

## “WHAT’S WRONG IN THE VATICAN PRESS OFFICE?”

“[T]he point of all our toiling and battling is that we have put our trust in the living God; he is the saviour of the whole human race but particularly of all those who believe in him.”

I Timothy 4: 10

In an article on *The Catholic Thing* website of 17<sup>th</sup> September 2012 bearing as title the above heading, Robert Royal, editor-in-chief, stepped outside the website’s usual conservative constraints to lambaste the Vatican Press Office over the blandness of its release in respect of the murders perpetrated by Muslims who stormed the United States diplomatic mission in Libya on 11<sup>th</sup> September.<sup>1</sup> The release ran—

“Profound respect for the beliefs, texts, outstanding figures and symbols of the various religions is an essential precondition for the peaceful coexistence of peoples. The serious consequences of unjustified offence and provocations against the sensibilities of Muslim believers are once again evident in these days, as we see the reactions they arouse, sometimes with tragic results, which in their turn nourish tension and hatred, unleashing unacceptable violence.

“The message of dialogue and respect for all believers of different religions, which the Holy Father is preparing to carry with him on his forthcoming trip to Lebanon, indicate the path that everyone should follow in order to construct shared and peaceful coexistence among religions and peoples.”<sup>2</sup>

News sources around the world accepted at face value the Muslim assertion that the ravaging of the American mission had occurred spontaneously in reaction to a film mocking Mohammed. The date on which the events occurred demonstrates the film merely served as an excuse for calculated acts of violence, something confirmed by the militaristic preparations for the attack. Muslims flexed their ideological muscles in demonstrations in other parts of the world including Sydney’s Hyde Park where posters called for the beheading of those who insult ‘the prophet’.

The various organs of the media expressed predictable outrage but their principals seem incapable, universally, of seeing this inimical, not to say violent, religion for what it is. Paul Kelly, editor at large of *The Australian*, for instance, suggested Muslims should accept the secular state.<sup>3</sup> In this he demonstrated a lack of grasp of history—whether of the development of the modern state, or of Islam—and the characteristic naivety of the atheist. No society can hope to live in peace where Mohammedanism flourishes, a fact once-Catholic Europe recognised in struggles with Islam that spanned a millenium.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. <http://www.thecatholicthing.org/> 17 September 2012.

<sup>2</sup> A substantial addition was made after widespread criticism.

<sup>3</sup> *Islam should accept a secular state*, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/columnists/islam-should-accept-a-secular-state/story-e6frg74x-1226476843588>

Which brings us back to the question posed by Robert Royal. The Vatican press office is an organ of the Vatican. If its response to the Muslim outrages was weak, this is not the fault of the press office but of the Vatican. The website heading should, then, have read—

### ***“WHAT’S WRONG IN THE VATICAN?”***

Royal quotes Pope Benedict XVI on his visit to Lebanon in the days that followed the assault praising the ‘Arab Spring’ as manifesting, despite its shortcomings, a genuine desire for freedom, but adding—

“We must do all we can to ensure that the concept of freedom, the desire for freedom, goes in the right direction and does not overlook tolerance, the overall social fabric, and reconciliation, which are essential elements of freedom.”

This comment was, with respect, about as effectual as the press office release.

For this is not the Mohammedan understanding of freedom. Islam’s view of the world and humanity turning on a fatalism that attributes every event to the ‘will of Allah’, its jaundiced light subverts human freedom turning it into a species of slavery. His bizarre understanding entitles the Muslim to attack his fellow man for the sake of ‘Allah’ when he thinks it necessary. Almighty God, Creator and Conservator of the universe, source of all that is good, allows evil in the world only that a greater good may come of it. The Muslim knows nothing of this for to the revelation of the God-man, Jesus Christ, he prefers that of ‘the prophet’.

In any other age the pope would condemn Mohammedanism for its errors and the systematic evils they work in the world. This is not to say that he would not be circumspect in doing so, but he would not remain silent, or confine himself to comments about the need to respect the freedom of others. Christ died to save all men including Muslims and they are not to be excluded from the care of Christ’s Vicar, especially in an age where the ambit of his influence is so enlarged. Mohammedanism can lead no one to heaven. The intimidation the Muslim thinks himself entitled to exercise is not addressed by Catholic silence; nor is his salvation.

