



The Splendor and Scandal of St. Peters Basilica

The History of St. Peter's Basilica - Part 1

Julius II = Pope

Bramante = Architect

Michelangelo = Sistine Chapel

****1506 first stone laid by Julius***

Leo X = Pope

Raphael = Architect

****1517 Luther posts 95 theses***

****1519 Magellan sets off***

Clement VIII = Pope

Antonio the Younger = Architect (after Raphael died young)

****1527 Sack of Rome***

****1534 Michelangelo paints 'The Last Judgment' to show them***

Paul III = Pope

Michelangelo = Architect

****1534 Henry VIII starts Church of England***

Saint Peter's Take 2 (Joseph's take...)

(This is the story of how the New Saint Peters was created.)

In 315 Jesus told Constantine to beat the holy shit out of his enemies and start a new religion – details to follow.

So, he did.

With the flash of a sword Christians went from being the persecuted to the persecutors.

He beat the holy living shit out of Maxentius– his enemy “numero uno”, chopped off his frigging head, put it on a spike, and paraded it around Rome. Apparently, Jesus was all cool with that. I guess that “turn the other cheek” nonsense wasn’t working out. What we really need is a new Machismo Christianity. No more sissy hippy stuff. So....

Constantine slaughtered a lot of people, including his wife and son, all in the name of God, cancel-cultured out the old Roman gods and replaced them with machismo Jesus as the

new War God of the Roman empire. At least this masculine version of Jesus got shit done – well up until the crusades when he couldn't seem to win a skirmish, much less a war.

Anyway, right on the spot where other sissy Roman emperors up-side-down-crucified poor Saint Peter, he built a huge, in your face church (Take that Zeus), with a statue of himself in center. (Humility went out with “turn the other check”).

But this was the first Christian Cathedral. Catholicism, for better or worse, was here to stay - Crusades, Inquisitions, Cultural Genocide, Holy Wars, torture, the 2022 Supreme Court, and general meym.

The First Saint Peter's Cathedral. Full of relics, pieces of the true cross, Mary's breast milk, bones of martyrs. Every year getting added to, additions, more relics, more bones. There it stood for 1300 years! That's a lot of dead saints to worry about.

It was actually abandoned for a while when the Popes became French, mothballed the place, and moved to France for 100 years.

And after that there was a time when they weren't quite sure who in the heck the pope was. There was a multiplicity of old, stinky, white guys in dresses wandering around Europe saying "hey, I'm pope, no! I'm pope". Finally, Pope Nicholas says "No I'm Pope" and everyone believes him. For some reason. Anyway, he brought the whole show back to Rome and to the old Cathedral.

But you can imagine, 1300 years is a long time and the church was way past its maintenance contract, and the last 100 of those years it was pretty much abandoned. It was old, moldy, creepy, and sort of leaning to one side. Finally, some structural engineers came around and said, hey, pope dude, unless Jesus is coming back like in the next week (he didn't), this place is a health hazard. It's a miracle it's still standing.

But then the Borgia Family took out a loan and bought the Papacy and were having too much fun to worry about structural engineering problems. By the time the next Pope came around it was basically too late.

*Finally, Pope Julius said, tear that puppy down!
This is the renaissance! And I am the new
Caesar. A New Better Constantine! (He took his
Papal name, not after Saint Julius, but after
Julius Caesar. That should tell you something. -
He was the last Pope to lead his Papal army in a
battle – against other Catholics for Christ’s sake!
– Don’t mess with Pope Julius Secundo!)*

*OK, Pope Julius II was no saint – but he was a
man’s man! He got things done. The first thing
was to tear down the old church, then he
rounded up De Vince, Michelangelo, Raphael,
and other Renaissance notables and said, let’s
build the greatest Cathedral ever!*

*In fact, one of the reasons he had to tear down
the old church was that his new, state of the art,
cutting-edge Mausoleum wouldn’t fit inside!
More space please!*

*This is the story of how the New Saint Peters
was created.*

**And This is Erasmus of Rotterdam's
take on Pope Julius II (after he died) - It
was the 1st Best Seller and was
available in Cartoon form as well!**

*Pope Julius II: “If you don’t hurry up
and open the gates, I’ll unleash my
thunderbolt of excommunication with*

which I used to terrify great kings on earth and their kingdoms too. You see, I've already got a bull prepared for the occasion."/ St. Peter: "Just tell me, please, what you mean by all this bombast about bulls, bolts of thunder, and maledictions. I never heard from Christ a single one of these words."



