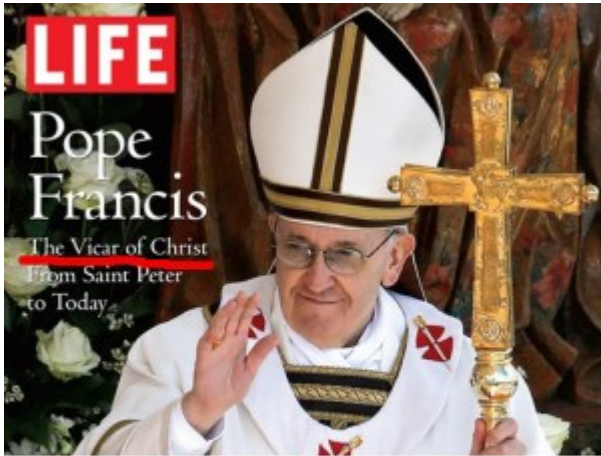


Refuting Pope Francis and the Roman Church



Vicar: (From Latin) vicarius, a *substitute*,
Anti: (From Greek) against, opposite, *instead of*,
Vicar of Christ = Anti Christ

Introduction

This is an article from Richard Bennett who was a Roman Catholic priest and who later left the Roman Catholic church and became a Protestant minister. Just read his testimony and you will see he is a sincere man who is a truly born again child of God in Jesus Christ who escaped the clutches of Rome! I myself am also a former Roman Catholic and can testify that Richard Bennett knows what he is talking about.

Dear Friend,

When you study the facts documented in the article below, you will understand that it is imperative that you disapprove of Pope Francis and the Roman Church. No matter how cleverly Romanism is presented, to accept the Church of Rome as a genuine Christian church is mortally dangerous. In history, there are many examples of how perilous it is. For example, in Ireland in 1172, the acceptance of the Roman Church by Christian Pastors across the nation finally meant, for most people, the end of true Christian faith on that island. Thus it was that Roman Catholicism was imposed on Christian Pastors in 1172 by Pope Alexander III with the military might of King Henry II of England. The Pastors and people accepted the Church of Rome, rather than die. How different things could have been if the Pastors and people sacrificed their lives for the Gospel of grace.

In a similar way, in the 1560s, the Jesuits arrived in Poland. They created a network of schools and colleges across Poland, and they managed in a very clever way to present Romanism as the true Church. Thus it was that the Pastors, leaders, and people acclaimed the Roman Church, and what the Reformation had achieved was sadly lost for the most part. Also from 1600 to 1610 the Jesuits also were in the forefront of the Counter-Reformation in Hungary. They were successful in reconverting two-thirds of the population

back to Catholicism, when the country was in its golden age of biblical faith.

Now with another clever Jesuit leading the field; i.e., Pope Francis, Romanism is foisted on the nations of the world. It is time for you and all true Christians to take a stand against the encroachment of this apostate Church.

Please forward this article, and have it posted on Internet Websites. Pray that Christ Jesus the Lord will show Himself as the Head of His Church. He it is that rules His Church according to His written Word of truth and the Gospel of grace.

Yours in the Lord's truth and grace,

Richard Bennett

Refuting Pope Francis and the Roman Church



By Richard Bennett

The New York Times reported the frenzy of adulation for Pope Francis during his September 2015 visit to the United States,

“Welcomed with a fanfare of trumpets and a chorus of amens, Pope Francis introduced himself to the United States on Wednesday with a bracing message on climate change, immigration and poverty that ranged from the pastoral to the political. On a day that blended the splendor of an ancient church with the frenzy of a modern rock star tour, Francis waded quietly but forcefully into some of the most polarizing issues of American civic life.” [1]

It appeared as though no lofty controversy was beyond the insight of his judgment, and no lowly mortal beyond the reach of his mercy. And as if unseen hands were covertly orchestrating them, crowds chanted homage and acclamation for the Roman Pontiff. To all appearance the world wonders after him, in great admiration of his power, policy, and pomp. Yet very few comprehend the truth about the institution that he directs. Very few also have bothered to analyze biblically what Pope Francis actually said. An example of this is what the Pope said at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. On September 24, 2015, Francis offered prayers for the hundreds of Muslim pilgrims killed during Islam's Hajj; saying,

