

Tractatus Theologici, Scholastici & Morales, De Virtutibus Fide, Spe, Et Charitate (*Theological, Scholastic and Moral Treatises On the Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity*)

by **Franciscus de Oviedo Madritanus (Francis of Oviedo, S.J.), 1651**

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Tractatus Primus, Controversia IV. Punctum VII.

Whether a universal revelation suffices for believing by an act of faith singular things evidently contained in the universal? Where it is asked whether it is a matter of faith that this particular Pope is Pope.

76 That a universal revelation suffices for believing singular things evidently contained under it is altogether certain among all theologians. Let this be an example: God reveals that every man proceeding from Adam contracts original sin; it is evident that Peter is a man proceeding from Adam, from which it follows that it is a matter of faith that Peter contracts original sin, because there is no prudent reason why we should except him from original sin. Therefore, by divine faith we believe that Peter contracts original sin, because this object has been revealed immediately in itself by a universal revelation, which is immediate concerning all particulars and concerning each one of them, although not concerning each one adequately, but inadequately, because not one singular alone, but all are contained in the revelation. For it is the same to say “every man contracts original sin” as to say “Peter contracts original sin, John contracts original sin,” etc., although in the universal revelation these individuals are not signified so distinctly, but confusedly on the part of the subject *every man*.

77 Universal or confused revelation and mediate or remote revelation are also distinguished from one another in that universal or confused revelation immediately attains the same object as singular and distinct revelation, and is distinguished from the latter only according to the mode of conceiving. Mediate revelation, however, does not attain the same object as immediate revelation; for immediate revelation attains the object in itself, whereas mediate revelation does not attain it in itself, but in something that is inferred from it. For example, when it is revealed that Christ is man, the revelation is terminated at those things which substantially constitute man,

and from the fact that it is terminated at these things, it is called a mediate revelation of all those things which are inferred from them through true causality. Thus it is said that from the fact that it has been revealed that Christ is man, it has been mediately revealed that He is risible [capable of laughter]. I posit now, for the sake of explaining the matter, that risibility is a property physically distinct from humanity, or any distinct accident naturally inseparable from humanity—in place of risibility substitute this. But this notion of being mediately revealed is not in reality the same as being revealed, but rather is necessarily inferred from that which has been revealed.

78 I have said “mediately revealed” concerning those things which are inferred by true causality from what is immediately revealed: for those things which are only inferred logically and are physically identified with each other are not called mediately but immediately revealed, when one of them has been revealed. Thus from the fact that it is revealed that Christ is a man, it is immediately revealed that He is a rational animal and consists of body and soul, because physically and really to be a man, to be a rational animal, to be consisting of body and soul, are entirely the same, and are only distinguished by diverse modes of signifying; wherefore all these things stand with the same certitude of faith. Moreover, the reason why those things must be believed with the same faith which are believed confusedly as parts of a whole, or as singulars in relation to a universal, as things revealed distinctly and expressly, is that this distinction between the confused and the distinct does not hold on the part of the revealed object, but only on the part of the mode of conceiving them—indeed, not on the part of the mode by which God the Revealer conceives them, but by which we apprehend such objects, because God apprehends nothing confusedly.

79 From these points you may infer that whenever a conclusion is drawn from one revealed premise and another known by the light of nature, the conclusion is a matter of faith, provided that the revealed premise confusedly contains the object of the premise known by the light of nature, as in this syllogism: Every man descending from Adam contracts original sin; Peter is a man descending from Adam; therefore Peter contracts original sin. The object of this conclusion is a matter of faith, because the minor premise is confusedly contained in the major, not mediately but immediately, for when it is said that every man descending from Adam contracts original sin, it is the same as saying: Peter descending from Adam contracts original sin; John descending from Adam contracts it, etc. For the minor premise of the aforesaid syllogism only makes explicit that its object is contained in the subject of the major premise, by which reasoning it applies to it the revelation affecting the object of the major proposition. From this it is established that the object of the minor premise is revealed, and becomes a proximate and expedited object for terminating an act of faith. Thus I explained controversy 10 of the Logic, point 3, from Father [Adam] Tanner cited there, in the first part, which he also teaches here in disputation 1, question 1, doubt 3. The same is taught by [Francisco] Suárez, disputation 3, section 11, number 5; [Gregorio de] Valencia, disputation 1, question 1, point 2; both [Gaspar and Diego] Hurtado [de Mendoza]; the Complutenses, disputation 2, difficulty 4; the Salmanticenses, disputation 11, section 2; [Gabriel] Vázquez, first part, disputation 5, chapter 3, and disputation 135, number 6, where he says that a singular proposition is not inferred from a universal, but is contained in it. The same is handed down by [Petrus] Aureolus, [Duns] Scotus, [the Carmelites of] Salamanca, and [Andrés de] Vega as cited by [Diego] Puente Hurtado, and by all the Doctors passim.

