

APOCALYPTIC TIMES

The Apocalyptic Times are marked by the Crisis of Faith and the Great Apostasy; by the Abomination of Desolation in the holy place; by Antichrist in his twofold manifestation: the Beast from the Sea, the political expression, and the Beast from the Earth, or the False Prophet, the religious or charismatic expression, such as religion appears in the modern world.

All this is nothing other than religion itself – and therefore the dogmas of the Faith – corrupted, counterfeited, falsified, rendered false: it is a Christianity adulterated through commerce, that is, through carnal and worldly traffic with the world. It is the sacrilegious and adulterous union born of the conjunction and interpenetration of Church and World, precisely as sacrilegious and adulterous ecumenism fosters it. Here is the famous *aggiornamento* of the Church: the lowering of what is sacred to what is base and worldly. Here is the adulterous liaison, the connivance and unholy wedlock between the World and the Church; and the result can only be a bastard fruit, as is the entire cult of the New Modernist Church. Hence Archbishop Lefebvre called the New Mass a bastard Mass. And now comes what is terrible and dreadful: as though all that has already been said were not enough, all this is nothing less than the work of a great falsifier and a great adulterer, of a great infamy and sacrilege, as the reality of things and of facts itself demands, requires, and proclaims.

Every effect has its cause, and its instruments. Now then, none of this is the work of chance, nor does it arise by spontaneous generation. Nothing of the sort. There is a cause, and that cause is Antichrist, who in concrete terms is embodied in an impostor of a religious character – and what better embodiment than an antipope? Antichrist in his religious manifestation, the Beast from the Earth, is a mitred one, a bishop of the hierarchy of the Church. He is sufficiently designated for us to identify him, for he has horns like a lamb – that is to say, the mitre, the two horns of Moses, symbolizing the Old and New Testaments.

A bishop who has, or could have, a universal power by which to draw all men after a falsified religion can only be the one bishop in the Church who possesses universal power: the Bishop of Rome, the Pope. Hence the terror of it, for Satan will make use of the Papacy to prostitute, like the Great Harlot, the Holy Church of God. Therefore it must necessarily be a false Pope, an impostor, an antipope; for a true Pope cannot exercise or carry out so dreadful an action.

Thus the Abomination of Desolation in the holy place, the adulteration of religion, the profanation of the Church, the falsification of the Faith and of the dogmas of the Faith, are the work of the False Prophet, the Beast from the Earth, in the service of the world and of its political power, the Jewish Synarchy, represented by the Beast

from the Sea. Between them both is formed the complete Antichrist – who is double, who is twofold – represented by these two apocalyptic Beasts.

This is the very substance of the contents – more or less – of the Third Secret or Message of Fatima. And it alone explains, and alone justifies, the reason for so much mystery surrounding its disclosure.

We shall cite a few texts upon which we rely in affirming what has been said.

Concerning the anthropotheistic cult of Antichrist: *“...the sacrilegious worship of man by man, which shall be the heresy of Antichrist.”* (Castellani, *El Apokalypsis*, Paulinas ed., Buenos Aires, 1963, p. 38).

The religion of man, atheistic humanism, is the distinguishing mark of the new anthropocentric and anthropotheistic religion of the present Ecumenism of the post-conciliar New Church.

“In Antichrist there will be two things: a sacrilege and a heresy (‘the Second Beast’). He shall cause himself to be adored as God, which is a sacrilege – the greatest of all – and to this end he will make use, as an instrument, of a religious cult spuriously derived from Christianity itself: that is to say, of a Christian heresy which would seem already to have been born in the world. (...) And thus political power, deified and embodied in a ‘genial commoner,’ upheld by a priesthood, shall be the abomination of desolation and the reign of Antichrist.” (Ibid., pp. 38–39).

