

**ROMAN CATHOLICISM THEN AND NOW:  
FROM CATHOLIC REFORMATION AND COUNTER-REFORMATION TO  
RESSOURCEMENT AND AGGIORNAMENTO**

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It is the eve of the five hundredth anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. Naturally, many are wondering, “Is Lutheranism still relevant today?” If one were to examine the historiography of Martin Luther (1483–1546), one would see that Roman Catholic church historians have come to paint a much more positive picture of the reformer and the need for his theology than they did in the past.<sup>1</sup> In 1976, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (1927–), the future Pope Benedict XVI, went so far as to make the following striking assertion (which it should be noted never came to fruition):

The researches of the past few years converge in understanding that the CA [*Confessio Augustana*] as the basic Lutheran confessional document was drawn up as it was not only for diplomatic reason, that it might be possible to interpret it under the laws of the empire as a catholic confession; it was also drafted with inner conviction as a searching for evangelical catholicity—as a painstaking effort to filter the bubbling cauldron of the early Reformation movement in such a way that it might give it the shape of a catholic reform. Accordingly, efforts are under way to achieve a Catholic recognition of the CA or, more correctly a recognition of the CA as catholic, and thereby establish the catholicity of the churches of the CA, which makes possible a corporate union while the differences remain.<sup>2</sup>

Nearly two decades later, Rome and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) forged a seemingly monumental agreement on what Lutherans are accustomed to call the “article on which the

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<sup>1</sup> Theo. M. M. A. C. Bell, “Roman Catholic Luther Research in the Twentieth Century: From Rejection to Rehabilitation,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther’s Theology*, ed. Robert Kolb, Irene Dingel, and L’ubomír Batka (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 584–97.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *Theologische Prinzipienlehre* (Munich: Wewel, 1982), 212, quoted in Avery Dulles, “The Catholicity of the Augsburg Confession,” *The Journal of Religion* 63, no. 4 (October 1983): 337–54.

church stands or falls” known as *The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (JDDJ).<sup>3</sup> Just this past year, Pope Francis (1936–) celebrated the Reformation at an ecumenical prayer service in the Lutheran Lund Cathedral, urging Roman Catholics and Lutherans alike to work towards reconciliation. Is there real hope that the unfortunate, but necessary breach (John 17:20–21; CA) in the Medieval Latin Church can finally be mended, or is the Lutheran Reformation still necessary? Has contemporary Roman Catholicism come to embrace at least the core of Luther’s reform? This essay will argue that the Lutheran Reformation is still necessary by first providing an overview of Early Modern Catholicism.<sup>4</sup> Second, it will chart the evolution of Roman Catholicism into the twenty-first century.

Renewal and reform movements in the Latin Church did not begin with Martin Luther. Such movements are as old as Christendom itself, as the canons of the councils and every new monastic movement well attest. Still the nature, scope, and urgency of such efforts entered new and uncharted territory in the Late Middle Ages when the papacy was experiencing one of its lowest ebbs.<sup>5</sup> The Latin Church had grown rife with abuses that the Avignon Papacy (1309–77) and Western Schism (1378–1415) brought to a head. The Council of Constance (1414–18) set out to bring “unity and reform to God’s church in head and members.”<sup>6</sup> This reform failed to be carried out largely because the popes sought to reclaim their power in the wake of the council’s

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<sup>3</sup> Heinrich Denzinger, *Compendium of Creeds, Definition, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, ed. Peter Hünermann, Robert Fastiggi, and Anne Englund Nash, 43rd ed. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), (no. 5073–74), 1129–30.

<sup>4</sup> For a historiographical survey of Early Modern Catholicism, please see the appendix at the end of the essay.

<sup>5</sup> For an overview of Early Modern Catholicism, see *Religion Past and Present: Encyclopedia of Religion and Theology*, 4th ed., s.v. “Counter-Reformation”; *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, s.v. “Katholische Reform und Gegenreformation”; *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance*, s.v. “Catholic Reformation and Counter Reformation”; *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, s.v. “Catholic Reformation.”

<sup>6</sup> *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. N. P. Tanner, G. Albergio, J. A. Dossetti, P.– P. Joannou, C. Leonardi, P. Prodi, and H. Jedin (London and Washington: Sheed & Ward and Georgetown University Press, 1990), 1:409.

attempt to subordinate them to councils.<sup>7</sup> A medieval pun captures the popular frustration with the Renaissance popes' neglect of the faith for power, influence, and opulence. The acrostic play on 1 Timothy 6:10 suggests that anyone who goes to Rome (*Roma*) would inevitably sell his soul: **R**adix **O**mnium **M**alorum **A**varitia (i.e., greed is the root of all evil).<sup>8</sup> There are few clearer examples of the devolution of the papacy into nepotism, simony, and libertinism than the Borgia papacy of the promiscuous Alexander VI (1431–1503). Still it was latter's sworn enemy, the "Warrior Pope" Julius II (1443–1513), who undercut Emperor Maximilian I's (1459–1519) call for a reforming council by summoning Lateran V (1512–17) under his direct control. In contrast to the rise of national churches, Lateran V not only "abrogated the Programmatic Sanction of Bourges (1438)," it also "affirmed that the pope has authority over all councils and only he can convoke, transfer, and close a council. Thus, Lateran V effectively put an end to conciliarism."<sup>9</sup>

If the reform of the head (pope and papal curia) of the church looked bleak on the eve of the Lutheran Reformation, the reform of its members was not nearly as dismal. A new "highly individualistic and activist" spirituality emerged, which maintained that only the inner renewal of the person via fervent prayer, rigorous self-discipline, and courageous good works could bring about the reform of the church.<sup>10</sup> Efforts to revitalize preaching and catechesis that were as old as the mendicant movements found new interest in the Late Middle Ages, especially in the form of

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<sup>7</sup> "... [E]veryone of whatever state or dignity, even papal, is bound to obey it [council] in those matters which pertains to the faith, the eradication of the said schism and the general reform of the said church of God in head and members." See *Decrees*, 1:409.

<sup>8</sup> Nine Robijntje Miedema, *Rompilgerführer in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit: Die "Indulgentiae ecclesiarum Urbis Romae"* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2003), 1.

<sup>9</sup> Nelson H. Minnich, "The Last Two Councils of the Catholic Reformation: The Influence of Lateran V on Trent," in *Early Modern Catholicism: Essays in Honor of John W. O'Malley, S. J.*, ed. Kathleen M. Comerford and Hilmar M. Pabel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 3–4, 15. See also *Decrees*, 1:642.

<sup>10</sup> John C. Olin, ed. *Catholic Reform: From Cardinal Ximenes to the Council of Trent 1495–1563* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1990), 11–12.

endowed preaching positions.<sup>11</sup> The Modern Devotion (*Devotio Moderna*), lay confraternities (e.g. Oratory of Divine Love), congregations of clerics regular (e.g. Theatines), and religious observantist movements (e.g. Capuchins) rose up, all of which placed renewed stress on the cultivation of the interior life.<sup>12</sup> Far from being a turn to godlessness, Renaissance humanism, which called Christians to focus on the active life (instead of the contemplative life) and cultivate virtuous civic engagement, facilitated both Roman Catholic and Protestant reform movements.<sup>13</sup> In contrast to other lands, Post-Reconquista Spain never really flirted with Protestantism in part because the Franciscan Cardinal and Chancellor of Castile Francisco Ximénez de Cisneros (1436–1517) helped bring about a renewal of the Spanish clergy, a humanist-informed approach to education (including Hebrew and Greek studies) at the University of Alcalá, and the *Complutensian Bible*. The latter included the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin texts of the Bible before Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466/69–1536) published his Greek New Testament in 1522.<sup>14</sup> Studies have even suggested that England was not nearly as ripe for reformation as previous scholars have claimed and that many in England were generally content with their church.<sup>15</sup>

The fundamental problem was not so much that pastoral care and the cultivation of piety was not happening in the Late Middle Ages; the problem was that the theology behind its

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<sup>11</sup> E. J. Dempsey Douglass, *Justification in Late Medieval Preaching: A Study of John Geiler of Keisersberg*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1989).

