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Popes and Jesuits vs. Nationalism (c.1846–1978)

THOMAS WORCESTER, S.J.

In 2010, Cambridge University Press published *The Papacy since 1500: From Italian Prince to Universal Pastor*, a collection of essays that I co-edited with James Corkery, essays that examined some of the ways in which the bishop of Rome came to function as a universal pastor. In the essay that follows, I will endeavor to carry this question a bit further by seeking to understand what such “universality” meant in opposition to various forms of nationalism, an opposition often encouraged and supported by Jesuits, in the era from the pontificate of Pius IX (1792–1878, r.1846–78) to that of Paul VI (1897–1978, r.1963–78).

It would be hard to overstate the importance of the conflicting memories and interpretations of the French Revolution in nineteenth-century Europe. The “nation” was a key part of those memories: understood either as the sovereign people who rose up and replaced an unholy and repressive alliance of throne and altar with a republic of liberty, equality, and fraternity; or as an ideology of terror that rejected legitimate authority and sought to destroy Christianity and replace it with pagan rituals as well as abundant use of the guillotine in punishing faithful clergy and religious, and in silencing any critics whatsoever.¹ For many European Catholics, even well into the twentieth century, the revolution was the antithesis of authentic Catholicism and was to be opposed whenever and wherever it seemed to reappear, in later revolutions or even rumors or hints of them.² Such anti-revolutionary Catholics included popes.

Yet Pope Pius VII (1742–1823, r.1800–23) had in the 1790s, as a bishop, tried to accommodate some revolutionary ideas including that of a republican government. He was later bullied and imprisoned by Emperor Napoleon (1769–1821, r.1804–14, 1815). The Congress of Vienna (1814–15) supported Pius VII in the restoration of the papal states, as part of a general restoration of much of pre-revolutionary Europe.³ But papal rule of central Italy would soon be seen as an obstacle to the creation of an Italian nation state, one to be ruled by a constitutional monarchy led by the House of Savoy.

Though Pope Pius IX seemed briefly to be friendly to Italian unification, the Revo-

1. On the “nation” and France, see David Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680–1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); on the “nation” and the “modern” territorial state, see Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). On the French Revolution as in some ways replacing Christianity, see, e.g., Mona Ozouf, *Festivals of the French Revolution*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988). A recent work on nationalism since the late eighteenth century is that of Florian Bieber, *Debating Nationalism: The Global Spread of Nations* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020).

2. Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821) was a particularly eloquent lay spokesman against the revolution and for the papacy in early nineteenth-century Europe; see Carolina Armenteros, *The French Idea of History: Joseph de Maistre and His Heirs, 1794–1854* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011).

3. On Pius VII, see Thomas Worcester, “Pius VII: Moderation in an Age of Revolution and Reaction,” in *The Papacy since 1500: From Italian Prince to Universal Pastor*, ed. James Corkery and Thomas Worcester (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 107–24.

lution of 1848 changed his mind, and he became a resilient foe of Italian nationalism. For a detailed examination of the life and significance of Pius IX, see the multi-volume study by Giacomo Martina.⁴

The nineteenth century was not only an era of vibrant nationalism in Italy, in Germany, in Latin America, and elsewhere but also a century of technological progress that could assist the process of national unification. The railroad and photography may be the best examples. But Eamon Duffy points out that the railroad also made possible pilgrimages to Lourdes, thus promoting a kind of Marian piety dear to Pius IX; and the railroad facilitated larger numbers of pilgrims going to Rome than had ever done so before.⁵ Duffy also highlights the importance of cheap print for making the image of the pope available: “Catholic households from Africa to the Americas were as likely to display a picture of the Pope as a crucifix or a statue of the Virgin, and the face of Pio Nono was better known than that of any pope in history.”⁶ New means of transportation made it possible for Pius IX to require regular *ad limina* visits of bishops to Rome.⁷ Thus new technologies might help promote loyalty to the pope at least as much as they did or could to any other leader. Older technologies, the printing press in particular, were also put to Ultramontane use: with encouragement from Pius, the Jesuits founded *Civiltà Cattolica* in 1849, and in 1860 the *Osservatore Romano* was established, both publications largely devoted to dissemination of the pope’s teaching.⁸

Meanwhile, Pius IX was busy with more than politics and technology. He was relentless in affirming his spiritual authority as universal, above and not subject to veto by nation states, their episcopates or civil authorities. On December 8, 1854, he defined the immaculate conception of Mary, in his “infallible” decree *Ineffabilis Deus*.⁹ He declared and “defined” this doctrine to be revealed by God and therefore to be constantly believed by all the faithful. In earlier eras, Mary’s conception without sin had been a debated point among theologians; from 1854 on, Rome had spoken, and the matter was decided, beyond legitimate debate or dispute, henceforth to be taught always and everywhere as part of the Catholic faith. This way of teaching, of exercising the papal magisterium, brushed aside centuries of Gallicanism and other ecclesiologies that had sought to limit papal authority by that of other bishops, especially when they met in a council,¹⁰ and by heads of state and other civil authorities eager to exercise power over churches in their territories. Such power was sometimes wielded by refusing to allow publication of a papal decree in a given jurisdiction, thus preventing or impeding its reception or implementation. So had Empress Catherine the Great (1729–96, r.1762–96)

4. Giacomo Martina, *Pio IX*, 3 vols. (Rome: Università Gregoriana, 1974–90).

5. Eamon Duffy, *Saints and Sinners: A History of the Popes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 228.

6. Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, 228.

7. James Heft, “From Pope to the Bishops: Episcopal Authority from Vatican I to Vatican II,” in *The Papacy and the Church in the United States*, ed. Bernard Cooke (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 59.

8. Heft, “From Pope to the Bishops,” 59.

9. Pius IX, bull *Ineffabilis Deus* (December 8, 1854), in *The Teaching of the Catholic Church*, ed. Josef Neuner, Heinrich Roos, and Karl Rahner, trans. Geoffrey Stevens (New York: Alba House, 1967), 186.