The abomination of desolation is identified with the reign of Antichrist: Antichrist in his religious aspect, the False Prophet, together with Babylonian and Apostate Rome, as Our Lady declared at La Salette: *“Rome will lose the faith and become the seat of Antichrist.”*

“The first heresy, insofar as we know it, resembles the last heresy – I mean that of our own times; and one may say that it runs transversely through the whole history of the Church and forms, as it were, the underlying ground of all historical heresies. It was a kind of dogmatic gnosticism joined to moral laxity, a ‘syncretism,’ as the theo-historiographers now call it. It was a falsification of Christian dogmas, adapting them to pagan myths without altering their outward form on the one hand; and, correspondingly, a promiscuous conformity with the loosened customs of the Gentiles – namely, in lust and in idolatry (...). They ate meats sacrificed to the gods in the ritual banquets celebrated by the various ‘guilds,’ which was a kind of idolatrous religious act, that is, a kind of ‘communion’; and they gave themselves over readily to fornication, which among the pagans was reckoned no grave fault nor even a vice at all, even, it would seem, after and as an appendage to those same religious banquets.” (Ibid., p. 32).

Hence, in the Apocalypse, the virgins are the undefiled: *“‘Virgins’ means those who are not stained by the ‘Fornication’ – that is, idolatry – of falsified religion, which fornication or apostasy is spread abroad by the Harlot woman of vision 16.”* (Ibid., p. 96).

“To fornicate with the kings of the earth” means that religion places itself at the service of politics. (Ibid., p. 97).

“The Measuring of the Temple signifies the reduction of the faithful Church to a small persevering remnant, and the widespread adulteration of religious truth among all the rest; and in this all the Holy Fathers are unanimous.” (Ibid., pp. 94–95). This is the well-known pusillus grex, the *“little flock”* of Luke 12:32. Thus one understands the words that open the Third Secret of Fatima: In Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved.

“Only the Tabernacle (or the Holy of Holies) shall be preserved: a small group of faithful and persecuted Christians; the Court, which also includes the Naves (there were none in the Temple of Jerusalem), shall be trodden underfoot. And that is ‘the abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel and repeated by Christ.” (Ibid., p. 154).

“All the Holy Fathers have seen in this vision (the Measuring of the Temple) the state of the Church in the time of the Great Apostasy: reduced to a band of faithful who resist the prestige and power of Antichrist – the martyrs of the latter days – while religion in general is trodden underfoot for forty-two months, or three years and a half. To trample underfoot is not to destroy: Christianity shall be adulterated.” (Ibid., p. 152).

“The Temple itself and the Holy City shall be profaned, nor shall they any longer be holy. They shall not be destroyed. Religion shall be adulterated, its dogmas emptied out and refilled with an idolatrous substance; not abolished, for somewhere there must remain the temple in which Antichrist shall sit, ‘showing himself as if he were God,’ as Saint Paul says. The Great Apostasy shall at once be a great heresy – the greatest of heresies.” (Ibid., p. 153).

“Christ says in His Eschatological discourse that the Great Apostasy would, if it were possible, cause even the elect to fall.” (Ibid., p. 125).

“Not even the worship of Satan possesses the subtle malice and total falsification of truth found in this heresy, which adulterates the whole of Christianity. This does not, however, exclude other elements of the antichristic host, such as Masonry, magic, and Satanism.” (Ibid., p. 188).

“By retaining the whole external apparatus and Christian phraseology, it falsifies Christianity, transforming it into a worship of man – that is, enthroning man in the temple of God as though he were God. It exalts man as though his powers were infinite. It promises man the Kingdom of God and paradise on earth by his own strength. The adoration of Science, hope in Progress, and the frenzied Religion of Democracy are nothing but the idolatry of

man; that is to say, the satanic core of all heresies, now found in its pure state.” (Cristo ¿Vuelve o no vuelve?, Dictio ed., Buenos Aires, 1976, p. 18).

“The Beast from the Sea (therion means a wild beast, and not merely ‘beast,’ as our translated Bibles usually render it) is simply Antichrist (...). The Beast from the Earth is a false – that is, falsified – religion, or the supreme heresy, together with its head and guide: perhaps an apostate bishop who is also a magician (Soloviev).” (El Apokalypsis, p. 95).

“...indeed, the organization and unification of the regions of the world into a single kingdom – which, for that very reason, will resemble the Roman Empire. This enterprise belongs to Christ; and at bottom it is the age-long aspiration of humanity. Yet it shall be wickedly anticipated and brought forth in abortive fashion by the Counter-Christ, aided by the power of Satan. In the bulletin of the Canadian Intelligence Service (January 1963), one may see the power now wielded, above all in the United States and England, by the ‘One-Worlders,’ that is, the advocates of the unification of the world under a single Empire. They promote the amalgamation of Capitalism and Communism, which shall be precisely the exploit of Antichrist.” (Ibid., pp. 188–189). “The final heresy shall be optimistic, euphoric, and ‘messianic.’ Bolshevism shall be incorporated into it; it shall be absorbed within it.” (Ibid., p. 201).

