

Fr. Perozich comments —

As a Catholic I am loyal to Jesus, to the Church, to the office of the papacy. I look to all to guide me in right paths to eternal life. I resent attempts at seduction to be used for another's purposes. I resent ambiguity as a tool toward that seduction.

A Catholic should get the truth always from Jesus, from the Church in its clergy, from Scripture and Tradition, in the liturgy, in the moral teaching of Jesus, not someone's personal adaptation of faith and morals to the "sign of the times".

Studied ambiguities are statements that sound truthful, but have enough trajectory to lead me away from truth. When documents of men allow a different interpretation from the Word, I get confused and thrown off course. Douglas Farrow illustrates this below.

I respect the pope, the bishops. Lately I feel confusion from some statements from many of them. Farrow shows me why. While his article might be dismissed as a conspiracy theory by some, it shined a light on the signs of the times for me.

The bold and italics are my own.

At the end of the article is the Alta Vendita from the Freemasons which shows a movement to unseat Jesus as Savior, and how many of us Catholics have been seduced, even those higher up in the church.

I will not cast aspersions or name names. That would be for a reader to understand for himself.

From the article I gather:

- There never will be a united peaceful world before Jesus comes*
- Conflict is part of life for the Christian in converting the world*
- No triumph over the world will come in our lifetime*
- The church of God will be undermined by deploying the same greed, hubris, self-deception, betrayal, and violence*
- Some in the church see an age of progress and change which will continue until the end.*
- They rail against a rigid and stultifying Church that insists on clinging to outmoded concepts of revelation, such as that found in Matthew 11:27, a Church that will not sacrifice itself to the new and universal paths of Spirit or Geist*
- They welcome syncretistic developments that threaten to turn the bedrock of the Christian confession into loose shale.*

- *Others suppress the truth in unrighteousness and turn the gospel into lawlessness*
- *Some church leaders are syncretistic: all are children of God and we must adapt the church to this*
- *The faithful are convinced that it belongs to the Church to give suffering witness for Christ to the age, inviting all to acknowledge his lordship and submit themselves to him in obedient love. They take their cue from Ad gentes -which is to say, from Matthew 28- rather than from the ambiguous Gaudium with its hint of anonymous Christianity.*
- *Some aren't interested in teaching men of every nation to observe all that Jesus commanded. In his place must be put someone as presentable to the Grand Mufti as to the Masons, to the devotees of Pachamama as to the grandees of the European Union.*
- *The faithful know that the Church has no other business than to testify to Jesus as the Lord of history, who will come in glory to judge the living and the dead.*
- *Failure in the continuity of the evangelization of John Paul II and Benedict XVI The Catholic Church has in consequence been reduced, or so it would appear, to salvaging a crumbling liberal Protestant discourse about the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man by way of a pseudo-Catholic concern with inculturation—most recently, to baptizing animistic religion and propping up an Amazonian fertility goddess, just as in the decaying Anglosphere it is slowly making its peace with the gay gods of infertility. It has been reduced to propping up its own relevance as a “dialogue partner” to the world through whatever opportunity the age affords it.*
- *their witness, like Leo's, has not been received in large tracts of the Church and is no longer being taught even in Rome.*
- *Men who fit Paul's pejorative description of the pagans in Romans 1 are now being appointed, protected, and promoted in Rome.*
- *The church is Christo - centric, not papal - centric What is the Bishop of Rome, as the vicar of Peter and so of Christ, but one charged by Christ to persist in making the good confession, to safeguard the sacraments, to exercise a ministry of unity and an extraordinary discipline where ordinary discipline fails? And why,*

though the gospel itself is now in grave peril, is there this deadly paralysis in the Church that is preventing a proper response? Why indeed, if not that the Catholic Church, even while its religious institutions and a good many of its prelates have been marching to the neo-Arian tune of decadent late Protestantism, has through its papocentrism become the very caricature of itself that early Protestantism drew for it? That is not the only reason, to be sure. But papocentrism has now left the Church vulnerable to those who wish either to reform it “irreformably” or to destroy it altogether.

