

# THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY.

---

VOL. XIV.

APRIL, 1910.

No. 2.

---

## THE VICAR OF CHRIST.

### III.

Suppose Peter had been the "Prince" of the Apostles, did he have the power to give this lordship to his successor? And if he had the power, did he do so? Where is it written in the Bible? Where is it written in History?

#### *1. The Emperors recognized no "Vicar of Christ."*

Pope Leo X, in the Lateran Synod of 1516, said, "It is manifestly established that the Roman Pontiff for the time being, as having authority over all councils, has alone the full power of convoking, transferring, dissolving;" a claim made no earlier than 785 by Hadrian I. — This is manifestly untrue.

The Emperor Constantine called the First General Council at Nicaea, in Bithynia, in 325; the Emperor made the opening address; the Emperor presided for a time; the Emperor formally confirmed the acts of the council; some of the main sessions were held in the Emperor's palace; the ecclesiastical president was Bishop Hosius of Cordova, not the Roman Bishop Sylvester or his Legates.

The Second General Council, at Constantinople, in 381, was called by the Emperor Theodosius alone. The Pope was neither present nor represented. The Emperor alone confirmed the acts of the Council.

After the division of the Roman Empire, in 395, the Emperors Theodosius II and Valentinian III called the Third General Council, at Ephesus, in 431; the Emperor bade the

---

## Prof. WESSEL'S CONTROVERSY WITH FATHER FOLEY.

At a meeting of the Eucharistic League, in Springfield, Ill., Father M. J. Foley of Quincy, Ill., delivered a sermon on "The Holy Eucharist," which was published *in toto* in a local newspaper, and contained in one of its parts a rehashing of moldy slander against Luther handed down by popish calumniators in the great Reformer's day. This present-day representative of Roman Catholic pulpit oratory, in the course of his sermon, marched out the church fathers to satisfy the faithful ones that they believed and taught the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and with special delight he quoted St. Cyril of Jerusalem as saying: "What seems to be bread is not bread, but the body of Christ; and what seems to be wine is not wine, but the blood of Christ." Then he invited his audience to make a study of patristic theology, and to include

in their reading matter the works of the Roman popes and the decrees of the councils of the church. He assured his hearers:

Martin Luther read them, hence, in the year 1532, writing to Albert, Duke of Prussia, he gave this startling testimony: "This article about the Eucharist has been admitted by common consent from the days of Christ even to our own times. The writings of the fathers, both Greek and Latin, prove this. Hence, to raise doubts on this subject would be to condemn as heretics Christ Himself, the apostles and prophets." What do you think of these words of the arch-reformer? They were wrung from him by stubborn facts. Why, then, did he make shipwreck of his faith in the holy mass? Writing to his disciple, Capito, he says: "I would gladly deny the doctrine of the Eucharist." Why? Listen to his reason for wishing to deny the doctrine of the mass: "I would willingly deny it and so deal the last deadly blow to the pope of Rome, but," he laments, "that doctrine is too firmly established in the Bible; it is unassailable."

And finally, to climax it all, the priest reproduced a hackneyed fable, now nearly four hundred years old, in this fashion:

If it was unassailable, how did he (Luther) come to reject the holy mass? In his writings he tells us why. He tells us how he had an audience with the devil, yes, with His Satanic Majesty. Luther gives us the arguments set forth by the Father of Lies, and assures us that he became convinced that the mass was rank idolatry. Luther listened to Satan's arguments, and ceased to ascend the altar of God. We are shocked. We stand abashed in the presence of such conduct. Christ, the eternal Truth, says, "This is my body." The Catholic hears, believes, and adores. Satan, the Father of Lies, says, "No, it is not his body, and it is rank idolatry to adore it." Luther rejects the doctrine of Christ, accepts the teachings of Satan, and ceases to ascend the altar of God.