“Capitalism and Communism, diverse though they may appear, coincide in their deepest core – in what one might call their ‘mystical’ nucleus: both seek the Earthly Paradise by means of Technique; and their ‘mysticism’ is a technolatrous and anthropolatrous mechanism, the diffusion of which we now behold on every side, and whose aim is the construction of man – a project that one day shall be embodied in a man.” (Ibid., p. 347).

“Antichrist will not be a demon, but a ‘demoniac’ man. He shall have ‘eyes like the eyes of a man,’ lifted up with the fullness of human knowledge; he shall make a show of humanity and of ‘humanism’; he shall crush the saints and cast down the law, both that of Christ and that of Moses. He shall triumph for three years and a half, until he is slain sine manu, not by the hand of man. He shall cause ‘the abomination of desolation’ to reign – that is, the supreme sacrilege. He shall be proud, deceitful, and cruel, though he will feign himself virtuous (...). He shall be atheistic, and will claim divine honors for himself; in what precise form, we do not know: as Son of Man, as the true Messiah, as the perfect incarnation and highest flower of a humanity proudly divinized, as Fuehrer, Duce, Caudillo, and savior of men, as one risen from the dead. (...) He shall reduce the Church to her utmost tribulation, while at the same time fostering a false Church. He shall kill the prophets and gather to his side a whole swarm of pseudo-prophets, fortune-tellers, and cantors of progressivism and of the euphoric gospel of man’s salvation by man – hierophants proclaiming the fullness of the times and a nefarious happiness. Above all, he shall persecute the preaching and interpretation of the Apocalypse, and he shall hate with fury even the mention of the Parousia. In his time there shall be veritable monsters occupying chairs and sees, and they shall pass for pious, religious, even holy men; for the man of sin will tolerate and make use of an adulterated Christianity. He

shall completely abolish the Holy Mass and public worship for forty-two months, that is, 1,260 days – which shall be long indeed in the passing.” (Ibid., pp. 198–199).

“The harlot woman, blasphemous and shameless, is adulterated religion, already formulated as a Pseudo-Church at the end of the age, prostituted to the powers of this world and seated upon the formidable political power of Antichrist.” (Ibid., p. 261).

“When Christ came, the times were confused and sorrowful. Religion had been corrupted in its leaders, and consequently also in part of the people. (...) When Christ returns, the situation shall be similar. Only Pharisaism, that sin against the Holy Ghost, is capable of producing that great apostasy which He foretold: ‘the greatest tribulation since the Flood,’ brought forth by the worst of corruptions, the corruption of what is best. (...) Therefore Saint John saw upon the brow of the harlot the word Mystery, and says that he marveled exceedingly; whereupon the Angel tells him: ‘Come, and I will explain to thee the mystery of the Beast.’ It is the mystery of iniquity, the abomination of desolation: the carnal element of religion concealing, adulterating, and even persecuting the truth. Synagoga Satanae.” (Ibid., p. 257).

Thus one understands the violent yet silent persecution directed against the whole Tradition of the Church—dogma, worship, and morals.

“The Bride commits adultery when her lawful Lord and Spouse, Christ, is no longer her soul and her all; when the joys of His house are no longer the whole of her life; when she covets the passing things of the world in their various forms; when she looks upon its grandeurs, riches, and honors with greedy eyes (...). This is what the prophet calls ‘fornicating with the kings of the earth.’ First there is fornication in the heart, through failing in faith; afterward in deeds, through failing in charity. The fundamental error of our present practice – and at times even of our theory – is that we amalgamate the Kingdom and the world, which is precisely what the Bible calls ‘prostitution.’” (Ibid., p. 258).

