

Commentaria in Secundam Secundae Angelici Doctoris D. Thomae, Quibus, Quae ad Fidem, Spem, et Charitatem Spectant, Clarissime Explicantur (*Commentary on the Second Part of the Second Part of St. Thomas Aquinas, in which those things pertaining to Faith, Hope, and Charity are most clearly explained*)

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Quaestio I, Art. X

The second principal doubt is whether the Supreme Pontiff can err in defining matters of faith.

The first argument is made for the affirmative position. He who is called the Supreme Pontiff in the Church is not a certain successor of Peter; therefore, he can err. The antecedent is proven thus: Because from the time of Urban VI, a schism began in the Church which lasted for a period of forty years, during which time the true Cardinals who were electors of the Supreme Pontiff died, and in their place other Cardinals were created by doubtful and uncertain Supreme Pontiffs. Consequently, the election of Martin V, who was elected in the Council of Constance, was not legitimate, and from him the Roman Church has continued to have Supreme Pontiffs in unbroken succession up to Gregory XIII. Therefore, all Roman Bishops are uncertain successors of Peter.

It is argued secondly: It is not certain according to faith that Gregory XIII is the true Supreme Pontiff; therefore, it will not be certain that this one whom we consider the Supreme Pontiff cannot err. The antecedent is proven because it is not certain according to faith that he is baptized; if, however, he is not baptized, he is not the true Supreme Pontiff, therefore [the conclusion follows]. And this is confirmed by a similar argument: For although it is certain that a properly consecrated priest can consecrate the sacrament of

the Eucharist, nevertheless that this particular man is a priest, and that this is a true sacrament consecrated by him, is not certain according to faith. Therefore, similarly, although it is certain according to faith that if someone is the true Pontiff he cannot err, nevertheless that this particular individual is the true Supreme Pontiff is not certain according to faith, and consequently it is not certain that he cannot err.

It is argued thirdly: The Pope can be a heretic; therefore, he can define falsehood in matters of faith, according to what he himself believes. The consequence is evident, because otherwise it would seem miraculous that he would define something contrary to what he himself believes. The antecedent, however, is proven because Anastasius, the Supreme Pontiff, was a heretic, as is stated in distinction 19, chapter "Anastasius." Likewise, Honorius was also a heretic, as is defined in the Sixth Council of Constantinople, actions 13 and 18. It is also proven by reason: For faith in the Supreme Pontiff is voluntary and of the same nature as in other men; but in any other man it is capable of being lost, therefore [it is capable of being lost] in the Pontiff.

It is argued fourthly: The Supreme Pontiff, however Catholic he may be, can err unless he employs the necessary diligence; but he can be negligent in employing such sufficient diligence, therefore [he can err]. The major premise is proven. Because the Holy Spirit does not assist the Pontiff through immediate revelation expressly illuminating him as to what he ought to define, in the manner by which He once assisted the sacred writers, but assists the Pontiff who seeks truth through disputation and inquiry and counsel, in which the Pope can proceed negligently, and consequently err.

It is argued fifthly: The infallible judgment concerning the doctrine of faith must be derived from the supreme rule of the Church; but a Council is a superior rule than the Pontiff, therefore the definition of the Pontiff is not infallible concerning faith. The minor premise is proven. Because it was thus defined in the Council of Constance, Sessions 4 and 5. And what is more pressing, Martin V himself, in Session 45 of the same Council, confirmed everything which was decreed in that Council pertaining to faith. This is confirmed by the definition of the Council of Basel, Sessions 2, 3, and 33. And it is proven by reason. Because the power which is in the Supreme Pontiff seems to be derived from the Church, since the Church elects the Supreme Pontiff.

It is argued sixthly: If the Supreme Pontiff cannot err when he alone decrees on matters of faith, labor would be wasted in assembling Councils with such expenses and efforts and superfluous disputations; the consequent is heretical, therefore [the antecedent must be rejected].

It is argued seventhly: Many Supreme Pontiffs have contradicted other Pontiffs, as is evident from many chapters and decrees, which Johannes Turrecremata collects together in book 2 of his Summa, chapter 112. And Cajetan [does likewise] in the second part of his Apology on the Authority of the Pope and Council, chapter 13, and in his Opusculum of 27 Questions, the final question, and Master Cano in book 6 of De Locis Theologicis, chapter 1. Therefore, the Supreme Pontiff can err. This is confirmed because, as may be seen in

these same places, many Pontiffs often explain the sacred scriptures improperly and unsoundly, therefore, etc.

In resolving this difficulty, we face controversy both with heretics and with Catholics. Indeed, all heretics deny that such authority exists in the Supreme Pontiff. But among these heretics, Luther and his followers are those who most violently rage against the dignity of the Pontiff. Even Erasmus, in his commentary on St. Jerome's Epistle to Damasus, and in his small book on the method of true Theology, says that those who teach that the Roman Pontiff cannot err whenever he makes determinations concerning morals and faith open a window to the destruction of true piety. But let Erasmus, who was always vehemently suspected of heresy, be dismissed. Behold the Catholic Gratian in distinction 19, chapter "Ita Dominus," §. "Hoc ait," states that Anastasius the Second erred. Likewise, Thomas Waldensis in book 2 of his "Doctrinale Fidei Antiquae," chapter 19, and Torquemada in book 4 of his "Summa," part 2, chapter 26, hold the same opinion. And Adrian in book 4 of his "Sentences," in the final question on Confirmation, and the Parisian Doctors, such as Gerson, Almain, and Ockham, whom Alfonso de Castro follows in his work "Against Heresies," book 1, chapters 2, 4, and 8.

FOR the decision of this most grave question, it must first of all be established that by the name of Supreme Pontiff or Pope we understand the universal Pastor of the Church, indeed of the whole world, who is the Vicar of Christ on earth and the successor of the Apostle Peter in the fullness of power. And indeed he is rightfully designated by such epithets and terms. For "Vicar" is properly called one who acts in the place of one who is absent; while "successor" is properly called one who is appointed and substituted in the place of one who has died, or of another who has been deposed from his dignity—just as a Bishop who succeeds a deceased Bishop, or one removed from the Episcopate. Since therefore Christ the Lord is absent according to visible presence, although He is present in the sacrament, and since the Apostle Peter is dead, our Pontiff is rightfully called the Vicar of Christ and the successor of Peter. For this reason, the Church is not a monster of many heads, since these two heads are related in such a way that one is subordinate to the other; for Christ is the head in heaven having a vicar on earth. This doctrine is implied by the Apostle in Hebrews 7, when he says: "And they indeed were made many priests, because by reason of death they were not permitted to continue; but this one (namely Christ), because he continues forever, has an everlasting priesthood." As if to say that even while existing in heaven, He is the high priest and Supreme Pontiff, and the only head of His Church. This unity is in no way diminished by the fact that on earth there is another man who is called the head of the militant Church—not by his own virtue and merit, but acting in the place of Christ, providing what is necessary for the militant and pilgrim Church to conquer its enemies and reach its homeland.