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The revolt against God of the sixteenth century corrupted the religion founded by God. Its result, Protestantism, devolved into numerous sub-heresies, one of which rejected God’s revelation that in the One God there are three Persons. Under the influence of Deism (as this aberration came to be known) virtue was suppressed in favour of power, the power of human freedom. Deism gave birth to Freemasonry, a movement whose secrecy is only matched by the malevolence of its influence, whose ideas precipitated the disaster of the French Revolution.<sup>4</sup>

When, in due course, sanity returned to the French people they yet retained a pre-occupation with freedom as a social principle. This they passed to the Deists and Freemasons among America’s founding fathers, who enshrined it—*literally*: courtesy

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<sup>4</sup> Deism bore a remarkable resemblance to Mohammedanism.

of the French, its symbol stands at the entrance of the country's first harbour—in the psyche of the American people.

### The Church's Wisdom on Freedom

Any society, if it is to prosper and to be stable, must be founded on virtue.<sup>5</sup> What is critical is not freedom *but freedom's right usage*. This had long been recognised by Christ's Church. Pope Pius IX dealt with an important aspect, that which concerns religion, in the *Syllabus of Errors* adjunct to his encyclical *Quanta Cura*, on 8<sup>th</sup> December, 1864. There he condemned, *inter alia*, the following proposition:

“Every man is free to embrace and profess that religion which, led by the light of reason, he thinks to be the true religion.” [n. 15]

In doing so he endorsed the teaching of his predecessor Gregory XVI who in the encyclical *Mirari vos* (August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1832) had condemned certain propositions of the French priest, Félicité de Lamennais, derived from the Masons of the Revolution.

Pope Pius IX prefaced his condemnations in *Quanta Cura* with this statement:

“We, truly mindful of Our Apostolic duty, and especially solicitous about our most holy religion, about sound doctrine and the salvation of souls divinely entrusted to Us, and about the good of human society itself, have decided to lift our voice again. And so all and each evil opinion and doctrine individually mentioned in this letter, by Our Apostolic authority We reject, proscribe and condemn; and We wish and command that they be considered as absolutely rejected, proscribed and condemned by all the sons of the Catholic Church.”

Let the reader observe that in condemning ‘religious freedom’ the pope addressed *a matter of faith* for his text addressed, by negation, what a man must believe. He addressed *a matter of morals* for morality has to do with human acts, each of which bears upon man's last end, and the act whereby a man embraces and professes the one and true religion is fundamental to his attainment of that end.

Less than six years later the Vatican Council, in the Dogmatic Constitution *Pastor Aeternus*, defined as dogma—that is, as revealed by God—that the Pope speaks infallibly when, 1) speaking *ex cathedra*, that is, carrying out his duty as pastor and teacher of all Christians; 2) in accordance with his supreme apostolic authority; 3) he explains a doctrine of faith or morals; 4) to be held by the universal Church. Each of these four conditions is fulfilled in *Quanta Cura* as analysis shows:

1. [M]indful of Our Apostolic duty... solicitous about our most holy religion, about sound doctrine and the salvation of souls entrusted to us, and... the good of human society;
2. by Our Apostolic authority;
3. We reject, proscribe and condemn [all and each evil opinion and doctrine individually mentioned]; and... wish and command they be considered as absolutely rejected, proscribed and condemned;
4. by all the sons of the Catholic Church.

Accordingly, when Pius IX condemned ‘religious freedom’ in the *Syllabus of Errors*, he spoke infallibly. That is, through the mouth of the pope Christ's Church had spoken definitively.

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<sup>5</sup> Virtue is grounded in man's nature as a rational being, that is, on man's dependence on his Creator, Almighty God. And the first virtue, the foundation of any society that hopes to endure, is charity, the love of God and of one's fellow man.