Such palpable misquotations could not go by unchallenged; and so the Rev. Prof. L. Wessel, at the urgent request of his brethren, assumed the duty of an unpleasant controversy with a biased opponent and carried it to a successful finish. In response to the above jumble of misrepresentations the Professor delivered in substance the same lecture, first before the student body of Concordia Seminary, and then before a large number of members of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church. Since the priest's alleged quotations from Luther and his com-

ment thereon made it appear as if Luther had granted only with great reluctance that the church fathers taught the real presence, and as if he had lamented to find this doctrine in the Bible, the Professor brought, in place of the above garbled quotations, Luther's own words with the necessary remarks. Luther's letter to Albert, Duke of Prussia, reads in part thus:

This article (of the Lord's Supper) is not a doctrine or tradition fabricated by men, but clearly found and established in the Gospel, in plain, clear, and indubitable words of Christ, unanimously believed and held from beginning by the Christian Church in all the world, up to this hour, as is proved by the books and writings of the dear fathers, both of the Latin and Greek tongue. Hence, as it has been unanimously held from the beginning within the pale of whole Christendom, every doubter of it now does actually as much as not believing a Christian Church at all and condemning, at the same time, not alone the entire Christian Church as a damnable heretic, but also Christ Himself, with all apostles and prophets. (St. Louis ed., vol. XX, 1684.)

And Luther's letter, dated December 15, 1524, addressed to the Christians at Strassburg—not to Capito, as the priest informed his hearers—in the passage touched upon by the Roman clergyman, reads thus:

I confess, if Dr. Carlstadt or any other person could have convinced me five years ago that the Sacrament contains nothing but bread and wine, he would have done me a great service. I suffered indeed great straits of doubt, and I struggled and writhed, as I would have been glad to be at liberty, for I saw full well that I could have then dealt popery the hardest blow. And there are two persons who have written to me on this matter with more ability than Dr. Carlstadt and have not distorted the words to their notion in the same degree as he. But I am conscience-bound, I cannot liberate myself: *the text is too powerful*, and cannot be removed from the mind by words. (St. Louis ed., vol. XV, 2050.)

A report of the Professor's answers to the papist's unfounded accusations appeared in the newspapers, and in consequence several lengthy articles on the disputed points were published in the dailies. In these articles Luther's "audience with the devil" was given more prominence; and about this ridiculous myth the Professor wrote:

Of this "audience" Luther writes in his book entitled, "Dr. Martin Luther's Treatise Concerning Private Mass (Winkelmesse) and the Consecration of Priests (Pfaffenweihe)." In it he does not give us the reason why he rejected the mass, as the opponent contends. Luther had rejected the mass ten years prior to this so-called audience. In this book, furthermore, he does not say that he had a personal "audience" with His Satanic Majesty. What he does say is that he "had a disputation *in his heart* with the devil." Is that anything strange in a Christian's experience? Does not the holy apostle say, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"? On this particular occasion, what was it that the devil assailed him with? Luther, prior to his conversion, had been a monk and a priest. For fifteen long years, he says, he had participated in this mass against the injunction of his Lord. The sin thereby committed again fell heavily upon his soul. That's the gist of the matter. The book is written in excellent German. The thoughts are clearly developed, the contents interesting and instructive. The book is self-interpreting. Read it! Furthermore, an author is the best interpreter of his own writings. That's a principle recognized the world over. Accord Luther the same privilege. Regarding this selfsame matter, Luther writes in a later treatise: "In my book I have not attacked the sin against, and the abuse of, the Sacrament (Lord's Supper), but the perverted order of the mass, as it stands in direct opposition to Christ's institution, not for our sake,—since we are now rid and free of the private mass more than ten years,—but that their own people see for themselves upon what rotten and rank lies and nonsense their idol, *i. e.*, their mass, stands." So Luther doesn't say that it was through the devil's argument at "this disputation in his heart" that he first learned to know that the mass is rank idolatry, but he says: "In that book I have attacked the perverted order of the mass." So before this "audience" he knew the mass was wrong. How did he know it is wrong? He answers: "It stands in direct opposition to Christ's injunction." How long before had he rejected the mass? Ten years.—Arguments *pro* and *con*.