This, tragically, is what the Second Vatican Council established with its aggiornamento and its ecumenism; and it is nothing less than prostitution. Bread must be called bread, and wine, wine. Things either are what they are, or they cease to be. Yet the Second Vatican Council—the only Ecumenical Council in the whole history of the Church that was not, and did not wish to be, infallible—is imposed with a doctrinal dogmatism, and is held in greater reverence than the very Dogma of the Faith, than the Deposit of Faith itself, than Divine Revelation itself. Could there be a greater confusion, a graver error? Only one word suffices: prostitution of religion, prostitution of the hierarchy of the Church—that carnal, human part, human because made up of men, which fornicates with the kings of the earth by amalgamating Church and World.

Here is portrayed the Beast from the Earth, the False Prophet, lamb-like in appearance yet spreading a sacrilegious cult, a fornicating religion in the service of

Antichrist, the other Beast from the Sea: *"The other seducer and tyrant of the world, whom John later calls 'the False Prophet,' has a religious character: he is 'like unto the Lamb,' and rises out of the solid earth, that is, Religion; not like the other, from the sea of the worldly world. And it is this beast that caused the whole world to adore the other."* (Ibid., p. 209).

"This theme of a false, corrupted, falsified, fraudulent religion (from fallo – fallere, to deceive, to fall) will appear again in Vision 16, the Great Harlot; and such a 'fornicating' religion is necessary if the sacrilegious worship of Antichrist is to arise, he 'who shall sit in the Temple of God, showing himself as though he were God,' as Saint Paul foretells. This is what Daniel calls 'the abomination of desolation,' and what Christ Himself repeats." (Ibid., p. 211).

"There is in Scripture no mention of any other crime of Antichrist than this one: blasphemy and the supreme sacrilege ('the abomination of desolation'), together with iniquity and tyranny against Christians, which is its consequence..." (Ibid., p. 344).

"The abominable desolation, or simply the desolation – the term used by Daniel and already applied several centuries earlier to the tyranny of Antiochus – was likewise fulfilled at this time, in the year 70, though it remains doubtful precisely what event was meant. But at the end of time, we know from Saint Paul that Antichrist shall profane the Temple of God by enthroning himself therein as God; and that is, in truth, a horrible profanation." (Castellani, Catecismo para Adultos, Patria Grande ed., Buenos Aires, 1979, p. 159).

Modernism is the religion of Antichrist: *"The 'encyclopedism' of the so-called 'philosophers' of the eighteenth century – that is, the 'religious naturalism' which began with 'deism' and is prolonged in present-day 'modernism': the worst heresy that has ever existed, for in its deepest core it contains the worship of man in place of God, the religion of Antichrist."* (El Apokalypsis, p. 136).

It is important to bear firmly in mind that the two beasts – the Beast from the Sea (Antichrist) and the Beast from the Earth (the False Prophet) – together constitute the full Antichrist, since the two beasts are complementary to one another. This broadens the vision, which might otherwise remain somewhat partial, and helps one to see more clearly, for it may well be that the Beast from the Sea is consolidated in a hidden world power, and the Beast from the Earth in an Antipope placed at the service of the former: *"Antichrist, then, shall be a Universal Secular Empire joined to a New Heretical Religion, both embodied in one man, or perhaps in two men: the Tyrant and the False Prophet."* (Cristo ¿Vuelve...?, pp. 47–48).

Saint John identifies Antichrist with the spirit that dissolves or divides Jesus, spiritus qui solvit Jesum (1 Jn. 4:3), that is to say, the spirit of apostasy.

All this implies a false Church, for where religion has been perverted, those who represent it become a false Church, even to the point of having a pseudo-pope or antipope to govern it, thereby eclipsing the true Church – the Church of all time,

ever faithful to Roman Apostolic Tradition. Hence La Salette speaks of the eclipse of the Church, and declares that Rome will lose the faith and become the seat of Antichrist. A false Church requires a false Pope, that is, an Antipope.

“Saint Victorinus the Martyr plainly declares that ‘the Church shall be taken out of the way’ (de medio fiet); yet this does not mean that she shall be altogether and absolutely extinguished, as Domingo Soto, O.P., reads it, but rather that she shall disappear from the face of the earth, and return to darker and more dreadful catacombs.” (Ibid., p. 204).