<sup>12</sup> R. R. Post, *The Modern Devotion: Confrontation with Reformation and Humanism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968); John Patrick Donnelly and Michael W. Mahler, eds., *Confraternities & Catholic Reform in Italy, France, & Spain* (Kirksville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1999); Richard L. DeMolen, ed., *Religious Orders of the Catholic Reformation* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1994).

<sup>13</sup> Charles Edward Trinkaus, *In Our Image and Likeness: Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

<sup>14</sup> Erika Rummel, *Jiménez de Cisneros: On the Threshold of Spain's Golden Age* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999).

<sup>15</sup> Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400–1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

pastoral care and piety actually fostered spiritual anxiety.<sup>16</sup> This is evident in Martin Luther's quest for a merciful God. If the synergistic Thomist theology of grace and works created doubts about God's favor in scrupulous Christians, then the Semi-Pelagian Ockhamist theology (that Luther was schooled in) of "To those who do what is in them, God will not deny grace" (*Facientibus quod in se est, Deus non denegat gratiam*) only exacerbated that doubt. The latter taught that man actually had to start out his conversion by reaching out to God with a half-merit (*meritum congrui*) in hope that God would bless it with grace. Only then could salvation be acquired via a faith formed by love (i.e., by full-merits [*meritum condigni*] or good works). This is why Martin Luther felt so liberated when he rediscovered passive (alien) righteousness in Romans 1:17 (i.e., that man is justified by faith alone on account of the imputed righteousness of Christ [passive or alien righteousness] and not on the basis of his own active [proper] righteousness).<sup>17</sup> At the Leipzig Debate (1519), Luther started to recognize that neither pope nor council could overturn Sacred Scripture's doctrine of justification by faith alone. Once he realized neither the pope nor the bishops had the desire to bring a full doctrinal reform, he wrote his 1520 threefold plan for reforming the church (*To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation, The Babylonian Captivity of the Church, and Freedom of a Christian*), which included a call for a free Christian council normed by Scripture alone.<sup>18</sup> In effect, Luther's reformation not

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<sup>16</sup> Steven E. Ozment, *The Reform in the Cities: The Appeal of Protestantism to Sixteenth-Century Germany and Switzerland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 22–32; Steven E. Ozment, *The Age of Reform. 1250–1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 218–19.

<sup>17</sup> Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, Helmut Lehmann, and Christopher Brown (St. Louis and Philadelphia: Concordia Publishing House and Fortress Publishing House, 1955–), 34:323–38.

<sup>18</sup> *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* called for a free Christian council governed by Scripture alone (as opposed to an unscriptural Roman papacy or an infallible council) to reform the church. It further demonstrated the spiritual vocation of the princes and their duty (as the most capable members of the priesthood of all believers) to reform the church (in lieu of true bishops). *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* charged the Roman papacy with not only corrupting the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist, but even holding them hostage. Fleshing out the two kinds of righteousness as a fundamental Biblical hermeneutic and the center of his theology, Luther shows in the *Freedom of a Christian* how the Christian is both a free lord no longer enslaved to sin through the passive righteousness of Christ and as a result also a dutiful servant. The Christian's active righteousness, moreover, was never intended to earn God's favor (either before or after the fall), but was always intended to serve

only challenged the abuses that had arisen in the church, he opposed the theological heart of the Roman Catholic reformation with none other than the sole-sufficient Word of Christ: Just as a bad tree cannot become good by bearing good fruit, so too human active righteousness can never cause passive righteousness.<sup>19</sup>

Initially the popes were neither able to comprehend the significance of the Luther Affair, nor were they equipped to respond.<sup>20</sup> Since the memory of conciliarism still loomed large and evangelical theology had struck such a cord with the people of every segment of society, the attempt of the worldly-minded Medici, Pope Leo X (1475–1521), to simply silence Luther with a bull of excommunication, *Exsurge Domine* (June 15, 1520), was not sufficient to end the tumult.<sup>21</sup> In fact, the Diet of Nuremberg (1522/23) even chimed in, calling for a free, Christian Council on German soil. When well-intentioned Pope Adrian VI (1459–1523) tried to reform the curia, the task of untangling this bureaucratic nightmare proved too great for the Dutch outsider and tutor of Emperor Charles V (1500–58). The indecisive approach to Protestantism by the second Medici pope, Clement VII (1478–1534), fared no better. He neither succeeded in pacifying the Lutherans with clerical marriage and communion in both kinds, nor could he prevent King Henry VIII of England’s (1491–1547) own reformation.

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God by serving one’s fellowmen in accord with one’s various vocations as a part of God’s providential care. For the three programmatic writings, see Luther, *LW*, 44:123–217; 36:3–126; 31:327–77 respectively.

<sup>19</sup> “The following statements are therefore true: ‘Good works do not make a good man, but a good man does good works; evil works do not make a wicked man, but a wicked man does evil works.’ Consequently it is always necessary that the substance or person himself be good before there can be any good works, and that good works follow and proceed from the good person, as Christ also says, ‘A good tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. . . .’ Furthermore, no good work helps justify or save an unbeliever. On the other hand, no evil work makes him wicked or damns him; but the unbelief which makes the person and the tree evil does the evil and damnable works. Hence when a man is good or evil, this is effected not by the works, but by faith or unbelief. . . .” See Luther, *LW*, 31:361–62.

<sup>20</sup> Eamon Duffy, *Saints and Sinners: A History of the Popes*, 4th ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 196–208.

<sup>21</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 1451–92), 363–67.

The pontificate of the Farnese pope, Paul III (1468–1549), marks a transition in the papacy. He would not only become an active participant in Roman Catholic reform, but he would also introduce Counter-Reformation.<sup>22</sup> First, Paul III was compelled to call a council of the church that would embody both of the aforementioned focuses of reform. This was due to the rise of new Protestant movements and the emperor's need after the Diet of the Augsburg (1530) to resolve the ecclesial schism for the sake of effective governance. To be sure, he would not call for a council until June 2, 1536. Yet he finally did open the council in 1545. This was because the Habsburg-Valois Wars (1494–1559) and the failure of the Regensburg Colloquy (1541) to resolve the breach between Catholics and Protestants delayed it. Second, Paul III had a group of nine reform-minded cardinals prepare a preliminary plan for the council called the *Consilium de emendanda ecclesia* (1537).<sup>23</sup> It clearly placed blame on the papal curia for many of the corruptions in the church and sought to restore a pastoral ideal among the bishops. Still it offered no concrete steps for actualizing reform. Finally, Paul III initiated some of the repressive measures of the Counter-Reformation, which would only reach their zenith in the fanatical Pope Paul IV (1476–1559). Even before the latter became pope, the then Cardinal Gianpietro Caraffa had convinced Pope Paul III to reorganize the inquisition (i.e., disciplinary mechanism of the Roman Church that used both mental and physical torture to ensure conformity in faith and morals) in Italy.

