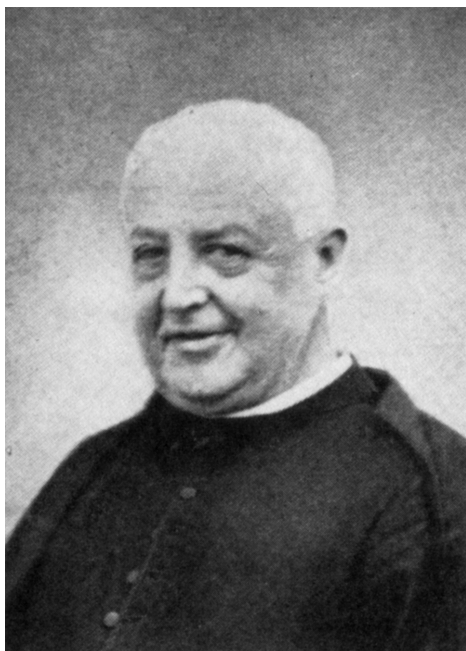


LIBERALISM IS A SIN

Liberalism is the root of heresy, the tree of evil in whose branches all the harpies of infidelity find ample shelter; it is today the evil of all evils. (Page 22).

“The theater, literature, public and private morals are all saturated with obscenity and impurity. The result is inevitable; a corrupt generation necessarily begets a revolutionary generation. Liberalism is the program of naturalism. Free thought begets free morals, or immorality. Restraint is thrown off and a free rein given to the passions. Whoever thinks what he pleases will do what he pleases. Liberalism in the intellectual order is license in the moral order. Disorder in the intellect begets disorder in the heart, and vice-versa. Thus does Liberalism propagate immorality, and immorality Liberalism.” (Page 125).



Don Félix Sardá y Salvany
1844-1916

LIBERALISM Is A SIN

BY

DR. DON FELIX SARDA Y SALVANY

TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED
FOR AMERICAN READERSHIP BY

CONDÉ B. PALLÉN, Ph.D., LL.D.

Liberalism “is, therefore, the radical and universal denial of all divine truth and Christian dogma, the primal type of all heresy, and the supreme rebellion against the authority of God and His Church. As with Lucifer, its maxim is, ‘I will not serve.’” (Page 16).

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“Liberalism, whether in the doctrinal or practical order, is a sin. In the doctrinal order, it is heresy, and consequently a mortal sin against faith. In the practical order, it is a sin against the commandments of God and of the Church, for it virtually transgresses all commandments. To be more precise: in the doctrinal order, Liberalism strikes at the very foundations of faith; it is heresy radical and universal, because within it are comprehended all heresies. In the practical order it is a radical and universal infraction of the divine law, since it sanctions and authorizes all infractions of that law.”
(Page 14).

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PREFACE

In 1886 there appeared in Spain a little work under the title *El Liberalismo es Pecado*, "Liberalism Is a Sin," by Don Felix Sarda y Salvany, a priest of Barcelona and editor of a journal called *La Revista Popular*. The book excited considerable commotion. It was vigorously assailed by the Liberals. A Spanish Bishop of a Liberal turn instigated an answer to Dr. Sarda's work by way of another Spanish priest. Both books were sent to Rome, praying the Sacred Congregation of the Index to put Dr. Sarda's work under the ban. The following letter, under date of January 10, 1887, from the Sacred Congregation itself, explains the result of its consideration of the two volumes:

TO THE MOST REV. JACOBO CATALA ET ALBOSO,
Bishop of Barcelona

Most Excellent Sir:

The Sacred Congregation of the Index has received the denunciation of the little work bearing the title *El Liberalismo es Pecado* by Don Felix Sarda y Salvany, a priest of your diocese; the

denunciation was accompanied at the same time by another little work, entitled *El Proceso del Integrismo*, that is, "A refutation of the errors contained in the little work *El Liberalismo es Pecado*." The author of the second work is D. de Pazos, a canon of the diocese of Vich.

Whereupon, the Sacred Congregation has carefully examined both works and decided as follows: In the first, not only is nothing found contrary to sound doctrine, but its author, D. Felix Sarda, merits great praise for his exposition and defense of the sound doctrine therein set forth with solidity, order and lucidity, and without personal offense to anyone.

The same judgment, however, cannot be passed on the other work, that by D. de Pazos, for in matter it needs corrections. Moreover, his injurious manner of speaking cannot be approved, for he inveighs rather against the person of D. Sarda than against the latter's supposed errors.