If one considers the matter closely, this is in a certain sense already a fact: true worship has been buried, the Mass of all time has been driven from temples and churches. Thus is fulfilled what Saint Jerome says in commenting on Daniel 12:11, where he speaks of the abolition of the perpetual sacrifice and of the abomination of desolation: *“By the perpetual sacrifice the Fathers, with Saint Jerome, understand here the Sacrifice of the Eucharist and all solemn worship, which no one shall dare to offer publicly.”* (Felipe Scio).

As happens today, scarcely anyone dares to offer the Holy Mass of all time, save a very small number of priests faithful to the Tradition of the Church. The Church taken away – that is, eclipsed – in the sense explained by Father Castellani when referring to the return of Christ and the loss of faith: *“...for there shall indeed be faith, though it be found in but few, and those persecuted, in the last times. But faith in this sense means faith in its organized form, that is to say, the Church. ‘The Church,’ says the theologian Domingo Soto, ‘shall be taken out of the way.’”* (Catecismo para Adultos, Patria Grande ed., Buenos Aires, 1979, p. 36).

“In every nation there are great professors of the Anti-Church, powerful spokesmen of impiety.” (Castellani, Los Papeles de Benjamín Benavides, Dictio ed., Buenos Aires, 1978, p. 266).

The Anti-Church is that which persecutes and eclipses the Church, for it cannot utterly destroy her, thanks to the promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail, since there shall always remain a little flock.

The possibility of an antipope, or false pope, arising through loss of faith in connivance with man and with the world is not something absurd, nor is it contrary to the Faith, as some mistakenly imagine or believe. Plainly, an antipope is nothing new in the history of the Church: there have been at least some forty, and the first antipope ended by dying a martyr, namely Saint Hippolytus the Martyr. Nor does the existence of an antipope in any way affect the Faith or the divine institution of the Church, for the institution of the Papacy remains always intact: Popes are born and die, but the Papacy and the Church, though they have a beginning in history, do not die. Luther’s error was to apply to the Papacy what Scripture says of

Antichrist. It is another matter altogether if, through a mystery of iniquity, a Pope should fail in the Faith, turn Rome into the seat of Antichrist, and make himself an Antichrist, as the Beast from the Earth or the False Prophet: *"The second beast, a wild beast rising out of the earth as the other rose out of the sea – that is, out of the Church in contrast to the world – which, though it speaks like a dragon, 'has two horns like the Lamb.' This beast is the one that 'acts' and reduces to practice, that is, ritualizes, all the power of the other, says the Prophet. (...) This beast is therefore plainly a religious movement, a heresy resembling Christianity, the final heresy, the most nefarious and subtle of all, the worship of man, embodied in a religious genius, a kind of immense Luther, Photius, or Mohammed. Perhaps it will be an antipope, and the two horns may signify the episcopal mitre; we do not know."* (Ibid., p. 297).

"Will it be the reign of an Antipope, or of a false Pope?" Father Castellani asks once again (Cristo ¿Vuelve o no vuelve?, Dictio ed., Buenos Aires, 1976, p. 29).

Nothing is more Judaizing, as Father Castellani points out, than to expect a triumph of the Church apart from the Parousia, and sadly this is the opinion of many today: *"For what could be more Judaizing than to expect a great earthly triumph of the Church before the second coming of Christ?"* (El Apokalypsis, p. 87).

Ecumenism likewise is Judaizing: *"The focal point (...) is none other than that triumphant unification of the universe (...) the great fusion of the peoples into one, and the natural advent of the Ecumenical Restoration. (...) Everything that is international is, in its essence, religious. (...) To say this is to say that everything today that is international is either Catholic or Judaic. These are the only two universal religions. Freemasonry is a Judaic invention; Islam is a Judaic heresy."* (Cristo ¿Vuelve..., p. 289).