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<sup>22</sup> Elisabeth G. Gleason, "Catholic Reformation, Counterreformation and Papal Reform in the Sixteenth Century," in *Handbook of the European History, 1400–1600 Late Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Reformation*, ed. Thomas A. Brady, Jr., Heiko A. Oberman, and James D. Tracy (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 2:317–45.

<sup>23</sup> John C. Olin, ed. *The Catholic Reformation: Savonarola to Ignatius Loyola* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1996), 182–97.

No other pope illustrates the Counter-Reformation at its worst like Pope Paul IV.<sup>24</sup> Before the inquisition could be organized in Italy, Caraffa already had chambers for interrogations in his own home. The subsequent words capture his zeal for inquisition: “If our own father were a heretic, we would carry the faggots to burn him!” He likewise remarked, “No man is to lower himself by showing toleration toward any sort of heretic, least of all a Calvinist.”<sup>25</sup> As Pope Paul IV, he punish cardinals that he believed were soft on Protestant views of salvation (Giovanni Morone [1509–80] and Reginald Pole [1500-58]). Caraffa forced Jews to wear badges and confined them to the ghettos. Last but not least, he introduced the *Index of Forbidden Books* (1559). It naturally condemned Protestant books. However, it also condemned the writings of certain Renaissance humanists, like Erasmus, as well as the reading of their new, more historically and philologically sound editions of the church fathers. Scholarship has somewhat mollified the nature and scope of the inquisition and the index in light of the secular standards of the time. But most recognize the theological police-state mentality they fostered, especially under Pope Paul IV.

One of the greatest instruments of Roman Catholic reform and Counter-Reformation was the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) approved by Pope Paul III in 1540.<sup>26</sup> While convalescing from a cannonball injury to the leg, a Basque soldier named Ignatius Loyola (1491–1556) decided to rededicate his life as a soldier of Christ. After an all-night vigil before the Black Madonna of Montserrat, he left his sword and former life behind. He then spent a transformative year in Manresa, where he began writing the central text of Jesuit spiritual identity. The *Spiritual*

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<sup>24</sup> Robert Bireley, *The Refashioning of Catholicism, 1450–1700: A Reassessment of the Counter Reformation* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1999), 46–47, 51–52; Gleason, “Catholic Reformation,” 2:317–45.

<sup>25</sup> Lewis Spitz, *The Renaissance and Reformation Movements*, rev. ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987), 2:477.

<sup>26</sup> John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).



*Exercises* is a retreat manual for the clergy and laity designed to facilitate the abandoning of oneself to God in service to others as well as the ever-increasing mastery of the passions through a process of discernment.<sup>27</sup> While studying at the University of Paris, he gathered a small circle around him that vowed to convert the Muslims of the Holy Land. If that failed, they decided to offer themselves to the papacy as a new kind of mendicant order that swore an additional vow of unwavering service to the mission of the papacy.<sup>28</sup> Since they focused on itinerant ministry and were not required to pray the divine office communally, they were poised to be the great missionaries and educators of the age. The new order grew at a phenomenal rate and became instrumental in refuting Protestantism and fostering Tridentine reforms, although this was not their original intention. The Renaissance humanist and new scholastic curriculum of the Jesuit colleges (e.g. Roman College), spelled out in the *Ratio studiorum* (1599), helped recatholicize a significant number of lands lost to Protestantism and formed formidable Roman Catholic theologians like Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621) and Francisco Suárez (1548–1617). Moreover, it was the great Jesuit missionaries to the Americas and Asia, like Francis Xavier (1506–52), that helped make Roman Catholicism the global church that it is today.<sup>29</sup>

The long awaited council finally opened on December 13, 1545. Trent proved a conducive location because it was an Italian city within the Holy Roman Empire. The purpose of the Council of Trent (1545–63), the nineteenth ecumenical council according to Roman

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<sup>27</sup> “In the persons of their founders the antithetical character of original Protestant and Counter Reformation piety is strikingly revealed. Whereas Luther had despaired of calculated efforts at self-reform and salvation, concluding that neither sublimation nor repression, no matter how diligently practiced, could ever bring peace of mind, Ignatius carefully examined himself and discovered a self-control like that of the first man, who could sin or not sin at will. Here was a new type of religious self-confidence that ran counter not only to the Reformation, but to much traditional spirituality as well.” See Ozment, *The Age*, 412.

<sup>28</sup> “If we wish to proceed securely in all things, we must hold fast to the following principle: What seems to me white, I will believe black if the hierarchical Church so defines.” See Olin, *The Catholic*, 198–211, especially 210.

<sup>29</sup> John W. O’Malley, eds. et al., *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999–2006).

reckoning, was to refute Protestantism, to define Roman Catholic doctrine, and to make a reform of the institution and practices of the Roman church.<sup>30</sup> No pope ever came to the council, but his legates presided over it. At first only three papal legates, one cardinal, four archbishops, twenty-one bishops, and five generals of orders attended, most of whom were Italians. By the end of the council, a hundred and ninety-nine cardinals, archbishops, and bishops were present. In addition, three patriarchs, seven abbots, seven superiors general of religious orders, and thirty-nine deputies for absent bishops attended. The council proceedings were anything but boring, quiet, and servile; rather, they were multifaceted, spirited, and sometimes even harsh.<sup>31</sup>

The twenty-five sessions of the council unfolded in three phases. The first period (1545–48) took place under the pontificate of Paul III. It was comprised of ten sessions (sessions 1–10). When Charles V initiated the Schmalkaldic War (1546–47) to force the Lutherans to the table, the pope had the council moved to Bologna under the pretext of avoiding an outbreak of disease. Paul III feared the emperor might force his hand next. Between 1547 and 1548, the last two sessions (8–9) unfolded which only prorogued the council. Pope Julius III (1487–1555) resumed the council at Trent for its second period (1551–52) because of imperial pressure to legitimize it in the eyes of the Protestants. It was comprised of six sessions (sessions 11–16). Charles V facilitated the attendance of a small group of Protestants at this time, but none were permitted to vote. Johannes Brenz (1499/99–1570), the Lutheran Reformer of Swabia, even submitted a confession to the council called the *Confessio Wirtembergica* (1552). The council was

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<sup>30</sup> For an overview of Trent, see *Religion Past and Present: Encyclopedia of Religion and Theology*, 4th ed., s.v. “Trent, Council of”; *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, s.v. “Tridentium”; *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance*, “Trent, Council of”; *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, s.v., “Trent, Council of”; *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v., “Trent, Council of.”