- *men are divinely punished by the very gifts they abuse. Does that not include the gift of the papacy? Papocentrism must be purged if the Church itself is to be purged and restored to health by the gospel.*
- *Yet the Church will not fail, because it is grounded in Jesus Christ himself.*

READING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

[Douglas Farrow](#)

The Church,” says [Gaudium et spes](#), “has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel.” A few paragraphs later, that duty is parsed in a positive way. The Church, we are told, “labors to decipher *authentic signs of God's presence and purpose* in the happenings, needs and desires in which this People has a part along with other men of our age” (emphasis added). As Aidan Nichols puts it in [Conciliar Octet](#), it labors to discern “God speaking through secular events.”

This was the Council’s most ambiguous document, and the storm of controversy over its ambiguity would likely have proved fatal to it but for the

sea anchor dropped in the nick of time at §22, reminding us that **the mystery of man and of human history is disclosed only in the crucified and resurrected Christ**. Even that, however, was not sufficient to prevent the post-conciliar Church from being blown off course by appeals to supposed signs of God's presence that owed far more to the optimism of John XXIII in [*Pacem in terris*](#) than to the warnings of Jesus in Matthew 16 or 24. Harbingers of judgment, of the coming of Jesus and the close of the age, were not much in vogue. A new openness to the world was in vogue. Just how open, we have lately begun to see in that [*soi-disant*](#) sign of the times, the Pan-Amazonian Synod.

We need to return to Jesus, mustering the courage to read the signs of the times as he taught us to. We need to recover our sense of the conflict between the Church and the world, the same conflict that took our Lord along the *via crucis*. We need to grasp not only the signs of the times but the sign of the cross, not forgetting this basic principle: that the relation between Jesus and Israel is reproduced, *mutatis mutandis*, in the relation between the Church and the Gentile world. As with Jesus in Jerusalem, so also with the Church; the *via crucis* must be her way also. That is the framing we need if we really wish to understand our situation.

In the dying days of the Hasmonaean regime, with its faux royal priesthood -already on the way to an equally faux messianism- Herodians and Sadducees and Pharisees

and Zealots joined forces to betray the God of the covenant by co-opting the powers of imperial Rome to crucify Jesus of Nazareth. Of course this was utterly disastrous. Judgment fell on the former by way of the latter, when the imperial army crushed Jerusalem and destroyed its temple in A.D. 70. Meanwhile, the disciples of Jesus went out from Jerusalem to carry on the true mission of Israel by taking the gospel of Messiah Jesus to the ends of the earth. This eventually produced, not without the sacrifice of numerous martyrs, the period we call Christendom, in which the Roman empire, after its own decadence and collapse, gave way to nations that learned (however imperfectly, and not without sporadic appearances of animus toward Jews) to acknowledge Jesus as the Christ.

But Jesus, who predicted success for his followers in their mission to the ends of the earth, did not predict for them any triumph over the world such as many Christians, buoyed by Christendom or lately pining for Christendom, vainly imagine. On the contrary, he spoke both of the judgment that would fall on Jerusalem *and* of a judgment that would fall on the nations - a judgment and suffering in which the Church would share, just as Jesus shared redemptively in the judgment and suffering of Israel. He predicted, that is, the fulfillment of Daniel's dire prophecy about the end of the age, when St. Michael, the protector of the sanctuary and people of God, would be told once again to stand down and allow the violation of the sanctuary and the people, to permit the mystery of lawlessness to deceive many and to prevail.

St. Paul, following Jesus and Daniel, spoke to the Thessalonians of that mystery penetrating in the last days even the temple of God. As it had done before under Antiochus in the days of Jason and Menelaus, as it did again when Caiaphas and company conspired to put Jesus to death -tearing down God's living temple in a vain attempt to preserve a temple of stone and their own religious regime- so it would do again, deploying the same greed, hubris, self-deception, betrayal, and violence. While the fathers pondered the rebuilding of Herod's temple as the specific site for the fulfillment of all this, it is much more likely, as some allowed, that Paul had in mind the Church itself, which he identified, in its union with Jesus, as God's living temple.