Therefore, the Sacred Congregation has commanded D. de Pazos, admonished by his own Bishop, to withdraw his book, as far as he can, from circulation, and in the future, if any discussion of the subject should arise, to abstain from all expressions personally injurious, according to the precept of true Christian charity; and this all the more since Our Holy Father, Leo XIII, whereas he urgently recommends castigation of error, neither desires nor approves expressions personally injurious, especially when directed against those

who are eminent for their doctrine and their piety.

In communicating to you this order of the Sacred Congregation of the Index, that you may be able to make it known to the illustrious priest of your diocese, D. Sarda, for his peace of mind, I pray God to grant you all happiness and prosperity, and subscribe myself with great respect,

Your most obedient servant,

FR. JEROME SECHERI, O.P.

*Secretary of the Sacred Congregation
Of the Index.*

The following short chapters on Liberalism are mainly and substantially Dr. Sarda's book, put into English and adapted to our American conditions. Their need and their use will be best understood and appreciated by their perusal.

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

People today are almost universally asking, "What has happened to our society? What is *wrong*?" The book you hold in your hands, Dear Reader, contains in essence the answers to these questions.

Liberalism Is A Sin was written in Spain by Fr. Felix Sarda y Salvany in 1886 and was translated and adapted for U.S. readership by Conde B. Pallen, Ph.D., L.L.D. under the title *What Is Liberalism?* and published in English in 1899. The book went through various reprints from the original hardbound edition of the B. Herder Book Company, the latest of which were done by TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., the first in 1979, and then the second one in 1989. This present edition of the book has been completely retypeset in a more readable style, using modern spelling and punctuation. Plus, we have brought up to date Dr. Pallen's statistics cited in Chapter 1. Also, we have changed the title from Dr. Pallen's *What Is Liberalism?* back to Fr. Sarda y Salvany's original and more provocative title, *Liberalism Is A Sin*.

We have also added most of the italics and all the capitalization in the text, to emphasize important points and to give the reader a little better frame of reference in each chapter. Other than these minor changes, the book is the same as the one Conde Pallen issued in 1899 and substantially the same as the Reverend Dr. Sarda y Salvany's original Spanish text.

Liberalism Is A Sin is one of the most important books for Catholics today (and for non-Catholics, too, if they will read it with an open mind). For it discusses the problem of Liberalism, both in its principles and in all its details and ramifications. (It must be noted here that as the word is used in this present context, "Liberalism" refers to religion and not to politics, though it definitely bears upon that realm as well.)

By definition, Liberalism is the mistaken notion that "One religion is as good as another." The absurdity of this proposition is immediately obvious to all, for two beliefs that contradict each other cannot at the same time both be true. Therefore, insofar as one at least is false, it is simply not good at all, and definitely it is not as good as a belief which is true. Nor is it even as good as one that is *nearer* to the truth. Also, Liberalism takes no cognizance of there being in the world a One, True, Divinely revealed Religion that is true in all its doctrines and moral teachings—which is exactly what the Roman Catholic Church unabashedly maintains that it is.

This book shows that Liberalism—at least here in America—is all-pervasive and is almost, as it were, universally victorious over the thinking of our people. Yet as a religious-philosophical tenet it is *false!* And *woefully* so! For, as the author points out, it leads to an eventual denial of *any* truth whatsoever by some of its adherents. For people hear first one religious “truth” asserted and then another that contradicts it, and soon they are so confused that they do not know what to believe. And often they end up believing nothing—or holding that nothing is certain, even in matters relating to the Natural Law, which all people know through the use of their reason alone.

Regarding its source, Liberalism, as the author shows very clearly, is a direct result of Protestantism, with its tenet of private interpretation of the Bible. For if a person has a right to decide for himself what the Bible means, this says in effect that he has a right to choose whether he will believe or not believe certain revealed teachings. Then in effect, he also has a right to believe nothing at all. Whereas the correct view is that when the mind of man sees the divinely revealed truth, he has NO CHOICE, *morally speaking*, to reject it. Its obvious truth requires that he *must* accept it as true.

(Society, on the other hand, must concede every person a *civil* right to reject religious truth, as far as he *individually* is concerned, but that is only because both religion and society must allow a

person to exercise his free will and to choose for himself whether he will accept or reject God's Revelation. He who rejects the truth, however, must personally bear whatever evil consequences that result from his own personal choice.)

