Seattle a few years ago I learned that one of the dailies made various excuses for not inserting the advertisement of my lectures. My agent, a local businessman, was persistent, and he found, to his astonishment, that through the bishop the Roman Church held a high proportion of the shares in the paper. Haldeman-Julius has told in his paper how after his advertisements had been accepted and inserted in some papers a hidden hand intervened, and no more advertisements were accepted and even a public apology made for the insertion. We speak ironically when we call it a "hidden" hand. You can smell the holy oil on it, even when it acts through a Knight of Columbus as a member of the Holy Family Society.

Editors and journalists, often ashamed of the pressure to which economic necessity compels them to yield, evolve their own defense-mechanism. As good Americans they are not going to encourage the disruption of community-life by this "sectarian strife." Moreover, the Roman Church is really exceptionally entitled to respect. Look at its long and glorious history—as told now by certain professors who are, like themselves, intimidated by it. Look at its world-wide spread, its primacy amongst the Christian sects (if not all religions), the great names (of dead men) it has on its roll of honor, the world-prestige of its venerable and once more royal head, its vast wealth, its unique organization, its privileged position in Washington, and so on. So every Catholic event is written up by Catholic members of the staff on their knees. A Eucharistic Congress? Not a word must be said to the public about the childish Catholic doctrine that is at the root of it. A canonization? Not a word about how the Vatican claims that the "saint" literally wrought miracles and the Italian clergy at all events lined their pockets at the expense of the country to which the saint belongs. Diplomatic courtesies with Japan? Not a word about how these have gone on since 1930 and the Vatican, by its

international influence, mightily helped Japan to hoodwink America and the world.

So it goes on. As I write, some of the papers announce that the French general who has "escaped" from Germany and gone to the holy shrine of Vichy, the foulest nest of treachery in Europe, took a message that the Catholic industrialists of Germany are prepared, in collusion with the army-leaders to destroy Hitlerism and make peace with Britain and America. The condition implied is that Catholicism shall be restored in Germany and continue to hold the position it has won by treachery in Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Slovakia, etc. It is, of course, nonsense, but the remark leaves on the mind a vague feeling that the Roman Church has vast potentialities of service. It is unique. That, or the reputation for it, is its strength. And all this subservience of the press which it now commands hides the real uniqueness which ought to put it on the same level in the public mind as the Holy Rollers or the Seventh Day Adventists. Its creed is uniquely contemptible amongst the major branches of the Christian religion and more redolent of deliberate priestcraft than any other. "Can such a faith survive?" is the title given by an Angelican bishop to a series of sermons he gave on the theology of his Church. Yes, he said, by jettisoning half its dogmas, literally understood. But the Church of Rome survives, ravaged it is true but still massive, without the sacrifice of a line of its creed. How? To that question we must next address ourselves.



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