<sup>31</sup> John W. O’Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013); Paolo Prodi, and Wolfgang Reinhard, eds., *Il concilio di Trento e il moderno* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1996); Hubert Jedin, *Geschichte des Konzils von Trient* (Freiburg i. B.: Herder, 1951–75), the first two volumes of which are translated as *A History of the Council of Trent*, trans. Ernest Graf (St. Louis: Herder, 1957–61).

interrupted by the Saxon Elector Moritz's (1521–53) military alliance against Emperor Charles V, which ended the interims (1548) and brought about the Peace of Passau (1552). Following the death of the very unpopular Pope Paul IV and the growth of French Calvinism, Pius IV (1499–1565) opened the third period (1562–63) of the council, which was comprised of nine sessions (sessions 17–25).<sup>32</sup>

Just as the *Augsburg Confession* (1530) would provide a fundamental definition of Lutheranism, so too the Council of Trent would do the same for Roman Catholicism. The following doctrinal and reforming decrees (typically followed by chapters and canons) best exemplify how Roman Catholicism differentiates itself from Lutheranism and lays out its most significant reforms.<sup>33</sup> Session IV of the council “accepts and venerates with like feelings of piety and reverences” Scripture and tradition (which the majority understood as a material supplement to the Bible). It declared the antilegomena and the apocrypha books of the Bible “sacred and canonical.” The Vulgate was made the authoritative text for “public reading, debates, sermons, and explanations.” Scripture was to be interpreted via the “consensus of the fathers,” but in the end it is “holy mother church [teaching magisterium] ... whose function it is to pass judgment on the true meaning and interpretation of the sacred scriptures.”<sup>34</sup> Session V does not embed original sin into a problematic Aristotelian framework. Yet it taught that original sin was fully removed in baptism, maintained that the remaining concupiscence is not sin, and left room for (but did not dogmatize) the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary.<sup>35</sup> This session's reform

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<sup>32</sup> *Decrees*, 2:657–799.

<sup>33</sup> For a comprehensive Lutheran review of the council in light of Jesuit commentators, see Martin Chemnitz, *Examination of the Council of Trent* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971–86).

<sup>34</sup> *Decrees*, 2:663–65.

<sup>35</sup> *Decrees*, 2:665–67.

decrees required diocesan schools for improving priestly formation. Bishops and priests were obligated to preach on Sundays and feast days.<sup>36</sup>

Session VI on justification was one of the longest and most controversial because of the failure of the Augustinian General Girolamo Seripando (1493–1563) and others to pass a more Protestant-acceptable theory of double justification. While Trent seems to make a doctrinal reform by excluding the Ockhamist Semi-Pelagian view of conversion, it still insists on a synergistic understanding at a minimum.<sup>37</sup> “[A]ctual justification in adults take its origin from a predisposing grace ... with no existing merits on their side.... [T]hus, those who have been turned away from God by sins are disposed by God’s grace inciting and helping them, to turn towards their own justification by giving free assent to and co-operating with this same grace.” The council goes on to clarify that justification is a “process,” whereby one not only receives “the forgiveness of sins,” but also one “is grafted” into Christ as well as “infused” with “faith, hope, and love.” “[F]aith is the first state of human salvation, the foundation and root of all justification....” Insisting that the commandments are not impossible for the justified and graced person to keep, the council maintains that good works are more than “the effects and signs of justification obtained.” In contrast, Trent insists that authentic good works, which can only be facilitated by grace, have meritorious value in completing justification and ultimate salvation. “[B]y the good deeds done by him through the merits of Jesus Christ (of whom he is a member), [the justified person] does ... truly merit an increase in grace, eternal life, and (so long as he dies in grace) the obtaining of his own eternal life....” Lest there be any doubt about the council’s final position on justification by faith alone, it adds:

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<sup>36</sup> *Decrees*, 2:667–70.

<sup>37</sup> Martin Chemnitz shows that this exclusion is unfounded based on some contradictions in the logic of the canons, etc. See *Examination*, 1:547–64.

If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning thereby that no other co-operation is required for him to obtain the grace of justification, and that in no sense is it necessary for him to make preparation and be disposed by a movement of his own will: let him be anathema.... If anyone says that people are justified either solely by attribution [*imputazione*] of Christ's justice, or by the forgiveness of sins alone, to the exclusion of the grace and the charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the holy Spirit and abides in them; or even that the grace by which we are justified is only the good-will of God: let him be anathema. If anyone says that the faith which justifies is nothing else but trust in divine mercy, which pardons sins because of Christ; or that it is this trust alone that justifies: let him be anathema.<sup>38</sup>

This session's reform decrees penalized the clergy for unjust absences (non-residence) beyond six months from their dioceses, an abuse that the practical needs of the papal curia had long facilitated. In addition, bishops could no longer hold multiple bishoprics (pluralism).<sup>39</sup>

Session VII enumerated the seven sacraments. The council confirmed that the sacraments granted grace "by the work performed" (*ex opera operato*).<sup>40</sup> Session XIII stated that the Holy Eucharist is a "propitious sacrament." Transubstantiation is the proper explication of Christ's sacramental presence. The Eucharist should be adored even outside of the Divine Service.<sup>41</sup> Session XIV insisted that sacrament of penance requires contrition, confession (of all mortal sin especially), and satisfaction, albeit Trent seems to suggest attrition may suffice. Absolution was (or was like) a judicial act, limited to priests and in reserved cases to bishops, etc.<sup>42</sup> Despite attempts to allow the reception of the Eucharist in both kinds in certain dioceses or to Protestant converts, session XXI maintained, "laity and clergy, who are not consecrating, are under no divine command" to receive both species. The church has the authority to make communicating in one kind "its rule, which ... is not to be freely changed without the church's authority."<sup>43</sup> In

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<sup>38</sup> *Decrees*, 2:671–81.

<sup>39</sup> *Decrees*, 2:681–83.

<sup>40</sup> *Decrees*, 2:684–89.

<sup>41</sup> *Decrees*, 2:693–98.

<sup>42</sup> *Decrees*, 2:703–13.

<sup>43</sup> *Decrees*, 2:726–28. On April 16, 1564, the pope acted on a Tridentine proposal and permitted communion in both kinds under certain conditions in specific German and Habsburg territories.

order to distance itself from “resacrifice,” session XXII affirmed that the mass makes present or “re[-]presented” (*repraesentaretur*) Christ’s once for all sacrifice to the Father that secured eternal redemption. It is “truly a propitiatory sacrifice” for the living and dead. “For it is one and same victim [Christ] here offering himself by the ministry of his priests, who then offered himself on the cross: it is only the matter of offering that is different.” This session further defended: the antiquity and orthodoxy of its “venerable eucharistic prayer” (*sacrum canonem*), private masses, and the celebration of the mass in Latin, albeit priests were also encouraged to provide vernacular explanations of the service during the mass.<sup>44</sup> This session’s reform decrees agreed to a number of articles on the proper conduct of the clergy.<sup>45</sup>

Session XXIII maintained that a hierarchically ordered ministry was Biblical founded. On the basis of 2 Timothy 1:6–7, it affirmed that bishops bestowed on priests an indelible character through ordination which granted the faculties necessary to effect the sacraments. “The holy council further declares that ... bishops in particular belong to this hierarchal order and (as the apostles says) have been made by the holy Spirit *rulers of the church of God*; and that they are higher than priests and are able to confer the sacrament of confirmation, to ordain the ministers of the church....”<sup>46</sup> After repeated attempts throughout the council to declare episcopal residency a divine law (*ius divinum*), this session’s reform decree compromised: “All to whom the care of souls has been entrusted are subject to the divine command (*praecepto*) to know their sheep....” Diocesan colleges, moreover, were now mandated for improving priestly formation.<sup>47</sup> Session XXIV prohibited another marriage of even the innocent party after an infidelity had occurred. It

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<sup>44</sup> *Decrees*, 2:732–37.