For some, this book may be difficult because they are unaccustomed to reading abstract, theoretical books, but the issues it discusses are so important to each person individually, and to our society as a whole, that it behooves everyone to persist to the end (the concluding chapter is one of the best in the book, maybe even the best), and even to reread the book, that he or she might become completely familiar with the issues covered here.

For *Liberalism* says in effect that there is no objective truth, which is patently absurd. And in the practical order—in our social and political lives—*Liberalism* leads to a practiced atheism, that is, to a situation in society where, though we do not deny the *existence* of God, we nonetheless must conduct ourselves vis-a-vis one another *as if God did not exist*, because we must in effect deny that He has a right to tell man what to do. This situation results from Liberalism's denying in effect that there is one body of revealed truth, with which man must comply. Liberalism therefore destroys adherence even to the Natural Law, that law which we all understand to be true without the assistance of divine Revelation. But it also destroys the universal acceptance among people of divine Revelation. Adherence to both the supernatural

and the natural order, therefore, breaks down under its influence, and the result is chaos in individual lives and anarchy in society.

The all-pervading Liberal ideas that "one religion is basically as good as another" and that "it does not matter what a person believes so long as he is a good person" were spawned almost automatically and by logical necessity, as it were, due to the historical context leading up to where we find ourselves today.

By the year 304 A.D., Christianity (read here "Catholicism") had pretty well permeated and converted the ancient Roman world, so that with the victory of Constantine the Great at that time in the battle of the Malvian Bridge and with his succession as Roman Emperor in that year, Catholicism became the official religion of society. And as the Roman world more and more influenced its neighbors, especially the northern European peoples, the civilization that developed there was Roman-Catholicized civilization, or Catholicized-Roman civilization, if you will. At the time of the Protestant Reformation (read "Revolt"), starting in 1517 and continuing throughout that century, European civilization had already been well formed by the Catholic religion for, at the most, 1,200 years in some regions to, at the least, 400 years in others.

Significant for our Western civilization is the fact, as Hilaire Belloc points out in *Essays of a Catholic*, that THE PEOPLE WHO HAD BECOME PROTESTANT DID NOT ABANDON THEIR CATHOLIC

MORAL CUSTOMS. They continued to *live* by the truth which their Catholic forefathers had lived by for centuries. The only problem was that they no longer believed as true the religious-philosophical truths taught by the Revealed Religion, the Catholic Faith, which had created their customary and traditional ethic.

This dichotomy between varying professed faiths in the minds of people, on the one hand, and the continued practice of the traditional Catholic and therefore true moral customs, on the other, has come down into our own time. All during the centuries since Luther's revolt in 1517, society has been able to function fairly well, despite the various erroneous religious-philosophical ideas in the minds of people in the same nation—simply because, practically speaking, they were by and large *living* by the old inherited Catholic truths and practices, and this was what enabled our society to function more or less harmoniously, despite a diversity of belief among its members.

Let us pause here to name some of the Catholic social moral customs that are based on the revealed word of God: to worship God on Sunday, not to work on Sunday, to give honest work for your pay, not to steal, to keep monogamous marriage relations, not to practice polygamy, to avoid adultery and fornication, to shun homosexuality (*like a plague!*), to have children and not to practice birth control (let alone abortion), to raise and nurture them within the family they were born in,

to respect and care for the elderly, to nurse the sick, to bury the dead (in anticipation of the resurrection of the body), etc., etc.

Now, the average person might say, "Most of that we have always taken for granted." But the fact is that *now* (1993) most of these traditional customs—that have made our society workable heretofore—have been, not just called into question, but simply abandoned by many people, as if there were no objective truth, and definitely as if there were no divine retribution for sin left unexpiated. This abandonment is the direct result of the loss of the one, true Catholic faith as the integral creed of our society as a whole, which in turn has eventuated in the abandonment of traditional Catholic moral customs that enable man to live in conformity with God's laws and enable society to function harmoniously.

Liberalism, which in effect says, "It does not matter what you believe—or whether you believe anything at all"—could be held without dire results by even the majority of people in our present society—*so long as the majority of our people were also still practicing the old traditional (read "true," "Catholic") moral customs*, for these customs, based on the revealed truths of Almighty God and adherence to the Natural Law, enabled our society to function reasonably well. But now, in the 1990's, with so many people having lost touch with the *reasons* for morality and goodness, we live in a situation where many of these customs

have been abandoned by a large segment of our society, and the result is social disorder of the first magnitude.

