

Practicae resolutiones morales: cum summa
resolutionum practicae. Pars undecima, tota miscellanea,
Quæ in duobus Tractatibus in calce operis additis
continentur (*Practical Moral Resolutions: with a Summary
of Practical Resolutions, Part Eleven, Entirely
Miscellaneous, and which are contained in the two
Treatises added at the end of the work*)

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Sectio II, Tractatus II, Resolutio VI

To confirm those things which have been adduced above in favor of our position, the following question is proposed: Whether it is altogether a matter of faith that, for example, this particular Innocent X is the true Pontiff and the true successor of Peter.

THIS question is indeed necessary for confirming our position that the decrees of the Pontiff outside of Council are infallible; for someone could argue thus: it is not a matter of faith that this Pontiff is the true Pontiff; therefore his determinations will never be matters of faith. The antecedent is proved because it is not a matter of faith, nor is it otherwise established with complete certainty, that he is truly baptized, and consequently neither whether he is capable of Episcopal dignity. The inference is proved thus: when we can doubt the antecedent, we can also doubt the consequent.

Therefore, since it is at least not a matter of faith that this Pontiff who has been elected is the true successor of Peter—given that it is not certain as a matter of faith that he has been baptized, or that no substantial defect has occurred in his election—therefore it could not be certain as a matter of faith that he cannot err, because the inability to err is attached (as I have said) to the true Vicar of Christ, not to a counterfeit one. And this can be confirmed by the example of the Eucharist: although it is indeed a matter of faith that in a Host properly consecrated the Body of Christ is present, nevertheless it is not a matter of faith that it is present in this particular Host,

because it is not a matter of faith that the one consecrating is a baptized priest having the intention of consecrating; for this is believed only with moral certainty. Therefore, similarly, even if it is true and certain as a matter of faith that the true Vicar of Christ and successor of Peter cannot err in matters of faith to be proposed, yet it does not seem to be certain as a matter of faith that this particular one cannot err, because it does not seem to be certain as a matter of faith that he is the true Pontiff.

But responding directly to the question at hand: The first opinion asserts that it is not a matter of faith that Innocent—for example, the Tenth—who is truly and felicitously reigning is the true Pontiff; and thus holds Domingo Báñez *in* 2.2. [*Summa*] *D. Thomae quaest. 1. art. 10. dub. 2. ad 2.* where he affirms this proposition: “This Pontiff in particular is the true Pope” is only certain with moral certainty, under which speculatively falsehood may lie. They prove this first, because it is not a matter of faith that one now elected to the Pontificate is baptized. Therefore neither that he is the true Pontiff. Secondly, he can define matters of faith and govern the universal Church without being the true Pontiff; for it suffices if he is esteemed and reputed as such; for if the Republic confers jurisdiction upon an incapable Praetor, when he is esteemed as legitimate, lest grave inconveniences follow from null acts. Therefore we shall say the same regarding an incapable Pontiff who is reputed as legitimate—that Christ confers upon him all jurisdiction and authority, just as if he were truly Pontiff. The same position is held by Cardinal Cajetan [Thomas de Vio] *in* 2. 2. *quaest. 1. art. 3. ad 4.* Alfonso de Castro *adversus haereses lib. 1. cap. 9.* and many others.

But I adhere to the affirmative opinion, for which I presuppose that the Supreme Pontiff can be considered, when he is elected and acknowledged illegitimately, or with suspicion of illegitimacy: in this sense there is no question, because while there exists a probable foundation regarding the illegitimacy of a Pontiff, one cannot believe with Divine faith that he is the successor of Peter, since divine faith cannot be exercised when there is room for prudent hesitation, as I have often shown: but a probable foundation gives occasion for prudent hesitation. Therefore the Church does not rest until, having removed every foundation for doubt, the occasions for schisms are eliminated.

In another way a Pontiff is considered when he is elected and acknowledged so legitimately that the entire Church receives him, as now our Lord Innocent X,¹ without any trace of controversy, holds the helm of the Christian Republic and the keys of Peter: therefore the question is whether it should be believed with Divine Faith that Innocent X and other Pontiffs peacefully received are legitimate successors of Peter; And as I said, I think it should be believed with divine faith that each and every such Pontiff is a legitimate successor of Peter. This conclusion will not be found expressed in ancient authors, because perhaps they never doubted it, taking it for granted.

