

# Tractatus de Papa ubi et de Concilio Oecumenico (*Treatise on the Pope and on the Ecumenical Council*)

by **Dominique Bouix, 1869**

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## Caput XIII: An et quatenus sit de jure divino et de fide, Romanum Pontificem esse successorem sancti Petri in primatu auctoritatis

A fourfold question comes to be examined here: 1° whether the fact that he thus succeeds is truly and properly by *divine law*; 2° whether it is *of the faith*; 3° whether it is *of the faith* that such a one, for example Pius IX, is the Supreme Pontiff; 4° whether the primacy could be separated from the Roman See by any ecclesiastical power and transferred to another (for example, Lyon).

**§ 1.** — *That the Roman Pontiffs succeed Saint Peter in the primacy of authority is truly and properly by divine law.*

For it would be an erroneous opinion which held that the primacy belongs to the Roman Pontiff by *human law* alone, that is, because the Church had so disposed, or even because Saint Peter himself had done so from his mere human will. Before we refute this error, certain things must be noted beforehand, namely:

1° Saint Peter had the primacy of authority by *divine law*, as is established from the preceding section.

2° Likewise, that the primacy of Peter is to be transmitted to his successors until the end of the world is equally a matter of *divine right*, that is, from the very institution of Christ, as has been proven in the same place. And therefore, by virtue of the same institution of Christ, that succession by which the primacy of Peter passes to another when it ceases in one (on account of his death or another cause) cannot fail in the Church.

3° That Christ himself instituted and decreed that the Roman Bishops, and no others, should be the successors of Peter with regard to the primacy or power of governing the universal Church, is indeed highly probable; but it has not been defined, nor has it even been placed beyond controversy. We say it is highly probable: for since Christ revealed so many other things to Saint Peter, and conferred the primacy upon him in such a way that he most clearly taught at the same

time that this prerogative was to be transmitted to his successors, it is not likely that he remained silent about the manner or method of determining and establishing such successors. Indeed, this determination contributed most greatly to the good of the Church. Moreover, it was highly desirable for Saint Peter himself that in a matter of such great importance he should learn, by the Lord's own teaching and command, how he ought to conduct himself. Therefore, by reason of his supreme benignity, it is probable that the Lord Jesus signified to Peter that he should assume the episcopate of the city of Rome, and that he should know and declare that the primacy was attached to this episcopal See by divine dispensation; so that the Bishops succeeding him in this See should also succeed him in the supreme government of the whole Church. This, indeed, is probable. But since it is not read in the Sacred Scriptures, nor has it been defined by the Church as pertaining to the deposit of tradition, it is still lawfully subjected to controversy among Catholics.

4° Hence there remains also to some extent a probable hypothesis, that Christ himself did not determine who would be the future successors in the primacy, but left this determination to be made by Peter, and established only that those would be successors and would be endowed by him with the said primacy, whom Saint Peter himself had chosen and designated for this purpose. In this hypothesis, moreover, the fact that the Roman prelate, rather than the Antiochene or that of another See, succeeds Peter in the primacy, would arise jointly both from the human and free act of Peter, choosing and designating the Roman See so that the primacy might be attached to it, and from the divine institution of Christ, who willed that the power of governing the universal Church be attached to that See which Peter had freely chosen and determined for this purpose.

5° That the Bishops of Rome have in fact succeeded in the primacy is entirely certain and to be held; whether Christ the Lord immediately established this, according to the former hypothesis, or whether there was need in addition of Peter's free choice, according to the sense of the latter system.

These things having been noted beforehand, the truth of the assertion can thus easily be proved, namely, that it pertains to truly and properly divine law that the Roman Pontiffs succeed in the primacy:

For either Christ Himself decreed and revealed to Peter that the Bishops of the Roman See, and no others, would be successors in the primacy; or He decreed only that they would be successors if Peter so willed and disposed. Moreover, in either case this succession of the Roman Pontiffs is, and must be called, *de jure divino* [by divine right]. And indeed in the former case the matter is self-evident, since the succession of the Roman Prelates is supposed to have been decreed by Christ Himself absolutely and without condition. But even in the latter hypothesis, this succession is still truly and properly *de jure divino*. For then, the fact that the Roman Prelates succeed depends indeed in part upon the free act of Saint Peter. But once such an act has been posited, by which Saint Peter willed and chose the Roman See as heir of his primacy, it remains true that it is the will of Christ the Lord that the Roman Pontiffs, and no others, should succeed. Now that which comes about by the will or decree of Christ is truly and properly *de jure divino*.