Now, here is a parting of the ways in the discernment of our present situation. **There are those who think that the Christian gospel proved the key to an age of progress that will continue to the end, if ever there is an end. They are postmillennialist in their reading of history, though we might more accurately call them adherents of the Myth of Progress developed by Lessing and Hegel.** And, like the latter, they see a hand writing on the wall, inscribing the words *mene, mene, tekel, upharsin*. It is not inscribing them against Babylon, however, but **against a rigid and stultifying Church that insists on clinging to outmoded concepts of revelation, such as that found in Matthew 11:27. It is inscribing them against a Church that will not sacrifice itself to the**

new and universal paths of Spirit or *Geist*. Even the successor of Peter now opposes what, with no small irony, he calls “petrification”—while welcoming syncretistic developments that threaten to turn the bedrock of the Christian confession into loose shale.

There are others, however, who think the gospel the key to an age of progress all right, but progress in righteousness and in wickedness alike. They know that evil is parasitic on good, that because of the advance of the gospel lawlessness is also advancing. They know that *mene, mene, tekel, upharsin* was inscribed against Babylon first, then against Hasmonaean and Herodian Israel - where it was written by the hand of Jesus, perhaps in the sand rather than on a wall, but certainly on the cross. They know from the teaching of Jesus that it is inscribed also against that coming alliance of those who refuse with and through him to give thanks to God, **who instead suppress the truth in unrighteousness and turn the gospel into lawlessness.** And they see in our present situation indications that this alliance is already being formed, though they peer ahead, through clouds and darkness, with only such light on the path as Scripture affords.

The former, of course, are convinced that the only way to move forward is to adapt the Church to the spirit of the age, acknowledging that all are children of God, whether thankful or unthankful, eucharistic or anti-eucharistic, obedient or disobedient, Christian or pagan. Their project is a

syncretistic one. The latter are convinced that it belongs to the Church to give suffering witness for Christ *to the age*, inviting all to acknowledge his lordship and submit themselves to him in obedient love. They take their cue from *Ad gentes* -which is to say, from Matthew 28- rather than from the ambiguous *Gaudium* with its hint of anonymous Christianity.

The former aren't interested in teaching men of every nation to observe all that Jesus commanded. That's the sort of thing that must be sacrificed, as Hegel said, on the altar of History. The Jesus who insisted that he had come to bring, not peace, but a sword - he also must be sacrificed. **In his place must be put someone as presentable to the Grand Mufti as to the Masons, to the devotees of Pachamama as to the grandees of the European Union.** For their part, the latter think that the Church has no other business than to testify to Jesus as the Lord of history, who will come in glory to judge the living and the dead. And that just as Jesus suffered and died in Jerusalem and for Jerusalem -yet not for Jerusalem only, but for the whole world- so the Church should be ready to suffer and die, in the whole world, for the sake of Jesus.

It is surely a **sign of the times** that this division is taking place before our eyes, as the apostles and fathers warned it would. It is surely a **sign of the times** that so many are now being misled, just as Jesus predicted. It is surely a **sign of the times** when even the one charged to

succeed Peter in making the good confession seems to call it into question; **when there is a studied ambiguity about what the good confession is; when we find ourselves under shepherds whose idea of feeding the flock is to offer them the pastures of moral and doctrinal uncertainty and a liturgical chaos that nullifies the law of prayer.**

Some look for the next pope to clear up the confusion, hopeful that he will begin separating the sheep from the goats, at least at the episcopal level. I wonder. Judgment indeed begins with the household of God, **but would God have permitted this situation if he did not mean to require difficult choices from us all?** Certainly **the present pontificate** is not merely an unfortunate aberration. It **is, rather, a timely testing of the people of God with a view to their purification.** The period of examination and purification may well outlast this pontificate. Be that as it may, we are all faced with the question of how we ought to respond, and things are already bad enough.