However, among the more recent theologians, the following hold this opinion: Cardinal Juan de Lugo *de fide disp. 5. sect. 1. §. 5. n. 316.* Francisco Suárez *de fide disp. 5. sect. 8. n. 12.* Antonio de Oviedo *de fide contr. 4. punct. 7. n. 86* Hurtado de Mendoza *de fide disp. 37. sect. 3. cum seq.* Rodrigo de Arriaga *in cur. Theol. to. 5. disp. 7. sect. 8. num. 50. cum seq.* Adam Tanner *to. 3. disp. 1. q. 1. dub. 5. n. 146.* Castro Palao *t. 1. tr. 4. disp. 1. punct. 5. §. 2. n. 9. cum seqq.*

¹ Pope Innocent X (1644-1655)

Bartholomeo Amico *in cur. Theol. to. 3. disp. 6. sect. 5. n. 152*. Francisco de Gerunda *de Episcopo, to. 2. l. 5. disp. 3. n. 56*. Comitoli *resp. l. 1. q. 99*. Gregorio de Valencia *tom. 3. disp. 1. q. 1. punct. 7. in qu. 5. §. 39*. all from the Society of Jesus, who boldly uphold this opinion in favor of the Supreme Pontiffs; to whom should be added Silvius *in controuersiis fidei lib. 4. quæst. 2. art. 8*. Puerorum *de Reg. Aristocratia tom. 2. cap. 8. per tot.* Verricelli *in qq. mor. tr. 8. q. 24. n. 7*. Pontius *in cur. Theol. disp. 28. q. 1. concl. 9. n. 14*. and from the Dominican family, the most learned John of St. Thomas *in 2. 2. q. 1. disp. 8. art. 2. per tot.* Adrian and Peter van Walenburch *in examine princip. fidei p. 2. contr. 7. n. 50*. John Pontius *in cur. Theol. disp. 28. q. 1. concl. 9. n. 13. & 14*. Bordonus *in sacro tribunali c. 5. q. 6. n. 16*. Martin Bonacina *de cens. disp. 1. q. 2. punct. 1. n. 9*.

And Clement VIII gave great strength to this opinion, who, as Puente Hurtado testifies in the place cited above, imprisoned certain Doctors who then held the opposite view, and ordered them to go to Rome to give an account of that opinion.

This opinion is proved first, because in the Bull of Martin V at the Council of Constance it is established that heretics returning to the Church should believe that the Pope canonically elected, whoever he may be at the time (his name being expressed), is the successor of Peter, etc. Therefore the Council supposes that now, specifically concerning the present one, for example Innocent X, his name being expressed, it must be believed that he is Peter's successor. Second, because many Councils have specifically acknowledged as such the one who was then presiding; but there is no greater reason for one than for another. Third, because if it is not established as a matter of faith that Pius IV was a true Pope, neither will it be established that the Council of Trent is valid, because a Council receives all its force from the Pope. But this is almost heretical.

And finally, because otherwise whatever [we hold] concerning the Judge of controversies in the Church, as something certain to be believed by faith, would be plainly ridiculous; for how ought I to believe as a matter of faith that such a Judge is given, if I cannot state from faith who that person is? For what purpose, I ask, would such assent concerning his quasi-vague existence as Judge serve in practice? Surely we would not be bound by faith to approach the Pope in those controversies: because anyone could say, "faith only teaches me that I am bound to approach the Judge of controversies; but it does not tell me that he is Giovanni Battista Pamphilj, or Innocent X. Therefore I am not bound by faith to approach him, or to believe his decisions."

Furthermore, it is proven because every proposition of faith can be inferred from a double premise of faith, or as it pleases others, one [premise] of faith, the other contained in natural light; but this proposition "The Pope defining cannot err" is certain as a matter of faith. Therefore it can be inferred from a double premise in the manner stated; which nevertheless can be done by no reasoning, as will be evident to one examining it, unless this proposition be a matter of faith: "This Pontiff defining is the true Pope." For in whatever syllogism that conclusion "The Pope defining cannot err" is inferred, there must be assumed, as the minor [premise], "This Pontiff defining is the true Pope," which, since it is not known by natural light, must necessarily be a matter of faith, otherwise the conclusion would not be a matter of faith.

To this argument, Báñez responds *loco citato* that it is not required, in order for some conclusion of faith to be inferred, that both premises be matters of faith, or that one be of faith and the other evident; but it suffices that one be of faith and the other morally certain; because then the conclusion does not follow from that morally certain proposition as from a cause, but as from a

condition sine qua non, or as from something that applies it. And he illustrates this with the example of a Preacher, who, if he properly proposes evangelical doctrine to you, you are bound to assent by divine faith to the truths proposed: even though it is not certain by divine faith that this Preacher is of infallible truth.