It should be noted in the second place that it is a dogma of the Catholic faith that the Supreme Pontificate was instituted by divine law in the Church by Christ the Lord in John 21, when He said to Peter: "Feed my sheep." This He had promised earlier in Matthew 19, when He said to Peter: "You are Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church." Therefore, the governance of the Church is a monarchy, and not an aristocracy. For the

Church cannot establish two or more Pontiffs who govern, as ancient Rome was once governed by two Consuls; but necessarily and by divine law it must be governed by a single monarch, the Vicar of Christ. This matter is treated in the fourth book of Sentences, distinction 18, concerning the Keys; or also distinction 24, concerning the sacrament of Orders. And see Torquemada in the second book of his Summa, and Rochester [John Fisher] against Luther, article 25, and Johann Eck in his Enchiridion on the primacy of Peter, and Albert Pighius in book 4 on Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, and Cajetan in his Opuscula on the authority of the Pope and councils, and in his Apology on the same subject, and in his Opuscula on the primacy of the Roman Church, and Brother Dominic de Soto in book 4, distinction 20, question 1, article 4, and distinction 24, question 2, article 5.

Furthermore, it should be noted thirdly that it is highly reckless and scandalous, and an encouragement to many heresies, to assert that a council is above the Pope, and similarly, that the authority which is in the Pope to shepherd and govern the Church does not come directly from Christ, but is derived from the Church, which elects the Pontiff. Here I dare not say that this is a heretical dogma, because I have not yet found it expressly defined in any Council or Papal decretal. Furthermore, the Doctors of Paris who hold this view that a council is above the Pope are tolerated. It is true, however, that Cajetan in the present article cites the definition of the Lateran Council under Leo X, at which Cajetan himself was present, where it was expressly defined that the Pope is above the council. Nevertheless, this Third Lateran Council has not been received throughout all of France, nor by the Doctors of Paris; rather, they appealed from it to a future council. And their reasoning was that the Bishops of France did not attend that Council because of the war which existed at that time between Julius II, who convened the council, and the King of France. And although that appeal was scandalous and reckless, and the beginning of many heresies, it should not be so openly condemned as heresy. Moreover, we see that although in the Council of Florence it was expressly defined that the primacy of Peter and of the Roman See is necessary for shepherding the Church, it did not expressly define that the Pontiff is above the Council—a point which the aforementioned Doctors have also noted.

It should be noted, fourthly, that the Roman Pontiff is, by divine law, the supreme pontiff of the Church, such that the Episcopate of the city [of Rome] and the Episcopate of the world are one and the same by Christ the Lord's institution. This doctrine is confirmed by many substantial arguments by Cajetan in his treatise "On the Primacy of the Roman Church," and by Master Cano in the sixth book of his *De Locis Theologicis*, chapter four, and throughout the three following chapters. Nevertheless, this doctrine is not as certain as the preceding ones. For this reason, some eminent doctors of our time assert that the Bishop of Rome is indeed the Supreme Pontiff, yet these two offices are not joined by divine law in such a way that the Apostolic See could not be transferred to the episcopate of another city. This is the opinion of Brother Dominic de Soto in the above-mentioned work; indeed, he says that it is not necessary for the Supreme Pontiff to be the prelate of any particular church. Nevertheless, Dominic de Soto himself at the end of the article states: "Let these things, however, be said in such a way that I submit my head to Roman feet."

It should be noted, fifthly, that neither the Supreme Pontiff nor the entire Church can establish a new article or new dogma with respect to substance, just as they cannot institute a new sacrament—indeed, much less so, because faith is the principal foundation in the Church. Therefore, even Christ the Lord Himself, although He instituted new sacraments, did not establish or create a new article of faith with respect to substance.

Just as all truths of the sciences are contained in this principle—that a thing either is or is not—so too there is no truth of faith which, as regards its substance, is not contained in that principle set forth by the Apostle in Hebrews 11: “He who comes to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him.” From this it follows that when we inquire whether the Supreme Pontiff can err in defining matters of faith, we understand this to mean in explaining matters of faith through his definition. This we explain by an example. If someone consults a moral philosopher about some moral question, and that philosopher responds with the truth according to moral principles, then that philosopher is certainly explaining what was hidden rather than being himself the author of the truth. In this manner, when the Supreme Pontiff defines something to be held as a matter of faith, he acts as one who explains a hidden truth, not as the author of that truth. Nevertheless, there is a great difference, because that Philosopher does not juridically declare or compel the inquirer to accept what he says; the Church or Pontiff, however, explains juridically in such a way as to oblige the Christian or inquirer to believe and to accept as certain according to faith what he has declared must be held. And in this manner St. Thomas should be understood in his article, when he says that a new edition of the creed pertains to the authority of the Supreme Pontiff, namely, with regard to new explanation. From this it follows that heretics wrongly object against us that the Supreme Pontiff creates a new faith. It also follows that those are gravely mistaken who say that the Pope has no power concerning the explanation of matters of faith beyond that possessed by other Doctors of the Church, when in fact the Supreme Pontiff has jurisdiction to feed Christ’s sheep with the doctrine of faith.

Finally, it should be noted that the Pope can define a truth in two ways. In one way, as a doctor and private person. In this manner, Innocent III produced commentaries on the Decretals. In another way, as the pastor and universal judge of the Church; this judicial power, however, is twofold. One is that by which the Pontiff proceeds according to the common practice of judges in accordance with allegations and proofs, both in criminal cases and in civil matters of the Christian commonwealth, by excommunicating, or absolving, or binding. This power, which resides most fully in the Supreme Pontiff, is nevertheless shared by other Bishops in their dioceses; indeed, this power of jurisdiction over the whole world can be committed and subdelegated by the Supreme Pontiff. There is, however, another definitive power for declaring truths of faith, which, although it is a power of jurisdiction, is nevertheless of a higher order and nature than the preceding one, because it belongs to the Pontiff through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, which is promised to no one else. Concerning this power, scholastic Theologians often raise the question of whether it can be delegated, even though there is no doubt about the subdelegation of the former power.

The complete question, therefore, is whether the universal Pastor of the Church, who is now in fact the Roman Pontiff, can err in defining matters of faith. For it is established among all that he can err according to the ordinary judicial power, at least from ignorance of fact, or even from malice in absolving or condemning the accused.

Therefore, we respond to the question with this first conclusion: The Supreme Pontiff, insofar as he is a Doctor [of the Church] and a private person, can err in matters of faith, whether through inculpable error or culpable error even with pertinacity, such that he could become a heretic. This conclusion stands against Albert Pighius of Kampen as cited above, and against certain more recent theologians. However, it represents the unanimous opinion of all ancient [authorities], Roman pontiffs, and scholastic doctors before Albert Pighius; indeed, even after him, the more serious doctors hold this view. See Cajetan in his book on the primacy of the Roman Church and in the places cited above. In these works, he takes it as most certain that a Pope can become a heretic, and discusses whether he would cease to be Pope by full right. Torquemada holds the same opinion as cited above. This has been taught by the most learned masters of our time at Salamanca, the primary professors of sacred theology in their commentaries on this article 10, namely Victoria, Soto, and Cano, as is evident in book 6 of *De Locis*, final chapter. Now, therefore, the conclusion is proven. First, because it is not permissible for a theologian, especially in grave matters, to introduce new opinions unless compelled by substantial and necessary reasoning. But our conclusion represents the ancient and common opinion, while the contrary is new and asserted without manifest and urgent reasoning; therefore, it should not be admitted. For the first author of this [contrary] opinion was Pighius, in book 4 of his *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, chapter 8, led by reasoning that is scarcely topical or probable. For it is voluntarily and gratuitously asserted that as soon as someone is created Supreme Pontiff, he is immediately confirmed in the faith, such that even if he wished, he could not err through personal error. Second, it is proven that although the opposing opinion might seem to manifest a certain piety and to exalt pontifical dignity, nevertheless, upon careful examination, it is scarcely pious and rather diminishes pontifical dignity; therefore, our conclusion must be upheld. The antecedent is proven because nothing is pious unless it is also true; but Albert's opinion is less true, and therefore less pious.