1. Luther says: "I had a disputation in my heart with the devil." Father Foley says: "Luther had an audience with the devil, yes, with His Satanic Majesty." To have "a disputation in my heart with the devil" and to have "an audience with the devil" is not one and the same thing. Here's the first injustice done to Luther.

2. Luther says: "I rejected the mass ten years prior to this disputation." Father Foley says: "In consequence of this audience with the devil Luther rejected the mass." That's the second injustice done to Luther.

3. Luther says: "I did not reject the Lord's Supper, but the perverted order of the mass." Father Foley says: "In consequence of this audience Luther rejected the words of Christ: 'This is my body.'" This is the third injustice done to Luther by Father Foley. Well might we exclaim: "We are shocked! We stand abashed in the presence of such conduct!"

The Roman priest at no time made an attempt at proof. He simply reiterated the misinterpreted passage from Luther's writings used in his sermons, and declared he would continue to repeat it. But that he had placed himself in a hopeless dilemma he well knew, because he had artlessly asserted, "It is immaterial as to when he (Luther) renounced the mass." In addition to this, he made a grand splurge for the edification of his readers about Roman Catholic doctrine in regard to religion and sacrifice and transubstantiation, adduced a long array of quotations from the church fathers, in support of his dogmatical effort, filled two columns with other foreign matter, and thus tried to obscure the question of debate, "Was Luther correctly quoted and interpreted?" Digressing also in other directions, he reasserted the old absurdity that Lutherans teach impanation and consubstantiation and contrary to Christ's words make the Savior say, "Here is my body." To this the Professor answered:

Cyclopedias may ascribe these doctrines to us, but that does not make them Lutheran doctrine. As to the remark, "According to Lutherans Christ should have said, 'Here is my body'" — that is naive. Lutherans well know how to express their doctrines, as witness the Augsburg Confession with its twenty-eight articles, delivered at the Diet of Augsburg in 1530.

But this Roman father resorted to even baser tactics. Because he well knew that Luther's doctrine is invincible, he vented his spleen on Luther's person, citing various bitter foes of the Reformer who believed him either mad or possessed by

an evil spirit. In answer to this he was reminded, among other things, of the word of Luther: "If the devil cannot prevail against the doctrine, he slanders the person who preaches God's doctrines. Thus of John the Baptist and of Christ Himself it was said that they were possessed of the devil."

In his concluding article the papist still maintained, in the face of all proof from the writings of Luther, that the devil persuaded Luther to reject the mass at the so-called audience; however, he no longer called it an "audience," but receded a few steps and termed it a "conference" and a "dispute." But he was very far from conceding that it was "a disputation in the heart," as Luther styles it. To disarm the priest completely in the eyes of all "truth-loving people" and his "honest Lutheran friends," to whom the priest had appealed so blandly and *usque ad nauseam*, expressing also the hope that his Lutheran friends might "find a way to recover their birthright, the mass," Prof. Wessel, in his reply to the priest's concluding article, extended to every interested person a courteous invitation to visit Concordia Seminary library and to verify from Luther's own complete works the truth of his statements made in regard to the treatise of Luther under discussion. Then the Professor went on in his article to say:

And now to show you the utter impossibility of Father Foley's being in the right in this argument, I will say that Luther had this "disputation" in the year 1533, at a time when he had left the Catholic Church long, long ago, and long ago knew that the mass was rank idolatry.

