

The God of Rome Eaten by a Rat

Charles Chiniquy

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By Rev. Charles Chiniquy

Forward by the Webmaster

I was raised a Roman Catholic. I attended an eight-year Catholic elementary school in the southeast side of Chicago, St. Forian's parochial school. I sincerely believed in the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, meaning when the Catholic priest consecrates the wafer, it literally becomes the body of the Lord Jesus Christ! I heard many horror stories from my teachers, the Catholic Sisters, who told me what happened to people who received the Holy Eucharist unworthily. One man was immediately killed by God and became a black burnt cinder! One woman took the wafer back to her home, cut it with a knife, and immediately blood poured out of it and filled up her house with blood until she called a priest who came and made it stop! Or so the stories go. This is what I was indoctrinated with by the Catholic nuns who taught me. I didn't question it then. Why should I? I was only 9 or 10 years old then. Of course I don't believe those stories today.

I don't mean to offend any Catholics with this article. My aim is to enlighten them. I believe it's a true account of an actual occurrence. It was written by a former Roman Catholic priest who was a friend of Abraham Lincoln! And I think it's very amusing! My wife laughed and laughed! She's from the Philippines and was raised a Catholic too, but not nearly as much as me because she went to public elementary school. This surprised me because I think the Philippines is more Catholic than the USA. But where I lived in Chicago is very Catholic consisting of Polish and Irish ancestry.

Author's bio:

Charles P. Chiniquy (30 July 1809 – 16 January 1899), was a former Roman Catholic priest from Quebec Canada who established the settlement of St. Anne Illinois for French immigrants. St. Anne is only 33 miles (53 km) from where I was raised in Chicago. After reading Charles Chiniquy's book, [Fifty Years](#)

[in the Church of Rome](#), he has become my role model! This Catholic priest stood up to the power of Rome, and though he was excommunicated, his parishioners loved him so much they didn't mind getting excommunicated with him!

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TO His Eminence the Cardinal

As you are the highest dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church on this Continent of America, I have thought it was my duty to dedicate to you this new edition of Papal Idolatry, with the hope that, by the mercy of God, its perusal would help to enlighten your mind, and change your heart.

Truly yours,

C. Chiniy St. Anne, Kankakee Co., Ill., January 1890.

HAS GOD given us ears to hear, eyes to see, and intelligence to understand? The Pope says no! But the Son of God says: Yes. One of the most severe rebukes of our Saviour to His disciples was for their not paying a sufficient attention to what their eyes had seen, their ears heard and their intelligence perceived. "Perceive ye not, neither understand? Have ye your heart yet hardened? Having eyes, see ye not; having ears, hear ye not? and do not ye remember?" – (Mark 8:17, 18.)

This solemn appeal of our Saviour to our common sense is the most complete demolition of the whole fabric of Rome. The day that a man ceases to believe that God would give us our senses and our intelligence to ruin and deceive us, but that they were given to guide us, he is lost to the Church of Rome. The Pope knows it; hence the innumerable encyclicals, laws and regulations by which the Roman Catholics are warned not to trust the testimony of their ears, eyes or intelligence.

"Shut your eyes," says the Pope to his priests and people; "I will keep mine opened, and I will see for you. Shut your ears for it is most dangerous for you to hear what is said in the world, I will keep my ears opened, and will tell you what you must know. Remember, that to trust your own intelligence, in the research of truth and the knowledge of the Word of God, is sure perdition. If you want to know anything, come to me; I am the only sure and infallible fountain of truth," says the Pope.

And this stupendous imposture is accepted by the people and the priests of Rome with a mysterious facility, and retained with a most desolating tenacity.

It is to them what the iron ring is to the nose of the ox, when a rope is once tied to it. The poor animal loses its self-control; its natural strength and energies will avail it nothing; it must go left or right, at the will of the one who holds the end of the rope.

Reader, please have no contempt for the unfortunate priests and people of Rome, but pity them when you see them walking in the ways into which

intelligent beings ought not to make a step. They cannot help it. The ring of the ox is at their nose, and the Pope holds the end of the rope.

Had it not been for that ring, I would not have been long at the feet of the WAFER-GOD of Rome. Let me tell one of the shining rays of truth, which were evidently sent by our merciful God, with a mighty power to open my eyes. But I could not follow it; the iron ring was at my nose, and the Pope was holding the end of the rope.

This was after I had been put at the head of the magnificent parish of Beauport, in the spring of 1838. There was living at "La Jeune Lorette" an old retired priest, who was blind. He was born in France, where he had been condemned to death, under the Reign of Terror. Escaped from the guillotine, he had fled to Canada, where the Bishop of Quebec had put him in the elevated post of Chaplain of the Ursuline Nunnery. He had a fine voice, was a good musician, and had some pretensions to the title of poet. Having composed a good number of Church hymns, he had been called "Pere Cantique;" but his real name was "Pere Daule." His faith and piety were of the most exalted character among the Roman Catholics; though this did not prevent him from being one of the most amiable and jovial men I ever saw. But his blue eyes, sweet as the eyes of the dove; his fine yellow hair, falling on his shoulders as a golden fleece; his white rosy cheeks and his constantly smiling lips had been too much for the tender hearts of the good nuns. It was not a secret that "Pere Cantique," when young, had made several interesting conquests when in the monastery. There was no wonder at that. Indeed, how could that young and inexperienced butterfly escape damaging his golden wings at the numberless burning lamps of the fair virgins? But the mantle of charity had been put on the wounds which the old warrior had received on that formidable battle-field, from which even the Davids, Samsons, Solomons and many others had escaped only after being mortally wounded.