Confirmed. For those who hold that opinion, in order to defend it, invalidate two General Synods received by the Church, and also deny their decrees, as we shall soon see. Therefore, it is argued thirdly: Victor I, Marcellinus, Liberius, Honorius, and Anastasius II were Supreme Pontiffs, and they erred in matters of faith, therefore [the proposition is proven]. Concerning Victor, Eusebius asserts in Book 5 of his *Ecclesiastical History*, in the penultimate chapter, that he was a heretic. Regarding Marcellinus, all histories proclaim that he offered incense to idols and was condemned in a Synod of three hundred bishops. Jerome in his *Chronicles*, and Platina, report that Liberius consented to the Arian heresy. Concerning Anastasius, Gratian in *Distinction 19*, chapter "Anastasius," states that he agreed with the Nestorians and communicated with Acacius. As for Honorius, he was anathematized by the Sixth General Synod in Acts 13 and 18, and by Tarasius in the Seventh General Synod in Act 3, and by Epiphanius in Act 6, and by the entire Synod in the final Act. And what presses more urgently, three Roman Pontiffs—Agatho, Leo II, and

Adrian I—passed judgment on Honorius as a heretic. Agatho's judgment is contained in his epistle to the Sixth General Synod in Act 4. Leo's judgment is found in the epistle by which he confirmed the same Synod, where he states thus: "We anathematize Honorius, who did not illuminate this Apostolic Church with the doctrine of Apostolic tradition, but by profane betrayal attempted to subvert the immaculate faith." Adrian's judgment is contained in Act 7 of the Eighth General Synod, where he says that although anathema was pronounced upon Honorius by the Orientals, this was because he was accused of heresy, in which case it is permitted for inferiors to judge their superiors.

Nevertheless, the supporters of the contrary opinion respond to this argument we have made in multiple ways. First, they deny the credibility of historical accounts. And indeed, although by this approach Victor can be excused from heresy, since the Paulianists and Artemonites lied when asserting that he was an associate of their faction, as Eusebius well proves in the passage cited above. Likewise, Marcellinus could be excused from heresy, since it is firmly established that he sacrificed to idols, which is deserving of belief: for afterward, moved by penitence, he became a martyr and was canonized.

(Regarding Liberius and Anastasius, whether they were heretics, let the testimony rest with Gratian and Platina.) However, concerning Honorius I, they have no response except that the texts of the Sixth and Seventh General Councils were corrupted by falsifiers, even though these texts are circulated and read by the Church as authentic. Now, some respond more modestly in a second way, saying that councils and Supreme Pontiffs can err when they judge according to ordinary judicial power based on allegations and proofs presented. And thus they claim that witnesses falsely presented against Honorius a letter in his name, which either they themselves fabricated as being from Honorius, or which they certainly corrupted out of hatred. This letter contained the heresy of Eutyches and Dioscorus, and therefore the pontiffs and councils condemned Honorius, who was truly innocent, but judged a heretic according to the allegations and proofs presented. They respond in a third, somewhat more modest way, that Pope Honorius indeed consented to the opinion of Eutyches and Dioscorus, but was nevertheless not a heretic, because that opinion had not yet been condemned as heresy, and therefore Honorius was not deprived [of his office]. Nonetheless, he was condemned as a heretic, because the Church does not judge internal matters: however, the external testimonies were sufficient to condemn him, especially because at that time Honorius had already departed from life, and could not defend himself, nor did anyone else respond on his behalf.

Indeed, if we admit such sophisticated solutions, much greater inconveniences follow than if we were to confess that Honorius was a heretic. For from the first solution, the authority of two or three General Synods is destroyed—indeed of all of them, if we once admit that it is permissible for us to assert that the texts of councils have been corrupted. Regarding the second solution, although it may be admitted as possible that popes and councils can err when they proceed in such a manner, nevertheless it is rash to say that they did in fact err in a most serious matter, and that they exercised due diligence in examining witnesses, inquiring whether that letter was Honorius's or not. And certainly it is ridiculous that after nine hundred years Albertus Pighius discovered that those witnesses were false and

falsifiers. But let it be so for the sake of argument, that those popes erred in the condemnation of Honorius; nevertheless, it cannot be denied that they held it as established that the Supreme Pontiff can fall into heresy, otherwise they would in no way have admitted an accusation of heresy. And finally, from the third solution it also follows, contrary to these same authors, that at least the Supreme Pontiff can err through an inculpable error, which is against the privilege that they say is inferred from Luke 22: "I have prayed for you, Peter, that your faith may not fail." Where they assert that the pontiff can in no way err, neither through culpable nor inculpable error; especially since it would make little difference for the Church's benefit whether the Supreme Pontiff errs in faith culpably or inculpably; for in either case he will cause the flock entrusted to him to err if he hands down to others what he himself believes as Catholic faith. Thus far concerning their solutions.

Now, however, we must briefly respond to certain specific objections against our conclusion. For they object, firstly, that the privilege which they understand from Luke 22, "I have prayed for you, Peter," was not granted to Peter alone, but also to all of Peter's successors; but if it refers to Peter, it is understood such that neither Peter's personal nor public faith could fail, therefore it must be understood in the same way if it refers to Peter's successors. The minor premise is evident from what has been said above. The major premise, however, is proven thus: Because that privilege was not conferred upon Peter insofar as he was an Apostle (otherwise the Apostle Thomas would never have lost his faith), but it was given to him insofar as he was the universal Pastor of the Church, and consequently this privilege passes to the Apostles who are Peter's successors.

To this objection it is answered that such a privilege contained two aspects. One pertained to Peter's personal excellence, namely, that his own personal faith would not fail. The other pertained to the office of the Supreme Pontiff and Vicar of Christ, namely, that in proposing doctrine for the whole Church and in confirming the brethren, the public faith of Peter would not fail. We say, therefore, that Peter's successors succeed him in this privilege insofar as it pertains to the office of the Supreme Pontificate and the common governance of the Church; they are not, however, heirs to that privilege in matters that pertained to Peter's personal dignity. Just as all the Apostles likewise received from Christ the Lord universal power to govern the Church throughout the world, and not merely each of them in his own diocese, yet nonetheless the Bishops, as successors of the Apostles, have not inherited that prior and general power, but only that particular power over their own diocese.

Their second objection is this: It seems to them that it pertains to God's gentle disposition in governing the Church that the Supreme Pontiff cannot be a heretic. For the judge himself ought to be the standard of what is straight and what is crooked, and any judge pronounces sentence according to his own judgment. It would be, as it were, a violation of nature for a heretical Supreme Pontiff to define something other than what he himself believes, therefore, etc.

To this objection we respond that by the same reasoning one could prove that the Supreme Pontiff cannot be a sinner or an idolater because he himself must judge against sinners and idolaters. Therefore it must be said that just as it pertains to the harmonious disposition and order of the universe that water may ascend upward when necessary, lest a vacuum be created, although according to its own proper and specific inclination it tends downward; so also it pertains to the harmonious disposition and order of the universal Church that he who is the Vicar of Christ on earth receives from Christ himself such influence, when necessary, that in defining matters of faith he infallibly follows the doctrine of Christ, even if the pontiff himself might otherwise err through his own malice or ignorance. In this matter, God's omnipotence is more clearly demonstrated, as He pronounces infallible truth through the instrument of one who may otherwise be in error.