80 Therefore, since on account of universal revelation a particular thing explicated through its determinate knowledge is believed by an act of faith, then the act of faith is not said to depend upon two premises, one revealed and the other not revealed; rather, through a particular proposition the subject of revelation is explicated and distinctly known, and is believed by a distinct act of faith. For we hold from faith that *every human being* (the Most Blessed Virgin Mother of God must always be excepted) contracted original sin; afterwards when we say: *Peter is a human being*, the subject of the major universal is explicated and distinguished, and we know that Peter is contained in that universal, and therefore we believe concerning Peter by an act of faith what we enunciate concerning every human being in the major premise. Nor is it necessary for this that we believe by faith that this individual is a human being, in order that we believe by the same faith that he contracted sin; rather it suffices that he be evidently known to be a human being, because, as Hurtado rightly notes in disputation 11, §20, the subject concerning which something is revealed is presupposed as known by the light of nature, and afterwards it is believed by an act of faith that the revealed predicate pertains to it.

81 But if anyone should falsely judge by physical evidence that some individual is a man because he perceived in that individual all the accidents of man, he could not believe by an act of faith that it had contracted original sin—not because the application was lacking (for this was a prudent basis for believing), but because the formal object of faith was lacking, which Puentius Hurtado rightly noted in the same place. Therefore, he would consider that man to be bound to believe by an act of faith that the individual, which he judged to be a man, had contracted original sin; wherefore, if he were to assert the opposite, he would sin from an erroneous conscience.

82 The aforementioned Valentia held that this application of revelation through a naturally known premise only occurs when the revealed premise is universal and the naturally known premise is particular, as happens in the syllogism adduced: *every man descending from Adam*, etc. However, Suárez rightly noted in the same place that sometimes a conclusion of faith is also inferred from a major premise known by the light of nature and a minor premise revealed, as in this syllogism: *every man consists of body and soul; Christ is man: therefore Christ consists of body and soul*. The consequent of this was revealed when the object of the minor premise was revealed. Nevertheless, the major proposition explains this, by which is shown the identity between this—that is, being man—and this—that is, consisting of body and soul—and consequently applies the revelation expressly and distinctly to this object, *Christ consists of body and soul*, and renders it to us proximately credible by an act of faith.

83 It is also appropriate to note that in all syllogisms whose conclusion we say is a matter of faith only, we intend that the object of the conclusion can be believed by reason of revelation, which formal reasoning applies or demonstrates, but not that the formal conclusion itself, as such, is an act of faith, because a formal conclusion deduced according to the form of a syllogism is never an act of faith, since faith is not discursive. Cardinal de Lugo defends this position in disputation 1, section 13, §3.

84 A difficulty of the gravest importance arises in this matter, namely whether by virtue of universal revelations—by which it is revealed that every man legitimately elected as the lawful Pontiff of the Church is Peter's successor in office and authority and the true Pope, and that every Council legitimately assembled possesses infallible authority and is assisted by the Holy Spirit in matters pertaining to the Church—it is also revealed that this particular Pope, for

example Innocent X, is the true Pope, and that this particular Council, for example the Council of Trent, is legitimate and treated the affairs of the Church and defined truths pertaining to the faith with the assistance of the Holy Spirit. The question does not concern a Pontiff and Council not yet received by the Church, concerning which it is still disputed whether the recent election and assembly were legitimate, but rather concerns a Pontiff and Council which the universal Church has received and which peacefully possess authority among the faithful.

