

THE TRINITY REVIEW

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare [are] not fleshly but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. And they will be ready to punish all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. (2 Corinthians 10:3-6)

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The Roman Catholic Socialist Agenda

by Richard Bennett

At the present time it is becoming more apparent that the Roman Catholic Church-State is first and foremost a socialist system. For example on February 10, 2012, Dr. Paul A. Rahe, a practicing Roman Catholic, vehemently criticized its socialist agenda in a widely read article entitled "American Catholicism's Pact with the Devil." He stated,

In my lifetime, to my increasing regret, the Roman Catholic Church in the United States has lost much of its moral authority. It has done so largely because it has subordinated its teaching of Catholic moral doctrine to its ambitions regarding an expansion of the administrative entitlements state. In 1973, when the Supreme Court made its decision in *Roe v. Wade*, had the bishops, priests, and nuns screamed bloody murder and declared war, as they have recently done, the decision would have been reversed. Instead, under the leadership of Joseph Bernardin, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Chicago, they asserted that the social teaching of the Church was a "seamless garment," and they treated abortion as one concern among many.¹

Rahe is exactly right in his estimation that the Roman Catholic Church-State has "subordinated its teaching of Catholic moral doctrine to its ambitions regarding an expansion of the administrative entitlements state." However, Cardinal Bernardin was acting in accord with the major thrust of the Vatican. The Roman Catholic agenda has not changed since Cardinal Bernardin's time. Indeed the Roman Catholic Church-State subordinates not only its moral teaching but also the very Gospel of grace to its social teaching. Further, official Vatican dogma in fact declares that Catholic social doctrine is a valid instrument of evangelization,

*The Church's social doctrine "is itself a valid instrument of evangelization" and is born of the always new meeting of the Gospel message and social life. Understood in this way, this social doctrine is a distinctive way for the Church to carry out her ministry of the Word and her prophetic role.... This is not a marginal interest or activity, or one that is tacked on to the Church's mission, rather it is at the very heart of the Church's ministry of service: with her social doctrine the Church "proclaims God and his mystery of salvation in Christ to every human being, and for that very reason reveals man to himself."*²

Purpose of Vatican's Social Doctrine

The purpose of the Vatican's social doctrine is officially stated, "*With her social doctrine, the Church aims 'at helping man on the path of salvation.'*" This is her primary and sole purpose.³ Thus the Vatican appears to be clear-cut in defining the intent of its social doctrine. It focuses on good social works that people do. It assumes that these social deeds proclaim "God and his mystery of salvation in Christ." However, salvation in Christ is totally separate from human deeds, as it is exclusively by the power of His name. As the Apostle Peter proclaimed, "neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (*Acts 4:12*). Likewise the Apostle Paul proclaimed, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any

² "Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church," Para. 67, www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html. 2/25/2012. Italics indicates emphasis added.

³ "Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church," Para 69.

¹ <http://ricochet.com/main-feed/American-Catholicism-s-Pact-With-the-Devil>, 2/15/2012.

man should boast" (*Ephesians* 2:8-9). Every converted sinner is a sinner saved by grace alone. The grace that saves them is the free undeserved favor of God. The Lord God saves sinners, not through doing social good deeds, but through faith alone in the Lord Christ Jesus alone. Both grace and believing faith in Jesus Christ alone are gifts of God. This true Gospel is given to mankind by divine revelation in Scripture. It stands in total contrast to the official dogma of the Vatican that "The Church's social doctrine is itself a valid instrument of evangelization." Rome's latest scheme to evangelize starts as always with the attempt to replace the true Gospel with its counterfeit gospel. In an age when Marxism, statism, and socialism are on the rise, the Roman Catholic Church's social doctrine, which is socialist to the core, has been added to its false gospel. Thus once again the Roman Catholic Church-State is able to blend itself in with the prevalent trends in the society it wishes to draw into itself.

Foundation of Catholic Social Doctrine

The Roman Catholic Church states that its "primary and sole mission" is to "help men on the path to salvation." Starting with a false gospel the Vatican then teaches a social doctrine based on standard anti-Biblical Catholic dogma. For example, it states,

*In fact, the roots of human rights are to be found in the dignity that belongs to each human being. This dignity, inherent in human life and equal in every person, is perceived and understood first of all by reason. The natural foundation of rights appears all the more solid when, in light of the supernatural, it is considered that human dignity, after having been given by God and having been profoundly wounded by sin, was taken on and redeemed by Jesus Christ in his incarnation, death and resurrection.*⁴

By speaking of "human dignity" having been "wounded by sin" and "redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ in His incarnation, death and resurrection," the Roman Catholic Church has simply retrofitted its old dogma that "It [original sin] is a deprivation of original holiness and justice, but human nature has not been totally corrupted..."⁵ With this new tool – "human dignity... wounded by sin...redeemed..." – the Vatican is now able to accommodate the socialist-statist trends so prevalent in modern secular thinking.

However, the Fall of man from grace was total. Since then, man is born spiritually "dead in trespasses and sins," as *Ephesians* 2:1 states. The Fall corrupted every aspect of who man is, including his ability to reason.