In order that the reader may more easily grasp the force of this reasoning, let him observe that the question here is not *whether* the Roman Pontiffs succeed to the primacy of Peter. That is taken as certain and indubitable; and the inquiry is only *whether they succeed by divine law*.

Moreover, since it is certain that they do succeed, it is also certain that Peter established a condition without which they would not have succeeded, that is, that the Bishops of the Roman See were elected by him as his successors. Once this condition is verified (if it was necessary), it is immediately verified that Christ Himself willed and disposed, immediately after the death of Peter, that the Roman Bishops, and no others, should succeed to the primacy. But what takes place by the will and disposition of Christ the Lord is *by divine law*, as is evident.

It is helpful to illustrate the same point in another way: whether the Roman Pontiffs succeed *by divine right* could be a matter of doubt only in the hypothesis that Christ established that they should succeed not absolutely, but only *conditionally*, that is, under the condition that Peter freely elected them as successors to his primacy. Now, in this hypothesis, the matter stands as if Christ had addressed Peter in this manner: *I confer upon you the primacy of authority in my Church; and this primacy I now confer simultaneously in your person and will continually confer upon your successors in the see which you shall choose: and whosoever shall succeed you in this see chosen by you, through canonical election to be carried out according to the rules to be determined by my Church or by yourself and your successors, by that very fact will also have from me your primacy of authority; whence, if you choose the Roman See, from this very fact your successors in this see will have from me this same primacy of authority which I confer upon you.* Now truly, in the hypothesis that Christ so established it, it is plain that the primacy belongs to the Roman Pontiff *by divine right*. For he has this primacy because Christ himself conferred it upon him in the person of Peter. Indeed, Christ conferred the primacy upon him only under the condition that Peter had chosen the Roman See, which election, being a human act of Peter, is not of divine right. But since this condition has been verified, although through an act which was not of divine right, it becomes true that the primacy exists in the possession of the Roman Pontiff through the very conferral of Christ himself, and therefore *by divine right*.

Concerning this matter, Bellarmine notes, “It is one thing to speak of succession, and another to speak of the basis of succession. For the succession of the Roman Pontiff to the Pontificate of Peter is by the institution of Christ: but the basis of succession, by which the Roman Pontiff rather than the Antiochene [Patriarch] or any other succeeds, took its beginning from the action of Peter. The succession itself, I say, is from the institution of Christ and by divine right, because Christ Himself instituted in Peter a Pontificate that was to endure until the end of the world; and consequently, whoever succeeds Peter receives the Pontificate from Christ” (*de Romano Pontifice*, Book II, chapter xii). Using Bellarmine’s final words, we thus briefly conclude the present disputation: The Roman Pontiff succeeds Peter in the primacy: whoever succeeds Peter in the primacy receives the primacy *from Christ*: whoever receives the primacy *from Christ* holds it *by divine right*: therefore the Roman Pontiff obtains the primacy *by divine right*: therefore he is the successor of Peter in the primacy *by divine right*.

## § 2. — That the Roman Pontiffs succeed Saint Peter in the primacy of authority is simply a matter of faith.

For that is *a matter of faith* which the Church has been able to define and has in fact defined. But indeed,

1° *The Church was able to define* that the Roman Pontiffs are successors to Saint Peter in the primacy of authority. For indeed the Church has the right to define the faith and whatever pertains to its own constitution. Hence if some fact touches upon the faith or pertains to the

Church's constitution, the Church can define that fact, so that all the faithful are bound to believe firmly and sincerely what it has defined concerning that fact. Now, that the Roman Bishops have succeeded Saint Peter in the primacy is indeed a fact which is not read in Sacred Scripture, and indeed which perhaps had its beginning from the human decision of Peter to choose the Roman prelates as his successors, since he could perhaps have chosen others. But nevertheless this fact pertains to the fundamental constitution of the Church; for from that fact it follows that the Roman Bishop is the head of the whole Church. Therefore the Church was able to define this fact, and to require that it be firmly believed by all.