85 In favor of the negative opinion stand Torquemada, book 4 of the *Summa*, §. 2, chapter 9; Albertus Pighius in *De agnoscendis assertionibus*, question 5; Cajetan (Thomas de Vio), 2a 2ae, question 1, article 3, in the response to the 4th objection; Melchior Cano, book *De locis theologicis*, final chapter; Andrés de Vega in *De Tridentino*, chapter 39; Antonio de Córdoba, book 1, question 17; Alfonso de Castro, book 1, *Contra haereses*, chapter 9; Domingo Báñez, 2a 2ae, question 1, article 10, doubt 2, response to the 2nd objection, where he affirms that this particular Pontiff being the true Pope is certain only with moral certainty. The same opinion was taught by Diego de Arce, Theological Reader, 2a 2ae, question 1, article 10; Master Mancio (de Corpus Christi), *Quaestio de autoritate Papae*, response to the 3rd objection. The same is presupposed there by our most learned Deza, the first public reader of Theology in this Complutensian college, doubt 1, *De potestate Pontificis*, just before the solution of the arguments, where he says that it could be evident to someone that this particular Pontiff is not the true Pope, because he baptized him without the intention. The same conclusion was formerly defended by Father Gaspar Hurtado, at that time a colleague of Don Ildefonso in this University of the Greatest College, in the solemn disputations customarily held in the university for the conferral of the doctoral degree. To this conclusion subscribed in their official capacity Doctor Gregory de la Cámara, Dean of this university, and Doctor Don Álvaro de Villegas, regent of the evening chair of Theology. Afterward Father Gabriel Vázquez and Father Francisco de Torres subscribed. Moreover, Cardinal Bellarmine, tome 1, treatise *De Conciliorum autoritate*, chapter 9, in response to the final objection, says that we hold the Council of Nicaea and Ephesus to have been legitimately convoked only by natural evidence or human faith, and that this suffices for what was defined by them to be held as matters of faith. Father Gregorio de Valencia, 2a 2ae, disputation 1, question 1, point 7, in the 5th small question, §. 39, admits as probable that someone not baptized, or incapable by divine law, could be elected Supreme Pontiff.

86 That it is a matter of faith that this particular Pope is the true Pope, and that this particular Council received without hesitation by the entire Church—for example, the Council of Trent—is a true Council, is defended by all the Doctors of this age: no one has dared to assert the opposite since the time of Clement VIII, when this matter was gravely controverted on the occasion of Father Gaspar Hurtado, who at that time, as a colleague of Don Ildefonso, defended the opposing opinion. For this reason, both he and others who subscribed to the same opinion were summoned to Rome by Clement VIII, although the matter was settled in Spain, as Hurtado himself relates in disputation 11, difficulty 13. Therefore, those affirming this position are: Cardinal de Lugo, disputation 1, section 3, §5, number 316; Suárez, disputation 5, section 8, number 1, and disputation 10, section 5; Tanner, disputation 1, question 1, doubt 5, number 146; Castro Palao, tome 1, treatise 4, point 5, §2; Puente Hurtado, disputation 11, section 3, and disputation 37, throughout. Gregory Hurtado also considers this probable in disputation 11, difficulty 13. Salmerón, Albertinus, Valencia, and Lorca are cited by Suárez in the aforementioned place, §disputation, and by Palao; Bonacina, Aragon, Luis de León, Master Guevara, and Doctor Andreas Marmol. Also cited by Báñez and others are certain individuals asserting that it is not a

matter of faith that this particular Pontiff is the Pontiff until he defines something or celebrates the canonization of some saint; but after he has performed one of these acts, it is then a matter of faith that this particular Pontiff is the Pontiff.

