

Summa Conciliorum Omnium quae a sancto Petro usque ad Gregorium XV. Papam celebrata sunt, juxta Chronologiam Annalium Illustrissimi Cardinalis Baronii praecipue, et aliorum illustrium virorum ecclesiastica historicaque monumenta. Adjunctis in loca praecipua et difficillima quamplurimis Annotationibus. (*Summary of All Councils from Saint Peter to Pope Gregory XV, According to the Chronology of Cardinal Baronius and Other Ecclesiastical Historians, with Many Annotations on Difficult and Important Places*)

by **Francisco Longo A Coriolano (Francis Longo of Coriolano), 1621**

[Online Location of Text Here](#)

- OCR of the original text by AI (*claude-3-7-sonnet-20250219*).
- Translation of the original text performed by AI (*claude-3-7-sonnet-20250219*).
- Last Edit: March 25, 2025.
- Version: 1.0
- Selection pages: 82-84

SECOND ASSERTION.

It is a matter of faith to declare that this particular Pope, e.g., GREGORY XV, is the true successor of Peter and Vicar of Christ.

THIS IS PROVED, first, Because it is an Article of the Catholic Faith that the Church is one, Catholic, and visible: therefore, it must be an article of the same faith that the Head is one, universal, and visible; but this is none other than this or that Pontiff, since a Pontiff who is conceived of in abstraction from this or that individual does not exist in the nature of things, nor is seen with the eyes, nor does he perform or undertake anything in the Church instituted by Christ. Therefore, by Catholic faith we are compelled to believe that this or that person, who by Christ's command is placed over the multitude, is the true and legitimate Pontiff. This is corroborated in the epistle to Cyprian concerning the confessors who returned to unity, where it says: *We, they say, know Cornelius, the most holy Bishop of*

the Catholic Church, to have been elected by God Almighty and Christ our Lord. And shortly after: For we are not ignorant that there is one God, and one Christ the Lord whom we have confessed; one Holy Spirit; one Bishop who must be in the Catholic Church.

SECONDLY, By Catholic Faith, not merely by human faith, we believe in the true and legitimate succession of Pontiffs in the Roman Church and Chair; but this succession consists of these specific Pontiffs who have passed away and who have governed the Church; therefore, we must believe by a faith that repels all suspicion of falsehood that each of these individuals was a true and legitimate Pontiff.

THIRD, We embrace with divine and inspired faith the Ecumenical Council, its authority, and the Canons of faith handed down by them; therefore, with the same faith we must honor the authority of this illustrious Roman Pontiff, without whom no Council can be legitimate, nor is the Church bound by its laws and decrees before they are confirmed by the Roman Pontiff. Moreover, it is Silvester, Agapetus, Leo, Pius, Gregory, Innocent, Clement, and Paul who convoke the Council and confirm it; therefore, it must be believed with certain and Catholic faith that these are legitimate Pontiffs.

FOURTH, If the Roman Pontiff, responding from the Chair [ex Cathedra], should decree something pertaining to the Catholic faith, the entire Christian people is compelled to assent to that Decree with Catholic faith; therefore, by that same faith, it is necessary to believe that the Pontiff who was the author of the Decree possessed the legitimate power to decree. And the one who discerns is Peter, Stephen, Pius, Paul; therefore, it must be understood with Catholic faith that these possess true, legitimate, and pontifical authority.

FIFTH, It is impious to suspect that the universal Church could err in the veneration of saints: therefore, when the Roman Pontiff proposes and commands that a certain Saint be venerated by the entire body of the faithful, he cannot be deceived or deceive in this matter. But when he enrolls someone in the number of Saints and commands that person to be venerated by the Christian multitude, he does this as the true and legitimate Vicar of Christ, just as the most holy Paul V did in fact in the canonization of Saint Charles Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, at whose Canonization I myself was present among so many thousands: therefore, we must affirm as a Catholic truth that he is such [i.e., the true and legitimate Vicar of Christ].

SIXTH, Those who in Britain suffered death for defending the pontifical authority of Gregory XIII attained the glory of Martyrs in the same way as if they had shed their blood for the Catholic faith: nor did those holy and most courageous men fear, during the time when they were fighting for the authority of Pope Gregory XIII, that they were struggling for any cause other than that of the faith.

SEVENTH, By Catholic faith we affirm that the Roman Chair is the interpreter of Religion, the incorrupt teacher of sacred rites and morals; but there is no Roman Chair except that which this or that Pontiff holds, whom the Church has chosen for itself—not one who never existed or will exist on earth. Therefore, we must believe, with faith that cannot err, that this or that individual is the true and legitimate Prelate of the same Chair. Great authority is

conferred upon this seventh argument by the words in the profession of faith promulgated by Pius IV: "I acknowledge the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church as the mother and teacher of all churches." But the governor and Master of the Roman Church is Linus, Clement, Paul: therefore, by Catholic faith we must acknowledge these as Masters of true faith and doctrine.

EIGHTH, Christ instituted an Ecclesiastical Monarchy, which was destined to equal the entire art of conquering the world. Therefore, since a Monarchy cannot exist without a Monarch, it is a matter of divine faith to believe that a true Monarch will never be lacking for it. In this case, another cannot be imagined except the successor of Peter, who is elected by the legitimate consent either of the Church or of those to whom this pertains. Therefore, we are compelled to believe that this elected Roman Pontiff is the true and legitimate Head and Ruler of this sacred Monarchy.