"Today, everything that is international, if it is not Catholic, is Jewish – even Freemasonry." (Ibid., p. 150). *"If we admit that the pacification of humanity into one great family is a religious matter, then only two religions remain capable of accomplishing it: the Catholic Church and the Anti-Church, that is to say, the Synagogue. The Church is international by divine vocation. The Synagogue is international by divine malediction. The Church and the Synagogue represent the two strongest and most concentrated embodiments of the religious sentiment existing in the world. (...) All the other hierarchical religions in existence are heresies of one or the other of these two: Mohammedanism is a Judaic heresy; Protestantism is a Christian heresy. The pantheistic religions of the East are forms of paganism; they constitute an unformed religious sentiment that has never attained expression as a religious society. (...) Bolshevism has a Judaic root; it is messianic, antichristian, and prophetic, and therefore belongs to the religious order. Russian atheism is animated by a dark religious breath. It is a provisional form; it represents a stage, the stage of warfare against transcendent religions. It is itself an immanent religion, the religion of man divinized – the reverse of the mystery of the Incarnation, the Mystery of Iniquity of which Saint Paul spoke..."* (Ibid., pp. 151–152).

"The nature of communism is religious and not merely political. It is a Judeo-Christian heresy. From Christianity decomposed into Protestantism, Marx took the obsessive idea of social justice, which is nothing other than the first Beatitude driven mad and emptied of its supernatural content: the poor must reign here below, reign politically by the mere fact of being poor, like the saints of Oliver Cromwell. But the formal element of the heresy is Judaic: it is that exasperated and temporal messianism which forms the bitter core of the immense soul of deicidal Israel through the centuries: We shall build, by force, by cunning, and by religiosity joined together, a Temporal Kingdom of the Proletariat, which shall be Paradise on Earth. To achieve this, we shall first destroy the whole existing order, incurably infected by evil." (Ibid., p. 205).

"Communism is not a party; communism is a heresy. It is one of the three Frogs spewed forth from the mouth of the devil in the last times, which are none other than our own. The other two frogs – garrulous heresies forever croaking the same refrain, and which have become guides of kings, that is, political powers – are liberal Catholicism and modernism. These three heresies shall one day join together by their tails (a marvelous thing, given that frogs have no tails) against what still remains of the Church of Christ, on a day that may perhaps not be far off." (Ibid., p. 204).

"The croaking of liberalism is 'liberty, liberty, liberty'; the croaking of communism is 'social justice'; and to the croaking of modernism, from which the others were born and which shall one day gather them together, we might assign this: 'Paradise on Earth; God is Man; man is god.' And what of 'democracy'? It is the chorus of all three together: political democracy, social democracy, and religious democracy: Demo – croaked the frog – cracy beneath the river." (Los Papeles, p. 46). Democracy, as Nicolás Gómez Dávila defined it with masterly and unsurpassed precision, is an anthropotheistic religion. Let us not forget it.

"And the three frogs are three heresies: namely, liberalism, communism, and modernism, or religious naturalism." (El Apokalypsis, p. 97).

And so, what is the end, in sum and substance? It is this: there shall be a temporal defeat, yet a supernatural triumph. Supernatural, because it requires divine intervention, the manifestation of the Lord's Parousia in glory and majesty, and not the Judaizing progressivism that dreams of triumph apart from such an intervention of God. It shall be the supernatural triumph of good over evil, even as on the Cross; or, as Father Castellani says: *"The end of history shall be a catastrophe, yet the divine purpose of history shall be attained in a metahistory, which shall not be a new creation but a 'transposition'; for 'new heavens and a new earth' means 'all things renewed' according to their pristine divine pattern."* (El Apokalypsis, p. 149).

"The world is moving toward an intrahistorical catastrophe that conditions an extrahistorical triumph; that is, a 'transposition' of the life of the world into a trans-world, and of Time into a Super-Time, in which our lives shall not be annihilated and then created

anew, but rather – as befits God – shall be transfigured wholly and entirely, without the loss of a single one of their elements.” (Ibid., p. 152).

“That is to say, the catastrophic intrahistorical end of humanity together with the triumphant extrahistorical end. For Christian eschatology is composed of these two contrary elements.” (Ibid., p. 175).

The triumphant extrahistorical, or metahistorical, end is the Kingdom of Christ the King, of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. It is the Millennium of Patristic exegesis and of the common doctrine of the primitive Church; it is the Millennium of the Apocalypse, concerning which we shall cite a few authors in order to form some notion of its essential features.