In the post-conciliar period we were patiently and diligently taught the faith by the **previous two pontiffs, who carried on the Leonine and conciliar project of witnessing to Christ in the modern world. But their witness, like Leo's, has not been received in large tracts of the Church and is no longer being taught even in Rome.** Indeed, it is resisted precisely where it has been taught, as the fate of the John Paul II Institute testifies. What is more, those doing the resisting are not merely dissident theologians but bishops who were

made bishops under the previous pontiffs, demonstrating that the whole business of discernment about the episcopate has been for some time in serious decline. **Men who fit Paul's pejorative description of the pagans in Romans 1 are now being appointed, protected, and promoted in Rome.** Many of them will be in positions of power and influence in the next conclave. That which is bad enough therefore threatens to become worse.

The Church has of course been through rough patches before, rough patches that tried and tested it and eventually produced renewal. At the outset of Christendom, for example, the Church was rocked by the Arian crisis. Over the past two centuries it has been rocked again by what amounts to the same crisis. But we should not overlook the fact that **Christendom has now come and gone. In its place is something quite different, which is being tried in various forms, from communism to Nazism to militant secularism to religious environmentalism to a new and potent global technocracy that looks increasingly likely to combine all these "isms."**

These are not attempts to return to the status quo ante, to the kind of paganism that did not know Christ. Even at their most benign, **they are attempts to supplant and replace Christ.** They are attempts to bring in a new kingdom of peace and concord, a **New Age or saeculum of man's own devising.** This age is not understood to be an age by virtue of the fact that it is bracketed between the first and second comings of Christ. No, **it is understood to be an age because no second**

coming is anticipated. It is an age without limits, an age in which, by some miracle of politics and technology and human spirituality, will appear an entirely immanent kingdom of perpetual peace - the age, in other words, of Antichrist, whose own parousia, Paul tells us, must precede the parousia of Jesus Christ.

The fathers of Vatican I did not fully foresee this. Their counterparts at Vatican II, who wished to present a more winsome face to the world, did not manage to look even the real and present danger of communism squarely in the eye. That sort of thing was left to John Paul II and eventually to Benedict. But their teaching was resented by a powerful faction and has now been shunted aside. **The Catholic Church has in consequence been reduced, or so it would appear, to salvaging a crumbling liberal Protestant discourse about the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man by way of a pseudo-Catholic concern with inculturation—most recently, to baptizing animistic religion and propping up an Amazonian fertility goddess, just as in the decaying Anglosphere it is slowly making its peace with the gay gods of infertility. It has been reduced to propping up its own relevance as a “dialogue partner” to the world through whatever opportunity the age affords it.**

What, then, are the faithful to do? How are they to understand their relation to the Church and to remain properly Catholic when it is no longer clear that the

Catholic Church itself cares to remain Catholic, when even the successor of Peter is no longer confessing Christ in firm and unmistakable tones? I have no easy answers to these questions. But whatever else they do, the faithful must determine, as Cardinal Müller has advised, to **be Christocentric - not papocentric**. That does not mean failing to acknowledge the special authority and responsibility vested in Peter and his successors and reminding them of their accountability. It does mean keeping our eyes on the Lord, rather than on those called to serve the Lord in that office. *Far too much, as I have argued [elsewhere](#), has been hung on the “peg” of the papacy, which has begun to loosen in its socket.*

What is the Bishop of Rome, as the vicar of Peter and so of Christ, but one charged by Christ to persist in making the good confession, to safeguard the sacraments, to exercise a ministry of unity and an extraordinary discipline where ordinary discipline fails? And why, though the gospel itself is now in grave peril, is there this deadly paralysis in the Church that is preventing a proper response? Why indeed, if not that the Catholic Church, even while its religious institutions and a good many of its prelates have been marching to the neo-Arian tune of decadent late Protestantism, has through its papocentrism become the very caricature of itself that early Protestantism drew for it? That is not the only reason, to be sure. But papocentrism has now left the Church vulnerable to those who wish either to

reform it “irreformably” or to destroy it altogether.

