

The Fifth Lateran Council, Session VIII, 1513:

« Leo, bishop, servant of the servants of God, with the approval of the sacred council, for an everlasting record. The burden of apostolic government ever drives us on so that, for the weaknesses of souls requiring to be healed, of which the almighty Creator from on high has willed us to have the care, and for those ills in particular which are now seen to be pressing most urgently on the faithful, we may exercise, like the Samaritan in the gospel, the task of healing with oil and wine, lest that rebuke of Jeremiah may be cast at us: Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there? Consequently, since in our days (which we endure with sorrow) the sower of cockle, the ancient enemy of the human race, has dared to scatter and multiply in the Lord's field some extremely pernicious errors, which have always been rejected by the faithful, especially on the nature of the rational soul, with the claim that it is mortal, or only one among all human beings, and since some, playing the philosopher without due care, assert that this proposition is true at least according to philosophy, it is our desire to apply suitable remedies against this infection and, with the approval of the sacred council, we condemn and reject all those who insist that the intellectual soul is mortal, or that it is only one among all human beings, and those who suggest doubts on this topic. For the soul not only truly exists of itself and essentially as the form of the human body, as is said in the canon of our predecessor of happy memory, pope Clement V, promulgated in the general council of Vienne, but it is also immortal; and further, for the enormous number of bodies into which it is infused individually, it can and ought to be and is multiplied. This is clearly established from the gospel when the Lord says, They cannot kill the soul; and in another place, Whoever hates his life in this world, will keep it for eternal life and when he promises eternal rewards and eternal punishments to those who will be judged according to the merits of their life; otherwise, the incarnation and other mysteries of Christ would be of no benefit to us, nor would resurrection be something to look forward to, and the saints and the just would be (as the Apostle says) the most miserable of all people.

And since truth cannot contradict truth, we define that every statement contrary to the enlightened truth of the faith is totally false and we strictly forbid teaching otherwise to be permitted. We decree that all those who cling to erroneous statements of this kind, thus sowing heresies which are wholly condemned, should be avoided in every way and punished as detestable and odious heretics and infidels who are undermining the catholic faith. Moreover we strictly enjoin on each and every philosopher who teaches publicly in the universities or elsewhere, that when they explain or address to their audience the principles or conclusions of philosophers, where these are known to deviate from the true faith—as in the assertion of the soul's mortality or of there being only one soul or of the eternity of the world and other topics of this kind—they are obliged to devote their every effort to clarify for their listeners the truth of the christian religion, to teach it by convincing arguments, so far as this is possible, and to apply themselves to the full extent of their energies to refuting and disposing of the philosophers' opposing arguments, since all the solutions are available.

But it does not suffice occasionally to clip the roots of the brambles, if the ground is not dug deeply so as to check them beginning again to multiply, and if there are not removed their seeds and root causes from which they grow so easily. That is why, since the prolonged study of human philosophy—which God has made empty and foolish, as the Apostle says, when that study lacks the flavouring of divine wisdom and the light of revealed truth—sometimes leads to error rather than to the discovery of the truth, we ordain and rule by this salutary constitution, in order to suppress all occasions of falling into error with respect to the matters referred to above, that from this time onwards none of those in sacred orders, whether religious or seculars or others so committed, when they follow courses in universities or other public institutions, may devote themselves to the study of philosophy or poetry for longer than five years after the study of grammar and dialectic, without their giving some time to the study of theology or pontifical law. Once these five years are past, if someone wishes to sweat over such studies, he may do so only if at the same time, or in some other way, he actively devotes himself to theology or the sacred canons; so that the Lord's priests may find the means, in these holy and useful occupations, for cleansing and healing the infected sources of philosophy and poetry. »

Pope Gregory XVI, *Singulari Nos*, 1834, To all the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops:  
« He who placed Us as scouts in Israel forbids Us to hide in silence the great harm brought to sound doctrine. So We must warn about the error those whom Jesus, the author and perfecter of the faith, entrusted to Our care. Therefore, We consulted many of Our venerable brothers, the cardinals of the Holy Roman Church. We have studied the book entitled *Paroles d'un croyant*. By Our apostolic power, We condemn the book: furthermore, We decree that it be perpetually condemned. . . . You correctly understand, venerable brothers, that We speak here also of that erroneous philosophical system which was recently brought in and is clearly to be condemned. This system, which comes from the contemptible and unrestrained desire for innovation, does not seek truth where it stands in the received and holy apostolic inheritance. Rather, other empty doctrines, futile and uncertain doctrines not approved by the Church, are adopted. Only the most conceited men wrongly think that these teachings can sustain and support that truth. »

Pope Pius IX, *Qui Pluribus*, 1846, To All Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops:  
« Each of you has noticed, venerable brothers, that a very bitter and fearsome war against the whole Catholic commonwealth is being stirred up by men bound together in a lawless alliance. These men do not preserve sound doctrine, but turn their hearing from the truth. They eagerly attempt to produce from their darkness all sorts of prodigious beliefs, and then to magnify them with all their strength, and to publish them and spread them among ordinary people. We shudder indeed and suffer bitter pain when We reflect on all their outlandish errors and their many harmful methods, plots and contrivances. These men use these means to spread their hatred for truth and light. They are experienced and skillful in deceit, which they use to set in motion their plans to quench peoples' zeal for piety, justice and virtue, to corrupt morals, to cast all divine and human laws into confusion, and to weaken and even possibly overthrow the Catholic religion and civil society. For you know, venerable

brothers, that these bitter enemies of the Christian name, are carried wretchedly along by some blind momentum of their mad impiety; they go so far in their rash imagining as to teach without blushing, openly and publicly, daring and unheard-of doctrines, thereby uttering blasphemies against God.[1] They teach that the most holy mysteries of our religion are fictions of human invention, and that the teaching of the Catholic Church is opposed to the good and the prerogatives of human society. They are not even afraid to deny Christ Himself and God.

In order to easily mislead the people into making errors, deceiving particularly the imprudent and the inexperienced, they pretend that they alone know the ways to prosperity. They claim for themselves without hesitation the name of “philosophers.” They feel as if philosophy, which is wholly concerned with the search for truth in nature, ought to reject those truths which God Himself, the supreme and merciful creator of nature, has deigned to make plain to men as a special gift. With these truths, mankind can gain true happiness and salvation. So, by means of an obviously ridiculous and extremely specious kind of argumentation, these enemies never stop invoking the power and excellence of human reason; they raise it up against the most holy faith of Christ, and they blather with great foolhardiness that this faith is opposed to human reason.

Without doubt, nothing more insane than such a doctrine, nothing more impious or more opposed to reason itself could be devised. For although faith is above reason, no real disagreement or opposition can ever be found between them; this is because both of them come from the same greatest source of unchanging and eternal truth, God. They give such reciprocal help to each other that true reason shows, maintains and protects the truth of the faith, while faith frees reason from all errors and wondrously enlightens, strengthens and perfects reason with the knowledge of divine matters.

It is with no less deceit, venerable brothers, that other enemies of divine revelation, with reckless and sacrilegious effrontery, want to import the doctrine of human progress into the Catholic religion. They extol it with the highest praise, as if religion itself were not of God but the work of men, or a philosophical discovery which can be perfected by human means. The charge which Tertullian justly made against the philosophers of his own time “who brought forward a Stoic and a Platonic and a Dialectical Christianity”[2] can very aptly apply to those men who rave so pitifully. Our holy religion was not invented by human reason, but was most mercifully revealed by God; therefore, one can quite easily understand that religion itself acquires all its power from the authority of God who made the revelation, and that it can never be arrived at or perfected by human reason. In order not to be deceived and go astray in a matter of such great importance, human reason should indeed carefully investigate the fact of divine revelation. Having done this, one would be definitely convinced that God has spoken and therefore would show Him rational obedience, as the Apostle very wisely teaches.[3] For who can possibly not know that all faith should be given to the words of God and that it is in the fullest agreement with reason itself to accept and strongly support doctrines which it has determined to have been revealed by God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived?

But how many wonderful and shining proofs are ready at hand to convince the human reason in the clearest way that the religion of Christ is divine and that “the whole principle of our doctrines has taken root from the Lord of the heavens above”;<sup>[4]</sup> therefore nothing exists more definite, more settled or more holy than our faith, which rests on the strongest foundations. This faith, which teaches for life and points towards salvation, which casts out all vices and is the fruitful mother and nurse of the virtues, has been established by the birth, life, death, resurrection, wisdom, wonders and prophecies of Christ Jesus, its divine author and perfecter! Shining forth in all directions with the light of teaching from on high and enriched with the treasures of heavenly wealth, this faith grew famed and notable by the foretellings of so many prophets, the lustre of so many miracles, the steadfastness of so many martyrs, and the glory of so many saints! It made known the saving laws of Christ and, gaining in strength daily even when it was most cruelly persecuted, it made its way over the whole world by land and sea, from the sun’s rising to its setting, under the single standard of the Cross! The deceit of idols was cast down and the mist of errors was scattered. By the defeat of all kinds of enemies, this faith enlightened with divine knowledge all peoples, races and nations, no matter how barbarous and savage, or how different in character, morals, laws and ways of life. It brought them under the sweet yoke of Christ Himself by proclaiming peace and good tidings to all men!

Now, surely all these events shine with such divine wisdom and power that anyone who considers them will easily understand that the Christian faith is the work of God. Human reason knows clearly from these striking and certain proofs that God is the author of this faith; therefore it is unable to advance further but should offer all obedience to this faith, casting aside completely every problem and hesitation. Human reason is convinced that it is God who has given everything the faith proposes to men for belief and behavior.

This consideration too clarifies the great error of those others as well who boldly venture to explain and interpret the words of God by their own judgment, misusing their reason and holding the opinion that these words are like a human work. God Himself has set up a living authority to establish and teach the true and legitimate meaning of His heavenly revelation. This authority judges infallibly all disputes which concern matters of faith and morals, lest the faithful be swirled around by every wind of doctrine which springs from the evilness of men in encompassing error. And this living infallible authority is active only in that Church which was built by Christ the Lord upon Peter, the head of the entire Church, leader and shepherd, whose faith He promised would never fail. This Church has had an unbroken line of succession from Peter himself; these legitimate pontiffs are the heirs and defenders of the same teaching, rank, office and power. And the Church is where Peter is,<sup>[5]</sup> and Peter speaks in the Roman Pontiff,<sup>[6]</sup> living at all times in his successors and making judgment,<sup>[7]</sup> providing the truth of the faith to those who seek it.<sup>[8]</sup> The divine words therefore mean what this Roman See of the most blessed Peter holds and has held.

For this mother and teacher[9] of all the churches has always preserved entire and unharmed the faith entrusted to it by Christ the Lord. Furthermore, it has taught it to the faithful, showing all men truth and the path of salvation. Since all priesthood originates in this church,[10] the entire substance of the Christian religion resides there also.[11] The leadership of the Apostolic See has always been active,[12] and therefore because of its preeminent authority, the whole Church must agree with it. The faithful who live in every place constitute the whole Church.[13] Whoever does not gather with this Church scatters.[14]

1. Ap 13.6.
2. Tertullian, de Praescript., chap. 8.
3. Rom 13.1
4. St. John Chrysostom, hom. 1 in Isaiah.
5. St. Ambrose on Ps 40.
6. Council of Chalcedon, Act. 2.
7. Synod of Ephes., Act. 3.
8. St. Peter Chrysologus, epistle to Eutyches.
9. Council of Trent, session 7 on baptism.
10. St. Cyprian, epistle 55 to Pope Cornelius.
11. Synod. Letter of John of Constantinople to Pope Hormisdas and Sozomen, Hist., III. 8.
12. St. Augustine, epistle 162.
13. St. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. III, 3.
14. St. Jerome, epistle to Pope Damasus. »

Pope Pius IX, *Qui Pluribus*, 1846, To All Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops:  
« You already know well, venerable brothers, the other portentous errors and deceits by which the sons of this world try most bitterly to attack the Catholic religion and the divine authority of the Church and its laws. They would even trample underfoot the rights both of the sacred and of the civil power. . . To this goal also tends the unspeakable doctrine of Communism, as it is called, a doctrine most opposed to the very natural law. For if this doctrine were accepted, the complete destruction of everyone's laws, government, property, and even of human society itself would follow. »

Pope Pius IX, *Praedecessores Nostros*, 1847, To all Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops and Bishops:  
« You know the power of almsgiving and the rich fruits which proceed from it. You know the noteworthy praises showered on almsgiving by the holy Church Fathers and especially by St. Leo the Great in many of his sermons.[4] And you readily recall the well-known letter of St. Cyprian, martyr and Bishop of Carthage, to the Bishops of Numidia,[5] which contains clear evidence of his people's zeal in generous almsgiving for those Christians who needed help. You can, furthermore, remember the words of St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan,[6] that "the beauty of wealth lies not in the manner of life of the rich but in food given to the poor; wealth is more resplendent among those who are weak and in

want; Christians should learn to use money in looking not for their own goods but for Christ's, so that Christ in turn may look after them." When you recall these and other praise, We hope that you will vigorously assist the poor whom We are discussing.

4. On the fast of the tenth month and on almsgiving.

5. Epistle 60 (Balut. edit.) in dealing with the money collected at Carthage and sent to the bishops of Numidia for the purpose of redeeming Christians, states that "we have sent a hundred thousand sesterces, which were collected here in the church of which by God's kindness we are the leader, by contribution from the clergy and people who stand firm with us. In your diligence you will distribute this money in your district."

6. Epistle 2 to Bishop Constantius (vol. 2, Maurist edit., Paris, 1690). »

Pope Pius IX, *Nostis Et Nobiscum*, 1849, To the Archbishops and Bishops of Italy:

« In addition, let the poor and all the wretched recall their great debt to the Catholic religion which keeps the teaching of Christ unspoiled and preaches it publicly. For He proclaimed that whatever benefits are conferred on the poor and wretched are likewise conferred on Himself.[19] Furthermore, He wishes that all be informed of the special account He will take of these works of mercy on the Day of Judgment; that is, He will give the gift of eternal life to the faithful who engaged in works of mercy, and He will punish with eternal fire those who neglected them.[Mt. 25.34f.]

