

Outside The Church There Is No Salvation

by

Father Martin Stepanich, O.F.M., S.T.D.

Editor's Foreword

Although those who have been convinced that the distortion and misrepresentation of Catholic teaching on the doctrine of *Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus* made famous by the late Father Leonard Feeney is correct—and that all who disagree with it are execrable “heretics” who will be cast into Hell immediately upon their deaths, the truth is otherwise. Father Martin Stepanich, O.F.M., S.T.D., has been kind enough send me photocopies of seven articles that he wrote on the authentic Catholic teaching on the doctrine of *Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus*. These articles appeared in *The Remnant* between November 3, 1973, and June 7, 1974. Those possessed of the false interpretation of the doctrine of *Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus* made the same arguments then, with the same demonic fury and pride, that are being made today by their successors. It is, therefore, with great joy that I present this series of articles for those who are open to learning the truth of Catholic teaching, and I thank Father Martin for his kindness in forwarding these articles to me.

Part I:

The Church's Understanding of the Dogma,

published on November 3, 1973

Introduction

Many years have now gone by since the eruption of the scandalous Boston College controversy of the 1940s over the interpretation of the Catholic dogma, “Outside the Church there is no salvation”. It has recently been said that the original advocates of a false interpretation of that Dogma have “mellowed” with the passing years—yet they have not given up their erroneous notions, but have only become somewhat less belligerent and less vociferous.

But, if it is true that a supposed “mellowing” process has quieted down the original promoters of heresy, this is by no means true of all their present-time followers in various places. The fact is that there are misinformed and half-informed and uninformed “Catholics” who have been quite active in zealously peddling their warped interpretations of the Church's dogma of salvation.

There are, for example, parents (who should know better) who have been bugging genuine teachers of traditional Catholic doctrine (yes, some of these still exist!) with pesky attempts to foist on these teachers their own false notions of the Dogma of salvation and of the closely-related Catholic doctrine of Baptism of

water, desire, and of blood. Children of such misguided parents, like the blind being led by the blind, have also been harassing their teachers in the classrooms.

In the confusion stirred up by such parents and their children, other parents have mistakenly suspected the orthodox teachers themselves of being guilty of unorthodox doctrine, and some have angrily threatened to remove their own children from the schools in question.

But behind the scenes have been the hard-core pushers of an erroneous “no salvation outside the Church” doctrine. Among them are some who, curiously enough, have been labelled “knowledgeable theologians”, though they are neither knowledgeable in the right things, nor are they by any means genuine theologians.

For the sake of those who have been unwittingly misled, like blind and innocent sheep, as well as for those who desire to know how to give correct explanations, we will now take up, though rather briefly, the Catholic dogma of “no salvation outside the Church,” showing how the Church, in the person of some of her Popes, has always understood and interpreted this dogma. In the second part of this article, we will consider the traditional Catholic teaching and practice regarding Baptism of desire and of blood, showing also the ominous implications of a rejection of this teaching.

Teaching of the Popes

For a correct understanding and interpretation of the Catholic dogma, “outside the Church there is no salvation”, we must turn to the Popes, the guardians of Divine Truth. It will be sufficient for our purposes here to quote two great and saintly Popes—Pius IX (1846-78) and Pius XII (1939-58).

There is no need to pile up a mountain of quotations, as the false prophets like to do, showing that “outside the Church there is no salvation” is indeed a dogma of our Holy Faith and that it was repeatedly upheld, even in the strongest terms, by many of the Popes. What the false prophets fail to note, while quoting the Popes, are certain key words and expressions that the Popes have used in proclaiming the dogma, such as “invincibly ignorant”, and “knowingly”, “wilfully”, etc. And those false prophets seem not to take notice of any of those statements in which the Popes have expressly shown how the Church interprets her dogma of salvation.

We will quote Pope Pius IX, because he both upholds the dogma itself and, at the same time, explains how those of good faith outside the Church stand with God.

Like so many other Popes, Pius IX was most emphatic—jarringly emphatic—in maintaining that outside the Church there is no salvation. An example of this teaching is found in his encyclical *Quanto conficiamur Moerore* (“With what sorrow We are consumed . . .”) of August 10, 1863. He first condemns as

“absolutely contrary to Catholic teaching” the notion that “persons living in error and outside of the True Faith and Catholic unity can reach eternal life”.

This might, at first sight, seem automatically to exclude from salvation all those who are not visibly and externally members of the One True Church through Baptism of water, regardless of their good dispositions and despite their genuine desire and search for the Truth. But it is immediately evident, from his very next sentence, that he is speaking of those who are knowingly and wilfully “living in error and outside the True Faith and Catholic unity. . .”

Here is what the saintly Pope Pius IX immediately goes on to declare (and we add emphasis):

“We know and you know that those who are INVINCIBLY IGNORANT of our most holy Religion, and who, carefully observing the Natural Law and its precepts, placed by God into the hearts of all men, and being disposed to obey God, lead an honest and upright life, CAN, with the help of Divine Light and Grace, MERIT ETERNAL LIFE; for God, Who has perfect knowledge, examines and judges the minds, the souls, the thoughts and the deeds of all men, and He does not permit, in His sovereign Goodness and Mercy, any men NOT CULPABLE OF WILFUL SIN to be punished with eternal torment.”

After that most clear declaration, the Holy Father reverts once again, in his next sentence, to the dogma of “no salvation outside the Church”, as follows (with emphasis again added):

“But this Catholic Dogma is equally well known: That no one can be saved outside the Catholic Church, and those who KNOWINGLY rebel against the teaching and the authority of the Church cannot obtain eternal salvation, nor can those who WILFULLY separate themselves from union with the Church and with the Roman Pontiff, the successor of Peter, to whom the Savior has entrusted the safe-keeping of His vineyard.”

From the way the Holy Father expresses himself, we can conclude that he is speaking of two Dogmas, for he says: “But this Catholic Dogma is equally well known. . .” This means that he regards it as a Dogma of the Faith that “outside the Church there is no salvation”, and he likewise implies that it is a Dogma of Faith that those who are visibly outside the Church through “invincible ignorance” can be saved, if they have the proper dispositions.

One who does not grasp the distinction between these two Truths of Faith might be tempted to say that Pope Pius IX is contradicting himself—not just once, but twice. That is, he first tells us that outside the Church there is no salvation, then he says that outside the Church there is, or can be, salvation, and finally, he

supposedly re-contradicts himself by saying once again that outside the Church there is no salvation.

But the Holy Father is NOT contradicting himself. What should immediately come to the mind of a thinking person is the obvious fact that the expression “outside the Church” must have a deeper and more mysterious meaning than at first suspected, and which an unthinking person would not detect. One should almost spontaneously ask: Just what is meant by that word “outside” in this particular case?

To be sure, the word “outside”, in this case, cannot be taken in a mere visible and external and material sense. The word does not mean merely that a non-Catholic is standing outside the door of a Catholic Church. And it has a deeper meaning than the idea of standing outside visible membership in the Church.

We are face to face here with the Mystery of Grace. We are speaking here of one being “outside the means of grace”.

For a clearer view and understanding of the full picture of Divine Truth, we must bear in mind here these basic Dogmas of the Faith:

- 1) That there is One Redeemer of mankind;
- 2) That the One Redeemer of mankind founded One and only One True Church for the salvation of men;
- 3) That the One Redeemer established One and only One Treasury of Grace which He filled with the merits of His Sacred Passion and Death; and
- 4) That the One Redeemer entrusted His One Treasury of Grace to His One True Church.

Those who “wilfully separate themselves from union with the Church,” also wilfully separate themselves from the Church’s Treasury of Grace, as well as from the Redeemer Himself, and they cannot therefore be saved, because they have wilfully placed themselves “outside the means of grace.”

It should now be clear that anyone who is not a visible and external member of the One True Church through Baptism of water, and who is living in the “invincible ignorance” of which Pius IX speaks, IS SAVED ONLY THROUGH THE GRACES WHICH THE CHURCH POSSESSES IN THE ONE TREASURY OF GRACE ESTABLISHED BY THE ONE REDEEMER. This means that such a person is not saved independently of the One True Church, but only through her.

So then, the Dogma, “outside the Church there is no salvation”, could be worded in this way: “Independently of the Church, there is no salvation.” Or, to express the fact even more fully, “Independently of the Catholic Church and of her divinely-given Treasury of Grace there is no salvation.”

It should also be clear that those living in “invincible ignorance” outside visible membership in the Catholic Church are really NOT TOTALLY “outside” the Church. The fact is that they are in an invisible and mysterious way connected with the Church, or are “related” to her. They are “related” to the Church

THROUGH GRACE, which the Most High can easily bestow on them, even without actual Baptism of water, provided that they are properly disposed. This is no problem for the Almighty.

It is precisely of this “relationship” with the One True Church that Pope Pius XII spoke in his encyclical on the Mystical Body of Christ (*Mystici Corporis*) in 1943. In paragraph (of the NCWC 1943 edition), this saintly Pontiff of our own times speaks of “those who do not belong to the **VISIBLE Body of the Catholic Church**”. (We deliberately give special emphasis to the all-important word “visible”). About half-way down the same paragraph, the Holy Father states (and we again add emphasis) that “**by an unconscious desire and longing THEY HAVE A CERTAIN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MYSTICAL BODY OF THE REDEEMER. . .**”

The “unconscious desire and longing”, of which the great Vicar of Christ speaks, is obviously the doctrine of Baptism of desire, which we will take up in the second and concluding part of this article on “salvation outside the Church”.

The teachings of Pope Pius IX and Pius XII make it as clear as could be just how the Church understands her Dogma, “outside the Church there is no salvation”. Any erroneous or twisted interpretation of this Dogma—or of any Dogma or the Church for that matter—is equivalent to a denial of the Dogma itself, whether consciously or unconsciously done. And the rejection of any Dogma of the Faith is HERESY.