<sup>45</sup> *Decrees*, 2:737–41.

<sup>46</sup> *Decrees*, 2:742–44.

<sup>47</sup> *Decrees*, 2:744–53.

prohibited clerics from entering the state of holy matrimony and still deemed celibate life to be a greater calling.<sup>48</sup> This session's reform decrees required that bishops convene synods every year and that bishops conduct regular visitations.<sup>49</sup> Sessions XXV affirmed the orthodoxy of purgatory, intercession of the saints, as well as the veneration of saints and adoration of God through relics and icons.<sup>50</sup> This session's reform decrees focused on reforms of the regular clergy and cathedral chapters. The remarks on indulgences and fasting regulations were glossed over due to time constraints.

Ironically, the rise of Protestantism inadvertently brought about a Papalization of the church (i.e., it strengthened the power of the papacy). Roman Catholics inevitably had to galvanize around it.<sup>51</sup> The council took significant steps to distance itself from Protestantism, to define Roman Catholicism, and to reform abuses that would shape the church for centuries to come. In fact, the Cardinal Archbishop of Milan Carlo Borromeo (1538–84) would be celebrated as the model of the pastoral reforming bishop that the council sought to foster.<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, Trent did not affirm an episcopal share in guidance of the universal church, it entrusted the reform of the papacy to the curia, and it left the papal claims asserted by Lateran V unquestioned. The council even had the pope ratify its decrees and canons on January 26, 1564.<sup>53</sup> To be sure, Trent was only appropriated in varying degrees in different Roman Catholic lands.<sup>54</sup> That said, the subsequent papal promulgation of a revised *Index of Forbidden Books* (1564), the

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<sup>48</sup> *Decrees*, 2:753–59.

<sup>49</sup> *Decrees*, 2:759–74.

<sup>50</sup> *Decrees*, 2:774–76.

<sup>51</sup> John W. O'Malley, *Catholic History for Today's Church: How Our Past Illuminates Our Present* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 7–14.

<sup>52</sup> R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal 1540–1770*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 111–26.

<sup>53</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 1847–50), 431–33.

<sup>54</sup> See Marc R. Foster, *Catholic Germany from the Reformation to the Enlightenment* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

*Tridentine Creed* (1564), *Roman Catechism* (1566), *Roman Breviary* (1568), and *Roman Missal* 1570, and the Sixto-Clementine Vulgate (1592) helped forge a unified vision of a Papal Catholicism that was unknown to the Medieval Latin Church.<sup>55</sup> In point of fact, the *Roman Catechism* may only be the second or third catechism (after Jesuit Peter Canisius's [1521–97] 1555 *Summa Doctrinae Christianae* and 1556 *Catechismus Minor*, from which it borrows) to treat the papacy, a topic that is not even discussed by Trent.

... So has he [Christ] placed over his Church, which he governs by his invisible spirit, a man to be his vicar, and the minister of his power: a visible Church requires a visible head, and, therefore, does the Saviour appoint Peter head and pastor of all the faithful, when, in most ample terms, he commits to his care the feeding of all his sheep; desiring that he, who was to succeed him, should be invested with the very same power of ruling and governing the entire Church.<sup>56</sup>

This essay will now chart the evolution of Roman Catholic theology and practice into the present. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Jesuits helped develop Tridentine Catholicism in new and sometimes controversial ways, but the fissure it created in Christendom would soon temper the remarkable advance of Early Modern Catholicism. Roman Catholic theologians like Michael Baius (1513–89) and Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638) maintained that Trent and the Jesuits had veered too far away from the soteriology of St. Augustine to counter Protestantism.<sup>57</sup> Following the death of the latter, a Jansenist movement thrived, which called for a more Augustinian Catholicism until it was squashed in 1713.<sup>58</sup> The Society of Jesus's Semi-Pelagian heightening of free will's role in salvation (Molinism), most famously articulated by Luis de Molina (1535–1600), brought the new order into loggerheads with other Catholics,

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<sup>55</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 1851–80), 433–37. See also *Decrees*, 2:796–99.

<sup>56</sup> *The Catechism of the Council of Trent: Published by Command of Pope Pius the Fifth*, trans. J. Donovan (Baltimore: James Myres, 1833), 96–97. Later editions list this as pt. I, chap. X, q. 9.

<sup>57</sup> William Doyle, *Jansenism: Catholic Resistance to Authority from the Reformation to the French Revolution* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

<sup>58</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 1901–80, 1999–2007, 2010–12, 2301–2332, 2390–2510), 437–47, 455–57, 489–92, 497–507.



especially the Dominicans. This was only compounded by the society's approach to moral theology (attrition and probabilism) and the syncretistic practices of Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (1552–1610).<sup>59</sup> The society ultimately advanced its theology, but its interference in politics (as confessors to the great catholic houses) led to the temporary suppression of the order in 1773.<sup>60</sup>

Just as a divided Christendom was being perceived as a crisis of truth, Roman Catholicism found itself refuting its own version of Pietism (called Quietism).<sup>61</sup> Far more threatening was the Radical Enlightenment's attempt to resolve the crisis by grounding truth on pure reason rather than a seemingly hermeneutically fraught Bible and tradition. Long thought to be completely hostile to the Enlightenment, some Roman Catholics synthesized their faith with the new thinking in moderate or radical ways. Oratorian priest Richard Simon (1638–1712) pioneered historical criticism. The medicine professor Jean Astruc (1684–1766) laid the foundations for the documentary hypothesis. Vincentian priest Antoine-Adrian Lamourette (1742–94) made the case for tolerating non-Catholic faiths, limiting the rights of the clergy, and storming the Bastille.<sup>62</sup> Meanwhile, Gallicanism, Febronianism, and Josephinism all challenged the authority of the papacy in eighteenth century France and the Holy Roman Empire. Such movements met papal condemnation because they sought to limit papal power over national churches and instead asserted the power of the bishops and civil magistrates.<sup>63</sup> Finally, the

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<sup>59</sup> John W. O'Malley, *The Jesuits: A History from Ignatius to the Present* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).

<sup>60</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 1997, 2008, 2021–2195, 2290–92, 2564–65), 453–54, 456–57, 459–79, 488–89, 520.

<sup>61</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 2181–2269, 2351–74), 476–86, 493–96.

<sup>62</sup> Ulrich L. Lehner, *The Catholic Enlightenment: The Forgotten History of a Global Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Jeffrey D. Burson and Ulrich L. Lehner, eds., *Enlightenment and Catholicism in Europe: A Translational History* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2014); Ulrich L. Lehner and Michael Printy, eds., *A Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment in Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

<sup>63</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 2281–85, 2592–97, 2590–2706), 487–88, 525–56.

French Revolution's (1789–99) policy of dechristianization became so radical that it secularized church property. It executed (or exiled) priests (and religious) for refusing to take an oath of loyalty to the 1790 *Civil Constitution of the Clergy*. The revolution banned monastic vows, introduced the Cult of Reason, converted churches into temples of reason, and blotted out Sunday or any other vestiges of Christianity from public life. For this reason, Napoleon's (1769–1821) Concordat of 1801 was a godsend. Even though it restored a much more limited church than that of the *Ancien Régime*, it provided a new model for papal and civil relations that would allow for a new flowering of the Church of Rome.