It is only when the present disorder arose in our *social* affairs—when murders and broken marriages and people going berzerk in all sorts of ways—became epidemic that people universally began to ask: “WHAT IS WRONG?!” People in general do not understand philosophy, let alone the bad effects that a bad philosophy can have. These evil effects must first impinge on their lives—“smack them hard in the face”—before they cry out, “*What is wrong?!?*”

Well, Dear Reader, “What is wrong” is what has already been wrong for a very long time in the thinking of our people—they no longer profess the truth. They abandoned it starting in 1517, when Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the chapel door at Wittenberg and initiated his revolt against the True Faith and a unified Catholic society. They jettisoned the Revealed Religion of God, sort of like naughty children left home alone and rebelling against their parents’ firm (but orderly) rule—*not realizing that they were destroying the very underpinnings of society itself, not to mention the infinitely more important matter of abandoning the one and only vehicle of their eternal salvation.* And it was these people by and large who emigrated to North America and founded our nation.

I believe we can say with good historical

accuracy that the Catholic moral customs inherited from centuries of Catholic and Roman civilization survived until the decade of the 1960's, when the rot of Liberalism—spread at an accelerated rate by the immoral movie industry—had prepared the social seedbed for people finally to abandon the traditional Catholic moral customs. This abandonment of order for hedonism and personal licentiousness was precipitated during the 1960's, more than anything else, I believe, by the advent of the birth control pill, accompanied by the utter daring of the movie industry in portraying on the screen people actually committing fornication and adultery. The result over the next few years was a general disintegration of sexual morality, pandemic infidelity, a meteoric rise in divorce, and finally, the *coup de grace* for society, abortion. Top this all off with the concomitant alarming increase in drug abuse, and the rest of human morals simply disintegrated in the train.

This historical scenario we have actually witnessed in just the past 30 years! The discussion here, therefore, is *not* academic. For the collapse of Catholic customs has taken place only *recently*, and that within the lifetimes of many of us. The result—if not soon reversed—will destroy what is left of our civilization.

This collapse ultimately is the result of Protestantism—with its belief in private interpretation of the Bible. With the Protestant Revolt from revealed truth and the divinely established

authority in the person and office of the Pope in Rome, everyone became his own little pope. Whereas people could not abide one man's being infallible—one man, who held the divine commission from Jesus Christ Himself, when He said to St. Peter, "I say to thee: that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys to the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven" (*Matt.* 16:18-20); whereas they could not abide this one man's being infallible, whose authority exists only within the strictly defined limits of a tightly wrought, nearly 2,000-year, universally known tradition, all the while being guided by the Holy Spirit, the "Paraclete" whom Christ had sent; whereas they could not accept this sort of God-assisted, worldwide-visible, tightly constrained infallible teacher; they could and did accept, and continue to this day to accept, THEMSELVES(!) as the infallible, unfailing, inerant rule of faith and morals—they, who are often mental pygmies in theoretical matters, uninstructed in theology and philosophy, poorly informed, busy with practical affairs, weak, sick and all of that; *they themselves* are the *only*, the *one*, the *true* and *infallible authority* which they will accept—*only themselves!* God preserve us from such nonsense!

Is it any wonder we have ended with the social dilemmas we now face, when the majority of people in our society operate under an idea structure such as this? The moral, social, civil, political chaos we have brought upon ourselves is the direct result of Protestantism, with its disastrous tenet of "private interpretation," and its ugly stepchild, "Liberalism," which blesses the spiritual and moral disorder produced by Protestantism with the gooey mental salve of "One religion is as good as another," and its equally absurd corollary, "It doesn't matter what you believe, as long as you lead a good life."

As Fr. Sarda y Salvany states, "Protestantism is now a dead dog." (Page 74). But Liberalism still waxes strong in Protestantism's defense. However, the social upheaval of our times, brought on by these false ideas, now demands the ringing of the death-knell of Liberalism. We can no longer abide this error and survive as a civilization. For liberals in a society are like termites in a wooden house. They live off the house while it is still basically sound, saying all the while, "What harm do we do? The house still stands!" But we know that the house of our civilization is getting progressively weaker as the termite-Liberals increase and thrive, and at some point, in the not-too-distant future, we are going to crash!