By conscious and willful heresy, a Catholic is automatically excommunicated from the Catholic Church, outside of which there is no salvation. And a Catholic living in conscious and willful heresy cannot worthily nor lawfully receive the Sacraments.

Part II: Baptism of Desire and of Blood,

published on November 15, 1973

“Unconscious Desire and Longing”

As we noted in Part I of this article, Pope Pius XII, in speaking of those in good faith outside the “**VISIBLE Body of the Catholic Church**”, declared that “**by an unconscious desire and longing they have a certain relationship with the Mystical Body of the Redeemer. . .**”

The concept expressed here by the Holy Father is nothing else but the already ancient Catholic belief and teaching that eventually gave rise to the well-known expression, “Baptism of desire”. The basic idea with Baptism of desire is that the grace of justification, or sanctifying grace, which is normally given by God

through Baptism of water, can be, and is, given by Him to those who genuinely desire and strive to fulfill His will in all things, even though they may be as yet “unconscious”, or unaware, of the One True Church and of the Sacraments, and of all the obligations connected with the True Faith.

This means that they have become pleasing to God already before receiving Baptism of water. Their “desire and longing” to do God’s will in all things is what sets them out on the path to salvation, and this is what has led to countless converts into the True Church all through the centuries. Genuine converts to the True Faith have personal experience of this “desire and longing” which, by the grace of God, they have satisfied, despite great difficulties and obstacles and often long years of soul-searching and agony of heart.

But the expression, “Baptism of desire”, is used especially in connection with those who are overtaken by death before they can attain to Baptism of water. Because of their genuine “desire and longing” to fulfill God’s will in all things, including sincere repentance of their sins, they are saved by “Baptism of desire”, and without Baptism of water, which is otherwise of strict obligation. As Pope Pius IX expressed it, such persons “merit eternal life” even though not belonging to the visible Body of the Catholic Church.

We do not say that such persons are saved “independently of” Baptism of water, but rather “without” Baptism of water. The fact is that their “unconscious desire and longing” to do God’s will implicitly includes a desire for Baptism of water, even if they may not as yet know of it and of the strict obligation to receive it.

Heretics Reject Baptism of Desire

It is typical of heretics to defend their principal heresy with other errors and to reject truths that are closely connected with the main Truth of Faith which they are denying. And so it is no surprise that the advocates of a false salvation doctrine reject outright any idea of Baptism of desire. Why? Because it stands in the way of their heresy, of course! Some have even asserted, with juvenile brashness, that Baptism of desire is a “deplorable heresy”, whereas they themselves are the ones who are in heresy.

The false prophets wrongly contend, among other things,

- 1) That the Catechism of the Council of Trent says nothing of Baptism of desire;
- 2) That there is no Scriptural basis for Baptism of desire;
- 3) That Baptism of desire is nothing but a modern invention and the product of the speculations of theologians; and,
- 4) That Baptism of desire and of blood make up to three Sacraments of Baptism.

Trent and Baptism of Desire

As for the Catechism of the Council of Trent, we must first warn the reader that the advocates of the false salvation doctrine (based with the so-called “Marian Publications”, South Bend, Ind.) have published their own edition of that Catechism and have deceitfully added their own subversive appendix to it—an appendix that brazenly asserts that there is “No Baptism of Desire”. Two letters of warning on that edition of the Trent Catechism appeared in the March 1, 1973, issue of *The Remnant*.

Taking an untampered McHugh-Callan edition of the Trent Catechism, we come upon the following clear statement of the concept of Baptism of desire, on page 179:

“Should any unforeseen accident make it impossible for adults to be washed in the salutary waters, their intention and determination to receive Baptism and their repentance for past sins, will avail them to grace and righteousness.”

With that statement, the Trent Catechism plainly tells us,

- 1) That it is possible for a person not baptized in the “salutary waters” to be saved;
- 2) That through no fault of his own a person could be prevented from receiving Baptism of water after being prepared for it while having every intention and desire to receive this Sacrament;
- 3) That the proper dispositions which would save a person in such a case are his “intention and determination” to receive Baptism” and “repentance for past sins”; and,
- 4) That such a person receives “grace and righteousness” from God without Baptism of water.

Those who think that the Trent Catechism favors their errors either have not read what that Catechism says about Baptism or they did not know what they were reading, or they merely looked for the words, “Baptism of desire”, without looking for the concept that gave rise to that expression. There is serious doubt that they know what Baptism of desire is—or even Baptism of water, for that matter!

The authors of the Trent Catechism well understood that Our Lord was laying down a strict obligation binding on all men to receive Baptism of water, when He said to Nicodemus: “Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God” (Jn 3, 5), yet they did not interpret this Divine Law so rigidly as to exclude from “grace and righteousness” those who do not receive Baptism of water because of some “unforeseen accident”. They well understood that the Law of God requiring Baptism of water for salvation is a positive law, and not a precept of the Natural Law. Baptism of water is of

obligation because of the express will of God, and not because the very nature of things demands it.

The use of the word “Baptism” in connection with “desire” and “blood” does not mean that there are two additional Sacraments of Baptism. There is only one Sacrament of Baptism, while the grace of that Sacrament is one and the same grace that is given by God, under certain circumstances, without the actual reception of the Sacrament.

The Trent Catechism, drawn up after the Council of Trent was over, teaches the doctrine of Baptism of desire because that is what the Council itself taught. In its 6th Session (Jan. 13, 1847), the Council of Trent described the justification of the sinner as a “translation from that state in which man is born a child of the first Adam, to the state of grace and of the adoption of the sons of God through the second Adam, Jesus Christ, Our Savior”.

And then the Council immediately declared (and we add emphasis):

“This translation, however, cannot, since the promulgation of the Gospel, be effected except through the laver of regeneration, OR ITS DESIRE, as it is written: ‘Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God’.”

In view of this authoritative declaration of one of the greatest of the Ecumenical Councils, Baptism of desire, far from being a “deplorable heresy,” is a solid and unquestionably Catholic doctrine. In fact, the Council gives us good reason to say that it is an Article of Faith or of Dogma.

Scripture and Baptism of Desire

The concept of Baptism of desire is well founded on Sacred Scripture and goes right back to the beginning. It may be difficult to say at just what moment Our Lord’s Law of Baptism of water began to be binding, but it is clear from His own words, “Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much” (Lk. 7, 47), that Mary Magdalen was justified before she was baptized with water. The Good Thief on the cross was justified and saved without Baptism of water. Our Lord did NOT say to him: “This day you will be with me in Paradise, provided you can get someone to baptize you with water.”

A classic Scriptural example of how a person can be acceptable to God already before Baptism of water is Cornelius the Centurion, to whom God sent St. Peter for Baptism. By divine revelation, Peter saw the state of Cornelius’ soul before Baptism, and he exclaimed: “Now I really understand that God is not a respecter of persons, but in every nation he who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him” (Acts 10, 34-35).

If only the misguided lambs, prey to the heretics, could now humble themselves also and exclaim: “Now I understand. . .!” And let them quit listening to unknowledgeable non-theologians!

Among the Fathers of the Church, long before modern theologians could supposedly invent Baptism of desire, the 4th century St. Ambrose of Milan said this in reference to the Emperor Valentinian II, who died without receiving Baptism of water: “I hear you express grief because he (Valentinian) did not receive the Sacrament of Baptism. Tell me, what else is there in us except the will and petition? But he had long desired to be initiated (i.e., baptized) before he came to Italy, and he expressed his intention to be baptized by me as soon as possible, and it was for this reason, more than any other, that he hastened to me. Has he not, therefore, the grace which he desired? Has he not received it because he asked for it”!

St. Augustine, who was baptized by St. Ambrose, once declared: “I do not hesitate to place the Catholic catechumen, who is burning with love of God, before the baptized heretics.”

From ancient times we can also find good examples of “Baptism of blood”. Some martyrs whom the Church has long honored as Saints were never baptized with water. Among the various names that could be mentioned, there is St. Emerentiana, whose feast has long been on the traditional liturgical calendar (on Jan. 23). She was put to death because of the Faith, before she could be baptized with water, when she was caught praying at the tomb of St. Agnes.

And there is Soldier No. 40 of the famed Martyrs of Sebaste in ancient Armenia (Feast, March 10). One of the original 40 soldiers chickened out on the ice, so a pagan guard, while off duty, saw in a vision only 39 crowns brought down from Heaven by Angels. Struck by the grace of God, given to him, without Baptism of water, he declared himself a Christian and joined the 39, winning for himself the 40th crown. The Church honors also this unbaptized martyr as a saint.

A Monstrous Doctrine

And now, before we conclude, we must point out that the awful implications of the denial of Baptism of desire and blood.

Just imagine a prospective convert, “burning with desire of God”, intensely desiring Baptism and well-instructed in the True Faith, being overtaken by death through some “unforeseen accident”; before Baptism of water could be administered to him. He comes before the Judgment Seat of God, only to hear the Most High say to him: “I’m very sorry about that accident that kept you from Baptism of water. It was no nice of you to prepare for Baptism and for the True Faith with such great love for Me, but you weren’t baptized with water, so down into hell you must go!”

Or, imagine someone like St. Emerentiana coming before the Divine Judge, only to hear the same kind of bad news!

Can anyone with a properly functioning thinking apparatus fail to understand the blasphemous injustice and cruelty that the heretics must attribute to the All-Just and All-Holy God because of their false doctrines? Can anyone with a sane mind embrace such a monstrous doctrine as that peddled by the advocates of no salvation without Baptism of water? Isn’t their doctrine about as revolting as the wrong kind of predestination doctrine, which makes God choose some for Heaven and some for Hell, without considering at all their good or bad deeds?

If those who have fallen for the false salvation doctrine of the Feeneyites haven’t yet fainted on seeing the sickening implications of that doctrine, it’s about time that they do so. And then, let them come to and repent, and return to the True Faith and to a worthy reception of the Sacraments. Let them get back inside the Church, for outside the Church there is no salvation for them!