The third objection is this: For if we concede (they say) that the Pope cannot be a heretic, we avoid many difficulties and questions, namely: Whether the pope loses his pontifical dignity on account of heresy, and by whom he should be judged? These questions are difficult for theologians to resolve. To this objection we respond that it is unworthy of a theologian to abandon truth because he is overwhelmed by the difficulty of a question; rather, it is more fitting to seek out and elucidate hidden truth. Therefore, let this be our second conclusion in the order of this disputation.

Second conclusion: If the Supreme Pontiff should fall into heresy, he does not immediately lose his pontifical dignity before being deposed by the Church. This conclusion stands against Turrecremata in book 2 of his Summa, chapter 112, in response to the 7th argument, where he asserts that if the Roman Pontiff becomes a heretic, by the very fact that he falls from the faith of Peter, he falls from the chair and seat of Peter, and consequently, any judgment made by such a heretic would not be a judgment of the Apostolic See. And in book 4, part 2, chapters 18, 19, and 20, he holds the same opinion. And this opinion is said by Cajetan in his treatise "On the Authority of the Pope and Council," chapter 18, to be held by many men. But Cajetan himself holds our conclusion in the same work, chapters 17 and 18. First proof: Other bishops, if they are heretics, still retain their Episcopal dignity until they are deposed; therefore, so does the Supreme Pontiff. The consequence is proven because the Supreme Pontiff should not be of worse condition than other bishops. The antecedent is proven because the Church or Pope, to whom belongs the deposition of a heretic bishop, cannot judge internal acts, yet a bishop can be a heretic by interior heresy alone; therefore, such a bishop still retains his episcopal dignity. This is confirmed because otherwise it would follow that if a bishop, or even the Supreme Pontiff, were a mental heretic and later returned to better mind, he would be obliged to betray himself or leave his own pontifical seat, since he would not be a true prelate unless newly elected—all of which would be extremely harsh consequences. Second proof: If a pontiff who was once a heretic is later prepared to be corrected, he is not to be deposed, as even our adversaries admit; therefore, he does not cease to be pontiff. The consequence is evident. For if he had once ceased to be true pontiff, whether by divine or human law, he could not be placed again in the seat except through a new election. Third proof: It would be perilous if the governance of the entire Church depended upon the faith of one man, which no one can recognize whether he has it in his heart, and

great inconveniences would follow. First indeed, because in this way all pontifical definitions could be invalidated not only by heretics but also by Catholics. For who would be certain whether the pontiff himself has true faith? Then, consequently, all laws and statutes emanating from the pontiff would be similarly weakened. And finally, all the inconveniences that follow from the heresy of those asserting that a prelate loses his dignity through any mortal sin also follow from the opinion contrary to our conclusion, such as, for example, that we would have doubtful and unknown pontiffs, and all things would be turned into a certain Babylonian confusion.

But those holding the opposite opinion object against our second and first conclusion. For when the Supreme Pontiff first falls into heresy, he ceases to be the head of the universal Church, therefore he ceases to be pontiff. The consequence is evident, and the antecedent is proven because the Supreme Pontiff immediately ceases to be a member. To this objection we shall easily respond from the doctrine delivered above, when we were explaining the definition of the Church. We now say, therefore, that the Supreme Pontiff is said to be the head of the Church not by reason of the sanctity or faith that he possesses (for in this way he does not influence the other members), but he is said to be the head by reason of his ministerial office for governing the Church by defining truth, establishing laws, and administering sacraments, all of which are externally exercised according to the visible ecclesiastical hierarchy, and, if I may say so, tangible hierarchy. However, the fact that the pontiff himself ceases to be a member of Christ because of heresy, insofar as he ceases to receive from Him spiritual influence directed toward his own sanctity, does not prevent the pontiff from being called the most important member of the Church, namely the head, with respect to ecclesiastical governance. Just as the magistrate of a city is called the head of the republic. We noted above that since the concept of member is used metaphorically, different considerations of the metaphor are possible. And according to one consideration, the pontiff is not a member of Christ or of the Church, while according to another, he will be a member of Christ and of the Church.

Third Conclusion: In public judgment concerning faith, the Apostolic See should not be distinguished from the Apostolic president or Supreme Pontiff, nor the Roman See from the Roman Pontiff. This conclusion stands against the opinion of Alfonso de Castro who, in his first book against heresies, chapter 8, asserts that the Apostolic See comprises not only the Supreme Pontiff but also the College of Cardinals, and thus the Supreme Pontiff alone can err. Nevertheless, our conclusion is proven. Because the privilege granted to Peter as Christ's Vicar in confirming the brethren was granted to him alone without the association of the other Apostles; therefore, our conclusion is true. The antecedent is proven from Matthew 16, where, after the other Apostles reported false opinions of men concerning Christ—for example, that He was Elijah, or Jeremiah, or one of the Prophets—and Christ again inquiring, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered before all others, saying: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"; and consequently deserved to hear: "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," etc. Here Christ the Lord promised to Peter, as His Vicar, infallible authority in deciding matters of faith, which He did not promise to the other

Apostles. Furthermore, in Luke 22 it is said: "Simon, behold Satan has desired to have you all, that he might sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail, and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren." Here Christ's discourse is quite particularly directed to Peter as the Vicar, who was to be the judge and rule for others. For He did not say in vain that He had prayed singularly for Peter, that his faith would not fail: to whom it pertained to strengthen the brethren. All of which seems to refer to Peter's successors, who by virtue of their office must confirm the Cardinals and all the faithful in the faith. For indeed, Christ the Lord confirmed the Apostles themselves in faith and charity without Peter's assistance, by sending the Holy Spirit from heaven. Finally, in John 21, where Peter was instituted by Christ the Lord as universal Pastor of the Church, to whom it would belong to feed Christ's sheep with wholesome doctrine, Christ prefaced this institution with these words: "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" Here He compared Peter with the rest of the Apostles, to show that He was specially committing the pontificate of the whole Church to Peter alone as His Vicar. Our conclusion is proven secondly. When the faithful approach the Apostolic See to be instructed in matters of faith, and when councils request confirmation of their decrees from the same See, they do not approach the Cardinals, nor do they inquire of anyone except the Pontiff alone, who presides in the Apostolic See; therefore, our conclusion concerning the Pontiff alone is true. Because the Supreme Pontiff alone, even excluding the College of Cardinals, is Christ's Vicar and Peter's successor (for who would dare deny this?), therefore he alone cannot err. It is proven thirdly. Because the author who holds the opposite view, and any others who follow him, separate the Apostolic See from the Supreme Pontiff because they know no other way to respond to the arguments presented; but such arguments can easily be resolved if we say that the Supreme Pontiff can err with a personal error, but cannot propose his error to the Church to be believed by virtue of his office, therefore, etc.

From what has been said, it is concluded that this authority to define matters of faith resides first in the Supreme Pontiff, and then in the Apostolic See. This is evident. For as we have shown earlier, the privilege of firmness in faith was granted to Peter alone, and then it flows to his Apostolic See. Indeed, if we speak properly, the Apostolic See is nothing other than the successor of Peter in the prelature and primacy of the governance of the Church.