Father José Rovira, S.J., author of the article *Parusía* in the *Enciclopedia Espasa*, sets forth the matter thus: *“The Parousia is nothing other than, as we have said, the second coming of Christ. Christ Jesus shall come from heaven, whither He ascended in His glorious Ascension (Acts 1:9–11), yet He shall not come as He came the first time, when the Word was made flesh (...); rather, He shall come and appear in glory, with the glory and splendor of His divinity (...). And then – that is, after the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give its light, and the stars shall fall – then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man (most probably the Cross), and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming upon the clouds of heaven with great power and glory (Mt. 24:30; Mk. 13:26; Lk. 21:27) (...). But among all these descriptions, the foremost is that given us by the Apostle Saint John in chapter 19 of the Apocalypse, where he portrays Him as a warrior-king going forth to wage battle against Antichrist (...). Yet Christ shall not come alone. Being a King, He shall come attended by His court (...). The Lord shall come accompanied by His angels (Mt. 26:27) (...), and with His saints (...), (Jude 14–25). (...) There shall follow thereafter the resurrection of the saints. It is true that, on this point, theologians and interpreters are not agreed, for they commonly say that the resurrection shall be of all together and at the same time; but this must be understood of the general resurrection. This particular resurrection of the saints, however, shall be as a privilege; and just as Christ rose, and with Christ certain other saints also arose, as Saint Matthew says (27:52–53), who probably, as Saint Thomas (S. Th. Suppl., q. 77, a. 1, ad 3), probably did not die again. Thus it may likewise be admitted that, when Christ shall appear at His Second Coming to destroy Antichrist, not all the saints shall rise by privilege, but only some. (...) According to this, Saint Paul clearly distinguishes, at the coming of Christ, two classes or orders of the just who shall be gathered unto Him. The one shall be the dead, who shall rise first and shall rise incorrupt; the other shall be the living, who shall not die, but shall be changed from mortal and corruptible into incorruptible and immortal, and together with the others shall be caught up through the air upon the clouds of heaven to meet Christ. (...) ‘And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were fulfilled. This is the first...’ This text of Saint John would seem to indicate two classes or orders of the elect: the one, those beheaded for the testimony of Jesus – that is, the martyrs, whether all or some, and in the first place the Apostles, to whom Christ Himself promised*

that in the regeneration they should sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel; the others are those who did not adore the beast nor receive his mark, even though they were not martyred but still living, for otherwise there would be no need to distinguish them from the martyrs. (...) Another effect of the coming of Christ shall be the destruction of Antichrist (...). Then, therefore, Christ shall come to destroy him, and to save and deliver His own. (...) 'And then shall that wicked one be manifested, whom the Lord shall slay' – or rather, remove out of the way – 'with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming' (2 Thess. 2:8). And Saint John says the same in the Apocalypse. (...) Once the anti-theocratic powers have been destroyed, and the devil bound and cast into prison, there shall follow at once the reign of Christ and of the saints. This kingdom is foretold by the prophet Daniel in the seventh chapter of his prophecy (...). In this text it is clearly foretold that, after the destruction of Antichrist and of the other anti-theocratic powers, there shall follow not merely a triumph, but a kingdom of Christ and of the Saints – a kingdom which shall be upon the earth or under heaven, as Daniel says – a kingdom in which the dominion shall belong to the people of the saints of the Most High, whom all the kings of the earth shall serve and obey. (...) See, for example, what Cornelius a Lapide says: 'Then, the kingdom of Antichrist having been destroyed, the Church shall reign throughout the whole earth, and from Jews and Gentiles there shall be made one fold under one shepherd.' Thereafter shall follow the uprising or rebellion of Gog and Magog against the city of the saints, which is probably, as we shall see, distinct from the persecution of Antichrist. Then later, the fire of the conflagration (...). And at last all shall be brought to its consummation with the final resurrection and the Last Judgment. (...) Saint Paul likewise says (1 Cor. 15:24–28) that Christ shall reign until He has put all His enemies beneath His feet, and the last of all to be destroyed shall be death; after this Christ shall deliver up His kingdom to the Father, and then God shall be all in all."