10. On the long-term medieval background to this, see Brian Tierney, *Foundations of Conciliar Theory: The Contribution of the Medieval Canonists from Gratian to the Great Schism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955).

done in the Russian Empire regarding Pope Clement XIV's (1705–74, r.1769–74) brief that decreed the suppression of the Society of Jesus.¹¹

Pius IX not only sought unimpeded teaching authority in doctrinal matters but also administrative or governmental power that would be immediate, that is, that could be in no way restricted or limited by authorities in any country or any diocese. Such universal jurisdiction would, for example, allow him to appoint bishops of his choosing, not simply to rubber stamp choices made by someone else such as a Catholic monarch. The United States, with its separation of church and state, was one of relatively few places in the nineteenth century where there was no involvement in selection of bishops by civil government; it was also a place that rather quickly abandoned any serious involvement by the local church in the choice of bishops. As James Hennessey remarks, “Papal selection of bishops [...] came to be taken for granted in the United States.”¹² A republic, largely Protestant, was not necessarily an unfriendly place for at least some elements of Ultramontanism. And this was a republic that even tolerated the presence and activity of Jesuits.

As in the pre-suppression Society of Jesus, many Jesuits were missioned to work in Rome itself, and in the nineteenth century several Jesuit theologians in Rome worked tirelessly to provide persuasive intellectual and theological foundations for papal teaching, including on infallibility. A Jesuit, Giovanni Perrone (1794–1876), had provided the biblical and theological basis for the doctrine of the immaculate conception, while Josef Kleutgen (1811–83), Johannes Baptist Franzelin (1816–86), and some other Jesuits helped prepare and were theological experts at Vatican I (1869–70).¹³

With the calling of Vatican I, Pius IX set the stage for bishops from around the world to affirm that the pope could speak infallibly, on at least some matters, in certain circumstances, and to affirm the pope's immediate universal jurisdiction in governing the Catholic Church. Infallibility placed a limit on papal prerogatives in that a later pope could not alter an infallible definition made by one of his predecessors. But infallibility also rendered certain papal decrees irreformable by any other authority as well, civil or religious, thus excluding, for example, ecclesiologies that might make a church council the final arbiter of doctrinal matters.¹⁴ Though at Vatican I there was a minority of bishops skeptical of the Ultramontane agenda, Pius IX succeeded in mustering overwhelming support when it came to final votes, guaranteed in part by the early departure from the council of certain prelates.

They were the exceptions. By the time Pius IX called Vatican I, he could be quite sure that the number of bishops and indeed cardinals favorable to his interpretation of both papal teaching authority and jurisdiction was growing rapidly. Still, their ex-

11. See John W. O'Malley, *The Jesuits & the Popes: A Historical Sketch of Their Relationship* (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2016), 87–89.

12. James Hennessey, “Rome and the Origins of United States Hierarchy,” in Cooke, *Papacy and the Church*, 92.

13. See O'Malley, *Jesuits & the Popes*, 101; see also James Corkery, “Kleutgen, Joseph,” in *Cambridge Encyclopedia of the Jesuits* (hereafter CEJ), ed. Thomas Worcester, S.J. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 443–44, and Corkery, “Vatican I,” in CEJ, 817.

14. The best recent book on Vatican I is John W. O'Malley's *Vatican I: The Council and the Making of the Ultramontane Church* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

cellencies and their eminences did not all hold exactly the same views, with the same emphasis, as Jeffrey von Arx's edited volume *Varieties of Ultramontanism* makes clear, a book concerning both the era of Vatican I and also its aftermath well into the twentieth century. For example, von Arx identifies the English cardinal Henry Edward Manning (1808–92) as more strongly identified with Ultramontanism “than any other nineteenth-century ecclesiastic save Pius IX himself.”¹⁵ And yet Manning would eventually move away from support of temporal power for the pope, to urge “accommodation” with the Italian state.¹⁶

By the 1860s, the papal states had been reduced to a small fraction of what they had historically been. Pius IX held on to this remnant with the indispensable help of foreign troops, but this solution would not last. With the withdrawal of French troops in August 1870, due to the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71), there was no way the papal states could resist an incorporation into the kingdom of Italy. The Vatican Council was suspended *sine die*, and the bishops went home; even the Vatican itself was henceforth in the territory of the Italian state, though Pius IX and his successors would dispute this for a half century. Yet Pius became, if anything, even more powerful as a spiritual leader once he was relieved of temporal authority in central Italy. In his governance of the church over his reign of thirty-two years, he oversaw the creation of an astonishing number of new dioceses around the world, especially in countries such as the United States.¹⁷ There his rather free hand in naming bishops helped to make the American church more and more Ultramontane as the nineteenth century went on. The Irish church, so influential in the United States and many other Anglophone countries, also became staunchly aligned with papal teaching, with *Romanità* and Roman norms governing the details of Catholic life and practice.¹⁸

French Canada is another case. Ignace Bourget (1799–1885) was bishop of Montreal from 1840 to 1876. His agenda was Ultramontane in many ways: catechetical instruction based on the Council of Trent (1545–63) and the Roman Catechism; conformity to Roman devotional and sacramental practices; and promotion of loyalty to the Holy See, which included the sending in 1868 of volunteer soldiers to defend the papal states. Bourget had a second, larger cathedral replace an earlier one in Montreal. The new cathedral, Saint-Jacques, built from 1870, was a model of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, though on a smaller scale.¹⁹ It is still the Montreal cathedral, with the name Marie Reine du Monde added. Though Quebec has moved in the last half century or so in an increasingly and aggressively secular direction, one of the main streets in Montreal remains the Boulevard Pie IX, dating back to the last years of the reign of Pius IX. The

15. Jeffrey von Arx, “Introduction,” in *Varieties of Ultramontanism*, ed. Jeffrey von Arx (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 7.