Pope Pius IX's assistant, Gioacchino Pecci, the Bishop of Perugia, had urged him in the definition of the terms of the *Syllabus of Errors*. In November 1878 on the death of Pius IX Cardinal Pecci was elected pope as Leo XIII and on 20<sup>th</sup> June 1888 he devoted an encyclical, *Libertas praestantissimum*, to human freedom. He began—

“Liberty, the highest of natural endowments, being the portion only of intellectual or rational natures, confers on man this dignity, that he is ‘in the hand of his counsel’ [Ecclesiasticus 15: 14] and has power over his actions. But the manner in which such dignity is exercised is of the greatest moment inasmuch as on the use that is made of liberty the highest good and the greatest evil alike depend. Man is free... to obey his reason, to seek moral good, and to strive unswervingly after his last end. Yet he is free also to turn aside... and in pursuing the empty semblance of good, to disturb right order and to fall headlong into the destruction he has chosen...”<sup>6</sup>

He went on to distinguish *natural* (or absolute) freedom from *moral* freedom, liberty within the limits imposed by the moral law. He exposed these powers as founded on the reality of man's twofold limitation, his *dependence* and his *contingency*.

- Man is *dependent*: he did not bring himself into existence—another did that for him. He does not keep himself in existence—another does that for him.
- He is *contingent*: he can be and be not.

A man's very essence and existence conform to laws in whose establishment he had no hand, to whose operation he is irrevocably bound by a force extrinsic to himself. Among these is the moral law, a law imprinted on his mind.

Set forth in the Appendix are further passages from this encyclical, compulsory reading for all who are troubled over the confusion of the modern age. The reader who studies them will come upon a section [nn. 19-20] in which the pope confirms the condemnation of Pius IX referred to above.

“[L]et us examine that liberty in individuals which is so opposed to the virtue of religion, namely, the liberty, as it is called, of worship. This is based on the principle that every man is free to profess, as he may choose, any religion or none at all.

“But assuredly, of all the duties which man has to fulfil, that without doubt is the chief and the holiest which commands him to worship God with devotion and piety. This follows of necessity from the truth that we are ever in the power of God, are ever guided by His will and providence, and having come forth from Him, must return to Him. Added to which, no true virtue can exist without religion for moral virtue is concerned with those things which lead to God as man's supreme and ultimate good; and therefore religion, which (as St Thomas says) ‘performs those actions which are directly and immediately ordered to the divine honour’ (*Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 81, a. 6; resp.), rules and tempers all virtues.

“And if it be asked which of the many conflicting religions it is necessary to adopt, reason and the natural law unhesitatingly tell us to practise that one which God enjoins upon us and which men can easily recognise by certain exterior notes through which Divine Providence has willed that it should be distinguished, because in a matter of such moment the most terrible loss would be the consequence of error. Wherefore, when a liberty such as we have described is offered to man the power is given him to pervert or

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<sup>6</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> June 1888, n. 1.

abandon with impunity the most sacred of duties, and to exchange the unchangeable good for evil. This, as we have said, is no liberty at all but its degradation and the abject submission of the soul to sin.”

### **The Adoption of the American Pre-Occupation by the Fathers of Vatican II**

The members of Christ’s Church lived in the aura of this wisdom until the 1950s. With the calling of the Second Vatican Council by Pope John XXIII, however, a sea change overtook the episcopacy. Under the pope’s urging that there was a need to ‘bring the Church up to date’, *aggiornamento*, the bishops set about disturbing this stability. That the exercise was not only unlikely to be fruitful, but dangerous to the faith; that the Church, the means instituted by God for man’s salvation, was not intended to conform to the demands of that or of any age;<sup>7</sup> that she is outside time—these matters hardly troubled a majority of the Council’s bishops. Their efforts ‘to bring the Church up to date’ succeeded beyond expectation. The ravaging of the Church and of the faith of its members that followed has no parallel in history.

A principal feature of the movement instigated by John XXIII was the bishops’ acceptance of the American pre-occupation with the Masonic view of freedom. Closing their minds to the Church’s teachings, the bishops adopted the specious reasoning of the American *peritus*, Fr John Courtney Murray S.J., and endorsed the claim of freedom of religion in the United States Constitution.<sup>8</sup> The document in which they did this, *Dignitatis Humanae*, was formally endorsed on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1965. Since that time a majority of the members of Christ’s Church have regarded ‘religious freedom’ as Catholic teaching.