87 Let the conclusion be: in order that what the Pontiff defines may be of the faith and believed by faith, it is not necessary to believe by faith, or for it to be of the faith, that this particular individual Pontiff is the Pontiff. Thus expressly Bellarmine, cited above, and Báñez, who responds to the argument by which it is attempted to prove from his own opinion that those things which are defined by Pontiffs or Councils are not to be believed by faith; and all authors who deny that it is of the faith that this particular individual Pontiff is the true Pontiff, or that this particular individual Council is a true Council—for these men will never admit that those things which have been defined by Trent and by Innocent X are not of the faith, which could not be said without error in the faith. I am moved to this conclusion because the testimony of the Pontiff or of a Council is not the formal reason for believing, but rather the application of the testimony of God, or of a revelation otherwise made by God, which is contained in Scripture or established by tradition. For those things which the Pontiff or Councils define as to be believed by faith were otherwise already revealed, and they then begin to be of the faith—not because they are then revealed for the first time, but because the revelation is sufficiently and efficaciously applied by a certain infallible rule; once this application is made, we are bound to believe the defined object on account of the definition as a condition, and on account of the revelation otherwise made by God as the formal reason. But that which is not the formal reason for believing, but only a condition, ought not to be believed by divine faith. That which is not the formal object of faith, but only a condition, need not necessarily be believed by an act of faith, but it suffices that it be otherwise prudently judged—so runs the common opinion of the Doctors. That the testimony of the Pontiff is not the formal reason for believing by an act of faith is taught by Molina in the first part, question 1, article 2, disputations 1 and 2, where he says that the Pontiff does not make of the faith those things which previously were not revealed and for which there was not in reality a sufficient motive that they be believed by an act of faith, but only applies the motive which previously lay hidden, or was not so sufficiently applied that we could not prudently doubt its existence. Concerning this I shall speak where I treat of the authority of the Church. Therefore, in order that we may believe by an act of faith those things which are defined by a Pontiff admitted throughout the whole Church, it suffices that the divine revelation be applied—which revelation is the motive for believing—by a Pontiff whom it is established with moral certainty and most prudent judgment to be the true Pontiff, even if it were not certain with the certitude of faith, because nowhere would it have been revealed that such a Pontiff was legitimately elected.

88 Against the same conclusion, these same authors argue thus: if it were not a matter of faith that this particular Pontiff is the Pontiff, we could doubt whether he is the true Pontiff; but by the very fact that we could doubt whether he is the true Pontiff, it would also be permissible to doubt whether the objects defined by him were true, or whether his definitions had any value whatsoever: therefore we would not be bound to believe the objects defined by him. I respond that this is an absurd consequence. We do not believe this by an act of Theological faith: therefore we can prudently doubt concerning it. For even though revelation, which is the object of faith, is that which most excludes grounds for doubting, there are many other things concerning which we cannot prudently doubt, just as at this moment I cannot doubt that Naples exists, even though I have never seen this city, nor do I know it to have been revealed that such a city exists. But all those things which cannot prudently be doubted, and which must otherwise be

believed in order to elicit an act of Theological faith, even though they are not believed by a similar act, fall under the same precept under which falls the act of Theological faith, to which their assent is subservient. The reason is that a power perceiving some object indirectly perceives all things that are necessary to it. For this reason, all natural acts that are necessarily presupposed for an act of Theological faith fall under the same precept by which we are bound to a formal act of Theological faith, even though they are not formally Theological. Thus in this matter, even though it were not a matter of faith that this particular man is the Pontiff, because nevertheless this cannot be prudently doubted by anyone, but all must judge him to be the true Pontiff, and since so judging is necessary lest one deny that his definitions are to be believed by an act of faith, by the same precept by which we are bound to believe by an act of faith the object defined by the Pope as an article of faith, we are bound to judge that he is the true Pope, at least by a natural act, if a supernatural motive does not subsist for judging this by an act of faith.

89 Puente Hurt[ado] objects in disputation 37, section 2, that the testimony of the Pope is the formal reason for believing, and that God speaks through the medium of the true Pope, just as He spoke through the medium of Isaiah and the other Prophets; for which reason He does not speak through the medium of a Pope who is not true, but falsely supposed [to be Pope], and thus his definitions cannot be believed with divine faith. I respond that the Pope does not receive a new revelation from God when he defines an object to be believed by faith, but only applies a preexisting revelation. I shall treat this matter more broadly and in a dedicated manner in point 9.