“I would like to express two sentiments for my Muslim brothers and sisters...My sentiments of closeness in the face of tragedy. Tragedy that they suffered in Mecca...In this moment I give assurances of my prayers. I unite myself with you all. A prayer to all mighty God all merciful.”[2]

This sentiment is consistent with the official teaching of the Vatican. In the measure that Rome has distanced herself from the Lord of Salvation, so has she moved into solidarity with Islam, and confesses that they both worship the same god.

“The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind’s judge on the last day.”[3]

Pope Francis’ expression of a union of faith in the “Allah” of Islam is an abomination before the One and only True God, as He commands, “For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God,[4] and “I am the Lord that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another.”[5] Thus, sacerdotal wickedness and doctrinal outrages are blights that even Francis’ affectation cannot charm away.

The Wickedness of the Roman Church That Needs to Be Analyzed

What was revealed to the world in 2003 remains true today: “From Canada to Australia, South Africa to Hong Kong, across Europe from Ireland, and to Pope John Paul II’s native Poland, clergy sex abuse cases and the ensuing cover-ups have proven to be a worldwide problem.”[6] “It is not about one man or one country; it is about an institution.”[7] Time and again it has proved itself to be “an institution” of betrayal, abuse, and lies. Cases of sexual misconduct by Catholic clerics continue to come to light as was reported as recently as August 5, 2015,

“Monday’s deadline for filing claims has passed, the bankruptcy case of the Twin Cities archdiocese moves to its next stage. By the deadline, more than 600 claims had been filed, including 407 by alleged victims of clergy sex abuse.”[8]

On July 15, 2015, The New York Times reported,

“Though sexual misconduct by individual priests has long drawn headlines in Minnesota and around the world, the latest resignations [Archbishop John C. Nienstedt and an auxiliary bishop, Lee A. Piché] come amid a push to punish the church leaders who did not intervene.”[9]

It is well recognized that the Roman Catholic Canon Law imposing priestly celibacy has been the root cause of moral degradation and licentiousness among Catholic priests. These men are but human beings with human passions. To force celibacy upon them is an abomination because it goes against the will of God that men and women are to marry and bear children. Hence the predictable outcome: it drives these men to illicit acts. These priests corrupt women, boys, and girls, with acts of fornication and sodomy. It is also known and readily admitted by Catholics that it was Pope Gregory VII who first imposed the law banning priests from marrying. Thus, a Catholic website www.uscatholic.org states, “In 1075 Pope Gregory VII issued a decree effectively barring married priests from ministry, a discipline formalized by the First Lateran Council in 1123.”[10]

Pope Francis is touted as a pope who breaks with Roman traditions. If he is truly concerned for the countless clergy and laity, casualties of a papal law, which viciously ripped through their lives, then he should hasten to abolish that vile regulation. Rumor has it that he may just do that. But if,

after 940 years of the enforcement of the absurd regulation of his predecessors, were Francis to rescind it, we would suspect that his main reason might be financial weight of legal costs rather than concern for the victims of the abuse perpetrated by the Roman priests. News sources such as The Guardian report,

“Pope Francis has hailed US bishops for their handling of the sexual abuse crisis that has rocked the Catholic church for decades, saying they had shown ‘courage’ throughout and regained the authority and the trust which was demanded of them...Between 2004 and 2013, US diocese paid \$1.7bn in legal settlements, according to a report released last year by the US Conference on Catholic Bishops. In that same period, it also paid \$379m in legal fees.”[11]

The Catholic Church is a corporation, and no corporation could long sustain such financial losses. She must maintain her authority and power over the millions of Catholics who look to her, in spite of the record of her lies and corruption; thus, indeed, Pope Francis may rescind the law barring married priests from ministry.