Father Foley had said this "disputation" had taken place when Luther was at the Wartburg. The Professor continued:

The Reformation began in 1517; the Diet of Worms was held in 1521, where Luther gave utterance to the memorable words: "Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Word of God, etc., I cannot and will not recant anything," etc. He closed thus, "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise; God help me! Amen." In 1530 the famous Diet at Augsburg was held at which the Lutherans delivered the Augsburg Confession. Among other articles it treats of the Lord's Supper; in another it speaks of the mass, and the

error connected therewith. It says this doctrine as taught then by the opponents is a departure from the Holy Scriptures. It rejects this doctrine as false. So this is proof positive that Luther and his colaborers at and before this time held the mass as taught by the Roman Catholics to be utterly wrong. And now observe, kind reader, that it was three years later, in 1533, that Luther had this "disputation in his heart," in consequence of which Father Foley says, "Luther assures us" that he then first became convinced that the mass was rank idolatry! Do you require proof that this "disputation" occurred in 1533? One may suffice. In a letter to Hausmann, dated December 17, 1533, Luther mentions the treatise containing that "disputation" as one lately published, and in the same letter he refers to the disputation as having taken place "recently." Judge for yourselves! I don't fear the verdict of fair-minded readers. Said one, and a non-Lutheran at that, after reading my former article: "Well, I see, Luther is well able to defend himself." But Father Foley is much like the village schoolteacher in Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," of whom we read:

For e'en though vanquish'd, he could argue still,  
While words of learned length, and thundering sound,  
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;  
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew  
That one small head could carry all he knew.  
But, past is all his fame.

One point which this blundering vassal of the pope wished to carry in his sermon and in every one of his newspaper contributions was to impress others with the view that Luther did not believe in the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist, and that, since he rejected the mass, he also rejected the Lord's Supper. He had, however, in the heat of the controversy, forgotten this and had quoted, this time true to the text, passages from Luther's Small Catechism, his Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord which show clearly that Luther and, with him, the whole Lutheran Church adhere faithfully to the words of Christ: "This is my body." Professor Wessel did not fail to remind his floundering opponent to his chagrin and to his disgrace of the concession he had unwittingly made, and the slap he had dealt himself. Notwithstanding, this ardent champion of the mass bent every effort to prove that Luther had renounced the doctrine of the real



presence. So he boldly delved into history, but produced such a mess of fabrications as would have caused even Baron von Muenchhausen to turn green with envy. An enumeration of some of his worst antics, with the necessary comment from the Lutheran side, follows:

1. He (Foley) says: "In response to the wishes of the Elector of Saxony and of Philip of Hesse Luther drew up the Articles of Smalcald."—What are the facts? Philip of Hesse had not uttered a wish to Luther in regard to the drawing up of these articles. This was at the request of the Elector alone. (Compare Seckendorf, *Historia*, liber III.) This is Father Foley's first fiction.

2. Father Foley says: "The Articles of Smalcald differed in several important points from the Augsburg Confession."—What are the facts? If this assertion means that the Smalcald Articles differ from the Augsburg Confession in 1530 doctrinally, I declare this to be an assertion without foundation of fact. Luther's doctrinal position in 1537 is absolutely that of 1530. The Augsburg Confession distinctly rejects the Sacramentarian view in the Tenth Article. This is Father Foley's second fiction.

3. Father Foley says: "Luther wrote to Philip that he was in favor of uniting with the (Swiss) Sacramentarians, though he had condemned their teachings before." Father Foley here intimates that Luther was ready to unite with the Sacramentarians in spite of their false doctrine, that "we find Luther drifting farther and farther from his former belief in the real presence in the Holy Eucharist, and doing so to placate the Swiss Sacramentarians."—What are the facts? In 1529 there was an abortive conference between the Swiss Sacramentarians and Luther at Marburg. Why was the conference barren of favorable results? Because Luther would not surrender the scriptural doctrine of the Lord's Supper. In 1536 there was another attempt at concord, and a union was effected. Why had this meeting a favorable termination? Because Bucer and Capito came over to Luther's view and faith as respects the Lord's Supper. Witness their own statement in the Articles of Agreement. Bucer recanted his former false doctrine in a public sermon held at Wittenberg a few days after the conference. (See Seckendorf, liber III; Walch XVII, 2534; Rudelbach, *Reformation*, etc., page 363 sqq.) This is Father Foley's third fiction.