16. Von Arx, “Introduction,” 8.

17. See Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, 234.

18. See Ciarán O'Carroll, “Pius IX: Pastor and Prince,” in Corkery and Worcester, *Papacy since 1500*, 136–42; Oliver Rafferty, ed., *Irish Catholic Identities* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013); Colin Barr, *Ireland's Empire: The Roman Catholic Church in the English-Speaking World, 1829–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

19. See Terence Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics: Gallicanism, Romanism, and Canadianism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 76–79.

nomenclature of this street suggests a popularity of Pio Nono that had a very public face. By the last years of his papacy, the pope who had “lost” the papal states to Italian nation building won respect and attention and loyalty on an international scale that no pope had equaled before.

Pius IX died in February 1878; his successor, Gioacchino Vincenzo Pecci (1810–1903), at age sixty-eight, was almost certainly thought by the cardinal electors to be unlikely to have a long papacy. They were wrong in this, as Leo XIII’s (r.1878–1903) reign exceeded twenty-five years. Though more intellectually inclined than his predecessor, Leo XIII would prove no less than Pius IX a strong promoter of an Ultramontanist agenda. Leo emphasized the pope’s teaching office, especially through the publication of a great many encyclicals (eighty-six) throughout his papacy.²⁰ Destined for bishops and the Catholic Church throughout the world, these papal writings addressed a broad range of topics, including the centrality of Thomas Aquinas (1224/25–74) in Catholic philosophy and theology; Leo’s 1879 *Aeterni Patris* was an enthusiastic endorsement of a thorough Thomist revival.²¹

But the encyclical of Leo XIII that engaged by far the longest-lasting attention was his 1891 *Rerum novarum*, on the “condition” of workers.²² Addressed to all the patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops in communion with the Apostolic See, Leo offered a vigorous critique of a “socialism” that would deny a natural right to private property, even as he also defended the natural rights of workers to fair wages and humane working conditions, as well as a right of association that could include the right to form unions, and even to go on strike in certain circumstances, such as if the state failed to intervene and mediate.²³ Leo was especially clear in his rejection of a laissez-faire economic theory in which the state did not attempt to regulate relations between labor and capital. Pope Leo insisted that the state was to guarantee distributive justice, that is, justice by which each person receives their due.²⁴ And thus the state must give “special consideration” to the poor, for the rich have “many ways of protecting themselves.”²⁵ For Leo, the fairness of wages was not guaranteed by contractual arrangements but only when remuneration was enough to support the wage earner and his family in “reasonable and frugal comfort.”²⁶ The dignity of the worker must not be violated, and such violations would include denial of sabbath rest, during which the worker both rests from labor and engages in religious observances.²⁷

Though Leo addressed bishops across the globe, his frame of reference remained

20. Though Pius IX published relatively few encyclicals compared to his successor, one that gained a great deal of attention is *Quanta cura*, and its attached Syllabus of Errors, published in 1864.

21. *Aeterni Patris*, August 4, 1879.

22. See Thomas Massaro, “The Social Question in the Papacy on Leo XIII,” in Corkery and Worcester, *Papacy since 1500*, 143–61.

23. I cite the edition /translation of *Rerum novarum* published in Oswald van Nell-Breuning, *Reorganization of the Social Economy*, trans. Bernard Dempsey (Milwaukee, WI: Bruce, 1936). For information on van Nell-Breuning, see below, note 66.

24. *Rerum novarum*, no. 27. Note that there is not a standard numbering of paragraphs for this encyclical; these vary according to edition.

25. *Rerum novarum*, no. 29.

26. *Rerum novarum*, no. 34.

27. *Rerum novarum*, no. 32.

mostly European. Leo could claim success in seeing Otto von Bismarck (1815–98, in office 1871–90) backdown on at least much of the *Kulturkampf* against the Catholic Church in Germany.²⁸ Well before Leo was pope, he had spent time in Belgium as papal nuncio, and his Belgian experience likely played a role in how he understood the situation of workers in his era.²⁹ Industrialization was more advanced there than in Italy. In the course of the 1890s, the international reach of Leo’s papacy went in some other directions as well, including France and the United States. In the case of France, his concern was to encourage a possible reconciliation between the French church and a republican French state.³⁰ This did not go well, as the Catholic elites in France remained deeply suspicious of and hostile to a republic that sought, among other things, to secularize education and make certain that children were taught a favorable narrative of the French Revolution. As for the United States, in *Testem benevolentiae nostrae*, a letter sent to Baltimore archbishop James Cardinal Gibbons (1834–1921), Leo deplored the dangers he saw in new opinions, associated with Americanism, opinions he saw as at odds with the church’s teachings. Leo affirms that he, as successor in the chair of Peter, is the center and foundation of unity in doctrine and in government and states *ubi enim Petrus ibi Ecclesia* (for where Peter is, there is the church), which he attributes to St. Ambrose (c.339–97).³¹

Leo XIII’s successor was Giuseppe Sarto (1835–1914), patriarch of Venice, who took the name Pius X (r.1903–14). Though he may have brought a more pastoral style to the papacy, in insistence on papal authority in governance and doctrine he was, if anything, even more unrelenting. Utterly opposed to anything like historical method in scripture studies or in theology, he sought to eliminate “Modernism” from the church, above all from the clergy, even at the price of stunting Catholic intellectual life. In 1907, Pius published, in *Lamentabili sane*, a syllabus of Modernist errors,³² and in the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici gregis* he asserted that it was his duty, assigned to him by Christ, to guard the deposit of faith and to reject “profane novelties of words.”³³ Among the chief “doctrines” of the Modernists identified by Pius was the evolution of all things, including even dogma, church, worship, the Bible, and faith.³⁴ Horrified by the Modernists and their errors, Pius claimed that they “generate a pestilence in the air which penetrates everywhere and spreads the contagion.”³⁵ Yet Pius was certain that he knew what remedies to apply: require the philosophy of Aquinas in seminaries; purge Catholic institutions of professors “imbued” with Modernism; require bishops to pro-

28. Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, 237–38.

29. Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, 235; and see Paul Misner, *Social Catholicism in Europe: From the Onset of Industrialization to the First World War* (New York: Crossroad, 1991).

30. Among studies of Leo’s effort to encourage a *ralliement* of French Catholics to the republic: Alexander Sedgwick, *The Ralliement in French Politics, 1890–98* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965); Robert De Mattei, *Il ralliement di Leone XIII: Il fallimento di un progetto pastorale* (Florence: Le lettere, 2014).

31. See Leo’s letter of January 22, 1899, *Testem benevolentiae nostrae*. For an English translation, see, e.g., John Wynne, ed., *The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII* (New York: Benziger, 1903), 441–53, especially 452.

32. Pius X, syllabus of 1907, *Lamentabili sane*.

33. Pius X, encyclical of September 8, 1907, *Pascendi Dominici gregis*, no. 1.

34. *Pascendi Dominici gregis*, no. 26.

35. *Pascendi Dominici gregis*, no. 34.

scribe the pernicious books in their dioceses; censor books proposed for publication.³⁶ In 1910, Pius X followed this up with an anti-Modernist oath, to be required of all clergy, a requirement that lasted until the 1960s.³⁷

Yet Pius X should not be seen as limited to his anti-Modernist zeal. He acted as universal pastor, in a very different way, in promoting more frequent reception of communion, and of communion by children from the age of seven, several years younger than had been the customary practice.³⁸ At the time, many Catholics received communion only a few times a year; Pius encouraged weekly or even daily reception.³⁹ In so doing, Pius sided firmly with the Jesuit advocacy of frequent communion and against the Jansenist insistence on lengthy preparation for communion and relatively rare reception of the sacrament. Jesuits were grateful, and praised and thanked Pius for his intervention and decisive position in this matter. For example, American Jesuit Walter Dwight (1872–1923), in his 1912 book *The King's Table: Papers on Frequent Communion*, refers to Christ as the King and to Pius X as his “Prime Minister” who has invited us to receive communion daily at the King’s table (i.e., the altar).⁴⁰ Responding to Jansenist arguments for lengthy preparation, Dwight insists that “communion is not a reward for being good, one cannot repeat too often, but a means for keeping good.”⁴¹ As an epilogue, Dwight includes an English translation of the full text of Pius X’s 1905 decree on communion, a decree in which Pius never refers directly to the Jesuits and their long history of advocacy of frequent communion but does refer explicitly to the history of the “plague of Jansenism” and the “poison of Jansenism,” and to the fact that the controversy continues to be carried on, at times “not without bitterness.”⁴² The decree sought to end such bitterness by papal resolution of the matter.

Pius X’s successor, Giacomo della Chiesa (1854–1922), was elected pope and took the name Benedict XV (r.1914–22) on September 3, 1914, shortly after the start of what became the First World War. The bitterness, violence, and controversies of that conflict would make anything Pius had had to deal with look very mild indeed. Benedict was relentless in seeking to play a role in bringing about peace. He was stymied in this by various factors, including the unresolved Roman Question, the rather small number of nations that afforded diplomatic recognition to the Holy See, and by suspicions on each side in the war that Benedict really favored their enemy.

Less than two months after his election, Benedict published an encyclical, *Ad beatissimi apostolorum*, in which he implored rulers to “consider the floods of tears and blood already poured out, and to hasten to restore to the nations the blessing of peace.”⁴³ He

36. *Pascendi Dominici gregis*, nos. 44–53.

37. Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, 251.

38. See Pius X, a document from the Congregation on Sacraments, on first communion, August 8, 1910, *Quam singulari*.

39. Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, 247. See Pius X, decree *Sacra Tridentina Synodus*, December 20, 1905, on frequent communion; text may be found as an appendix in Walter Dwight, *The King's Table* (New York: Apostleship of Prayer, 1912), 171–81.

40. Wright, *King's Table*, 3.

41. Wright, *King's Table*, 65.

42. Pius X, *Sacra Tridentina Synodus*, 174–76.

43. Benedict XV, encyclical of November 1, 1914, *Ad beatissimi apostolorum*, no. 4.

called for arms to be laid aside while other means of rectifying violated rights could be pursued. Though over four long years the slaughter would prove to be worse than what Benedict deplored in 1914, already in this encyclical he regretted that “combatants [...] well provided with the most awful weapons modern military science has devised [...] strive to destroy one another with refinements of horror.”⁴⁴

Benedict’s efforts to pursue a kind of prophetic role for himself, pleading for peace, and to adhere to neutrality or impartiality did not persuade many in wartime. For example, in Britain, the government was displeased, and British Catholics were at pains to demonstrate their patriotism and loyalty to their country, a goal in tension with certain Ultramontanist tendencies. In 1903, Edward VII (1841–1910, r.1901–10) had paid a visit to Leo XIII, and the hopes raised by such an action among Catholics for a more complete acceptance in Britain were challenged by Benedict’s diplomatic strategy in the Great War.⁴⁵ Benedict was somewhat more successful in sponsoring humanitarian efforts, with the help of neutral Switzerland, especially on behalf of prisoners of war.⁴⁶ From the summer of 1915, Benedict and his secretary of state Pietro Gasparri (1852–1934) sought a more active diplomatic role for the Holy See in promoting peace, though this goal would meet with plenty of resistance.⁴⁷ Excluded from the Versailles peace conference, the Holy See would have at least the advantage of having to take no blame for the treaty it produced. As John Pollard states, “much of the Vatican’s post-war diplomatic prestige and room for manoeuvre was built precisely upon its distance from the peace settlement.”⁴⁸

Though the war had taken up much of Benedict’s attention, among other things, he attended to the promulgation of a code of canon law for the Latin church on May 27, 1917. Much of the work on this project had been done under Pius X; not surprisingly, many of the articles emphasized central, papal authority. For example, article 329 states that the Roman pontiff “freely” appoints bishops,⁴⁹ a practice with shallow historical roots, but one that had become more frequent in the preceding century or so. The very action of promulgating a law code by the bishop of Rome for the entire Latin church sent a powerful message of papal authority at work on a major international scale.