Though Julius Excluded from Heaven was written anonymously, scholars generally agree that the author of this satirical work was the acerbic and brilliant humanist, Erasmus of Rotterdam, whose criticisms of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church were well-known in his time. Written in 1514 on the eve of the Protestant Reformation, the work lampoons the moral failings of the recently-deceased Pope Julius II, known as the "Warrior Pope," who throughout his papacy engaged in military campaigns and who personally led troops in battle on two occasions. It is likely, however, that the character of Julius as depicted by

Erasmus stands also for other corrupt popes, as the real Julius was not guilty of all the abuses mentioned in the dialogue. In the satire, Julius, accompanied by his spirit-advisor ("Genius"), attempts to gain entry into Heaven, where St. Peter is guarding the gates. Below is the first part of the work. —Editor

Speakers: Julius, his Genius, Peter

JULIUS: What the devil is this? The doors don't open? Somebody must have changed the lock or broken it.

GENIUS: It seems more likely that you didn't bring the proper key; for this door doesn't open to the same key as a secret money-chest. Why didn't you bring both the keys you have? This is the key of power, not of wisdom.

JULIUS: I didn't have any other key but this; I don't see why we need a different one when we've got this.

GENIUS: I don't either; but the fact is, we're still on the outside.

JULIUS: Now I'm really getting mad; I'll knock the doors down. Ho! Ho! Somebody come and open this door right away! What's the hangup? nobody home? What's the matter with the doorman? He's asleep, I guess, or else drunk.

GENIUS: This fellow judges everyone else by himself.

PETER: A good thing our gates are of adamant, otherwise this one, whoever he is, would have kicked them in. He must be a giant of some sort, a general of the armies, a stormer of cities.

But oh my God, what a sewer-stench is this! I certainly won't open the gates right away, but take a seat up here by a grated window where I can look out and keep an eye on the scene. Who are you and what do you want?

JULIUS: Open the door, will you? at least, if you can. And if you were really doing your job, it should have been open long ago, and decorated with all the heraldry of heaven.

PETER: Pretty lordly. But first tell me who you are.

JULIUS: As if you couldn't see for yourself.

PETER: See? What I see is new to me, like nothing I ever saw before, and I might say monstrous.

JULIUS: But if you're not stone-blind, you're bound to recognize this key, even if you aren't familiar with the golden oak tree. You can certainly see my triple crown, as well as my cloak all gleaming with gold and gems.

PETER: That silver key of yours I do recognize, though there's only one of them, and it's very different from those that were given to me long ago by the one true shepherd of the church, that is, Christ. But that glorious crown of yours, how could I possibly recognize it? No tyrant ruling over barbarian peoples ever ventured to wear one like it, much less anyone who came here asking for admission. Your cloak doesn't impress me either; for I always used to consider gold and jewels as trash to be despised. But what does this amount to really? In all this stuff—the key, the crown, the cloak—I recognize marks of that rascally cheat and impostor who

shared a name with me but not a faith, that scoundrel Simon whom I once flung down with the aid of Christ.

JULIUS: Enough of these jokes, and watch yourself; for I, if you don't know, am Julius of Liguria, and I don't doubt you recognize these two letters P. M., unless you've forgotten how to read.

PETER: I expect they stand for "Pestiferous Maximus."

GENIUS: Ha ha ha! This porter is as good as a wizard; he's got the needle's touch.

JULIUS: What it means is "Pontifex Maximus."

PETER: If you were triply great, greater even than Hermes Trismegistus, you still wouldn't get in here unless you were supremely good, that is, holy.

JULIUS: Well, if it comes down to comparative holiness, you've got some nerve to keep me waiting outside here when for all these centuries you've only been called "holy," whereas nobody ever called me anything but "most holy." I have six thousand bulls to prove it.

GENIUS: That's what he said, bulls!

JULIUS: —in which I am not only named "Lord most holy," but addressed as "your holiness," so that whatever I chose to do.

GENIUS: —Even when he was drunk.

JULIUS: —people used to say that the holiness of the most holy lord Julius had done it.

PETER: Then you'd better ask those flatterers of yours to let you into heaven, because they're the ones who made you so holy. They provided the holiness, now let them provide the bliss. By the way, though I know you don't think it matters, do you actually imagine you were a holy man?

JULIUS: You really vex me. If I were only allowed to go on living, I wouldn't envy you your holiness or your bliss, either one.