4. Father Foley says: "To gratify these men, Melanchthon, under the direction of Luther, dropped from the Augsburg Confession these words: "The body and blood of Christ are veritably present in the

Eucharist," and in their place he inserted: "The body and blood of Christ," etc. — What are the facts? Melancthon changed the Augsburg Confession of 1530. He did this without the knowledge of Luther. When Luther's attention was directed to the alteration, he remonstrated with Melancthon and sorely upbraided him for his action. Luther never accepted the alterations, but continuously and strenuously rejected them. (See Krauth, *Conservative Reformation*, p. 246; *Hauptverteidigung des Augapfels*, p. 340.) This is Father Foley's fourth fiction.

The Lutheran Church in her confession, the Formula of Concord of 1580, states with emphasis (Article VII, p. 653, § 33, German and Latin edition) that Luther never changed the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, as laid down in the Augsburg Confession. Here are the words: "Dr. Luther, who certainly understood the tone and proper meaning of the Augsburg Confession, rather than others, and constantly adhered to it and defended it, till the end of his life, in his last confession, a little before his death, confessed his faith concerning this article (Lord's Supper) with great zeal, and repeated it in the following words, where he thus writes: 'I reckon all those in the same number . . . who will not believe that the bread of the Lord in the Supper is His true natural body, which the ungodly or Judas, as well as St. Peter and all other saints, received orally. Whoever, I say, will not believe this, should let me alone and not expect to hold fellowship with me; and to this principle I must adhere.' From this exposition, but more especially from Dr. Luther's explanation, who is the principal divine of the Augsburg Confession, every intelligent person, who loves truth and peace, can perceive with certainty what has always been the proper meaning and sense of the Augsburg Confession concerning this article." So far the Lutheran Confession. — How dare Father Foley, in the face of such unimpeachable testimony, assert that Luther changed his doctrinal position on the Lord's Supper?

5. Father Foley says: "The poor innocent people were attached to the holy mass, hence Luther, to wean them away by deception, retained the vestments, lights, elevation of host, and chalice, in order, as he said, that visitors from foreign parts, seeing those outward ceremonies, would feel that they were in an orthodox Catholic church." — What are the facts? Since 1520 Luther wrote and spoke against the abomination of the popish mass. The mass was abolished in the main church at Wittenberg. The opposition against the Roman Catholic Church was so great that the people were hard to restrain. Excesses occurred which caused Luther's return to Wittenberg. In a

series of sermons, than which there are none more powerful or evangelical in any language, Luther called the people back to Christian moderation. He showed the necessity of distinguishing essentials and non-essentials, sin and Christian liberty. The mass continued abolished, but some of the ceremonies were re-established. Why? Because the doctrine and not indifferent ceremonies make a church apostolic and pure. This principle was embodied in the Augsburg Confession, Article XV, where we read: "Concerning ecclesiastical rites made by men, they (the Lutherans) teach that those rites are to be observed which may be without sin, and are of value for tranquillity and good order in the church, such as set holidays, feasts, and the like. Yet concerning these things men are to be admonished that consciences are not to be burdened as if such exercises were necessary to their salvation. Also they are to be admonished that human traditions, instituted to propitiate God, to deserve grace, and make satisfaction for sins, are opposed to the Gospel and the doctrine of faith." (Compare Guericke, *Church History*, III, p. 57; *Ideas That Have Influenced Civilization*, V, p. 156.) This is Father Foley's fifth fiction.

Thus the pope's devotees fight for their mutual master's, the devil's, cause, and, as the children of the Father of Lies, resort to any, even the most infamous, means to gain their end, the greater glory of the church of Antichrist! And even if this priest lies outright, and asserts, among other falsehoods, that this controversy had been forced upon him, and tries to pose as one persecuted, whereas he began it with his shameful and baseless attacks upon Luther and Lutheran doctrine, yet he finds to his satisfaction that there is union in the camp of the devil, for he received from Washington, D. C., a very brotherly letter of commendation from the Apostolic Delegate Falconio for the services rendered in this disputation, as a *defensor fidei*. But the prelate's applause may only have been intended for the gratification of the galleries, as his satellite was completely routed and had no more to say.