His internationalism did not blind Benedict to the need to facilitate good relations between church and state in certain countries, such as France. Pius had beatified Joan of Arc (c.1412–31) on April 18, 1909; Benedict canonized her on May 16, 1920. Interest in this young woman who had taken up arms to defend France against England in the Hundred Years’ War (1337–1453) had grown rapidly after the French defeat in the

44. *Ad beatissimi apostolorum*, no. 3.

45. See Charles Gallagher, “The Perils of Perception: British Catholics and Papal Neutrality, 1914–1923,” in Corkery and Worcester, *Papacy since 1500*, 162–81.

46. See John Pollard, *The Papacy in the Age of Totalitarianism 1914–1958* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 54–57.

47. Pollard, *Papacy in the Age of Totalitarianism*, 58–68.

48. John Pollard, *Benedict XV: The Pope of Peace* (London: Continuum, 1999), 143.

49. Pollard, *Papacy in the Age of Totalitarianism*, 106. See *Codex iuris canonici* (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1917). This code would be in force until replaced by Pope John Paul II (1920–2005, r.1978–2005): *Code of Canon Law: Latin–English Edition*, trans. Canon Law Society of America (Washington, DC: Canon Law Society of America, 1983).

Franco-Prussian War. For the republican left, she was the patriotic daughter of the people, an exemplar to be followed. For many Catholics, she was a model of obedience to God, for she had heard and responded favorably to heavenly voices calling her to fight for France, and for its monarchy.⁵⁰ For both secular and religious fans of Joan, she was in her death a victim of English brutality and injustice.

Conflict between the French Republic and the Catholic Church in France had reached fever pitch at the beginning of the twentieth century, with expulsion of most religious orders and congregations (1901) and by the government's unilateral separation of church and state (1905) and abrogation of the 1801 Concordat. The First World War brought a degree of reconciliation, *de facto* and in attitudes, if not in law, in view of the very large numbers of French clergy and religious who fought and gave their lives for the *patrie*.⁵¹ The canonization of Joan of Arc was "a highly imaginative symbolic gesture,"⁵² an effort on the part of Benedict to signal and promote good relations between the Holy See and the French Republic. In the Catholic Church, there is no limit on the amount of time possible between a person's death and canonization as saint; for Joan, it took about five hundred years and the right configuration of political and religious authorities.⁵³

Benedict's successor, Achille Ratti (1857–1939), was elected in 1922 and took the name Pius XI (r.1922–39). It was the same year in which Mussolini (1883–1945) took control of the Italian government (in office 1922–43), with the approval of the king of Italy. Reigning until 1939, Pius was faced with an abundance of civil authorities keen on exalting the power of a highly centralized, authoritarian—if not totalitarian—nation state above all other authorities. Besides the Fascists in Italy, this would eventually include the National Socialists in Hitler's Germany and the nationalists in Franco's Spain. In 1925, Pius created a liturgical feast of Christ the King and published an encyclical, *Quas primas*, on the power and authority of Christ above all earthly rulers, thus relativizing what earthly dictators would seek to absolutize.⁵⁴ In 1926, Pius condemned Action Française, a right-wing, monarchist, anti-Semitic movement in France seeking to replace the republic with a more authoritarian state.⁵⁵

Pius XI did not, however, spurn the opportunity to resolve the Roman Ques-

50. On the complexities of the various ways in which the memory of Joan of Arc was promoted, see Gerd Krumeich, *Jeanne d'Arc in der Geschichte: Historiographie-Politik-Kultur* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1989). For an example of Joan appropriated in the service of nineteenth-century French nationalism, see the panegyric preached in the cathedral of Orléans, May 8, 1891, by Monsieur l'abbé Joseph Lémann, "Jeanne d'Arc restauratrice de l'unité française" (Orléans: Herluison Libraire-Editeur, 1891).

51. French colonialism saw some French Jesuits place Frenchness above membership in the Society of Jesus; see, e.g., John McGreevy, *Catholicism: A Global History from the French Revolution to Pope Francis* (New York: Norton, 2022), 156–58.

52. Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, 255.

53. The relationship between national consciousness and religious sentiment in France has a long history; see, e.g., on the 1500s, Alain Tallon's *Conscience nationale et sentiment religieux en France au XVIe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2002).

54. Pius XI, encyclical of December 11, 1925, *Quas primas*. See by Marie-Thérèse Desouche, "Pie XI, le Christ Roi et les totalitarismes," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 130 (2008): 740–58.

55. On the condemnation of Action Française, see Pollard, *Papacy in the Age of Totalitarianism*, 235–37.

tion. The Italian Jesuit Pietro Tacchi Venturi (1861–1956) played a central role in negotiating on behalf of the Holy See with the Italian government.⁵⁶ In 1929, this bore fruit in the Lateran Treaties, which recognized the Vatican City as an autonomous state; created a financial convention granting compensation to the Holy See for property taken by the Italian state; and established a concordat between Italy and the Holy See. This *conciliazione* (reconciliation), as it was known, did not mean, however, that all would henceforth go smoothly between Mussolini and Pius XI. For example, conflict over the role of Catholic Action and its youth groups revealed a large gap in perspectives between Il Duce and the Vicar of Christ.⁵⁷

For Pius XI, the Jesuits could be trusted and put to work in various ways, as demonstrated by the diplomatic work of Tacchi Venturi. Pius also canonized a number of Jesuit saints, recognizing their holiness and thus holding them up as models for others, Jesuits themselves among them, to follow. For example: Peter Canisius (1521–97) was canonized in 1925. He was Dutch by birth but joined the Jesuits in Mainz and spent a good deal of his Jesuit life in German lands, preaching, teaching, offering the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius. He was the first provincial of the Upper German Jesuit province; moreover, he taught rhetoric for a time at the Jesuit college in Messina, in Sicily, and spent his last years in Switzerland, where he was sent to found a Jesuit college at Fribourg.⁵⁸ In 1930, Pius XI canonized Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621), as well as a group of eight martyrs, seven Jesuits and a lay colleague, known as the Canadian martyrs or North American martyrs. Bellarmine entered the Jesuit novitiate in Rome and later went on to teach in Florence, Padua, and Leuven before returning to Rome, where he spent his most productive years as a theologian writing in defense of the papacy and of the Catholic Church, and as a cardinal and an advisor especially to Popes Clement VIII (1536–1605, r.1592–1605) and Paul V (1550–1621, r.1605–21).⁵⁹ The eight saints martyred in mid-seventeenth-century North America offered examples of courageous and resilient efforts to preach the Gospel in parts of the world where it had previously been unknown.⁶⁰ Canonization of these new Jesuit saints illustrated both the international vocation and mission of the Catholic Church and the centrality of the pope in the church.

Meanwhile, Pius XI also turned to the creation of Vatican Radio as a means of disseminating papal teaching and more generally communicating Catholic programming to the people of Italy but also far beyond to other countries, in a great diversity of languages. He put the Jesuits in charge of the radio station, and it began broadcasting in

56. See Robert Maryks, “Tacchi Venturi, Pietro, SJ,” in CEJ, 770–72.

57. See John Pollard, *The Vatican and Italian Fascism, 1929–32: A Study in Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 103–32.

58. See Hilmar Pabel, “Canisius, Peter, SJ,” in CEJ, 132–34.

59. See Charles Keenan, “Bellarmine, Robert, SJ,” in CEJ, 91–93. On Bellarmine’s theory of indirect papal power for the sake of souls, a power that could trump that of sovereigns, see Stefania Tutino, *Empire of Souls: Robert Bellarmine and the Christian Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

60. See Jacques Monet, “Canadian/North American Martyrs,” in CEJ, 130–32.

1931.⁶¹ Vatican Radio expressed henceforth in a thoroughly modern medium the role of the papacy as an international voice, to be listened to even as, and especially as, shrill nationalist voices sought to engage, mesmerize, and command the hearts and minds of citizens.⁶²

By 1931, much of the world was mired in a deepening economic depression. The date marked forty years since Leo's XIII's encyclical *Rerum novarum*, and Pius published *Quadragesimo anno* as a kind of updated version of Leo's work on labor and capital, and especially on the dignity and natural rights of workers.⁶³ The work of drafting this encyclical fell principally to the German Jesuit Oswald von Nell-Breuning (1890–1991), work that included articulation of a path for the church's social teaching that was neither that of Soviet Communism nor of "free" market capitalism.⁶⁴ For Leo, communism was a theory, that of Karl Marx (1818–83) and others, problematic enough, to be sure, but not something realized. For Pius XI and many of his contemporaries in Europe of the 1930s, it was a reality brought forth by the Russian Revolution of 1917 and seen as a grave threat, especially given Communist atheism. In March of 1937, Pius XI published both an anti-Communist encyclical (*Divini Redemptoris*) and an anti-Nazi encyclical, the latter in German (*Mit brennender Sorge*).⁶⁵

By the late 1930s, Mussolini was moving Italy closer to Nazi ideology. Nazi racial theory and practices drew the negative attention of Pius XI, and he commissioned in 1938 an encyclical on the unity of the human race. There were several ghost writers, including the American Jesuit John Lafarge (1880–1963).⁶⁶ The draft encyclical, *Humani generis unitas*, saw nation, race, and class as obstacles to unity⁶⁷ and asserted that "Christianity was incompatible with racism and anti-Semitism."⁶⁸ In the event, Pius XI died (February 10, 1939) before the encyclical could be published, and his successor chose not to publish it.

Eugenio Pacelli (1876–1958), secretary of state for Pius XI since 1930, was elected as his successor and took the name Pius XII (r.1939–58). A highly experienced and well-traveled diplomat, he was thoroughly committed to an impartiality and neutrality of the Holy See much like that espoused by Benedict XV. Such a stance together with a commitment to behind-the-scenes diplomacy rather than public, prophetic denunciations of wrongdoing by any nation state meant that his alleged "silence" during the Second World War, and in particular in the face of the Holocaust, would eventually

61. See Charles Gallagher, "Vatican Radio," in CEJ, 822–23; John Pollard, "Electronic Pastors: Radio, Cinema, and Television: from Pius XI to John XXIII," in Corkery and Worcester, *Papacy since 1500*, 182–203.

62. See Marilyn Matelski, *Vatican Radio: Propagation by the Airwaves* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995).

63. Pius XI, encyclical of May 15, 1931, *Quadragesimo anno*.

64. See Thomas Massaro, "Nell-Breuning, Oswald von, SJ," in CEJ, 552–54.

65. See Pollard, *Papacy in the Age of Totalitarianism*, especially the chapter on Pius XI and the dictators, 241–90. On *Mit brennender Sorge*, see Fabrice Bouthillon and Marie Levant, eds, *Pie XI, un pape contre le Nazisme?* (Brest: Editions Dialogues, 2016).

66. Lafarge's writings help to explain why he would have attracted Roman attention regarding such a topic; see his *Interracial Justice: A Study of the Catholic Doctrine of Race Relations* (New York: America Press, 1937).