Part III: That “Pretty Preposterous” Salvation Article, published on January 1, 1974

We find it necessary to publish the protest letter of a quick-on-the-trigger reader against the first part of the “Outside the Church There Is No Salvation” article that appeared in the Nov. 3, 1973, *Remnant*, in order to expose the confused and impossible mentality of those who, in total and ignorant blindness and contrary to all sound reason, choose wilfully to adhere to what is a heretical interpretation of the Church’s doctrine on salvation outside visible membership in the True fold.

As was to be expected, there was another, just as wild and illogical protest to the second part of our “Salvation” article, which appeared in the Nov. 15, 1973, *Remnant*, but there is no need to put on display more than some of this kind of arrogant nonsense.

The first protest letter, then, of one whom we will call Mrs. P. P. (for “pretty preposterous”), reads as follows:

Dear and Rev. Father—

Your article in the current *Remnant* (11-3-73) was pretty preposterous, to say the least.

From the enclosed as printed in the October 1973—hereabouts, it doesn’t seem to be that dear Father Feeney is yielding an inch—even if as you say he is mellowing.

We will all mellow when we get in our 70s—let us hope we’ve as fine as grasp of truth and the Church Militant as Father Feeney has always had.

Meanwhile, if your article and Omlor’s (Robber Church No. 3) final Interdum is the best the opposition can put out, then I’ll take Fr. Feeney’s sterling promulgation of the Church’s teachings before the Liberal Modernists got the upper hand and used what they said were the words of Pius IX and XII to introduce the exception to No Salvation Outside the Church in the idea of invincible ignorance!

Just as today they are “using” and abusing His Holiness by attributing to him the necessity of the Masonic Novus Ordo to replace the True Mass of St. Pius V.

Be ye not deceived, nor hasten to deceive others. In God’s good time, Fr. Feeney will be vindicated just as Alphonsus Liguori, Joan of Arc, Louis de Montfort and others were after living and dying in episcopal disfavor.

Gratefully(?) in Our Savior, His Blessed Mother, and His Vicar on Earth, Paul VI.

Our letter-writer of instant protest against facts, who could not even wait for the second part of our article to appear, is obviously beyond being convinced of the correct Catholic doctrine of salvation, and she has made it clear in both her letters that she does not want to be convinced of it. She does not make the slightest intelligent attempt to disprove, with documented evidence or any kind of sound reasoning, the facts brought out in either the Nov. 3rd or Nov. 15 parts of the “Salvation” article, and she knows all too well that these facts cannot be disproven, and especially by one who is mentally in no way equipped to do so.

Mrs. P. P. begins with a quick and disdainful blurting out of the words “pretty preposterous”, and then makes a hurried get-away from the unwanted facts presented in the article in question, losing herself in a mass of odds and ends that she imagines build up an incontrovertible case or orthodoxy for her.

Of these odds and ends, there is, first, a hasty recourse to the “enclosed” evidence (which we will get to in a minute) that Fr. Feeney has not yielded an inch—apparently forgetting that this is precisely what was indicated in the article. As for the diversionary bit about “mellowing”, we must let Mrs. P. P. know that it was a certain prestigious group of Feeneyites themselves, not we, who had said that they had mellowed.

Patrick Henry Omlor is unjustifiably trotted out for a quick whack for his “crime” of not accepting the Feeney heresy. And then the “liberal modernists” are dragged into the picture, where they do not belong. They are NOT the ones who have attributed to Popes Pius IX and Pius XII the words quoted in our Nov. 3rd article, nor would they, any more than Mrs. P. P., ever be interested in quoting the Popes correctly when it would hurt their own heretical cause. They (“liberal

modernists”) are not interested in the correct Catholic interpretation of the Dogma of salvation—and neither are the Feeneyites, especially not the incurably opinionated Mrs. P. P., who obviously has the mind and tongue of a “liberal modernist”, though using her “talent” in another area.

Mrs. P. P. pulls off the old liberal trick of trying to discredit the source of the papal statements that she refuses to accept. That is why Pope Pius IX and XII are not even allowed by her to say what they really said in their encyclicals, nor is this liberal modernist woman interested in checking with the encyclicals in question to find out if they actually say what we attributed to them in our Nov. 3rd article. Instead, she prefers to dream up something about how certain people are trying to make an “exception” to the salvation Dogma, and she, being invincible in her ignorance, denies the very notion of “invincible ignorance” as it was always been understood by the Church and as employed by Pope Pius IX.

And yet, in her second letter, this liberal dreamer has the cheek to assert that the expression “invincible ignorance” is a “modernist expression”—which means that she regards Pope Pius IX a modernist. She also asserts that “Baptism of Desire” is a modernist expression, and this means that, among others, St. Thomas Aquinas of the 13th century is a modernist, for he uses that expression and expounds the doctrine pertaining to it in his *Summa Theologica* (Part III, Q. 68, Art. 3). With all her “talent” for fabrications, Mrs. P. P. opines that “enemies of the Holy Catholic Church and the Roman Pontiff (and she is one of those enemies!) ... probably once misrepresented and misquoted Pius IX over invincible ignorance.

Because the facts presented in our “Salvation” article are not the right flavor for her, and side-tracking is more in accord with her tastes, Mrs. P. P. drags in also the question of the “Novus Ordo” Mass where it does not belong, and she thinks nothing of her glaringly contradictory stance manifested in her unfavorable attitude towards the “Novus Ordo” and her favorable attitude towards him who gave the Church the same “Novus Ordo”. She proceeds to offer an admonition about not deceiving or being deceived, without realizing how totally she herself has been deceived and taken in by heresy. And, finally, certain Saints and a heretic who will not budge an inch from his heresy are placed on an equal footing—something that fits in very nicely with the thinking of her birds-of-a-father liberal modernist friends and their “salvation for all” theory.

Whatever may or may not have been the “education” of our benighted reader in other matters, she has either received no education at all in the Church’s true salvation doctrine, or, in her unsuspecting innocence, she was incorrectly indoctrinated and is a victim of deception.

The “enclosed” to which her first letter refers, is a fairly recent little 3-page folder entitled “A Message from Father Feeney”, with the added sub-title “A Statement to the Catholics of Boston and of America”. Published by the ill-named “Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary”, St. Benedict Center, Still River,

Massachusetts, with a different address given for ordering “additional copies”, the folder is not dated, though Mrs. P. P. wrote “October 1973” on it.

The Feeney Message is triumphantly presented by Mrs. P. P. as Exhibit A evidence that our Nov. 3rd article was indeed “pretty preposterous”, simply because “dear Fr. Feeney” has not moved an inch from his heresy and disobedience, and so he must necessarily be right, since he had remained so firm in his “sterling promulgation” of error.

We know from personal experience how evasive Feeneyites, like all heretics, can be, for they have shown themselves reluctant to tell exactly what their position is. They seem afraid to hear themselves proclaim their belief that all who are not visibly and externally members of the Catholic Church through Baptism of water are automatically condemned to eternal hell-fire. This would mean that good faith is impossible in any non-Catholics of whatever brand, and that all non-Catholics, without exception, are automatically excluded from Heaven by the Feeneyites. Nor could there ever have been any converts to the True Faith if there is no good faith and good will and desire for the Truth to lead a non-Catholic into the True Fold.

And woe to the unbaptized infants, and double woe to all the unborn victims of today’s Satanic abortionists, for the Feeney doctrine must logically relegate them to the eternal woe of hell!

We may as well ask: Is good faith possible in a Feeneyite? Is it possible for Mrs. P. P.?

It is no surprise to find no clear statement of the true Feeneyite position in the recent “enclosed” Feeney Message. There is only a generalized and impudently untruthful claim of “loudly professing every dogma of faith”, with a careful evasion of the specific Dogma at issue, and a pretended respect for the authority of the Holy Father. There is also something vague about “our grievances” and “our crusade”, while the “Message” ends with a statement that is subject to either a true or a false interpretation, namely: “We still profess the same Faith, out of which no one at all can be saved, as we did a quarter of a century ago”. But the “Message” nowhere tells what was, and is, the precise nature of the “grievances” and of the “crusade in question.

Added to all this is Fr. Feeney’s ridiculous claim that all the evils rampant within the Church today have come about because no one would listen to him 25 years ago—whereas the real fact is that he himself contributed to those evils with his heresy of rejecting a Dogma of the Faith and with his contempt for ecclesiastical authority.

After bemoaning the fact that, 25 years ago, he did not receive any “protection” for his heresy from the lowest ecclesiastical authorities on up to the Vatican’s Holy Office, Fr. Feeney makes the most preposterous claim of all in his “Message”. That is, he claims to have received, by way of a private letter, the “support and encouragement” of Pope Pius XII, who supposedly encouraged and blessed his

self-style “crusade”—which could only mean blessing his “crusade” for something that is a totally false interpretation of the Church’s salvation Dogma.

The truth is that Pope Pius XII personally gave explicit orders that Fr. Feeney be summoned to Rome by the Holy Office, so that his views on salvation outside the Church could be examined first hand. It was because of his refusal to obey a repeated summons from the Holy Office that he appear in Rome on January 31, 1953, under the threat of automatic excommunication from the Church, that Fr. Feeney actually incurred that excommunication, which was made public in a decree of February 13, 1953, after the decree of excommunication had been approved and confirmed by Pope Pius XII on the previous day. The same Holy Father had also approved, on July 28, 1949, the Holy Office’s explanation of how the Church’s Dogma, “Outside the Church there is no salvation,” is to be understood.