It is my opinion that *we are now there!* We are about to crash as a civilization. And we need immediately to begin the process of exterminating

the verminous Liberal pest with large antidotes of real, logical truth, taken from the wellspring of all truth, our Divinely Revealed Religion—the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Faith. No other medicine will do for what is otherwise a terminal case for all of us.

We are at the point where action is imperative. For our very personal, earthly safety is at stake—not to mention the vastly more important matter of the salvation of our souls. But we can only act rightly if we *know* the truth and act in accordance with it.

Liberalism Is A Sin will focus our sights on the last enemy that needs to be destroyed before we can begin rebuilding the “Lost Faith” that makes life on this earth reasonable and harmonious and that enables people to obtain eternal salvation—if they will only embrace it and live by it. For Liberalism is all that is left standing between us and the shedding of the light of Catholic truth on all the problems of our times and eventuating thereby those real, lasting solutions to the moral, social and religious problems which now afflict us unto the death of our civilization.

Thomas A. Nelson
March 10, 1993

FOREWORD— WHY LIBERALISM CAN EXIST

A major factor related to our living in a post-Catholic civilization allows Liberalism to live and to thrive; it is an element the author does not touch upon, and in fact, which I have never seen mentioned by any other author, and it is this: Christianity (read "Catholicism") solved the nagging questions for mankind as to the purpose of life, whether man is immortal, and what is his eternal destiny. Those who have studied the pre-Christian-era literature of ancient Greece and Rome realize that the answers to these questions held at that time were at the very best vague, shadowy and uncertain notions in the minds of the ancient people. Save for the Israelite nation, singled out by God to prepare themselves (and to a certain extent, the world) for the coming of a Redeemer, the nations of the world by the time Our Lord Jesus Christ entered the picture of human history had pretty well lost the correct view of these important questions, which God had communicated to Adam and Eve and which had been handed down through the millenia before Christ.

But the teachings of Jesus Christ, once they had

permeated the Roman world and spread to the barbarian European nations, solved all these ultimate questions for our ancestors in the West. People were assured by Divine Revelation that man *is* immortal, that he is destined ultimately either to Heaven or to Hell, that these states last forever (in an ever-present *now* that the human mind, knowing only the element of change in this world, finds impossible fully to grasp) and that man's acceptance or rejection of Christ's doctrine, plus living an absolutely correct life and dying in God's grace, are the determining factors as to whether a person will go to Heaven or to Hell.

Since the advent of Protestantism, it is my contention, the SOCIAL AWARENESS of the answers to man's questions about the immortality of the soul, the purpose of life, the ultimate end of man, and the role of human behavior in determining man's last end *has not been lost!* The historical reality of Catholicism's being the *only* religion of Europe is not that old (16th century), and therefore the *memory* of its teaching is still fairly fresh from a *social awareness* aspect, plus Catholicism is still with us today—e.g., almost 20% of the U.S. population is Catholic, at least in name, and some areas of the Western world are predominantly Catholic. So the ferment of Catholicism, the fountainhead of Christianity, with its true, unalloyed doctrines on these ultimate questions, is still in our midst (though in the post-Vatican II era, i.e., after 1965, it definitely has become significantly weaker).

Consequently, there exists in our *social awareness* a pretty strong conviction among *most* people of our society today that man *is* immortal, that he is intended by God for an eternity of happiness and that, if he will lead a good life here on earth, he will attain that end.

The one aspect relative to all these Catholic answers to man's questions about the meaning of life and the ultimate end of man which has been lost—alas, even by many Catholics—is “*exactly HOW salvation is attained!*” “*Just WHAT it takes to gain Heaven!*” Non-Catholics no longer know this—or they would become Catholic—and even most Catholics today (those who are Catholic in name only) have lost it as well.

(The answer to *how* one attains salvation is simply this: to know and embrace Catholicism, “the faith of . . . Christ” (*James* 2:1), “the faith of God” (*Rom.* 3:3), and to live an absolutely correct moral life by means of sharing actively and regularly in the Sacramental life of the Catholic Church. “For without me you can do nothing,” said Our Lord (*John* 15:5), by which He meant that we need the *light of His faith for knowledge* of the way, plus the grace of His Sacraments to receive the *life of God* in our souls and for *assistance* to lead a good life. “Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day.” (*John*

6:54-55). This passage refers to the Sacrament of Holy Communion, which is received under the form or appearance of bread and wine.)