This proclamation of Christ and His other stern warnings on the use of wealth and its dangers[Mt. 19.23f – Lk. 6.4; 18.22f – Jas. 5.1f.] have meant that the condition of the poor and wretched in Catholic nations is much less harsh than in any other nations. The poor would receive even greater aid if the many institutions which our pious ancestors established for their relief had not been closed down or plundered in the recent recurrent public demonstrations. Let Our poor recall the teaching of Christ Himself that they should not be sad at their condition, since their very poverty makes lighter their journey to salvation, provided that they bear their need with patience and are poor not alone in possessions, but in spirit too. For He says: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." [22] »

Pope Pius IX, *Nostis Et Nobiscum*, 1849, To the Archbishops and Bishops of Italy:

« But if the faithful scorn both the fatherly warnings of their pastors and the commandments of the Christian Law recalled here, and if they let themselves be deceived by the present-day promoters of plots, deciding to work with them in their perverted theories of Socialism and Communism, let them know and earnestly consider what they are laying up for themselves. The Divine Judge will seek vengeance on the day of wrath. Until then no temporal benefit for the people will result from their conspiracy, but rather new increases of misery and disaster. For man is not empowered to establish new societies and unions which are opposed to the nature of mankind. If these conspiracies spread throughout Italy there can only be one result: if the present political arrangement is shaken violently

and totally ruined by reciprocal attacks of citizens against citizens by their wrongful appropriations and slaughter, in the end some few, enriched by the plunder of many, will seize supreme control to the ruin of all. »

Pope Pius IX, *Singulari Quidem*, 1856, To the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church and to the Archbishops and Bishops of the Austrian Empire:

« Another disease just as dangerous is spreading, a disease to which the name of rationalism has been given, because of the pride and a certain vanity of reason associated with it. Certainly the Church does not condemn[9] the efforts of those who want to know the truth, since it is God who made it the nature of man to be most eager to grasp truth. Nor does she condemn the efforts of healthy and right reason, for it is through this reason that we cultivate the spirit, study nature, and bring to light its most hidden secrets. This tender mother recognizes and justly maintains that reason is the most notable of the heavenly gifts,[10] since it is through reason that we raise ourselves above the senses and display a certain image of God in ourselves. She knows that we must search until we find and that we must believe what we have believed. But we must also believe, in addition, that there is nothing else to believe and to seek once we have found and believed what was taught by Christ, who does not command us to seek anything other than what He taught.[11] What is it that the Church does not tolerate? What is it that she censures and absolutely condemns in virtue of her mission to preserve what has been entrusted to her? The Church has always condemned and continues to condemn the conduct of those who abuse their reason; those who do not fear to foolishly and criminally prefer reason to the authority of what God Himself says; those who boldly exalt themselves; those who, blinded by their pride and their vanity, lose the light of truth and proudly spurn the faith of which it is written: “Whoever does not believe will be condemned.”[12] Full of confidence in themselves,[13] they deny that we must believe in God for Himself and accept what He taught us about Himself. The Church does not cease to oppose these people,[14] since whenever something deals with the very knowledge of God, it is God whom we should believe. It is from Him that all we believe about Him comes, because man could not know God if He Himself did not communicate this salutary knowledge.

These are the people whom the Church seeks to bring back to sound reasoning with these words: “What is there more contrary to reason than to seek to exalt oneself above reason by means of reason itself? And what is more contrary to faith than to not want to believe that which we cannot attain by reason?”[15] She never ceases to repeat to them that faith bases itself not on reason but on authority[16] because it is not suitable that God, in speaking to mankind, should use arguments, as if we could refuse to believe. Rather, He spoke as was appropriate, as the supreme judge of everything, who does not have to argue but who rather issues His pronouncements.[17] The Church clearly declares that the only hope of salvation for mankind is placed in the Christian faith, which teaches the truth, scatters the darkness of ignorance by the splendor of its light, and works through love. This hope of salvation is placed in the Catholic Church which, in preserving the true worship, is the solid home of this faith and the temple of God. Outside of the Church, nobody can hope for life or salvation

unless he is excused through ignorance beyond his control. The Church teaches and proclaims that if sometimes we can use human wisdom to study the divine word, our wisdom should not for that reason proudly usurp to itself the right of master. Rather, it should act as an obedient and submissive servant, afraid of erring if it goes first and afraid of losing the light of interior virtue and the straight path of truth by following the consequences of exterior words.[18]

9. Lactantius, *divin. institut.*, bk. 3, chap. 1.

10. Clemens Alex, *Stromat*, bk. 1, chap. 3 and bk. 2, chap. 2; Gregory, *thaumaturg*, panegyric speech, 7. 13.

11. Tertullian, *de praescript.*, chap. 9.

12. Mk 16.16.

13. St. Hilar., *de Trin.*, bk. 4.

14. Cassian, *de Incarnat.*, bk. 4, chap. 2.

15. St. Bernard, epistle 190.

16. *Ibid*, *de Considerat*, bk. 5, chap. 3.

17. Lactantius, *divin. institut.*, bk. 3, chap. 1.

18. St. Peter Damian, *opuscul.* 36, chap. 5. »

Condemned by Pope Pius IX in *Syllabus Errorum*, 1864:

« “Human reason, without any reference whatsoever to God, is the sole arbiter of truth and falsehood, and of good and evil; it is law to itself, and suffices, by its natural force, to secure the welfare of men and of nations.”

“All the truths of religion proceed from the innate strength of human reason; hence reason is the ultimate standard by which man can and ought to arrive at the knowledge of all truths of every kind.”

“The faith of Christ is in opposition to human reason and divine revelation not only is not useful, but is even hurtful to the perfection of man.”

“As human reason is placed on a level with religion itself, so theological must be treated in the same manner as philosophical sciences.”

“All the dogmas of the Christian religion are indiscriminately the object of natural science or philosophy, and human reason, enlightened solely in an historical way, is able, by its own natural strength and principles, to attain to the true science of even the most abstruse dogmas; provided only that such dogmas be proposed to reason itself as its object.”

“As the philosopher is one thing, and philosophy another, so it is the right and duty of the philosopher to subject himself to the authority which he shall have proved to be true; but philosophy neither can nor ought to submit to any such authority.”

“The Church not only ought never to pass judgment on philosophy, but ought to tolerate the errors of philosophy, leaving it to correct itself.”

“The decrees of the Apostolic See and of the Roman congregations impede the true progress of science.”

“The method and principles by which the old scholastic doctors cultivated theology are no longer suitable to the demands of our times and to the progress of the sciences.”

“Philosophy is to be treated without taking any account of supernatural revelation.”

“The science of philosophical things and morals and also civil laws may and ought to keep aloof from divine and ecclesiastical authority.”

“Right consists in the material fact. All human duties are an empty word, and all human facts have the force of right.” »

Pope Pius IX, *Levate*, 1867, To the Venerable Brothers Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops and Bishops of the Entire Catholic Community:

« You surely see how vehemently a decree of this kind must be condemned. This schismatic secular power destroys the constitution of the Catholic Church and subverts ecclesiastical discipline. Furthermore, it inflicts the greatest injury on Our supreme Pontificate, on the power and authority of this Holy See and of the bishops, and on the liberty of the highest pastor of all the faithful. It therefore drives the faithful to a mournful schism and even tramples underfoot natural law in matters pertaining to faith and conscience. »

Pope Pius IX, *Ubi Nos*, 1871, To all the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Local Ordinaries:

« Assuredly, these many errors and blasphemies are plainly at variance with the Catholic faith and with the very foundations of natural law. »

Pope Pius IX, *Ubi Nos*, 1871, To all the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Local Ordinaries:

« God has given Us the authority of making laws in regard to the religious and moral order. We have been established as interpreters of the natural and divine law for the entire world; these laws concern

the government of the universal Church. Will their observance and execution be right only because they are commanded and established by the will of lay powers? We, as the representative of blessed Peter, have received directly from God Himself all the prerogatives and all rights of authority which are necessary for ruling the universal Church; those prerogatives and rights, as well as the liberty of the Church, were produced and acquired by the blood of Jesus Christ and must be valued in accordance with the infinite value of His divine blood. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris*, 1879, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Catholic World in Grace and Communion With the Apostolic See:

« Since, then, according to the warning of the apostle, the minds of Christ's faithful are apt to be deceived and the integrity of the faith to be corrupted among men by philosophy and vain deceit,[2] the supreme pastors of the Church have always thought it their duty to advance, by every means in their power, science truly so called, and at the same time to provide with special care that all studies should accord with the Catholic faith, especially philosophy, on which a right interpretation of the other sciences in great part depends. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris*, 1879, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Catholic World in Grace and Communion With the Apostolic See:

« Whoso turns his attention to the bitter strifes of these days and seeks a reason for the troubles that vex public and private life must come to the conclusion that a fruitful cause of the evils which now afflict, as well as those which threaten, us lies in this: that false conclusions concerning divine and human things, which originated in the schools of philosophy, have now crept into all the orders of the State, and have been accepted by the common consent of the masses. For, since it is in the very nature of man to follow the guide of reason in his actions, if his intellect sins at all his will soon follows; and thus it happens that false opinions, whose seat is in the understanding, influence human actions and pervert them. Whereas, on the other hand, if men be of sound mind and take their stand on true and solid principles, there will result a vast amount of benefits for the public and private good. We do not, indeed, attribute such force and authority to philosophy as to esteem it equal to the task of combating and rooting out all errors; for, when the Christian religion was first constituted, it came upon earth to restore it to its primeval dignity by the admirable light of faith, diffused "not by persuasive words of human wisdom, but in the manifestation of spirit and of power",[3] so also at the present time we look above all things to the powerful help of Almighty God to bring back to a right understanding the minds of man and dispel the darkness of error.[4] But the natural helps with which the grace of the divine wisdom, strongly and sweetly disposing all things, has supplied the human race are neither to be despised nor neglected, chief among which is evidently the right use of philosophy. For, not in vain did God set the light of reason in the human mind; and so far is the super-added light of faith from extinguishing or lessening the power of the intelligence that it completes it rather, and by adding to its strength renders it capable of greater things.

Therefore, Divine Providence itself requires that, in calling back the people to the paths of faith and salvation, advantage should be taken of human science also — an approved and wise practice which history testifies was observed by the most illustrious Fathers of the Church. They, indeed, were wont neither to belittle nor undervalue the part that reason had to play, as is summed up by the great Augustine when he attributes to this science “that by which the most wholesome faith is begotten . . . is nourished, defended, and made strong.”[5]

In the first place, philosophy, if rightly made use of by the wise, in a certain way tends to smooth and fortify the road to true faith, and to prepare the souls of its disciples for the fit reception of revelation; for which reason it is well called by ancient writers sometimes a steppingstone to the Christian faith,[6] sometimes the prelude and help of Christianity,[7] sometimes the Gospel teacher.[8] And, assuredly, the God of all goodness, in all that pertains to divine things, has not only manifested by the light of faith those truths which human intelligence could not attain of itself, but others, also, not altogether unattainable by reason, that by the help of divine authority they may be made known to all at once and without any admixture of error. Hence it is that certain truths which were either divinely proposed for belief, or were bound by the closest chains to the doctrine of faith, were discovered by pagan sages with nothing but their natural reason to guide them, were demonstrated and proved by becoming arguments. For, as the Apostle says, the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made: His eternal power also and divinity;[9] and the Gentiles who have not the Law show, nevertheless, the work of the Law written in their hearts.[10] But it is most fitting to turn these truths, which have been discovered by the pagan sages even, to the use and purposes of revealed doctrine, in order to show that both human wisdom and the very testimony of our adversaries serve to support the Christian faith — a method which is not of recent introduction, but of established use, and has often been adopted by the holy Fathers of the Church. What is more, those venerable men, the witnesses and guardians of religious traditions, recognize a certain form and figure of this in the action of the Hebrews, who, when about to depart out of Egypt, were commanded to take with them the gold and silver vessels and precious robes of the Egyptians, that by a change of use the things might be dedicated to the service of the true God which had formerly been the instruments of ignoble and superstitious rites. Gregory of NeoCaesare[11] praises Origen expressly because, with singular dexterity, as one snatches weapons from the enemy, he turned to the defense of Christian wisdom and to the destruction of superstition many arguments drawn from the writings of the pagans. And both Gregory of Nazianzen[12] and Gregory of Nyssa[13] praise and commend a like mode of disputation in Basil the Great; while Jerome[14] especially commends it in Quadratus, a disciple of the Apostles, in Aristides, Justin, Irenaeus, and very many others. Augustine says: “Do we not see Cyprian, that mildest of doctors and most blessed of martyrs, going out of Egypt laden with gold and silver and vestments? And Lactantius, also and Victorinus, Optatus and Hilary? And, not to speak of the living, how many Greeks have done likewise?”[15] But if natural reason first sowed this rich field of doctrine before it was rendered fruitful by the power of Christ, it must assuredly become more prolific after the grace of the Savior has renewed and added to the native

faculties of the human mind. And who does not see that a plain and easy road is opened up to faith by such a method of philosophic study?

But the advantage to be derived from such a school of philosophy is not to be confined within these limits. The foolishness of those men who “by these good things that are seen could not understand Him, that is, neither by attending to the works could have acknowledged who was the workman,”[16] is gravely reproved in the words of Divine Wisdom. In the first place, then, this great and noble fruit is gathered from human reason, that it demonstrates that God is; for the greatness of the beauty and of the creature the Creator of them may be seen so as to be known thereby.[17] Again, it shows God to excel in the height of all perfections, especially in infinite wisdom before which nothing lies hidden, and in absolute justice which no depraved affection could possibly shake; and that God, therefore, is not only true but truth itself, which can neither deceive nor be deceived. Whence it clearly follows that human reason finds the fullest faith and authority united in the word of God. In like manner, reason declares that the doctrine of the Gospel has even from its very beginning been made manifest by certain wonderful signs, the established proofs, as it were, of unshaken truth; and that all, therefore, who set faith in the Gospel do not believe rashly as though following cunningly devised fables,[18] but, by a most reasonable consent, subject their intelligence and judgment to an authority which is divine. And of no less importance is it that reason most clearly sets forth that the Church instituted by Christ (as laid down in the Vatican Council), on account of its wonderful spread, its marvelous sanctity, and its inexhaustible fecundity in all places, as well as of its Catholic unity and unshaken stability, is in itself a great and perpetual motive of belief and an irrefragable testimony of its own divine mission.[19] »

Pope Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris*, 1879, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Catholic World in Grace and Communion With the Apostolic See:

« Lastly, the duty of religiously defending the truths divinely delivered, and of resisting those who dare oppose them, pertains to philosophic pursuits. Wherefore, it is the glory of philosophy to be esteemed as the bulwark of faith and the strong defense of religion. . . Moreover, the Church herself not only urges, but even commands, Christian teachers to seek help from philosophy. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris*, 1879, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Catholic World in Grace and Communion With the Apostolic See:

« Since it is established that those things which become known by revelation have the force of certain truth, and that those things which war against faith war equally against right reason, the Catholic philosopher will know that he violates at once faith and the laws of reason if he accepts any conclusion which he understands to be opposed to revealed doctrine. »

We know that there are some who, in their overestimate of the human faculties, maintain that as soon as man’s intellect becomes subject to divine authority it falls from its native dignity, and hampered by the yoke of this species of slavery, is much retarded and hindered in its progress toward the supreme

truth and excellence. Such an idea is most false and deceptive, and its sole tendency is to induce foolish and ungrateful men willfully to repudiate the most sublime truths, and reject the divine gift of faith, from which the fountains of all good things flow out upon civil society. For the human mind, being confined within certain limits, and those narrow enough, is exposed to many errors and is ignorant of many things; whereas the Christian faith, reposing on the authority of God, is the unfailing mistress of truth, whom whoso followeth he will be neither enmeshed in the snares of error nor tossed hither and thither on the waves of fluctuating opinion. Those, therefore, who to the study of philosophy unite obedience to the Christian faith, are philosophizing in the best possible way; for the splendor of the divine truths, received into the mind, helps the understanding, and not only detracts in nowise from its dignity, but adds greatly to its nobility, keenness, and stability. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris*, 1879, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Catholic World in Grace and Communion With the Apostolic See:

« Among the Scholastic Doctors, the chief and master of all towers Thomas Aquinas, who, as Cajetan observes, because “he most venerated the ancient Doctors of the Church, in a certain way seems to have inherited the intellect of all.”[34]. . . For these reasons most learned men, in former ages especially, of the highest repute in theology and philosophy, after mastering with infinite pains the immortal works of Thomas, gave themselves up not so much to be instructed in his angelic wisdom as to be nourished upon it. It is known that nearly all the founders and lawgivers of the religious orders commanded their members to study and religiously adhere to the teachings of St. Thomas, fearful least any of them should swerve even in the slightest degree from the footsteps of so great a man. To say nothing of the family of St. Dominic, which rightly claims this great teacher for its own glory, the statutes of the Benedictines, the Carmelites, the Augustinians, the Society of Jesus, and many others all testify that they are bound by this law.