The astute will be quick to note that Divine Providence ensured that the document failed by a day to be anointed on the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. They may also note that it had taken the bishops of Christ’s Church 99 years *less one day* to reject her infallible teaching. With the benefit of hindsight one may say that there could hardly have been a worse time in history for the Church’s hierarchy to abandon principle in so important a matter. Now, through the permissive will of Almighty God, a burgeoning Mohammedanism is demonstrating the folly of the Masonic error in every nation that has embraced it, and in the halls of the Catholic Church.

### **What is Worse, Atheism or Mohammedanism?**

On one view atheism is worse. For it denies reality, the ability of a man to account for his essence (*what* he is), or his existence (*that* he is), or that he has any need as a rational animal to do so. How rightly does sacred scripture describe the man who says there is no God as a fool.<sup>9</sup>

Atheists think their position justified by the pseudo-explanation of Darwinian evolutionism, a bland materialism blinding them to that theory’s sleight of hand. For

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<sup>7</sup> Save *per accidens*, in adapting to the needs of each society in which the Church flourishes.

<sup>8</sup> 2,308 in favour; 70 against.

<sup>9</sup> *Psalms* 14: 1

while it pretends that the world and the universe are explicable with reference to nothing but matter (*material* causality only) it cannot do so without invoking *formal* and *efficient* causality *per accidens*, through chance, ‘natural selection’, or some other fortuitous incident. But since every accidental cause is reduced to a cause *per se*, the theory’s purported exclusive reliance on matter is false.

On another view Mohammedanism is worse for it operates to pervert true religion. Not so much a religion as an ideology that mocks religion, Mohammedanism’s distortions serve to confirm the atheist in his contention that belief in God is folly. That Mohammedanism is a mockery of true religion may be seen in the way its tenets reverse the principles God laid down for man’s salvation 600 years before.

- Charity, the love of God and of one’s fellow man, is the supreme principle, and virtue, of a religious life—but not for Muslims whose supreme principle is slavish obedience to the demands of ‘Allah’.
- Almighty God so loved his creature, man, that He assumed human flesh to redeem him from the perdition incurred in the sin of Adam—but Muslims reject God’s revelation, reject the Christ who laid down His life for them, in favour of the assertions of a ‘prophet’ who produced no miraculous event to verify the claims that he had been sent by God.<sup>10</sup>
- The religion that God founded uses the imagery necessary to man’s nature and essential to draw him to the love of God—the Muslim rejects all use of images.
- God makes the man who accepts baptism and faith in His Son, Jesus Christ, his adopted son by sanctifying grace—to the Muslim, the slave of ‘Allah’, such a claim is incomprehensible.
- God said that no man can have greater love than to lay down his life for his fellow man—the Muslim believes that for the sake of ‘Allah’ he can get to heaven by killing his fellow man.
- God made man to work out his destiny bearing with fortitude the vicissitudes of life in the exercise of his freedom under the moral law—the Muslim, determined by fate, thinks his freedom constrained by subservience to the demands of ‘Allah’. Chesterton wrote of the Christian’s contrast to the Muslim in his poem *Lepanto*:

*It is he who says not ‘kismet’  
It is he who says not ‘fate’.  
It is Richard, it is Raymond,  
It is Godfrey in the gate...<sup>11</sup>*

The Mohammedans’ Allah resembles nothing so much as Moloch, the god of the Phoenicians and Canaanites, or the gods of the Mayans, that demanded human sacrifices to appease them. Let the reader open any newspaper and he will see this demand for human sacrifice executed daily at the hands of the votaries of ‘Allah’.

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<sup>10</sup> On this topic see St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* Bk. I, 6 [4]

<sup>11</sup> Raymond, Count of Toulouse, and Godfrey of Bouillon were members of the First Crusade against the Muslim in the Holy Land. Richard I, *Coeur de Lion*, King of England, led the Third Crusade.

## What's Wrong in the Vatican

Perhaps the most significant characteristic of the *Declaration on Religious Freedom* is the naivety of its claims. The objective observer can only wonder at the complacency with which the Council bishops—

- refrained from distinguishing the various categories of freedom,
- treated the term 'religion' and its cognate adjectives univocally, as if there was no difference between the innumerable religions founded by men and the one religion founded by Almighty God.