Fourth conclusion. The Supreme Pontiff cannot err in a public judgment of faith. This conclusion is asserted by St. Thomas here, and below in question 11, article 2, reply to objection 3, and in book 4 of *Contra Gentiles*, chapter 76, and in *Opusculum 1* against the errors of the Greeks, chapter 33, and chapters 65 through 70. It is also affirmed by Thomas Waldensis in book 4 of *Doctrinale Antiquitatum Fidei*, chapters 47 and 48, and by Torquemada in book 2 of his *Summa*, from chapter 107 through 112, and by Albert Pighius in book 4 of *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, from chapter 2 through 8, and by Johann Eck in his *Enchiridion* on the primacy of Peter, and by Cajetan in the above-mentioned work, especially in his *Opusculum* on the primacy of the Roman Church, chapters 12, 13, and 14, and by Melchior Cano in his work *De Locis Theologicis*, book 6 throughout, especially from chapter 9 through 7. All these authors cite numerous testimonies from Popes, Holy Fathers, and ancient councils asserting this truth. Therefore, I believe that this conclusion must be held as an Apostolic tradition. And indeed, it would be held as such by all the

faithful, had not the enemy, that is, the devil, sown weeds in the Lord's field since the time of the Council of Constance. For until those times, only the Greeks erred in this matter. And thus St. Thomas, in the cited *Opusculum*, relates this error as peculiar to the Greeks. And without doubt, if this question were brought before a legitimate council, I do not doubt that the aforementioned conclusion would be defined as true faith, and the contrary would be anathematized. Because the contrary can be shown to have already been defined by Leo X in the bull against Luther, article 8, in which Luther claimed that even if the Pope and the greater part of the Church held a certain position, it would be neither a sin nor heresy to hold the opposite view, even if such a position were defined as to be held as Catholic faith.

This article, along with all others contained therein, is condemned by the pontiff, and whoever presumes to teach them is excommunicated. Furthermore, the conclusion is proven from Deuteronomy 17, where it says: "If you find a case too difficult or ambiguous for judgment, etc. And if you see that the opinions within your gates vary, arise and go up to the place which the Lord your God has chosen, and come to the priests of the Levitical race and to the judge who is in office at that time; and inquiring of them, they shall pronounce judgment, and henceforth let no one become puffed up with pride." From this, an argument is drawn from the lesser to the greater. If the high priest of the synagogue, when questioned about doctrine, could not err in defining controversies, then much less can the Supreme Pontiff of the Church, the Vicar of Christ and successor of Peter, err. And this is confirmed. For it is more necessary that the Church have such an infallible rule than formerly the synagogue, which consisted only of one people and nation, where fewer controversies could arise. Now the new Church, gathered from many and various nations, can be disturbed by more controversies; therefore, an infallible rule of definition in the Supreme Pontiff is now more necessary than formerly.

Moreover, the same conclusion is proven. Because St. Peter could not err in defining controversies of faith, but the Supreme Pontiff succeeds Peter in the same authority, therefore he cannot err. The major premise is evident from the testimonies cited in the first argument for the preceding conclusion. The minor premise is evident. Because just as Christ the Lord established the Church to endure perpetually until the consummation of the world, so that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: so He seems to have instituted in Peter himself his own successor, who would feed and govern the Church, as was defined in the Council of Constance, Session 8 against Wycliffe, Session 15, errors 1 and 27 against John Hus, and in the Bull of Martin V, which is found at the end of the council, where it is condemned as an error that the pope is not the Vicar of Christ and successor.

Furthermore, the conclusion is proven. Because the Supreme Pontiff ought to possess in the Church as much authority as is necessary to maintain the faithful in the unity of faith, but for this unity, an infallible power of definition in the Supreme Pontiff is necessary, therefore he possesses it. The major premise is evident in every well-established commonwealth. The minor premise, however, is proven thus: Because in the Church, questions about faith frequently arise, but truly, if there were not in the Church one judge who could settle these disputes, there would be perpetual dissensions in the Church

regarding the doctrine of faith, and consequently, the unity of the Church would perish. Therefore, if someone should say that for this purpose it is sufficient that infallible authority resides in a universal council, against this is the fact that controversies of this kind concerning faith frequently arise in the Church, and it is necessary that they have a ready remedy at hand; but indeed, to convene a universal council so often is both difficult and impossible. Moreover, even if it were feasible to convene a council, what would happen if the Fathers of the council should disagree among themselves? And what if the majority of them (which can happen) should defend a false position? Then indeed, no other haven remains except to take refuge with the Vicar of Christ, who alone will settle all questions: and this is entirely most consistent with the wisdom of Christ, which is the reasoning of St. Thomas in this article.

Fifth conclusion. The Roman Pontiff possesses this firm and infallible authority in defining matters of faith, which we have said Peter possessed and was conferred upon his successors. This conclusion does not seem to me less certain than the preceding one, if we speak of the Roman Bishop insofar as he is in fact the Supreme Pontiff, whether by human or divine right. For it is clear from what has been said and from the cited authors, especially from Torquemada in Book 2, Chapter 36, that if the Roman Bishop is the Supreme Pontiff, then he is Christ's Vicar and Peter's successor. It is proven secondly: Because all heresies hitherto condemned in the Church have been condemned by the Roman Pontiff; therefore, he is the true Vicar of Christ, otherwise it would now be permissible to doubt all those heretics condemned until now. It is proven thirdly: Because the conclusion was defined by Nicholas, as is evident in Distinction 22, "Omnes." Where it is stated that whoever denies the Roman Church is placed above the others falls into heresy.

And this same point is stated in the Eighth General Synod, Sessions 1 and 7, and in the Council of Constance in the Bull of Martin V, which is found at the end of the council. And finally, in the assembly held a hundred years ago at Alcalá de Henares by Alfonso Carrillo, Archbishop of Toledo, by command of the Supreme Pontiff Sixtus IV, against Pedro de Osma, a Doctor formerly of Paris and a secular cleric, who was head of the primary chair of Sacred Theology at Salamanca, and who alone rather inauspiciously interrupted the succession of masters of the Dominican family presiding in the same chair since its establishment. For his books, together with the chair in which he sat, were consigned to be burned by fire in the middle of the main school. Among other propositions of this Doctor, the seventh one—that the Roman Church could err in faith—was condemned as heretical. And Sixtus IV himself, in an extravagant constitution against the same Pedro, confirmed the acts of that assembly and condemned the same proposition as heresy. Wherefore Pedro himself was compelled to retract his opinion under this form of words: "I submit to the Holy Mother Roman Church and the Apostolic See, and I confess with mouth and heart that I hold the same faith which the Lord Sixtus, the current pope, holds by Evangelical and Apostolic authority, and I pronounce all who come against this faith worthy of eternal damnation." The acts of this Council of Alcalá and the words of the aforementioned extravagant constitution are contained in the Summa of Councils under the life and decrees of Sixtus IV.

Finally, the conclusion is proven. Because it is not permissible to appeal from the Roman See and from its head. Likewise, councils seek confirmation of their decrees from the same See, therefore, etc. The premise cannot be denied by a Catholic, as is evident from the Canons and Ecclesiastical histories. And it seems necessary. For if it were permissible to appeal from the Roman See to a council, no small opportunity for error would be given to heretics. The consequence is indeed proven. Because if the Roman Pontiff could err, it would be against all reason to deny an appeal from him to a council, which could not err. But if anyone should respond to this argument that in fact it is not permissible to appeal from the Roman Pontiff to a council, because also in fact and by positive human law the Roman Bishop is the same as and is the Supreme Pontiff, however it is not lawful to appeal from the Supreme Pontiff; against this solution I reply thus. If the Roman Pontiff were not by divine law the Supreme Pontiff, it would follow that neither would he have by divine law infallibility in defining matters of faith. Again, therefore, it would be against reason not to admit an appeal to a council, in which that firmness and infallibility would exist by divine law; indeed, it would be possible, while preserving the faith, to doubt whether the Roman Bishop himself was the Supreme Pontiff, and whether he had that infallibility in defining.