20. And, here, how pleasantly one’s thoughts fly back to those celebrated schools and universities which flourished of old in Europe — to Paris, Salamanca, Alcala, to Douay, Toulouse, and Louvain, to Padua and Bologna, to Naples and Coimbra, and to many another! All know how the fame of these seats of learning grew with their years, and that their judgment, often asked in matters of grave moment, held great weight everywhere. And we know how in those great homes of human wisdom, as in his own kingdom, Thomas reigned supreme; and that the minds of all, of teachers as well as of taught, rested in wonderful harmony under the shield and authority of the Angelic Doctor.

21. But, furthermore, Our predecessors in the Roman pontificate have celebrated the wisdom of Thomas Aquinas by exceptional tributes of praise and the most ample testimonials. Clement VI in the bull “*In Ordine*,” Nicholas V in his brief to the friars of the Order of Preachers, 1451; Benedict XIII in the bull “*Pretiosus*,” and others bear witness that the universal Church borrows luster from his admirable teaching; while St. Pius V declares in the bull “*Mirabilis*” that heresies, confounded and convicted by the same teaching, were dissipated, and the whole world daily freed from fatal errors;

others, such as Clement XII in the bull “Verbo Dei,” affirm that most fruitful blessings have spread abroad from his writings over the whole Church, and that he is worthy of the honor which is bestowed on the greatest Doctors of the Church, on Gregory and Ambrose, Augustine and Jerome; while others have not hesitated to propose St. Thomas for the exemplar and master of the universities and great centers of learning whom they may follow with unfaltering feet. On which point the words of Blessed Urban V to the University of Toulouse are worthy of recall: “It is our will, which We hereby enjoin upon you, that ye follow the teaching of Blessed Thomas as the true and Catholic doctrine and that ye labor with all your force to profit by the same.”[35] Innocent XII, followed the example of Urban in the case of the University of Louvain, in the letter in the form of a brief addressed to that university on February 6, 1694, and Benedict XIV in the letter in the form of a brief addressed on August 26, 1752, to the Dionysian College in Granada; while to these judgments of great Pontiffs on Thomas Aquinas comes the crowning testimony of Innocent VI: “His teaching above that of others, the canonical writings alone excepted, enjoys such a precision of language, an order of matters, a truth of conclusions, that those who hold to it are never found swerving from the path of truth, and he who dare assail it will always be suspected of error.”[36]

22. The ecumenical councils, also, where blossoms the flower of all earthly wisdom, have always been careful to hold Thomas Aquinas in singular honor. In the Councils of Lyons, Vienna, Florence, and the Vatican one might almost say that Thomas took part and presided over the deliberations and decrees of the Fathers, contending against the errors of the Greeks, of heretics and rationalists, with invincible force and with the happiest results. But the chief and special glory of Thomas, one which he has shared with none of the Catholic Doctors, is that the Fathers of Trent made it part of the order of conclave to lay upon the altar, together with sacred Scripture and the decrees of the supreme Pontiffs, the “Summa” of Thomas Aquinas, whence to seek counsel, reason, and inspiration. . . While, therefore, We hold that every word of wisdom, every useful thing by whomsoever discovered or planned, ought to be received with a willing and grateful mind, We exhort you, venerable brethren, in all earnestness to restore the golden wisdom of St. Thomas, and to spread it far and wide for the defense and beauty of the Catholic faith, for the good of society, and for the advantage of all the sciences. The wisdom of St. Thomas, We say; for if anything is taken up with too great subtlety by the Scholastic doctors, or too carelessly stated — if there be anything that ill agrees with the discoveries of a later age, or, in a word, improbable in whatever way — it does not enter Our mind to propose that for imitation to Our age. Let carefully selected teachers endeavor to implant the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas in the minds of students, and set forth clearly his solidity and excellence over others. Let the universities already founded or to be founded by you illustrate and defend this doctrine, and use it for the refutation of prevailing errors. But, lest the false for the true or the corrupt for the pure be drunk in, be ye watchful that the doctrine of Thomas be drawn from his own fountains, or at least from those rivulets which, derived from the very fount, have thus far flowed, according to the established agreement of learned men, pure and clear; be careful to guard the minds of youth from those which are said to flow thence, but in reality are gathered from strange and unwholesome streams. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Licet Multa*, 1881:

« In what concerns yourselves, Dear Son and Venerable Brethren, use all your vigilance so that all men of science, and those, most especially, to whom you have confided the charge of teaching youth, be of one accord, and unanimous in all those questions upon which the teaching of the Holy See allows no freedom of opinion. And as to points left to the discussion of the learned, may their intellects, owing to your inspiration and your advice, be so exercised upon them that the divergences of opinion destroy not union of heart and concord of will. On this subject the Sovereign Pontiff, Benedict XIV., our immortal predecessor, has left in his Constitution “*Sollicita ac provida*,” certain rules for men of study, full of wisdom and authority. He has even proposed to them, as a model to imitate in this matter, St. Thomas Aquinas, whose moderation of language and maturity of style are maintained as well in the combat against adversaries, as in the exposition of doctrine and the proofs destined for its defense. We wish to renew to learned men the recommendations of our predecessor, and to point out to them this noble model, who will teach them not only the manner of carrying on controversy with opponents, but also the character of the doctrine to be held and developed in the cultivation of philosophy and theology. On many occasions, Dear Son and Venerable Brethren, we have expressed to you our earnest desire of seeing the wisdom of St. Thomas reinstated in Catholic schools, and everywhere treated with the highest consideration. We have likewise exhorted you to establish in the University of Louvain the teaching of higher philosophy in the spirit of St. Thomas. In this matter, as in all others, we have found you entirely ready to condescend to our wishes and to fulfill our will. Pursue then, with zeal, the task which has been begun, and watch with care that in this same University the fruitful sources of Christian philosophy, which spring from the works of St. Thomas, be open to students in a rich abundance, and applied to the profit of all other branches of instruction. In the execution of this design, if you have need of our aid or our counsels, they shall never be wanting to you. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Nobilissima Gallorum Gens*, 1884:

« But when the human mind, filled with the poison of new opinions, had begun, in the pride of an untempered liberty, to reject the authority the Church, its downward course has been rapid and precipitate. For when the mortal poison of false doctrines had penetrated manners and customs themselves, society, to a great extent, came to fall away from Christianity. And in France the propagation of this plague was not a little promoted by certain philosophers in the last century, professors of a foolish wisdom, who set themselves to root up the foundations of Christian truth, and started a system of philosophy calculated the more vehemently to inflame the desires after unlimited license which had been already enkindled. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Humanum Genus*, 1884:

« In the third place, there is a matter wisely instituted by our forefathers, but in course of time laid aside, which may now be used as a pattern and form of something similar. We mean the associations of guilds of workmen, for the protection, under the guidance of religion, both of their temporal interests

and of their morality. If our ancestors, by long use and experience, felt the benefit of these guilds, our age perhaps will feel it the more by reason of the opportunity which they will give of crushing the power of the sects. Those who support themselves by the labor of their hands, besides being, by their very condition, most worthy above all others of charity and consolation, are also especially exposed to the allurements of men whose ways lie in fraud and deceit. Therefore, they ought to be helped with the greatest possible kindness, and to be invited to join associations that are good, lest they be drawn away to others that are evil. For this reason, We greatly wish, for the salvation of the people, that, under the auspices and patronage of the bishops, and at convenient times, these guilds may be generally restored. To Our great delight, sodalities of this kind and also associations of masters have in many places already been established, having, each class of them, for their object to help the honest workman, to protect and guard his children and family, and to promote in them piety, Christian knowledge, and a moral life. And in this matter We cannot omit mentioning that exemplary society, named after its founder, St. Vincent, which has deserved so well of the lower classes. Its acts and its aims are well known. Its whole object is to give relief to the poor and miserable. This it does with singular prudence and modesty; and the less it wishes to be seen, the better is it fitted for the exercise of Christian charity, and for the relief of suffering. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*, 1885, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries:

« Therefore, when it is said that the Church is hostile to modern political regimes and that she repudiates the discoveries of modern research, the charge is a ridiculous and groundless calumny. Wild opinions she does repudiate, wicked and seditious projects she does condemn, together with that attitude of mind which points to the beginning of a willful departure from God. But, as all truth must necessarily proceed from God, the Church recognizes in all truth that is reached by research a trace of the divine intelligence. And as all truth in the natural order is powerless to destroy belief in the teachings of revelation, but can do much to confirm it, and as every newly discovered truth may serve to further the knowledge or the praise of God, it follows that whatsoever spreads the range of knowledge will always be willingly and even joyfully welcomed by the Church. She will always encourage and promote, as she does in other branches of knowledge, all study occupied with the investigation of nature. In these pursuits, should the human intellect discover anything not known before, the Church makes no opposition. She never objects to search being made for things that minister to the refinements and comforts of life. So far, indeed, from opposing these she is now, as she ever has been, hostile alone to indolence and sloth, and earnestly wishes that the talents of men may bear more and more abundant fruit by cultivation and exercise. Moreover, she gives encouragement to every kind of art and handicraft, and through her influence, directing all strivings after progress toward virtue and salvation, she labors to prevent man's intellect and industry from turning him away from God and from heavenly things. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Officio Sanctissimo*, 1887:

« Thence the way easily opened, though to them it lay open most miserably, for denying and discarding all things and the powers of man: then insolently denying that there was any authority which emanated from God or even that there was a God, they at length lapsed into absurd theories of Idealism and Materialism. But this prostitution of the highest things, those who are named Rationalists or Naturalists do not hesitate to call by the false name of scientific and social progress, which in truth is nothing less than the destruction and ruin of both.

Thus, indeed, Venerable Brethren, you may know and see why and in what way the younger members of the Church ought to be instructed in higher doctrines that they perform their duties with ease and utility at the present time. That these may be thoroughly grounded and accomplished in the study of humanities they should not enter upon the study of sacred theology before having undergone a preparation in philosophy. We mean that deep and real philosophy, the investigator of the loftiest problems, the best patron of truth: by virtue of which they themselves will not be tossed about nor carried away “by every wind of doctrine, by the wickedness of men, by the craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive” (Ephes. iv. 14), and will enable them to give to other doctrines the aid of truth, by the discussion and refutation of captious and deceptive theories. With this object we have already advised that the works of the great Aquinas should be in their hands, and should be constantly and carefully explained; and We have often laid stress upon the same thing with solemn words; and We believe that the best fruits are thence received by the clergy, and We shall confidently look for fruits still more excellent and abundant. Indeed, the method of the Angelic Doctor is admirably adapted for training minds, wonderfully fitted for use in making comments, in philosophizing, in discoursing forcibly and incontrovertibly: for it shows clearly each subject connected one with another in a continuous series, all however joined together and fitting into each other, all leading to the highest principles; then it raises one to the contemplation of God, Who is the efficient cause and strength and highest type of all things, to Whom finally all philosophy and man himself, such as he is, ought to be referred. Thus truly the knowledge of things are held together, as they are admirably shown, so also are they most firmly established by St. Thomas; by conflict with which knowledge, as the ancient sects of errors have entirely disappeared, so the new, unlike them rather in name and kind than in fact, as soon as they have put forth their heads fall, laid low by the same blows, as indeed many of Our writers have shown. Truly human reason desires to penetrate freely into the hidden and secret knowledge of things, nor can it do otherwise, but with Aquinas for Our author and master it does this more quickly and freely because it does it safely without any danger of passing over the boundaries of truth. For neither can you rightly call that liberty which gathers and scatters opinions according to its own will and pleasure, nay rather it is to be reputed the vilest license, lying, and false science, a disgrace and slavery of the mind. He indeed is the true Doctor who walks within the confines of truth, who not only never differs from God, the Head and Fount of all truth, but is always strictly in accordance with Him and always follows Him when disclosing His secrets in any manner; who no less piously listens to the Roman Pontiff when speaking, reverses in him the divine authority and fully holds that “submission to the Roman Pontiff is necessary to salvation.” (Opusc. contra errores Graecorum.) In his school,

therefore, let the cleric be brought up and exercised both in philosophy and theology: for he will then be learned and strong as the mightiest to fight the sacred combats. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Saepe Nos*, 1888, To the Bishops of Ireland:

« On this account We gave to the Irish people timely counsels, to be mindful of their obligations as Catholics, and to take part in nothing at variance with natural right or forbidden by the Divine law. Hence the recent Decree ought not to have come upon them unexpectedly; all the more as you yourselves, Venerable Brethren, assembled in Dublin in the year 1881 bade the clergy and people to beware of everything contrary to public order or to charity — such as refusing to discharge just obligations; preventing others from discharging theirs; inflicting injury on anyone either in person or property; violently resisting the law or those engaged in the discharge of public duties; joining in secret societies and the like. These injunctions, most just in themselves and given most seasonably, were praised and approved by Us. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Libertas Praestantissimum*, 1888, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Catholic World in Grace and Communion with the Apostolic See:

« Now, truth, which should be the only subject matter of those who teach, is of two kinds: natural and supernatural. Of natural truths, such as the principles of nature and whatever is derived from them immediately by our reason, there is a kind of common patrimony in the human race. On this, as on a firm basis, morality, justice, religion, and the very bonds of human society rest: and to allow people to go unharmed who violate or destroy it would be most impious, most foolish, and most inhuman.