PETER: The proper expression of a pious mind! But apart from that, when I look you over from head to foot, I see many a sign of impiety and none of holiness. What's the meaning of these many comrades of yours? They're certainly not a papal retinue. You have almost twenty thousand men at your back, and in this entire crowd I can't find one single individual who has so much as the face of a Christian. I see a horrifying mob of ruffians, reeking of nothing but brothels, booze shops, and gunpowder. They look to me like plain highway robbers or spooks stolen out of hell and now intent on stirring up wars in heaven. As for yourself, the more I look at you, the fewer traces do I see of any apostolic character. What sort of unnatural arrangement is it, that while you wear the robes of a priest of God, under them you are dressed in the bloody armor of a warrior? Besides that, what a savage pair of eyes, what baleful features, what a menacing brow, what a disdainful and arrogant expression! I'm ashamed to say, and even to see, that there's no part of your body not marked with traces of outrageous and abominable lust; in addition,

you belch and stink like a man just come from a drunken debauch and fresh from a fit of vomiting. Judging from the appearance of your whole body, you seem to me, not worn out by age or disease, but broken down and shrivelled up by drunken excesses.

GENIUS: How vividly he portrays the man in his own colors!

PETER: I see you threatening me with your lofty expression; but my feelings won't be suppressed. I suspect you may be that most pestilent pagan of all, Julius the Roman, returned from hell to make mock of our system. Certainly everything about you agrees well with him.

JULIUS: Ma di sì!

PETER: What did he say?

GENIUS: He's angry. At that expression, every one of the cardinals used to take flight, otherwise they'd feel the stick of his holiness on their backs, especially if he hadn't had his supper.

PETER: You seem to me to have some understanding of the man; tell me, who are you?

GENIUS: I am the particular Genius of Julius.

PETER: His bad Genius, no doubt.

GENIUS: Whatever I may be, I'm Julius's man.

JULIUS: Why don't you stop all this nonsense and open the doors? Perhaps you'd rather I

broke them down. Why do we need all this palaver? You see the sort of troops I have at my command.

PETER: I do indeed see some highly practiced thieves. But you must be aware that these doors can only be opened in other ways.

JULIUS: Enough words, I say. If you don't hurry up and open the gates, I'll unleash my thunderbolt of excommunication with which I used to terrify great kings on earth and their kingdoms too. You see, I've already got a bull prepared for the occasion.

PETER: Just tell me, please, what you mean by all this bombast about bulls, bolts of thunder, and maledictions. I never heard from Christ a single one of these words.

JULIUS: You'll feel their full force, if you don't watch out.

PETER: Perhaps you used to terrify people with that bluster, but it counts for nothing here. Here we deal only in the truth. This is a fortress to be captured with good deeds, not ugly words. But let me ask you, since you threaten men with the thunder of excommunication; what's your legal authority for that?

JULIUS: Very well: I take it you are now out of office and have no more standing than any other unbeneficed priest; indeed, you're not even a complete priest, since you lack the power to consecrate.

PETER: Doubtless because I happen to be dead.

JULIUS: Obviously.

PETER: But for the same reason, you have no more standing with me than any other dead man.

JULIUS: But as long as the cardinals are arguing over the election of a new pope, it counts as my administration.

GENIUS: He's still dreaming dreams about being alive!

JULIUS: But now, open the door, I tell you.

PETER: And I won't do a thing, I tell you, unless you give me a full account of your merits.

JULIUS: What merits?

PETER: Let me explain the idea. Did you distinguish yourself in theology?

JULIUS: Not at all. I had no time for it, being continually engaged in warfare. Besides, there are plenty of priests to do that sort of work.

PETER: Then by the holiness of your life you gained many souls for Christ?

GENIUS: Many more for hell, I'd say.

PETER: You performed miracles?

JULIUS: You're talking old-fashioned nonsense.

PETER: You prayed earnestly and constantly?

JULIUS: This is pure foolishness.

PETER: *You subdued the lusts of the flesh with fasts and long vigils?*

GENIUS: *Enough of this, please; with this line of questioning, you're just wasting your time.*

PETER: *I never heard of any other gifts that an outstanding pope was supposed to possess. If he has some more apostolic talents, let him tell me about them himself.*

JULIUS: *Though it's a disgraceful thing for Julius who never lowered his crest before anyone else to yield to Peter—who was, to say nothing worse, a lowly fisherman and almost a beggar—still, just to let you know what sort of prince you're slighting in this way, now hear this. In the first place, I am from Liguria, not a Jew like you; but I'm afraid that like you I was once a boatman.*

GENIUS: *It's nothing to be ashamed of, for there's still this difference, that Peter fished for a living, while Julius plied the oar on a barge for minimum wages.*