2° *The Church has defined* that the Roman Bishop is the successor of Peter with regard to the primacy, that is, with regard to the supreme power of governing the whole Church. We have set forth above various definitions on this matter. One should especially attend to the words of the ecumenical Council of Florence: *We define... that the Roman Pontiff himself is the successor of blessed Peter..., and that to him in blessed Peter full power was handed down by Our Lord Jesus Christ of feeding, ruling, and governing the universal Church.*

Moreover, this succession of the Roman Pontiffs in the primacy cannot be denied without thereby denying their supreme power of governing the Church. Furthermore, this denial would be formally heretical.

3° That the succession of the Roman Prelates in the primacy is to be held as a matter of faith could be proved by the common opinion of Catholic doctors. We shall cite only Suárez, who states as follows: "We conclude that the Roman Bishop alone is the true successor of Peter, and that the power given to Peter to feed the sheep of Christ perseveres in him. This assertion is certain and is to be held with Catholic faith. For although it is not read expressly and in proper terms in Sacred Scripture, it is virtually contained in the principles revealed therein, which has been sufficiently declared by the Church, indeed is established by a certain evidence of facts and by experience. It is declared first of all: for we have from Scripture that the primacy of the Church was given to Peter, so that it would endure perpetually in it, as has been sufficiently proved. But this duration, since it was not going to be in the same person, was necessarily going to be through the succession of several persons in the same dignity; and this also is sufficiently contained in Scripture, not by any addition, but by legitimate interpretation of the same Scripture. But in which see or episcopate this succession and series of persons succeeding in this dignity was left, Scripture did not report, because the canonical history of the New Testament does not extend to the death of Peter. And therefore, in order that it may be certainly established for the Church that the institution made by Christ and revealed in Scripture has been fulfilled and continues to be fulfilled in such a see, it suffices that the application (so to speak) of that institution and dignity to such an Episcopate be sufficiently proposed to the same Church through evident tradition and continuous and most well-known usage... In this manner, therefore, we say that the assertion set forth is a matter of faith, and is sufficiently contained in Scripture, with the tradition of the Church joined to it" (*Defensio fidei*, Book III, Chapter XIII).

### § 3. — *Whether it is of the faith that such a one (for example Pius IX) is the Supreme Pontiff.*

There exists among Catholic doctors some controversy concerning this matter; but it turns only upon the different manner of understanding and explaining the requisite conditions in order that any proposition may be and ought to be called *of the faith*. For some deny that this proposition,

“Pius IX is the Supreme Pontiff,” is *of the faith*, on the ground that that proposition was not expressly revealed by Christ. Others hold the contrary, relying on this reasoning: It was revealed, and is of the faith, that anyone canonically elected as the successor of Peter is the Supreme Pontiff; on the other hand, that Pius IX was canonically elected is established by the testimony of the Church, which recognized Pius IX as canonically elected, and which cannot err in recognizing her true head. Therefore, they say, once such recognition has been posited, it is simply *of the faith* that Pius IX is the Supreme Pontiff, that is to say, the successor of Peter in the primacy.

In what sense the said proposition is *of the faith*, and in what sense it is not *of the faith*, can be explained and proven thus:

1° Immediately upon its becoming known that someone has been canonically elected as Roman Pontiff (and this becomes known from the fact that Catholic bishops recognize the election as canonical), it becomes certain by this very fact that the one elected must be regarded as the Roman Pontiff, the successor of Peter, and the Vicar of Christ, and that all manner of obedience is owed to him by all persons. On this point the advocates of both opinions set forth above are in agreement, nor does any doubt exist among Catholics concerning this matter.

2° This proposition, “Pius IX is the Roman Pontiff,” was not immediately and formally expressed and revealed by Christ. Therefore, it is not *de fide* in the sense that it was expressly and formally revealed.