And here is the most preposterous and most brazen part of the preposterous Feeney Message: Pope Pius XII, he says, “[canonized our grievances in his famous Encyclical *Humani Generis* of 1950, condemning those of his sons ‘who reduce to a meaningless formula the necessity of belonging to the True Church in order to attain salvation’.](#)”

No one with elementary understanding needs to be told that Pope Pius XII was referring, in that statement, to such errors as religious indifferentism, false ecumenism, and the false notion that all men will eventually be saved—errors which would indeed reduce to a “meaningless formula” the Church’s salvation Dogma, because they would eliminate the need of a One and Only True Church.

According to Fr. Feeney’s audaciously distorted interpretation of the passage quoted from *Humani Generis*, Pope Pius XII would himself have to be accused of “[reducing to a meaningless formula the necessity of belonging to the True Church in order to attain salvation](#)”, because he maintained, in his encyclical on the Mystical Body, that those of good faith who do not belong to the visible Body of the Church “[have a certain relationship with the Mystical Body of the Redeemer](#)”—as was brought out in our November 3rd article. And Pope Pius IX would have to be held guilty of the same charge.

The trouble is that those with a shallow understanding and only surface vision, who can see only the words “Outside the Church there is no salvation”, and not their profound meaning, are incapable of penetrating into the Mystery of Grace hidden within those words. It is indeed strange that one who (according to Mrs. P. P) supposedly has “as fine a grasp of truth” as does Fr. Feeney, should completely fail to grasp the Mystery of Salvation as understood by the Church.

Such, then, is the misleading and confused and outright false Feeney Message that dear Mrs. P. P. ought to see as “pretty preposterous, to say the least”. Perhaps she knows of persons who were for a time misled by some organization or individual that they thought to be orthodox, but which they eventually found to be

objectionable in some way or other, causing them to withdraw support from said organization or individual. Maybe she could do the same in regard to the Feeney heresy, now that she knows the facts.

Surely, if Mrs. P. P. opens her mind and heart to God's grace, and humbles herself before Him, and quite rushing headless into preposterous and ignorant statements, she will drop the Feeney heresy hard and fast.

Part IV:

Aquinas's "Heresy" of Baptism of Desire,

published on February 1, 1974

It has been repeatedly asserted by adherents of the modern Feeney heresy that such theological notions as "invincible ignorance" and "Baptism of blood" are modernist inventions, which came into being within the past 100 years or so, though they are not in agreement as to just how long ago these "inventions" were supposed to have seen the light of day (some say 70-80 years ago), nor do they venture to say who were their supposed "inventors".

Of course, they would never be able to provide any kind of proof for their erroneous contention, because the terms represent genuine Catholic teaching of long standing. There never was any "invention" to begin with, except that the charge itself is an invention of Feeneyism.

If the promoters of this modern heresy of Feeneyism are logical in their invincible ignorance, they will be forced to accuse, among many other great old-time theologians, none other than the "Prince of Theologians" himself, St. Thomas Aquinas, of the 13th century, as being both a "heretic" and a "modernist", for this Saint clearly upholds the Catholic doctrine of desire in his renowned *Summa Theologica*. The misguided sheep of the Feeney flock do not know this, but what about the hard-core leaders who are so ready to quote St. Thomas if it serves their heretical purposes?

We now wish to present the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas on Baptism of desire in his own words, as we find this teaching in the *Summa*, and we hope that even less-educated readers will easily grasp the main ideas, though they may have trouble here and there in following the methodical scholastic system that the Saint uses in taking up and solving theological questions.

We regard it as a happy coincidence that we happen to be calling attention to this great Saint of the Middle Ages on the approach of the 7th centenary of his death, which occurred on March 7, 1274.

Aquinas deals with the recipients of Baptism in Part III, Question 68, of his *Summa*, Bearing the title, "On those who receive Baptism", Question 68 is divided

up into 12 "articles". In the second of these 12 articles, Aquinas takes up the matter that now holds our interest, namely, the question of "whether a man can be saved without Baptism."

In article 2, following his usual system of giving both sides of a question, the Saint first cites three objections favoring the view that a man cannot be saved without the Sacrament of Baptism, and then he considers the opposite view, that is, the belief that a man can indeed be saved without the actual reception of this Sacrament.

After having brought forward both views—first "against" and then "for"—the Prince of Theologians declares his own position and presents his solution to the question, and in this he defends the traditional Catholic teaching that a man can, under certain conditions, be saved without Baptism of water. Finally, he refutes the three objections one by one.

We now call on St. Thomas Aquinas to come forward and solve the problem of "whether a man can be saved without Baptism". He begins as follows:

Objection 1. It seems that no man can be saved without Baptism, for Our Lord said (Jn. 3, 5): "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God". But those alone are saved who enter God's Kingdom. Therefore, no one can be saved without Baptism, by which a man is born again of water and the Holy Ghost.

Objection 2. Further, in the book, *De Eccl. Dogmat.*, 41, it is written: "We believe that no catechumen, though he die in his good works, will have eternal life except if he suffer martyrdom, which constitutes all the sacramental power of Baptism". But if it were possible for anyone to be saved without Baptism, this would be the case especially with catechumens who are credited with good works, for they seem to have "faith which works through charity" (Gal 5, 6). Therefore it seems that no one can be saved without Baptism.

Objection 3. Further, as stated above (Art. 1; Ques. 65, art. 4), the Sacrament of Baptism is necessary for salvation. Now, that is necessary "without which something cannot be" (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 5). Therefore, it seems that no one can obtain salvation without Baptism."

We will yet see how Aquinas answers each of these three objections. The Saint next proceeds to give a brief statement of the opposing view—the true Catholic view—which holds that a man can be saved without the Sacrament of Baptism. He says:

On the contrary, Augustine says (On Leviticus, 84) that “some have received the invisible sanctification without the visible sacraments, and to their profit: but though it is possible to have the visible sanctification, consisting in a visible sacrament, without the invisible sanctification, it will be to no profit”. Since, therefore, the Sacrament of Baptism pertains to the visible sanctification, it seems that a man can obtain salvation by means of this invisible sanctification.”

After having thus completed giving both sides of the question, St. Thomas presents his own view, showing that he agrees with the second position, as held by the great St. Augustine of the 5th Century (d. 430). This means that Aquinas favors the view that a man, by virtue of “invisible sanctification”, can be saved without Baptism of water, which is precisely the position always held by the Catholic Church.

The Prince of Theologians proceeds as follows, and we deem it helpful to add emphasis:

I answer that the Sacrament of Baptism may be wanting to someone in two ways. First, both in reality and in desire—as in the case with those who neither are baptized nor wish to be baptized, which clearly indicates contempt for the Sacrament in the case of those who have the use of free will. Consequently, those to whom Baptism is wanting in his way cannot obtain salvation, since neither sacramentally nor mentally are they incorporated in Christ, through Whom alone salvation can be obtained.

Secondly, the Sacrament of Baptism may be wanting to someone in reality, but not in desire. For instance, when a man wishes to be baptized, but by some ill-chance he is forestalled by death before receiving Baptism. And **SUCH A MAN CAN OBTAIN SALVATION WITHOUT BEING ACTUALLY BAPTIZED, ON ACCOUNT OF HIS DESIRE FOR BAPTISM**, which desire is the outcome of “faith which works through charity” (Gal. 5, 6), whereby God, **WHOSE POWER IS NOT TIED TO VISIBLE SACRAMENTS, SANCTIFIES A MAN INWARDLY**. Hence, Ambrose says of Valentinian, who died while yet a catechumen: “I lost him whom I was to regenerate, but he did not lose the grace he prayed for”.

Such, then, is the clear Catholic doctrine of Baptism of desire—a supposed “liberal modernist heresy”!—taught by an outstanding 13th century theologian, who obviously must have been in an awfully big hurry to teach something that was not destined to be “invented” for another 600 years or so. And not only St. Thomas Aquinas, but as the Saint himself informs us, two 4th and 5th century greats—St.

Ambrose (d. 397) and St. Augustine—taught the same concept of Baptism of desire, showing that they were even more anxious than he to get that “liberal modernist heresy” invented in plenty of time for the future Feeneyites to have their ammunition ready.

We must now go into the concluding part of Aquinas’ exposition of the Catholic doctrine of Baptism of desire, that is, his refutation of the three objections to that doctrine which he began his second article of Question 68.

The first objection centers around Our Lord’s declaration that no one can enter God’s Kingdom unless he has been “born again of water and the Holy Ghost”. This ancient objection, refuted so long ago, is a resurrected favorite of the modern Feeney heresy, which sees only the outer surface of words, but is incapable of penetrating into the profound Divine Mystery of sanctification represented by Our Lord’s words. Aquinas very succinctly puts away that first objection, in these words (emphasis added):

Reply to Objection 1: As it is written (1 Kgs. 16, 7), “man seeth those thing that appear, but the Lord beholdeth the heart”. Now, a man who desires to be “born again of water and the Holy Ghost by Baptism, is **REGENERATED IN HEART**, though **NOT IN BODY**. Thus, the Apostle says (Rom. 2, 29) that “the circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”

Obviously, then, the key requirement for one to be “born again” is not water, but the **HOLY GHOST**. Though a man possessing “faith which works through charity” cannot be “born again” of water alone, he can be “born again” of the **HOLY GHOST ALONE**, that is, through a genuine desire for Baptism, which effects in him an “invisible sanctification”.

Aquinas continues to defend Baptism of desire—not to mention “Baptism of blood” (martyrdom), another Feeneyite bugaboo—while refuting the second objection, which he had cited from an unnamed author’s Latin work on dogmatic theology. The Saint says (emphasis added):

Reply to Objection 2. No man obtains eternal life unless he be free of all guilt and debt of punishment. Now, this plenary absolution is given when a man receives Baptism, or suffers martyrdom, for which reason it is stated that **MARTYDOM “CONTAINS ALL THE SACRAMENTAL POWER OF BAPTISM”**, that is, as to **FULL DELIVERANCE FROM GUILT AND PUNISHMENT**. Suppose, therefore, a **CATECHUMEN** to have the **DESIRE FOR BAPTISM** (else he could not be said to die in his good works, which cannot be without “faith which works through charity”), such a one, were he to die, would not forthwith come to eternal life, but would suffer punishment for

his past sins “but HE HIMSELF SHALL BE SAVED, yet so as by fire”, as is stated in 1 Cor 3, 15”.