But with no less religious care must we preserve that great and sacred treasure of the truths which God Himself has taught us. By many and convincing arguments, often used by defenders of Christianity, certain leading truths have been laid down: namely, that some things have been revealed by God; that the Onlybegotten Son of God was made flesh, to bear witness to the truth; that a perfect society was founded by Him—the Church, namely, of which He is the head, and with which He has promised to abide till the end of the world. To this society He entrusted all the truths which He had taught, in order that it might keep and guard them and with lawful authority explain them; and at the same time He commanded all nations to hear the voice of the Church, as if it were His own, threatening those who would not hear it with everlasting perdition. Thus, it is manifest that man's best and surest teacher is God, the Source and Principle of all truth; and the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the true Light which enlightens every man, and to whose teaching all must submit: "And they shall all be taught of God. "[8]

In faith and in the teaching of morality, God Himself made the Church a partaker of His divine authority, and through His heavenly gift she cannot be deceived. She is therefore the greatest and most reliable teacher of mankind, and in her swells an inviolable right to teach them. Sustained by the truth received from her divine Founder, the Church has ever sought to fulfill holily the mission entrusted to

her by God; unconquered by the difficulties on all sides surrounding her, she has never ceased to assert her liberty of teaching, and in this way the wretched superstition of paganism being dispelled, the wide world was renewed unto Christian wisdom. Now, reason itself clearly teaches that the truths of divine revelation and those of nature cannot really be opposed to one another, and that whatever is at variance with them must necessarily be false. Therefore, the divine teaching of the Church, so far from being an obstacle to the pursuit of learning and the progress of science, or in any way retarding the advance of civilization, in reality brings to them the sure guidance of shining light. And for the same reason it is of no small advantage for the perfecting of human liberty, since our Savior Jesus Christ has said that by truth is man made free: “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”[9] Therefore, there is no reason why genuine liberty should grow indignant, or true science feel aggrieved, at having to bear the just and necessary restraint of laws by which, in the judgment of the Church and of reason itself, human teaching has to be controlled.

The Church, indeed—as facts have everywhere proved—looks chiefly and above all to the defense of the Christian faith, while careful at the same time to foster and promote every kind of human learning. For learning is in itself good, and praiseworthy, and desirable; and further, all erudition which is the outgrowth of sound reason, and in conformity with the truth of things, serves not a little to confirm what we believe on the authority of God. The Church, truly, to our great benefit, has carefully preserved the monuments of ancient wisdom; has opened everywhere homes of science, and has urged on intellectual progress by fostering most diligently the arts by which the culture of our age is so much advanced. Lastly, we must not forget that a vast field lies freely open to man’s industry and genius, containing all those things which have no necessary connection with Christian faith and morals, or as to which the Church, exercising no authority, leaves the judgment of the learned free and unconstrained.

From all this may be understood the nature and character of that liberty which the followers of liberalism so eagerly advocate and proclaim. On the one hand, they demand for themselves and for the State a license which opens the way to every perversity of opinion; and on the other, they hamper the Church in divers ways, restricting her liberty within narrowest limits, although from her teaching not only is there nothing to be feared, but in every respect very much to be gained. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Libertas Praestantissimum*, 1888, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Catholic World in Grace and Communion with the Apostolic See:

« 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. 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 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 all this, clearly, cannot be found in man, if, as 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 all 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. Not that the divine assistance hinders in any way the free movement of our will; just the contrary, for grace works inwardly in man and in harmony with his natural inclinations, since it flows from the very Creator of his mind and will, by whom all things are moved in conformity with their nature. 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. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Sapientiae Christianae*, 1890, To the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Catholic world in Grace and Communion with the Apostolic See:

« The natural law enjoins us to love devotedly and to defend the country in which we had birth, and in which we were brought up, so that every good citizen hesitates not to face death for his native land. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 1891, To the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries of Places having Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See:

« Those who rule the commonwealths should avail themselves of the laws and institutions of the country; masters and wealthy owners must be mindful of their duty; the working class, whose interests are at stake, should make every lawful and proper effort; and since religion alone, as We said at the beginning, can avail to destroy the evil at its root, all men should rest persuaded that that main thing needful is to re-establish Christian morals, apart from which all the plans and devices of the wisest will prove of little avail. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 1891, To the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries of Places having Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See:

« To sum up, then, We may lay it down as a general and lasting law that working men's associations should be so organized and governed as to furnish the best and most suitable means for attaining what is aimed at, that is to say, for helping each individual member to better his condition to the utmost in body, soul, and property. It is clear that they must pay special and chief attention to the duties of religion and morality, and that social betterment should have this chiefly in view; otherwise they would lose wholly their special character, and end by becoming little better than those societies which take no account whatever of religion. What advantage can it be to a working man to obtain by means of a

society material well-being, if he endangers his soul for lack of spiritual food? “What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?”[39] This, as our Lord teaches, is the mark or character that distinguishes the Christian from the heathen. “After all these things do the heathen seek . . . Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice: and all these things shall be added unto you.”[40] Let our associations, then, look first and before all things to God; let religious instruction have therein the foremost place, each one being carefully taught what is his duty to God, what he has to believe, what to hope for, and how he is to work out his salvation; and let all be warned and strengthened with special care against wrong principles and false teaching. Let the working man be urged and led to the worship of God, to the earnest practice of religion, and, among other things, to the keeping holy of Sundays and holy days. Let him learn to reverence and love holy Church, the common Mother of us all; and hence to obey the precepts of the Church, and to frequent the sacraments, since they are the means ordained by God for obtaining forgiveness of sin and for leading a holy life. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 1891, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries of Places having Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See:

« If we turn not to things external and material, the first thing of all to secure is to save unfortunate working people from the cruelty of men of greed, who use human beings as mere instruments for money-making. It is neither just nor human so to grind men down with excessive labor as to stupefy their minds and wear out their bodies. Man’s powers, like his general nature, are limited, and beyond these limits he cannot go. His strength is developed and increased by use and exercise, but only on condition of due intermission and proper rest. Daily labor, therefore, should be so regulated as not to be protracted over longer hours than strength admits. How many and how long the intervals of rest should be must depend on the nature of the work, on circumstances of time and place, and on the health and strength of the workman. Those who work in mines and quarries, and extract coal, stone and metals from the bowels of the earth, should have shorter hours in proportion as their labor is more severe and trying to health. Then, again, the season of the year should be taken into account; for not infrequently a kind of labor is easy at one time which at another is intolerable or exceedingly difficult. Finally, work which is quite suitable for a strong man cannot rightly be required from a woman or a child. And, in regard to children, great care should be taken not to place them in workshops and factories until their bodies and minds are sufficiently developed. For, just as very rough weather destroys the buds of spring, so does too early an experience of life’s hard toil blight the young promise of a child’s faculties, and render any true education impossible. Women, again, are not suited for certain occupations; a woman is by nature fitted for home-work, and it is that which is best adapted at once to preserve her modesty and to promote the good bringing up of children and the well-being of the family. As a general principle it may be laid down that a workman ought to have leisure and rest proportionate to the wear and tear of his strength, for waste of strength must be repaired by cessation from hard work.

In all agreements between masters and work people there is always the condition expressed or understood that there should be allowed proper rest for soul and body. To agree in any other sense would be against what is right and just; for it can never be just or right to require on the one side, or to promise on the other, the giving up of those duties which a man owes to his God and to himself.

We now approach a subject of great importance, and one in respect of which, if extremes are to be avoided, right notions are absolutely necessary. Wages, as we are told, are regulated by free consent, and therefore the employer, when he pays what was agreed upon, has done his part and seemingly is not called upon to do anything beyond. The only way, it is said, in which injustice might occur would be if the master refused to pay the whole of the wages, or if the workman should not complete the work undertaken; in such cases the public authority should intervene, to see that each obtains his due, but not under any other circumstances.

To this kind of argument a fair-minded man will not easily or entirely assent; it is not complete, for there are important considerations which it leaves out of account altogether. To labor is to exert oneself for the sake of procuring what is necessary for the various purposes of life, and chief of all for self-preservation. "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread." [33] Hence, a man's labor necessarily bears two notes or characters. First of all, it is personal, inasmuch as the force which acts is bound up with the personality and is the exclusive property of him who acts, and, further, was given to him for his advantage. Secondly, man's labor is necessary; for without the result of labor a man cannot live, and self-preservation is a law of nature, which it is wrong to disobey. Now, were we to consider labor merely in so far as it is personal, doubtless it would be within the workman's right to accept any rate of wages whatsoever; for in the same way as he is free to work or not, so is he free to accept a small wage or even none at all. But our conclusion must be very different if, together with the personal element in a man's work, we consider the fact that work is also necessary for him to live: these two aspects of his work are separable in thought, but not in reality. The preservation of life is the bounden duty of one and all, and to be wanting therein is a crime. It necessarily follows that each one has a natural right to procure what is required in order to live, and the poor can procure that in no other way than by what they can earn through their work.

Let the working man and the employer make free agreements, and in particular let them agree freely as to the wages; nevertheless, there underlies a dictate of natural justice more imperious and ancient than any bargain between man and man, namely, that wages ought not to be insufficient to support a frugal and well behaved wage-earner. If through necessity or fear of a worse evil the workman accept harder conditions because an employer or contractor will afford him no better, he is made the victim of force and injustice. In these and similar questions, however—such as, for example, the hours of labor in different trades, the sanitary precautions to be observed in factories and workshops, etc.—in order to supersede undue interference on the part of the State, especially as circumstances, times, and localities differ so widely, it is advisable that recourse be had to societies or boards such as We shall mention

presently, or to some other mode of safeguarding the interests of the wage-earners; the State being appealed to, should circumstances require, for its sanction and protection.

If a workman's wages be sufficient to enable him comfortably to support himself, his wife, and his children, he will find it easy, if he be a sensible man, to practice thrift, and he will not fail, by cutting down expenses, to put by some little savings and thus secure a modest source of income. Nature itself would urge him to this. We have seen that this great labor question cannot be solved save by assuming as a principle that private ownership must be held sacred and inviolable. The law, therefore, should favor ownership, and its policy should be to induce as many as possible of the people to become owners.

Many excellent results will follow from this; and, first of all, property will certainly become more equitably divided. For, the result of civil change and revolution has been to divide cities into two classes separated by a wide chasm. On the one side there is the party which holds power because it holds wealth; which has in its grasp the whole of labor and trade; which manipulates for its own benefit and its own purposes all the sources of supply, and which is not without influence even in the administration of the commonwealth. On the other side there is the needy and powerless multitude, sick and sore in spirit and ever ready for disturbance. If working people can be encouraged to look forward to obtaining a share in the land, the consequence will be that the gulf between vast wealth and sheer poverty will be bridged over, and the respective classes will be brought nearer to one another. A further consequence will result in the great abundance of the fruits of the earth. Men always work harder and more readily when they work on that which belongs to them; nay, they learn to love the very soil that yields in response to the labor of their hands, not only food to eat, but an abundance of good things for themselves and those that are dear to them. That such a spirit of willing labor would add to the produce of the earth and to the wealth of the community is self-evident. And a third advantage would spring from this: men would cling to the country in which they were born, for no one would exchange his country for a foreign land if his own afforded him the means of living a decent and happy life. These three important benefits, however, can be reckoned on only provided that a man's means be not drained and exhausted by excessive taxation. The right to possess private property is derived from nature, not from man; and the State has the right to control its use in the interests of the public good alone, but by no means to absorb it altogether. The State would therefore be unjust and cruel if under the name of taxation it were to deprive the private owner of more than is fair.

In the last place, employers and workmen may of themselves effect much, in the matter we are treating, by means of such associations and organizations as afford opportune aid to those who are in distress, and which draw the two classes more closely together. Among these may be enumerated societies for mutual help; various benevolent foundations established by private persons to provide for the workman, and for his widow or his orphans, in case of sudden calamity, in sickness, and in the event of

death; and institutions for the welfare of boys and girls, young people, and those more advanced in years.

The most important of all are workingmen's unions, for these virtually include all the rest. History attests what excellent results were brought about by the artificers' guilds of olden times. They were the means of affording not only many advantages to the workmen, but in no small degree of promoting the advancement of art, as numerous monuments remain to bear witness. Such unions should be suited to the requirements of this our age—an age of wider education, of different habits, and of far more numerous requirements in daily life. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 1891, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries of Places having Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See:

« There is another and deeper consideration which must not be lost sight of. As regards the State, the interests of all, whether high or low, are equal. The members of the working classes are citizens by nature and by the same right as the rich; they are real parts, living the life which makes up, through the family, the body of the commonwealth; and it need hardly be said that they are in every city very largely in the majority. It would be irrational to neglect one portion of the citizens and favor another, and therefore the public administration must duly and solicitously provide for the welfare and the comfort of the working classes; otherwise, that law of justice will be violated which ordains that each man shall have his due. To cite the wise words of St. Thomas Aquinas: "As the part and the whole are in a certain sense identical, so that which belongs to the whole in a sense belongs to the part." [27] Among the many and grave duties of rulers who would do their best for the people, the first and chief is to act with strict justice—with that justice which is called distributive—toward each and every class alike. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 1891, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries of Places having Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See:

« The great mistake made in regard to the matter now under consideration is to take up with the notion that class is naturally hostile to class, and that the wealthy and the working men are intended by nature to live in mutual conflict. So irrational and so false is this view that the direct contrary is the truth. Just as the symmetry of the human frame is the result of the suitable arrangement of the different parts of the body, so in a State is it ordained by nature that these two classes should dwell in harmony and agreement, so as to maintain the balance of the body politic. Each needs the other: capital cannot do without labor, nor labor without capital. Mutual agreement results in the beauty of good order, while perpetual conflict necessarily produces confusion and savage barbarity. Now, in preventing such strife as this, and in uprooting it, the efficacy of Christian institutions is marvelous and manifold. First of all, there is no intermediary more powerful than religion (whereof the Church is the interpreter and guardian) in drawing the rich and the working class together, by reminding each of its duties to the other, and especially of the obligations of justice.