When Pius IX recommended publication of the “Permanent Instruction of the Alta Vendita,” allegedly a Carbonari plan for corrupting the Church, did he pause to consider that his own rather heavy-handed efforts to *strengthen* the papacy might play into that plan? One does not have to be a conspiracy theorist or a sedevacantist to be struck by the prescience of that perverse document:

“Seek out the Pope of whom we give the portrait. You wish to establish the reign of the elect upon the throne of the prostitute of Babylon? Let the clergy march under your banner in the belief always that they march under the banner of the Apostolic Keys. You wish to cause the last vestige of tyranny and of oppression to disappear? Lay your nets like Simon Barjona. Lay them in the depths of sacristies, seminaries, and convents, rather than in the depths of the sea, and if you will precipitate nothing you will give yourself a draught of fishes more miraculous than his. The fisher of fishes will become a fisher of men. You will bring yourselves as friends around the Apostolic Chair. You will have fished up a Revolution in Tiara and Cope, marching with Cross and banner - a Revolution which it will need but to be spurred on a little to put the four quarters of the world on fire.”

St. Vincent Ferrer, in a sobering [sermon](#) on Luke 21, reminded us long ago of that rule of theology, drawn from Wisdom 11, which teaches that **men are divinely punished by the very gifts they abuse. Does that not include the gift of the papacy? Papocentrism must be purged** if the Church itself is to be purged and restored to health by the gospel. It must be purged if the Church is to be purified in holiness and readied for the trial that is coming on the whole world. We hold to the vicar of Peter only for the sake of Christ, not to Christ for the sake of the vicar of Peter. To suppose that there is no such vicar was a mistake of the Protestant Reformation; to suppose that there is no meaningful distinction here is a still greater mistake being made by Catholics today.

Peter himself warned, as our Lord warned, that this age is advancing toward a time of trial such as the world has never seen, to be followed by a final act of judgment and deliverance. He further warned, as our Lord warned, that in this time of trial there would be false teachers among us who “secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them.” Jesus prayed for Peter that his own faith would not fail, and in the end it did not. The charism of the papacy does not guarantee, however, that each and every successor of Peter will have a faith that does not fail. It does not guarantee that none will set a bad example or confuse the faithful, as Peter himself did briefly in Antioch. It does not guarantee that the

abomination that brings desolation will never be set up in God's temple.

Yet the Church will not fail, because it is grounded in Jesus Christ himself. And the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who knows those in every station who are his, is sufficient to protect them and to preserve them in the truth by his Holy Spirit. Hence the faithful must always be of good cheer. "Now when these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

The Alta Vendita Instruction follows below.



The Unholy Subversion of the Catholic Papacy

The secret papers of the (Freemasons) Alta Vendita of the Carbonari that fell into the hands of Pope Gregory XVI embrace a period that goes from 1820 to 1846. They were published at the request of Pope Pius IX by Cretineau-Joly in his work The Roman Church and Revolution. (2nd volume, original edition, 1859; reprinted by Circle of the French Renaissance, Paris, 1976; Mgr. Delassus produced these documents again in his work The Anti-Christian Conspiracy, DDB, 1910, Tome III, pp. 1035-1091) And with the brief of approbation of February 25, 1861, which he addressed to the author, Pius IX guaranteed the authenticity of these documents; but he did not allow anyone to divulge the true names of the members of the Alta Vendita implicated in this correspondence.

PERMANENT INSTRUCTION OF THE ALTA VENDITA.

