Crucial Truths to Save Your Soul

PASTOR ÆTERNUS
First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ,
Published in the Fourth Session of the Holy Ecumenical Council of the Vatican [18 Jul 1870]
Pius IX Bishop, Servant Of The Servants Of God, With The Approval Of The Sacred Council, For An Everlasting Remembrance.

INTRODUCTION
† Jesus Christ is the eternal Pastor and Bishop of our souls (1 Pt 2:25). †
  ➢ Jesus Christ (God Himself!), willed to found a Church.
    Why? So that His work of redemption would endure until the consummation of the world.
  ➢ Christ made His Church ONE (Jn 17:20). All therein are united by the bond of faith and of charity.
  ➢ Christ willed for His Church to always have pastors and teachers (they too must be united).
  ➢ Christ established His Church upon St. Peter and established in him the perpetual principle and visible foundation of both unities (faith and charity).
† The truth regarding the Sacred Apostolic Primacy (Papacy) – which is Catholic Tradition - must be taught clearly and contrary errors condemned – this is for the salvation of the faithful.

CHAPTER I – THE INSTITUTION OF APOSTOLIC PRIMACY IN BLESSED PETER
† Jesus Christ conferred the primacy of jurisdiction over the entire Church immediately and directly upon St. Peter, and upon him alone.
  ➢ This is the true and infallible interpretation of Matthew 16:16 and John 21:15.
  ➢ No Apostle, as an individual or together with all the others, can have any primacy over Peter.

CHAPTER II – THE PERPETUITY OF THE PRIMACY OF BLESSED PETER AMONG THE ROMAN PONTIFFS
† Jesus Christ ensures that St. Peter’s primacy over the Church will endure to the end of time. †
  Why? For the perpetual salvation and perennial good of the Church.
  ➢ This office and its perpetuity (necessarily including succession) are signified by the keys.
  ➢ St. Peter continues to live and rule the Church from the See which was hallowed by his blood.
† Whoever succeeds Peter in His Chair (the Roman See) is the Vicar of St. Peter and holds the primacy of Peter over the whole Church.
  ➢ Thus every ‘local church’ must be in union with the Church of Rome to be part of the one Body.

CHAPTER III – THE POWER AND MANNER OF THE PRIMACY OF THE ROMAN PONTIFF
† The Apostolic See and Roman Pontiff hold primacy over the whole world! †
  ➢ As successor to St. Peter, he is the Vicar of Christ, head of the Church, and teacher of all Christians.
  ➢ He has full power to feed, rule, and guide the universal Church [will he exercise this power?].
† The Pope’s sovereignty over all others is an ordinary, immediate, and episcopal power. †
  ➢ All the faithful, regardless of office, owe him true obedience, not just in matters of faith and morals, but also in what pertains to the discipline and government of the Church.
† Why? So the Church will remain ONE - in one Faith, in one communion, under one shepherd.
This primacy does not diminish or interfere with the office of any other bishop, but rather is for the validation, strengthening and honor of each and every episcopal office.

As the supreme authority, the pope may communicate freely with any member of the flock and it is never licit for any other power (secular or ecclesial) to inhibit such communication.

The pope’s authority never requires consent from any other authority (secular or ecclesial).

The Roman Pontiff is the **Supreme Judge**.

- All the faithful have the right to have recourse to him for judgment in ecclesial matters.
- No one is permitted to disclaim or to pass judgment upon his judgments (not even an ecumenical council).

**CHAPTER IV – THE INFALLIBLE MAGISTERIUM OF THE ROMAN PONTIFF**

- Both East and West have agreed the the Pope has the *supreme power* of the magisterium.
- For example, see Fourth Constantinople (869-870), Second Lyons (1274), and Florence (1438-39)
- The Pope has the grace to infallibly judge that a doctrine is in agreement with Sacred Scripture and Apostolic Tradition. (Note, how the supreme magisterium is in service of Divine Revelation.)
- The Pope does *not* have an infallible grace to disclose and teach a new doctrine.
- The Holy Ghost assists the Pope in *guarding* the deposit of faith and *faithfully* transmitting it.
- The **See of St. Peter** has always remained unimpaired by any error.

  *Why?* Christ prayed St. Peter to have this grace (Luke 22:32).

- Christ entrusted this gift (grace) of Truth and never failing Faith to St. Peter and the successors in his chair so that:
  - The Pope might carry out his awesome responsibility (*i.e.* the *salvation of every soul*).
  - The flock might always be nourished with true doctrine & turned away from poisonous error.
  - The Church would remain as ONE and be preserved from *schism*.
  - Thus, may the Church always remain firm against the “*gates of hell*”

  *(To discuss: What *exactly* does that phrase mean? It is certainly a truth of our Faith, but as with the other Mysteries of God, we should realize it may not be apparently perceptible to our external senses or even readily comprehended by our spiritual faculties.)*