



Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem ©
* Knights of Malta *

Chancellor's Update

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Liberalism

In 1886 a priest in Spain published a book under the title Liberalism Is a Sin. Not long after in 1899 Conde B. Pallen, Ph.D., LL.D, translated the book and adapted it to contemporary America. How did Liberalism affect the America of his day? (What Is Liberalism?, San Diego Catholics for Better Libraries, 1963)

That we may know our danger we must appreciate the possible shapes in which it may come. Here is just the difficulty; the uniform of the enemy is so various, changeable, sometimes even of our own colors, that if we rely upon the outward semblance alone we shall be more often deceived than certain of his identity. Alongside Catholics and doctrinal Protestants, there are Christians who hold a loose, amorphous, belief in Christ, either as God redeeming the world or even as a great ethical teacher, not God Himself sent by God. This places each one within the compass of his own standard of orthodoxy. Outside of these various bodies of loosely professed Christians, stands a still larger mass of our population who are either absolutely indifferent to Christianity as a creed or positively reject it. In other words we have here to reckon with a body, to all practical purposes, infidel.

Out of these conditions springs this monster of our times, Liberalism.

Rejecting the principle of authority in religion ramifies in many directions, striking root into our domestic, civil, and political life, whose vigor and health depend upon the nourishing and sustaining power of religion. For religion is the bond which unites us to God, the source and end of all goods, and Infidelity severs the bond which binds men to God, and seeks to build human society on foundations of man's absolute independence. Hence we find Liberalism laying down as the basis of its propaganda these principles:

1. The absolute sovereignty of the individual in his entire independence of God and God's authority.
2. The absolute sovereignty of society in its entire independence of everything, which does not proceed from itself.
3. Absolute civil sovereignty in the implied right of the people to make their own laws in entire independence and utter disregard of any other criterion than the popular will expressed at the polls and in parliamentary majorities.
4. Absolute freedom of thought in politics, morals, or in religion. The unrestrained liberty of the press.

In the order of ideas Rationalism promotes freedom of worship, the supremacy of the State, secular education and marriage sanctioned and legitimized by the State alone. Secularization denies religion any active intervention in the concerns of public and of private life. In secularized education of public schools rationalism propagates itself in the hearts of the future citizen and the future parent. In the speech and intercourse of social life it is constantly asserting itself with growing reiteration. It ever acts in the same direction, and it will ever be found stigmatizing the most ardent defenders of the Faith, as reactionaries, clericals, etc. Wherever found, Liberalism in its practical action is ever a systematic warfare against the Church.

Liberalism in the doctrinal order is heresy and consequently a mortal sin against Faith because it tolerates error. In the practical order it is a sin against the commandments of God and of the Church, for it virtually transgresses all commandments. Liberalism is a very grievous and deadly sin, for sin is rebellion against God in thought, word or deed, the enthronement of the creature in the place of the Creator.

Jerusalem 1048-1291, Cyprus 1291-1310, Rhodes 1311-1523, Malta 1530-1798, Russia 1798-1907, U.S.A. 1908-

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Besides the deadly sin against Faith itself, it is accompanied by hardness of heart, obstinacy, and the proud preference for one's own reason over the reason of God Himself.

What are the signs or symptoms by which we may distinguish what is and what is not Liberalism in a person, journal, book or institution? In varying degrees the Liberal dislikes the Pope and priests, and may live a life devoid of all religion. He has only sarcasm and invective for the heroic defenders of the Faith.

What are the permanent causes of Liberalism?

1. **Corruption of morals.** The theater, literature, public and private morals are saturated with obscenity and impurity. Liberalism is the programme of naturalism. Free thought begets free morals or immorality.
2. **Journalism.** The influence exercised without ceasing by the numerous publications which Liberalism spreads broadcast is incalculable. People are forced to live in a Liberal atmosphere – commerce, the arts, literature, science, politics, domestic and foreign news. One finds himself thinking, speaking and acting as a Liberal. People absorb it in prose, in verse, in pictures, in public, in private, in the city, in the country, everywhere.
3. **General ignorance in matters of religion.** Liberalism has striven to paralyze the action of the Church, to render her mute, and in the old world to leave her merely an official character, so as to sever her connections with the people. This is the aim of the Liberals - to destroy the religious life, to place every hindrance possible in the way of Catholic teaching, to ridicule the clergy and to deprive them of their prestige. Naturalism, the denial of the supernatural, it inculcates everywhere. Liberalism teaches that religion is a mere private opinion.
4. **Secular education.** To gain the child is to secure the man. To educate a generation apart from God and the Church instills denial of the supernatural into the soul of the child. Liberalism has realized the power of education, and with satanic energy is now striving the world over for the possession of the child. In its efforts to slay Christ it decrees the slaughter of the innocents. "Snatch the soul of the child from the breast of its mother the Church," says Liberalism, "and I will conquer the world." Here is the real battleground between Faith and Infidelity. **Who is victor here is victor everywhere.**

So how prevalent is Liberalism today, a century or five generations later? Younger generations have left the Church. Women have the right to choose to kill their own offspring. Society rejects the Natural Law. Citizens pass ballot questions and amendments to state constitutions and courts render these results unconstitutional. Controversial topics are now discussed openly in conversations and in media. Freedom of worship is promoted rather than freedom of religion. Same sex 'marriage' has been legitimized by the State. Religion is not to be practiced in public. Schools now include sex education of all types and dumbed down curriculum. Bullying and defaming the defenders of Faith and the Natural Law is now rampant. Environmentalism and animal rights replace the Creator. The permanent causes of Liberalism are openly practiced. The soul of the child is snatched from its mother the Church and also from its biological mother in the womb by abortion, from the mother's home by day care and preschool, and from family life in secularized schools.

Can civilization be rescued from this disastrous conquest by Liberalism? Three mothers need to resume their roles in society. Mothers must seriously nurture their children, Holy Mother Church must zealously proclaim the mission given her by Jesus Christ, and the members of the Mystical Body must once again pray for assistance from the Mother of God.

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