Now Liberalism is able to live and to thrive today precisely because the people of our time have lost the precise knowledge of HOW to attain salvation. They have lost the awareness that *the salvation of one's soul is a big job*, the daily, hourly, minute-by-minute, second-by-second preoccupation of man's entire life (especially if he intends to avoid Purgatory and gain a *high* place in Heaven), that it is bound up intimately with participation in the Sacraments of the Catholic Church, to give us, first of all, the life of Sanctifying Grace (God's life) in our souls through Baptism and, secondly, the *assistance* through the actual graces of the other Sacraments (Confession, Holy Communion, Confirmation, Matrimony, Holy Orders) to lead an absolutely correct life according to God's law and befitting our vocation and state of life.

People today, in other words, have RETAINED the general ideas that man is immortal, that he is destined by God for an eternity of happiness in the next life, that he must lead a good life in this world and die repentant of his sins to gain Heaven, and that the wicked will be punished in Hell. But they have LOST *the exact knowledge of just what a "good" life entails and of how all-consuming the job of salvation is and that it demands the life and the supernatural assistance*

of Jesus Christ, which He gives through the Sacraments of His Church, and therefore that membership in His Church, the Catholic Church, is essential to salvation. (This membership is essential because only Catholicism has the KNOWLEDGE, through faith, plus the DIVINE LIFE and the HELP received from the Catholic Sacraments that we need for attaining this end.)

Therefore, in the distance between modern man's SOCIAL AWARENESS (inherited through the centuries from Catholicism) that "all is well with man" (we *are* immortal and destined for Heaven if we will "be good") and the PRECISE KNOWLEDGE of the monumental task of salvation (achievable only with the exact knowledge of the Catholic faith and the assistance of the Catholic Sacraments), Liberalism—that doctrine that one religion is as good as another, that it does not matter what you believe so long as you lead a good life, that in effect if you do not accept any religion at all, it is all right—finds a comfortable atmosphere in which to thrive, *living, as it only can, on contemporary man's SOCIAL AWARENESS that "all is well" regarding eternity and his ignorance of PRECISE spiritual truths and his laziness to bestir himself to learn the truth, plus his fear of the challenge which a correct perception of the truth will force him to accept.*

Probably the most important spiritual fact lost to the majority of people today—a fact that makes Liberalism so plausible—is the Catholic distinction between the *natural* and the *supernatural*

orders—between *natural* ends and means and *supernatural* ones. Those today who entertain the fuzzy thinking of Liberalism do so largely because they have lost cognizance of this distinction.

Heaven, according to Catholic teaching, is a *supernatural* state, an end or objective *above* man and *beyond* his ability to attain, a goal which man on his own cannot achieve. It is the presence of God. It is the eternal vision of God and an eternal sharing in the life of God Himself. But this is not something within the *nature* of man to achieve or possess. It is rather a *special, supernatural* gift from God, an unwarranted (on man's part), gratuitous GIFT OF GOD. We do not deserve it. We can only attain it by the special, *supernatural* assistance which God has given us through the knowledge of the "faith of God" (*Rom. 3:3*) and the help of the Sacraments of the Catholic Church, the divinely revealed religion. These Sacraments were given by Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, to the Church and are *supernatural means* to give us *supernatural assistance* to save our souls and attain Heaven, a *supernatural end*.

People who have lost the Catholic faith but retain the "social awareness" that we can be saved will just automatically think that every "good" or "nice" person who dies will be saved, not realizing that "None is good but God alone" (*Luke 18:19*) and that Heaven is something we do not deserve in the natural course of things, but that it is a *supernatural* reward freely given by God, as a

result of *supernatural* faith in His revealed word and requiring *supernatural* means to attain (which He provides through the Sacraments of the Catholic Church).

Thus, when people lose the True Faith, the natural and the supernatural get blurred or lost sight of, and people think everyone can be saved or even that everyone *is* saved—no matter that they ignore and neglect the only means of salvation. *This* is why Liberalism can exist!