Of these duties, the following bind the proletarian and the worker: fully and faithfully to perform the work which has been freely and equitably agreed upon; never to injure the property, nor to outrage the person, of an employer; never to resort to violence in defending their own cause, nor to engage in riot or disorder; and to have nothing to do with men of evil principles, who work upon the people with artful promises of great results, and excite foolish hopes which usually end in useless regrets and grievous loss. The following duties bind the wealthy owner and the employer: not to look upon their work people as their bondsmen, but to respect in every man his dignity as a person ennobled by Christian character. They are reminded that, according to natural reason and Christian philosophy, working for gain is creditable, not shameful, to a man, since it enables him to earn an honorable livelihood; but to misuse men as though they were things in the pursuit of gain, or to value them solely for their physical powers—that is truly shameful and inhuman. Again justice demands that, in dealing with the working man, religion and the good of his soul must be kept in mind. Hence, the employer is bound to see that the worker has time for his religious duties; that he be not exposed to corrupting influences and dangerous occasions; and that he be not led away to neglect his home and family, or to squander his earnings. Furthermore, the employer must never tax his work people beyond their strength, or employ them in work unsuited to their sex and age. His great and principal duty is to give everyone what is just. Doubtless, before deciding whether wages are fair, many things have to be considered; but wealthy owners and all masters of labor should be mindful of this—that to exercise pressure upon the indigent and the destitute for the sake of gain, and to gather one's profit out of the need of another, is condemned by all laws, human and divine. To defraud any one of wages that are his due is a great crime which cries to the avenging anger of Heaven. "Behold, the hire of the laborers . . . which by fraud has been kept back by you, crieth; and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabbath." [6] Lastly, the rich must religiously refrain from cutting down the workmen's earnings, whether by force, by fraud, or by usurious dealing; and with all the greater reason because the laboring man is, as a rule, weak and unprotected, and because his slender means should in proportion to their scantiness be accounted sacred.

Were these precepts carefully obeyed and followed out, would they not be sufficient of themselves to keep under all strife and all its causes?

But the Church, with Jesus Christ as her Master and Guide, aims higher still. She lays down precepts yet more perfect, and tries to bind class to class in friendliness and good feeling. The things of earth cannot be understood or valued aright without taking into consideration the life to come, the life that will know no death. Exclude the idea of futurity, and forthwith the very notion of what is good and right would perish; nay, the whole scheme of the universe would become a dark and unfathomable mystery. The great truth which we learn from nature herself is also the grand Christian dogma on which religion rests as on its foundation—that, when we have given up this present life, then shall we really begin to live. God has not created us for the perishable and transitory things of earth, but for things heavenly and everlasting; He has given us this world as a place of exile, and not as our abiding

place. As for riches and the other things which men call good and desirable, whether we have them in abundance, or are lacking in them—so far as eternal happiness is concerned—it makes no difference; the only important thing is to use them aright. Jesus Christ, when He redeemed us with plentiful redemption, took not away the pains and sorrows which in such large proportion are woven together in the web of our mortal life. He transformed them into motives of virtue and occasions of merit; and no man can hope for eternal reward unless he follow in the blood-stained footprints of his Savior. “If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him.”[7] Christ’s labors and sufferings, accepted of His own free will, have marvelously sweetened all suffering and all labor. And not only by His example, but by His grace and by the hope held forth of everlasting recompense, has He made pain and grief more easy to endure; “for that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory.”[8]

Therefore, those whom fortune favors are warned that riches do not bring freedom from sorrow and are of no avail for eternal happiness, but rather are obstacles;[9] that the rich should tremble at the threatenings of Jesus Christ—threatenings so unwonted in the mouth of our Lord[10]—and that a most strict account must be given to the Supreme Judge for all we possess. The chief and most excellent rule for the right use of money is one the heathen philosophers hinted at, but which the Church has traced out clearly, and has not only made known to men’s minds, but has impressed upon their lives. It rests on the principle that it is one thing to have a right to the possession of money and another to have a right to use money as one wills. Private ownership, as we have seen, is the natural right of man, and to exercise that right, especially as members of society, is not only lawful, but absolutely necessary. “It is lawful,” says St. Thomas Aquinas, “for a man to hold private property; and it is also necessary for the carrying on of human existence.”[11] But if the question be asked: How must one’s possessions be used?—the Church replies without hesitation in the words of the same holy Doctor: “Man should not consider his material possessions as his own, but as common to all, so as to share them without hesitation when others are in need. Whence the apostle saith, ‘Command the rich of this world . . . to offer with no stint, to apportion largely’.”[12] True, no one is commanded to distribute to others that which is required for his own needs and those of his household; nor even to give away what is reasonably required to keep up becomingly his condition in life, “for no one ought to live other than becomingly.” [13] But, when what necessity demands has been supplied, and one’s standing fairly taken thought for, it becomes a duty to give to the indigent out of what remains over. “Of that which remaineth, give alms.”[14] It is duty, not of justice (save in extreme cases), but of Christian charity—a duty not enforced by human law. But the laws and judgments of men must yield place to the laws and judgments of Christ the true God, who in many ways urges on His followers the practice of almsgiving—“It is more blessed to give than to receive”;<sup>[15]</sup> and who will count a kindness done or refused to the poor as done or refused to Himself—“As long as you did it to one of My least brethren you did it to Me.”[16] To sum up, then, what has been said: Whoever has received from the divine bounty a large share of temporal blessings, whether they be external and material, or gifts of the mind, has received them for the purpose of using them for the perfecting of his own nature, and, at the

same time, that he may employ them, as the steward of God's providence, for the benefit of others. "He that hath a talent," said St. Gregory the Great, "let him see that he hide it not; he that hath abundance, let him quicken himself to mercy and generosity; he that hath art and skill, let him do his best to share the use and the utility hereof with his neighbor." [17]

As for those who possess not the gifts of fortune, they are taught by the Church that in God's sight poverty is no disgrace, and that there is nothing to be ashamed of in earning their bread by labor. This is enforced by what we see in Christ Himself, who, "whereas He was rich, for our sakes became poor"; [18] and who, being the Son of God, and God Himself, chose to seem and to be considered the son of a carpenter—nay, did not disdain to spend a great part of His life as a carpenter Himself. "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?" [19]

From contemplation of this divine Model, it is more easy to understand that the true worth and nobility of man lie in his moral qualities, that is, in virtue; that virtue is, moreover, the common inheritance of men, equally within the reach of high and low, rich and poor; and that virtue, and virtue alone, wherever found, will be followed by the rewards of everlasting happiness. Nay, God Himself seems to incline rather to those who suffer misfortune; for Jesus Christ calls the poor "blessed"; [20] He lovingly invites those in labor and grief to come to Him for solace; [21] and He displays the tenderest charity toward the lowly and the oppressed. These reflections cannot fail to keep down the pride of the well-to-do, and to give heart to the unfortunate; to move the former to be generous and the latter to be moderate in their desires. Thus, the separation which pride would set up tends to disappear, nor will it be difficult to make rich and poor join hands in friendly concord.

But, if Christian precepts prevail, the respective classes will not only be united in the bonds of friendship, but also in those of brotherly love. For they will understand and feel that all men are children of the same common Father, who is God; that all have alike the same last end, which is God Himself, who alone can make either men or angels absolutely and perfectly happy; that each and all are redeemed and made sons of God, by Jesus Christ, "the first-born among many brethren"; that the blessings of nature and the gifts of grace belong to the whole human race in common, and that from none except the unworthy is withheld the inheritance of the kingdom of Heaven. "If sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and co-heirs with Christ." [22]

Such is the scheme of duties and of rights which is shown forth to the world by the Gospel. Would it not seem that, were society penetrated with ideas like these, strife must quickly cease?

But the Church, not content with pointing out the remedy, also applies it. For the Church does her utmost to teach and to train men, and to educate them and by the intermediary of her bishops and clergy diffuses her salutary teachings far and wide. She strives to influence the mind and the heart so that all may willingly yield themselves to be formed and guided by the commandments of God. It is

precisely in this fundamental and momentous matter, on which everything depends that the Church possesses a power peculiarly her own. The instruments which she employs are given to her by Jesus Christ Himself for the very purpose of reaching the hearts of men, and drive their efficiency from God. They alone can reach the innermost heart and conscience, and bring men to act from a motive of duty, to control their passions and appetites, to love God and their fellow men with a love that is outstanding and of the highest degree and to break down courageously every barrier which blocks the way to virtue.

»

Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 1891, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries of Places having Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See:

« As regards bodily labor, even had man never fallen from the state of innocence, he would not have remained wholly idle; but that which would then have been his free choice and his delight became afterwards compulsory, and the painful expiation for his disobedience. “Cursed be the earth in thy work; in thy labor thou shalt eat of it all the days of thy life.”[5] »

Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 1891, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries of Places having Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See:

« In any case we clearly see, and on this there is general agreement, that some opportune remedy must be found quickly for the misery and wretchedness pressing so unjustly on the majority of the working class: for the ancient workingmen’s guilds were abolished in the last century, and no other protective organization took their place. Public institutions and the laws set aside the ancient religion. Hence, by degrees it has come to pass that working men have been surrendered, isolated and helpless, to the hardheartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition. The mischief has been increased by rapacious usury, which, although more than once condemned by the Church, is nevertheless, under a different guise, but with like injustice, still practiced by covetous and grasping men. To this must be added that the hiring of labor and the conduct of trade are concentrated in the hands of comparatively few; so that a small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself.

To remedy these wrongs the socialists, working on the poor man’s envy of the rich, are striving to do away with private property, and contend that individual possessions should become the common property of all, to be administered by the State or by municipal bodies. They hold that by thus transferring property from private individuals to the community, the present mischievous state of things will be set to rights, inasmuch as each citizen will then get his fair share of whatever there is to enjoy. But their contentions are so clearly powerless to end the controversy that were they carried into effect the working man himself would be among the first to suffer. They are, moreover, emphatically unjust, for they would rob the lawful possessor, distort the functions of the State, and create utter confusion in the community.

It is surely undeniable that, when a man engages in remunerative labor, the impelling reason and motive of his work is to obtain property, and thereafter to hold it as his very own. If one man hires out to another his strength or skill, he does so for the purpose of receiving in return what is necessary for the satisfaction of his needs; he therefore expressly intends to acquire a right full and real, not only to the remuneration, but also to the disposal of such remuneration, just as he pleases. Thus, if he lives sparingly, saves money, and, for greater security, invests his savings in land, the land, in such case, is only his wages under another form; and, consequently, a working man's little estate thus purchased should be as completely at his full disposal as are the wages he receives for his labor. But it is precisely in such power of disposal that ownership obtains, whether the property consist of land or chattels. Socialists, therefore, by endeavoring to transfer the possessions of individuals to the community at large, strike at the interests of every wage-earner, since they would deprive him of the liberty of disposing of his wages, and thereby of all hope and possibility of increasing his resources and of bettering his condition in life.

What is of far greater moment, however, is the fact that the remedy they propose is manifestly against justice. For, every man has by nature the right to possess property as his own. This is one of the chief points of distinction between man and the animal creation, for the brute has no power of self-direction, but is governed by two main instincts, which keep his powers on the alert, impel him to develop them in a fitting manner, and stimulate and determine him to action without any power of choice. One of these instincts is self-preservation, the other the propagation of the species. Both can attain their purpose by means of things which lie within range; beyond their verge the brute creation cannot go, for they are moved to action by their senses only, and in the special direction which these suggest. But with man it is wholly different. He possesses, on the one hand, the full perfection of the animal being, and hence enjoys at least as much as the rest of the animal kind, the fruition of things material. But animal nature, however perfect, is far from representing the human being in its completeness, and is in truth but humanity's humble handmaid, made to serve and to obey. It is the mind, or reason, which is the predominant element in us who are human creatures; it is this which renders a human being human, and distinguishes him essentially from the brute. And on this very account—that man alone among the animal creation is endowed with reason—it must be within his right to possess things not merely for temporary and momentary use, as other living things do, but to have and to hold them in stable and permanent possession; he must have not only things that perish in the use, but those also which, though they have been reduced into use, continue for further use in after time.

This becomes still more clearly evident if man's nature be considered a little more deeply. For man, fathoming by his faculty of reason matters without number, linking the future with the present, and being master of his own acts, guides his ways under the eternal law and the power of God, whose providence governs all things. Wherefore, it is in his power to exercise his choice not only as to matters that regard his present welfare, but also about those which he deems may be for his advantage in time yet to come. Hence, man not only should possess the fruits of the earth, but also the very soil,

inasmuch as from the produce of the earth he has to lay by provision for the future. Man's needs do not die out, but forever recur; although satisfied today, they demand fresh supplies for tomorrow. Nature accordingly must have given to man a source that is stable and remaining always with him, from which he might look to draw continual supplies. And this stable condition of things he finds solely in the earth and its fruits. There is no need to bring in the State. Man precedes the State, and possesses, prior to the formation of any State, the right of providing for the substance of his body.

The fact that God has given the earth for the use and enjoyment of the whole human race can in no way be a bar to the owning of private property. For God has granted the earth to mankind in general, not in the sense that all without distinction can deal with it as they like, but rather that no part of it was assigned to any one in particular, and that the limits of private possession have been left to be fixed by man's own industry, and by the laws of individual races. Moreover, the earth, even though apportioned among private owners, ceases not thereby to minister to the needs of all, inasmuch as there is not one who does not sustain life from what the land produces. Those who do not possess the soil contribute their labor; hence, it may truly be said that all human subsistence is derived either from labor on one's own land, or from some toil, some calling, which is paid for either in the produce of the land itself, or in that which is exchanged for what the land brings forth.

Here, again, we have further proof that private ownership is in accordance with the law of nature. Truly, that which is required for the preservation of life, and for life's well-being, is produced in great abundance from the soil, but not until man has brought it into cultivation and expended upon it his solicitude and skill. Now, when man thus turns the activity of his mind and the strength of his body toward procuring the fruits of nature, by such act he makes his own that portion of nature's field which he cultivates—that portion on which he leaves, as it were, the impress of his personality; and it cannot but be just that he should possess that portion as his very own, and have a right to hold it without any one being justified in violating that right.

So strong and convincing are these arguments that it seems amazing that some should now be setting up anew certain obsolete opinions in opposition to what is here laid down. They assert that it is right for private persons to have the use of the soil and its various fruits, but that it is unjust for any one to possess outright either the land on which he has built or the estate which he has brought under cultivation. But those who deny these rights do not perceive that they are defrauding man of what his own labor has produced. For the soil which is tilled and cultivated with toil and skill utterly changes its condition; it was wild before, now it is fruitful; was barren, but now brings forth in abundance. That which has thus altered and improved the land becomes so truly part of itself as to be in great measure indistinguishable and inseparable from it. Is it just that the fruit of a man's own sweat and labor should be possessed and enjoyed by any one else? As effects follow their cause, so is it just and right that the results of labor should belong to those who have bestowed their labor.

With reason, then, the common opinion of mankind, little affected by the few dissentients who have contended for the opposite view, has found in the careful study of nature, and in the laws of nature, the foundations of the division of property, and the practice of all ages has consecrated the principle of private ownership, as being pre-eminently in conformity with human nature, and as conducing in the most unmistakable manner to the peace and tranquility of human existence. The same principle is confirmed and enforced by the civil laws—laws which, so long as they are just, derive from the law of nature their binding force. The authority of the divine law adds its sanction, forbidding us in severest terms even to covet that which is another's: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife; nor his house, nor his field, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his." [2]

The rights here spoken of, belonging to each individual man, are seen in much stronger light when considered in relation to man's social and domestic obligations. In choosing a state of life, it is indisputable that all are at full liberty to follow the counsel of Jesus Christ as to observing virginity, or to bind themselves by the marriage tie. No human law can abolish the natural and original right of marriage, nor in any way limit the chief and principal purpose of marriage ordained by God's authority from the beginning: "Increase and multiply." [3] Hence we have the family, the "society" of a man's house — a society very small, one must admit, but none the less a true society, and one older than any State. Consequently, it has rights and duties peculiar to itself which are quite independent of the State.

That right to property, therefore, which has been proved to belong naturally to individual persons, must in like wise belong to a man in his capacity of head of a family; nay, that right is all the stronger in proportion as the human person receives a wider extension in the family group. It is a most sacred law of nature that a father should provide food and all necessaries for those whom he has begotten; and, similarly, it is natural that he should wish that his children, who carry on, so to speak, and continue his personality, should be by him provided with all that is needful to enable them to keep themselves decently from want and misery amid the uncertainties of this mortal life. Now, in no other way can a father effect this except by the ownership of productive property, which he can transmit to his children by inheritance. A family, no less than a State, is, as We have said, a true society, governed by an authority peculiar to itself, that is to say, by the authority of the father. Provided, therefore, the limits which are prescribed by the very purposes for which it exists be not transgressed, the family has at least equal rights with the State in the choice and pursuit of the things needful to its preservation and its just liberty. We say, "at least equal rights"; for, inasmuch as the domestic household is antecedent, as well in idea as in fact, to the gathering of men into a community, the family must necessarily have rights and duties which are prior to those of the community, and founded more immediately in nature. If the citizens, if the families on entering into association and fellowship, were to experience hindrance in a commonwealth instead of help, and were to find their rights attacked instead of being upheld, society would rightly be an object of detestation rather than of desire.

The contention, then, that the civil government should at its option intrude into and exercise intimate control over the family and the household is a great and pernicious error. True, if a family finds itself in exceeding distress, utterly deprived of the counsel of friends, and without any prospect of extricating itself, it is right that extreme necessity be met by public aid, since each family is a part of the commonwealth. In like manner, if within the precincts of the household there occur grave disturbance of mutual rights, public authority should intervene to force each party to yield to the other its proper due; for this is not to deprive citizens of their rights, but justly and properly to safeguard and strengthen them.

But the rulers of the commonwealth must go no further; here, nature bids them stop. Paternal authority can be neither abolished nor absorbed by the State; for it has the same source as human life itself. "The child belongs to the father," and is, as it were, the continuation of the father's personality; and speaking strictly, the child takes its place in civil society, not of its own right, but in its quality as member of the family in which it is born. And for the very reason that "the child belongs to the father" it is, as St. Thomas Aquinas says, "before it attains the use of free will, under the power and the charge of its parents."<sup>[4]</sup> The socialists, therefore, in setting aside the parent and setting up a State supervision, act against natural justice, and destroy the structure of the home.

And in addition to injustice, it is only too evident what an upset and disturbance there would be in all classes, and to how intolerable and hateful a slavery citizens would be subjected. The door would be thrown open to envy, to mutual invective, and to discord; the sources of wealth themselves would run dry, for no one would have any interest in exerting his talents or his industry; and that ideal equality about which they entertain pleasant dreams would be in reality the leveling down of all to a like condition of misery and degradation.

Hence, it is clear that the main tenet of socialism, community of goods, must be utterly rejected, since it only injures those whom it would seem meant to benefit, is directly contrary to the natural rights of mankind, and would introduce confusion and disorder into the commonweal. The first and most fundamental principle, therefore, if one would undertake to alleviate the condition of the masses, must be the inviolability of private property. This being established, we proceed to show where the remedy sought for must be found.

We approach the subject with confidence, and in the exercise of the rights which manifestly appertain to Us, for no practical solution of this question will be found apart from the intervention of religion and of the Church. It is We who are the chief guardian of religion and the chief dispenser of what pertains to the Church; and by keeping silence we would seem to neglect the duty incumbent on us. Doubtless, this most serious question demands the attention and the efforts of others besides ourselves—to wit, of the rulers of States, of employers of labor, of the wealthy, aye, of the working classes themselves, for whom We are pleading. But We affirm without hesitation that all the striving of

men will be vain if they leave out the Church. It is the Church that insists, on the authority of the Gospel, upon those teachings whereby the conflict can be brought to an end, or rendered, at least, far less bitter; the Church uses her efforts not only to enlighten the mind, but to direct by her precepts the life and conduct of each and all. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Pastoralis Officii*, 1891:

« To the Archbishops and Bishops of the German Empire and Austria-Hungary.

Mindful of your pastoral duty and moved by your love of neighbor, you wrote to me last year concerning the frequent practice among your people of a private, individual contest called dueling. You indicate, not without grief, that even Catholics customarily engage in this type of combat. At the same time your request that We, too, attempt to dissuade men from this manner of error. It is indeed a deadly error and not restricted to your country, but has spread so far that practically no people can be found free from the contagion of the evil. Hence, We praise your zeal. It is clearly known what Christian philosophy, certainly in agreement with natural reason, prescribes in this matter; nevertheless, because the vicious custom of dueling is being encouraged with greatest forgetfulness of Christian precepts, it will be expedient to briefly review these rules.

Clearly, divine law, both that which is known by the light of reason and that which is revealed in Sacred Scripture, strictly forbids anyone, outside of public cause, to kill or wound a man unless compelled to do so in self-defense. Those, moreover, who provoke a private combat or accept one when challenged, deliberately and unnecessarily intend to take a life or at least wound an adversary. Furthermore, divine law prohibits anyone from risking his life rashly, exposing himself to grave and evident danger when not constrained by duty or generous charity. In the very nature of the duel, there is plainly blind temerity and contempt for life. There can be, therefore, no obscurity or doubt in anyone's mind that those who engage in battle privately and singly take upon themselves a double guilt, that of another's destruction and the deliberate risk of their own lives. Finally, there is hardly any pestilence more deadly to the discipline of civil society and perverse to the just order of the state than that license be given to citizens to defend their own rights privately and singly and avenge their honor which they believe has been violated.

The Church is the protectress and guardian not only of truth, but also of justice and honor, in the union of which public peace and order are held together; therefore it has vehemently condemned and taken pains to punish with the gravest penalties possible those guilty of private combat. The constitutions of Our predecessor Alexander III, inserted in the books of canon law, condemn and solemnly denounce these private disputes. The Council of Trent punishes with singular and severe penalties those who engage in these contests or in any way participate in them. Indeed, above all other punishments it brands these persons with disgrace; expelled from the bosom of the Church, they are judged unworthy of the honor of ecclesiastical burial if they die in the struggle. Our predecessor

Benedict XIV in his constitution of November 10, 1752, “Detestabilem,” explained in fuller detail the Tridentine sanctions. In most recent times, Pius IX in his apostolic letter, which opens with “Apostolicae Sedis” and reduces the number of “latae sententiae” censures, clearly declares that not only those who contend in the duel incur ecclesiastical penalties, but also those who are called “patrinos,” seconds, and likewise witnesses and accomplices.

The wisdom of these regulations is more evident as one examines the absurd justification or excuses for the inhuman custom of dueling. The generally held argument that this sort of struggle washes away, as it were, the stains that calumny or insult has brought upon the honor of citizens surely can deceive no one but a madman. Even if the challenger of a duel is the victor, all reasonable persons will admit that the outcome simply proves he is the better man in strength or in handling a weapon, not the better man in honor. But if he falls in the combat, does he not prove by the same token how absurd is this way of protecting his honor? Few there are, we believe, who commit this crime deceived by erroneous opinion. It is, to be sure, the desire of revenge that impels passionate and arrogant men to seek satisfaction. God commands all men to love each other in brotherly love and forbids them to ever violate anyone; he condemns revenge as a deadly sin and reserves to himself the right of expiation. If people could restrain their passion and submit to God, they would easily abandon the monstrous custom of dueling.

Fear is not a just excuse for those who accept the challenge of a duel. They are afraid that they will be publicly disgraced as cowards if they refuse. Now if the duties of mankind are measured by the false opinions of the multitude, not by the eternal norms of rectitude and justice, there would be no natural distinction between honorable actions and disgraceful deeds. The pagan philosophers themselves both knew and taught that the fallacious judgments of the masses must be spurned by a courageous and steadfast man. It is rather a just and holy fear which prevents a man from committing murder and makes him solicitous of his own safety and that of his brothers. Truly, he who disdains the worthless judgments of the mob, who prefers to undergo the scourging of insults rather than abandon duty in any matter, proves himself to be of a far greater and exalted spirit than he who rushes to arms when provoked by an affront. Yes, indeed, if he wants to be judged rightly, he is the one in whom solid virtue shines forth. The fortitude is truly called virtue, and its companion is a glory, that is neither counterfeit nor deceptive. Virtue in a good man exists in accordance with reason, and unless virtue rests on the judgment of God’s approval, all glory is vain.

Lastly, the baseness of dueling is so evident, that in our time, despite the approval and patronage of many, legislators have felt bound to repress it by public authority and published penalties. What is so perverse and destructive in this case is that the written laws for the most part are evaded in substance and in deed; and this often happens with the knowledge and silence of those whose duty it is to punish the guilty and see to it that the laws are enforced. Thus it happens that frequently duels are fought and go unpunished, mocking the law.

Absurd, certainly, and unworthy of a sensible man is the belief of those who think that civilians are to be prevented from these contests, yet recommend that they be permitted to the military because, they maintain, such experience sharpens military valor. Now, in the first place, honorable deeds and disgraceful acts are essentially different; in no way can they be changed to their opposites by the different status of persons. Indeed, men in whatever condition of life are equally bound by natural and divine law. The reason, moreover, for such a concession for the military would have to be sought in public benefit which could never be so great so as to silence the voice of natural and divine law. What about the obvious deficiency in this rationale of public advantage? Assuredly, the incentives to military courage aim at better preparing the state against the enemy. Can this be accomplished by the practice of a custom that by its very nature causes the death of one of the individual parties of the country's defense whenever dissension arises among the soldiers for which, indeed, occasions are by no means rare?

Finally, the new age which boasts of far excelling previous ages in a more civilized culture and refinement of manners is wont to consider older institutions of little value and too often reject whatever differs from the character of the new elegance. Why is it that in its great zeal for civilization, it does not repudiate the base remnants of an uncouth age and foreign barbarism that we know as the custom of dueling?

It will be your duty, venerable brothers, to impress diligently upon the minds of your people these points which I have briefly touched upon, that they not rashly follow false notions concerning dueling, nor allow themselves to be carried away by the judgments of shallow men. Take particular care that youth at the right time understand that the Church's position on dueling is in agreement with natural philosophy. Indeed, just as in other countries Catholics in the prime of youth voluntarily and faithfully refuse to endorse dishonorable associations, in like manner, we are extending to Catholic youth the opportunity to make the same agreement among themselves and pledge that at no time and under no condition will they engage in a duel.

We humbly pray God that he strengthen our common efforts with divine grace and that He kindly grant what We desire for public welfare, for the integrity of morals and for Christian life. Affectionately in the Lord, we impart the Apostolic Blessing, Venerable Brothers, in protection of truly divine favors and as a witness of Our good will.

Given at Rome at the See of St. Peter, September 12, 1891, in the fourteenth year of Our Pontificate. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Constanti Hungarorum*, 1893:

« There have been other evils these past years, either decreed or carried out by public authority, no less destructive to the Church and to the Catholic faith. Considering the direction in which your country is going, moreover, it is greatly to be feared that there is impending evil far more harmful to religion.

Consequently, be sure that you diligently do all that you can so that priests and laity understand exactly what they are allowed to do and what they must beware of lest they offend the precepts of natural and divine law. As the majority of you who have pastoral responsibility gave orders to await the judgment of the Holy See on these matters, it will be your urgent duty to exhort the same ministers of the sacred mysteries to consider it their religious duty not to depart in the least degree from the decision or regulations of the Holy See. It goes without saying, moreover, that what is forbidden for the clergy is by no means permitted the laity. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Providentissimus Deus*, 1893, To All Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Catholic World, in *Grace and Communion with the Apostolic See*:

« The best preparation will be a conscientious application to philosophy and theology under the guidance of St. Thomas of Aquin, and a thorough training therein—as We ourselves have elsewhere pointed out and directed. By this means, both in Biblical studies and in that part of Theology which is called positive, they will pursue the right path and make satisfactory progress. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Permoti Nos*, 1895:

« So there is little doubt that Our Catholic sons will receive and carry out religiously these exhortations and commands with a will equal to Our purpose in issuing them.

For they will certainly never allow their discord to lessen and destroy imprudently that public regard for their religion which their concord has long fostered and which many a country envies them.

Let them rather act in the closest concert in order to oppose all their plans and strength to the wickedness of Socialism, which very clearly will cause evils and great losses. For it is constantly and in every way exerting itself violently against religion and the state; it is striving every day to throw both divine and human laws into confusion and to destroy the good works of evangelical providence. Our voice has been raised often and vehemently against this great calamity, as the commands and warnings which We gave in the Letter *Rerum Novarum* sufficiently testify. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Insignes*, 1896:

« In the preparation for your celebrations, the power of the Catholic religion as an excellent promoter of public safety and as the source or support of good things among the peoples shines forth. Certainly, as your wiser historians state, the Hungarian nation would not have held their occupied areas either very long or very prosperously unless the Gospel had led it, freed from the yoke of superstition, to

accept these well-known principles: to respect natural law, to do harm to no one, to be merciful, to pursue peace, to be subject to princes as to God, and to practice brotherhood at home and abroad. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Depuis Le Jour*, 1899:

« If one notes the critical condition of the times in which we live and ponders on the state of affairs in public and private life he will have no difficulty in seeing that the cause of the evils which oppress us, as well as those which menace, lies in the fact that erroneous opinions on all subjects, human and divine, have gradually percolated from philosophical schools through all ranks of society, and have come to be accepted by a large number of minds.