To help the poor blind priest, the curates around Quebec used to keep him, by turns, in their parsonages, and give him the care and marks of respect due to his old age. After the Rev. Mr. Roy, curate of Charlesbourg, had kept him five or six weeks, I had taken him to my parsonage. It was in the month of May – a month entirely consecrated to the worship of the Virgin Mary, to whom Father Daule was a most devoted priest. He was really inexhaustible, when trying to prove to us how Mary was the surest, the only foundation of the hope and salvation of sinners; how she was constantly appeasing the just wrath of her Son Jesus, who, were it not for his love and respect to her, would have long since crushed us down.

The Councils of Rome have forbidden the blind priests to say their mass; but on account of his high piety, he had got from the Pope the privilege of celebrating the short mass of the Virgin, which he knew perfectly by heart. One morning when the good old priest was at the altar saying his mass, and I was in the vestry hearing the confession of the people, the young servant boy came to me in haste, and said, "Father Daule calls you; please come quick."

Fearing something wrong had happened to my old friend, I lost no time and ran to him. I found him nervously tapping the altar with his two hands, as in an anxious search for some very precious thing. When very near to him, I said,

"What do you want?" He answered with a shriek of distress, "The good god has disappeared from the altar... He is lost! J'ai perdu le Bon Dieu... Il est disparu de dessus l'autel!" (French for, "I lost the good god. He disappeared from the altar.")

Hoping that he was mistaken and that he had only thrown away the good god (Le Bon Dieu) on the floor by some accident, I looked on the altar – at his feet – everywhere I could suspect that the good god might have been moved away by some mistake of the hand. But the most minute search was of no avail; the good god could not be found. I really felt stunned. At first, remembering the thousand miracles I had read about the disappearance, marvelous changes of form of the wafer-god, it came to my mind that we were in the presence of some great miracle, and that my eyes were to see some of those great marvels of which the books of the Church of Rome are filled. But I had soon to change my mind, when a thought flashed through my memory which chilled the blood in my veins.

The church of Beauport was inhabited by a multitude of the boldest and most insolent rats I had ever seen. Many times, when saying my mass, I had seen the ugly nose of several of them, who, undoubtedly attracted by the smell of the fresh wafer, wanted to make their breakfast with the body, blood, soul and divinity of my poor Roman Catholic Christ. But, as I was constantly in motion, or praying with a loud voice, the rats had invariably been frightened, and fled away into their secret quarters. I felt terror-struck by the thought that the good god (Le Bon Dieu) had been taken away and eaten by the rats.

Father Daule so sincerely believed what all the priests of Rome are bound to believe – that he had the power to turn the wafer into God – that, after he had pronounced the words by which the great marvel was wrought, he used to pass from five to fifteen minutes in silent adoration. He was then as motionless as a marble statue, and his feelings were so strong that often torrents of tears used to flow from his eyes to his cheeks. Leaning my head towards the distressed old priest, I said to him have you not remained, as you are used, a long time motionless, in adoring the good god after the consecration?"

He quickly answered, "Yes! But what has this to do with the loss of the good god?"

I replied in a low voice, but with a real accent of distress and awe, "Some rats have dragged and eaten the good god!!!"

"What do you say?" replied Father Daule: "the good god carried away and eaten by rats?"

"Yes," I replied, "I have not the least doubt about it."

"My God! My God! What a dreadful calamity upon me!" enjoined the old man; and raising his hands and his eyes to heaven, he cried out again, "My God! My God! Why have you not taken away my life, before such a misfortune could fall upon me?"

He could not speak any longer; his voice was choked by his sobs.

At first, I did not know what to say; a thousand thoughts, some very grave, some exceedingly ludicrous, crossed my mind more rapidly than I can say them. I stood there as nailed to the floor, by the side of the old priest, who was weeping as a child, till he asked me, with a voice broken by his sobs, "What must do, now?"

I answered him, "The Church has foreseen occurrences of this kind, and provided for them the remedy. The only thing you have to do is to get a new wafer, consecrate it, and continue your mass, as if nothing strange had occurred. I will go and get you, just now, a new bread."

I went without losing a moment, to the vestry, got and brought a new wafer which he consecrated and turned into a new god, and finished his mass as I had told him. After it was over, I took the disconsolate old priest by the hand to my parsonage, for breakfast. But all along the way he rent the air with his cries of distress. He would hardly taste anything, for his soul was really drowned in a sea of disconsolation. I vainly tried to calm his feelings, by telling him that there was no fault of his; that this strange and sad occurrence was not the first of that kind; that it had been calmly foreseen by the Church, which has told us what to do in these circumstances; that there was no neglect, no fault, no offense against God or man on his part.