Liberalism, because modern man has lost the *true* Christian faith (with its recognized distinction between the natural and the supernatural), can mouth its absurdities and find a hearing among ignorant, lazy and/or unthinking people. But, as stated earlier, here on earth the ultimate fruit for man of Liberalism's chaotic reasoning is chaos and anarchy in the social order. And that chaos is now upon us, so that people are now seriously asking, "*What is wrong?!*"

And therefore *now* is the time we must shed the light of the True Faith upon the spiritual darkness of our times. Sweeping away Liberalism is the last job to be accomplished before the work of the regeneration of the True Faith and the reintroduction of the true doctrine of Jesus Christ, "the light of the world" (1 John 8:12), can begin.

Thomas A. Nelson
March 15, 1993

LIBERALISM IS A SIN

“Liberalism is the dogmatic affirmation of the absolute independence of the individual and of the social reason. Catholicity is the dogma of the absolute subjection of the individual and of the social order to the revealed law of God. One doctrine is the exact antithesis of the other. They are opposites in direct conflict.” (Page 28).

“Protestantism is now a dead dog; Liberalism a living lion going about seeking whom he may devour. Its dreadful doctrine is permeating society to the core; it has become the modern political creed and threatens us with a second revolution, to turn the world over once again to paganism.” (Page 74).

CHAPTER 1

What Begets Liberalism

Physical science tells us that floating through the atmosphere are innumerable disease germs seeking a suitable nidus in which to settle and propagate and that we are constantly breathing these germs into the lungs. If the system be depleted or weakened, the dangerous microbe takes up its abode with us, and propagating its own kind with astonishing rapidity, undermines and ravages our health. The only safeguard against the encroachments of this insidious enemy, which we cannot escape, is a vigorous and healthy body with adequate powers of resistance to repel the invader.

It is equally true that we are subject to like infectious attacks in the spiritual order. Swarming in the atmosphere of our spiritual lives are innumerable deadly germs, ever ready to fasten upon the depleted and weakened soul and, propagating its leprous contagion through every faculty, destroy the spiritual life. Against the menace of this ever-threatening danger, whose advances we cannot avoid in our present circumstances, the ever-healthy soul alone can be prepared. To escape the contagion, the power of

resistance must be equal to the emergencies of the attack, and that power will be in proportion to our spiritual health. To be prepared is to be armed, but to be prepared is not sufficient; we must possess the interior strength to throw off the germ. There must be no condition in the soul to make a suitable nidus for an enemy so insidious and so efficacious as to need only the slightest point of contact whence to spread its deadly contagion.

It is not only through the avenues of disordered passions that this spiritual disease may gain an entrance; it may make its inroad through the intellect, and this under a disguise often calculated to deceive the unwary and incautious. The Trojans admitted the enemy into their walls under the impression that they were actually securing a valuable acquisition to their safety, and today their fatal experience has come down to us in the proverb: "Beware of the Greeks when they bring gifts." Intellectual torpidity, inexperience, ignorance, indifference, and complaisance, or even virtues, such as, benevolence, generosity, and pity may be the unsuspected way open to the foe, and lo, we are surprised to find him in possession of the citadel!

That we may know our danger, we must appreciate the possible shapes in which it may come. Here is just the difficulty; the uniform of the enemy is so various, changeable, sometimes even of our own colors, that if we rely upon the

outward semblance alone, we shall be more often deceived than certain of his identity. But before laying down any test by which we may distinguish friend from foe in a warfare so subtly fought within the precincts of our own souls, let us first reconnoiter the respective positions of either camp, and to do this best, we shall consider the origin and sources of the danger which surrounds us, for we may be asked: "Where is this foe described as so intangible as scarcely to be apprehended by ordinary mortals?" Or it may be urged: "Is the danger as proximate, as frequent and [as] fearful as you allege? Whence is it anyhow? Point it out! If we know from what direction the enemy comes, we may better appreciate the peril."

As we are addressing ourselves to those who live amidst the peculiar circumstances of our American life, and as the spiritual and moral conditions which obtain in this country make up the moral and spiritual atmosphere in which we have our being, it is in the relation of our surroundings to ourselves as well as of ourselves to our surroundings that we shall find the answer to our question. Let us then consider these surroundings in a general way for the moment.

First, as to some patent facts: The population of this country is at present something over 260 million. [1990 census]. Of these, 60 million are Catholics, and according to their claim, 80 million are Protestants, leaving a population of 120 million or more who do not profess any form

of Christianity at all.

