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THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH IN TEMPORAL MATTERS

His Holiness Pope Pius XII

Two addresses given by the Holy Father to the Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops present in Rome (1) for the canonization of St. Pius X on May 31, 1954 and (2) for ceremonies in honor of Our Lady on November 2, 1954.

NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE

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Address of May 31, 1954

Venerable Brothers :

1. "If you love . . . feed". These words which are a command of our Divine Redeemer to the Apostle Peter are the commencement of the Mass in honor of one or more Supreme Pontiffs. They show clearly the meaning of apostolic labor, its exalted virtue, and the reason for its merit.

2. Jesus Christ is the eternal High Priest and Shepherd of souls, Who taught, labored and suffered greatly for our sakes. Pius X, Bishop of Rome, whom it has been Our great joy to enroll in the list of the Saints, following closely in the footsteps of his Divine Master, took that command from the lips of Christ and strenuously fulfilled it: he loved and fed. He loved Christ and fed his flock. He drew abundantly on the heavenly treasures which our merciful Redeemer brought to the earth, and distributed them bountifully to the flock: namely, the nourishment of truth, heavenly mysteries, the munificent grace of the Eucharistic sacrament and sacrifice, charity, earnestness in governing, fortitude in defense. He gave fully of himself and of those things which the Author and Giver of all good things had bestowed on him.

3. Your presence in Rome, venerable brothers, and participation in these solemn celebrations, gladdens Us. You have come in order that in union with Us you may pay a tribute of admiration and honor to a Bishop of the City of Rome whose life was the glory of the entire Church; and to give thanks to Almighty God for those whom His paternal mercy, with a great abundance of favors, guides to salvation through this Pontiff.

4. And now, beloved brothers, as We stand among you gathered together from all parts of the world, Our heart is overjoyed—We, that is, the Vicar of Christ, one who is also an "ancient" among you "the ancients." What We have to say to you, We wish to sum up first of all in words taken from the letter, which We have just quoted, of the first Supreme Pontiff and Prince of the Apostles himself: "The ancients therefore that are among you, I beseech, who am myself also an ancient and witness of the sufferings of Christ . . . feed the flock of God which is among you, taking care of it not by constraint, but willingly according to God . . . being made a pattern of the flock from the heart" (cf. *I. Pet.* 5, 1-3). These words have the same purport as

the Divine utterance: "If you love . . . feed!", encouraging pastors to active charity in their ministry.

5. We wish to develop briefly what We have just summed up in the words of Blessed Peter.

6. Care of all the Church, and the daily vigilance which Our supreme office demands of Us, compel Us to consider and weigh certain ideas, sentiments, and ways of acting. We draw your attention to them, and ask you to unite your vigilant care with Ours, in order thus to provide more quickly and effectively for the needs of Christ's flock. There are evident the symptoms and effects of a certain spiritual contagion, which require your pastoral care, in order that they may not spread, but may be remedied in time and extirpated.

7. Our purpose will be best effected by explaining the triple office and privilege, which by divine institution belongs to you, the successors of the Apostles, under the authority of the Roman Pontiff (cf. can. 329): namely, of teacher, priest, and ruler. But since time will not permit today, We will limit Ourselves to the first point, putting the others off to another occasion, if God so permits.

8. Christ Our Lord entrusted the truth which He had brought from heaven to the Apostles, and through them to their successors. He sent His Apostles, as He had been sent by the Father (Jn. 20, 21), to teach all nations everything they had heard from Him (cf. Matt. 28, 19-20). The Apostles are, therefore, by divine right the true doctors and teachers in the Church. Besides the lawful successors of the Apostles, namely the Roman Pontiff for the universal Church and Bishops for the faithful entrusted to their care (cf. can. 1326), there are no other teachers divinely constituted in the Church of Christ.

9. But both the Bishops and, first of all, the Supreme Teacher and Vicar of Christ on earth, may associate others with themselves in their work of teacher, and use their advice; they delegate to them the faculty to teach, either by special grant, or by conferring an office to which the faculty is attached (cf. can. 1328). Those who are so called, teach not in their own name, nor by reason of their theological knowledge, but by reason of the mandate which they have received from the lawful teaching authority. Their faculty always remains subject to that authority, nor is it ever exercised in its own right or independently.