“Ever since we have established ourselves as a body of action, and that order has commenced to reign in the bosom of the most distant lodge, as in that one nearest the centre of action, there is one thought which has profoundly occupied the men who aspire to universal regeneration. That is the thought of the enfranchisement of Italy, from which must one day come the enfranchisement of the entire world, the fraternal republic, and the harmony of humanity. That thought has not yet been seized upon by our brethren beyond the Alps. They believe that revolutionary Italy can only conspire in the shade, deal some strokes of the poinard to sbirri and traitors, and tranquilly undergo the yoke of events which take place beyond the Alps for Italy, but without Italy. This error has been fatal to us on many occasions. It is not necessary to combat it with phrases which would be only to propagate it. It is necessary to kill it by facts. Thus, amidst the cares which have the privilege of agitating the minds of the most vigorous of our lodges, there is one which we ought never to forget.

“The Papacy has at all times exercised a decisive action upon the affairs of Italy. By the hands, by the voices, by the pens, by the hearts of its innumerable bishops, priests, monks, nuns and people in all latitudes, the Papacy finds devotedness without end ready for martyrdom, and that to enthusiasm. Everywhere, whenever it pleases to call upon them, it has friends ready to die or lose all for its cause. This is an immense leverage which the Popes alone have been able to appreciate to its full power, and as yet they have used it only to a certain extent. Today there is no question of reconstituting for our-selves that power, the prestige of which is for the moment weakened. **Our final end is that of Voltaire and of the French Revolution, the destruction for ever of Catholicism and even of the Christian idea which, if left standing on the ruins of Rome, would be the resuscitation of Christianity later on.** But to attain more certainly that result, and not prepare ourselves with gaiety of heart for reverses which adjourn indefinitely, or compromise for ages, the success of a good cause, we must not pay attention to those braggarts of Frenchmen, those cloudy Germans, those melancholy Englishmen, all of whom imagine they can kill Catholicism, now with an impure song, then with an illogical deduction; at another time, with a sarcasm smuggled in like the cottons of Great Britain. Catholicism has a life much more tenacious than that. It has seen the most implacable, the most terrible adversaries; and it has often had the malignant pleasure of throwing holy water on the tombs of the most enraged. Let us permit, then, our brethren of these countries to give themselves up to the sterile intemperance of their anti-Catholic zeal. Let them even mock at our Madonnas and our apparent devotion. With this passport we can conspire at our ease, and arrive little by little at the end we have in view.

“Now the **Papacy** has been for seventeen centuries inherent to the history of Italy. Italy cannot breathe or move without the permission of the Supreme Pastor. **With him she has the hundred arms of Briareus, without him she is condemned to a pitiable impotence. She has nothing but divisions to foment, hatreds to break out, and hostilities to manifest themselves** from the highest chain of the Alps to the lowest of the Appenines. We cannot desire such a state of things. It is necessary, then, to seek a remedy for that situation. The remedy is found. **The Pope, whoever he may be, will never come to the secret societies. It is for the secret societies to come first to the Church, in the resolve to conquer the two.**

“The work, which we have undertaken is not the work of a day, nor of a month, nor of a year. It may last many years, a century perhaps, but in our ranks the soldier dies and the fight continues.

“We do not mean to win the Popes to our cause, to make them neophytes of our principles, and propagators of our ideas. That would be a ridiculous dream, no matter in what manner events may turn. Should cardinals or prelates, for example, enter, willingly or by surprise, in some manner, into a part of our secrets, it would be by no means a motive to desire their elevation to the See of Peter. That elevation would destroy us. Ambition alone would bring them to apostasy from us. The needs of power would force them to immolate us. **That which we ought to demand, that which we should seek and expect, as the Jews expected the Messiah, is a Pope according to our wants.** Alexander VI., with all his private crimes, would not suit us, for he never erred in religious matters. Clement XIV., on the contrary, would suit us from head to foot. Borgia was a libertine, a true sensualist of the eighteenth century strayed into the fifteenth. He has been anathematized, notwithstanding his vices, by all the voices of philosophy and incredulity, and he owes that anathema to the vigour with which he defended the Church. Ganganelli gave himself over, bound hand and foot, to the ministers of the Bourbons, who made him afraid, and to the incredulous who celebrated his tolerance, and Ganganelli is become a very great Pope. He is almost in the same condition that it is necessary for us to find another, if that be yet possible. With that we should march more surely to the attack upon the Church than with the pamphlets of our brethren in France, or even with the gold of England. Do you wish to know the reason? It is because by that we should have no more need of the vinegar of Hannibal, no more need the powder of cannon, no more need even of our arms. **We have the little finger of the successor of St. Peter engaged in the plot, and that little finger is of more value for our crusade than all the Innocents, the Urbans, and the St. Bernards of Christianity.**