67. Georges Passelecq and Bernard Suchecky, *The Hidden Encyclical of Pius XI*, trans. Steven Rendall (New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1997), 176.

68. Passelecq and Suchecky, *Hidden Encyclical of Pius XI*, 167.

emerge as central to controversies about how he should be remembered.⁶⁹ During the war, Pius did make use of Vatican Radio to appeal for peace, and to condemn the killing of persons on account of their race or nationality.⁷⁰ But was such a condemnation all too vague to matter? Pius XII had been papal nuncio in Berlin in the years of the Weimar Republic; some have suggested that his love of the German language and culture may have later blinded him to the exceptional depth and breadth of evil carried out by Nazi Germany.⁷¹

The Cold War years would see Pius XII outspoken in his condemnation of Communism, especially of Communist repression of the Catholic Church in Eastern Europe. Pius XII opposed international Communism but not so much by juxtaposing it with a nationalism that would be preferable, but with alternate international models, such as that of the 1957 Treaties of Rome and other signs of emergent European collaboration/unification.⁷² In these same years, Pius XII responded to progress in decolonization with support for indigenous priests and bishops in Africa and elsewhere,⁷³ and by cautioning against the dangers of Communism as well as “false nationalism [...] and the influence of materialism and the consumer society of the West.”⁷⁴ In the post-war years, Pius XII also saw fit to exercise his teaching authority in various ways, but above all with a definition of the doctrine of the assumption of Mary, a definition intended to meet the criteria of Vatican I for infallibility.⁷⁵

Like Pius XII, John XXIII (1881–1963, r.1958–63) came to the papacy with a lot of diplomatic experience that had given him a great deal of exposure to places other than Italy. In John’s case, this included Turkey and Greece, and Bulgaria, as well as France, thus opening his eyes to religious and national diversity. As pope, he called Vatican II (1962–65), the council that would put aside Catholic hostility to ecumenical and inter-religious dialogues, and henceforth embrace them with enthusiasm. The council did most of its work under Paul VI, John’s successor, but it was John that had set the tone as one of pastoral sensitivity, of collaboration in place of conflict with non-Catholics, as one of openness to the modern world, and one of an increasingly global understand-

69. For a negative assessment of Pius, see John Cornwell, *Hitler’s Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII* (London: Viking Penguin, 1999). For a more balanced approach, see José Sanchez, *Pius XII and the Holocaust: Understanding the Controversy* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2002). For a case study of “secret” diplomacy in the papacy of Pius XII, see Charles Gallagher, *Vatican Secret Diplomacy: Joseph P. Hurley and Pope Pius XII* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

70. See Pollard, “Electronic Pastors,” in Corkery and Worcester, *Papacy since 1500*, 188–96.

71. See Sánchez, *Pius XII and the Holocaust*, on Pius XII and his German staff, 16. For a recent case study of Pius XII as supporting the rescue of Jews, in Vichy and Occupied France, see Limore Yagil, “Bishops in France, Pope Pius XII, and the Rescue of Jews, 1940–1944,” *Catholic Historical Review* 108 (2022): 118–48.

72. On Pius XII and Communism in Eastern Europe, see Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, 266–67; on Pius and moves toward European unity, see Andrea Riccardi, “Pius XII,” in *The Papacy: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Philippe Levillain and John W. O’Malley (London: Routledge, 2002), 2:1216–17.

73. On Pius XII, and “indigenous” clergy, see Pollard, *Papacy in the Age of Totalitarianism*, 427–28.

74. See Andrea Riccardi, “Pius XII,” 1218.

75. For a massive study that helped to prepare the way for the definition (of November 1, 1950), see Martin Jugie, *La mort et l’assomption de la Sainte Vierge: Étude historico-doctrinale* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944).

ing of the church rather than of the church as overwhelmingly European.⁷⁶ An overweight-but-smiling, grandfatherly and pastoral figure, frequently seen on television around the world, John XXIII appeared very different from the austere, ascetical, and more remote Pius XII.

Of John XXIII's encyclicals, two stand out: *Mater et magistra* (May 15, 1961),⁷⁷ an updating of Catholic social teaching for the seventieth anniversary of *Rerum novarum*, and *Pacem in terris* (April 11, 1963),⁷⁸ an appeal for the Cold War and its nuclear armament to give way to peaceful relations between East and West. The latter was published just six months after the Cuban Missile Crisis, the most dangerous and tense moment of the Cold War years, a crisis whose peaceful resolution was in part personally negotiated by Pope John with the American and Soviet leaders.⁷⁹ Dying of cancer on June 3, 1963, less than two months after *Pacem in terris*, Pope John had lasted less than five years, but his papacy was likely more significant for the history of the Catholic Church than many others that lasted much longer.⁸⁰

Giovanni Battista Montini had been a close assistant to Pius XII and then became archbishop of Milan. Seen as a good choice to continue what John XXIII had begun at the Council, he was elected pope on June 21, 1963 and chose the name Paul VI.⁸¹ Seeing the council through to its completion in December 1965 is likely his greatest accomplishment,⁸² but his papacy was more than that and was especially important for making the pope more than ever a universal pastor, known throughout the world, having visited much of it. He was the first pope to fly on jet airplanes to distant lands, something taken for granted in a pope's "job description" today but an innovation in the 1960s.