10. Bishops, for their part, by conferring this faculty are not deprived of the right to teach; they retain the very grave obligation of supervising the doctrine which others propose, in order to help them, and of seeing to its integrity and security.

11. Therefore, the legitimate teaching authority of the Church is guilty of no injury or no offense to any of those to whom it has given a canonical mission, if it desires to ascertain what they, to whom it has entrusted the mission of teaching, are proposing and defending in their lectures, in books, notes and reviews intended for the use of their students, as well as in books and other publications intended for the general public.

12. In order to accomplish this, We do not contemplate extending the prescription of canon law on previous censorship of books to include all these kinds of teaching; for there are many ways and means at hand for investigating and acquiring accurate information on what professors are teaching.

13. And this care and prudence of the legitimate teaching authority does not at all imply distrust or suspicion, (nor does the profession of faith which the Church requires of professors and many others; cf. Can. 1406, n. 7 and 8) on the contrary, the fact that the office of teacher has been bestowed implies confidence, high regard and honor shown the person to whom the office has been entrusted.

14. Indeed, the Holy See, whenever it inquires and wishes to be informed about what is being taught in various seminaries, colleges, universities and institutions of higher learning, in those fields which pertain to its jurisdiction, is led by no other motive than the consciousness of Christ's mandate and the obligation by which she is bound before God to safeguard and preserve without corruption or adulteration sound doctrine. Moreover, the exercise of this vigilance aims also at protecting and upholding your right and office of feeding with the genuine teaching of Christ and with His truth the flock entrusted to your pastoral care.

15. Not without serious reason, Venerable Brothers, have We wished to recall these things in your presence. For, unfortunately, it has happened that certain teachers care little for conformity with the living teaching authority of the Church, pay little heed to her commonly received doctrine clearly proposed in various ways; and at the same

time they follow their own bent too much, and regard too highly the intellectual temper of more recent writers, and the standards of other branches of learning, which they declare and hold to be the only ones which conform to sound ideas and standards of scholarship.

16. Of course, the Church is very keen for and fosters the study of human branches of learning and their progress; she honors with special favor and regard learned men who spend their lives in the cultivation of learning. However, matters of religion and morals, because they completely transcend truths of the senses and the plane of the material, pertain solely to the office and authority of the Church.

17. In Our encyclical letter, *Humani Generis*, We described the attitude of mind, the spirit, of those whom We have referred to above. We also recalled to mind that some of the aberrations from the truth which We repudiated in that Encyclical had their direct origin in a neglect of conformity with the living teaching authority of the Church.

18. Time and again, St. Pius X, in writings whose importance is known to all of you, urgently stressed the need for this union with the mind and teaching of the Church. His successor in the Supreme Pontificate, Benedict XV, did the same. In his first Encyclical (*Ad Beatissimi Apostolorum Principis*, Nov. 1, 1914), after solemnly repeating Pius' condemnation of Modernism, he thus describes the attitude of mind of followers of that doctrine: "He who is influenced by its principles disdainfully spurns whatever appears old, and eagerly pursues the new: in his manner of speaking of divine things, in performance of divine worship, in Catholic usages, even in private devotions" (AAS, VI, 1914, p. 578).

19. And if there are any present-day teachers making every effort to produce and develop new ideas, but not to repeat "that which has been handed down," and if this is their whole aim, they should reflect calmly on those words which Benedict XV, in the Encyclical just referred to, proposes for their consideration: "We wish this maxim of our elders held in reverence: *Nihil innovetur nisi quod traditum est* (Let nothing new be introduced but only what has been handed down); it must be held as an inviolable law in matters of faith, and should also control those points which allow of change, though in these latter for the most part

the rule holds: *Non nova sed noviter* (Not new things but in a new way)."

20. As for the laity, it is clear that they can be invited by legitimate teachers and accepted as helpers in the defense of the faith. It is enough to call to mind the thousands of men and women engaged in catechetical work and other types of lay apostolate, all of which are highly praiseworthy and can be strenuously promoted. But all these lay apostles must be, and remain, under the authority, leadership and watchfulness of those who by divine institution are set up as teachers of Christ's Church. In matters involving the salvation of souls, there is no teaching authority in the Church not subject to this authority and vigilance.