Worse than Abuse: RC Dogma of Spiritual Life Obtained by Sacraments

Sunday, May 3, 2015, Pope Francis, in the manner of popes who have preceded him, emphasized participation in the sacraments as a way of possessing spiritual life and communion with Christ. He said,

“Jesus is the vine, and through Him ... we are the branches, and through this parable, Jesus wants us to understand the importance of remaining united to him. Grafted by Baptism in Christ, we have freely received from Him the gift of new life; and we are able to remain in vital communion with Christ. We must remain faithful to Baptism, and grow in friendship with the Lord through prayer, listening and docility to His Word, reading the Gospel, participation in the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation.”[12]

This has been the unbroken theme of Papal Rome’s doctrine, insisting that physical rituals are the effective means of grace. The Church of Rome asserts that the sacraments are necessary for salvation, and that they impart sanctifying grace automatically.”[13] Thus the official Church doctrine states:

“The [Roman Catholic] Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are necessary for salvation. ‘Sacramental grace’ is the grace of the Holy Spirit, given by Christ and proper to each sacrament.” [14]

However, in Scripture, before the All Holy God, an individual is saved by God’s grace alone, through the exercise of faith and not from the practice of rituals. Scripture is adamant on this subject. For example, Ephesians 2:8-9 states, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast .” Ephesians 2:7 states that it is in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus that God shows the riches of His grace, “That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” That He alone saves is the whole meaning of divine grace, it is not

through the sacraments of the Roman system.

The Official Vatican News: Pope Francis and the Sin of Abortion

The Vatican news agency has stated the following,

Pope Francis specifically turns his attention to women who have resorted to abortion and 'bear the scar of this agonizing and painful decision' saying the forgiveness of God cannot be denied to one who has repented. 'For this reason' he writes, 'I have decided to concede to all priests for the Jubilee Year the discretion to absolve of the sin of abortion those who have procured it and who, with contrite heart, seek forgiveness for it. '" [15]

This is in compliance with the Roman Church's law that Catholic people seek forgiveness by confessing their sins to a priest. Their law is seen in the following, "One who desires to obtain reconciliation with God and with the Church, must confess to a priest all the unconfessed grave sins he remembers after having carefully examined his conscience." [16]

This system of confession in the ear of a priest is a ritual unknown in Scripture. Nonetheless, Catholics are obliged to confess all sins, no matter how serious! The Catholic Church teaches that she alone possesses the authority and privilege to forgive sins. This is confirmed in the Vatican's own words, "There is no offense, however serious, that the Church cannot forgive. 'There is no one, however wicked and guilty, who may not confidently hope for forgiveness, provided his repentance is honest.'" [17]

It would be difficult to conjure up words of greater arrogance. Pope Francis states, "I have decided to concede to all priests...discretion to absolve of the sin of abortion those who have procured it." It is blasphemy for Pope Francis to grant his priests (human creatures) the "discretion to absolve of the sin of abortion." For a mortal to presume to absolve the sin of others is blasphemy, for that is God's prerogative alone. The Lord God declares, "I, even I, am he that blots out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." [18] God graciously assures contrite sinners that sins are blotted out for God's own name's sake. The pronoun "I" is repeated to make it emphatic that He alone can forgive sins. By grace, sins are forgiven when people believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

In believing on the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ alone, God bestows both the forgiveness of sins, as Scripture states, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," [19] and eternal salvation. This is biblical truth, rather than the Catholic dogma of auricular confession to a priest, which is a soul-deceiving lie! The scandals that have resulted from the confessional and other close encounters within the Catholic system have reached such horrendous proportions that the documented evidence overwhelms a person. Nonetheless, Pope Francis stays the course of the traditional Papal dogma of auricular confession as we see his August 2015 decree. Our hearts ought to grieve in anguish, and our desire increase, to give the pure Gospel to Catholics so that they can come to the Lord Himself and know the freedom and joy it is to be His very own. As our Lord Himself proclaimed, "if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." [20]

The Lord's Test of Character

Our Savior gave us the proper test of character, saying, "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"[21] Pope Francis and his Roman Church are theologically heretical, thus their moral theology leads to grievous corruptions. While the Vatican is the smallest independent state in the world (108 acres), it is one of the greatest states in political intrigue. In the words of Lord Acton, it is, "the fiend skulking behind the Crucifix." [22]