But there was more than naivety at work; there was objective, if not subjective, malice. This is clear from the systematic quotation out of context of the words of earlier popes to provide apparent support for the propositions asserted by Courtney Murray. Moreover, the Church had warned Americans and the rest of the world of defects in the American perception and of their dangers [*Longinqua* (6.1.1895); *Testem Benevolentiae* (22.1.1899)]. The bishops of Vatican II chose to ignore these warnings.

Although they had addressed and condemned atheism elsewhere in the Council documents, notably in *Gaudium et Spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World) nn. 19-21, nowhere did they do so in *Dignitatis Humanae*. The most they said was this—

"[Christ] did indeed denounce the unbelief of some who listened to Him; but He left vengeance to God in expectation of the day of judgement." [n. 11]

And with good reason, for as Leo XIII had noted in *Libertas praestantissimum*—

"The liberty of worship... is based on the principle that every man is free to profess as he may choose any religion, or none at all." [n. 19: emphasis added]

You cannot exclude from 'religious freedom' the freedom to embrace atheism.

Defenders of the Council are quick to reject this assertion, pointing to the bishops' statements against atheism. What they do not realise is that it matters not *what the bishops said*, what matters is *what they did*. By endorsing the Masonic principle they acknowledged that a man is free to reject all religion.

No papal encyclical is more important for the modern world than one setting forth a reasoned condemnation of atheism, yet Catholics will wait in vain for its publication under the present dispensation. Just as the Pope feels himself bound by *Dignitatis Humanae* to refrain from condemning Mohammedanism and the evils it brings, so does it operate to constrain him from publishing a reasoned condemnation of atheism.

Michael Baker

11<sup>th</sup> October 2012—*Fiftieth anniversary of the Opening of the Second Vatican Council*

*Note on the duty of obedience to the Pope*

The writer repeats, as if it is set forth here, the terms of the note contained in the article *The Trouble With Dignitatis Humanae III* on this website.

## Appendix

Edited passages from *LIBERTAS PRAESTANTISSIMUM*, Encyclical letter of Pope Leo XIII, 20<sup>th</sup> June 1888, *On the Nature of Human Liberty*.

3. While our concern is with *moral* liberty, it is first necessary to speak briefly of *natural* liberty; for, though it is distinct and separate from moral liberty, natural freedom is the fountainhead from which liberty of whatsoever kind flows, *sua vi suaque sponte*<sup>12</sup>. The unanimous consent and judgment of men... recognises this natural liberty only in those only endowed with intelligence or reason; and it is by his use of this faculty that man is regarded rightly as responsible for his actions. For, while other animate creatures follow their senses, seeking good and avoiding evil by instinct only, man has reason to guide him in each and every act of his life. Reason sees that the good things of this earth may exist or may not, and discerning that none of them are [of absolute necessity] for us, it leaves the will free to choose what it pleases... When, therefore, it is established that man's soul is immortal, endowed with reason and not bound up with things material, the foundation of natural liberty is at once most firmly laid.

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5. ... Considered as to its nature, [liberty] is the faculty of choosing means fitted for the end proposed, for he is master of his actions who can choose one thing out of many. Now, since everything chosen as a means is viewed as good or useful, and since good, as such, is the proper object of our desire, it follows that freedom of choice is a property of the will, or, rather, is identical with the will in so far as it has in its action the faculty of choice. But the will cannot proceed to act until it is enlightened by the knowledge possessed by the intellect. In other words, the good wished by the will is necessarily good in so far as it is known by the intellect; and this the more, because in all voluntary acts choice is subsequent to a judgment upon the truth of the good presented, deciding to which good preference should be given... The end, or object, both of the rational will and of its liberty is that good only which is in conformity with reason.