Paul VI's visit to the United Nations, in New York, on October 4, 1965, gave the pope an opportunity to address the UN at its twentieth anniversary and to celebrate its central role in promoting global solidarity and fraternity. Speaking in French, he called for *jamais plus la guerre* (no more war), a message that may have been hard to accept by President Lyndon Johnson (1908–73, in office 1963–69), who was at that time increasing American participation in the Vietnam War. But Paul VI did not limit his New York visit to the UN; he also met with the American president in a hotel, he honored the archdiocese of New York by going to Saint Patrick's Cathedral, and he celebrated Mass for a huge crowd in Yankee Stadium.⁸³ After a visit to the Vatican pavilion at the New

76. For a concise biography of John XXIII, see Christian Feldman, *Pope John XXIII: A Spiritual Biography*, trans. Peter Heinegg (New York: Crossroad, 2000). On the importance of the 'style' of Vatican II, see John W. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

77. John XXIII, encyclical of May 15, 1961, *Mater et magistra*.

78. John XXIII, encyclical of April 11, 1963, *Pacem in terris*.

79. See Feldman on John XXIII and Cold War etc., *Pope John XXIII*, 164–71; J. N. D. [John Norman Davidson] Kelly, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Popes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 321–22.

80. For an enthusiastic celebration of John XXIII, published shortly after his death, see the work by the then archbishop of Boston, Richard Cardinal Cushing, *Call Me John* (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1963).

81. For a massive (some 750 pages) but very engaging biography of Montini, see Peter Hebblethwaite, *Paul VI: The First Modern Pope* (New York: Paulist, 1993).

82. See O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*.

83. See Bill Adler, *Pope Paul in the United States* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1965); for the address to the UN, see 87–92.

York World's Fair, he returned to Rome, where the council was in its final months, in the midst of completing several key documents including *Gaudium et spes* (The church in the modern world).⁸⁴

Two years later, he published the encyclical *Populorum progressio*. It is a sustained appeal for wealthier nations to recognize their obligation of solidarity with poorer nations, their obligation to promote social justice, their obligation to act with charity, and to build a humane world community.⁸⁵ Speaking with a prophetic voice, Paul VI declared that avarice on the part of wealthier nations will “arouse the judgment of God and the wrath of the poor, with consequences no one can foresee.”⁸⁶ In 1965, the Jesuits elected Pedro Arrupe (1907–91) as their superior general, a position he would hold until 1983. A charismatic and prophetic voice for justice for the poor and the oppressed, Arrupe did much to move the Society of Jesus away from an uncritical focus on the education of wealthy Catholics to a firm commitment to working for social justice, and to living alongside the poor, throughout the world.⁸⁷ Arrupe did not lack for critics, from within and without the ranks of Jesuits.

After *Populorum progressio*, in the remaining years of his fifteen-year papacy, Paul VI would have to face plenty of criticism and indeed wrath, from both the ideologically right and left. On the right, traditionalists clamored for rejection of much of the council's work, including liturgical reform, and a fraternal approach to dialogues with other Christians and indeed persons of other religions. On the left, at least in the Western world, many deplored Paul's encyclical *Humanae vitae* (1968), both for its condemnation of artificial birth control and for its Ultramontanist, top-down, go-it-alone exercise of papal authority, seemingly oblivious to the conciliar model of a more collegial authority.⁸⁸ For some Catholics, however, *Humanae vitae* was a prophetic papal document.⁸⁹

Conclusion and Epilogue

From Pius IX to Paul VI, popes affirmed a papacy that transcended the boundaries of nations, of kingdoms, empires, and republics, as well as ecclesiastical boundaries of dioceses and parishes. The pope was to be the universal pastor, possessing the power and authority to exercise both jurisdiction and magisterium, unchecked by secular or ecclesiastical authorities. These popes met with both adulation and enthusiastic obedience, as well as opposition from within and outside the church. They sought to create an international church, and indeed a world, where national and ethnic rivalries would fade away. They adopted the latest technologies of their day to get their message out, across borders and continents. They sought to build bridges, not walls, between peo-

84. *Gaudium et spes* (Pastoral constitution on the church in the modern world, December 7, 1965), in *Vatican Council II*, ed. Austin Flannery (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing, 1975), 903–1014.

85. Paul VI, encyclical of March 26, 1967, *Populorum progressio*, no. 44.

86. *Populorum progressio*, no. 49. It may be useful to recall that the prophetic is one of John O'Malley's “cultures” in his *Four Cultures of the West* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

87. For an excellent selection of Arrupe's talks and writings, see Pedro Arrupe, *Justice with Faith Today* (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1980).

88. Paul VI, encyclical of July 25, 1968, *Humanae vitae*.

89. See Mary Eberstadt, “The Prophetic Power of *Humanae vitae*,” *First Things* (April 2018): 33–39.

ples. All of these popes were Italian, as they had been since 1523, but from the time of Pius IX to that of Paul VI the popes turned increasingly outward, beyond the Italian peninsula and beyond Europe.

After Paul VI (d. August 6, 1978), there would be one more Italian pope, John Paul I (1912–78), who in his very brief papacy (August 26–September 28, 1978) did away with papal coronation and with the portable papal throne known as the *sedia gestatoria*. None of his three successors, all of them “foreign” (non-Italians), have restored those symbols of a Euro-centric, monarchical papacy; they have inherited, respected, and developed the model of the pope as a universal pastor, addressing and caring for all peoples across the globe. Despite some significant differences among them, these three popes have all been eloquent spokesmen, at times prophetic figures, rejecting the greed and arrogance and racism that so often infect nationalist discourses, and defending an international order that promotes peace and justice and the common good.⁹⁰ In the papacy of Francis (r.2013–), the Jesuit pope, Ultramontanism may be making room for a global synodality that emphasizes shared discernment regarding the future of the world as our common home.⁹¹

90. For a relatively recent example of papal teaching on international promotion of the common good, see Pope Francis, encyclical of October 3, 2020, *Fratelli tutti*. On how Hans Küng’s (1928–2021) concept of a global ethic, and Pope Francis’s promotion of a culture of encounter, offer alternatives to religious nationalism, see David Hollenbach, “Religious Nationalism, a Global Ethic, and the Culture of Encounter,” *Theological Studies* 83 (2022): 361–78.

91. See Rafael Luciani, *Synodality: A New Way of Proceeding in the Church* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2022).