The lesson we learn from what we have documented about Pope Francis concerns the very nature of the Papacy and its modus operandi. The "mystery of iniquity" spoken of in Scripture is not the evil lives of atheists, prostitutes, drunkards and the like, but rather it is the evil of false religion.[23] Christ Jesus has His people, His Church. Christ Jesus is truly the Light of the world; yet in opposition to Him there is one who is "transformed into an angel of light" and has his system and his own false teachers.[24]

We have seen that Pope Francis' teachings, like that of his Roman Church, are that salvation is accomplished through physical sacraments. Looking to physical things to give spiritual life was historically the first lie of Satan, "...in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." [25] Satan offered the fruit as the efficacious means of bestowing good upon Eve. She believed in the inherent usefulness of the physical object to open her eyes to the knowledge of good and evil. In the same way, Pope Francis and his Church present seven physical sacraments as the inherent means of obtaining the grace of the Holy Spirit. Pope Francis' pretense is to present physical symbolic sacraments as the efficacious cause of sanctity and salvation. As we saw, he stated, "Grafted by Baptism in Christ, we have freely received from Him the gift of new life." [26] Pope Francis as we also saw, stated, "I have decided to concede to all priests...discretion to absolve of the sin of abortion those who have procured it." This he stated, precisely because he believes the official teaching of the Roman Church,

"All grave sins not yet confessed, which a careful examination of conscience brings to mind, must be brought to the sacrament of Penance. The confession of serious sins is the only ordinary way to obtain forgiveness." [27]

As we know, this is scripturally a horrendous blasphemy.

Nevertheless, honor and veneration are paid to Pope Francis. The world admires his charm, policy, and success. So great is the darkness and degeneracy of the world! Roman Catholics live their lives under Pope Francis' jurisdiction. Thus, they have a long journey through the sacrifice of the Mass, sacraments, good works, merit, veneration of Mary, and the Saints. Each one is required to partake of the sacraments. Even for all this, yet they will be dispatched for some duration to the fires of a place by tradition known as "purgatory."

Time for True Christians to make a stand

It is a time to be serious. For those of us who really love the Lord and the truth of the Bible, it is time to show where we stand. Each of us is commanded by the Lord not only to contend for the faith, but we are also commanded to separate from those who have already compromised and refuse to repent of their disbelief in the truth of God's own Word. The Lord Jesus Christ's great commandment to give the Gospel is laid on all we who call ourselves Christians. To uphold His Gospel of truth based on His written Word alone is what is set before each of us who takes the name of Christian! The Lord Himself warned us against "other christs." The Apostle Peter warned of "false teachers," and the Apostle Paul warned of "wolves" within the flock. It is not simply that apostates existed in former days, but these warnings are for the year 2015 every bit as much as they were in the time of the Apostles, Peter and Paul.

Conclusion

Self-salvation by Mass, sacraments, good works, accumulated merit, veneration of Mary and the Saints, is a wasteland before the All Holy God. It is thousands of light years away from the conviction of the Holy Spirit that comes through the Scriptures. The advantage of God's written Word is that it is all in black and white, leaving no room to escape. Pope Francis' Church in contrast tries to control religion, morals, politics, and education. The bottom line in Francis' Rome is not the convicting power of the Holy Spirit through the written Word; rather, it is Pope Francis himself and his bishops and priests who make pronouncements on moral questions and preach what is to be believed and applied in moral life. In stark contrast, the final word in Scripture is that "He [The Holy Spirit] will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." [28] The Spirit works powerfully and with evident effects. When we are brought to truly mourn our sin, to groan under the burden of our own corruption, to long for Christ Jesus, and to cry to the Lord God to rescue us from our helpless state, then we know that the Spirit of the living God has moved us. The Lord God's intent was centered and terminated in Jesus Christ's sacrifice; it was both an act of His will, and most profitable for His people. The priceless double empowerment of Christ's perfect sacrifice is proclaimed by the Holy Spirit, "by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." [29]

