

# Petri Hurtado de Mendoza Scholasticae et morales disputationes de tribus virtutibus theologicis: de fide : volumen secundum (*Scholastic and Moral Disputations on the Three Theological Virtues: On Faith, Volume Second*)

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## DISPUTATION XXXVII.

*Whether it is a matter of faith that this specific man who is the Roman Bishop is the Pope?*

1. Those who are legitimately created Bishops of Rome succeed PETER. I now inquire whether the one who currently exists as the Bishop of Rome is so certainly the Roman Bishop and the legitimate successor of Peter in the universal governance, that it is in no way permissible to doubt that he is the Pope, any more than we can doubt any mystery of faith. This question applies to each of the Roman Pontiffs from Linus to Urban VIII: whether it is sanctioned by faith that Urban VIII is the Pope, just as Peter was?

### SECTION I. Two Admonitions.

2. FIRST, it must be noted that the legitimate successor of Peter cannot err in questions of faith when he resolves them not by private authority, but by Pontifical authority. This doctrine is to be held according to faith, which Father Valencia excellently proves in volume 3, disputation 1, question 1, seventh point, question 6, paragraph 4, and Cardinal Bellarmine in book 2 on the Roman Pontiff, from chapter 12, but especially in book 4, chapters 2 and 3. Indeed, this doctrine is easily deduced from what has been stated above; because the power of defining questions of faith, confirming the brothers in sound doctrine, and feeding the sheep was conferred by Christ upon Peter; but the Roman Pontiff succeeds Peter in this power: therefore [he cannot err]. If heretics would admit the minor proposition of this syllogism, there would be no new contest with them concerning the

consequence, or the consequent of the same syllogism: for they themselves admit that the Catholic Church cannot err in these questions. However, the Innovators resort to their own personal spirit, by which individuals judge whether the Catholic Church designates to them the faithful successors of Peter. Wherefore, since the power of Peter and his successors has been sufficiently discussed, I refrain from a lengthy proof of the conclusion, as it must be sought from there.

**3.** I posit secondly 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 is a probable foundation for the illegitimacy of the Pontiff, it cannot be believed with divine Faith that he is the successor of Peter. For divine faith cannot be exercised when there is room for prudent hesitation, as I have often shown; and a probable foundation gives occasion for prudent hesitation. Therefore, the Church does not rest until, having rooted out every foundation for doubt, occasions for schisms are removed.

**4.** In another way, the Pontiff is considered when he has already been legitimately elected and acknowledged, such that the whole Church recognizes him—as now our Lord Urban VIII, without any trace of controversy, holds the helm of the Christian Commonwealth and the key of Peter. The question is, therefore, whether it is to be believed with divine faith that Urban VIII, Clement VIII, and other peacefully accepted Pontiffs are the legitimate successors of Peter?

## SECTION II The Affirmative Position

**5.** I SAY that we must believe with divine faith that all and each of these Pontiffs, whom I discussed in §.4, are legitimate successors of Peter. This conclusion will not be found explicitly stated by ancient authors, perhaps because they never doubted it, taking it for granted; however, it is vigorously defended by many Doctors of our Society, especially by Father Suarez in disputation 10, section 8, number 12, where he cites and follows our authors; and in disputation 10, section 5. This opinion was greatly strengthened by Pope Clement VIII, who imprisoned certain Doctors for maintaining the opposite view, and ordered them to Rome to give an account of that opinion, which the Holy See deemed worthy of punishment.

### SUBSECTION I First argument

**6.** IT IS PROVEN first, because unless we believe with divine faith that such Pontiffs are legitimate successors of Peter, there is nothing that we can believe with divine faith, and consequently the entire Christian religion [would collapse]. The absurdity of this consequence is self-evident. The major premise is proven: because we cannot believe with divine faith that a revelation was made to the Pontiff formally as Pontiff, without in the same act of assent believing that he is truly the Pontiff; but unless we believe with divine Catholic faith the revelations made to Pontiffs as formally Pontiffs, we cannot believe with Catholic faith the mysteries of faith. Therefore, unless we believe with the same faith that

such Pontiffs are legitimate successors of Peter, we cannot believe with divine faith the mysteries of faith.

The major premise is evident because revelation is God's speech to someone: we cannot, however, conceive of speech occurring between two parties without conceiving of those two parties. Hence, it follows that we cannot conceive of revelation being made by God to the Pontiff without, by the same act, conceiving of both God and the Pontiff. The minor premise is proven first because we believe all mysteries either from Scripture, or tradition, or the definition of the Church; but all these modes depend upon the Catholic assent by which we believe God's revelation made to the Pontiff. Therefore, unless we believe by Catholic faith the revelation to the Pontiff, we cannot believe the mysteries of faith by Catholic faith.

The minor premise is proven because all divine Scripture which has been confirmed by the authority of the Pontiffs is admitted in the Church as Canonical; whereas that which has not yet been proposed by the Supreme Pontiffs as Canonical is not held as such in the Church, as with the books of Judith and the fourth [Book of Esdras]. Indeed, all tradition is derived from the Apostles and has been admitted by the whole Church together with the Supreme Pontiff; and the definitions of the Church require confirmation from the Supreme Pontiff. Therefore, we cannot believe any mystery of faith by Catholic faith without by the same faith believing in the revelation made to the Pontiff.

It is not my intention to prove that there are no other motives besides the authority of the Church for believing with divine faith: for now I am not disputing about the conditions for belief, but about the formal object of faith itself. Indeed, in fact, as things are now arranged by God's providence, the sacred Scriptures are not accepted, nor can they be, except through the authority of the Church, as Saint Augustine said of the Gospel, that he would not believe it unless moved to do so by the authority of the Catholic Church.

**7.** This argument is confirmed because, for example, we recognize by divine faith that in the Eucharist only the accidents remain while the substance ceases to exist because of the definition of the Council of Trent confirmed by Pius IV. Likewise, we believe that absolution given in absence is invalid because of the definition of Clement VIII. Similarly, we believe that sacred images should be venerated because of the definition of the Second Council of Nicaea confirmed by Adrian. But unless we believe with divine faith that Pius IV, Clement VIII, and Adrian were legitimate Pontiffs, we cannot believe these mysteries of faith. The minor premise is proven because to believe is to accept what is proposed through the infallible authority of the Supreme Pontiff, to whom God revealed these things, on account of the infallible promise of assisting him, lest he err. Therefore, we are persuaded that this infallible pronouncement of the Pontiff arises from the Holy Spirit assisting the Pontiff, because he is the Pontiff.

**8.** This is confirmed secondly, because we may doubt the infallible truth of a Pontifical proposition for as long as we can doubt the legitimacy of the Pontiff: therefore, if I can doubt the legitimacy of the Supreme Pontiff without sinning against the Catholic faith, I can also, without such sin, doubt the infallibility of the same proposition, and consequently I

can doubt the truth of the revealed mystery, because I lack a sufficient principle for believing without doubt. The consequence is evident, because the certainty or doubt regarding a person and the rights of that person rest on the same foundation: for if I doubt that this man is King, I also doubt the obligation of the law issued by him. I prove the antecedent, because the infallibility of a Pontifical proposition is known to arise from his dignity and legitimate succession from Peter: for this condition is necessarily antecedent, just as ownership of something is a necessary principle for the validity of its alienation, and as royal dignity is necessary for the validity of laws. And, just as we doubt all effects while doubting their adequate causes, so we can doubt the infallibility of a proposition while we can doubt the authority of the Pontiff, without which there cannot be given an adequate cause of its infallibility.

**9.** Observe that the same difficulty exists regarding this article of faith as regarding Councils: because Councils, in the more probable opinion, do not have the power of defining [dogma] without the instruction or consent of the Roman Pontiff. Therefore, for conciliar decrees to have force, so that they may be believed with Catholic faith, it is necessary that we believe they are confirmed by the true Pontiff. Consequently, unless we believe this man to be the true Pontiff, we do not believe this Council to have infallible authority. I prove this consequence from what has just been said.

And even if we grant that Councils cannot err unless they do something against the consent or instruction of the Pontiff, still it is necessary to believe by divine faith that this Council is legitimate; otherwise, for the same reason one doubts its legitimacy, we can also doubt its infallibility. And there is almost the same difficulty in believing with Catholic faith that this Council is legitimate as there is regarding this Pontiff.

Likewise, there is the same difficulty regarding the whole Church: which, although correspondingly it cannot err in infallibility due to the legitimacy of the Pontiff, still we can doubt in which persons this Catholic Church resides. For let us suppose it to be in the Roman Episcopate; still we do not know from which particular faithful it is composed. For we do not know whether they are baptized, or whether they are heretics in spirit. In Councils of the Church it is necessary to believe with Catholic faith their legitimacy and Catholic spirit; similarly with the Roman Pontiff, lest we waver in faith, his legitimate succession from Peter must be believed with Catholic faith.

Indeed, we believe with Catholic faith that the same Peter, who was Bishop of Rome, was the one to whom Christ gave the keys of the Church; otherwise nothing would be certain. Therefore, for no other reason must we believe that Paul V, Clement VIII, Pius IV, Adrian II, Urban VIII, and others are legitimate successors of Peter.

The authors of the opposing brotherhood did not consider that the authority of individual Councils and of the whole Church is called into question by them—concerning whose internal faith and baptism there is the same obscurity as there is concerning Urban VIII. For me, however, it is sufficient that my position has the same reasoning as other mysteries of faith depending on objects and conditions that are obscure.

## SUBSECTION II. The First Response is Challenged.

**10.** DOMINICUS Bañez, in question 1, article 10, in the second principal doubt, regarding the second argument, reports that some believe it must be accepted as Catholic faith that he who defines a proposition to be believed by divine faith is the legitimate Pontiff. He proves this because a conclusion of faith cannot follow except from two premises of faith, or from one premise of faith and another known by natural light. But the conclusion which the Pontiff defines is certain according to faith, which nevertheless depends on these premises: “The Supreme Pontiff cannot err; this man is the Supreme Pontiff; therefore, this man cannot err.” The minor proposition of this syllogism is not known by natural light; therefore, it is known by faith. Secondly, he proves a posteriori, because he who has the power to confirm the brethren in faith is the Supreme Pontiff, which we believe by Catholic faith. But Paul V confirms the Church in faith, as is evident to the senses, because the faithful who previously doubted some proposition no longer doubt after his definitions; therefore, Paul V is the Supreme Pontiff. Thirdly, because when the Supreme Pontiff or a Council defines something, they implicitly define at the same time that they have the power to define; therefore, at that point it must be believed by faith. He proves the antecedent because otherwise the ultimate resolution of faith would rest on each person’s own spirit and testimony. Finally, because it is not only a matter of faith that there is a Catholic Church, but also that it exists under one head.

**11.** This doctrine was contested by me in disputation 2, §39: first, because some Councils and Popes define many things without saying anything about their own legitimacy. Second, it is contested because either I am legitimately certain about the pontificate or the legitimacy of the Council, such that before the definition itself I am certain that he is the legitimate Pontiff or it is a legitimate Council—in which case no new definition is needed for me to believe it with Catholic faith; or if, prior to the actual definition, I am not entirely certain about the legitimacy of the one defining, then the definition is of no consequence whatsoever—because I persuade myself of its force because I understand it to have been made by a legitimate Pontiff; but through that definition it is not established for me that this is a legitimate Pontiff; therefore, it is not established for me what appears to have been confirmed. Fourth, suppose I have a controversy with some Pontiff about his legitimacy: and he, before bringing forth to me any new reasoning, defines himself to be the legitimate Pontiff; his definition will be ridiculed by me, because since he has not presented any new reason to me, nor has his definition indicated such: I remain equally doubtful as before, both about the legitimacy and about the force of the definition. See that eleventh disputation, §33 and 34: this doctrine is taught by Cardinal Bellarmine, and insinuated by Master Bañez; with whom I conclude that it is certain according to faith that this man is the legitimate Pontiff before he defines that he is the legitimate Pontiff; otherwise his definition will have no force.

**12.** Since Dominicus Bañez maintains that it is not certain by faith, either before or after a definition, that this particular man is the Pope, he responds to the remaining objections: to the first objection proposed in §.10, he himself responds that a proposition becomes certain according to faith if it is accepted by the whole Church, which cannot err; but it is

not certain according to faith that this particular man is Pope. At the end, he concludes with these words, *Padet non est opus* [It is not necessary to be ashamed]; for a proposition to be considered certain according to faith, it need not be deduced by consequence from the antecedent premise: “this man is the Supreme Pontiff,” and “this man defines and proposes this proposition,” therefore it is of faith. It is sufficient for us that it be accepted by the whole Church as certain according to faith, so that from this we may infer and hold that it is certain according to faith.

**13.** This doctrine is by no means acceptable to me: rather, it is suspect to me; because it weakens the authority of the Roman Pontiff in questions of faith, transferring to the members that authority it denies to the head: and it does not make the Roman Pontiff the infallible rule for the other members of the Church; but rather makes the other members the rule for the head. I prove this evidently, because this author distinguishes the whole body of the Church from the head: thus he says that the reason by which I persuade myself that a proposition is of faith is drawn from the consensus of all members, and not from the definition of the head: therefore he makes the members, not the head, the rule of faith: I prove the consequence, because that is for me the rule of faith by which I am infallibly directed to believe with divine faith; but in this opinion I am not directed by the definition of the head, but by the consensus of the members: therefore this opinion establishes the members, and not the head, as the rule of faith: how absurd this is, is evident from the fact that Christ established Peter and his successors to feed the entire flock and to confirm all the brethren: He did not establish the members to feed the head, nor to confirm it: and clearly the infallible authority of the Supreme Pontiff is removed by this opinion.

**14.** Secondly, it is contended: when the Pontiff defines by Pontifical right, having employed diligence in consulting learned men and performing other requisite duties, as soon as such a definition becomes so evident to me that I cannot doubt it with any apprehension, I am bound by the laws of the Catholic faith to assent to it without hesitation and in a Catholic manner, even before I see whether others assent or dissent. Therefore, the power obliging me to Catholic assent lies in the legitimate definition of the Pontiff alone. From this consequent, the entire response is contested: because the foundation for Catholic belief is taken not from the consensus of the faithful, but from the definition of the Pontiff. This cannot be unless it is certain according to faith that he who defines is legitimately the Pontiff, just as Bañez maintains must be believed with Catholic faith, because by the same faith I believe this Church, which approves the definition, is Catholic. I prove the antecedent first because either the power to define infallibly resides in the Pontiff alone prior to the consensus of the whole Church, or it does not. Bañez does not affirm that it does not exist, nor does any Catholic. If, however, it does exist, then as soon as the exercise of that power is legitimately evident to me, I am bound to believe it with the proper assent of faith.

Secondly, the same premise is proven: for after I have been sufficiently informed of the legitimate definition by the Pontiff, must I wait for the consensus of all the faithful, or a general Council; or must I not wait for these? If I need not wait: then prior to the consent of the Church I believe with Catholic Faith some proposition defined by this Pontiff, which

Bañez seems to deny. But if I must wait: then no one would be a heretic, even though he does not believe before he sees the consensus of all the faithful, or of a general Council. And so, if someone residing in Rome saw the definition of Clement VIII concerning the invalidity of absolution in absence, he could without sin refuse to believe it until he saw the whole Church consenting: thus even individual faithful could refrain from belief, since individuals could suspend their assent until they were assured of the agreement of others. All of which are absurd in themselves.

**15.** Third, from the a priori principle, because individual believers and all the faithful believe precisely because they are persuaded that something has been legitimately defined by a legitimate Pontiff: therefore, although the consensus of the whole Church can be the proximate rule of faith, nevertheless the primary rule is the definition of the Pontiff. The consequence is evident; because the consensus of the Church is resolved into the definition of the Pontiff, as into an object known prior. I prove the antecedent first from examples: before Clement VIII defined the nullity of absolution given in absence, the whole Church did not agree on this opinion. For many Catholics believed such absolution to be valid, while those who considered it null did not brand their opponents with the mark of heresy. But after Clement's definition, all Catholics agreed on the nullity of this absolution and considered as heretics those who opposed it. What principle led the Church to this consensus other than Clement's definition? The same could be said about Sixtus V defining that the marriage of eunuchs is null. The Catholic Church therefore believes itself bound by the laws of orthodox faith to assent with Catholic Faith to the Supreme Pontiff when he legitimately defines, because it is Catholically persuaded that when he defines in this manner, he is not moved by his own authority, but by God's. No one can Catholically reject God's authority and revelation when sufficiently manifested. Therefore, the primary rule of belief in matters that the Pontiff defines is not the consensus of the faithful, but the definition of the Pope. Thus, the consensus of the faithful is an a posteriori argument for the infallible truth of the defined proposition, because since the whole Church cannot err, universal assent is a sign of the truth of what is believed. And the definition of the Pontiff is an a priori argument for our Catholic assent, which follows that definition as its formal object.

**16.** These points are proved secondly, because infallibility pertains to the Pontiff and the Church in different ways: neither can err, but the Pontiff cannot err in defining, while the Church cannot err in believing. The Pontiff indeed [cannot err] because Christ prayed that his faith might not fail in confirming the brethren, to whom He handed the keys for this purpose. The Church, however, is infallible in believing because the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Thus the Catholic Church remains until the end of time. Since it consists of members and a head, it must persevere intact in both head and members—the head indeed infusing the nourishment of doctrine, and the members receiving it. Therefore, just as God infallibly assists the Pontiff to define truly, so He assists the Church to believe that definition. When head and members are in agreement, the whole Church flourishes. Add to this what I said in the ninth section, that there is almost the same difficulty in believing with Catholic faith in which individuals the Church exists, as in [believing] who is its head. And since the faith of individuals is hidden, there is a new difficulty in believing with

Catholic faith that the definition of the Pontiff is believed by others with the same faith, because the baptism of each person is just as obscure to me as is the baptism of the Pope.

**17.** To the objection raised in §. 10 concerning the resolution of faith into each person's own spirit: Bañez responds that the veracity of the Church is ultimately resolved into the internal light of faith, by which individual believers are inclined to believe. This doctrine has been contested by me in disputation 5, §.37, and disputation 13, §.116, because on the part of the believer, the light, habit, and act of faith are the same: the habit inclines one to believe in the genus of efficient causality, because it is the active principle of assent. Beyond these, there are congruent aids of grace for belief. But on the part of the object, something is proposed to be believed, around which the assents of faith revolve. This object also includes the definition of the Pontiff or the Church. Therefore, beyond the internal light, the objective resolution of faith occurs in the authority of the Church and the Pontiff. This, however, cannot happen unless it is believed by divine faith that this man is the Pontiff. Therefore, I conclude against this first response that it is equally certain that this man is the legitimate Pontiff both before and after a definition. But against Domingo Bañez I conclude: nothing can be believed by Catholic faith unless this is so believed.

### SUBSECTION III. Second response.

**18.** SECONDLY, one can respond to the argument made: That the Pope's definition does not pertain to the formal grounds of faith, but is only a condition *sine qua non*, or an application. The application, however, is not to be believed by divine faith, as I have shown at length in disputation 7. It is sufficient for the necessary application of faith if it is proposed so prudently that no one can prudently dissent from it, as I have demonstrated. Bañez indicates this doctrine in the verse "& propter," although he does not seem to either fully approve or disapprove of it. And this can be confirmed because many hold that no new revelation is given to the Pope when he defines.

**19.** Yet this doctrine cannot be admitted, for in the Pope and the Church there is a twofold authority: one purely human, the other divine. The human authority has nothing divine about it but consists in teaching and moral authority, which persuades the prudent person that they neither wish to deceive nor can easily be deceived. This persuasion is morally certain, not physically certain, and remains physically susceptible to falsehood, since human will itself is not physically incapable of lying, nor is the human intellect incapable of error. Therefore, this authority does not pertain to the formal object of faith but to its prudent application. The other authority is divine, because the Holy Spirit moves the Pope in his definitions with the same certainty and infallibility as He moved Isaiah and the other Prophets.

**20.** Hence I argue: the proposition of the Pontiff arising from this second authority is an objective principle of faith: not as an application, therefore as a formal object. I prove the consequence because every known object is either known as a formal object, or as a material object, or as an application. This definition is not known as a material object, because it is not known through another formal object previously known. Nor is it an



application, because every application to faith is purely human and, as far as it is in itself and physically, is fallible and exposed to falsity, as I have abundantly stated from the beginning of the seventh disputation. For this reason, an application is not a formal object of faith, but a condition *sine qua non*, because faith relies on an adequate formal object that is physically infallible. It remains, therefore, that this definition of the Pontiff is a formal object of faith.

**21.** What is said about the Pope not receiving a new revelation, if taken generally, is entirely false. For we can distinguish two types of revelations: one is direct concerning the revealed object, which some say is not made anew because it has at least implicitly been made in Scripture. This opinion does not please me; for although God may not newly reveal some mystery whose knowledge is necessary for salvation by necessity of means, He nevertheless reveals many things that are expedient for common utility. For some canonical books were not accepted as canonical in the very beginnings of the Church; later, however, Pontiffs defined them to be canonical. Yet this revelation had not been made previously, just as neither was the revelation that marriages of eunuchs were invalid, and other such matters. At the very least, it cannot be denied that some things were not formerly revealed so explicitly that they could not be denied without infidelity; later, however, they are revealed so explicitly that they can no longer be lawfully denied. Therefore, that more explicit revelation is what is made to the Pontiff. When he defines, moreover, he defines with foundation; nevertheless, it is not necessary that this be done from Scripture. For from what Scripture is it gathered that the epistle of James is canonical? And if the Pontiff now were to define that the last books of Esdras are or are not canonical, he would not define this from any Scripture. What, then, prevents God from revealing anew whatever He wishes?

**22.** The second revelation is, as it were, reflexive, which has for its object other revelations: for example. The prophecy of Isaiah is God's revelation concerning all things that are in the book of Isaiah; however, when the Pontiff declared those books to be canonical, he had God's revelation concerning the authority of those books. This revelation occurs anew daily: for now we believe two things by Catholic faith concerning the books of Isaiah: the first is everything that is in that book, which is immediately believed because of Isaiah's revelation; the second is that it has been revealed to the Church that this book is canonical, because whoever would deny this would be a heretic, since he would act against the faith. This revelation, moreover, was made to the Pontiff. Thus, Isaiah's revelation is known by us through Catholic faith as a material object, through the definition of the Pontiff as through a formal object. I do not deny that this revelation of Isaiah can also be known through immediate impressions left from the first syllogism, concerning which type of cognition I treated in disputations 7 and 8, and concerning the avoidance of circular reasoning I treated in disputation 15.

**23.** This entire doctrine is confirmed: because when the Pontiff defines something by Pontifical authority, the definition proceeds from the Holy Spirit as its special author, so infallibly that the Holy Spirit is the special author of it no less than when He reveals something or confirms it by a miracle; otherwise, the definition would not be infallible

unless it had God as its special author. But this special assistance consists in a revelation made to the Pontiff; therefore [the doctrine is confirmed]. I prove the minor premise, because that judgment of the defining Pontiff could not infallibly arise from purely human motives and conjectures, since the Pontiff could not be moved by them more infallibly than other Catholics who were not so moved that they could not, without infidelity, remain unmoved. Let us suppose, for example, a controversy among Catholics concerning the validity of absolution given in absentia: those who asserted its validity were indeed moved by prudent conjectures, the efficacy of which their adversaries denied without committing the sin of infidelity. The Pontiff, therefore, having considered all these things, could assent without sin to whichever side he wished. Such assent would in no way be more an act of Catholic faith than in other faithful, because when something can be doubted without sin, it is not believed with divine faith, as I showed in the eleventh disputation, fourth section. Therefore, the Pontiff, judging with supernatural assent the position which he defines, is moved by another objective supernatural principle, which seems to be nothing other than the instrumental speech of God, which I have discussed extensively in disputation 13 from the beginning.

**24.** You may say: the assent of the Pontiffs is not a revelation from God; but it is an act of faith arising from God in a special manner: just as the fact that the Church does not fail in believing is an assent of faith arising from God in a more special manner than in some individual faithful. Against this: other faithful, in those things which they believe by divine faith, are moved by such prudent conjectures that they would lose faith if they dissented or doubted; but the Pontiff, when he resolves a controversy, neither side of which was previously believed by divine faith, does not have such efficacious conjectures that he would sin by not believing, just as Catholics who did not believe were not sinning. Therefore, when he defines something with supernatural assent, he has received from God alone different principles, which he could not have obtained from those things that were being done in the whole Church. Likewise, God infuses an act of faith into no individual faithful except through congruous grace, which one could physically resist and through a false act dissent from the revealed object: because although God has decreed concerning the whole Church that they should not lose faith, nevertheless individual faithful can lose it. The Pontiff, however, when he defines, is individually determined by the preceding Holy Spirit to the truth of assent. Whether this consultation is necessary for a legitimate definition is of no consequence: for although human conjectures are necessary, they are not infallibly connected with the definition of the Pontiff; but because God has decreed to speak with the Pontiff when he has been prudently disposed, and having recognized the ambiguity of the matter, asks to be enlightened by God. And this pertains to the prudent administration of the Church, so that individuals may persuade themselves that aid from God is to be implored and obtained when, after diligent prudence has been applied, there is no hope in human means.

**25.** Furthermore, I confirm that the legitimate definition of a Pontiff is a revelation from God: because it possesses something supernatural, as is agreed upon by all Catholics (with whom I am disputing): therefore it is believed through a supernatural habit: since every supernatural object requires, for its proportionate cognition, that it be known through

a supernatural habit; but that habit, by which it is believed, is the Catholic faith: therefore that definition demands to be believed by Catholic faith: therefore it is a revelation from God: I prove the consequent, because every object of Catholic faith is either a revealed mystery, or the authority of God, or a revelation from God: this definition, however, is not a revealed object, because it is not known from another, nor is it the authority of God: therefore it is a revelation from God: and indeed, since Caiaphas prophesied because he was the Pontiff of that year, it would be strange to deny to our Pontiffs prophecy, which is formally revelation.

**26.** You will object: the supernatural assent of any faithful person seeks by its nature to be known through the supernatural habit of faith, even though not every act of faith is a revelation. I respond that acts of faith in particular cases cannot be known through Catholic faith, nor in this life through infused habit according to common law: because since individual faithful can err, we do not have morally infallible indicators by which we are led to supernatural assent regarding their faith. However, that Catholic faith exists in the whole Church is known through faith, as a material object known through some revelation made particularly to a certain Pontiff. But when the appearances of faith existing in the Church are left behind, Catholic faith is not exercised through them: because all faith in God concerns a formal object that includes either instrumental or formal revelation from God; but there are many acts of infused faith which are neither formal nor instrumental revelation from God: therefore faith does not consider them as a formal object. But when in a particular case the supernatural definition of the Pontiff demands and ought to be believed by the faithful, there remains no other supernatural habit through which this may occur, except faith: hence the argument of the chapter returns: By Catholic faith we believe that to be the revelation of God to the Pontiff; therefore by Catholic faith we believe this man to be the Pontiff. From which I respond to the fifth and eighteenth, that the application of revelation need not be believed by divine faith: yet by faith it must be believed that God reveals this mystery to this man because he is Pontiff; just as I believe the Incarnation was revealed to Isaiah, or at least, that God specially and infallibly assists this man who is Pontiff. However, I do not know his Pontificate with certainty except from Scripture, as I will say in § 42.