It remains to respond to the arguments posed at the beginning.

In response to the first argument, it should be noted that because of this the heretic Wycliffe held the opinion that after Urban VI no one should be accepted as Supreme Pontiff, but that one should live according to the manner of the Greeks under their own laws. The Lutherans later followed this error; however, it was condemned in the Council of Constance, Session 8. It must therefore be said that there is no reasonable doubt concerning the election of Martin V. First, because according to the faith, the authority to elect the Supreme Pontiff resides in the Church. The Pope, indeed, as head of the Church, prescribes the method of conducting the election and determines by whom the election ought to be carried out; and accordingly established that it should be done by the Cardinals alone. But if the pontiff (which God forbid) together with all the Cardinals were to perish by plague or sword, nevertheless it is certain that the authority to elect the pope, or certainly to convoke a council in which the Supreme Pontiff would be elected, would remain with the Bishops and the Roman clergy. And thus it was done when Martin V was elected. For when three men simultaneously conducted themselves as Supreme Pontiffs, namely, John XXIII, Gregory XII, and Benedict XIII, then through the industry and efforts of Emperor Sigismund, the Council of Constance was assembled, where first John XXIII attended with his followers and those obedient to him; then the other two obediences convened, and by the common consensus of the whole Church, the three aforementioned were deposed from the supreme pontificate; and it was decreed that, together with the Cardinals, six men would be designated from each of the nations that participated in the council, who would cast votes in the election of the new pontiff for that occasion only. And thus, as is evident from Session 41, Martin V was elected by the consensus of all, in the year of our Lord 1417, on the feast of Saint Martin. The Church was therefore able, on account of common error of fact, to depose those three who were called pontiffs, even if one of them was the true pontiff. For all of them were bound to cede their right for the common good of the Church; otherwise, if they refused to cede, they could be deposed by

the Church, which could also create a new pontiff, as was done. Furthermore, even if Martin V had been elected by the Cardinals alone and those of dubious or even false standing, and without the convocation of a council, he could nevertheless be called the true pontiff because of the common consensus of the Church and error of fact. For as is held in the law Barbarius (ff. de officio Praetoris), where there is common error of fact, the prelate possesses jurisdiction, and all his acts and deeds are valid both in civil and spiritual matters; hence even a parish priest who is excommunicated by name, if there is common error of fact, truly absolves. And thus the Cardinals, who elected Martin V, because they held the title of Cardinal and there was common error of fact, had jurisdiction to cast votes in the election of the pontiff: and thus the one elected would be the undoubted Supreme Pontiff. Thirdly, it is responded that even if we concede that the election of Martin V itself was null, nevertheless, because he was subsequently accepted by the whole Church as universal pastor, he would have been in reality the Supreme Pontiff and consequently his successors as well. Just as the Goths first occupied Spain through tyranny, but then with the consent of the kingdom became true Kings and are called such in the Councils of Toledo, especially in the 5th Council, Canon 3.

In response to the second argument, it is answered that even if there were someone in the Church who was considered to be the pontiff who in reality was not, nevertheless the error of such a person making definitions would never redound to the universal Church, because either he will not define anything, or he will define what is true, or if he defines what is false, it will not be received by the Church, but the error of the definition or of the one defining will be revealed. And this occurs without a miracle, but according to the common law, which is explained in Matthew 16, where it is said: "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Secondly, it is answered that if one who is esteemed to be the pontiff, but in reality is not, should be incapable of the Pontificate—as if, for example, he were a woman (which some have wished to claim about John VIII), or he were not baptized—he would possess no spiritual jurisdiction whatsoever. If, however, he is eligible for the pontificate, but his election was null due to some defect, then he will have partial jurisdiction, similar to what the Vicar of the Pope usually has when the See is vacant, but he will not have the power to define matters of faith infallibly, since this resides in the true pontiff alone.

Some respond thirdly that after the Pope has defined something to be held according to faith, then it must also be asserted according to faith that he is the Supreme Pontiff. For example, if Gregory XIII now defines some proposition to be held according to faith, he simultaneously and consequently defines that he is the Supreme Pontiff. And they say the same about a council, that it simultaneously defines a conclusion of faith and [defines] itself to be a council. And they prove it thus: Because a conclusion of faith can only follow from two premises of faith, or from one premise of faith and another known by the light of natural reason; but the conclusion which the Pontiff defines is certain according to faith, and depends on these premises: "The Supreme Pontiff cannot err," and "This man is the Supreme Pontiff." But since the minor premise is not known by the light of nature, therefore it must be known by faith.

Furthermore, they prove it a posteriori. The following argument is valid: He who has the power to confirm, and confirms the brethren in faith, is the Supreme Pontiff; but this man confirms the brethren in faith, therefore he is the Supreme Pontiff. The major premise is found in Luke 22, and the minor premise is evident to the senses after Gregory has defined some truth of faith. Indeed, before that definition the faithful were in doubt, but after it they now firmly believe; therefore, the conclusion “this man is the Supreme Pontiff” is held according to faith.

They prove thirdly. If the Supreme Pontiff or a council, when defining some proposition, did not implicitly and consequently define themselves as having the authority to make such a definition, it would follow that the final resolution in matters of faith would rest solely on the private judgment of each individual believer, and there would be no certain and visible rule to which final resolution could be made, which seems to favor the Lutheran position. They prove the logical consequence. Because it would pertain to each person’s private judgment to determine whether this person is the Supreme Pontiff, or whether that assembly is a council.

And finally, it is confirmed. Because as was stated above, it pertains to faith that we believe and confess not only that the Church of Christ exists in the world, but also that this singular Church exists, in which the faithful serve under one Roman pontiff. Nevertheless, the aforementioned arguments are not convincingly effective. For the first argument of those who respond in the aforementioned manner, if it were valid, would also prove that it should be certain according to faith that this person is the supreme pontiff, before the defined conclusion is certain according to faith. Indeed, according to the a posteriori doctrine, premises must be known before the conclusion, and with greater certainty; consequently, it would be necessary to know with certainty that this person is the supreme pontiff before assenting in faith to the conclusion defined by him. Therefore, we need not wait for the pontiff to define something in order to be certain according to Catholic faith that he is the supreme pontiff. But neither is their second proof effective, because one could respond that the proposition is certain according to faith because the whole Church accepts it, which cannot err, but not because it is certain according to faith that this particular individual is the supreme pontiff. Nor does their third argument convince. Indeed, the resolution of this truth—that the Church is a truthful and infallible rule—happens through the intrinsic testimony of the Holy Spirit as it relates to us, but it does not happen through the Church itself merely because the Church judges itself to be truthful. Rather, it is because the Holy Spirit intimately inclines us to believe that the Church is truthful in explaining matters of faith, according to 1 John 4: “He who is of God hears us.” Therefore, it is not necessary that for a proposition to be considered certain according to faith, it must be derived through a consequence from the antecedent “this person is the supreme pontiff, and this person defines and proposes this proposition, therefore it is of faith.” It will be sufficient for us that the proposition is accepted by the whole Church as certain according to faith, so that from this we can judge and hold that it is certain according to faith.