90 Notwithstanding these things, I stand by the opinion affirming that this particular man, for example Innocent X, is the true Pope, and that this particular Council, for example the Council of Trent, are objects to be believed with divine faith. The reason is that, although this is not necessary for believing with divine faith the objects defined by the Pontiff or Council, according to this opinion the infallibility of definitions is more sincerely defended and more clearly explained, especially in the opinion of those who assert that God speaks through the medium of the Pope defining, just as He spoke through the medium of the other Prophets. Moreover, this opinion is more pleasing to the most holy See, which it shows greater reverence than does the opposing view, and it is more suitable for refuting the errors of heretics who think unworthily concerning the supreme dignity of the Pontiff.

91 Moreover, if it were not a matter of faith that this particular man is the true Pope, nor a matter of faith that his predecessor was such, and thus concerning the entire past succession of Pontiffs it were not a matter of faith that they were legitimate Popes, then the whole certainty of the true Church would collapse, for if the Pontiffs were not legitimate, neither would the Bishops and Priests be legitimate. By this reasoning heretics argue, contending that at least from the time of Urban the legitimate succession of Bishops failed. Furthermore, it would not be a matter of faith that there exists a true Church, which depends entirely upon one head, without whom Councils would have no validity. For those celebrated under a fictitious, or non-legitimate, Pontiff would not be legitimate. Additionally, in the Councils—especially in the Bull of Martin V at the Council of Constance—it is laid down that the very first thing to be required of heretics who wish to be reconciled to the Catholic Church is that they believe that the Pope canonically elected, whoever he may be at the time, his name being expressly stated, is the successor of Peter and possesses supreme power in the Church: therefore, according to the mind of the Councils, and especially of Martin V in the aforesaid Bull, this must be believed as a matter of faith. Furthermore, the councils do not distinguish between the Pontiff in general and this particular Pontiff who now sits with the consent of the whole Church, but they embrace him with the same

veneration and faith: thus the Council of Chalcedon received by name Pope Leo [I], the Second Synod [received] Agatho, the [Council of] Milevis [received] Innocent III, and so on concerning the rest.

92 I hold, moreover, that by the very fact that this particular Pope has been received by the whole Church, it must be believed with the certitude of faith that he is a true Pontiff, even before he defines anything. The reason is that the entire motive for believing this truth subsists prior to any definition, for before this there exists the universal revelation for all Popes legitimately elected, and there is moral evidence that this particular Pope, having been received by the whole Church, is contained in the universal revelation, or is one of those for whom the revelation was made, which suffices for an act of faith.

To understand this doctrine, it is necessary to distinguish two things which almost everyone confounds; namely, that it is one thing for this man to be legitimately elected to the Pontificate, and another thing to be the true Pontiff. The first signifies being capable of passive election, and being elected by those in whose hands lies the authority to elect, with all the requisites for the election. The second is to possess the Pontifical authority given by God, the election being presupposed, and the special assistance of the Holy Spirit. From these considerations, therefore, the first is morally evident by reason of the testimony of the Church, yet it is not revealed, nor is it necessary to believe it by divine faith; but after it is believed on account of the moral evidence arising from the consent of the whole Church and the special assistance of God toward His Church, it is then believed by an assent of faith that he is the true Pope, because it has been revealed that everyone legitimately elected is the true Pope. Whence the prior assent explicates the subject of the universal revelation, and shows that this man is contained in such a subject; just as when I believe that Peter contracted original sin, because it has been revealed that everyone descending from Adam contracts it, I do not believe by divine faith that Peter is a man and descended from Adam, but this is presupposed as already prejudged for the assent of faith, as I was saying following the opinion of Hurtado de Mendoza. Thus when I believe that Innocent X, legitimately elected, is the true Pope; for this act of believing it is presupposed as prejudged that he is legitimately elected, and concerning that legitimately elected person, as concerning a subject known by moral evidence, through an act of faith I declare him to be the true Pope. I am also bound by the precept of faith to the act by which I judge him to be legitimately elected, and if this is not an act of faith, it is because this object is evidently credible and certain by moral evidence, and otherwise such an act is required for the assent of faith. For faith, just as any other virtue, obliges not only to its own proper acts, but to all those acts which are prerequisite to them.