“We do not doubt that we shall arrive at that supreme term of all our efforts; but when? but how? The unknown does not yet manifest itself. Nevertheless, as nothing should separate us from the plan traced out; as, on the contrary, all things should tend to it—as if success were to crown the work scarcely sketched out to-morrow—we wish in this instruction which must rest a secret for the simple initiated, to give to those of the Supreme—Lodge, councils with which they should enlighten the universality of the brethren, under the form of an

instruction or memorandum. It is of special importance, and because of a discretion, the motives of which are transparent, never to permit it to be felt that these counsels are orders emanating from the Alta Vendita. The clergy is put too much in peril by it, that one can at the present hour permit oneself to play with it, as with one of these small affairs or of these little princes upon which one need but blow to cause them to disappear.

“Little can be done with those old cardinals or with those prelates, whose character is very decided. It is necessary to leave them as we find them, incorrigible, in the school of Consalvi, and draw from our magazines of popularity or unpopularity the arms which will render useful or ridiculous the power in their hands. A word which one can ably invent and which one has the art to spread amongst certain honourable chosen families by whose means it descends into the *cafés* and from the *cafés* into the streets; a word can sometimes kill a man. If a prelate comes to Rome to exercise some public function from the depths of the provinces, know presently his character, his antecedents, his qualities, his defects above all things. If he is in advance, a declared enemy, an Albani, a Pallotta, a Bernetti, a Della Genga, a Riverola? Envelop him in all the snares which you can place beneath his feet; create for him one of those reputations which will frighten little children and old women; paint, him cruel and sanguinary; recount, regarding him, some traits of cruelty which can be easily engraved in the minds of the people. When foreign journals shall gather for us these recitals, which they will embellish in their turn (inevitably because of their respect for truth) show, or rather cause to be shown, by some respectable fool those papers where the names and the excesses of the personages implicated are related. As France and England, so Italy will never be wanting in facile pens which know how to employ themselves in these lies so useful to the good cause. With a newspaper, the language of which they do not understand, but in which they will see the name of their delegate or judge, the people have no need of other proofs. They are in the infancy of liberalism; they believe in liberals, as, later on, they will believe in us, not knowing very well why.

“Crush the enemy whoever he may be; crush the powerful by means of lies and calumnies but especially crush him in the egg. **It is to the youth we must go. It is that which we must seduce; it is that which we must bring under the banner of the secret societies.** In order to advance by steps, calculated but sure, in that perilous way, two things are of the first necessity. You ought have the air

of being simple as doves, but you must be prudent as the serpent. **Your fathers, your children, your wives themselves, ought always be ignorant of the secret which you carry in your bosoms.** It pleases you, in order the better to deceive the inquisitorial eye, to go often to confession, you are, as by right authorised, to preserve the most absolute silence regarding these things. You know that the least revelation, that the slightest indication escaped from you in the tribunal of penance, or elsewhere, can bring on great calamities and that the sentence of death is already pronounced upon the revealer, whether voluntary or involuntary.