But this solution is precluded by the easiest of arguments, drawn from the inconvenient consequence: for if it were true, it would follow that this proposition would be a matter of faith: “Under this particular Host is the consecrated Body of Christ,” because it is truly inferred by evident consequence from one matter of faith—such as this: “In every Host duly consecrated is the Body of Christ”—and is moreover inferred as from a condition, and as applied from another proposition that is morally certain, namely “this Host is duly consecrated”; therefore, would the conclusion “under this Host is the Body of Christ” be a proposition of faith? The same argument can be formed concerning these propositions: “This little child being baptized receives grace”; “This man who is being ordained is a priest”; and concerning other similar propositions, which it is established among all are not matters of faith, since there can underlie them something false due to a defect of intention on the part of the one baptizing, ordaining, or consecrating. Nor does the example of the Preacher pose an objection, because although a Preacher in other matters may not be infallibly truthful, yet insofar as he preaches here and now, you ought to believe that he speaks infallible truth, since you are obliged to assent to his statements with divine faith.

And thus our opinion appears to be the opinion of Augustine *vol. 6, in his epistle against the power of the Donatists* & *vol. 2, epistle 115*, of Irenaeus *book 3, chapter 3*, of Basil, Ambrose, and Jerome, whom Domingo Báñez cites *Summa Theologica 2-2, question 1, article 10, on papal authority, argument 5*. The sacred Councils favor this view; for the Sixth Synod specifically acknowledges Agatho, confessing him to be the true Pontiff; the Council of Chalcedon acknowledges Leo; the Council of Milevis acknowledges Innocent III; and finally *in the chapter “de libellis,” distinction 20*, Silverius, Zosimus, Innocent, and others are approved as true and legitimate Pontiffs.

Response to arguments contrary to this opinion.

RESOLUTION VII.

TO the argument that neither from Scripture, nor from tradition, nor from definition can it be established that this one is the legitimate Pontiff; therefore it is not a matter of faith that he is such.

And to that argument which Domingo Báñez teaches *in the place cited above*, that it is not a matter of faith that this man is baptized: for it is not established regarding the will of the one baptizing, nor is it a matter of faith that he is legitimately a priest, because it is not established by faith regarding the will of the one conferring or receiving orders; therefore it cannot be established by faith that he is Pontiff.

The response is given by denying the antecedent; for it is established that this one is the legitimate Pontiff from those testimonies of Scripture by which Peter’s primacy is customarily confirmed; because that is a universal promise, by which all legitimate successors of Peter are immediately contained—those whom God saw individually, and concerning whom He spoke; and who were to be known by us through moral evidence arising from their legitimate election and peaceful acceptance. Just as when God revealed that every man would be conceived in

original sin, God spoke immediately concerning Peter and Paul, whom God clearly knew, and who were to be known by us through physical evidence arising from the senses; and just as, having known Peter, and having known the universal revelation concerning the conception of every man in sin, I see from the mere apprehension of the terms that God speaks concerning Peter and Paul; so, having seen God's universal promise concerning all successors of Peter, and having clearly seen the legitimate election and approbation of the Pontiff, I see that this one is the legitimate successor of Peter, and that Christ spoke concerning him.

The response is given secondly by distinguishing the antecedent; for if it is understood concerning revelation by which this proposition "Innocent X is the true Pontiff" would have been revealed in those terms, it is true, but the consequence is not valid: for something can be a matter of faith which, even though it may not be expressly revealed in itself or in its own terms, is nevertheless held and known from revelation, just as this proposition: "Peter, Paul, John, and other individual men who are now born by the ordinary process of generation were conceived in original sin and are subject to the necessity of death" is certain by faith, although it has not been revealed in those terms, because it is revealed in its universal principle, from which it is deduced by a certain induction, namely in this: "all have sinned in Adam"; likewise in those passages: "through sin came death," "what man lives and shall not see death?" "it is appointed for men to die once."

Similarly, however, it is in the present case: for the aforesaid proposition, which is now being discussed, although it may not have been expressly revealed in its own terms, is nevertheless revealed in its universal principle, in which it is contained and from which it is deduced by a certain induction, namely in this: "all successors of Peter in the Roman See are Vicars of Christ and true Supreme Pontiffs." For from this induction it follows that both this man and that particular man who has been elected, received, and assumed as Supreme Pontiff by the Catholic Church (such today is Innocent X) is truly the Supreme Pontiff.