21. Recently what is called "lay theology" has sprung up and spread to various places, and a new class of "lay theologian" has emerged, which claims to be *sui juris*. There are professors of this theology occupying established chairs, courses are given, notes published, seminars held. These professors distinguish their teaching authority from, and in a certain way set it up against the public teaching authority of the Church. At times, in order to justify their position, they appeal to the charismatic gifts of teaching and of interpreting prophecy, which are mentioned more than once in the New Testament, especially in the Pauline Epistles (e.g. *Rom.* 12, 6-7; *I Cor.* 12, 28-30). They appeal to history, which from the beginning of the Christian religion down to today presents so many names of laymen who for the good of souls have taught the truth of Christ orally and in writing, though not called to this by the Bishops and without having asked or received the sacred teaching authority, led on by their own inward impulse and apostolic zeal.

22. Nevertheless, it is necessary to maintain to the contrary that there never has been, there is not now, and there never will be in the Church a legitimate teaching authority of the laity withdrawn by God from the authority, guidance and watchfulness of the sacred teaching authority. In fact, the very denial of submission offers a convincing proof and criterion that laymen who thus speak and act are not guided by the Spirit of God and of Christ.

23. Furthermore, everyone can see how great a danger of confusion and error there is in this "lay theology"; a danger also lest others begin to be taught by men clearly

unfitted for the task, or even by deceitful and fraudulent men, whom St. Paul described: "The time will come when men . . . always itching to hear something fresh, will provide themselves with a continuous succession of new teachers, as the whim takes them, turning a deaf ear to the truth, bestowing their attention on fables instead" (cf. *II Tim.* 4, 3-4).

24. Far be it from Us by this admonition to turn away from a deeper study and dissemination of sacred doctrine those men, of whatsoever class or group, who are inspired to it by such a noble zeal.

25. With daily increasing diligence, Venerable Brothers, as both the duty and the privilege of your office demand of you, devote yourselves to searching and penetrating more and more into the sublimity and profundity of supernatural truth, whose exponents you are by right, and with eloquence inflamed by zeal make known the holy truths of religion to those who at the present time, not without the threat of extremely grave dangers, are being engulfed by the darkness of error in matters of both mind and heart. And thus through salutary penance and rectitude of affection men may at last return to God, "to turn away from Whom is to fall; to turn toward Whom is to rise again; to remain in Whom is to stand firm; . . . to return to Whom is to come to life again; to dwell in Whom is to live" (*St. Aug. Soliloquiorum*, lib. I, 3, Migne *P. L.*, tom. 32, col. 870).

26. In order that you may accomplish this, We call down heaven's help upon you; and that it may be poured out in abundance, with great affection We impart to you and to your flocks the Apostolic Blessing.

Address of Nov. 2, 1954

1. "Magnify the Lord with me; together let us extol His name" (*Ps.* 33, 4), for by a new favor from Heaven has Our desire been fulfilled, and at the same time We rejoice at the sight of you, beloved sons and venerable brothers, gathered before Us in such large numbers. And the consideration of the new liturgical feast of Mary, Mother of God and Queen of Heaven and Earth, which We just recently solemnly proclaimed, swells Our holy joy; for it is only fitting for her children to rejoice when they see an increase of honor accorded their mother.

2. Yet, though she is Queen of all, the Blessed Virgin Mary rules over you, and your plans and undertakings, by a special title and in a more intimate way, for she has long been invoked under that singular and glorious title of Queen of the Apostles. For, being the mother of fair love, and of fear, and of knowledge, and of holy hope (cf. *Ecclus.* 24, 24), what does she desire more eagerly, and strive for more earnestly, than that the authentic worship of the true God be ever more deeply implanted in souls, a more genuine charity glow in them, a pure fear of God rule their plans, a hope, solidly based on the promise of immortality, be a solace in this sad exile on earth? All these virtues are being cultivated among men through the labors and efforts you expend on your apostolic tasks, so that, leading their earthly lives in sobriety, justice and piety, they may win everlasting happiness in heaven. It is, therefore, under the guidance and protection of Mary, ever Virgin, Mother and our Queen, that We decided to treat some points, which, We trust, will prove helpful to you and to the work you are devotedly engaged in of tending the Lord's harvest.