JULIUS: *Then, as it happened that I was the nephew of Pope Sixtus the great.*

GENIUS: *Great in vices, he means.*

JULIUS: *—on his sister's side, his special favor combined with my industry first gave me access to ecclesiastical office; and so I gradually rose to the dignity of a cardinal's cap. Having undergone many reverses of fortune, and been tossed to and fro by various accidents—having suffered, among other diseases, from epilepsy and the pox they call French—I found myself quite overwhelmed; I*

was exiled, rejected, despised, despaired of, and almost given over as lost. Yet I never doubted that some day I would attain the papacy. That showed real strength of character, compared with you, who were terrified at the question of a serving girl, and gave up your faith on the spot. She weakened your courage, but I got new courage from a woman, a soothsayer and prophetess of sorts, who when she saw me overwhelmed with misfortunes secretly whispered in my ear, "Bear up, Julius! Don't be ashamed of anything you have to do or put up with some day you will attain the triple crown. You will be king of kings and ruler of all rulers." And in fact neither her prophecy nor my own instincts deceived me. Beyond all expectations I achieved my goal, partly with the help of the French who sheltered me in my hour of need, partly by the marvelous power of money in large quantities, which I increased by taking usurious rates of interest. And finally my own ready wit helped me.

PETER: *What's this ready wit you're talking about?*

JULIUS: *—to coin money from the bare promise of ecclesiastical offices, making skillful use of brokers in the process, since the sums I demanded couldn't have been paid in cash by a man as rich as Crassus. But it's useless to describe the schemes to you, since not even all my bankers understood them. Anyhow, that's how I made my way. Now as for how I bore myself in the pontificate, I'll venture to say that none of the early popes (who seem to me to have been popes in name only), nor even of the later ones, deserve so well of the church and of Christ himself as I do.*

GENIUS: *Only listen to the bragging of the beast!*

PETER: *I'm waiting to hear how you got away with it all.*

JULIUS: *I discovered a great many new offices (that's what they're called) which in themselves brought goodly sums into the papal treasury. Then I found a brand-new way by which bishoprics could be bought without any taint of simony. For my predecessors had made a law that any man appointed bishop should lay down his previous office. I interpreted it this way; "You are ordered to lay down your previous office; but if you don't have one you can't lay it down, therefore you must buy it." By this means each individual bishopric brought in its six or seven thousand ducats over and above those that are traditionally extorted for bulls. Also the new money that I spread all over Italy brought in a very healthy sum. And I never let up on accumulating money, understanding as I did that without it nothing is managed properly, whether sacred or profane. Now, to come to my major achievements, I conquered Bologna, which had long been ruled by the Bentivogli, and restored it to the control of Rome. The previously undefeated Venetians I crushed with my army. For a long time I harassed the duke of Week 7 6 Ferrara, and nearly caught him in a trap. I cleverly escaped from a schismatic council set up against me by convoking a fraudulent counter-council, and so, as they say, drove out one nail with another. Finally, I expelled from Italy the French, who at that time were the terrors of the whole world, and I would have driven out the Spanish too (for I had that project under way), if the fates had not suddenly removed me from the earth.*

And I ask you to admire my undaunted spirit throughout these trials. When the French looked like winners, I was already looking around for a good hiding place; when my position seemed almost desperate, I grew a long white beard as a disguise. But then the golden messenger of victory alighted unexpectedly on me at Ravenna, where a good many thousand Frenchmen were killed; and that was the resurrection of Julius. In fact, for three days I was believed to be at death's door; I thought so myself; and yet here again, against everyone's hopes and even my own expectations, I lived anew. In fact my power and my political shrewdness are so great to this day that there's none of the Christian kings whom I haven't brought to blows, breaking up the treaties by which they had painfully made peace with one another, ripping them to pieces, and trampling them underfoot. Indeed, I was so successful in abolishing the treaty of Cambrai, made between me, the king of France, the emperor Maximilian, and several other rulers, that nobody ever mentions it any more. Over and above all this, I raised several different armies, celebrated many grandiose triumphs, put on splendid shows, built numerous impressive structures, and then at my death left at least five million ducats, which I would have increased even further if that Jewish physician who saved my life on one occasion had been able to stretch it out a little longer. And I really wish now that some magician could be found to restore my earthly existence, so that I could put the finishing touches on the really marvelous projects that I had under way. Still, on my deathbed I tried to ensure that none of the wars I had stirred up throughout the world should be settled; I ordered that moneys set aside for those wars should not be diverted

elsewhere; and that was my last wish as I breathed out my dying breath. Now do you hesitate to open the gates for a pontiff who has deserved so well of Christ and the church? And I expect you to be all the more impressed because all this was achieved by my individual constancy of mind alone. I had none of those helpers and favoring circumstances that others have enjoyed; I had no ancestors, for I didn't even know my own father (which indeed I say proudly); I had no personal attractions, since most people shuddered at my face as at an ogre; I had no education, since with me it never took; I had no physical strength, for reasons mentioned above; I was not possessed of youthful energy, for I did all these things as an old man; popularity played no part, for there was nobody who didn't hate me; and I got no credit for clemency because I punished savagely those whom other rulers commonly let off scot-free...