6. Since, however, both these faculties are imperfect, it is possible, as is often seen, that reason should propose something which is not really good, but which has the appearance of good, and that the will should choose accordingly. For, as the possibility of error, and actual error, are defects of the mind and attest its imperfection, so the pursuit of what has a false appearance of good, though a proof of our freedom... implies a defect in human liberty. The will also, simply because of its dependence on the reason, no sooner desires anything contrary to reason than it abuses its freedom of choice and corrupts its very essence... This is often discussed by [St Thomas Aquinas]... 'Every thing,' he says, 'is that which belongs to it a naturally. When, therefore, it acts through a power outside itself, it does not act of itself, but through another, that is, as a slave. But man is by nature rational. When, therefore, he acts according to reason, he acts of himself and according to his free will; and this is liberty. Whereas, when he sins, he acts in opposition to reason, is moved by another, and is the victim of foreign misapprehensions. Therefore, *Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin.*' [*On the Gospel of St. John*, cap. viii, lect. 4, n. 3 (ed. Vives, Vol. 20 p. 95)]. Even the heathen philosophers recognised this truth, especially those who held that only the wise man, that is, the man trained to live in accord with... justice and virtue, is free.

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<sup>12</sup> "by one's own power and free will."

7. Such, then, being the condition of human liberty, it necessarily stands in need of light and strength to direct its actions to good and to restrain them from evil. Without this, the freedom of our will would be our ruin. First of all, there must be *law*; that is, a fixed rule of teaching as to what is to be done and what is to be left undone... [R]eason prescribes to the will what it should seek or shun for the eventual attainment of man's last end, for [which]... all his actions ought be performed. This ordination of *reason* is called law. In man's free will, therefore, or in the moral necessity that our voluntary acts comply with reason, lies the very root of law's necessity. Nothing more foolish can be uttered or conceived than the notion that, because man is free by nature, he is exempt from law. Were this the case, it would follow that to become free we must be deprived of reason; whereas the truth is that we are bound to submit to law precisely because we are free by our very nature. For, law is the guide of man's actions; it turns him toward good by its rewards, and deters him from evil by its punishments.

8. Foremost in this office comes the *natural law*, which is written and engraved in the mind of every man; and this is nothing but our reason commanding us to do right and forbidding sin. Nevertheless, all prescriptions of human reason can have the force of law only inasmuch as they are the voice and the interpreters of some higher power on which our reason and liberty necessarily depend. For, since the force of law consists in the imposing of obligations and the granting of rights, authority is the one and only foundation of all law—the power, that is, of fixing duties and defining rights, as also of assigning the necessary sanctions of reward and chastisement to each and all of its commands. But this, clearly, cannot be found in man, as if, his own supreme legislator, he is to be the rule of his own actions. It follows, therefore, that the law of nature is the same thing as the *eternal law*, implanted in rational creatures, and inclining them *to their right action and end*; and can be nothing else but the eternal reason of God, the Creator and Ruler of the world. To this rule of action and restraint of evil God has vouchsafed to give special and most suitable aids for strengthening and ordering the human will. The first and most excellent of these is the power of His divine *grace*, whereby the mind can be enlightened and the will wholesomely invigorated and moved to the constant pursuit of moral good, so that the use of our inborn liberty becomes at once less difficult and less dangerous... As the Angelic Doctor points out, it is because divine grace comes from the Author of nature that it is so admirably adapted to be the safeguard of all natures, and to maintain the character, efficiency, and operations of each.

9. What has been said of the liberty of individuals is no less applicable... when considered [of]... civil society. For what reason and the natural law do for individuals, that *human law*, promulgated for their good, does for the citizens of states. Of the laws enacted by men, some are concerned with what is by its very nature good or bad; and they command men to follow after what is right and to shun what is wrong, adding at the same time a suitable sanction. But such laws by no means derive their origin from civil society, because, just as civil society did not create human nature, so neither can it be said to be the author of the good which befits human nature, or of the evil which is its contrary. Laws come before men live together in society, and have their origin in the natural, and consequently in the eternal, law. The precepts, therefore, of the natural law, contained bodily in the laws of men, have not merely the force of human law, but they possess that higher and more august sanction which belongs to the law of nature and the eternal law. And within the sphere of this kind of laws the duty of the civil legislator is, mainly, to keep the community in obedience by the adoption of a common discipline and by putting restraint upon those who are refractory and viciously inclined...