3. At the beginning of June, on the occasion of the canonization of St. Pius X, We spoke to the large group of Bishops who had come to Rome to honor the new Pope-Saint. Our topic was that teaching office which by divine institution and right belongs to the successors of the Apostles, under the authority of the Roman Pontiff. Now continuing that address, as it were, We are pleased to speak to you of two other closely related functions which concern you and demand your thought and care—the priesthood, and the government of the Church. Let Us turn Our thoughts once more to St. Pius X.

4. From the story of his life We know what the altar and the Sacrifice of the Mass meant to him, from the very day on which he first offered the Holy Sacrifice to God, a newly ordained priest pronouncing for the first time with trembling lips "Introibo ad altare Dei." It was the same throughout his priestly life, as pastor, as spiritual director of a seminary, as Bishop, as Cardinal-Patriarch, finally as Supreme Pontiff. The altar and the Mass were the source and very center of his piety, his repose and strength in labors and difficulties, the source of light, courage, unflinching zeal for God's glory and the salvation of souls. This Pontiff, just as he was and is a model teacher, was and is a model priest.

5. The particular and chief duty of the priest has ever been "to offer sacrifice"; where there is no true power to offer sacrifice, there is no true priesthood.

6. This is also perfectly true of the priest of the New Law. His chief power and duty is to offer the unique and divine sacrifice of the most High Eternal Priest, Jesus Christ Our Lord, which Our Divine Redeemer offered in a bloody manner on the Cross, and anticipated in an unbloody manner at the Last Supper. He wished it to be constantly repeated, for He commanded His Apostles: "Do this in remembrance of Me" (Luke, 22, 19). The Apostles, therefore, and not all the faithful, did Christ ordain and appoint priests; to them He gave the power to offer sacrifice. Concerning this noble duty of offering the sacrifice of the New Law, the Council of Trent taught: "In this divine sacrifice which takes place at Mass, the same Christ is present and is immolated in an unbloody manner, Who once on the Cross offered Himself in a bloody manner. For the victim is one and the same, now offering through the ministry of priests, Who then offered Himself on the Cross; only the manner of offering is different" (*Session XXII, cap. 2 - Denzinger, n. 940*). Thus the priest-celebrant, putting on the person of Christ, alone offers sacrifice, and not the people, nor clerics, nor even priests who reverently assist. All, however, can and should take an active part in the Sacrifice. "The Christian people, though participating in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, do not thereby possess a priestly power," We stated in the Encyclical *Mediator Dei* (*AAS, vol 39, 1947, p. 553*).

7. We realize, venerable brothers, that what We have just said is quite familiar to you; yet We wished to recall it, since it is the basis of, and motive for, what We are about to say. For there are some who have not ceased claiming a certain true power to offer sacrifice on the part of all, even laymen, who piously assist at the sacrifice of the Mass. Opposing them, We must distinguish truth from error, and do away with all confusion. Seven years ago, in the same Encyclical We just quoted, We reproved the error of those who did not hesitate to state that Christ's command, "do this in remembrance of Me," "refers directly to the entire assembly of the faithful, and only afterwards did a hierarchical priesthood follow. Hence, they say, the people possess a true sacerdotal power, the priest acts only on an authority delegated by the community. Wherefore they

think that 'concelebration' is the true Eucharistic sacrifice, and that it is more fitting for priests and people together to 'concelebrate' than to offer the Sacrifice in private, with no congregation present." We also recalled to mind, in that Encyclical, in what sense the celebrating priest can be said "to take the place of the people"; namely "because he bears the person of Jesus Christ our Lord, Who is the head of all the Members, and offers Himself for them; thus the priest goes to the altar as a minister of Christ, subordinate to Christ, but ranking above the people. The people, however, since in no way do they bear the person of our Divine Redeemer, and are not mediators between themselves and God, cannot in any way share in sacerdotal rights." (AAS, 1947, pp. 553, 554).