⁴www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html# "The Value of Human Rights," Para 153, 2/25/12.

⁵ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994), Para. 405.

Therefore, the Bible does not talk about human dignity but rather about man's sin nature. The sin of Adam brought spiritual death to the whole human race. Consequently before Holy God, all men are born possessed of inherent pride, selfishness, idolatry, hostility to God and the truth of His Word. It is not surprising, therefore, to see that the Roman Catholic Church states, "This dignity, inherent in human life and equal in every person, is perceived and understood first of all by reason." Their statement is simply a demonstration of corrupted reasoning. Rather what is demonstrably "inherent in human life and equal in every person" is this: every one of us is born spiritually dead. The sin nature with which every individual is born shows itself by the personal sins each commits.⁶

The Roman Catholic teaching is contradictory to Scripture because the Bible portrays unregenerate human beings as dead in trespasses and sins, thus before God lacking all dignity. Sinners are cut off from God, the Fountain of life, and therefore spiritually dead, even as a condemned criminal is said to be a dead man. This is the reason we need to be in right standing before God on the terms He prescribes. We have a spiritual debt of infinite proportions that we are unable to repay. However, by His grace alone we can be turned to Him in faith alone for the salvation that He alone gives. Then by the conviction of the Holy Spirit, based on Christ's death and resurrection, we believe on Him alone. As the Scripture states, "you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (*Ephesians* 2:1). All the vain glory of speaking about "human dignity" ought to alert one to the fact that the Papacy is promoting its social works agenda with an ulterior motive beyond the proffered "helping man to salvation." For centuries the Vatican's false gospel has deceived souls to their destruction. The new agenda is simply the latest device added to their false gospel. It cannot save from destruction. It cannot deliver life in Jesus Christ.

Human Rights as Defined by Roman Catholic Social Dogma

Having stated that the roots of human rights are in human dignity, the Vatican defines what it means by human rights, "In Catholic teaching, human rights include not only civil and political rights but also economic rights...all people have a right to life, food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, education, and employment."⁷ However, the Bible does not speak in terms of rights. From cover to cover the words "rights"

⁶ "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." *Romans* 3:23.

⁷ US Bishops 1995 Pastoral Letter, "Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy," Section 17.
http://www.usccb.org/upload/economic_justice_for_all.pdf
2/17/2012.

and “privileges” are never found in the Bible. The Bible speaks rather about what is fitting for man as when it states, “to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word” (*Isaiah* 66:2). Thus it is that God looks to the one who recognizes himself to be poor in spirit, whose heart is contrite for sin and who trembles at His Word. By God’s grace, men can repent of the arrogance of standing on one’s so-called rights and accept the truth of His Word that states “There is none righteous, no, not one” (*Romans* 13:10).

Vatican Aligns with Socialist Theories of Government

Roman Catholic social doctrine continues to be honed for accumulating power to the Papacy. In its claimed status of spiritual moral authority, the Roman Catholic Church-State makes known its opinion regarding the duties of civil government when it states,

Society as a whole, acting through public and private institutions, has the moral responsibility to enhance human dignity and protect human rights. In addition to the clear responsibility of private institutions, government has an essential responsibility in this area [because]...Human rights are the minimum conditions for life in community. In Catholic teaching, human rights include not only civil and political rights but also economic rights. As Pope John XXIII declared, “all people have a right to life, food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, education, and employment.”⁸

Thus the Roman Catholic Church teaches a role for civil government that is beyond the purpose designated to it by Scripture. The civil government is meant to constrain evil behavior.⁹ Thus people are to obey their civil government in order to avoid anarchy and chaos. It is the individual’s responsibility to provide food, clothing, shelter, education, medical care, *etc.*, for his own family. As Scripture states, “if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel” (*1 Timothy* 5:8). The Papal Church contradicts this by asserting that individuals have rather a “right” to such things. Moreover, the Vatican insists emphatically that private institutions and civil governments have an essential duty to provide such things. The Papal

⁸ “Economic Justice for All”, Para 18

<http://www.osjspm.org/document.doc?id=94>.

⁹ *Romans* 13:3, 4: “For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.”

Church teaches a socialist policy regarding the duties of civil governments. In so doing, the Vatican hopes to set itself up as the moral watchdog for society, both within nations and internationally.