10. From this it is manifest that the eternal law of God is the sole standard and rule of human liberty, not only in each individual man, but also in the community of civil society. Therefore, the true liberty of human society does not consist in every man doing what he pleases, for this would simply end in turmoil and confusion, and bring on the overthrow of the state; but rather in this, that through the injunctions of the civil law all may more easily conform to the prescriptions of the eternal law. Likewise, the liberty of those who are in authority does not consist in the power to lay unreasonable and capricious commands upon their subjects, which would equally be criminal and lead to the ruin of the commonwealth; but the binding force of human laws lies in this, that they are applications of the eternal law, and incapable of sanctioning anything which is not contained in the eternal law, as in the principle of all law. Thus, St. Augustine most wisely says: '[T]here is nothing just and lawful in [the] temporal law, except what men have gathered from [the] eternal law.' (*De libero arbitrio*, lib. I, cap. 6, n. 15 [PL 32, 1229].) If, then, anyone in authority should sanction something out of conformity with the principles of right reason, and hence hurtful to the commonwealth, any such enactment could have no binding force of law since it would be no rule of justice and be certain to lead men away from that good which is the very end of civil society.

11. Therefore, the nature of human liberty, however it be considered, whether in individuals or in society, whether in those who command or in those who obey, supposes the necessity of obedience to some supreme and eternal law, which is no other than the authority of God commanding good and forbidding evil. And, so far from this most just authority of God over men diminishing or even destroying their liberty, it protects and perfects it, for the real perfection of all creatures is found in the prosecution and attainment of their respective ends; but the supreme end to which human liberty must aspire is God.

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14. If when men discussed the question of liberty they were careful to grasp its true and legitimate meaning... they would never venture to affix such a calumny on the Church as to assert that she is the foe of individual and public liberty. But many there are who follow in the footsteps of Lucifer, and adopt as their own his rebellious cry, 'I will not serve' and... substitute for true liberty what is sheer and most foolish license. Such, for instance, are the men belonging to that widely spread and powerful organization, who, usurping the name of liberty, style themselves 'liberals'.

15. What *naturalists* or *rationalists* aim at in philosophy, the supporters of *liberalism*, carrying out the principles laid down by naturalism, are attempting in the domain of morality and politics... To refuse any bond of union between man and civil society, on the one hand, and God the Creator and... the supreme Law-giver, on the other, is plainly repugnant to the nature not only of man but of all created things; for, of necessity, all effects must in some proper way be connected with their cause, and it belongs to the perfection of every nature to contain itself within that sphere and grade which the order of nature has assigned to it, namely, that the lower should be subject and obedient to the higher.

16. Moreover, besides this, a doctrine of such character is most hurtful both to individuals and to the state. For, once ascribe to human reason the only authority to decide what is true and what is good, and the real distinction between good and evil is destroyed; honour and dishonour differ not in their nature, but in the opinion and judgment of each one; pleasure is the measure of what is lawful; and, a code of morality

being provided which can have little or no power to restrain or quieten the unruly propensities of man, a way is naturally opened to universal corruption... [A]uthority is severed from the true and natural principle whence it derives its efficacy for the common good; and the law determining what it is right to do and avoid doing is at the mercy of a majority. Now, this is simply a road leading to tyranny. The empire of God over man and civil society once repudiated, it follows that religion, as a public institution, can have no claim to exist, and that everything that belongs to religion will be treated with complete indifference. Furthermore, with ambitious designs on sovereignty, tumult and sedition will be common amongst the people; and when duty and conscience cease to appeal to them, there will be nothing to hold them back but force, which of itself alone is powerless to keep their covetousness in check...

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18. [Some]... affirm that the morality of individuals is to be guided by the divine law, but not the morality of the state, such that in public affairs the commands of God may be passed over, and may be entirely disregarded in the framing of laws. Hence follows the fatal theory of the need of separation between Church and state. But the absurdity of such a position is manifest. Nature herself proclaims the necessity of the state providing means and opportunities whereby the community may be enabled to live properly, that is to say, according to the laws of God. For, since God is the source of all goodness and justice, it is... ridiculous that the state should pay no attention to these laws or render them abortive by contrary enactments. Besides, those who are in authority owe it to the commonwealth not only to provide for its external well-being and the conveniences of life, but still more to consult the welfare of men's souls in the wisdom of their legislation. But, for the increase of such benefits, nothing more suitable can be conceived than the laws which have God for their author; and, therefore, they who in their government of the state take no account of these laws abuse political power by causing it to deviate from its proper end and from what nature itself prescribes. And, what is still more important, and what we have more than once pointed out, although the civil authority has not the same proximate end as the spiritual, nor proceeds on the same lines, nevertheless in the exercise of their separate powers they must occasionally meet...