3° Nevertheless, it is *de fide* in an absolute sense. For it is a matter of faith that whosoever is canonically elected as Roman Pontiff is the successor of Saint Peter, and by this very fact the head of the entire Church and its supreme ruler, or Supreme Pontiff. On the other hand, it is likewise *de fide* that the Church cannot err in recognizing its head; and consequently it is absolutely certain that he whom the Church recognizes as such has been canonically elected. Since, therefore, the Church recognizes Pius IX as Roman Pontiff, it is certain—even with supernatural certitude—that he was canonically elected. Therefore this proposition, *Pius IX is the Supreme Pontiff*, is a particular proposition which is contained in this universal proposition: *whosoever is canonically elected is the Supreme Pontiff*. It is contained, I say, because, given the fact that the Church recognizes Pius IX as canonically elected, it is absolutely certain that Pius IX is one of those who have been canonically elected. Now the universal proposition, *whosoever is canonically elected is the Supreme Pontiff*, is absolutely *de fide*. On the other hand, when any universal proposition is *de fide*, all particular propositions contained in it are at the same time and by this very fact *de fide*. Thus, for example, because this universal proposition is *de fide*—all men (except the Most Blessed Virgin) have contracted original sin—the particular propositions are also *de fide*: Caesar contracted original sin, Cicero contracted original sin, etc. Therefore the proposition *Pius IX is the Supreme Pontiff* is absolutely *de fide*, inasmuch as it is a particular proposition certainly contained in the universal proposition *de fide*, namely in this one: *Everyone canonically elected is the Supreme Pontiff and the successor of Peter in the primacy*. Nor should it be objected that it is not *de fide* but only certain that Pius IX is one of those canonically elected. For it suffices that this be certain in order that the particular proposition be contained in the universal proposition *de fide*, and consequently that it itself also be *de fide*. That Cicero existed, for example, is not *de fide*, but only historically certain; and yet this proposition is *de fide*: *Cicero contracted original sin*.

The same [point] can be proven otherwise thus: just as *de fide* is whatever the Council of Trent defined, so too is it *de fide* that this council was ecumenical. For if its ecumenicity were not *de fide*, by that very fact neither would its infallibility in defining be *de fide*. Consequently, what it defined would not be infallibly true, and a fortiori would not be *de fide*. Therefore, the ecumenicity of the Council of Trent is *de fide* and must be believed. Nevertheless, it was not expressly and formally revealed by Christ. But on the one hand it is *de fide* that any council clothed with the requisite conditions is ecumenical and infallible; and on the other hand it is certain that those conditions were not lacking to the Council of Trent, because the Supreme Pontiff or the Church acknowledged them, nor can the Supreme Pontiff or the Church err in judging which councils have possessed the conditions of ecumenicity and infallibility. Therefore, just as the ecumenicity of the Council of Trent is *de fide* and must be believed from the fact that the Supreme Pontiff or the Church acknowledged it, so too is it *de fide* and must be believed that Pius IX is the Supreme Pontiff and true successor of Peter, from the fact that the Church acknowledged him as canonically elected.

4° If anyone, however, should be unwilling to admit the proposition *Pius IX is the Supreme Pontiff* as formally of the faith, on the ground that he understands by this name only propositions expressly and formally revealed by Christ, his opinion seems to be one of those views which the Church has thus far permitted to the free disputation of the schools. But he is bound at least to admit the said proposition as a theological conclusion absolutely certain, and also pertaining implicitly to the faith, and to which internal assent is also owed under grave sin against the faith and to the detriment of salvation.

#### § 4. — Could the Church now separate the primacy from the Roman See and attach it to another see, for example, to Lyons?

1° What Benedict XIV teaches on this matter. — Thus he states, *On the Diocesan Synod*, Book II, Chapter 1, n. 1: “Since Peter fixed his See at Rome, and in it gloriously died, crowned with martyrdom, whether this occurred by divine precept or express revelation specially made by God to Peter himself, or from the will of Peter alone, although divinely inspired; thence it came to pass that the prerogative of the supreme pontificate remained so inherently attached to the Roman See, that whoever succeeds Peter in this See, necessarily succeeds Peter in the primacy over the whole Church... Although therefore it may be said in some sense that the supreme monarchy of the Church is annexed to the Roman See by merely human right, because evidently the union, connection and obligation of both had its origin from the deed of Peter, nevertheless the opinion of those does not seem able to be sustained who have asserted that the aforesaid annexation is so of human right that it can be dissolved by the Church and one separated from the other. For, it being granted that Peter established his See permanently at Rome and died governing the Roman Church, no one who is not Bishop of Rome can be called the true successor of Peter; and therefore the words of Christ the Lord can never be referred to him: *Feed my sheep* (John xxi), by which He committed the care of the universal Church to Peter and his successors. Wherefore rightly and justly Melchior Cano (*On the Theological Sources*, Book VI, Chapter iv), Gregory of Valencia (*On the Controversies of the Faith*, Book VII, Chapter xii), and not a few other theologians refute such an opinion of the few and censure it severely.”