NINTH, The Catholic faith teaches that the Christian Church is the true and legitimate Church: therefore it also teaches that this or that Roman Pontiff is the true and legitimate Vicar of Christ; because he is the source and propagator of the Christian community: since from him Bishops are created, from these Priests, and from Priests the rest of Christians; so that whoever doubts the truth of the Pontificate of Peter, Clement, Paul, must necessarily doubt the truth of the Church itself.

TENTH, It is a dogma of the Catholic faith that the Ecclesiastical hierarchy is divinely constituted: for thus in the Council of Trent, Session 23, Canon 6: *If anyone says that in the Catholic Church there is not a hierarchy instituted by divine ordination, consisting of bishops, priests, and ministers, let him be anathema.* But the chief part of this hierarchy is the Roman Pontiff, its Head and visible Governor: therefore just as we believe the divinely instituted hierarchy to be true, so must we believe its head to be true. And this head is this or that Pontiff, whom we can point to with our finger. Therefore.

ELEVENTH, It is a dogma of the Christian faith that bishops appointed by the Roman Pontiff are legitimate and true bishops; therefore, by Catholic faith, one must confess that the Pontiff, by whose authority they are appointed, is a legitimate and true Pontiff. The antecedent of this enthymeme is from the Council of Trent, session 23, canon 8, in these words: *"If anyone says that bishops who are appointed by the authority of the Roman Pontiff are not legitimate and true bishops, but a human invention, let him be anathema."* Therefore, regarding Clement, Pius, Gregory, Paul, by whose authority bishops are chosen, the truth of the Catholic faith compels us to say that they are legitimate and true Pontiffs.

TWELFTH, Whoever would weaken or deny the authority of the decrees made by Innocent III, Alexander III, Gregory IX, Boniface VIII, or other Pontiffs—decrees by which judgments are carried out in the Church—would be punished with the penalty for heretics; therefore, by Catholic faith, it is necessary to believe that the authority from which these decrees proceeded was true, legitimate, and Pontifical.

THIRTEENTH, Whoever would deny that Gregory XV, whom the Catholic Church obeys, is either the head of the Church, or the true successor of Peter, or the Vicar of Christ, would

sin not against human authority, but against orthodox faith—which cannot contain falsehood—and would be burned as a true heretic. Therefore, it pertains to divinely infused faith that Gregory XV be proclaimed by every Christian as the true and legitimate Vicar of Christ.

Objections Against the Aforementioned Assertion

FIRST, That while preserving the Catholic faith one can doubt about any individual priest, whether he is or is not a true and legitimate priest: why, therefore, would it not similarly be without the crime of heresy to doubt concerning this Roman Pontiff?

I respond: Because bound up with the power of the Roman Pontiff are many things which must be held by Catholic faith: namely, that in him resides the power of convening and confirming Councils, of resolving controversies of faith, of enrolling pious and religious men after death in the number of Saints, of creating Bishops, of depriving Kings and Emperors of their Kingdom and Empire when necessary, of governing the universal Church, and of imposing salutary laws upon it. Since none of these applies to an individual priest, one who doubts that he is a priest does not incur the fault of heresy.

SECOND, The Catholic Faith imposes on no one the necessity of believing that the Roman Pontiff has been baptized: yet without Baptism he cannot be the true and legitimate Vicar of Christ. Therefore, the Catholic Faith does not impose on anyone the necessity of believing that he is the true Pontiff.

I respond by turning the argument around: because we are compelled by the Catholic Faith to acknowledge that there is a true and legitimate Vicar of Christ in the Catholic Church, for so many other reasons, a necessary conclusion now compels us that he is baptized, and likewise that he is Orthodox, that he is male, and that he possesses everything without which Pontifical power cannot exist. For it is characteristic of the divine judgment, which does not deceive the Church, that His Vicar, whom He wishes to be placed in charge of feeding His flock, lacks nothing that such great power requires as it is exercised, and that the office which he must execute necessarily demands. But it demands that he be a man of uncorrupted faith, lacking neither Baptism nor reason: therefore, that man must necessarily be believed to be faithful and baptized—with a necessity, I say, of consequence and of divine providence that watches over His Church.

THIRD, Since certain things defile and vitiate the election of the Roman Pontiff, among which the sin of Simony is foremost, according to the Constitution which begins, *Cum tam divino, quam humano iure* [Both by divine and human law], promulgated to the Christian world in the year 1505, on January 18th, wherein it is established that a simoniacal election of a Roman Pontiff is null, and can never at any time become valid: this Constitution Pius IV confirmed by another of his own, which begins: *In eligendis Ecclesiarum Praelatis* [In the election of Prelates of Churches]: and in the last Lateran Council in session 5, a Bull was read renewing and confirming that an election of a Pontiff made through the corruption of Simony is by that very fact null and void. And before this, Pope Nicholas II, having held a Priestly Council at the Lateran, established this Law: *If anyone should be placed on the*

Throne of Peter through money, human favor, popular or military tumult, without the harmonious and canonical election of the Cardinals, let him be called not Apostolic, but apostate, that is, deservedly called one who has departed from proper order, and let it be permitted for Cardinals, Clerics, and God-fearing laypeople to excommunicate him as a robber, and to drive him from the Apostolic See by any human assistance; and to gather Catholics for this purpose in any place, if it is not permitted in the city. From all of which it follows that however much danger exists in the elections of Supreme Pontiffs, just as much doubt exists in the power of those who are elected.

I respond that God, who oversees the election of His Vicar with a special providence and who guides the efforts and votes of the electors, either will not permit such defects to occur in an election, or, if they should occur, He will immediately reveal them, lest the Church be deprived of her legitimate spouse, father, and ruler. Thus I have sufficiently addressed the objections that can be raised against the proposed assertion.