8. In considering this matter, it is not only a question of measuring the fruit that is derived from the hearing or offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice—it is indeed possible that one derive more fruit from a Mass devoutly and religiously heard than from a Mass celebrated with casual negligence—but of establishing the *nature of the act* of hearing and celebrating Mass, from which the other fruits of the sacrifice flow. Omitting any mention of the acts of worship of God, and thanksgiving to Him, We refer to those fruits of propitiation and impetration on behalf of those from whom the Sacrifice is offered, even though they are not present; likewise the fruits "for the sins, penalties, satisfactions and other needs of the faithful still alive, as well as for those who have died in Christ, but are not yet fully purified." (*Conc. Trid. Sess. XXII cap. 2 - Denzinger n 940*). When the matter is thus regarded, an assertion which is being made today, not only by laymen but also at times by certain theologians and priests and spread about by them, ought to be rejected as an erroneous opinion: namely, that the offering of one Mass, at which a hundred priests assist with religious devotion, is the same as a hundred Masses celebrated by a hundred priests. That is not true. With regard to the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice, the actions of Christ, the High Priest, are as many as are the priests celebrating not as many as are the priests reverently hearing the Mass of a Bishop or a priest; for those present at the Mass in no sense sustain, or act in, the person of Christ sacrificing, but are to be compared to the faithful layfolk who are present at the Mass.

9. On the other hand, it should not be denied or called in

question that the faithful have a kind of "priesthood," and one may not depreciate or minimize it. For the Prince of the Apostles, in his first Letter, addressing the faithful, uses these words: "You, however, are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people" (*I Pet.* 2, 9); and just before this, he asserts that the faithful possess "a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (*ibid.* 2, 5). But whatever is the full meaning of this honorable title and claim, it must be firmly held that the "priesthood" common to all the faithful, high and reserved as it is, differs not only in degree, but in essence also, from priesthood fully and properly so called, which lies in the power of offering the sacrifice of Christ Himself, since he bears the person of Christ, the supreme High Priest.

10. We note with joy that in many dioceses there have sprung up special liturgical institutes, that liturgical groups have been established, that moderators to promote interest in the liturgy have been nominated, that diocesan or inter-diocesan rallies on liturgical matters have been held, and gatherings have been held, or will be organized, on an international level. We are happy to hear that, in some places, the Bishops were present in person and presided at these gatherings. These meetings sometimes follow a definite program, viz., only one offers the Mass, and others (all or the majority) assist at this one Mass, and receive the Holy Eucharist during it from the hands of the celebrant. If this be done for a good and sound reason, and the Bishop, to avoid scandal among the faithful, has made no contrary decision, the practice is not to be opposed, so long as the error we have mentioned above is not underlying it. Then, with regard to the matters dealt with at these gatherings, there are discussions on points of history, doctrine and the conduct of life; conclusions have been arrived at and motions drawn up which seem necessary or in keeping with greater progress in this study, but subject to the decision of proper ecclesiastical authority. But this movement to study the sacred liturgy does not stop at the holding of these gatherings; alongside them continually grow and develop experience and practice, so that the faithful, in ever greater numbers, are being influenced to an active union and communion with the priest who is carrying out the sacrifice.

11. But, venerable brothers, however you show favor—

and rightly—to the practice and development of the sacred liturgy, do not allow those studying this subject in your dioceses to withdraw from your guidance and watchfulness, or to adapt and change the sacred liturgy according to their own judgment, contrary to the Church's clearly declared norms: "It is the function of the Apostolic See alone to determine the sacred liturgy and to approve liturgical books" (can. 1257), and particularly with regard to the celebration of Mass: "All other custom to the contrary being revoked, a priest celebrating must observe accurately and devoutly the rubrics of the books of his own rite, and take care not to add other ceremonies or prayers at his own whim" (can. 818). And do you give no consent or permission to attempts of this kind, or to movements which are more daring than prudent.

12. "Being made a pattern to the flock" (*I Pet.* 5, 3): the words of St. Peter especially refer to Bishops, as having, and exercising, the office of shepherd. The special and personal note of the Pontificate of Pius X was indeed this aspect and habit of "Shepherd." To put it briefly, after he reached the highest office in the apostolic ministry, it was clear to all that there had been raised to the Chair of the Prince of the Apostles a priest who had grown up in the care of souls, who had been from the beginning of his priesthood, and who continued to be a shepherd of souls, until he was set to feed the whole flock of Christ. The unvarying principle which he kept in his action, the aim of life which he set himself, was "salvation of souls." If he desired to "renew all in Christ," it was a desire for the sake of the salvation of souls. To this end and function he, in some way, subordinated all his actions. He was the good shepherd in the midst of his flock, anxious about its needs, troubled by the dangers threatening it, entirely devoted to the leading and guiding of the flock of Christ in the way of Christ.