2° What Veith thinks. — “We, he says, together with Benedict XIV deny only this: that the attachment of the primacy, made to the Roman See, can be dissolved by the Church, insofar as she is considered separately from the Pontiff. But whether this can be done by the will of the

Pontiffs themselves, if they were to desert the Roman See and choose another see to be retained perpetually, to which they would transfer the succession of Saint Peter and the primacy, *is not easy to decide*” (*de Primatu* [On the Primacy], sect. I, § 19, p. 65, Mechlin edition, 1824).

3° What Petrus Ballerinius thinks. — In refuting Febronius, who (cap. II, § 3) contends that the Church can transfer the primacy from the Roman to another Bishop, Ballerinius states as follows: “Whether this could be done by the will of the Pontiffs, if they, abandoning the Roman See, should choose another see to be retained perpetually, *is not easy to decide*... However, to the authority of the Church, if the Church be considered separately from the Supreme Pontiff, this cannot be attributed; not only because we have elsewhere refuted Febronius’s hypothesis concerning the keys immediately entrusted to the Church, but also because for whatever reason the primacy could not be transferred elsewhere, unless the Pontiff himself before his death had transferred his see with the primacy annexed to it to another place. For with his See not yet transferred, wherever he might die, whether at Milan, or at Naples, or at Paris, the Roman See would always be vacant; and he who should be elected in the place of the deceased would be not the Milanese, not the Neapolitan, not the Parisian, but the Roman Bishop and successor of Saint Peter, to whom, by the institution of Christ, which the Church cannot derogate, the primacy would have passed by right of succession” (*de Potestate ecclesiastica*, cap. VIII, § 2, p. 226, edition of Verona, 1768).

4° *What seems to be held.* — First, if the question concerns transferability *by the Roman Pontiff himself*, although the most distinguished Ballerinius considers that the question *is not easy to decide*, nevertheless we shall set forth the reasons which rather move us to decide it *in the negative*.

For in the first place, that opinion which attributes to the Roman Pontiff the power to transfer the primacy to another see rests entirely upon this hypothesis: that Christ willed the primacy to be annexed not to that see alone which Peter should have chosen, but also successively to other sees which the successors of Peter might in future designate for that purpose. For if Christ commanded Peter to establish his episcopal see at Rome, and revealed to him that all those bishops and only those bishops who should succeed in that see would be endowed with the primacy, it is plain that neither any successors of Peter, nor Peter himself, would have been free to fix the primacy in another see, but by Christ’s own institution that primacy would remain affixed to the Roman See until the end of the world. Likewise, if Christ left it free to Peter to choose whatever see he wished, but decreed that only those bishops succeeding in this see, once chosen by Peter for that purpose, would possess the primacy or supreme power over the universal Church, it is still plain that the primacy cannot be transferred to another see by any Roman Pontiff. Therefore, that power of the Roman Pontiffs to annex their supreme power to another see cannot be defended unless one simultaneously maintains the hypothesis that Christ willed the primacy to be annexed not to that see alone which He Himself, or Peter, should have chosen, but to various sees successively to which the successors of Peter might wish to annex that primacy in future. This hypothesis, moreover, seems to be one that must be rejected.

For by instituting the primacy as thus movable and transferable from one see to another, Christ would not have sufficiently provided for the security of His Church. For then it would frequently happen that secular powers would wish and demand that the primacy be transferred by the Roman Pontiff to their respective territories; and since the matter would depend upon the arbitrary decision of each individual Roman Pontiff, frauds and violence would often be



employed to obtain the desired end, and thus the government of the universal Church would be subject to disturbances and changes.

Moreover, the said hypothesis is contrary to the perpetual conviction of the Fathers and of the ages. For all ecclesiastical monuments on this matter either express or presuppose the contrary disposition of Christ, namely: that all and only the successors of Peter in the Roman See are at the same time his successors in the supreme power of governing the universal Church. But that Christ instituted the primacy as transferable from one see to another is something unheard of in all past antiquity, and which can be supported by no syllable of Sacred Scripture, by no monument of tradition. Therefore the Church would have erred throughout a long series of centuries, and indeed concerning a dogma touching the fundamental constitution of herself, and the gates of hell would have prevailed against her, which could never happen.

