

[A Romish Bishop's Testimony – by Charles Chiniquy](#)

This is the continuation from the previous chapter of [The God of Rome Eaten by a Rat](#)

The *Kankakee Times* publishes the following communication from a member of the Illinois bar. Though perhaps containing nothing new or strange to those who have studied the matter, **the statement made may convince such Protestants as imagine the Church of Rome to be a harmless institution, of their great error.** The principles of the Papal hierarchy remain unchanged. The wearer of the Tiara (the Pope) would as readily depose for simple heresy any temporal ruler of today, as his predecessor, six centuries ago, deposed and deprived of his estates Count Richmond of Toulouse, for a like crime. Religious liberty is both hated and dreaded by a Church which claims the right of enforcing its spiritual decrees by the assistance of the secular arm.

Letter from Stephen Moore to the publisher of the Kankakee Times

In one of your past issues you told your readers that the Rev. Mr. Chiniquy had gained the long and formidable suit instituted by the Roman Catholic Bishop to dispossess him and his people of their church property. But you have not yet given any particulars about the startling revelations the bishop had to make before the Court, in reference to the still existing laws of the Church of Rome against those whom they call heretics. Nothing, however, is more important for every one than to know precisely what those laws are.

As I was present when the Roman Catholic Bishop Foley of Chicago, was ordered to read in Latin and translate into English those laws, I have kept a correct copy of them, and I send it to you with a request to publish it.

The Rev. Mr. Chiniquy presented the works of St. Thomas and St. Ligouri to the Bishop, requesting him to say, under oath, if those works were or were not among the highest theological authorities in the Church of Rome all over the world. After long and serious opposition on the part of the Bishop to answer, the Court having said he (the Bishop) was bound to answer, the Bishop confessed that those works were looked upon as among the highest authorities, and that they are taught and learned in all the colleges and universities of the Church of Rome as standard works.

Then the Bishop was requested to read in Latin and translate into English the following laws and fundamental principles of action against the heretics, as explained by St. Thomas and Ligouri:

[1] "An excommunicated man is deprived of all civil communication with the faithful, in such a way that, if he is not tolerated, they can have no communication with him, as it is in the following verse: 'It is forbidden to kiss him, pray with him, salute him, to eat or do any business with him.'" – St. Ligouri, vol. 9, page 162.

[2] "Though heretics must not be tolerated because they deserve it, we must bear with them till, by a second admonition, they may be brought back to the faith of the Church. But those who, after a second admonition, remain obstinate in their errors, must not only be excommunicated, **but they must be delivered to the secular powers to be exterminated.**"

[3] "Though the heretics who repent must always be accepted to penance as often as they have fallen, they must not in consequence of that, always be permitted to enjoy the benefits of this life... When they fall again they are admitted to repent, ...but the sentence of death must not be removed." – St. Thomas, vol. 4, page 64.

[4] "When a man is excommunicated for his apostasy, it follows from that very fact, that all those who are his subjects are released from the oath of allegiance by which they are bound to obey him." – St. Thomas, vol. 4, page 94.

The next document of the Church of Rome brought before the Court was the act of the Council of Lateran, A. D. 1215:

"We excommunicate and anathematize every heresy that exalts itself against the holy, orthodox and Catholic faith, condemning all heretics, by whatever name they may be known; for though their faces differ they are tied together by their tails. Such as are condemned **are to be delivered over to the existing secular powers**, to receive due punishment. If laymen their goods must be confiscated: If priests, they shall be first degraded from their respective order, and their property applied to the use of the church in which they have officiated. Secular powers of all ranks and degrees are to be warned, induced, and if necessary, compelled by ecclesiastical censure, to swear that they will exert themselves to the utmost in the defense of the faith and extirpate all heretics denounced by the Church who shall be found in their territories. And whenever any person shall assume government, whether it be spiritual or temporal, he shall be bound to abide by this decree.

"If any temporal lord, having been admonished and required by the Church, shall neglect to clear his territory of heretical depravity, the Metropolitan and the Bishops of the province shall unite in excommunicating him. Should he remain contumacious (obstinately disobedient or rebellious;) a whole year, the fact shall be signified to the Supreme Pontiff, who will declare his vassals released from their allegiance from that time and will bestow his territory on Catholics, to be occupied by them, on the condition of exterminating the heretics and preserving the said territory in the faith. "Catholics who shall assume the cross for the extermination of heretics shall enjoy the same indulgence and be protected by the same privileges as are granted to those who go to the help of the Holy Land. We decree further, that all who may have dealings with heretics, and especially those who receive, defend or encourage them, shall be excommunicated. He shall not be eligible to any public office. He shall not be admitted as a witness. He shall neither have the power to bequeath his property by will nor to succeed to any inheritance. He shall not bring any action against any person, but anyone can

bring action against him. Should he be a judge, his decision shall have no force, nor shall any cause he brought before him. Should he be an advocate, he shall not be allowed to plead. Should he be a lawyer, no instruments made by him shall be held valid, but shall be condemned with their author."

The Roman Catholic Bishop swore that these laws had never been repealed, and of course they were still the laws of his Church. He had to swear that every year he was bound under pain of eternal damnation, to say in the presence of God, and to read in his Breviarium (his prayer-book) that "God Himself had inspired" what St. Thomas had written about the manner in which the heretics shall be treated by the Roman Catholics.

I will abstain from making any remarks on these startling revelations of that Roman Catholic high authority. But I think it is the duty of every citizen to know what the Roman Catholic bishops and priests understand by liberty of conscience. The Roman Catholics are as interested as the Protestants to know precisely what the teachings of their Church are on that subject of liberty of conscience, and hear the exact truth, as coming from such high authority that there is no room left for any doubt.

Stephen Moore, Attorney.