Therefore, to the principal argument we can respond fourthly, that even after the definition of the Supreme Pontiff and Council, it is known only through human prudence and evident inquiry, or even through infused prudence (to which falsehood may be present speculatively), that this person is the Supreme Pontiff, and that this is a duly convened and confirmed Council. Nevertheless, the proposition thus defined must be held as certain according to faith. As when some preacher proclaims the faith among barbarians, the barbarians themselves can believe the Gospel through infused faith, and yet not assent through infused faith that the preacher cannot err. Rather, they judge by human conjecture that the preacher is neither deceived nor deceives in that instruction. And to the argument in form, the response is that this particular Supreme Pontiff serves as a condition without which not [*conditio sine qua non*], but not in such a way that his authority is the reason for believing.

However, this fourth solution requires explanation. For it seems to follow from it that it is not necessary to believe according to faith that this particular Church is the Catholic Church, but that it suffices to believe and confess in general that the Church is catholic. The consequence is proven thus: Because this particular Church is none other than the one which now exists under Pope Gregory XIII, and which here and now is gathered in this particular council, e.g., the Council of Trent. Therefore, if faith does not immediately incline one to believe that this is the Council and this is the pontiff, it follows that faith does not incline one to believe in particular that this is the Catholic Church. The consequence is proven because this particular Church here and now cannot be recognized except through such particular conditions and circumstances. To this argument I respond by denying the consequence. For this particular Church is not individuated *per se* by the fact that it now exists under this particular pontiff, nor by the fact that it is gathered in this council. Indeed, before this pontiff and before this council, this Church existed; and similarly, when the council ends and when the pontiff dies, this same numerical Church remains. Therefore, its individuation does not consist in the aforementioned circumstances, although these are certain signs for investigating which and where is the Church that is called catholic. It must be said, therefore, that the Church is individuated by the fact that it is a congregation of the faithful subject to the successor of Peter and to the Roman pontiff in fact, whether this particular man or another is the Roman pontiff. Hence, as long as such a man in particular is considered to be the pope, then the Church which is subject to him is this particular and catholic Church, which prudently judges and sometimes believes morally that this man has been duly elected, presupposing the faith which teaches that there exists in the Church the power to elect a pontiff as successor to Peter.

Therefore we say that faith and the Holy Spirit directly incline one to believe that this which is now called the Roman Church is the true and catholic Church of Christ, whether this particular man is truly the Roman Pontiff or not. For this depends on certain circumstances which can be lacking, as for example, it is necessary that he be baptized, and perhaps he is not baptized. Similarly, it depends on the fact that this person is a man, and perhaps it is a woman. As is commonly said of John VIII. However, if the situation is such that this council was assembled and confirmed by the true pontiff, then not only does human faith cause a singular assent to the truth defined in such a council, but also faith and the Holy Spirit

incline one to assent to that truth thus defined. But if in reality he who is thought to be the true pontiff is not, and the council is not, as it is thought to be, duly assembled and confirmed, then a particular faithful individual, or some particular congregation, could be deceived, thinking they are assenting by infused faith to that defined proposition, to which, however, in reality they assent only from human faith and human conjectures, by which they are deceived. Nevertheless, it should never be admitted that the whole Church is deceived in accepting such a definition of a council made public. If the whole Church has accepted it, it will be a most certain sign that the defined proposition is true and pertains to the faith, even if he who was regarded as the supreme pontiff was not the true pontiff.

Nevertheless, despite all the aforementioned points, it would be highly reckless and scandalous if, after the Church has accepted someone as the Supreme Pontiff, anyone were to deny that he is the true Supreme Pontiff, unless they could demonstrate that he was not baptized or not a man. Otherwise, such a person would not only be vehemently suspected of heresy but would also deservedly be punished as a heretic. For he would seem to deny that the Church possesses the power to elect a Supreme Pontiff as Peter's successor. It is a most well-known case for moral disputation, that someone might ascend to the height of the pontificate without being baptized, especially since it is believed to pertain to divine providence that it does not permit an unbaptized man to ascend to the priesthood, and much less to the supreme pontificate. Moreover, what is said about that "John" having been a woman is uncertain. And even if this had happened once, it is nevertheless not to be admitted that such a person would propose to the whole Church some error as though it were to be believed as a matter of faith, and that it would be accepted by the Church.

And if anyone should object that it is possible in the Church for an unconsecrated host to be adored as consecrated out of an impulse of true religion, therefore it can happen that out of an impulse of faith, this man might be believed to be the Supreme Pontiff, and yet not be the true pontiff. To this we respond that faith can in no way incline toward falsehood, neither practical nor speculative, as has been stated above. However, the virtue of religion, just like that of prudence (even infused prudence), always inclines toward practical truth, but does not always incline toward that which is speculatively true. There is also another difference. For error is easy regarding this particular host, whether it is consecrated, due to the forgetfulness of the priest. But concerning the Supreme Pontiff, it is not so easy to err in the particular case of whether he who is accepted by the universal Church as such is the Supreme Pontiff. And through this, the confirmation of the second principal argument is addressed.

To the third argument, some respond by denying the antecedent. Others concede that a pontiff can indeed be a heretic, but they do not admit that he might meanwhile define something to be believed according to faith by the whole Church. Nevertheless, these authors seem to assert a miracle, such as that someone could be the true Vicar of Christ and yet be unable to confirm the brethren in faith. We, therefore, speaking consistently with what we have already stated, respond that just as Caiaphas prophesied without knowing what he was saying, since he was the high priest of that year, as is recorded in

John 11, so also a heretical supreme pontiff, as long as he functions in the office of pontiff, could define truth contrary to his own opinion through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, a heretical supreme pontiff would understand that what he defines is contrary to his own opinion, and nevertheless he would define it through the ordination of the Holy Spirit, who assists the office of the Supreme Pontificate.

To the fourth argument, some respond by conceding the major premise but denying the minor. Others, conversely, deny the major premise and concede the minor. Both, however, maintain that the Supreme Pontiff will never define something false, either because he will always employ sufficient diligence, or because, even if he fails to do so and thereby sins, God will not permit him to define falsehood. The rationale of these theologians is that the privilege which Christ granted to Peter was expressed thus: "I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail." He did not say, "that your prudence may not fail," therefore the Pope might be negligent in employing due diligence. They further argue that otherwise no privilege would seem to have been granted to Peter. For anyone who is diligent in investigating matters of faith will discover the truth. But this position does not seem to provide an adequate response. First, because the assistance of the Holy Spirit was not granted to Peter and his successors through immediate illumination, as the Holy Spirit assisted the authors of Sacred Scripture; otherwise, a papal definition would be Sacred Scripture, if it were obtained immediately from a revelation of the Holy Spirit made to the pontiff. It seems, therefore, that we must say that diligent inquiry is required before the Pontiff can define what is certain according to faith. This is further proven from the practice which the Church has always observed of preceding conciliar definitions with disputations, so that afterward it may be defined what is to be held according to faith. Even the Supreme Pontiffs themselves, when they wish to define something without a general council, always precede it with a consultation of theologians. If someone should say that this is done because such diligence is prescribed, not because it is absolutely necessary, the contrary is evident because such a precept cannot be deduced from anywhere else except from the fact that otherwise the Pontiff would expose himself to the danger of error if he did not employ such diligence. Indeed, if neither council nor Pontiff could err regardless of the industry applied, it would not be reckless to omit such diligence, nor would there be any basis from which to deduce the precept to employ it. We respond, therefore, to the fourth argument that the Pope and council cannot omit this kind of diligence, nor will they ever omit it when they prepare to define matters of faith. And this is as certain as it is certain that the council and the Pontiff cannot err in defining matters of faith. For He who granted infallibility regarding the end also conferred infallibility regarding the means necessary to that end. Furthermore, if we did not have this certainty, heretics could easily calumniate the definitions of Pontiffs and councils, saying that the necessary diligence was not employed, nor was revelation made immediately by God concerning such definitions.