We renew our condemnation of those teachings of philosophy which have merely the name, and which by striking at the very foundation of human knowledge lead logically to universal skepticism and to irreligion. We are profoundly grieved to learn that for some years past some Catholics have felt at liberty to follow in the wake of a philosophy which under the specious pretext of freeing human reason from all ideas and from all illusions, denies it the right of affirming anything beyond its own operations, thus sacrificing to a radical subjectivism all the certainties which traditional metaphysics, consecrated by the authority of the strongest thinkers, laid down as the necessary and unshakable foundations for the demonstration of the existence of God, the spirituality and immortality of the soul, and the objective reality of the exterior world. It is to be deeply regretted that this doctrinal skepticism, of foreign importation and Protestant origin, should have been received with so much favor in a country so justly celebrated for its love of clearness of thought and expression. We know, Venerable Brothers, how far you share our well-grounded anxiety on this subject, and we reckon on you to redouble your solicitude and vigilance in shutting out this fallacious and dangerous philosophy from the teaching in your seminaries, and to honor more than ever the methods we recommended in the above-quoted Encyclical of August 4, 1879. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Tametsi Futura Prospicientibus*, 1900, to the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Local Ordinaries having Peace and Communion with the Holy See:

« A system of morality based exclusively on human reason robs man of his highest dignity and lowers him from the supernatural to the merely natural life. Not that man is not able by the right use of reason to know and to obey certain principles of the natural law. But though he should know them all and keep them inviolate through life—and even this is impossible without the aid of the grace of our Redeemer—still it is vain for anyone without faith to promise himself eternal salvation. “If anyone abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up and cast him into the fire, and he burneth” John xv., 6). “He that believeth not shall be condemned” (Mark xvi., 16). »

Pope Leo XIII, *Graves De Communi Re*, 1901, To the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See:

« The name of Christian Socialism, with its derivatives, which was adopted by some was very properly allowed to fall into disuse. Afterwards, some asked to have it called the popular Christian Movement. In the countries most concerned with this matter, there are some who are known as Social Christians. Elsewhere, the movement is described as Christian Democracy and its partisans as Christian Democrats, in opposition to what the socialists call Social Democracy. Not much exception is taken to the first of these two names, i.e., Social Christians, but many excellent men find the term Christian Democracy objectionable. They hold it to be very ambiguous and for this reason open to two objections. It seems by implication covertly to favor popular government and to disparage other methods of political administration. Secondly, it appears to belittle religion by restricting its scope to the care of the poor, as if the other sections of society were not of its concern. More than that, under the shadow of its name there might easily lurk a design to attack all legitimate power, either civil or sacred. Wherefore, since this discussion is now so widespread, and so bitter, the consciousness of duty warns Us to put a check on this controversy and to define what Catholics are to think on this matter. We also propose to describe how the movement may extend its scope and be made more useful to the commonwealth.

What Social Democracy is and what Christian Democracy ought to be, assuredly no one can doubt. The first, with due consideration to the greater or less intemperance of its utterance, is carried to such an excess by many as to maintain that there is really nothing existing above the natural order of things, and that the acquirement and enjoyment of corporal and external goods constitute man's happiness. It aims at putting all government in the hands of the masses, reducing all ranks to the same level, abolishing all distinction of class, and finally introducing community of goods. Hence, the right to own private property is to be abrogated, and whatever property a man possesses, or whatever means of livelihood he has, is to be common to all.

As against this, Christian Democracy, by the fact that it is Christian, is built, and necessarily so, on the basic principles of divine faith, and it must provide better conditions for the masses, with the ulterior object of promoting the perfection of souls made for things eternal. Hence, for Christian Democracy, justice is sacred; it must maintain that the right of acquiring and possessing property cannot be impugned, and it must safeguard the various distinctions and degrees which are indispensable in every well-ordered commonwealth. Finally, it must endeavor to preserve in every human society the form and the character which God ever impresses on it. It is clear, therefore, that there is nothing in common between Social and Christian Democracy. They differ from each other as much as the sect of socialism differs from the profession of Christianity.

Moreover, it would be a crime to distort this name of Christian Democracy to politics, for, although democracy, both in its philological and philosophical significations, implies popular government, yet in its present application it must be employed without any political significance, so as to mean nothing else than this beneficent Christian action in behalf of the people. For, the laws of nature and of the

Gospel, which by right are superior to all human contingencies, are necessarily independent of all particular forms of civil government, while at the same time they are in harmony with everything that is not repugnant to morality and justice. They are, therefore, and they must remain absolutely free from the passions and the vicissitudes of parties, so that, under whatever political constitution, the citizens may and ought to abide by those laws which command them to love God above all things, and their neighbors as themselves. This has always been the policy of the Church. The Roman Pontiffs acted upon this principle, whenever they dealt with different countries, no matter what might be the character of their governments. Hence, the mind and the action of Catholics devoted to promoting the welfare of the working classes can never be actuated with the purpose of favoring and introducing one government in place of another.

In the same manner, we must remove from Christian Democracy another possible subject of reproach, namely, that while looking after the advantage of the working people it should seem to overlook the upper classes of society, for they also are of the greatest use in preserving and perfecting the commonwealth. The Christian law of charity, which has just been mentioned, will prevent us from so doing. For it embraces all men, irrespective of ranks, as members of one and the same family, children of the same most beneficent Father, redeemed by the same Saviour, and called to the same eternal heritage. Hence the doctrine of the Apostle, who warns us that “We are one body and one spirit called to the one hope in our vocation; one Lord, one faith and one baptism; one God and the Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in us all.”[2] Wherefore, on account of the union established by nature between the common people and the other classes of society, and which Christian brotherhood makes still closer, whatever diligence we devote to assisting the people will certainly profit also the other classes, the more so since, as will be thereafter shown, their co-operation is proper and necessary for the success of this undertaking.

Let there be no question of fostering under this name of Christian Democracy any intention of diminishing the spirit of obedience, or of withdrawing people from their lawful rulers. Both the natural and the Christian law command us to revere those who in their various grades are shown above us in the State, and to submit ourselves to their just commands. It is quite in keeping with our dignity as men and Christians to obey, not only exteriorly, but from the heart, as the Apostle expresses it, “for conscience’ sake,” when he commands us to keep our soul subject to the higher powers.[3] It is abhorrent to the profession of Christianity that any one should feel unwilling to be subject and obedient to those who rule in the Church, and first of all to the bishops whom (without prejudice to the universal power of the Roman Pontiff) “the Holy Spirit has placed to rule the Church of God which Christ has purchased by His Blood.”[4] He who thinks or acts otherwise is guilty of ignoring the grave precept of the Apostle who bids us to obey our rulers and to be subject to them, for they watch as having to give an account of our souls.[5] Let the faithful everywhere implant these principles deep in their souls, and put them in practice in their daily life, and let the ministers of the Gospel

meditate them profoundly, and incessantly labor, not merely by exhortation but especially by example, to teach them to others.

We have recalled these principles, which on other occasions We had already elucidated, in the hope that all dispute about the name of Christian Democracy will cease and that all suspicion of any danger coming from what the name signifies will be put at rest. And with reason do We hope so; for, neglecting the opinions of certain men whose views on the nature and efficacy of this kind of Christian Democracy are not free from exaggeration and from error, let no one condemn that zeal which, in accordance with the natural and divine laws, aims to make the condition of those who toil more tolerable; to enable them to obtain, little by little, those means by which they may provide for the future; to help them to practice in public and in private the duties which morality and religion inculcate; to aid them to feel that they are not animals but men, not heathens but Christians, and so to enable them to strive more zealously and more eagerly for the one thing which is necessary; viz., that ultimate good for which we are born into this world. This is the intention; this is the work of those who wish that the people should be animated by Christian sentiments and should be protected from the contamination of socialism which threatens them.

We have designedly made mention here of virtue and religion. For, it is the opinion of some, and the error is already very common, that the social question is merely an economic one, whereas in point of fact it is, above all, a moral and religious matter, and for that reason must be settled by the principles of morality and according to the dictates of religion. For, even though wages are doubled and the hours of labor are shortened and food is cheapened, yet, if the working man hearkens to the doctrines that are taught on this subject, as he is prone to do, and is prompted by the examples set before him to throw off respect for God and to enter upon a life of immorality, his labors and his gain will avail him naught.

Trial and experience have made it abundantly clear that many a workman lives in cramped and miserable quarters, in spite of his shorter hours and larger wages, simply because he has cast aside the restraints of morality and religion. Take away the instinct which Christian wisdom has planted and nurtured in men's hearts, take away foresight, temperance, frugality, patience, and other rightful, natural habits, no matter how much he may strive, he will never achieve prosperity. That is the reason why We have incessantly exhorted Catholics to enter these associations for bettering the condition of the laboring classes, and to organize other undertakings with the same object in view; but We have likewise warned them that all this should be done under the auspices of religion, with its help and under its guidance. »

Pope Leo XIII, *Graves De Communi Re*, 1901, To the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See:

« The grave discussions on economical questions which for some time past have disturbed the peace of several countries of the world are growing in frequency and intensity to such a degree that the minds of

thoughtful men are filled, and rightly so, with worry and alarm. These discussions take their rise in the bad philosophical and ethical teaching which is now widespread among the people. The changes, also, which the mechanical inventions of the age have introduced, the rapidity of communication between places, and the devices of every kind for diminishing labor and increasing gain, all add bitterness to the strife; and, lastly, matters have been brought to such a pass by the struggle between capital and labor, fomented as it is by professional agitators, that the countries where these disturbances most frequently occur find themselves confronted with ruin and disaster.

At the very beginning of Our pontificate We clearly pointed out what the peril was which confronted society on this head, and We deemed it Our duty to warn Catholics, in unmistakable language,[1] how great the error was which was lurking in the utterances of socialism, and how great the danger was that threatened not only their temporal possessions, but also their morality and religion. That was the purpose of Our encyclical letter *Quod Apostolici Muneris* which We published on the 28th of December in the year 1878; but, as these dangers day by day threatened still greater disaster, both to individuals and the commonwealth, We strove with all the more energy to avert them. This was the object of Our encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of the 15th of May, 1891, in which we dwelt at length on the rights and duties which both classes of society—those namely, who control capital, and those who contribute labor—are bound in relation to each other; and at the same time, We made it evident that the remedies which are most useful to protect the cause of religion, and to terminate the contest between the different classes of society, were to be found in the precepts of the Gospel. »

Pope Leo XIII, Allocution on Christian Democracy, Addressed to the Cardinals on December 23rd, 1902:

« We shall not employ many words, Venerable Brethren, to express Our gratitude for the devoted sentiments uttered in the name of all by the revered Cardinal, the Dean of your College. But this We cannot leave unsaid, that to-day more than ever, We repose Our confidence in your united devotedness. Well-deserving co-operators for so long a time, you accompany Us still with strenuous affection, even though the difficulty of the way be increasing.

This year of Jubilee, the occasion of your courteous congratulations and of the unceasing demonstrations of love of the whole Christian world, is passing, as you see, embittered by social events, altogether too sorrowful for the heart of a Pontiff. The cause of the Church and of the Christian Name having been thwarted in a hundred ways, there is now a bolder attempt, to undermine, under the pretext of law, the sacred institutions of Christianity. But are not those a portion, and the choicest, of the heritage left by Christ to the nations redeemed, and are they not ordained expressly for the guardianship and protection of the sovereign benefits of morality, the chief source of all other benefits to human society? Ah! it is not the desire of public prosperity and of civil development, which inspires the doers of deeds like these! What is intended and sought is, in truth, the ruin of the Christian order of society and the reconstruction of States on the basis of a pagan naturalism. If it be written in heaven

that amid such sorrows Our day of life must end, We shall close Our weary eyes in resignation, blessing God; but with this conviction planted most firmly in Our heart, that, when the hour of mercy shall have come, He Himself will arise for the healing of the nations, assigned as an inheritance to the Only-Begotten of God.

Your last words allude, my Lord Cardinal, to the social action of Christian Democracy, which has become to-day, as you fully understand, a matter of no slight importance. To this action, so entirely consonant to the spirit of our time and to the needs which called it forth, We gave sanction and impulse, defining clearly and distinctly its scope, its method, and its limitations; so that, if in this regard any one err, he cannot allege as an excuse that Our authoritative guidance was wanting. But speaking in general of those who have become engaged in this work, Italians as well as others, it is undeniable that they labor therein with excellent zeal and notable results: nor may We allow to pass unnoticed the active part that hundreds of noble-hearted young men have taken in it. We have encouraged the clergy also to enter this same field of action; for, in truth, there is no enterprise of genuine judicious and beneficent charity, which is foreign to the vocation of the Catholic priesthood. And is not this true and most opportune charity to apply one self with care and disinterestedness to the betterment of the spiritual condition as well as the material circumstances of the people? The maternal love of the Church for mankind is wide as the paternity of God; but, nevertheless, faithful to her origin, and mindful of the Divine example, she has been always accustomed to devote herself, by predilection, to the lowly, to the afflicted, to the disinherited of fortune. When it is sincerely and constantly animated by the spirit of this universal mother of the peoples, Christian Democracy need have no fear of failing in its scope; nor need any one have fear of the name when he knows that the thing itself is good. Understood as the Church understands it, the democratic concept not only accords marvelously with the dictates of revelation and religious belief, but has even been born of Christianity and educated by it, and it is by the preaching of the Gospel that the nations have received it. Athens and Rome knew it not before they heard the Divine Voice which said to men, "You are all brothers, and of one Father Who is in heaven."

Outside of this democracy, which is called and which is Christian, there is a seditious and Godless democracy, which pursues other ideals and walks by other ways; and bitter are the days which it is preparing for the States in which it originates and is fostered. But our popular Christian movement, extending itself to the same objects, is an antagonistic force which bars the way of success for the other, and is frequently able to anticipate its work. If our Christian movement does nothing more than contest the field with socialistic democracy, and circumscribe its pernicious influences, it will have rendered a service, by no means unimportant, to social order and Christian polity.

In affectionate exchange of good wishes, We implore from heaven the choicest blessings on the Sacred College, and of them may this be an omen which with warmth of heart We impart to you, extending it to the Bishops, to the various Prelates, and to all others who are gathered about us. »

Pope St. Pius X, *Iucunda Sane*, 1904, To the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries:

« Men even go so far as to impugn the arguments for the existence of God, denying with unparalleled audacity and against the first principles of reason the invincible force of the proof which from the effects ascends to their cause, that is God, and to the notion of His infinite attributes. “For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made: his eternal power also and divinity” (Rom. i. 20). The way is thus opened to other most grievous errors, equally repugnant to right reason and pernicious to good morals. »

Pope St. Pius X, *Iucunda Sane*, 1904, To the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries:

« The times are indeed greatly changed. But, as We have more than once repeated, nothing is changed in the life of the Church. From her Divine Founder she has inherited the virtue of being able to supply at all times, however much they may differ, all that is required not only for the spiritual welfare of souls, which is the direct object of her mission, but also everything that aids progress in true civilization, for this follows as a natural consequence of that same mission.

For it cannot be but that the truths of the supernatural order, of which the Church is the depository, promote also everything that is true, good, and beautiful in the order of nature, and this the more efficaciously in proportion as these truths are traced to the supreme principle of all truth, goodness and beauty, which is God.