94 I add, moreover, that a definition handed down by the Pontiff can serve to enable me to believe by an act of faith that this man defining for the whole Church is the true Pontiff, because through such a definition I have a new foundation upon which to persuade myself that he is included in the number of those for whom the universal revelation has been made, since it cannot be believed of divine providence that it would permit a false Pontiff to define anything for the whole Church with the consent of the universal Church. Whence by the very fact that I see the Pontiff defining something—before I believe the definition by an act of faith—I have from the definition itself a certain application that is morally certain, and together with other foundations morally evident, of the universal revelation made for all legitimately elected [Pontiffs] to this man; this application having been posited as a condition, I believe by an act of faith that he is the

legitimate Pontiff on account of the Church's revelation, and afterwards I believe the very object defined by an act of faith, or by theological reasoning according to the quality of the definition.

95 From this doctrine one easily responds to Puente Hurtado, who asserts that a definition does not serve to make one believe that this particular Pope is the true Pope, because he who doubts the legitimacy of the Pontiff will also be able to doubt the legitimacy of the definition issued by him, and it is necessary first to acknowledge that this Pontiff is legitimate, and afterwards to assent to his definition as certain and infallible. I set aside [the fact] that a definition resting on a prior revelation and proposed by the Pontiff would be legitimate, even if the Pontiff were only invincibly considered to be such, and not the true Pope. I respond, therefore, that the definition itself, before it is considered legitimate by the very fact that it is issued, provides a foundation for believing that this particular Pontiff is legitimate; and once this is believed, one must afterwards believe in his definition as legitimate. Whence it could happen that if someone did not have sufficient foundation for believing that this man is the true Pope, because the universal revelation was not sufficiently applied to him in regard to this man, after he saw him define something for the whole Church with its consent, he would have sufficient foundation for believing that the Pontiff making the definition is the true Pope, and [would have] sufficient application of the universal revelation in regard to this Pontiff; and once this application is established, he could and would be bound to believe [him to be] the true Pope.

96 Moreover, it is a matter of faith that the Church consists of members which truly are members of the Church, for since it is of faith that there exists one true Church, it must be of faith that there exist true members of that Church in whatsoever the nature of membership consists: therefore it is also of faith that the Church consists of a true head, for the Church is no less individuated and composed from its head than from its members, and is always understood by reference to one head even when the supreme see is vacant: therefore when, by the consensus of all the faithful, some head is placed over it, it must be held by faith that this is the true head. The same thing which we have said concerning this particular Pope must be understood concerning this particular Council. For the Doctors hold the same view concerning both for the same reason.

97 You will object: even if it has been revealed that everyone legitimately elected is a true Pope, it is not established that this man, who now presides over the Church, has been legitimately elected, because concerning this in particular there is no revelation, nor is it evident to us that he is capable of the pontifical dignity, because it is not established whether he was ritually baptized, nor can there be certainty concerning the intention of the one baptizing. Similarly it is not established that the Fathers of the Council are legitimate Bishops ritually baptized and ordained: therefore it cannot be established with the certitude of faith that the Council celebrated by them is legitimate.

98 I respond that it has been revealed that this Pontiff, having been received by the entire Church in this number, is a legitimate Pontiff—not by any singular revelation specially given for him individually, but by universal revelation made for all. This is established with moral certitude and evidence from the fact that he has been peacefully received by the entire Church. From this it becomes morally evident that he is baptized, and in every respect capable of the pontifical dignity, and legitimately elected, and consequently that he is comprehended by the universal revelation on account of which we believe with divine faith that he is the true Pope. For although perhaps it may not be contradictory for a man otherwise incapable to be elected Pontiff, it is contradictory for such a one to be peacefully received by the entire Church: for from the ordinary

and special providence of God it must be believed that the election of a person incapable of the pontifical dignity would be impeded, and granted that an incapable person were elected, it must be believed that the defect would be manifested before he is peacefully received by the universal Church. For if, on account of the special assistance of the Holy Spirit, it is contradictory for a true Pontiff to define something false, much better from the same principle will it be contradictory for the entire Church to acknowledge an illegitimate Pontiff as true. What is reported concerning John VIII—namely, that she was a woman—is a fable and a fiction of heretics. Let one read Palao [Translator's note: likely Francisco Palao], tome 1, tract 4, disputation 1, point 5, §2, n. 7, where he solidly proves this from the distinguished testimony of Leo IX. It must be added that impediments introduced by human law to the pontifical dignity are removed, or dispensed by the Church if any such exist in him who is assumed to the supreme Pontificate by election, or by the very fact that he is elected. For in a matter of such great moment, it is the intention of the Church to celebrate it in the best way possible, so that the common good and the Church may be provided for.