In response to the argument of Báñez, I reply that although that proposition: "this man, who is called Innocent X, is a man of the male sex, or is baptized," considered in itself, is not certain, yet insofar as it rests upon divine revelation absolutely, it is certain; so that according to this consideration it neither can be, nor could have been false. This response is founded in Blessed Thomas, insofar as in *Summa Theologica II-II, question 1, article 3, ad 2* he writes that God's not becoming incarnate, considered in itself, was possible, even after the time of Abraham; but according as it falls under Divine foreknowledge, it has a certain necessity of infallibility, as was said in *the First Part* (namely *I, question 14, articles 13 & 15*), and in this way it falls under faith: Whence, insofar as it falls under faith, it cannot be false. For we speak of this proposition: "Innocent X is the legitimate Pontiff," insofar as it falls under divine foreknowledge and revelation: and we say that thus regarded, it is certain from faith. Whence that he is of the male sex; and also that he was properly baptized, we are entirely certain, and indeed from faith on account of revelation, from which we know that he is the Supreme Pontiff. For because we believe by Catholic faith that he whom the Church receives and holds as Supreme Pontiff (who now is none other than Innocent X) is the true Vicar of Christ and legitimate Supreme Pontiff; it follows by necessary consequence that he is male, that he is baptized, and that he has all that without which pontifical power cannot subsist. For it belongs to Divine Providence, which neither wills nor is able to deceive the Church, that Christ's Vicar, whom He wills to be set over His flock, should lack nothing which the power he bears and the office he must execute necessarily requires.

Therefore, it must be said that it pertains to the special providence of God in the Church not to permit the election and peaceful admission of one who cannot legitimately be Pope. Wherefore, from evident knowledge of a legitimate election and peaceful acceptance, we conclude with certainty that this man lacks none of the requirements for the Pontificate, and that God has conferred upon him the Pontificate of Saint Peter. Therefore, from an application that is known per se, we deduce an act of faith by which we believe that the power of Peter himself has been conferred upon that successor of Peter, just as from evident knowledge of Peter we conclude his conception in sin. What is asserted concerning a private priest does not press the point: because God did not promise that special providence in these private cases, because the matter is of lighter moment and can occur without prejudice to the faith, but the election of a pseudo-pontiff is otherwise.

But to that which is said, that whoever would withdraw from the modern Supreme Pontiff would indeed be schismatic and not heretical; therefore it is not a matter of faith that he himself is the Supreme Pontiff, because to withdraw from some dogma pertaining to the faith is heresy, and not merely schism.

I respond that although schism and heresy differ in their formal nature, it is not necessary that every schismatic be a heretic, not even one who withdraws from obedience to the Supreme Pontiff. If, however, someone were to withdraw with an error of understanding, whereby he would not believe that the one whom the Church has received and retains as Supreme Pontiff is truly the Supreme Pontiff, he would indeed be a heretic, provided that the aforementioned proposition certainly and immutably pertains to the faith.

And all the matters stated above are taught by Hurtado de Mendoza, Sylvius, Arriaga, and other Doctors, *as cited above*, who are adduced in favor of our position against Báñez, Cajetan, and others.

Other arguments that can be adduced against our position you will find resolved in the cited Authors, and from what has been adduced *above*, the solution to arguments brought forward to the contrary by Caramuel *in his strict method of disputation, part 1, folio 59* is also evident.

Whether, standing in the opinion that it is not a matter of faith that this particular Innocent X is the true Pontiff: Whether, I ask, his decrees concerning matters of faith would still possess infallibility.

RESOLUTION VIII.

I respond that, even standing with the opinion of those Doctors who assert that it is not a matter of faith that this Pontiff is truly the Pontiff, it would not follow from this that the decrees made by him are not infallible. Thus, besides Domingo Báñez *in the place cited above*, Johannes Malderus, Bishop of Antwerp and formerly public professor at the renowned Academy of Louvain, holds this view *in Summa Theologica I-II, question 1, article 10, disputation 5, at the end*, where he speaks thus: “For in order that what the Pope determines should be a matter of faith, it is not required that it be a matter of Divine faith that he who makes the determination is the true Pontiff, but it suffices that this be most certain. Now it is most certain that he whom the universal Church receives as Pontiff is the true Pontiff. For this pertains to God’s promise to prevent the Church from being deceived in such a judgment. Therefore, certain blasphemous new men and apostates vainly raise doubts about the legitimate election of the Pontiffs of this