Aquinas, supported by the incomparable St. Augustine, very concisely disposes of the third and last objection to the Catholic doctrine of Baptism of desire with the following profound statement (emphasis again added):

Reply to Objection 3. The Sacrament of Baptism is said to be necessary for salvation insofar as MAN CANNOT BE SAVED WITHOUT AT LEAST BAPTISM OF DESIRE, “which, with God, counts for the deed” (Augustine, *On the Psalms*, 57).”

The crashing sound that the followers of the ill-fated Feeneyism should be hearing, after such a superb performance by the Prince of Theologians, is the sound of yet another of their pet idols being demolished—that is, the completely fabricated notion that the Catholic doctrine of Baptism of desire, as well as Baptism of blood, is a heretical invention of liberal modernists.

Surely, there must be enough elementary honesty hidden away in the hearts of the victims of the Feeney heresy to make them acknowledge humbly that they have been taken in and misled by irresponsible propagators of error, who fill their fat black spring-binders with quotations, only to manipulate those quotations as to serve heresy. It is high time these innocent victims tell the quack theologians to look for another job.

Until now, perhaps, these victims of Feeneyism could possibly plead good faith and honestly invincible and innocent ignorance, since the heresy propagators withheld the true facts from them. But how much longer can they plead innocence, and receive the Sacraments from priests whom they slander as heretics, if they continue stubbornly and contumaciously to reject fact after fact that is presented to them, showing how they have fallen into heresy, which blocks one’s way to salvation. Can they kick against the goad forever?

Part V: The “Heresy” of Invincible Ignorance,

published on March 1, 1974

Ever since the appearance of the two-part article, “Outside the Church There Is No Salvation” (*Remnant*, Nov. 3 and Nov. 15, 1973), one thing that is increasingly clear is the intense dislike which those of the heretical Feeney persuasion have for such genuinely Catholic theological terminology as “invincible ignorance”, “unconscious desire”, “Baptism of desire”, and the like. They apparently realize

that the facts presented by such terminology are the death-blow to their heresy, and so their desire is to discredit it all by attributing it even to such monstrosities as modernism and Calvinism.

Not only Mrs. P. P., but scattered individuals from many sections of the country have taken violent exception to the truths represented by the above terminology—one of them presenting his protests with “righteous indignation”, another scrawling “Shame on you!” on a Christmas card sent to the writer. In general, all of them use the same stereotyped reasoning, indicating that there is a common source of error to which they are drawn.

When they come face to face with any of the above terminology, or the concepts expressed by that terminology, either in papal documents or even in dogmatic declarations, they rashly presume to explain them away or brush them aside. Some of these critics have preferred to quote some particular writer’s personal opinion as the “official teaching of the Church”, even though the opinion be clearly at variance with papal teaching. Invincibly and inculpably ignorant non-Catholics, it has been alleged, can be saved only by such extraordinary means as that of an Angel from Heaven coming down to them to instruct and baptize them! And this is passed off as the “official teaching” of the Church!

In addition to this, a “knowledgeable theologian” (? ? ?) has been cited to the effect that the reward of invincibly and inculpably ignorant non-Catholics dying without Baptism of water is, simply stated, a more lenient punishment in hell!

As if that were not bad enough, there is also this: That the position taken in our November “Salvation” article is “identical to the interpretation given the dogma by Calvin at the time he broke from the Church”. (!) This could only mean that the Popes quoted in the article are guilty of Calvinism! Of course, the truth is that Calvin represents the same kind of merciless rigorism that is manifest in the Feeney heresy, nor would he be in the slightest degree interested in the correct interpretation of the “Salvation Outside the Church” dogma that we have been upholding.

What stands out perhaps more than anything else in the protest letters received on the subject, is the unfortunate ignorance of the writers, a good percentage of whom are supposedly converts. One particular individual, who obviously has no idea just what “heresy” really is, has charged that we are guilty of the “heresy” of invincible ignorance and that, moreover, a quack theologizer has “clearly” proven this to be so. The editor of *The Remnant* has also been admonished, in a sort of hush-hush, “let me tip you off” manner, of his responsibility to rectify this “terrible mistake”.

Another critic, after firing off at us a somewhat incoherent statement as to what we, as Catholics, are obliged to believe and accept, suddenly concludes his broadside on this note: “Can you tell me in which Council or in which *Ex-Cathedra* statement you find ‘Baptism of desire’ or ‘invincible ignorance’?”

As for “Baptism of desire”, which will come up again in another article, all the reader in question has to do is to read—this time attentively!—the Nov. 15th part of the “Salvation article” to see what the Ecumenical Council of Trent says about it.

It should not be necessary to explain that a Council or an *Ex Cathedra* statement by a Pope need not, and would not be expected to, define as an article of faith the fact of “invincible ignorance” among non-Catholics before it can be considered in connection with authentic Catholic teaching. Since it was in an encyclical letter that Pope Pius IX spoke of the possibility of “invincibly ignorant” non-Catholics being saved, it should suffice to recall here the following from the encyclical *Humani Generis* (1950) of Pope Pius XII:

Nor must it be thought that what is expounded in Encyclical Letters does not of itself demand consent, since in writing such Letters the Popes do not exercise the supreme power of their Teaching Authority. For these matters are taught with the ordinary teaching authority, of which it is true to say: “He who heareth you, heareth me”; and generally what is expounded and inculcated in Encyclical Letters already for other reasons appertains to Catholic doctrine.

In view of such a clear-cut declaration by the Holy Father, who will be so brash as to by-pass the ordinary teaching of the encyclical and seek refuge in some more solemn declaration of a Council, or even an *Ex Cathedra* definition by a Pope? Heretics have tried this kind of escape maneuver before.

An emotionally disturbed soul, confessing confusion regarding the Church’s salvation doctrine, warns: “Unless you come right out and tell us what constitutes ‘invincible ignorance’ . . . you are putting more confusion on this most important matter,”—and then comes the unfinished sentence (exactly as the writer put it): “Unless you come out and specify what you mean by ‘invincible ignorance’ and ‘unconscious desire’.”

The charge of adding more confusion to this issue by using such an expression as “invincible ignorance” is, of course, really directed at the Pope who used it—not to mention the numerous traditional theologians of the past who have all made use of it in propounding genuine Catholic doctrine.

If it is necessary that we “come right out” and give the elementary explanation of what is meant by “invincible ignorance”, then let us by all means come right out and say that it is a type of ignorance that cannot be so easily overcome or removed, and let us come right out and add that some of the well-known reasons for this kind of ignorance are: faulty upbringing and education, lack of opportunities to learn, the disadvantages of the place where one lives, the deficiencies of the persons with whom one regularly associates, slowness of comprehensions, etc.

As for ignorance of the True Faith and the True Church, this varies so greatly among men—from the most uneducated heathen in a totally non-Christian environment to the fairly well-informed non-Catholic Christian—that it is impossible for man to say how much, if at all, any one individual is to blame for such ignorance. Only the all-knowing God can know this perfectly and He alone can pass correct judgment on all without exception, so it is not for man to intrude into this domain. It is not for man to determine just which ones will be saved or lost, or to suggest the percentage of saved or lost, or to set limits to the Divine Power and Goodness and Mercy, or to specify what particular means the Lord may or may not use in saving souls.

In speaking of non-Catholics who are “invincibly ignorant of our Holy Religion”, Pope Pius IX was stressing the fact that such persons are not to be held automatically culpable before God for their invincible ignorance of the True Faith and the True Church when they do not wilfully contribute to that ignorance. These, he said, can merit eternal life despite their ignorance, provided that they persevere to the end in observing God’s “Natural Law and its precepts”, from which no one can be excused, and provided that they are “disposed to obey God” in whatever they may learn to be His Holy Will, and provided that they “lead an honest and upright life . . .”

The Holy Father could go no further than to make this general statement of principle in regard to the salvation of those who are not visibly and externally members of the One True Church. He had to leave the final decision as to the state of soul of each individual non-Catholic to the Most High, Who alone has “perfect knowledge, examines and judges the minds, the souls, the thoughts and deeds of all men . . .”

The saintly Pope did not condemn outright to eternal hellfire all those who are not visible members of the One True Church through Baptism of water, as the Feeneyites do. Rather, he gave credit to God’s “sovereign Goodness and Mercy”, which, as he said, “does not permit...any men not culpable of wilful sin to be punished with eternal torment.” He did not tie down the Almighty Power of God, so as to make Him incapable of granting the graces of justification and salvation to those who may, through no wilful fault of their own, be prevented from knowing in full the True Faith and the True Church and from receiving Baptism of water.

In contradiction to the teaching of Pope Pius IX, the Feeneyites make a crucial mistake in rashly assuming that God does not take into consideration the invincible and inculpable ignorance of non-Catholics who die without Baptism of water, nor do they respect the fact that, despite such ignorance, there are non-Catholics who nevertheless carefully observe the Natural Law and its precepts, are disposed to obey God, and lead an honest and upright life. The Feeneyites make the further mistake of giving God no other choice than to have such persons baptized with water—even if it be after death!—if He wishes to admit them into Heaven

Pope Pius IX was not, of course, excusing those who wilfully keep themselves ignorant of the True Faith and of the True Church, or who are not interested in seeking the Truth, nor in obeying God's Will, nor in leading an honest and upright life. He was not excusing those—whether non-Catholic or Catholic—“[who knowingly rebel against the teaching authority of the Church](#)”. He was not excusing those Catholics who “[wilfully separate themselves from union with the Church of the Roman Pontiff](#)”, thus placing themselves in the company of culpable non-Catholics.