99 You will object secondly: The Church erred in thinking that the marriages of eunuchs were legitimate, until she was purged of this error by Sixtus V through a definitive pronouncement made on this matter: therefore in the same manner she could err in judging that this particular Pope is legitimate: therefore the common consensus of the Church does not make it morally evident that this particular Pope is contained in the universal revelation. I respond: The Church never positively declared that the marriages of eunuchs were legitimate, but rather by passing over them in silence she permitted them, in which there was no error: afterwards, however, when this question was called to formal examination, the Church discerned the truth. But in regard to the Pope, the Church conducts herself positively, and by the very election and by the common reception of all the faithful she testifies that he is the true Pope.

100 You will object thirdly: a legitimate Pontiff can fall into heresy, even external heresy, though not public heresy, but heresy manifested to one or another person; by committing this crime he would fall from his dignity and would not be a true Pontiff. Nevertheless, such a one would commonly be regarded by the whole Church in the same way as before he fell into heresy. Therefore, the whole Church can err by rendering the worship due to a true Pontiff to a man who is not in fact a true Pontiff. Therefore, its testimony is not a sufficient application of universal revelation, so that by virtue of it we might believe by an act of faith that this particular man is the true Pontiff. Furthermore, since it cannot be certainly known to us that the Pontiff has not defected from the faith, it cannot be known to us with the certitude of faith that he is the legitimate Pontiff. I respond that it is true that the Pontiff can fall into heresy, as Báñez, Cajetan, Driedo, Cano, Soto, Córdoba, Aragon, and Valentia hold according to the common opinion, cited by Palao above, who reports weighty historical accounts from which it is established that Victor V, Marcellinus, Liberius, Honorius, and Anastasius II fell into heresy. Nevertheless, one who has thus fallen into heresy does not fall from his dignity, but retains it and remains the true Pontiff until the crime of heresy committed by him is declared by the Church. So hold Báñez, Cajetan, Soto, Cano, Córdoba, and Valentia, cited by the same Palao, whom he himself follows in that place.

101 You will object 4. It has sometimes happened in the Church that certain men were considered true Pontiffs who were not such: therefore the Church can err in proposing who is the true Pontiff. Nor is it certain by faith that he whom the Church universally regards as such is the legitimate Pontiff. I respond that all schisms frequently arise before the Pontiff has been received

as such by the universal Church, and never after the entire Church has admitted a man elected to the pontifical dignity as the true Pontiff, and Christian Princes and the entire commonwealth of Catholics have without any hesitation rendered obedience to someone as the true Pontiff, has there arisen a prudent reason for doubting concerning his legitimate dignity.

101 From this doctrine I infer that, in order to believe with that infallibility with which things defined by a legitimate council ought to be believed, it suffices for this council to be legitimate that it be known beforehand with natural certitude that is morally certain and evident that the council is legitimate, and afterwards that this very fact be defined by the council itself, because—supposing as a condition a judgment that is morally certain and evident concerning the legitimation of the council—afterwards all things revealed by the council can be believed with that degree of certitude under which they are defined. Moreover, since one of the things defined is the very legitimation of the council, this must be believed by the intervening authority of the council, just as the other things defined by the same council.