age, whom they have found to be opposed to themselves. Having been received by the Catholic Church, they are beyond the reach of this calumny. Moreover, that it suffices for something to be entirely certain, even if it were not a matter of faith, I prove as follows: Because the certitude of faith depends upon the veracity of God saying that which is believed; but the Pope does not make new articles of faith, but only proposes that God at some time said this or that. Now it has been said *above* that in those things which contribute to the proposition and credibility of faith, it is not required to demand certitude equal in all respects to the certitude of faith, but it suffices that credibility be made evident through arguments of such a kind that, while they indeed cannot deceive, they are nevertheless not believed by Divine faith. For this suffices not only for the infallibility of faith, but also for obligation, so that one who does not believe incurs the sin of heresy or infidelity.” Thus says Malderus.

This is also taught by Bishop Araujo, a Dominican, and by the Professors of Theology in the most celebrated Academy of Salamanca in *1-2 of St. Thomas, question 7, doubt 2, number 4*, where they formulate this argument against themselves: Through faith we give assent to truths defined by the Supreme Pontiff, insofar as they are defined by him: therefore, if we did not have the certainty of faith concerning his power, neither would we have it concerning the truths defined by him: since there cannot be greater certainty about what is defined than about the one who defines, given that the former depends upon the latter.

But afterwards we respond to this argument, thus he says: And inasmuch as the faith and divine certitude which is held concerning truths defined by the Supreme Pontiff, as from the head of the Church, does not rest upon him as upon a formal reason and principal rule, but only as upon an instrument through which the first truth, which is the principal rule and formal reason of the object of faith, speaks and reveals, or as upon a condition and rule with respect to us, without which the divine revelation concerning such defined truths would not be communicated to us, nor would it be applied: just as in natural and artificial things an effect can exceed the instrument and condition in perfection and nobility, so also in our case the certitude of defined truths can exceed the instrument and condition with regard to the certitude which is held concerning them: for which reason also in intellectual matters, in which genus the assent of a scientific conclusion is more excellent than the syllogistic disposition in mood and figure, upon which nevertheless it depends per se as upon a condition. Therefore, although concerning the truth and legitimate election of the head who defines, only theological certitude is had, most properly can formal certitude of divine faith be had concerning the things defined, and consequently from this point it is not proven that the same or equal certitude must be held concerning the truth of the head in particular as concerning the truth of the matter defined by him. Thus far Araújo. And so that we may join Jesuit authors to Dominican writers, Francisco de Oviedo teaches this opinion from Bellarmino *de fide contr. 4. pun. 7. n. 87*. Fr. Johannes Poncius *in cur. theol. disp. 28. q. 1. concl. 9. num. 13*.

Therefore it must be said that the matter proposed would be certain by divine faith, even though the one proposing it is not known by divine, but only by human faith. This is established first by examples; for first, that this is a legitimate Council congregated by a legitimate head is established by human faith alone; for it is not immediately applied to us through the Pontiff's own definition, but this is held only through the testimony of the Church, which has accepted it as a legitimate Council—which testimony does not exceed human faith; and yet we are bound by divine faith to believe what this Council teaches concerning orthodox faith.

Second, that this scripture is declared to be canonical is not established to us immediately by the testimony of the Pontiff defining and declaring this to be canonical scripture, but only by the testimony of men who accept it as such: although we are nevertheless bound by divine faith to believe that it is canonical, and that whatever is contained in it is revealed by God.

Third, we are bound by divine faith to believe that the mysteries of the Christian Religion are true and revealed by God, although we do not believe by divine faith, but by human faith, the signs by which these are proposed to us as evidently credible—namely, that they are revealed by God. Therefore, in like manner, we can believe by divine faith what this Pontiff proposes to us for belief, even though we do not believe by that same divine faith that he is the true Pontiff.

Since, therefore, the Pope holds himself only as one who proposes matters of faith, it is not necessary—in order that the matters proposed by him should be believed with divine faith—that he himself also be believed with divine faith to be the true Pope. Rather, it suffices if he is believed only with human faith, because indeed he proposes the matter to be believed with such signs of pontifical authority that it is morally certain that he is the true Pope. For then the matter proposed must be believed with divine faith, and yet he himself can be believed with only human faith.

For I can be certain with divine faith that this is a legitimate Council, that this is canonical Scripture, that this is Apostolic tradition, even if I am not certain with that same divine faith that the one proposing is the legitimate Pope—rather, it suffices if I am certain only with human faith.

And this doctrine is very noteworthy, because you will find it among few authors.