Human science gains greatly from revelation, for the latter opens out new horizons and makes known sooner other truths of the natural order, and because it opens the true road to investigation and keeps it safe from errors of application and of method. Thus does the lighthouse show many things they otherwise would not see, while it points out the rocks on which the vessel would suffer shipwreck.

36. And since, for our moral discipline, the Divine Redeemer proposes as our supreme model of perfection His heavenly Father (Matthew v. 48), that is, the Divine goodness itself, who can fail to see the mighty impulse thence accruing to the ever more perfect observance of the natural law inscribed in our hearts, and consequently to the greater welfare of the individual, the family, and universal society?  
»

Condemned by Pope St. Pius X in *Lamentabili Sane*, 1907:

« “Since the deposit of Faith contains only revealed truths, the Church has no right to pass judgment on the assertions of the human sciences.”

“In proscribing errors, the Church cannot demand any internal assent from the faithful by which the judgments she issues are to be embraced.”

“They are free from all blame who treat lightly the condemnations passed by the Sacred Congregation of the Index or by the Roman Congregations.” »

Pope St. Pius X, *Singulari Quadam*, 1912, to George Kopp, Cardinal Priest of the Holy Roman Church, Bishop of Breslau, and to the other Archbishops and Bishops of Germany:

« These are fundamental principles: No matter what the Christian does, even in the realm of temporal goods, he cannot ignore the supernatural good. Rather, according to the dictates of Christian philosophy, he must order all things to the ultimate end, namely, the Highest Good. All his actions, insofar as they are morally either good or bad (that is to say, whether they agree or disagree with the natural and divine law), are subject to the judgment and judicial office of the Church. All who glory in the name of Christian, either individually or collectively, if they wish to remain true to their vocation, may not foster enmities and dissensions between the classes of civil society. On the contrary, they must promote mutual concord and charity. The social question and its associated controversies, such as the nature and duration of labor, the wages to be paid, and workingmen’s strikes, are not simply economic in character. Therefore they cannot be numbered among those which can be settled apart from ecclesiastical authority. “The precise opposite is the truth. It is first of all moral and religious, and for that reason its solution is to be expected mainly from the moral law and the pronouncements of religion.”[1] »

Pope Benedict XV, *Ad Beatissimi Apostolorum*, 1914:

«It is not our intention here to repeat the arguments which clearly expose the errors of Socialism and of similar doctrines. Our predecessor, Leo XIII, most wisely did so in truly memorable Encyclicals; and you, Venerable Brethren, will take the greatest care that those grave precepts are never forgotten, but that whenever circumstances call for it, they should be clearly expounded and inculcated in Catholic associations and congresses, in sermons and in the Catholic press. But more especially—and We do not hesitate to repeat it—by the help of every argument, supplied by the Gospels or by the nature of man himself, or by the consideration of the interests of the individual and of the community, let us strive to exhort all men, that in virtue of the divine law of charity they should love one another with brotherly love. Brotherly love is not calculated to get rid of the differences of conditions and therefore of classes—a result which is just as impossible as that in the living body all the members should have the same functions and dignity—but it will bring it to pass that those who occupy higher positions will in some way bring themselves down to those in a lower position, and treat them not only justly, for it is only right that they should, but kindly and in a friendly and patient spirit, and the poor on their side will rejoice in their prosperity and rely confidently on their help—even as the younger son of a family relies on the help and protection of his elder brother.»

Pope Pius XI, *Mit Brennender Sorge*, 1937:

« Such is the rush of present-day life that it severs from the divine foundation of Revelation, not only morality, but also the theoretical and practical rights. We are especially referring to what is called the natural law, written by the Creator's hand on the tablet of the heart (Rom. ii. 14) and which reason, not blinded by sin or passion, can easily read. It is in the light of the commands of this natural law, that all positive law, whoever be the lawgiver, can be gauged in its moral content, and hence, in the authority it wields over conscience. Human laws in flagrant contradiction with the natural law are vitiated with a taint which no force, no power can mend. In the light of this principle one must judge the axiom, that "right is common utility," a proposition which may be given a correct significance, it means that what is morally indefensible, can never contribute to the good of the people. But ancient paganism acknowledged that the axiom, to be entirely true, must be reversed and be made to say: "Nothing can be useful, if it is not at the same time morally good" (Cicero, *De Off.* ii. 30).

Emancipated from this oral rule, the principle would in international law carry a perpetual state of war between nations; for it ignores in national life, by confusion of right and utility, the basic fact that man as a person possesses rights he holds from God, and which any collectivity must protect against denial, suppression or neglect. To overlook this truth is to forget that the real common good ultimately takes its measure from man's nature, which balances personal rights and social obligations, and from the purpose of society, established for the benefit of human nature. Society, was intended by the Creator for the full development of individual possibilities, and for the social benefits, which by a give and take process, every one can claim for his own sake and that of others. Higher and more general values, which collectivity alone can provide, also derive from the Creator for the good of man, and for the full development, natural and supernatural, and the realization of his perfection. To neglect this order is to shake the pillars on which society rests, and to compromise social tranquillity, security and existence.

The believer has an absolute right to profess his Faith and live according to its dictates. Laws which impede this profession and practice of Faith are against natural law.

Parents who are earnest and conscious of their educative duties, have a primary right to the education of the children God has given them in the spirit of their Faith, and according to its prescriptions. Laws and measures which in school questions fail to respect this freedom of the parents go against natural law, and are immoral. The Church, whose mission it is to preserve and explain the natural law, as it is divine in its origin, cannot but declare that the recent enrollment into schools organized without a semblance of freedom, is the result of unjust pressure, and is a violation of every common right. »

Pope Pius XII, *Humani Generis*, 1950:

« For though, absolutely speaking, human reason by its own natural force and light can arrive at a true and certain knowledge of the one personal God, Who by His providence watches over and governs the world, and also the natural law, which the Creator has written in our hearts, still there are not a few obstacles to prevent reason from making efficient and fruitful use of its natural ability. »

Pope Pius XII, Allocution, 2 Nov. 1954, AAS 46—666:

« And first, there are some noticeable attitudes and tendencies of mind which presume to check and set limits to the power of Bishops (the Roman Pontiff not excepted), as being strictly the shepherds of the flock entrusted to them. They fix their authority, office, and watchfulness within certain bounds which concern strictly religious matters, the statement of the truths of the faith, the regulation of devotional practices, administration of the Sacraments of the Church and the carrying out of ecclesiastical ceremonies. They wish to restrain the Church from all undertakings and business which concern life as it is really conducted, the “realities of life” as they say. In short, this way of thinking in the official statements of some lay Catholics, even those in high positions, is sometimes shown when they say: “We are perfectly willing to see, to listen to and to approach Bishops and priests in their churches and regarding matters within their authority; but in places of official and public business, where matters of this life are dealt with and decided, we have no wish to see them or to listen to what they say. For there, it is we laymen, and not the clergy – no matter of what rank or qualification – who are the legitimate judges.”

We must take an open and firm stand against errors of this kind: the power of the Church is not bound by the limits of “matters strictly religious,” as they say, but the whole matter of the Natural Law, its foundation, its interpretation, its application, so far as their moral aspect extends, are within the Church’s power. For the keeping of the Natural Law, by God’s appointment, has reference to the road by which man has to approach his supernatural end. But on this road the Church is man’s guide and guardian in what concerns his supreme end. The Apostles observed this in times past, and afterward from the earliest centuries the Church has kept to this manner of acting, and keeps to it today, not indeed like some private guide or adviser, but by virtue of the Lord’s command and authority. Therefore when it is a question of instructions and propositions which the properly constituted Shepherds (that is, the Roman Pontiff for the whole Church and the Bishops for the faithful entrusted to them) publish on matters within the Natural Law, the faithful must not invoke that saying (which is wont to be employed with respect to opinions of individuals): “the strength of the authority is no more than the strength of the arguments.” Hence, even though to some one certain declarations of the Church may not seem to be proved by the arguments put forward, his obligation to obey still remains. This was the mind and these are the words of Saint Pius X in his Encyclical Letter, *Singulari quadam*, of September 24th, 1912 (AAS, Vol. 4, 1912, p. 658): “Whatever a Christian man may do, even in affairs of this world, he may not ignore the supernatural, nay, he must direct all to the highest good as to his last end, in accordance with the dictates of Christian wisdom: but all his actions, in so far as they are morally good or evil, that is, in as far as they agree with or are in opposition to divine and natural law, are subject to the judgment and authority of the Church.” And he immediately transfers this principle to the social sphere: “The social question and the controversies underlying that question . . . are not merely of an economic nature, and consequently such as can be settled while the Church’s authority is ignored, since on the contrary it is most certain that it (the social question) is primarily a

moral and religious one, and on that account must be settled chiefly in accordance with the moral law and judgment based on religion (*ibid.*, pp. 658, 659).

Many and serious are the problems in the social field – whether they be merely social or socio-political – which pertain to the moral order, are of concern to conscience and the salvation of men; thus they cannot be declared outside the authority and care of the Church. Indeed, there are problems outside the social field, not strictly “religious,” political problems, of concern either to individual nations or to all nations, which belong to the moral order, weigh on the conscience and can and very often do hinder the attainment of man’s last end. Such are: the purpose and limits of temporal authority; the relations between the individual and society; the so-called “totalitarian State,” whatever be the principle on which it is based; the “complete laicization of the State” and of public life; the complete laicization of the schools; war, its morality, licitness or non-licitness when waged as it is today, and whether a conscientious person may give or withhold his cooperation in it; the moral relationships which bind and rule the various nations.

Common sense and truth as well are contradicted by whoever asserts that these and like problems are outside the field of morals and hence are, or at least can be, beyond the influence of that authority established by God to see to a just order and to direct the consciences and actions of men along the path to their true and final destiny. This she is certainly to do, not only “in secret” within the walls of the church and sacristy, but also in the open, crying “from the house-tops” (to use the Lord’s words, Matt. 10:27), in the front line, in the midst of the struggle that rages between truth and error, virtue and vice, between the “world” and the kingdom of God, between the prince of this world and Christ its Saviour. » Fr. T. Lincoln Bouscaren, S.J., S.T.D., LL.B., and Fr. James I. O’Connor, S.J., A.M., S.T.L., J.C.D., *The Canon Law Digest*, Volume IV, pp. 145-147.

Pope Pius XII, Address to the “Stations de Plein Air” Movement, May 3, 1957:

« In spite of so many praiseworthy efforts and good intentions, it must be admitted that, among the people of the most developed countries of this continent, the income of a sizeable part of the population remains below the living minimum.

There are some hundreds of thousands of people who live constantly a prey to the direst necessities, deprived of decent shelter, tortured by hunger, struggling desperately to keep a little dignity and not to fall ultimately into black misery and despair. On numerous occasions the public has been shaken by some unusually tragic case which sharply revealed unsuspected distresses. But soon afterward indifference and forgetfulness fell again like a thick veil to hide these painful sights and to silence these lacerating voices which shout their appeal.

How is the great number of the abandoned to be explained if not by the fact that the laws and organizations for social assistance are addressed to those who are already capable of helping themselves, capable of making a fixed contribution which will permit them to enjoy anticipated security?

By reason of unfortunate circumstances, of forgetfulness or negligence, the person involved loses his right to assistance or finds that nothing is provided for in his case, which has become suddenly tragic. And so a man and a family are reduced to destitution, forced to accept housing conditions and a kind of life unworthy of human beings, which it will be extremely hard for them to escape.

In these and others who have not the means to organize themselves, and from whom no one can count on for any political or economic advantage, society is not interested. Then do they suffer cruelly and their weakness exposes them to the tactics of unscrupulous exploiters who will try to wrest from them the little that they still have and to keep them in this state of lowliness.

Is it necessary to bring up the sad example of the exploitation of slum areas? Dilapidated, ram-shackle houses without the most necessary hygienic installations sometimes yield a sizeable income to their owners without costing them a penny. Inevitably, they neglect to make necessary repairs in them for years on end.

Enough can never be said about the harm that these dwellings do to the families condemned to live in them. Deprived of air and of light, living in filth and in unspeakable commingling, adults and above all children, quickly become the prey of contagious diseases which find a favorable soil in their weakened bodies. But the moral injuries are still more serious: immorality, juvenile delinquency, the loss of the taste for living and for working, interior rebellion against a society that tolerates such abuses, ignores human beings, and allows them to stagnate in this way, transformed gradually into wrecks.

Society itself must bear the consequences of this lack of foresight. Because it did not wish to prevent the evil and to provide a remedy in time, it will spend enormous sums to keep up an appearance of curbing delinquency and to pay expenses for prolonged confinement in sanatoriums and clinics. How many millions authorized for the cure of evils that it would be easier and less expensive to prevent!

One of the most disastrous results of unhealthy and inadequate housing is serious deficiency in the education of children. How many among them are morally abandoned by their parents, deprived of care and affection, forced to live on the street or in an environment stamped with vice! Inevitably, psychological and emotional instability is added to physical damage. Once disorder takes hold, evil tendencies lose no time in stifling the good and in making the person unfit for all normal social life. Thus the evil, perhaps accidental at first, quickly takes root and grossly aggravates the task of re-education.

Persons of good faith who have only an inadequate knowledge of the matter readily believe that the majority of those who live in the slums or who must be satisfied with an income below the essential minimum are there through their own fault or negligence, and that welfare organizations are capable of helping anyone in need of it. The fact is, existing institutions which address themselves chiefly, as We have already said, to those who can help themselves, ought to be adapted and their activity extended to those who, for any reason whatsoever, are incapable of benefiting by measures already in force. » ~ The Pope Speaks, Vol. 4, No. 2, Autumn 1957, pp. 206-207.

Pope Pius XII, *Ad Apostolorum Principis*, 1958:

« Assuming false and unjust premises, they are not afraid to take a position which would confine within a narrow scope the supreme teaching authority of the Church, claiming that there are certain questions—such as those which concern social and economic matters—in which Catholics may ignore the teachings and the directives of this Apostolic See.

This opinion—it seems entirely unnecessary to demonstrate its existence—is utterly false and full of error because, as We declared a few years ago to a special meeting of Our Venerable Brethren in the episcopacy:

“The power of the Church is in no sense limited to so-called ‘strictly religious matters’; but the whole matter of the natural law, its institution, interpretation and application, in so far as the moral aspect is concerned, are within its power.

“By God’s appointment the observance of the natural law concerns the way by which man must strive toward his supernatural end. The Church shows the way and is the guide and guardian of men with respect to their supernatural end.”

This truth had already been wisely explained by Our Predecessor St. Pius X in his Encyclical Letter *Singulari quadam* of September 24, 1912, in which he made this statement: “All actions of a Christian man so far as they are morally either good or bad—that is, so far as they agree with or are contrary to the natural and divine law—fall under the judgment and jurisdiction of the Church.”[AAS 4(1912) 658] »