103 You will object 5. It cannot be morally evident that all the Bishops who constitute a council of this number are baptized, are not heretics, and possess the other requisites of this kind necessary for them to be legitimate ministers of the council: therefore there cannot be a sufficient application of the universal revelation with respect to this particular council, such that it may be believed by an act of faith to be legitimate. I respond that it is morally certain and evident that the greater part of the Fathers of the council are legitimate ministers thereof, are baptized, validly ordained, and possess all the requisites so as validly to take part in the council. For it is morally impossible in the lands of Catholics, where religion flourishes, that the greater part of the Bishops should not be legitimate, or should labor under some diriment impediment preventing them from being legitimate councilors, in such a way that this would be hidden from all: for it is morally repugnant that a false religion striking the mind should not break forth externally, and that from the evil fruits which evil trees always produce, these should not be recognized. I pass over the fact that Bellarmine [Robert Bellarmine] in tome 1, book 2, *De Conciliorum Autoritate*, said that for the authority of a council it suffices that those convene who externally govern the Church, even though they be not baptized or be heretics. Nor do I disapprove this opinion on the ground that it seems harsh to wish that God should govern His Church through wicked ministers, because this reasoning efficaciously persuades me that God will never permit heretics or the unbaptized to be present at a council of Catholics with these vices concealed. But that, in the case where He should permit it, the council would be valid, exalts rather than diminishes God's providence toward His Church, because it would be better for the Church that a council celebrated by heretics be valid, since then it would pertain to God's providence to prevent any false dogma from being defined in the council, and through wicked ministers to teach His Church true doctrine, according to that passage in *Matthew 23*: "The scribes have sat upon the chair of Moses: all things therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do, etc.," than that some invalid council should be celebrated in it without the assistance of the Holy Spirit, which would commonly be judged throughout the whole Church to be true and legitimate.

104 I have said these things not with the intention of defining the matter, for it is not necessary for our question; it will suffice to assert that it morally involves the greater part of the Fathers who assist at the council not being its legitimate ministers or being heretics, or not being baptized. That heretics, whose crime has not been declared by the Church, would be legitimate ministers of the council in the case that they should assist, can be argued, because a Bishop who falls into heresy does not fall from his dignity, nor does he fall from episcopal jurisdiction as

long as he is deprived of it by the Church, or at least his crime is declared, as we were saying a little earlier concerning the Supreme Pontiff. That the unbaptized would be legitimate ministers of the council is more difficult, because these do not belong to the Church, nor are they truly Bishops, but fictitiously and apparently: therefore I believe these to be illegitimate ministers, and it is more certain to me that God will never permit either these or heretics to be present at a council which the Church of Catholics invincibly judges to be legitimate, especially in such a number that on account of their illegitimacy the council could turn out to be illegitimate.

105 You will object 6. It is not a matter of faith that Christ is present under the species of this particular host—a teaching advanced by Suárez, tome 3, *In Tertiam Partem*, disputation 65, section 2, and by Vásquez, *Prima Secundae*, disputation 201, number 49, who gravely censures Cajetan for asserting the opposite—nor that this infant whom we see baptized is in grace, nor that grace is received by this man approaching the sacrament of penance, even though there are universal revelations by which it has been revealed that Christ is under the species of any host rightly and properly consecrated, and that everyone approaching with due disposition to the sacrament receives grace: therefore, just as these universal revelations cannot be applied to these designated individuals so that they may be believed by an act of faith, so neither can the universal revelation by which it is handed down that all legitimately elected to the Supreme Pontificate are truly successors of Peter and true Popes be applied to this particular Pontiff accepted by the Church.

106 I respond that the reasoning is different, because it is not morally evident to that degree by which the evidence of credibility is required for an act of faith that this host has been duly consecrated by a legitimate minister; for there is no testimony of the universal Church which would persuade this, as there is to persuade that this particular Pontiff has been legitimately elected. Say the same, with even greater right, concerning this man approaching the sacrament of penance, since neither can it be evidently established to him that he approaches with the required disposition. Similarly, it cannot be evidently established to anyone with the aforementioned evidence that one baptizing an infant has the intention of baptizing him. Except, however, the one who baptizes an infant, in whom no disposition is required for receiving the grace of baptism; for such a one baptizing can evidently know that he has the intention of baptizing the child, and since no special quality is required on the part of the minister baptizing, nor any disposition on the part of the infant being baptized, he who evidently knows that he has baptized a child with the intention [of doing so] has sufficient application of the universal revelation by which it has been revealed that every one legitimately baptized receives grace, with respect to this child, and therefore he can believe with divine faith that that child has received grace and remains in it throughout the entire time that precedes the use of reason, in which no one loses grace, because this is not lost except through sin freely committed. So holds Tanner, q.1, dub.3, n.71.