Vatican Promotes “the Common Good” to Attain a Collectivist State

The concept of “the common good” is an integral part of the Roman Catholic social doctrine. They define “the common good” as follows,

*The common good does not consist in the simple sum of the particular goods of each subject of a social entity. Belonging to everyone and to each person, it is and remains ‘common,’ because it is indivisible and because only together is it possible to attain it, increase it and safeguard its effectiveness.... The common good, in fact, can be understood as the social and community dimension of the moral good.*¹⁰

Implicit in this statement is the idea that all property, wealth and goods are never fully privately owned. Elsewhere it is officially stated that private property and all goods are always subject to regulation so that “the common good” will be the foremost beneficiary.¹¹ Further, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* declares,

It is the role of the state to defend and promote the common good of civil society. The common good of the whole human family calls for an organization of society on the international level.¹²

By aligning itself with current socialist trends, the Vatican hopes to gain an increasing position of relevance in secular political, economic, and social circles. Their ambition focuses on gaining power at every level but particularly at the international level. Pope Paul VI in a section of his encyclical entitled, “Toward an Effective World Authority,” proclaimed,

This international collaboration on a worldwide scale requires institutions that will prepare, coordinate, and direct it until finally there is established an order of justice which is universally recognized....¹³

Thus Roman Catholic social doctrine aims at a Marxist type collectivism in which each person has an equal portion of “the common good” based on his claimed human dignity and rights. Such a concept teaches people to depend on civil government rather than taking responsibility for their own lives and choices, as the Bible requires. Nowhere does the Bible call on believers to depend on government for their livelihood

¹⁰ Compendium, Section 164.

¹¹ Compendium, Sections 177, 178.

¹² *Catechism*, Para 1927.

¹³ Paul VI, “*Populorum Progressio*” (1967), Para. 78.

but rather they are to look to God who will provide for His own.¹⁴ If however, the Bible can be made to be irrelevant¹⁵ and the Gospel perverted, then the Roman Catholic Church will once again have an opportunity to be the moral authority internationally that it claims to be in primarily secular nations.

The Modus Operandi of the Vatican Socialist System

The Roman Church seeks to implement her socialist ideas by using her power as a religious system working through her own status as a civil state. As a religious system, she is able to command a "fifth column" within many nations. By her influence as a civil power, Papal Rome is also able to influence substantially civil rulers and civil policy in many nations and international bodies. The Church of Rome has 179 legal agreements with nations across the world. These "concordats," as they are called, guarantee that the Church has the right to define religion and worship for Catholics within that sovereign nation. They also secure for the Vatican the right to define doctrine, establish Roman Catholic education, and negotiate laws regarding property, appointing bishops, and Roman Catholic laws of marriage and annulments. Thus the Vatican is able to make use of civil governments to implement its own agenda.

Roman Catholics are Obligated to Promote the Socialist System

Dr. Rahe also noted that for so long he has heard no moral teaching from his priest when he goes to church but rather he hears socialism. And he is right. The central authority of the Roman Catholic Church-State has declared that all Catholics are to be taught this social doctrine and they are to promote it everywhere in every situation both personal and political.¹⁶ This, says the Roman Catholic Church, is the duty of the lay Catholics in particular; hence, they must be taught it. Since the social doctrine has been designated as part of the theology of the Roman Catholic Church, it must be believed on pain of excommunication.

Decidedly, the Vatican has on its agenda for the United States a change from constitutionalism to socialism. This the US Bishops made clear in 1995 when they stated,

¹⁴ *Matthew* 6:31-32 "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? ... for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." *Hebrews* 13:5-7 "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

¹⁵ This agenda has been taught ubiquitously in Western colleges and universities at least since the 1960s.

¹⁶ Compendium, Section 80.

In the pastoral letter we suggest that the time has come for a "New American Experiment"—to implement economic rights, to broaden the sharing of economic power, and to make economic decisions more accountable to the common good. This new experiment can create new structures of economic partnership and participation within firms at the regional level, for the whole nation, and across borders.¹⁷

God in His providence saved Europe and England during the Reformation of the sixteenth century by the spread of the Gospel and the proliferation of the Bible. In the seventeenth century thousands of Bible believers under threat of persecution from the Papacy's murderous Inquisition fled to the new land of America where they had freedom to worship God according to their belief and to set up civil government greatly influenced by the Bible. In our own day if the authority of the Bible and the Gospel of Jesus Christ can be removed from the Western world, then the Roman Catholic Church-State, which is both a religion and a nation state, will have an opportunity to again enslave the West.

Conclusion

The Lord requires His people to work and to depend increasingly on Him and not on their own might in every area of their lives. It is from the Biblical perspective that we must view the machinations of the Roman Catholic social teaching and practice. The Roman Catholic Church-State formally went apostate at the Council of Trent in 1546 when they denied the Gospel.¹⁸ Nonetheless the Gospel remains "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth...for therein is the righteousness of God revealed" (*Romans* 1:16). And the central message of the Gospel remains unaltered, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (*John* 6:29). The Lord God speaks to us again through His written Word, "Oh that my people had hearkened unto me...and had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries" (*Psalms* 81:13-14). He will give us victory over the enemies of the Gospel and Christian life as we listen to Him and walk in His ways. Our Lord God delights in our serving Him. In this we are utterly blessed as we hold to Him and His Biblical truth. And also we see the Lord's fruitfulness and providence in our days, to the praise of the glory of His name!

¹⁷ "Economic Justice for All," Para 21.

¹⁸ "If anyone shall say that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this confidence alone by which we are justified: let him be anathema [cursed]." Henry Denzinger, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma* (Herder Book Co., 1957) #822, Canon 12.