19. To make this more evident, the growth of liberty ascribed to our age must be considered apart in its various details. And, first, let us examine that liberty in individuals which is so opposed to the virtue of religion, namely, the liberty, as it is called, of worship. This is based on the principle that every man is free to profess, as he may choose, any religion or none at all.

20. But, assuredly, of all the duties which man has to fulfil, that, without doubt, is the chief and the holiest which commands him to worship God with devotion and piety. This follows of necessity from the truth that we are ever in the power of God, are ever guided by His will and providence, and, having come forth from Him, must return to Him. Added to which, no true virtue can exist without religion, for moral virtue is concerned with those things which lead to God as man's supreme and ultimate good; and therefore religion, which (as St. Thomas says) "performs those actions which are directly and immediately ordained for the divine honour," rules and tempers all virtues. And if it be asked which of the many conflicting religions it is necessary to adopt, reason and the natural law unhesitatingly tell us to practice that one which God enjoins, and which men can easily recognize by certain exterior notes, whereby Divine Providence has willed that it should be distinguished, because, in a matter of such moment, the most terrible loss would be the consequence of error. Wherefore, when a liberty such as we

have described is offered to man, the power is given him to pervert or abandon with impunity the most sacred of duties, and to exchange the unchangeable good for evil. This, as we have said, is no liberty, but its degradation, and the abject submission of the soul to sin.

21. This kind of liberty, if considered in relation to the state, clearly implies that there is no reason why the state should offer any homage to God, or should desire any public recognition of Him; that no one form of worship is to be preferred to another, but that all stand on an equal footing, no account being taken of the religion of the people, even if they profess the Catholic faith. But, to justify this, it must needs be taken as true that the state has no duties toward God, or that such duties, if they exist, can be abandoned with impunity, both of which assertions are manifestly false. For it cannot be doubted but that, by the will of God, men are united in civil society; whether its component parts be considered; or its form, which implies authority; or the object of its existence; or the abundance of the vast services which it renders to man. God it is who has made man for society, and has placed him in the company of others like himself, so that what was wanting to his nature, and beyond his attainment if left to his own resources, he might obtain by association with others. Wherefore, civil society must acknowledge God as its Founder and Parent, and must obey and reverence His power and authority. Justice therefore forbids, and reason itself forbids, the state to be godless; or to adopt a line of action which would end in godlessness—namely, to treat the various religions (as they call them) alike, and to bestow upon them promiscuously equal rights and privileges. Since, then, the profession of one religion is necessary in the state, that religion must be professed which alone is true, and which can be recognized without difficulty, especially in Catholic states, because the marks of truth are, as it were, engraven upon it. This religion, therefore, the rulers of the state must preserve and protect, if they would provide—as they should do—with prudence and usefulness for the good of the community. For public authority exists for the welfare of those whom it governs; and, although its proximate end is to lead men to the prosperity found in this life, yet, in so doing, it ought not to diminish, but rather to increase, man's capability of attaining to the supreme good in which his everlasting happiness consists: which never can be attained if religion be disregarded.

22. All this, however, we have explained more fully elsewhere. We now only wish to add the remark that liberty of so false a nature is greatly hurtful to the true liberty of both rulers and their subjects. Religion, of its essence, is wonderfully helpful to the state. For, since it derives the prime origin of all power directly from God Himself, with grave authority it charges rulers to be mindful of their duty, to govern without injustice or severity, to rule their people kindly and with almost paternal charity; it admonishes subjects to be obedient to lawful authority, as to the ministers of God; and it binds them to their rulers, not merely by obedience, but by reverence and affection, forbidding all seditions and venturesome enterprises calculated to disturb public order and tranquillity, and cause greater restrictions to be put upon the liberty of the people. We need not mention how greatly religion conduces to pure morals, and pure morals to liberty. Reason shows, and history confirms the fact, that the higher the morality of States, the greater are the liberty and wealth and power which they enjoy..."

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