Furthermore, the Holy Father was not excusing those Catholics who, while apparently accepting the rest of the Faith, nevertheless reject or distort one or the other of its Dogmas. He could not excuse those who are told over and over and over again of the correct interpretation of the dogmatic statement, “Outside the Church there is no salvation”, and who are provided with evidence from papal documents, yet who persistently and wilfully refuse to listen and refuse to accept the correct understanding of the Dogma.

When Pius IX spoke of those non-Catholics who are “disposed to obey God”, he was implying that such persons have the genuine desire and good will to know the Truths which God has revealed and to accept them, even if they do not fully understand them. He was implying that such persons are genuinely prepared to obey the Will of God whenever it is made known to them.

Pope Pius XII (quoted in our Nov. 3rd article) was speaking of precisely the same favorable dispositions of soul in certain non-Catholics when he said that “[by an unconscious desire and longing they have a certain relationship with the Mystical Body of the Redeemer](#)”.

Since we have been challenged to “come right out” and tell what is meant also by “unconscious desire”, we again proceed to come right out and say that such a desire—a real desire, and not just a whim—[is directed towards something of which one is not as yet fully or consciously aware](#). Thus, to get right to the point, non-Catholics of good will have in their souls the genuine desire to fulfill God's Will in all things, though they are not as yet aware of the specific details of the One True Faith which God requires them to accept. Their disposition of soul is such that they are prepared to accept whatever they find out God wants them to accept, even if they eventually find out that this is to accept the Catholic Faith and to be baptized, and thus become members of the One True Church, which they learn to be none other than the Roman Catholic Church. This genuine desire for the Truth is precisely what has led so many true converts into the One True Church.

It is merciless cruelty, as well as an awful and blasphemous insult to God, to insist that such persons, so well disposed to God, should be cast by Him into the eternal torment of hell if they die before they can learn the True Faith and be baptized in the Catholic Church.

Part VI: Those Three “*Ex Cathedras*”

published on April 16, 1974

The adherents of the Feeney heresy like to boast that they have incontrovertible proof for their erroneous position regarding salvation outside the Catholic Church in three declarations of the Popes are technically called “*Ex Cathedra*” declarations. “*Ex Cathedra*” (pronounced CATH-e-dra) literally means “from the chair”—and, in this case, it means “from the Chair of Peter”. A declaration of a Pope coming from the “Cathedra” or “Chair” of Peter is understood to mean a formal and official dogmatic declaration that is infallible and cannot be lawfully denied or rejected.

There are three “*Ex Cathedra*” declarations by three different Popes that the Feeney disciples triumphantly, though futilely, cite in their own favor, imagining that here they have evidence to show that their erroneous contention regarding the damnation of non-Catholics is the correct one.

We wish first to quote those three “*Ex Cathedras*” as they are presented in certain small pieces of pro-Feeneyism literature, sometimes in one arrangement, sometimes in another, and under such headings as “Ark of Salvation” and “*Magisterium Ecclesiae*” (in English: the Magisterium or Teaching Office of the Church).

Here, then, are those three “*Ex Cathedras*”:

1. *Ex Cathedra*: “There is but one universal Church of the faithful, outside of which no one can be saved.”—Pope Innocent III, Fourth Lateran Council, 1215.
2. *Ex Cathedra*: “We declare, say, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff.”—Pope Boniface VIII, the Bull “*Unam Sanctam*”, 1302.
3. *Ex Cathedra*: “The most Holy Roman Church firmly believes, professes, and proclaims that those not living within the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics cannot become participants in eternal life, but will depart ‘into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels’ [Matt. 25:41], unless before the end of life the same have been added to the flock; and that the unity of the ecclesiastical body is so strong that only to those remaining in it are the sacraments of the Church of benefit for salvation, and do fastings, almsgiving, and other functions of piety and exercises of Christian service produce eternal reward, and that no one, whatever almsgiving he has practiced, even if he has shed blood for the name of Christ,

can be saved, unless he has remained in the bosom and unity of the Catholic Church.”—Pope Eugene IV, the Bull “*Cantate Domino*,” 1441.

Before the Feeneyites can even begin to boast that here is proof for their heresy, they must first clearly and precisely state their own position, without taking refuge in generalities that can be interpreted to suit their purposes.

We have found the Feeneyites very reluctant to make any clear and precise definition of their real position. They will say, for example, that the words “Outside the Church there is no salvation” mean exactly what they say, yet they show that they do not want to understand what that dogmatic statement of the Church really does say. They take the word “outside” in an entirely shallow and external and naturalistic sense, seeing only the outer surface of the word, while failing to understand the supernatural Mystery of Grace to which the word refers. They scoff at the notion that the word is being used in connection with the Divine Treasury of Grace. They fear the deathblow to their heresy if they admit that “outside the Church” in this case is equivalent to “outside the Church’s Treasury of Grace”, so that anyone outside the Treasury of Grace, possessed solely by the One True Church, cannot be saved.

That is why it is useless for them to quote in their own favor the “*Ex Cathedra*” statement of Pope Innocent III, for they do not want to understand its real meaning. And it is particularly incongruous for them to use the “*Ex Cathedra*” of Pope Boniface VIII for their own purposes, because the glaring truth shining in their faces is the fact that their own founder and leader refused “to be subject to the Roman Pontiff” when he disobeyed repeated summonses to appear in Rome by January 31, 1953, where his case was to be examined and adjudged by the Holy Office. As a result of his disobedience, he incurred the threatened penalty of excommunication for his refusal to subject himself to the will of the Roman Pontiff.

The decree of excommunication for disobedience to the repeated summons of the Holy See is dated February 13, 1953, after it had been approved by Pope Pius XII on the previous day, February 12, 1953. This decree was published in the Vatican’s official organ, called the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (“Acts of the Apostolic See”), vol. 45, issue of Feb. 16, 1953, page 100.

Whether, or when, this particular excommunication was lifted by competent authority is entirely independent of the central issue, namely, the correct understanding of the Church’s Dogma, “Outside the Church there is no salvation”. Even if Fr. Feeney was possibly absolved from this excommunication, the fact is that never did he give up his erroneous interpretation of the Dogma of Salvation, as is evident from his writings on the matter in recent months. He has never accepted the official explanation of the Dogma as expounded by the Holy Office in a letter to Archbishop Cushing, dated August 8, 1949, which had been approved by Pope

Pius XII on July 29, 1949. Thus, it is also in this case that he refused “to be subject to the Roman Pontiff”. An English translation of the complete letter of the Holy Office was published belatedly (with the Latin version preceding it) in the “American Ecclesiastical Review”, vol. 127, issue of October 1952, pp. 311-315.

The denial of the correct interpretation of a Dogma of the Faith is obviously equivalent to a denial of the Dogma itself, which is heresy. According to Canon law (Can. 2314, 1), one who contumaciously and openly teaches heresy automatically (or “*ipso facto*”) incurs excommunication from the Church. Whether or not Fr. Feeney has incurred this excommunication—which holds as long as one persists in heresy—is something that only the proper ecclesiastical authority would have to declare officially. We can limit ourselves here solely to stating these two facts:

- 1) That there is an automatic excommunication for open heresy, and
- 2) That, as we have said, a rejection of the correct interpretation of a Dogma of Faith is the equivalent to a rejection of the Dogma itself.

Since the Feeney followers like to shy away from exposing their true position clearly and precisely, let us do it for them, even using some of the authoritative language of Pope Boniface VIII to make it more emphatic—as follows:

“We of the Feeney persuasion declare, say, define and pronounce that all non-Catholics without exception who not visibly join the One True Church before death, will be eternally lost; that all those who at death are not visibly and externally members of the One True Church through Baptism of water shall be condemned to hell; that there is no such thing as Baptism of Desire nor Baptism of Blood to save those who, through no wilful fault of their own, cannot receive the sacramental Baptism of water before death; that no one outside the visible membership in the One True Church, not even a little child, is ever invincibly and innocently ignorant of the One True Faith; that God may not, and indeed cannot, impart the graces of salvation to men except through Baptism of water; that unbaptized infants, including today’s countless victims of abortion, are condemned to the fire of hell forever.”

The disciples of Feeneyism have shown themselves horror-stricken, and some have burst into flames of unrighteous indignation, at seeing such precise and undeniable statements of their heresy. And Charley even shouted “Libel!” when confronted with the truth that Feeneyism must of necessity condemn unbaptized infants to eternal hellfire if Baptism of water is absolutely and unconditionally necessary for salvation—yet he failed to say just where such infants do end up. What else could their false and mercilessly rigorous interpretation of “Outside the Church there is no salvation” mean but an eternal hell for unbaptized infants?

These modern rigorists, who have taken such liberties with the Dogma of Salvation, have shown themselves unable to see anything but two extremes—that is, either you must insist that all non-Catholics, whether of bad will or of good will, are automatically headed for eternal hellfire, or else you must of necessity maintain that all men can equally be saved. They apparently cannot or do not want to see the fact that ONLY those non-Catholics can be saved who are invincibly and innocently ignorant of the One True Faith and are properly disposed for it, and who, through no wilful fault of their own, are at death still outside visible membership in the One True Church.

To the “*Ex Cathedra*” of Pope Eugene IV the propagators of Feeneyism apply the same vague generalizations, that is, “It means just what it says”, which they apply to the Dogma, “Outside the Church there is no salvation”, but without reading it carefully in the light of the supernatural Mystery of Grace and in light of actual historical facts.

Thus, in order to protect this heresy, they are here again forced to give their own shallow interpretation to the Pope’s words, “[none of those existing outside the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics, can have a share in life eternal](#)”. To them the expression, “existing outside the Catholic Church”, can have only that same superficial and external meaning of theirs which does not recognize the supernatural and invisible workings of God’s Grace in the souls of those non-Catholics who are in good faith and who genuinely desire and seek God’s Truth and the fulfillment of His Holy Will.