Moreover, in the said hypothesis, a schism and doubt concerning the legitimate head of the Church could easily come to pass. For supposing that some Roman Pontiff, according to this hypothesis, should issue a decree by which he declares the primacy severed from the Roman See and now annexed to another see, it would be called into question whether such a decree would be adverse to the divine constitution of the Church. And since it is otherwise certain that this divine constitution cannot be changed even by the Supreme Pontiff himself, there would at least be ambiguity concerning the validity of such a decree. Accordingly, upon the death of the Roman Pontiff who had thus declared the primacy transferred to another see, many would deny that the Bishop who had succeeded him in this other see is the true head of the Church, and they would maintain that the Bishop who is successor in the Roman See, notwithstanding the aforesaid decree, must be acknowledged as Supreme Pontiff. Whence, in the said hypothesis, Christ would not have sufficiently provided for a certain head of the Church; which since it cannot be said, that hypothesis must be deemed entirely false.

Add to this that it stands opposed to the common opinion of theologians, as we have seen above attested by Benedict XIV. For when they deny that it is in the power of the Church to detach the primacy from the Roman See and transfer it to another see, by the name "Church" they understand not the Church separated from the Supreme Pontiff, but the Church properly so-called, that is, together with its head. This is clear from their own reasoning. "Granted," they say, "that Peter established his see permanently at Rome, and died governing the Roman Church, no one who is not the Bishop of Rome can be called the true successor of Peter; and therefore the words of Christ the Lord *Feed my sheep* can never be referred to him." Therefore they deny that the primacy is transferable universally and in every sense; and consequently they deny that it can be transferred even by the Roman Pontiff himself.

Finally, what must especially be attended to is that the said hypothesis contradicts the express definition of the ecumenical Council of Florence. For it defined that *the Roman Pontiff holds the primacy over the whole world, and that the Roman Pontiff himself is the successor of blessed Peter... and the true vicar of Christ*. The definitions of ecumenical councils concerning dogma cannot at any time become false. Therefore it will always be true and must be firmly believed that *the Roman Bishop holds the primacy over the whole world and is the successor of blessed Peter*. Therefore this will always be true, and in every hypothesis. Therefore it will be true and must be believed, even if by the Church and even by the Roman Pontiff himself, someone other than the Roman Bishop were declared to be Peter's successor in the primacy. Or rather, since it can never happen that the Church together with the Roman Pontiff should define otherwise than



the ecumenical Council of Florence, it must be said that the aforementioned hypothesis is chimerical and utterly impossible.

Whence it must be altogether denied that the primacy can ever be torn away from the Roman See and transferred to another. And at the same time it must be denied that it can ever happen that any Roman Pontiff should dispose and decree the contrary. Hence the opinion which we are refuting seems to us worthy of rejection.

*You will object.*— It would follow that the city of Rome will necessarily remain until the end of the world. This moreover is absurd, since Rome, just like other cities, can be destroyed, and indeed even the entire Roman diocese can be overwhelmed by the waves of the sea and remain submerged. Then surely the primacy would be torn away from the Roman See.

*I respond:* For the primacy to be indivisibly annexed to the Roman See, it is not necessary that Rome or even the Roman diocese itself should always exist. It suffices indeed that there subsist *a title with true right* to govern the Roman Church, if it exists and for as long as it exists. Moreover, this title and this right would subsist even in the aforementioned case. And whosoever should succeed to this right and to this title, as the successor of Peter, would obtain the primacy over the universal Church. Certainly, if we speak of the merely possible, just as Rome can be destroyed or submerged by God's permission or disposition, so also can it be raised up again and emerge anew. In the meantime, however, the right of the Roman Pontiffs canonically succeeding one another to govern the Roman Church shall stand unchanged, as soon as it shall begin to exist again. That the primacy should remain annexed to this right is in no way contradictory. For the rest, that Rome and the Roman Church will endure until the end of the world can not only be piously believed, but right reason, arguing from moral fittingness, persuades us with moral certainty; namely, on account of that disposition of Christ the Lord by which He annexed the primacy to this see in perpetuity. Thus far concerning the transferability of the primacy by the Roman Pontiff himself.

Secondly, if it be a question of transferability by the Church insofar as *separated from* the Supreme Pontiff, it is plain that this must be rejected all the more forcefully. For besides the reasons set forth above, it would follow that the head of the Church depends upon the members and is subject to them, which is heretical.