Among the 80 million Protestants, every shade and variety of belief in the Christian dispensation finds easy lodgment—from the belief in the Incarnation and Consubstantiation [the erroneous Lutheran belief that in the Eucharist the substance of the body and blood of Christ co-exist in and with the substance of the bread and wine, as opposed to the Catholic teaching of Transubstantiation, wherein the substance of the bread and wine are changed into the substance of Jesus Christ, who is thereafter present “body, blood, soul and divinity” under the *appearances* of bread and wine] to the rejection of the divinity of Christ altogether in the vacuous creed of Unitarianism. In this scale of heresy, the adjustments of creeds are loose and easy. Lack of any decisive authority renders any exact standard of belief impossible. A Protestant may freely range from one end of the scale to the other and still be considered orthodox according to Protestant estimation. A loose, indefinite belief in Christ, either as God redeeming the world or even as a great ethical teacher (not God Himself, though sent by God), suffices to place the Protestant within the compass of his own standard of orthodoxy. Any specific expression of dogma or of particular truths bound up in the acceptance of Christianity is not required; or if required by any one sect or denomination, can find no authoritative exaction, for the differences between the sects, in the last resort,

become mere differences of private opinion, dependent upon nothing but the caprice or choice of the individual.

Outside of these various bodies of loosely professed Christians stands a still larger mass of our population who are either absolutely indifferent to Christianity as a creed or positively reject it. In practice, the distinction is of little moment whether they hold themselves merely indifferent or positively hostile. In other words, we have here to reckon with a body, to all practical purposes, that is infidel. This mass comprises over 45 percent of our population, holding itself aloof from Christianity, and in some instances virulently antagonistic to it. In distinct religious opposition to this mass of infidelity and Protestantism [now in excess of 76 percent of our population, but currently enhanced to an even more frightening percentage by the vast majority of Catholics today—1993—who either do not practice their faith at all or who are ignorant of its teachings (especially with regard to morality) or in practice simply disregard those teachings—bringing the total of practical non-believing and infidel people to probably just over 90 percent, if we can presume there to be today approximately 25 million *believing, practicing* Catholics], Catholics find themselves sharply and radically opposed. Heresy and infidelity are irreconcilable with Catholicity. “He that is not with me is against me” (*Matt.* 12:30) are the words of Our Lord Himself, for

denial of Catholic truth is the radical and common element of both heresy and infidelity. The difference between them is merely a matter of degree. One denies less, the other more. *Protestantism, with its sliding scale of creeds, is simply an inclined plane into the abyss of positive unbelief.* It is always virtual infidelity, its final outcome open infidelity, as the 120 million unbelievers in this country stand witness.

We live in the midst of this religious anarchy. Some 235 million of our population can, in one sense or other, be considered anti-Catholic [1990 figures]. *From this mass—heretical and infidel—exhales an atmosphere filled with germs poisonous and fatal to Catholic life, if permitted to take root in the Catholic heart. The mere force of gravitation, which the larger mass ever exercises upon the smaller, is a power which the most energetic vigor alone can resist.* Under this dangerous influence, a deadly inertia is apt to creep over the souls of the incautious and is only to be overcome by the liveliest exercise of Catholic faith. To live without enervation amidst an heretical and infidel population requires a robust religious constitution. And to this danger we are daily exposed, ever coming into contact in a thousand ways, in almost every relation of life, with anti-Catholic thought and customs. But outside of this spiritual inertia, our non-Catholic surroundings—a danger rather passive than active in its influence—beget a still greater menace.

It is natural that Protestantism and infidelity should find public expression. What our 200 million non-Catholic population thinks in these matters naturally seeks and finds open expression. They have their organs and their literature where we find their current opinions publicly uttered. Their views upon religion, morality, politics, the constitution of society are perpetually marshaled before us. In the pulpit and in the press they are reiterated day after day. In magazine and newspaper they constantly speak from every line. Our literature is permeated and saturated with non-Catholic dogmatism. On all sides do we find this opposing spirit. We cannot escape from it. It enfolds and embraces us. Its breath is perpetually in our faces. It enters in by eye and ear. From birth to death, it enslaves us in its offensive garments. It now soothes and flatters, now hates and curses, now threatens, now praises. *But it is most dangerous when it comes to us under the form of "liberality."* It is especially powerful for seduction in this guise. And it is under this aspect that we wish to consider it. For it is as Liberalism that Protestantism and Infidelity make their most devastating inroads upon the domain of the Faith.

Out of these non-Catholic and anti-Catholic conditions thus predominating amongst us springs this monster of our times, Liberalism!