13. But it is not our present purpose, venerable brothers, while We are addressing you, shepherds of your flocks, to sketch again a noble image and perfect pattern from the saintly Pontiff and shepherd. We wish rather—as We did with the teaching power and priesthood of Bishops—to mention some points which, especially in Our times, demand the interest, voice and activity of a dedicated shepherd.

14. And first, there are some noticeable attitudes and tendencies of mind which presume to check and set limits to

the power of Bishops (the Roman Pontiff not excepted), as being strictly the shepherds of the flock entrusted to them. They fix their authority, office and watchfulness within certain bounds, which concern strictly religious matters, the statement of the truths of the faith, the regulation of devotional practices, administration of the Sacraments of the Church, and the carrying out of liturgical ceremonies. They wish to restrain the Church from all undertakings and business which concern life as it is really conducted—"the realities of life," as they say. In short, this way of thinking in the official statements of some lay Catholics, even those in high positions, is sometimes shown when they say: "We are perfectly willing to see, to listen to, and to approach Bishops and priests in their Churches, and regarding matters within their authority; but in places of official and public business, where matters of this life are dealt with and decided, we have no wish to see them or to listen to what they say. For there, it is we laymen, and not the clergy—no matter of what rank or qualification—who are the legitimate judges."

15. We must take an open and firm stand against errors of this kind. The power of the Church is not bound by the limits of "matters strictly religious." as they say, but the whole matter of the natural law, its foundation, its interpretation, its application, so far as their moral aspects extend, are within the Church's power. For the keeping of the natural law, by God's appointment, has reference to the road by which man has to approach his supernatural end. But, on this road, the Church is man's guide and guardian in what concerns his supreme end. The Apostles observed this in times past, and afterwards, from the earliest centuries, the Church has kept to this manner of acting, and keeps to it today, not indeed like some private guide or adviser, but by virtue of the Lord's command and authority. Therefore, when it is a question of instructions and propositions which the properly constituted shepherds (i.e. the Roman Pontiff for the whole Church and the Bishops for the faithful entrusted to them) publish on matters within the natural law, the faithful must not invoke that saying (which is wont to be employed with respect to opinions of individuals): "the strength of the authority is no more than the strength of the arguments." Hence, even though to someone, certain declarations of the Church may not seem proved by the arguments put forward, his

obligation to obey still remains. This was the mind, and these are the words of St. Pius X in his Encyclical Letter *Singulari Quadam* of September 24, 1912 (AAS, vol. 4, 1912, p. 658) : "Whatever a Christian man may do, even in affairs of this world, he may not ignore the supernatural, nay, he must direct all to the highest good as to his last end, in accordance with the dictates of Christian wisdom; but all his actions, in so far as they are morally good or evil, that is, agree with, or are in opposition to, divine and natural law, are subject to the judgment and authority of the Church." And he immediately transfers this principle to the social sphere: "The social question and the controversies underlying that question . . . are not merely of an economic nature, and consequently such as can be settled while the Church's authority is ignored, since, on the contrary, it is most certain that it (the social question) is primarily a moral and religious one, and on that account must be settled chiefly in accordance with the moral law and judgment based on religion." (ibid., pp. 658, 659).

16. Many and serious are the problems in the social field—whether they be merely social or socio-political, they pertain to the moral order, are of concern to conscience and the salvation of men; thus they cannot be declared outside the authority and care of the Church. Indeed, there are problems outside the social field, not strictly "religious," political problems, of concern either to individual nations, or to all nations, which belong to the moral order, weigh on the conscience and can, and very often do, hinder the attainment of man's last end. Such are: the purpose and limits of temporal authority; the relations between the individual and society, the so-called "totalitarian state," whatever be the principle it is based on; the "complete laicization of the State" and of public life; the complete laicization of the schools; war, its morality, liceity or non-liceity when waged as it is today, and whether a conscientious person may give or withhold his cooperation in it; the moral relationships which bind and rule the various nations.