“Now then, in order to secure to us a Pope in the manner required, it is necessary to fashion for that Pope a generation worthy of the reign of which we dream. Leave on one side old age and middle life, go to the youth, and, if possible, even to infancy. Never speak in their presence a word of impiety or impurity. *Maxima debetur puero reverentia.* Never forget these words of the poet for they will preserve you from licences which it is absolutely essential to guard against for the good of the cause. In order to reap profit at the home of each family, in order to give yourself the right of asylum at the domestic hearth, you ought to **present yourself with all the appearance of a man grave and moral. Once your reputation is established** in the colleges, in the gymnasiums, in the universities, and in the seminaries—once that you shall have captivated the confidence of professors and students, so **act that those who are principally engaged in the ecclesiastical state should love to seek your conversation.** Nourish their souls with the splendours of ancient Papal Rome. There is always at the bottom of the Italian heart a regret for Republican Rome. Excite, enkindle those natures so full of warmth and of patriotic fire. Offer them at first, but always in secret, inoffensive books, poetry resplendent with national emphasis; then little by little you will bring your disciples to the degree of cooking desired. **When upon all the points of the ecclesiastical state at once, this daily work shall have spread our ideas as the light, then you will be able to appreciate the wisdom of the counsel in which we take the initiative.**

“Events, which in our opinion, precipitate themselves too rapidly, go necessarily in a few months’ time to bring on an intervention of Austria. There are fools who in the lightness of their hearts please themselves in casting others into the midst of perils, and, meanwhile, there are fools who at a given hour drag on even wise men. The

revolution which they meditate in Italy will only end in misfortunes and persecutions. Nothing is ripe, neither the men nor the things, and nothing shall be for a long time yet; but from these evils you can easily draw one new chord, and cause it to vibrate in the hearts of the young clergy. That is the hatred of the stranger. Cause the German to become ridiculous and odious even before his foreseen entry. With the idea of the Pontifical supremacy, mix always the old memories of the wars of the priesthood and the Empire. Awaken the smouldering passions of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, and thus you will obtain for yourselves the reputation of good Catholics and pure patriots.

“That reputation will **open the way for our doctrines to pass to the bosoms of the young clergy, and go even to the depths of convents. In a few years the young clergy will have, by the force of events, invaded all the functions.** They will govern, administer, and judge. **They will form the council of the Sovereign.** They will be called upon to choose the Pontiff who will reign; and **that Pontiff, like the greater part of his contemporaries, will be necessarily imbued with the Italian and humanitarian principles which we are about to put in circulation.** It is a little grain of mustard which we place in the earth, but the sun of justice will develop it even to be a great power; and you will see one day what a rich harvest that little seed will produce.

“In the way which we trace for our brethren there are found great obstacles to conquer, difficulties of more than one kind to surmount. They will be overcome by experience and by perspicacity; but the end is beautiful. What does it matter to put all the sails to the wind in order, to attain it. You wish to revolutionize Italy? **Seek out the Pope of whom we give, the portrait. You wish to establish the reign of the elect upon the throne of the prostitute of Babylon? Let the clergy march under your banner in the belief always that they march under the banner of the Apostolic Keys.** You wish to cause the last vestige of tyranny and of oppression to disappear? Lay your nets like Simon Barjona. Lay them in the depths of sacristies, seminaries, and convents, rather than in the depths of the sea, and if you will precipitate nothing you will give yourself a draught of fishes more miraculous than his. The fisher of fishes will become a fisher of men. You will bring yourselves as friends around the Apostolic Chair. You will have fished up a Revolution in Tiara and Cope, marching with Cross and banner—a Revolution which it will need but to be spurred on a little to put the four quarters of the world on fire.

“Let each act of your life tend then to discover the Philosopher’s Stone. The alchemists of the middle ages lost their time and the gold of their dupes in the quest of this dream. That of the secret societies will be accomplished for the most simple of reasons, because it is based on the passions of man. Let us not be discouraged then by a check, a reverse, or a defeat. Let us prepare our arms in the silence of the lodges, dress our batteries, flatter all passions the most evil and the most generous, and all lead us to think that our plans will succeed one day above even our most improbable calculations.”

“Truly indeed we can say that this is the hour granted to the power of darkness to grind the elect as wheat.” “EVIL comes out of Secret Societies, bottomless abyss of misery, which those conspiring societies have dug and in which heresies and sects as may be said, vomited as in a privy all they hold of licentiousness, sacrilege and blasphemy. Pope Gregory XVI- Mirari Vos (1832)

CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS