

Tractatus de Fide, Spe, et Charitate (*Treatise on Faith, Hope, and Charity*)

by Gaspare Hurtado Mondejarensi (Gaspar Hurtado of Mondéjar), 1632

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- *OCR of the original text by AI (claude-sonnet-4-5-20250929).*
- *Translation of the original text performed by AI (claude-sonnet-4-5-20250929).*
- *Last Edit: 2025-11-16.*
- *Version: 1.0*
- *Selection pages: 240-243*

Disputatio XI, De Regulis Fidei, Difficultas XIII

Whether it is a matter of Faith that this particular Pope, for example Urban VIII, is the true Pope?

THE difficulty does not proceed concerning a Supreme Pontiff who has not yet been received peacefully by the Church in every respect; because there is present some prudent occasion for suspecting that his election is not legitimate, since in that case it is not a matter of Faith that he is the true Pope. But the difficulty proceeds only concerning a Supreme Pontiff who has been received by the Church without suspicion and without any controversy, as our Lord Urban VIII is now received—namely, whether it should be believed by divine Faith that he is the true Pope?

Turrecremata, book 4, Summa, §. 2, chapter 9; Albertus [Pighius] on *De agnoscendis assertionibus*, question 5; Cajetan 2. 2. question 1, article 3, in response to the 4th [objection]; Báñez, article 10, in his earlier commentary, doubt 2, to the 2nd [point]; Canon, book 6, *De locis*, final chapter; Vega on Trent, chapter 39; Córdoba, book 1, question 17; Castro, book 1, *Against Heresies*, chapter 9, and others up to twenty-seven Doctors teach that it is not a matter of Faith that this particular man, or Pope—for example, Urban VIII (although received without controversy by the whole Church)—is the true Pope, because God has not revealed this, and what God has not revealed is not a matter of divine Faith. This can be confirmed by the fact that no one can be the true Pope who is not baptized, but it is not established as a matter of Faith that this man, or Pope, is baptized; therefore, it is not a matter of Faith that this man, or Pope, is the true Pope.

This I publicly defended in the year of Our Lord 1601, having cited as an example Pope Clement VIII, who was then the Supreme Pontiff, in full view and light of all, in the Academy of Alcalá in the School of Theologians in the academic exercise called the *Magna* — which was one of nine exercises that the Academy then required for conferring the doctoral degree (though now it requires only eight). I was then residing in the Greater College, and there I was the *Primarius* (as

it is called) governing the Arts faculty. To the aforementioned proposition, as is customary, there subscribed Doctor Gregorius de la Cámara, Dean of Alcalá and Professor Emeritus of the Chair of Sacred Scripture, and Doctor Alvarus de Villegas, Prefect of the Evening Chair of Sacred Theology. However, when the matter was reported to Clement himself, we were summoned by him to Rome (not imprisoned, as someone falsely writes) to give an account of the said proposition. We were already preparing for the journey when permission was obtained from the Pontiff for the matter to be settled in Spain, with judges appointed for this purpose. After the case was thoroughly examined by them, we were declared entirely innocent and unharmed, and the doctrine itself was judged completely sound. Meanwhile, while the case was pending, after all the theological exercises had been completed and we were now to be called to the doctoral degree with the order to be assigned by the Doctors according to each one's merits, ability, and learning (as is customary in the Academy of Alcalá), I was designated first among all, with thirty-five Doctors voting in my favor out of forty-two who then had the right to vote. This victory must always be placed by me in the highest position, especially considering that out of ten men who were competing most ardently for the order and place to be prescribed by the Doctors, seven were my senior colleagues: eight were Regents of the Liberal Arts, and four were subsequently Rectors of the Academy. The second place was obtained by Doctor Johannes de Pereda, *Primarius* Regent of the Scotist Chair, soon after the examination of abilities was conducted, called Canon of Conca above others, later Bishop of the Church of Oviedo and Governor of the Archbishopric of Toledo — truly an outstanding man in sacred theology. The third was Andreas Merino, *Primarius* Regent of the Chair of Saint Thomas. The fourth was Melchior Bolivar, Rector of the Academy of Alcalá, Director of Evening Sacred Theology, and Canon of Toledo. The rest were from among the most distinguished Doctors of the Academy, among whom was the aforementioned Doctor Alvarus de Villegas, who, as the principal Regent of the Chair of Theology, subscribed. This is the same man who later obtained a Canony of Toledo ahead of Curiel and other most learned men who competed with him for it in literary contest with great praise, and was subsequently appointed Governor of the Archbishopric in place of His Most Serene Highness Lord Ferdinand Cardinal Infante and given as Coadjutor to him. However, he became much more renowned for the integrity with which he conducted himself while he presided over it, and for the nobility of soul with which he resigned from that office and refused three other archbishoprics offered to him. In addition to his other virtues, he possessed a singular chastity, indeed purity, to such a degree that even when gravely ill, he did not permit even his own sisters to sit by his bedside, as I learned from one of them.

Suarez, however, in disputation 10, section 5, and Petrus Hurtado [de Mendoza] in disputation 37, section 2, along with other more recent authors in their manuscripts, teach that it is a matter of faith that this particular man, or Pope—for example, Urban VIII—is the true Pope. This position is not without probability, because this truth is immediately and in itself revealed by God, not by express revelation, but by confused revelation under this universal proposition: *Peter and others who after him have been legitimately elected in the Christian Church are Popes, or Supreme Pontiffs, each in his own time.* Therefore, it is a matter of faith that whoever in particular has been legitimately elected to the dignity of Peter is the true Pope. The consequence is evident, because for the formal object or motive of divine faith, confused revelation suffices, as we say in disputation 2, difficulty 4. But this particular man, or Pope—for example, Urban VIII—who now presides over the Church was legitimately elected; therefore, it is a matter of faith that this particular man, or this Pope in particular—for example, Urban VIII—is the true Pope. This consequence is also evident, because for something to be a matter of faith,

it is not necessary that it be established by faith that this particular man—for example, Urban VIII—was legitimately elected; rather, it suffices that this be established by prudent human faith, as it truly is established, indeed most prudently. For it is a matter of faith that this particular infant—for example, Peter—has contracted original sin, because this is confusedly revealed under the universal principle that every descendant of Adam contracts original sin when he does not enjoy a divine privilege of exemption, and it is established most prudently and with moral certainty that this infant—for example, Peter—descends from Adam and does not enjoy the privilege of exemption. Just as for something to be a matter of faith, it is not necessary that it be a matter of faith that God has revealed it, but it suffices that it be established by human faith that God has revealed it, as we say in disputation 3, difficulties 3 and 4. From this, the response to our adversaries' argument is clear, and also to the confirmation, because it is not necessary, for it to be a matter of faith that this particular man and Pope is baptized, but it suffices that this be prudently established, as it truly can be.