And to the arguments of the opposing opinion, it is answered that in that passage of Luke 22, when Christ promised Peter an unfailling faith, he consequently also promised the necessary means for preserving this kind of infallibility of faith.

To the second argument of that opinion, it is answered that a particular man may be negligent in inquiring after the truth of faith. And even if he has been sufficiently diligent, he may still err by an inculpable error concerning the truth of faith. However, the privilege granted to Peter and his successors is such that they could in no way be negligent in employing the necessary diligence, and moreover that, having employed such diligence, they could in no manner err in defining the truth of faith, neither by culpable nor inculpable error. We hold, therefore, that this conditional statement is true: if the Pope has not employed sufficient diligence in defining matters of faith, he could err. But the antecedent is impossible given the Gospel doctrine, and therefore it is not to be admitted. Just as in the state of innocence this conditional statement is granted: if man were to throw himself into fire, he would be burned. Yet the antecedent is not admitted for that state. Likewise, for the state of the Church militant, it is not admitted that the Supreme Pontiff would not employ sufficient diligence before defining a truth of faith.

From what has been said, it follows how the third principal conclusion should be understood, in which it was stated that in the public judgment of faith, the Apostolic See should not be distinguished from the Apostolic President. Wherein we also stated, against Alfonso de Castro, that the Supreme Pontiff not only cannot err. This should be understood in the sense that the definition ought to pertain to the Pontiff alone, such that the Cardinals' definition is not necessary; nevertheless, we do not deny that consultation should precede definition. And the fourth principal conclusion should be understood in a similar manner.

In response to the fifth argument, it is answered that even if, for the sake of argument, it were admitted that a council is above the pope, and that papal authority is derived from a council (about which we have already stated how scandalous and rash it is), nevertheless it must be asserted that the pontiff has firm authority to define matters of faith. The reason is that this very arrangement is expedient for the good and necessary governance of the Church, since a council cannot be easily convened. Similarly, in a civil republic, the King has firm authority to interpret laws, as stated in the first law of the Constitutions of Princes, and yet the King himself has received such authority from the republic as was necessary for a prince to possess for the good and necessary governance of the republic itself. Secondly, the argument is answered by denying the minor premise, namely, that a council is above the pope. And to the proof from the Councils of Constance and Basel, it is answered that these councils, when they defined this, were acephalous, that is, without a head; indeed, the Council of Basel was a conspiracy against the Supreme Pontiff. Furthermore, concerning the fact that Martin V approved the acts of the Council of Constance, this should not be understood universally, but in the manner which he himself explains in the Bull of confirmation mentioned above, namely that such approval extends to definitions against heretics. On this matter, see Torquemada, who was present at the council, in his *Summa*, Book 2, chapters 99 and 100; and Cajetan in his treatise *On the Authority of the Pope and Council*, chapters 8 and 9, and in his *Apology*, part 2, chapter 11, and in a certain oration *On the Difference of Synods* delivered at the Lateran Council; and Master Cano in Book 5 of *De Locis Theologicis*, final chapter, on the 8th and 9th arguments.

To the sixth argument, we respond that, as we have already stated, the Supreme Pontiff could err if he alone were to make a definition without consultation; however, the antecedent of this conditional statement is not to be admitted. Moreover, if when we say that the Pontiff alone defines, we merely exclude the participation of the Cardinals in the defining process, or the convocation of a council, it is true that the Pope defining alone cannot err.

To the argument, therefore, in form the consequence is denied, because councils are convened for three most fitting reasons. First, because the Supreme Pontiff, due to the gravity of the matter under discussion, ought to consult many or few advisors, and therefore when most grave questions or heresies arise in the Church, general councils are rightly convened, so that Catholic bishops may defend and protect the Supreme Pontiff as parts protect the whole. Of this we have an example and almost prototype in the First Council of Jerusalem, which was gathered to define a most grave question, namely, whether the legal observances ought to be kept together with the Gospel. There St. James, who was Bishop of Jerusalem, after Peter had pronounced the sentence concerning the cessation of legal requirements, confirmed it from the testimony of the Prophets, as is evident in Acts 15. The second reason why councils are convened is because in them not only are dogmas of faith addressed, but also the reformation of morals, for which purpose the counsel and judgment of bishops is of great value. The third reason why councils are convened is for the confounding of heretics, when the judgment of many bishops and doctors is presented against them, which greatly contributes to the edification of the faithful. For what is defined in councils and confirmed by the Pontiff is more agreeably accepted by the Christian people than what is established by the Pontiff alone, both in matters of defining the faith and in ordering the morals of the Christian people.

In response to the seventh argument, it should be noted that whenever the Pontiff appears to have erred in his decrees, this is to be interpreted as a personal error, and not as an error stemming from him while exercising the office of Supreme Pontiff. But someone may ask: How shall we discern when the Pontiff speaks as a private person or as a Doctor, and when he defines something as the Pontiff? A similar question can be asked about the council itself, namely, what will be the indication for understanding which is a definition of the council concerning a dogma of faith, and which is a definition or assertion of Doctors and bishops insofar as they are private persons? To this, we respond that we can have certain definite signs. First, if it is said: "Let anyone who holds the opposite opinion or speaks contrary to this be anathema." Second, if it is said: "Let anyone who holds a contrary opinion be considered a heretic." Third, if such a definition is expressly proposed as one to be accepted and believed by all the faithful as a dogma of faith. Fourth, if it is said: "With the counsel of our brethren, we define this or that." If, however, none of the aforementioned signs is present, the definition of the Pontiff is not in all ways infallible, even if the Pontiff pronounces something absolutely and inserts his pronouncement in the body of law. In this matter, Alfonso de Castro was mistaken in his first book against heresies, chapter 4. For he thought that when the Supreme Pontiff inserted his judgment into canon law, he was then speaking with Pontifical authority; and thus he was of the opinion that the Pope alone could err in defining matters of faith, unless he defined

something with the counsel of the Cardinals. Consequently, he is compelled to say that all things contained in the body of law are defined with the counsel of Cardinals.

Nevertheless, it should be observed regarding the aforementioned points that it is rash to deny what is defined in the decrees of a general council or of a provincial council confirmed by the Supreme Pontiff, especially in matters pertaining to the doctrine of faith, even if none of the aforementioned signs is added to such decrees. Furthermore, general councils are accustomed to reduce what has been more extensively explained in the decrees to shorter canons, in which anathema is usually pronounced against those holding contrary opinions. This has been expressly done in the Council of Trent. Let this suffice concerning this most serious difficulty, subject to the correction of the Holy Roman Church, in which alone the Vicar of Christ and successor of Peter presides.