17. Common sense, and truth as well, are contradicted by whoever asserts that these and like problems are outside the field of morals, and hence are, or at least can be, beyond the influence of that authority established by God to see to a just order and to direct the consciences and actions of men along the path to their true and final destiny. This she is certainly to do not only "in secret," within the walls

of the Church and sacristy, but also in the open, crying "from the rooftops" (to use the Lord's words, Matt. 10, 27), in the front line, in the midst of the struggle that rages between truth and error, virtue and vice, between the "world" and the kingdom of God, between the prince of this world and Christ its Saviour.

18. We must add a few remarks on ecclesiastical discipline. Clergy and the laity must realize that the Church is fitted and authorized, as also are the Bishops for the faithful entrusted to them, in accordance with Canon Law, to promote ecclesiastical discipline and see to its observance, i.e., to establish an external norm of action and conduct for matters which concern public order and which do not have their immediate origin in natural or divine law. Clerics and laity may not exempt themselves from this discipline; rather all should be concerned to obey it, so that by the loyal observance of the Church's discipline the action of the shepherd be easier and more efficacious, and the union between him and his flock stronger; that within the flock harmony and cooperation reign, and each be an example and support to his fellow.

19. Yet, those points We have just mentioned in connection with the jurisdiction of Bishops, who are shepherds of the souls committed to their care in all those matters which have to do with religion, moral law and ecclesiastical discipline, are subjected to criticism, often not above a whisper, and do not receive the firm assent they deserved. Hence, some proud, modern spirits provoke serious and dangerous confusion, traces of which are more or less clear in various regions. The awareness, daily more strongly insisted on, of having reached maturity produces in them an agitated and febrile spirit. Not a few moderns, men and women, think that the leadership and vigilance of the Church is not to be suffered by one who is grown up; they not only say it, but they hold it as a firm conviction. They are unwilling to be, like children, "under guardians and stewards" (*Gal.* 4, 2). They wish to be treated as adults who are in full possession of their rights, and can decide for themselves what they must, or must not, do in any given situation. Let the Church—they do not hesitate to say—propose her doctrine, pass her laws as norms of our actions. Still, when there is question of practical application to each individual's life, the Church must not interfere; she should let each one of the faithful follow his own

conscience and judgment. They declare this is all the more necessary because the Church and her ministers are unaware of certain sets of circumstances either personal or extrinsic to individuals; in them each person has been placed, and must take his own counsel and decide what he must do. Such people, moreover, are unwilling in their final personal decisions to have any intermediary or intercessor placed between themselves and God, no matter what his rank or title. Two years ago, in Our allocutions of March 23 and April 18, 1952, We spoke about these reprehensible theories and We examined their arguments (*Discorsi e Radio-messagi* vol. 14, 1952, pp. 19 sq., pp. 69 sq.). Concerning the importance given to the attainment of a person's majority this assertion is correct: it is just and right that adults should not be ruled as children. The Apostle speaking of himself says, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child. Now that I have become a man, I have put away the things of a child (*I Cor.* 13. 11)". That is not a true art of education which follows any other principle or procedure, nor is he a true shepherd of souls who pursues any other purpose than to elevate the faithful entrusted to his care "to perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fulness of Christ." (*Eph.* 4. 13). But to be an adult and to have put off the things of childhood is one thing, and quite another to be an adult and not to be subject to the guidance and government of legitimate authority. For government is not a kind of nursery for children, but the effective direction of adults toward the end proposed to the state.

20. But since We are speaking to you, venerable brothers, and not to the faithful; when these ideas begin to appear and to take root in your flocks, remind the faithful: (1) That God placed shepherds of souls in the Church not to put a burden on the flock, but to help and protect it; (2) that the true liberty of the faithful is safeguarded by the guidance and vigilance of pastors; that they are protected from the slavery of vice and error, they are strengthened against the temptations which come from bad example and from the customs of evil men among whom they must live; (3) that therefore they act contrary to the prudence and charity which they owe themselves, if they spurn this protection of God and His most certain help. If among clergy and priests you find some infected with this false zeal and attitude, set before them the grave warnings which Our

Predecessor, Benedict XV, uttered: "There is one thing which should not be passed over in silence: We want to warn all priests, who are Our dearly beloved sons, how absolutely necessary it is, not only for their own salvation, but for the fruitfulness of their sacred ministry, that each be most devoted and obedient to his own Bishop. As We deplored in passing, not all dispensers of the sacred mysteries are free from that proud and arrogant spirit which is characteristic of our times; and it frequently happens that shepherds of the Church are grieved and opposed, where they might rightly expect comfort and help (Encyclical Letter, *Ad Beatissimi Apostolorum Principis*, Nov. 1, 1914; AAS, Vol. 6, 1914, p. 579)".