Christ Jesus' sacrifice was vicarious, in that He substituted Himself in the place of believing sinners and thus satisfied the law on their behalf. So complete was this substitution that His sacrifice alone ruled out all necessity of punishment for them. In becoming the substitute for His people, Christ Jesus took their legal responsibility. In the wonderful words of Scripture, "when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." [30]

The Lord God has promised to be a Father to true believers that they shall be His sons and His daughters. This is the greatest honor possible to man. How ungrateful is it that those to whom this privilege is explained should degrade themselves by attempting to replace Christ Jesus and eternal life with a form of godliness that does not deliver. The Lord Christ Jesus has

promised that, "all that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." [31] Those who come at the call of God are given to Christ, because it is through His blood alone that they can be saved. God, by His Spirit, convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment those who acknowledge their iniquity and their need of salvation. Rather than Pope Francis addressing people in the U.S.A and other nations of the world, it would make sense if he addressed the iniquity of his Roman Church.

What we have documented in this article is with purpose and intent, which the Apostle Paul expressed when he wrote, "the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." [32]

Only in the Lord Jesus Christ, i.e., the Son of the living God is found freedom and eternal life! Believe on Him and Him alone "and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." [33] If the Lord has indeed touched your heart by His sovereign grace, please let us hear from you using the email address; richardmbennett@yahoo.com. Thank you ♦

Richard Bennett of "Berean Beacon"

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[1]

www.nytimes.com/2015/09/24/us/politics/pope-francis-obama-white-house.html?

[2]

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/pope-francis-offers-prayers-muslim-pilgrims-died-hajj/story?id=34022523>

[3] Catechism of the Catholic Church, Para. 841

[4] Exodus 34:14

[5] Isaiah 42:8

[6] B. Whitmore and C. Sennott, Boston Globe Staff, www.boston.com/globe/spotlight/abuse/print3/121402_failings.htm

[7] Ibid., "Colm O'Gorman, director of One In Four, a United Kingdom- and Ireland-based organization that assists sexual abuse victims.

[8] <http://www.mprnews.org/story/2015/08/05/archdiocese-bankruptcy8/28/2015>

[9]

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/15/us/archbishop-nienstedt-and-aide-resign-in-minnesota-over-sex-abuse-scandal.html?_r=0 8/29/15

[10] www.uscatholic.org/glad-you-asked/2009/08/why-are-priests-celibate.

[11] The Guardian report 23 September 2015, "Pope Francis: U.S. Bishops Show 'Courage' Over Catholic Church Sex Scandals Abuse Crisis."

[12]

www.missionsandiego.org/pope-francis-bear-the-fruits-of-membership-in-christ-and-the-church-regina-caeli-message-may-3-2015/

[13] "This is the meaning of the Church's affirmation that the sacraments act *ex opere operato* (literally: "by the very fact of the action's being performed." Catechism, Para. 1128

[14] Catechism, Para. 1129

[15]

www.news.va/en/news/pope-says-holy-year-indulgences-are-an-experience9/1/2015

[16] Catechism, Para. 1493

[17] *Ibid.*, Para. 982

[18] Isaiah 43:25

[19] I John 1:9

[20] John 8:36

[21] Matthew 7:16

[22] Acton, Correspondence, 55; as quoted in Himmelfarb, Lord Acton, p. 151

[23] Matthew 7:15; 24:24-25; II Thessalonians 2:3-12; I Timothy 4:1-2; Acts 20:29; II Peter 2:1

[24] Revelation 2:9; 2 Peter 2:1

[25] Genesis 3:5

[26]

www.missionsandiego.org/pope-francis-bear-the-fruits-of-membership-in-christ-and-the-church-regina-caeli-message-may-3-2015/ (Bolding is not in the original.)

[27] Catechism, Para. 1456

[28] John 16:8

[29] Hebrews 10:10

[30] Galatians 4:4-5

[31] John 6:37

[32] I Corinthians 15: 1-4

[33] Ephesians 5:11"/>