The juggernaut of progress ran through the nineteenth and early twentieth century colliding into everything in its path.<sup>64</sup> The technological advances of the industrial revolution created a profound shift in the way people lived out their daily lives—a shift that sometimes had deeply dehumanizing effects. Social upheaval sparked calls for liberal democratic reforms. These, in turn, drove the 1848 revolutions that set Europe ablaze. Immanuel Kant's (1724–1804) Copernican Revolution of the Mind completely reoriented the way philosophers and theologians would do their thinking in the modern world. Karl Marx's (1818–83) *Communist Manifesto* (1848) synthesized the radical spirit on the socio-economic, political, and religio-philosophical fringes of the day. While Marx's proletariat vision could not yet overturn the monarchies of Europe, constitutional protections (e.g. freedom of the press, universal male suffrage, trade associations, etc.) came about and the bourgeoisie flourished.<sup>65</sup> Some Roman Catholics like Hugues Félicité Robert de Lamennais's (1782–1854), the father of the Liberal Catholicism,

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<sup>64</sup> For an overview of modern Catholicism, see *Religion Past and Present: Encyclopedia of Religion and Theology*, 4th ed., s.v. "Catholicism."

<sup>65</sup> Peter J. Casarella, "Modernity and Post-Modernity," in *The Blackwell Companion to Catholicism*, ed. James L. Buckley, Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt, and Trent Pomplun (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 81–95.

pushed the papacy to harmonize the Catholic faith with the new politics of the times only to experience papal repudiation. Liberal Catholicism wanted to bring the democratic values of the French Revolution into concord with Roman Catholicism.<sup>66</sup> Other Roman Catholics like the Tübingen School sought to reconcile their faith with Kant and the German Idealists. Those that wrestled with the new foundation for theology in the structures of the human mind were once again met with condemnation.<sup>67</sup>

A revival of Ultramontanism from the Latin “beyond the mountains” defined the church of this age. This long-running movement condemned modernistic errors and asserted the authority of the papacy (beyond the Alps) as the anchor of Christian society.<sup>68</sup> The instability of the times fomented a rise in priests and females entering religious life. New orders arose that focused on mission in Africa and Asia. The laity found expression as well in new catholic associations, like Catholic Action, which resisted the rising tide of anti-clericalism. Between 1830 and 1933, a series of papal approved Marian apparitions occurred in Paris, France (1830), La Salette, France (1846), Lourdes, France (1858), Pontmain, France (1871), Knock, Ireland (1879), Fátima, Portugal (1917), Beauraing, Belgium (1932–33), and Banneux, Belgium (1933) that challenged the rising denial of the supernatural. Meanwhile the longest reigning pope in history, Pius IX (1792–1878), built a sort of theological bunker on top of this foundation to defend Catholicism from the errors of modernity. On December 8, 1854, he crowned the Marian apparitions with a papal solemnization of the dogma of the immaculate conception of Mary.<sup>69</sup> Ten years later to the day, he issued the *Syllabus of Errors* (1864), which condemned eighty

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<sup>66</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 2730–32), 561–62.

<sup>67</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 2738–40, 2751–56, 2765–69, 2828–45), 562–63, 565–66, 567–68, 577–80.

<sup>68</sup> Lawrence S. Cunningham, *An Introduction to Catholicism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 195–218.

<sup>69</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 2800–2804), 573–75.

errors on the topics of pantheism, naturalism, absolute rationalism, moderate rationalism, indifferentism, latitudinarianism, church and her rights, civil society, natural and Christian ethics, Christian marriage, civil power of the Roman pontiff, and liberalism.<sup>70</sup> He then opened the first council in about three hundred years, Vatican I (1869–1870).<sup>71</sup> There, the pope was declared infallible whenever he speaks *ex cathedra*. This was a direct refutation of the civil power’s ever-increasing attempts to control their churches. However, it also caused the famous dissention of Munich theology professor Ignaz von Döllinger (1799–1890), resulting in the formation of the Old Catholic Church. Just when papal power claims appeared to have reached a new zenith, Pope Pius IX, reminiscent of Boniface VIII (1235–1303), had to adjourn the council prematurely. Victor Emmanuel II (1820–78) invaded the Papal States and annexed them into a new united Italy.<sup>72</sup> Pius IX and his successors subsequently refused to accept the annexation and insisted that they were prisoners in the Vatican.

Pope Leo XIII (1810–1903) continued the conservative tradition of his predecessor, but set it on a Neo-Thomistic footing that shaped Catholic thought (e.g. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange [1877–1964], Jacques Maritain [1882–1973], and Étienne Gilson [1884–78]) right up to Vatican II.<sup>73</sup> In the encyclical *Aeterni patris* (1879), he made Thomism the normative system for the propagation of the catholic worldview.<sup>74</sup> He laid the foundation for Catholic social thought in *Rerum novarum* (1891), which centered in the principles of the dignity of the human person, the common good, and subsidiarity.<sup>75</sup> Leo XIII is also known as the first pope to teach Mary as the

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<sup>70</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 2901–2980), 590–98.

<sup>71</sup> For an overview of Vatican I, see *Theologische Realenzyklopädia*, s.v. “Vatikanum I und II”; *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v., “Vatican Council I.”

<sup>72</sup> *Decrees*, 2:802–16.

<sup>73</sup> Gerald A. McCool, *From Unity to Pluralism: The Internal Evolution of Thomism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1989).

<sup>74</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 3135–40), 624–26.

<sup>75</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 3265–71), 650–52.

“mediatrix of grace.”<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, he foreshadowed the theological developments to come when he incardinated famous convert John Henry Newman (1801–90), the controversial theorist of the development of doctrine. The conservative vision of Catholicism would breathe its last breath in Pius X’s (1835–1920) antimodernist oath (1910), which would be repudiated in 1967.<sup>77</sup>

The World Wars signaled a new Catholic willingness to engage with modernity that would crescendo in the Second Vatican Council. Pius XI (1857–1939) came out of the Vatican and accepted the Lateran Treaty (1929). It recognized the sovereignty and autonomy of both the Vatican City and Italy. Pope Pius XII (1876–1958) is more often remembered for choosing the evil of fascism (over that of communism) than his protection of the Roman Jews. No less important are his encyclicals, like *Humani generis*, that are critical of the French “New Theology” (*Nouvelle Théologie*) of Henri de Lubac (1896–1991) and his “return to the sources” (*ressourcement*), but which also appropriate elements of this new theology.<sup>78</sup> His 1942 encyclical *Mystici corporis* put forth a more organic view of the church as the mystical body rather than the church as canonical institutional.<sup>79</sup> Pius XII opened the door wide to higher criticism in the encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu* (1943).<sup>80</sup> His 1947 *Mediator Dei* embraced the Belgian and German Liturgical Movement.<sup>81</sup> He made the assumption of Mary dogma in 1950.<sup>82</sup>

It was an unassuming Pope John XXIII (1881–1963), who surprised everyone when he called the Second Vatican Council (1962–65).<sup>83</sup> The council would prove to be a momentous

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<sup>76</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 3274–75), 653–54.

<sup>77</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 3537–50), 710–12.

<sup>78</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 3875–99), 799–808.

<sup>79</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 3880–22), 770–78.

<sup>80</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 3825–31), 779–83.

<sup>81</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 3840–55), 785–91.

<sup>82</sup> Denzinger, *Compendium*, (no. 3900–3904), 808–9.

<sup>83</sup> For an overview of Vatican II, see *Religion Past and Present: Encyclopedia of Religion and Theology*, 4th ed., s.v. “Vatican II”; *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, s.v. “Vatikanum I und II”; *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v., “Vatican Council II.”

event that captured the attention of the world. Vatican II's purpose was threefold: "the better internal ordering of the church, unity among Christians, and the promotion of peace throughout the world."<sup>84</sup> The council functioned with twin hermeneutics, albeit the council fathers often favored one or the other: The first, "return to the sources" (*ressourcement*), focused on appropriating the received ancient tradition. The second, "bringing up to date" (*aggiornamento*), focused henceforth on engaging the culture as authentically as possible. A little over three thousand council fathers participated. The previously suspect theologians of the French "New Theology" profoundly shaped the council. Nearly all the theological titans of the age were involved in the council except Bernard Lonergan (1904–84) and Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–88). Those in attendance included Marie-Dominique Chenu (1895–90), Henri de Lubac, Yves Congar (1904–95), Karl Rahner (1904–84), Jean Daniélou (1905–74), Edward Schillebeeckx (1914–2009), Karol Wojtyła (1920–2005), Joseph Ratzinger (1927–), and Hans Küng (1928–).<sup>85</sup> Rome also invited observers from churches not in communion with it.

The seventeen sessions of the council unfolded in four phases, each lasting about ten weeks. The council enacted four constitutions: *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Sacrosanctum Concilium)*, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen gentium)*, *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Dei verbum)*, and the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World Today (Gaudium et Spes)*. There were nine decrees: *Decree on Mass Media (Inter mirifica)*, *Decree on the Eastern Catholic Churches (Orientalium Ecclesiarum)*, *Decree on Ecumenism (Unitatis redintegratio)*, *Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church (Christus Dominus)*, *Decree on the Sensitive Renewal of Religious Life (Perfectae caritatis)*, *Decree on*

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<sup>84</sup> *Decrees*, 2:817.

<sup>85</sup> Fergus Kerr, *Twentieth-Century Catholic Theologians: From Neoscholasticism to Nuptial Mysticism* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007).

*Priestly Formation (Optatam totius)*, *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (Apostolicam actuositatem)*, *Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church (Ad gentes)*, and the *Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (Presbyterorum ordinis)*. Last there were three declarations: the *Declaration on Christian Education (Gravissimum educationis)*, *Declaration on the Church's Relation to Non-Christian Religions (Nostra aetate)*, and the *Declaration on Religious Freedom (Dignitatis humanae)*.<sup>86</sup> The decrees had a new pastoral tone instead of the canonical verbiage of previous councils.<sup>87</sup> Since the work of the council is so extensive, it is best to summarize its themes as follows:

1. A reversal of the tendency to enclose the Church in some kind of spiritual and intellectual fortress. The pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world (*Gaudium et spes*) was not only addressed to all persons of good will but charged the Church itself to take its place in the needs and aspirations of all humanity.
2. A ringing endorsement of the idea of ecumenical and interreligious engagement and, where possible, cooperation. The declaration *Nostra aetate* was the premier document among others that fostered that idea.
3. A radical reform of the liturgy including an openness to a vernacular liturgy and the adaptation of the liturgy to the cultural needs of the worldwide Church.
4. A reversal of the older notion that the Church should be privileged in social society and an affirmation of the right of religious liberty.
5. A partial attempt to balance the rights and duties of the bishops in relation to the papacy so as to right an imbalance between papal and episcopal authority that developed after the proclamation of papal infallibility at the First Vatican Council.
6. A demand that the antiquated customs and usages in religious life be examined in the light of the original intentions of their founders and an *aggiornamento* in light of the current pastoral needs.
7. A description of the Church to right the undue emphasis on Church as a rigid hierarchy by underscoring the common membership of all baptized persons as part of the pilgrim people of God.<sup>88</sup>

Pope Paul VI brought the council to its conclusion. As the papal interpreter of Vatican II, his attempt to work within its hermeneutical framework is demonstrated in his controversial encyclical *Humanae vitae* (1968), which opposed artificial contraception, and his promulgation of the 1969 *Roman Missal*, which actualized vernacular liturgical reforms.

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<sup>86</sup> *Decrees*, 2:817–1135.

<sup>87</sup> John W. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

<sup>88</sup> Cunningham, *An Introduction*, 212–13.

The election of Polish Karol Wojtyła as Pope John Paul II caught everyone off guard. He was the first non-Italian elected since the sixteenth century. Now known as John Paul the Great, his trials under Nazism and communism, philosophical personalism, and mystical bent, not to mention his photogenic know-how, pastoral disposition, and travel to meet the faithful around the world made him uniquely suited to lead Catholics into the twenty-first century. John Paul II was regarded to be a theological conservative, who took an active interest in Catholic social thought, even contributing to the collapse of the iron curtain. Still he sought to cultivate better relations with the Eastern Orthodox, Protestants, as well as other world religions.<sup>89</sup>

One of his first acts was to expand *Humanae Vitae* into a full Catholic anthropology by means of a series of lectures (1978–84). These lectures called the *Theology of the Body*, which especially reflected on Christian sexuality, worked from the premise that the human body is a visible sign of the invisible God. In 1983, he promulgated the *Code of Canon Law* in order to bring the canons into conformity with the Vatican II. John Paul II issued the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in 1992. Entrusting it to his conservative right hand, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, it was the first universal catechism since Trent, and it served as a corrective to the proliferation of many zealously modern national catechisms. Yet on none other than October 31, 1999, representatives of John Paul II and the Lutheran World Federation signed the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*. Rather than being an authentic common confession of justification though, this document suggested that the ecclesiastical divide between Lutherans and Catholics is now more rooted in the different theological grammars (or language) in which each side has encased its respective formulations of justification than a genuine doctrinal divide.

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<sup>89</sup> George Weigel, *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2001); George Weigel, *The End and the Beginning: Pope John Paul II—The Victory of Freedom, the Last Years, the Legacy* (New York: Image Books, 2010).



For this reason, the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference, the International Lutheran Council, and some significant Lutheran World Federation theologians have rightly rejected it.

Weighing in on the papacies of Benedict XVI and Francis I still seems more like journalism than history. Suffice it to say that if Benedict XVI represents a turn towards *ressourcement*, then Francis I represents a swinging of the pendulum back towards *aggiornamento*. The former Joseph Ratzinger, Benedict XVI, did more than maintain his predecessor's opposition to clerical marriage, female priests, and birth control. He has also encouraged the celebration of the Latin Mass and took a more hardline stance against Islam. In contrast, the former Jorge Bergoglio, Francis I, is the first Jesuit and man from the New World to sit upon the papal throne. No less prone to controversy than Benedict XVI, if not more, Francis I's nebulous language about LGBT issues, the environment, capitalism, and the communing of the divorced have been openly disputed even by the cardinals.<sup>90</sup>

Now that this essay has come full circle, it is ready to address the questions that first prompted it. Is Lutheranism still relevant today? Has Roman Catholicism distanced itself from the Council of Trent? One would have to conclude that the assimilation of Classical Liberal Protestant tenants or at least those of Protestant Neo-Orthodoxy have marked the evolution of Roman Catholicism. It has come to accept modern philosophical presuppositions, Biblical criticism, theistic evolution, female extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, ecumenism, dialogue with non-Christian religions, and the possibility of salvation for non-Christians that reach out to God. In truth, Roman Catholicism has also accepted some elements of Classical Lutheranism, such as: vernacular worship, communion in two kinds, the priesthood of all

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<sup>90</sup> Edward Pentin, "Full Text and Explanatory Notes of Cardinals' Questions on 'Amoris Laetitia,'" *National Catholic Register*, November 14, 2016, accessed January 2, 2017, <http://www.ncregister.com/blog/edward-pentin/full-text-and-explanatory-notes-of-cardinals-questions-on-amoris-laetitia>.

believers, as well as vocation. No doubt, church historians have deepened their respective tradition's understanding of the other as well. But the sum and substance of Trent remains in effect the same. In some ways, like contemporary positions on the Papacy and Mariology, Trent has even been amplified. For this reason, Lutheranism remains as relevant as ever on the eve of this long anticipated Reformationtide.

## APPENDIX

### HISTORIOGRAPHY OF EARLY MODERN CATHOLICISM

Scholarship has long been divided over what to call Early Modern Catholicism. The Latin term “reformation” (*reformatio*) originally referred chiefly to personal transformation or renewal in the patristic era (Romans 12:2, Vulgate). It was expanded in the time of the Gregorian Reform (1073–85) to include the institutional reform of the church via faithful adherence to the canons, and in the Late Middle Ages, reformation was very much the talk of the day.<sup>91</sup> By 1688, Lutherans had so well appropriated the term for themselves that the Saxon statesman, Veit Ludwig von Seckendorff (1626–92), helped make it the normative historiographical description of Luther’s movement in his history of Lutheranism.<sup>92</sup> Roman Catholics past and present have long disputed the merits of defining Luther’s movement as the “Reformation,” but the historian’s use of this term to describe the Protestant movement continued until its meaning was expanded in the last two centuries.<sup>93</sup> Current historical parlance prefers the plural “Reformations” to “Reformation,” emphasizing the uniqueness of not only the Lutheran Reformation and Reformed (Anglican) Reformation, but also the Roman Catholic Reformation.<sup>94</sup>

Early Modern Lutherans were likewise opposed to ceding the term “catholic” to the Roman Church because it could neither be theologically nor historically identified with the church of Matthew 16:18. Instead, the German Lutheran lawyer Johann Stephan Pütter (1725–1807) introduced the term “Counter-Reformations” (*Gegenreformationen*) in the 1760s to

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<sup>91</sup> The subsequent discussion of the historiography of Early Modern Catholicism is indebted to the seminal work of John W. O’Malley. See his *Trent and All That: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

<sup>92</sup> Veit Ludwig von Seckendorff, *Commentarius Historicus Et Apologeticus De Lutheranismo Sive De Reformatione Religionis ductu D. Martini Lutheri ... ostensa* (Frankfurt a. M.: Johann Gleditsch, 1688).

<sup>93</sup> See John Bossy, *Christianity in the West 1400–1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

<sup>94</sup> Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations*, 2nd ed. (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

describe the recatholization of Lutheran territories in the empire through political, military, and diplomatic means between the Augsburg Interim (1548) and the Thirty Years' War (1618–48).<sup>95</sup> The father of modern historical study, Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886), standardized the singular use of the term “Counter-Reformation” both as a description of the period following the Reformation (1517–55) and as a comprehensive description of the Roman Catholicism of that period.<sup>96</sup> Still he was well aware of the reforms that did occur in Catholicism as his well-measured *Roman Popes of the Last Four Centuries* attests.

In contradistinction, the Lutheran historian Wilhelm Maurenbrecher (1838–92) proposed the term “Catholic Reformation” (*katholische Reformation*) to better articulate the reform efforts in the Late Medieval Latin Church.<sup>97</sup> This term along with a host of others like “Tridentine Era,” “Baroque Catholicism,” etc. would be capitalized upon by early twentieth-century Roman Catholic church historians. Still, it took the famed Catholic historian Hubert Jedin (1900–1980) to make “Catholic Reformation and Counter-Reformation” normative in 1946. He used the former to describe the reforms initiated in the Late Middle Ages, the Council of Trent, and thereafter. He used the latter to describe all the efforts Roman Catholics used to defend themselves.<sup>98</sup>

In 1977, Roman Catholic historian Wolfgang Reinhard (1937–) complimented Heinz Schilling's (1942–) conception of “Lutheran Confessionalization” and “Reformed Confessionalization” with parallel concept of “Catholic Confessionalization.” This largely socio-

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<sup>95</sup> Johann Stephan Pütter, *Die augsburgische Confession ... wird* (Göttingen: Wittve Vandenhoeck, 1776), 10.

<sup>96</sup> Leopold von Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation* (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1842–47), 5:501.

<sup>97</sup> Wilhelm Maurenbrecher, *Geschichte der katholischen Reformation* (Nördlingen: C. H. Beck, 1880).

<sup>98</sup> Hubert Jedin, *Katholische Reformation oder Gegenreformation? Ein Versuch zur Klärung der Begriffe nebst einer Jubiläumsbetrachtung über das Trienter Konzil* (Lucerne: Josef Stocker, 1946).

political thesis has gained credence, especially outside of church history scholarship. It overcame Max Weber's (1864–1920) notion that Roman Catholicism was most backward of the three great Western confessions and argued that Catholicism was just as much an agent of modernization as the other confessions.<sup>99</sup>

Most recently, the American Jesuit church historian John W. O'Malley (1927–) has argued that “Early Modern Catholicism” is the best description of this period.

Although bland and less specific than the four names [Counter Reformation, Catholic Reform or Catholic Reformation, Tridentine Reform and Tridentine Age, and Confessional Age or Confessional Catholicism] we have discussed, it welcomes them under its umbrella, where they can, when properly defined, provide more precision on certain issues.... Early Modern Catholicism suggests both change and continuity without pronouncing on which predominates.... This term seems more amenable to the results of “history from below” than the four just discussed.... [I]t allows that even after Trent Catholic religious identity might have found its genesis more in the traditional practices and the close-knit kinships of local communities than in passive acceptance of hierarchy and of ecclesial disciplining, increasingly important though these were.... Early Modern Catholicism thus provides room to move back a step from Europe to include in our purview Marie de l'Incarnation in Quebec, José de Acosta in Peru, and Matteo Ricci in Beijing.... “Early Modern Catholicism” as a more open term, has more space for the new roles played by Catholic women, lay and religious.<sup>100</sup>

This conception of the Early Modern Catholicism has established itself among scholars today as evident in the most recent editions of *Reformation and Early Modern Europe: A Guide to Research*.<sup>101</sup> Even though this thesis does not clearly stress the fact that global Roman Catholicism is still essentially a Roman or papal church, O'Malley's conception of “Early Modern Catholicism” does not truncate the Roman Catholicism of this period like other descriptions tend to do.

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<sup>99</sup> Wolfgang Reinhard, “Gegenreformation als Modernisierung,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 68 (1977): 226–52.

<sup>100</sup> O'Malley, *Trent and All That*, 140–43.

<sup>101</sup> Robert Bireley, “Early Modern Catholicism,” in *Reformation and Early Modern Europe: A Guide to Research*, ed. David M. Whitford (Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2008), 57–79.