21. Thus far We have spoken of pastoral care, about the persons for whose benefit it is exercised; it is not right to end Our discourse without turning Our attention to the pastors themselves. To Us and to you shepherds the holy words of the Eternal Shepherd are pertinent: "I am the good shepherd. I came that they may have life, and have it more abundantly" (John, 10, 11, 10). To Peter the Lord said, "If you love me, feed my lambs, feed my sheep (John 21. 15, 17)": To these good shepherds He contrasts the hireling, who seeks himself and his own interests and is not ready to give his life for his flock (cf. John 10. 12-13). He contrasts them with the Scribes and Pharisees who, greedy for power and domination, and seeking their own glory, were seated on the chair of Moses, amassing heavy and oppressive burdens and imposing them on the shoulders of men (cf. Matt. 23. 1, 4). Of His own yoke the Lord said, "Take my yoke upon you! For my yoke is easy and my burden light (Matt. 11. 29-30)".

22. Frequent and mutual communication among Bishops is very helpful for the fruitful and effective exercise of the pastoral office. Thus one perfects the other in assaying the lessons of past experience; government is made more uniform, the wonder of the faithful is avoided, for often they do not understand why in one diocese a certain policy is followed, while in another, which is perhaps adjacent, a different or even a quite contrary policy is followed. To realize these purposes general assemblies, which are now held almost everywhere, are very helpful, and also the more solemnly convened Provincial and Plenary Councils, for which the Code of Canon Law provides, and which are governed by definite laws.

23. In addition to this union and intercourse between brothers in the episcopacy there should be added close union and frequent communication with this Apostolic See. The custom of consulting the Holy See not only in doctrinal matters, but also in affairs of government and discipline, has flourished from the earliest days of Christianity. Many proofs and examples are to be found in ancient historical records. When asked for their decision, the Roman Pontiffs did not answer as private theologians, but in virtue of their authority and conscious of the power which they received from Christ to rule over the whole flock and each of its parts. The same is deduced from the instances in which the Roman Pontiffs, unasked, settled disputes that had arisen or commanded that "doubts" be brought to them to be resolved. This union, therefore, and harmonious communication with the Holy See arises not from a kind of desire to centralize and unify everything, but by divine right and by reason of an essential element of the constitution of the Church of Christ. The result of this is not detrimental but advantageous to the Bishops to whom is entrusted the governing of individual flocks. For from communication with the Apostolic See they gain light and assurance "in doubts," advice and strength in difficulties, assistance in labors, comfort and solace in distress. On the other hand, from the "reports" of the Bishops to the Apostolic See, the latter attains a wider knowledge of the state of the whole flock, learns more quickly and more accurately what dangers are threatening and what remedies can be applied to cure the evils.

24. Venerable brothers, on the day before He suffered, Christ prayed to the Father for the Apostles and at the same time for all their successors in the Apostolic Office: "Holy Father, keep in thy name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are. As thou has sent me into the world, so I also have sent them into the world . . . may the love with which thou has loved me be in them, and I in them" (John 17. 11, 18, 26).

25. And so We, also a presbyter, the Vicar on earth of the Eternal Shepherd, have spoken to you, our fellow-presbyters (I Peter 5, 1) and shepherds of your flocks, close to the tombs of the Prince of the Apostles and Saint Pius X, Supreme Pontiff; and at the end of Our discourse, We turn Our thoughts again to the Mass "Si diligis," with which We began, in the preface of which we pray: "that

Thou, Eternal Shepherd, may not abandon Thy flock, but through Thy Blessed Apostles may keep a continual watch over it. That it may be governed by those same rulers whom Thou didst set over it as shepherds in Thy Place"; and in the second Postcommunion prayer we add: "Increase, we beseech Thee, O Lord, in Thy Church the spirit of grace which Thou has given it, in order that through the intercession of Blessed Pius, Supreme Pontiff, neither the flock may be wanting in obedience to the Shepherd nor the Shepherd in care of the flock."

26. May God grant this prayer to all of you according to the measure of His divine liberality!