### SUBSECTION III. Third Response.

**27.** THIRDLY, it can be answered that someone may doubt the truth of a proposition defined by a Pope; not because they doubt the truth of every proposition defined by a legitimate Pope, but because they doubt the legitimacy of this particular Pope. Just as one who believes with Catholic faith that every human being is conceived in original sin may doubt whether this particular individual was conceived in sin, because they doubt whether this is truly a human being—such a person would not be a heretic: therefore, by the same reasoning, one who doubts the definition of a particular Pope because they doubt his legitimacy would not be a heretic.

**28.** Objection: when there is no probable basis for doubting the legitimacy of the Pontiff, we are bound by the laws of faith to believe without hesitation that he is the Pontiff;

therefore, we are also bound to believe his definitions without hesitation. I prove the antecedent, because we are bound by the laws of faith to believe without hesitation when, by not believing, the entire object of faith is destroyed; but the entire object of faith is destroyed when we doubt the legitimacy of the Pontiff without foundation; therefore, we are bound to believe without hesitation that he is the Pontiff when there is no probable basis for the opposite position. The major premise needs no proof, because if we place any faith in the rule of faith of the heavens, we cannot licitly give occasion to uprooting the faith. The minor premise is proved because if we doubt the legitimacy of the Pontiff, we cannot believe anything by divine faith, neither in particular nor in general: because everything that we believe as Catholics depends on some definition of the Roman Pontiff, who either approved the sacred books, or admitted tradition, or confirmed Councils, or defined something. Thus, one who would doubt the legitimacy of Pius IV, who confirmed the Council of Trent, might also doubt the truth of this proposition: *In the Eucharist, only the accidents of bread and wine remain*; because this truth was confirmed by Pius IV.

**29.** This is confirmed because, by the same reasoning by which someone doubts without probable foundation the legitimacy of Paul V, he could also doubt the legitimacy of Pius IV; indeed, even each and every one of the Pontiffs: whence he would believe nothing by divine faith. Therefore, we are bound not only to exercise this act of faith: *this definition is true, if this is the true Pontiff*; but also this one, *this is the true Pontiff, and his definition is true*: because we are bound to absolute acts of faith, and to all things necessary per se for those acts.

**30.** In response to the argument from §. 17, it is answered that to doubt without the sin of infidelity requires that there be some probable foundation for the opposing view: for example, for someone to disbelieve without the sin of infidelity that a particular individual was conceived in original sin, it is necessary that one have some foundation that persuades oneself with probability that this individual is not human—a foundation which is not found in other individuals who appear to be human. If one were to persuade oneself of this without foundation, one sins against the faith (if one possesses intellect) because in the same manner one could deny that any individual who appears human was conceived in original sin; or at least when the affirmative precept to believe that *every human is conceived in sin* urges, one is bound to believe this of Peter, whom one evidently sees is contained in that subject, *every human*. And although it might be possible to doubt about one individual without infidelity, there is a distinction regarding any Roman Pontiff, because although one may deny something of one individual, the foundation of faith is not removed, since the universal definition of the Pontiff remains intact; but when one doubts the legitimacy of a Pontiff without foundation, the basis for believing a defined proposition is destroyed.

## SUBSECTION V. Second argument.

**31.** The SECOND ARGUMENT is a confirmation of the first: either I can legitimately persuade myself that this man, though by definition, could have erred; or I cannot persuade myself of this. If I can persuade myself of this without sin, then I can also

legitimately persuade myself that the definition of this Pontiff is contingent regarding truth and falsehood; and consequently I cannot believe it with divine Catholic faith, as I have often said. But if I cannot legitimately persuade myself of this, then I believe with divine faith that this man is the Pontiff. I prove the consequence: because I believe this man cannot err precisely because I believe the Holy Spirit assists him as Pontiff. This argument is common against those who hold the opinion stated in §. 18, that no new revelation can be made to the Pontiff: for indeed the Pontiff has the infallible assistance of God, such that by reason of this he cannot err, and we believe this with divine faith, as a revealed article. Therefore, we cannot doubt the infallible assistance of God.

**32.** You may say first that we cannot doubt the truth of this definition because, although he may not be a true Pontiff, nevertheless, because he appears to be true, the Holy Spirit assists him. This doctrine is similar to another which I reported from Bellarmine in the eleventh disputation, §. 30, namely that for the legitimacy of a Council it suffices that the Council members be externally Catholic, even if internally they are not. However, I rejected that doctrine there because there is no foundation in Scripture from which we might gather that the Holy Spirit infallibly assists a Pseudo-Pontiff: for Christ promised that assistance to Peter and his successors, not to those who are not successors. Furthermore: this would mean it is already a matter of faith that this person is the legitimate successor of Peter in the power of defining. Finally, just as consecration performed by someone who only appears to be a Priest, and absolution, and other such things of this kind have no power; so too a definition by a Pseudo-Pontiff has no power. Therefore Father Suarez in disputation 10, section 5, number 4, rightly says that those who claim this both ignore the proper terms (because God's infallible assistance is promised to the Pontiff who is Peter's successor, and not to the devil or to an unbaptized person, if such were elected) and entangle us in the same difficulty. For they do not know that this person has been properly elected: because the illegitimate will of the electors is just as hidden as this man's baptism. Therefore, just as we are certain about the former, so also about his baptism and other hidden conditions, and thus we believe the Church is governed by a true Pontiff.

**33.** You may say secondly: we cannot doubt the truth of a proposition that has been defined, although we may doubt the legitimacy of the Pontiff, because even if we believe he can err due to illegitimacy, nevertheless his error in defining will never redound to the Church, because either he will not define, or he will define what is true, or if he defines falsehood, it will not be received by the Church; but the error of the definition, or of the one defining, will be revealed, and this will occur without miracle by the promise of Christ, *And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*. Thus responds Dominicus Bañez from his own opinion in article 10, doubt 2, toward the second objection.

**34.** Yet I argue that he is inconsistent, because he himself holds that even after a definition by the Pontiff, it is still not a matter of faith that he is the Pontiff; but the opposite is gathered from this doctrine: therefore. I prove the minor premise, because while after a definition God does not reveal the falsity of the definition, nor the illegitimacy of the one defining, it is a sign both that the definition is true and that the Pontiff is legitimate: this foundation did not exist before the definition: therefore it is not as certain now that he is

Pontiff before the definition as after it: because before the definition it is not necessary that God reveal either the falsity of the definition or of the one defining: but after the definition there is such necessity: therefore.

**35.** Likewise, there is another inconsistency: because he himself admits that the falsity of a definition will be revealed to the Church, lest the gates of hell prevail against it; but the same reasoning applies to revealing the falsity of a Pontiff: therefore [the conclusion follows]. I prove the minor premise, because the promise to the Church that the gates of hell would not prevail against it was made to the Church itself, as it is administered through the successor of Peter: *For thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail.* The reason, therefore, why the Church will always triumph is because Peter presides over it. Thus, lest the Church be deprived of Peter's protection through a Pseudo-Pontiff, God will reveal to it the illegitimacy of such a Pontiff. Indeed, this author will offer no distinction [on this matter]: let us examine the rest of his doctrine.

**36.** He says that a false Pontiff will define nothing. Very well: suppose he does define something; by this very definition, we are made to believe by faith that he is the legitimate Pontiff. I prove the consequence, because according to you, the definition is the proper characteristic of a true Pontiff; which characteristic is in no way present in a Pseudo-Pontiff. Therefore, after the definition, there is a stronger foundation for believing this person to be the Pontiff than before. Furthermore, why would he not define? Is it because he has no right to define? But he has no right to define with the assistance of the Holy Spirit; yet why would he not define without that assistance? But if you say that divine providence will impede such a definition, why would you not say that by the same providence it would be ensured that a Pseudo-pontiff is not accepted by the whole Church as legitimate? For the words of Christ concerning the promise of building the Church upon Peter signify this promise. The same applies to the other part of the doctrine which I am opposing: for if he is an illegitimate Pontiff, why would he necessarily define what is true? If it is by God's providence, that providence is much better understood as prohibiting the acceptance of an illegitimate Pontiff.

**37.** What he says afterward is worse, that a definition of the Pontiff should not be accepted by the Church; but that the opposite would be revealed to the Church by God: for he derives the authority in controversies of faith not from the head, but from the members, as I have shown in §. 13, where I refuted this. Furthermore, the occasion for schisms would not be removed, as St. Jerome intended: because such a Pontiff would consider that he had defined by Pontifical right: and countless Catholics would blamelessly follow his definition; while opponents would rightfully be punished as heretics by the same Pontiff and his followers, who would judge that the opponents could have no revelation to the contrary, because they would reasonably consider that the Pontiff had defined legitimately. Dominic Bañez would therefore have done better to establish a special providence of God in not accepting a Pseudo-Pontiff, rather than in rejecting his definitions after he has been accepted. I omit many other things that he mixes in, which are easily refuted from what has been said. I will propose an a priori argument in §. 41; consult it.

### SECTION III. The Opposing Opinion.

**38.** That it is NOT to be believed as Catholic faith that this Pontiff is legitimate was clearly taught by Cajetan in Summa Theologica 2.2, question 1, article 3, in the section: *in response to the fourth*, where concerning the Roman Pontiff, he states: *Who knows whether this man was baptized? And whether the one who baptized him had the intention of conferring the Sacrament of Baptism?* Cajetan was followed by Dominic Bañez in article 10, doubt 2, in the section *to the second argument*: and others cited by Fr. Suárez in disputation 10, section 5, number 2.

**39.** The first argument of this position is that neither from scripture, nor from tradition, nor from any definitive ruling can it be established that this person is the legitimate Pontiff: therefore it is not a matter of faith that he is such. This is confirmed because it is not a matter of faith that this man has been baptized: for the intention of the one baptizing is not certifiably known. Nor is it a matter of faith that he has been legitimately ordained a Priest, because the intention of the one conferring or receiving orders is not known with certainty from faith: therefore it cannot be established from faith that he is the Pontiff.

**40.** First, I shall demonstrate the absurdity of this position from the following argument: let us suppose that some controversy of faith arises in the Church concerning a particular article; and simultaneously one of the contending parties asserts that there is no legitimate Pontiff in the Church who can resolve this controversy, because Paul V is not a legitimate Pontiff. Indeed, it pertains to Paul V to define both that article and that he is the legitimate Pontiff: for who can doubt that both matters can be defined, since this is exceedingly necessary for the tranquility of the Church. Yet this definition would certainly be despised by both parties unless the Pontiff's legitimacy is established from other sources. For by what reasoning would one value it, who believes him not to be the Pontiff? Therefore, before any definition, there must exist an obligation to believe indubitably that he is the Pontiff and that he possesses the power of definition.

**41.** I preface this with a doctrine which I have broadly transmitted in the 12th disputation from the beginning: namely, that in a universal affirmative proposition all singular instances are contained. For instance, in this proposition, *every man is conceived in sin*, this is contained: *Peter is conceived in sin, John is conceived in sin, etc.* The a priori reason is because *every man* is the same as Peter, and Paul, and all others. Thus, Peter and Paul are essential parts of this example, *every man*. Similarly, when God speaks with a Prophet, He presupposes that the Prophet knows the quidditative terms of things, as I demonstrated in that 12th disputation, §17. For He presupposes a quidditative knowledge of this phrase *every man*: which quidditative knowledge can be either adequate or inadequate. Adequate knowledge extends to all individual men, because it must extend to all quidditative parts. Inadequate knowledge, however, must extend to some individual man. Thus, to know that Peter was conceived in original sin, there is no need for this syllogism: *every man is conceived in sin; Peter is a man; therefore Peter is conceived in sin.* The reason is that Peter can be known immediately in that universal proposition from the apprehensions of Peter and of every man alone. For with these apprehensions in place,

and having heard this statement, *every man is conceived in sin*, I immediately conceive that conception in sin is being said of Peter, and I form this syllogism: everything that God says is true; but He says that Peter is conceived in sin; therefore Peter is conceived in sin. If someone should ask where God says this about Peter, I will respond: in that universal proposition, every man is conceived [in sin]. All of which I have pursued at length in that 2nd disputation, section 2, where I also showed that this objective proposition, *Peter is conceived in sin*, is according to itself a matter of faith, because it is immediately revealed by God. This formal proposition, however, *Peter is conceived in sin*, can proceed either immediately from the habit of faith, or from theological habit under the habit of faith, when it is deduced through the syllogism which I formulated at the end of this section. It is elicited from theological habit, however, when in the universal proposition *every man*, Peter is not explicitly recognized, but I need a new cognition of him through this new minor proposition, *Peter is a man*: which I discussed in that twelfth disputation, second section.

**42.** I premise secondly, when Christ in Matthew 16 said to Peter, “*I will give you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven*”: and when in John 21 He said: “*feed my sheep*”, that promise was not made to the person of Peter alone; but to him and all his successors; just as the power of consecrating and absolving was not given to the Apostles alone; but also to their successors. Let us suppose, therefore, that Paul V is the legitimate successor of Peter, of him Christ said: “*feed my sheep, I will give you the keys of Heaven*”: just as if I am a legitimate Priest, Christ said to me, “*do this in remembrance of me*”. Thus these promises are universal privileges, with which God endowed Peter and the Apostles, and their successors: and as properly and immediately to the successors as to the Apostles themselves. For sometimes addressing the Apostles, He formed a universal proposition immediately signifying the successors: as a King addressing a soldier, grants to him and his successors nobility and annual stipends, which donation is made immediately to the successors; although the speech is directed to the sole soldier present.

**43.** I posit thirdly, that it pertains to God’s special providence with His Church, not to permit that the entire Church should conspire in some error from which the gates of hell might prevail against it: because He who promised that those gates would not prevail against the Church also promised to avert whatever might be an occasion for the infernal gates to prevail. Now, one of the principal occasions for the victory of these gates over the Church would be to lack a true and legitimate Pontiff, and to have a Pseudo-Pontiff peacefully substituted in his place: because Christ willed that the sheep be pastured by Peter and his successors, just as He governs the members through the head. Hence, if the whole Church were to peacefully admit some Pseudo-Pontiff, it would be exposed to the gravest dangers in faith and morals, because it would be exposed to the peril of accepting false doctrine as oracles, and a disgraceful administration, since that Pontiff would act by his own power, and not God’s. Therefore, the human authority of the whole Church could not be morally deceived in accepting an obscure revelation of God; likewise, neither in accepting a Pontiff. From this acceptance, we recognize both that he is the Pontiff and that he possesses all the intrinsic conditions for that office, just as we deduce that something is a revelation, with all its conditions, when it is proposed by the whole Church.



**44.** You will say that the Church cannot err in belief: I acknowledge this, because it cannot err in peacefully accepting an illegitimate universal Pastor. For having a legitimate Pastor, it receives the nourishment of truth and the influence of the Holy Spirit through Peter, upon whom it is founded. But if it could err in the peaceful recognition of a Pastor, it could also err in belief. Therefore, from one impossibility follows another, and conversely, from the infallibility of the Pastor follows the infallibility of doctrine and faith. Thus, the legitimate election of a Pastor and the peaceful consent of the Church to it are certain signs of a legitimate Pastor—such that either there is no dissension among Catholics, or if there is, it exists among those who contradict without any probable foundation; or if dissension exists, they can deservedly be punished according to the law of probability. However, when there is a probable foundation for doubting the legitimacy of a Pontiff, even if he might be legitimate in reality, nevertheless neither his legitimacy nor consequently his definitions are believed with Catholic faith. This is because whenever there is a probable foundation, we can prudently doubt; and as long as we can thus doubt, we cannot believe with Catholic faith. Therefore, at such times it is incumbent upon the Church not to rest until it clearly establishes the legitimate election and acceptance of the Pontiff. And if this cannot be obtained otherwise except by deposing the Pontiff or Pontiffs, it can accomplish this—as happened in the Council of Constance, which began in the year one thousand four hundred and fourteen, where John XXIII, Benedict XIII, and Gregory XII were deposed from the Supreme Pontificate, and Martin V was created. For as long as the legitimacy of a Pontiff is not established without probable controversy, the Church can depose him, as Father Suarez teaches in book three, chapter 18, number eight—although it lacks this right with respect to legitimate Pontiffs who have been accepted without probable controversy.

**45.** Hence, we respond to the argument proposed in §. 39 by denying the antecedent: for it is established that this is the legitimate Pontiff from those testimonies of Scripture by which the primacy of Peter is customarily confirmed. This is because that promise is universal, immediately including all legitimate successors, whom God has individually foreseen and spoken about; and who were to be recognized by us through moral certainty arising from their legitimate election and peaceful acceptance. Just as when God revealed that every human would be conceived in original sin, God spoke immediately about 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 human in sin, I see from the mere apprehension of the terms that God spoke about Peter and Paul; so too, having seen the universal promise of God concerning all successors of Peter, and having clearly seen the legitimate election and approval of the Pontiff, I see that this one is the legitimate successor of Peter, and that Christ spoke about him. Review §. 41 and 42.

**46.** You will say that we seem to see and evidently recognize with physical evidence, perceptible to the senses, the legitimate election and peaceful acceptance regarding these external matters; but not regarding internal matters. For we do not know whether he is baptized, and whether he is a Priest. Therefore, there is no certain evidence about the complete legitimacy of the election. This is confirmed by the example of a Priest consecrating the host: because we see all things that are externally required for legitimate

consecration, namely that he has received orders and pronounces the words of consecration; nevertheless, we are not certain by Catholic faith about the consecration of this host, because we are not certain about his Priesthood and intention to consecrate. I respond from paragraph forty-three that it pertains to God's special providence over the Church not to permit the election and peaceful acceptance of one who cannot legitimately be Pontiff. Therefore, from the evident recognition of a legitimate election and peaceful acceptance, it is deduced that this specific man requires nothing else for the Pontificate, and that God has entrusted to him the Pontifical Office of Saint Peter. And so, from this self-evident application, we deduce an act of faith by which we believe that the power of Peter himself has been conferred on that successor of St. Peter—just as from the evident knowledge of Peter, we infer his conception in sin. The arguments concerning a private Priest are not compelling, because God has not promised that special providence in these private cases, as they are of lesser importance and can occur without prejudice to the faith; but the election of a Pseudo-Pontiff is quite different.

**47.** You will say: therefore that Urban VIII is the Pontiff is deduced from two propositions of faith, from this one: *Everyone who is duly elected is Pontiff*, and from this one: *This man is duly elected*; and we recognize his Canonical election from the consensus of the whole Church. Against me, what follows from this? Let us concede that this happens by divine means, which you posit, whichever propositions you please. Nevertheless, the consensus of the Church is not revelation, but an application, so that through it we may recognize our Lord Urban to be contained in that subject, *everyone who is duly elected*; and that Christ the Lord spoke of him, when He spoke to St. Peter. For the Church, with morally infallible human authority, applies to us the revelations of God, which, once so applied, we cannot distrust without sin (as I have abundantly demonstrated). Therefore, this application of revelation is neither revelation itself nor believed by divine faith, but is a condition sine qua non, and is believed with human faith that is morally certain, and leads us immediately to assent with divine faith to the revelation which it applies. The Church, therefore, by human authority, applies to us the Canonical election of Urban: by this application we believe with morally certain human faith that Urban is duly elected, and is part of this subject: *everyone who is duly elected*, just as by natural knowledge we believe Peter is a man and part of this subject, *every man*. With this knowledge existing in the intellect, if we hear, *everyone who is duly elected is Pontiff*, we believe that the Pontificate is immediately and formally predicated of Urban, because we are morally certain that he is part of that subject, *everyone who is duly elected*, just as with the evident knowledge of Peter as a man, derived from physical principles: if we hear, *every man is conceived in sin*, we clearly see sin immediately and formally predicated of Peter, whom we clearly see to be part of that subject, *every man*.

**48.** It is evident that human authority of the Church is sufficient for us to be morally certain that Urban was legitimately elected and is part of this subject, *all legitimately elected*: because that authority renders us morally certain about the existence of revelation (as I have often proven), and the same reasoning applies in proposing a Canonical election, which we are discussing, and all its obscure conditions. Therefore, just as it is sufficient for moral certainty regarding revelation, so it is sufficient regarding the election. I prove the

minor premise: because infallibility concerning revelations depends on infallibility concerning election; therefore, the reasoning is the same. I prove the minor premise: because revelations are either proposed or confirmed by the authority of the true Pontiff, and what he proposes by Pontifical right, the rest of the body of the Church is bound to believe. Thus, for the Church to be morally infallible regarding revelations is equivalent to it being morally infallible regarding the Pontiff, who is the judge of those revelations.

**49.** From this it is clearly inferred that there is no special difficulty in my position regarding the legitimacy of this Pope that is not common to General Councils, the whole Church, and individual revelations believed as Catholic. Would that the proponents of the opposing view had observed this. Therefore, partly from the visible election and partly from the peaceful acceptance by the Church, we have a morally evident assent, which we cannot deny without sin, that Urban was duly elected, is a Priest, and is part of this subject, *every duly elected [Pope]*: just as from Natural Philosophy we know that Peter is a man, and part of this subject, *Every man*, and just as without further demonstration concerning the faith defined in this proposition, *every man is conceived in sin*, we believe with Catholic faith that Peter was so conceived; in the same way we believe with the same Catholic faith that Urban is Pontiff.

**50.** You might say that we know with evidence both that Peter is a man and that he is part of the subject “every man.” But we do not evidently know that Urban is elected, nor that he is part of the subject “every legitimately elected person”; therefore, this does not pertain to the Catholic faith, because we can be mistaken in that judgment. I deny the conclusion. In response to the proof, I answer that we can also be mistaken in judging that this individual is a human being; yet physical evidence suffices, although it may be exposed to error due to obscured disposition, [...] similarly, from moral evidence I know Urban is legitimately elected, and part of the subject “every legitimately elected person.” Therefore, moral evidence suffices, just as it suffices for believing that the Council of Trent was legitimately convened; and that these men who know the Church are Catholics; and for believing that Caesars existed and were conceived in sin. What is most important, this same human authority of the Church suffices to make revelations evidently credible: in precisely the same way, it suffices to make the legitimate election of Urban evidently credible.

**51.** Therefore, in a word, I believe with divine faith that Urban is Pope, not by this syllogism: *Every properly elected person is Pope: Urban is properly elected; therefore Urban is Pope*, just as I do not believe that Peter was conceived in sin by this syllogism: *Every human is conceived in sin, Peter is human, therefore Peter is conceived in sin*; but I believe by this syllogism: *Everything that God says is true, but He says Urban is Pope, and Peter was conceived in sin: therefore both Urban is Pope, and Peter was conceived in sin*. But if you ask where God has said that Peter was conceived in sin, and that Urban is Pope, I respond: in this proposition, “every human is conceived in sin,” and “everyone properly elected is Pope”—because from terms that are self-evident either physically or morally, I know that Peter is human, and whatever is said of all humans is said of him; and that Urban is elected, and whatever is said of all properly elected persons is said of him. I have discussed this at greater length to dispel fear from the minds of some who doubt how this

doctrine can be defended, since it is not a matter of faith that Urban was properly elected. I say that it is also not a matter of faith that Peter is human; or that a human is a rational animal; or that by the word “human” a true human is signified. For those terms, known from elsewhere, are presumed by faith: and God speaks about these things, which are thus foreknown, just as we speak: for I do not say to you: “this is your brother,” but I presuppose that is known by you, and say: “your brother did this.” See disputation 1, section 1, 2, and what I said there about a universal proposition that is self-evident physically or morally applies here in the same terms.

**52.** The second argument: because sometimes a legitimate election of a Pontiff occurs, with peaceful acceptance, in a person incapable of the Pontificate; therefore, these are not certain indicators of an internal election. I prove the antecedent from Martin of Poland and Marianus Scotus, who assert that in the year 853, a woman was elected as Roman Pontiff, who was called John VIII, who succeeded Leo IV before Benedict III. I deny the antecedent. To the proof, I respond that this is more than an old wives’ tale. Cardinal Bellarmine, with his customary erudition, confirms this in the third book of “*De Romano Pontifice*,” chapter 24, showing that authors of that time made no mention of this story, which is the clearest evidence of its obvious falsity. Platina, Sigebert, and Marianus Scotus received this from Martin of Poland, a writer indeed several centuries later, and moreover a simple and almost foolish man, who peddled several other carelessly believed fables. Bellarmine refutes this error through chronology, ancient writers, and other evident arguments, attributing that fable to the Constantinopolitan Church, in which certain eunuchs had been elected, and a rumor spread that even a woman had been elected, which is evident from Leo IX’s rebuke of that custom of electing eunuchs. Baronius, in volume ten, year 853, attempts to prove that not even in Constantinople was a woman elected. He also treats this matter eruditely; I do not know, however, why he considers Marianus Scotus the first author of this fable, when it was Martin of Poland.

**53.** The third argument is that various Supreme Pontiffs had different views regarding the legitimate election of Formosus: for Stephen VI judged that Formosus had not been legitimately elected, while John IX declared that the same Formosus had been legitimately elected. Afterwards, Sergius III agreed with Stephen VI. Subsequently, the remaining Pontiffs concurred with John IX. I respond that this proves nothing against our position. First, because while that controversy remained probable, it was not a matter of faith that Formosus was Pope: since he himself had sworn not to return to the pontifical dignity, and Stephen and Sergius were doubtful about his absolution from this oath, they had reasonable grounds for doubt. Second, because Stephen and Sergius did not err intellectually, but rather, driven by anger due to their enmities with Formosus, they nullified all his acts, declaring invalid the holy orders he had conferred. Not because they truly believed these ordinations to be null, but because they wished to defame him; and just as they sinned in this matter, they could have sinned in the first.

**54.** You object that Cardinal Bellarmine asserts they could have erred in questions of fact, in volume 1, book 4 of his work “*On the Roman Pontiff*,” chapter 14, § “It follows.” Bellarmine therefore considers that question not to pertain to faith. First, let the

consequence stand. Second, I distinguish the consequent: it does not pertain to faith before peaceful acceptance by the Church—let the consequence stand; after such acceptance, I deny the consequence. And thus should our Cardinal be understood.