Similarly, the conditional clause, “[unless before death they are joined with Her](#)”, excludes for the Feeneyites the possibility of any invisible sanctification in the souls of those who are properly disposed for it. To the Feeneyites, the word “joined” means only a visible joining or union with the Catholic Church through Baptism of water, whereas the Catholic Truth is that properly disposed non-Catholics are invisibly joined to, or “related to”, the One True Church through the grace of an invisible sanctification and, if they are thus at all properly disposed at death, they can be saved.

Speaking of “[those who do not belong to the VISIBLE Body of the Catholic Church](#)”, Pope Pius XII said, in his Encyclical on the Mystical Body (*Mystici Corporis*, 1943), that “[by an unconscious desire and longing THEY HAVE A CERTAIN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MYSTICAL BODY OF THE REDEEMER](#)” (emphasis added). This means that they are, through an invisible sanctification, “joined” to the Catholic Church, though not actual members of it, while the obligation remains to be baptized with water and to enter the One True Church formally and visibly.

The followers of Feeneyism have every reason to shudder if they thoughtfully read what Pope Eugene, in his “*Ex Cathedra*”, says of the importance of the unity of the Catholic Church, and how “[only those REMAINING within this unity can](#)

[profit by the sacraments of the Church unto salvation. . .](#)” They know all too well that their own founder and leader failed to “remain” within the unity of the Catholic Church by rejecting the correct interpretation of her Dogma of Salvation and by refusing “[to be subject to the Roman Pontiff](#)” when ordered to come to Rome in 1953. According to their teaching, the word “remain” means just what it says. How can they consider themselves as “remaining” within the unity of the Church if they follow such a disobedient leader and if they accept his errors? How can they consider their “works of Christian piety” as worthy of “eternal recompense” if they “remain” in their errors? How can they presume to call themselves “Slaves of Mary” or “Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary”, if they remain slaves of error and disobedience?

Pope Eugene adds even greater emphasis to the need of “[remaining within the bosom and the unity of the Catholic Church](#)” by declaring that not even the most generous almsgiving or philanthropy, nor even martyrdom for the sake of Christ, can merit eternal salvation for one who separates himself from the Church through heresy. This tells us that there are genuine martyrs—that is, martyrs for the Truth—and there are false martyrs—that is, martyrs in defense of error. There is no merit for salvation in doing the right thing for the wrong reason.

So, then, it is evident that those three “*Ex Cathedras*” to which Feeneyites appeal are actually a condemnation of their errors.

It has been asked, “[Just what is the REAL REASON why Father Feeney, who once taught the correct doctrine of salvation, suddenly switched to a rigorous and merciless interpretation of ‘Outside the Church there is no salvation’? Was it possibly because of an intense hatred for certain groups of non-Catholics whom he could not stand seeing in Heaven?](#)”

Whatever be the answer to these and other questions, the real reason for the sudden transfer from the correct Catholic doctrine to an intolerable rigorism could not possibly have been zeal for Truth. And we know that behind every heresy and every other kind of religious error lurks the shadow of the author of all heresy and error and lies and disobedience. It makes no difference to him what extreme of error be espoused by men, whether it be on the left or the right or in some other direction from the Truth, just as long as souls are ensnared in error and enslaved to him.

We can only hope that those who strangely call themselves “slaves” of Mary and her Immaculate Heart, while invincibly and innocently ignorant of the errors into which they have been misled, may show enough humility and good will so as to merit being led back to the Truth and to the Ark of Salvation by Our Lady, Destroyer of All Heresies. But they cannot merit this grace if they continue to close their eyes and ears and hearts to the Truth.

Part VII: “Nobody Wrote It,”

published on June 7, 1974

A genuine Catholic Sister (in the traditional long habit) likes to tell of an assignment once given to her little grade school children, who were asked to find the names of authors of books. On this occasion, one book that the children had to inspect for its authorship happened to be a textbook with a variety of names of contributors to the book given on the title page, where the children were taught to look for the author’s name. Two of the little girls put their heads together and they looked and looked for the author’s name, thinking that there should be only one name. Baffled by the presence of so many names on the title page, one of them finally announced with an air of triumphant solemnity, “Nobody wrote it!”

But the same cannot be said of an anonymous pamphlet that has emanated from Fr. Feeney’s St. Benedict Center in Still River, Mass., bearing the date “January, 1974”. Somebody did write it, and it is anything but a compliment to its author.

This inglorious pamphlet, consisting of 18 unnumbered regular book-size pages and done up in a glorious white cover, bears the misleading title, “The Dogma of Faith”, as if treating the “Dogma of Dogmas”, one greater even than, e.g., the Dogmas of the Trinity and the Incarnation. Under that misleading title is the untruthful subtitle: “‘Outside the Church There is no Salvation’ Defended Against Right-Wing Liberals”. This subtitle is untruthful especially because it DOES NOT DEFEND the Church’s Dogma of Salvation, but PROMOTES ONLY AN ERRONEOUS INTERPRETATION of that Dogma.

The pamphlet is labelled as “A From the Housetops Publication, second series, No. 1.” and it was supposedly published by an uncanonical group calling itself “The Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Benedict Center”. The coat of arms of this group is displayed in red on the cover, giving the name of the group in Latin and indicating 1949 as the year of the group’s uncanonical, and therefore illicit, founding.

Though the invisible author’s name is not revealed, his voice is clearly heard from the heresy-enshrouded “Housetops”. Whether he did so intentionally or in a moment of carelessness, the writer suddenly, towards the end, speaks of himself in the first person singular, after having constantly used the first person plural throughout the sorry tract. On unnumbered page 16, he writes the following: “Father Stepanich is not going to like my calling him a Rationalist any more than my calling him a Liberal”.

One could hardly conclude anything else but that the word “my” refers to none other than Fr. Feeney himself. In fact, there is ever indication of this already on the very first page, filled as it is with one untruth after another (thus setting the pace

for the remaining 17 pages), where the anonymous writer tells how “the doctrinal (?) crusade of the Saint Benedict Center dates back to the early 1940s when we began to attack...the very evils that conservative Catholics are so concerned about now”. He also untruthfully writes: “From the start we proclaimed the dogma of faith: ‘Outside the Church there is no salvation’. We vowed to defend it. . .”

Fr. Feeney’s unsuccessful attempt to keep himself anonymous must have been a shock to one of the most fanatical of his followers, who was wont to say of us: “If Father has the truth on his side, let me him come out with it and identify himself with it”. We have done exactly that, only to be greeted with insolence and contempt and unrighteous indignation on the part of various hardened Feeneyites. And now this anonymous smear pamphlet.

Since the writer wishes to keep himself anonymous, we will respect his wishes, though we must use some name for him in this article. Seeing that he has chosen to be anonymous, we do not believe he will be offended if we simply call him just that—”Anonymous”. If Fr. Feeney wishes to dispel the unavoidable impression that Anonymous is none other than himself, let him write an “I didn’t do it letter” to *The Remnant*.

Since it is not necessary, while also being practically impossible, to take up every error and untruth and slander that Anonymous brings up in this pamphlet, we are confining ourselves in this brief article only to certain points. *Remnant* readers know that the errors of Feeneyism have been adequately dealt with in the articles that followed last November’s two-part article—namely:

- 1) “That ‘Pretty Preposterous’ Salvation Article” (1-1-74).
- 2) “Aquinas’ ‘Heresy’ of Baptism of Desire” (2-1-74),
- 3) “The ‘Heresy’ of Invincible Ignorance” (3-1-74), and
- 4) “Those Three Ex Cathedras” (4-16-74).

By the time that the anonymous pamphlet came into our hands, these four articles had already been lined up, though not as yet all published. We had been tipped off by an “insider” early in January that some kind of “reply” to our November article was about to be released from St. Benedict Center, though we were not looking for any reply from there, since our article was mainly for the benefit of the pro-Feeney individuals and groups that were stirring up confusion and trouble elsewhere.

If Anonymous had known that those four additional articles were yet to come, refuting his unspeakably derogatory and confused pamphlet in advance, he might have avoided wasting his time and energy and money in writing and publishing his intemperate attack. He could have avoided repeating all those sophistries and misconceptions and distortions of his that were already too well known to us. He could have avoided his appallingly uncharitable smearing of those whom he calls “rationalists” and “liberals”, as well as *The Remnant*, which he dubs a

“professional wailer” publication, and even Walter Matt himself, whom he regards as being afflicted with the “disease” of the “heresy of liberalism”!

Anonymous imagines that we were “very little acquainted” with his own ideas and writings, and he issues an implied warning against “publications” for which, supposedly, he is “mistakenly” held responsible. Of course, we cannot see him being proud of the kind of persons who have, through letters and publications, acted as self-appointed instant mouthpieces of Feeneyism, and who have hastened to tell us, e.g., that “This is what Fr. Feeney means . . .”, etc., etc. Furthermore, while hearing of schism in his own back yard, we doubt that Anonymous could be very happy in knowing that his followers elsewhere are also divided among themselves, since one group knocks another as “not being truly representative of Fr. Feeney’s views. . .” Yet, remarkably enough, schism or no schism, all those groups and individuals use the very same type of false arguments as does Anonymous, pointing to him as the source of it all!

The crucial mistake of Anonymous is, course, the fact that he does not honestly and truthfully declare his own real position on salvation outside the church, as we have already noted, for example, in the April 16th article on the “Three Ex Cathedras”. He imagines he is defending the Church’s Dogma of Salvation, whereas he is propagating only his own false interpretation of that Dogma. Anonymous is surely not incapable of realizing this. He knows that there are two interpretations of the Dogma, yet, while demanding “infallible statements” supporting the correct interpretation, he fails to provide any “infallible statement” for his own false interpretation.