But as he would not pay the least attention to what I said, I felt the only thing I had to do was to remain silent and respect his grief by letting him unburden his heart by his lamentations and tears. I hoped that his good common sense would help him to overcome his feelings, but I was mistaken; his lamentations were as long as those of Jeremiah, and the expressions of his grief as bitter.

At last, I lost patience, and said: "My dear Father Daule, allow me to tell you, respectfully, that it is quite time to stop those lamentations and tears. Our great and just God cannot like such an excess of sorrow and regret about a thing which was only and entirely under the control of His power and eternal wisdom."

"What do you say there?" replied the old priest, with a vivacity which resembled anger.

"I say that as it was not in your power to foresee or avoid that occurrence, you have not the least reason to act and speak as you do. Let us keep our regrets and our tears for our sins; we have both committed many, and we cannot weep for them too much. But there is no sin here; and there must be some reasonable limits to our sorrow. If anybody had to weep and regret without measure what has happened, it would be Christ. For he alone could foresee that event, and He alone could prevent it. Had it been His will to oppose this sad and mysterious fact, it was in His, not in our power, to prevent it. He alone has suffered from it, because it was His will to suffer it."

"Mr. Chiniquy," he replied, "you are quite a young man; and I see you have the want of attention and experience which are too often seen among young priests. You do not pay a sufficient attention to the awful calamity which has just occurred in your Church. If you had more faith and piety, you would weep with me, instead of laughing at my grief. How can you speak so lightly of a thing which makes the angels of God weep? Our dear Saviour dragged and eaten by rats! Oh! great God! does not this surpass the humiliation and horrors of Calvary?"

"My dear Father Daule," I replied, "allow me respectfully to tell you that I understand, as well as you do, the nature of the deplorable event of this morning. I would have given my blood to prevent it. But let us look at the fact in its proper light; it is not a moral action for us; it did not depend on our will more than the spots on the sun. The only one who is accountable for that fact is our God! For, again I say, that He was the only one who could see and prevent it. And to give you, plainly, my own mind, I tell you here, that if I were God Almighty, and a miserable rat would come and try to eat me, I would strike it dead before it could touch me."

There is no need of confessing it here; every one who reads these lines, and pays attention to this conversation, will understand that my former so robust faith in my priestly power of changing the wafer into my god had melted away and evaporated from my mind, if not entirely, at least to a great extent.

Great and new lights had flashed through my soul in that hour. Evidently my merciful God wanted to open my eyes to the awful absurdities and impieties of a religion whose God could be dragged and eaten by rats. Had I been faithful to the saving lights which were in me then, I was saved in that very hour: and before the end of that day, I would have broken the shameful chains by which the Pope had tied my neck to his idol of bread. In that hour, it seemed to me evident that the dogma of Transubstantiation was a most monstrous imposture, and my priesthood an insult to God and man.

My intelligence said to me, with a thundering voice, "Do not remain any longer the priest of a god whom you make every day, and whom the rats can eat."

Though blind, Father Daule understood well, by the stern accents of my voice, that my faith in that god whom he had created that morning, and whom the rats had eaten, had been seriously modified, if not entirely crumbled down. He remained silent for some time; after which he invited me to sit by him. He then spoke to me with a pathos and authority which my youth and his old age alone could justify. He gave me the most awful rebuke I ever had; he really opened on my poor wavering intelligence, soul and heart all the cataracts of heaven. He overwhelmed me with a deluge of holy Fathers, Councils and Infallible Popes, who, he assured me, had believed and preached, before the whole world, in all ages, the dogma of Transubstantiation.

If I had paid attention to the voice of my intelligence, and accepted the lights which my merciful God was giving me, I could have easily smashed the arguments of the old priest. But what was human intelligence to do in the Church of Rome? What could my intelligence say? I was forbidden to hear it.

What was the weight of my poor isolated intelligence when put in the balance against so many learned, holy, infallible intelligences? Alas! I was not aware then that the weight of the intelligence of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost was on my side; and that, weighted against the intelligence of the Popes, they were greater than all the worlds against a grain of sand.

One hour after, shedding tears of regret, I was at the feet of Father Daule, in the confessional-box, confessing the great sin I had committed by doubting, for a moment, of the power of the priest to change the wafer into God.

The old priest, whose voice had been like a lion's voice, when speaking to the unbelieving curate of Beauport, had become sweet as the voice of a lamb, when he had me at his feet confessing my unbelief. He gave me my pardon. For my penance, he forbade me ever to say a word on the sad end of the god he had created that morning; because, said he, "This would destroy the faith of the most sincere Roman Catholics." For the other part of the penance, I had to go on my knees every day, during nine days, before the fourteen images of the way of the cross, and say a penitential psalm before every picture: which I did. But the sixth day, the skin of my knees was pierced, and the blood was flowing freely. I suffered real torture every time I knelt down and at every step I made. But it seemed to me that these terrible tortures were nothing compared to my great iniquity.

I had refused for a moment, to believe that a man can create his god with a wafer! and I had thought that a Church which adores a god eaten by rats must be an idolatrous Church!