For the sake of his followers, many of whom are innocently taken in as ideal-filled young people and who mistakenly believe that they are real religious “brothers” and “sisters” who form a real religious congregation, as well as for his own sake, we must emphatically declare once again that the dogmatic principle, “Outside the Church there is no salvation,” is NOT a statement of his true belief in this matter.

Here, then, is the way that principle would have to be re-worded to fit his own misconception of the Dogma:

“Outside **VISIBLE MEMBERSHIP** in the Church **THROUGH BAPTISM OF WATER** there is no salvation”.

Anonymous must surely know this, but he is probably afraid to put his COMPLETE belief into one sentence like that, because he can see then all his misdirected argumentation and sophistry and distortion of facts would crumble into dust.

Since Anonymous makes the “Three *Ex Cathedras*” the backbone of his false doctrine, even though those papal declarations actually condemn him, we must re-

word, for his benefit, at least one of them. Referring to the Popes of the “Three *Ex Cathedras*”, he expressly asks us in his pamphlet anonymous page 5: “**What terms would you have suggested more emphatic than the ones they actually used?**” The Popes were emphatic enough, but here is the way that, for example, the statement of Innocent III would have to be revised to fit the thinking of Anonymous: “There is but one universal Church of the faithful, **AND OUTSIDE VISIBLE MEMBERSHIP IN THAT CHURCH THROUGH BAPTISM OF WATER** no one at all can be saved”.

Anonymous states that for “over a quarter of a century” he had been hurling the following challenge at the liberals: “Produce one infallible statement in favor of salvation outside the Church!” Even in making this ill-advised challenge, he fails to express himself accurately, for this is the way he should say it: “Produce one infallible statement in favor of salvation outside **VISIBLE MEMBERSHIP** in the Church **THROUGH BAPTISM OF WATER!**” Here again, Anonymous must surely be capable of understanding that he himself is the one who should be producing an “infallible statement” in favor of his own erroneous idea—which, of course, he knows he cannot possibly do.

It is because of his failure to declare his own position that Anonymous is so presumptuous as to twist around and distort even the authoritative Encyclical statements of Pope Pius IX and Pius XII, which we quoted in our November 3rd article and which he vainly imagines to be in conflict with the Solemn Magisterium of the Church. Twice he refers to the quotation from Pius IX as “notorious”, and he baldly asserts, without offering a shred of evidence, that this passage caused the saintly Pope “**so much sorrow and pain . . . that he spent the rest of his long pontificate trying to retract it.**”

Since he is so liberal in rationalizing away the teaching of the Popes, it is no surprise that Anonymous sets up a doctrine of hell to fit his heresy. He spends pages and pages discussing the question of hell, which anyone rejecting the correct interpretation of a dogma, and refusing to be “subject to the Roman Pontiff”, has every reason to dread. He most untruthfully asserts that the doctrine of salvation which we based on the teachings of Popes Pius IX and Pius XII lets just about anybody and everybody into Heaven, leaving Hell practically empty!

We believe that Anonymous is capable, of seeing the falsity of his doctrine of “over a quarter of a century”, which has long been known as Feeneyism. It is time that he proclaims “from the housetops” that **FEENEYISM IS DEAD!**”

* * * * *

Afterword

by Thomas A. Droleskey,
July 21, 2008

It is interesting to note that Pope Pius XII amplified what he wrote in *Mystici Corporis*, June 20, 1943, in his Address to Italian Midwives, October 29, 1951:

If what We have said up to now concerns the protection and care of natural life, much more so must it concern the supernatural life, which the newly born receives with Baptism. In the present economy there is no other way to communicate that life to the child who has not attained the use of reason. Above all, the state of grace is absolutely necessary at the moment of death without it salvation and supernatural happiness—the beatific vision of God—are impossible. An act of love is sufficient for the adult to obtain sanctifying grace and to supply the lack of baptism; to the still unborn or newly born this way is not open.

All things happen in God's Holy Providence. He knew that the late Father Leonard Feeney would cause to be promoted a misinterpretation of the doctrine of *Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus* at the same time that an enemy of that doctrine, whether taught properly or heretically, the then Archbishop of Boston, Richard Cushing, was busily engaged in various acts of religious indifferentism that would lead to his boasting before he died that he had never made a single convert to the Catholic Church. Cushing did not want any mention of the doctrine of *Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus* taking place at a time when his good friend and benefactor, Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr., was grooming his son, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, then a newly elected member of the House of Representatives from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to be the first Catholic President of the United States of American. Father Feeney's tragic misinterpretation and stubborn misrepresentation of the authentic Catholic teaching of *Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus* gave the arch-Americanist Cushing and other early ecumenists an opportunity to paint anyone who mentioned this doctrine of the Catholic Church as a "Feeneyite."

Although I was taught the correct doctrine in parochial school and in college and seminary, I have to admit that there were moments when those three "Ex Cathedras" looked pretty intimidating, and thus believed, at least for a time, that this was one of those matters that would be "resolved" when the modernists were no longer in "control," and was thus "open" to the possibility of either interpretation being correct, considering those who took the Feeney position to be of "good will" and people with whom those not sure of their position, such as me, could work for the promotion of the Faith.

In God's Holy Providence, however, I was disabused of that notion while recognizing that the proper teaching of *Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus* is not a matter open to "debate." Articles and talks by various priests explicated the matter very clearly.

As per usual, however, most of the best work on the subject has been done by the "nine," including a conference, now published, given in 1996 by His Excellency Bishop Clarence Kelly (which contains the usual gratuitous swipes at the validity of the Thuc line consecrations and at the Congregation of Mary Immaculate Queen). His Excellency Bishop Daniel Dolan has given masterful sermons on the correct doctrine of the Church, and Father Anthony Cekada has written about it very clearly and very succinctly.

As Father Martin has demonstrated, the Feeney heresy is pernicious and is a denial of the Catholic Faith, giving rise to several generations of people who believe that they know quite infallibly the Particular Judgments of other human beings, expressing themselves in fits of anger and rage whenever the falsity of their position is presented.

Father Michael Müller, a Redemptorist of the Nineteenth Century, is often cited by those adhering to the heretical, rigoristic interpretation of *Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus*. Father Müller, while making the careful distinction that invincible ignorance neither saves nor damns anyone, states the following before quoting Pope Pius IX:

Inculpable or invincible ignorance has never been and will never be a means of salvation. To be saved, it is necessary to be justified, or to be in the state of sanctifying grace. In order to obtain sanctifying grace, it is necessary to have the proper dispositions for justification; that is, true divine faith in at least the necessary truths of salvation, confident hope in the divine Savior, sincere sorrow for sin, together with the firm purpose of doing all that God has commanded, etc. Now, these supernatural acts of faith, hope, charity, contrition, etc., which prepare the soul for receiving sanctifying grace, can never be supplied by invincible ignorance; and if invincible ignorance cannot supply the preparation for receiving sanctifying grace, much less can it bestow sanctifying grace itself. "Invincible ignorance", says St. Thomas Aquinas, "is a punishment for sin". (*De Infid.* q. x., art. 1.) It is, then, a curse, but not a blessing or a means of salvation.

But if we say that inculpable ignorance cannot save a man, we thereby do not say that invincible ignorance damns a man. Far from it. To say, invincible ignorance is no means of salvation, is one thing; and to say, invincible ignorance is the cause of damnation, is another. To maintain the latter would be wrong, for inculpable ignorance of the fundamental principles of faith excuses a heathen from the sin of infidelity, and a Protestant from the sin of heresy;

because such invincible ignorance, being only a simple involuntary privation, is no sin.

Hence Pius IX said “that, were a man to be invincibly ignorant of the true religion, such invincible ignorance would not be sinful before God; that, if such a person should observe the precepts of the Natural Law and do the will of God to the best of his knowledge, God, in His infinite mercy, may enlighten him so as to obtain eternal life; for, the Lord, who knows the heart and thoughts of man, will, in His infinite goodness, not suffer any one to be lost forever without his own fault.”

God alone knows the subjective state of the souls of others. The fact that it is possible for those who are not visible members of the true Church to save their souls by virtue of her Treasury of Grace does not mean that we know the number of those so saved, which is why the false ecumenism of the counterfeit church of conciliarism is such an exercise in spiritual cruelty. The conciliarists make no effort to seek with urgency the unconditional conversion of Protestants and Jews and Mohammedans and the Orthodox or the practitioners of various pagan superstitions, making it appear as though that their salvation is more or less assured, or, at the very least, not in too much jeopardy if they do not convert to the true Church, outside of which there is no salvation. The counterfeit church of conciliarism has abandoned the work of seeking the conversion of souls to what it claims is the Catholic Church.

We must never abandon that work. While we do indeed pass out Green Scapulars to those whom we meet and pray for the conversion of all men and their nations to the true Church, we must leave to God what is God’s, namely, the Particular Judgments that he renders on the souls of other men, Judgments that will be revealed, along with our own (!), at the Last Day at the General Judgment of the Living and the Dead. And those angry souls who follow the Feeney heresy—or some variation thereof—who think that they know with certainty the fate of the soul of any person not canonized by the Catholic Church is a fool of the highest order, daring to play God, a crime for which he will have to answer at the moment of his own Particular Judgment.

Holy Mary, Mother God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

* * * * *

<i>Parts</i>	<i>Source</i>
1 and 2	http://www.christorchaos.com/OutsidetheChurchThereIsNoSalvationbyFatherStepanich.htm
3 and 4	http://www.christorchaos.com/OutsidetheChurchThereIsNoSalvationpartsthreeandfourbyFatherStepanich.htm
5 and 6	http://www.christorchaos.com/OutsidetheChurchThereIsNoSalvatoinpartsfiveandsixbyFatherStepanich.htm
7	http://www.christorchaos.com/OutsidetheChurchThereIsNoSalvationpartsevenbyFatherStepanich.htm

Correction of typographical errors and omissions, and conversion to PDF by PB,
October 2010.