"We have seen that, according to Daniel's prophecy (7:26–27), immediately after the death of Antichrist the world shall not come to an end, but the Church shall continue, composed of Jews and Gentiles and spread throughout the whole earth; and the saints shall exercise power and sovereignty, and all the kings of the world shall serve and obey them. (...) Although Daniel says that their kingdom shall be everlasting, this is because he presents the kingdom of the saints on earth as continuing into that which comes after the Judgment. Yet here we are speaking only of the kingdom of the saints upon the earth, the kingdom of the saints prior to the Final Judgment, and this, of course, is not to be eternal. (...) Some interpreters, even among those who admit the reign of the saints upon earth, say with Tirini, a Lapide, and others, that this kingdom shall endure but a short time; others do not speak of its duration; others again suppose or affirm that it shall last a long time (...). On this point, the millenarians, grounding themselves upon the Apocalypse (20:1–9), admitted that after the death of Antichrist there would be a reign of Christ and of the saints upon earth, which was to endure for a thousand years."

Father Benjamín Martín Sánchez sums it up thus in his *Nuevo Testamento Explicado*, Apostolado Mariano ed., Seville, 1988, note-commentary on chapter 20 of the Apocalypse:

“Millenarianism is the belief of those who have held that Jesus Christ shall reign upon earth with His saints in a new Jerusalem for the space of a thousand years before the Day of Judgment. (...) I firmly believe – after a careful study of Sacred Scripture – in a millenarianism upon earth; and if the word ‘millenarianism’ be displeasing to anyone, let it be called a ‘wondrous age of peace,’ whether of a thousand years or of many thousands, which shall take place after the death of Antichrist and in the wake of the universal judgment of the nations. To this shall contribute the chaining, or repression, of Satan’s activity. Then the converted Jews shall enjoy the fruit of their conversion, the Faith shall be multiplied, the Church of Christ shall attain a definitive triumph, and the prophecy of ‘one fold under one shepherd’ shall be fulfilled. And in turn the following prophecies, which have not yet been fulfilled, shall then come to pass: ‘He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River unto the ends of the earth... All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him’ (Ps. 72:8, 11).”

“All the ends of the earth shall remember and be converted unto Yahweh, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him. For the kingdom is Yahweh’s, and He shall rule over the nations’ (Ps. 22:28–29).”

“In the latter days (v. 1)... I shall gather, saith the Lord, her that was driven away’ – that is, the strayed or scattered of Israel – ‘and I shall make her a mighty people; and Yahweh shall reign over them in Mount Sion from henceforth even for ever’ (Mic. 4:6 and following).”

“And Yahweh shall reign over all the earth; in that day Yahweh shall be one, and His Name one’ (Zech. 14:19).”

“Then’ – that is, after the great judgment of the nations – ‘will I restore to the peoples a pure speech, that they may all call upon the Name of the Lord’ (Zeph. 3:9).”

“And the New Covenant, which began to be fulfilled under the New Law, as foretold by Jeremias (31:31–34), shall reach its fullness with the conversion of Israel. Then, saith the Lord, ‘I will put My law within their hearts... and they shall no more teach every man his neighbor... for they shall all know Me.’ And ‘then the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of Yahweh’ (Is. 11:9). When Israel is converted and purified from his sins, the deserts shall blossom, they shall become fruitful fields, and they shall yield harvests of fruit and increase of cattle such as has never yet been known (Ez. 36:33–35). To these texts many others would have to be added from Isaiah, Micah, Zacharias, and other prophets, who speak to us of the great peace of that age, of temporal well-being, of Jerusalem as the capital of the Christian world, and so forth. (Let it be noted that this shall not be in heaven, but upon earth – something real, and therefore an actual fact: such is millenarianism, or that wondrous age of peace. (...)) Some have wished to understand the ‘first resurrection’ spiritually, as the birth into the life of grace; yet they do not persuade, because the text speaks of martyrs who died for the Faith. Pirot says: ‘Certain contemporary Catholic critics, for example Calmes, admit the literal interpretation of the passage under study. The millennium would be

inaugurated by a resurrection of the martyrs alone, to the exclusion of the other dead.' Saint Irenaeus likewise already identified the first resurrection as that of the just. I believe this may well be confirmed by these two texts: 1 Cor. 15:23, where Saint Paul speaks of the order of the resurrection: 'Christ the firstfruits, then they that are Christ's, who have believed in His coming; afterwards the end...'; and likewise by 1 Thess. 4:14–16: 'Those who have died in Christ shall rise first...' The exegete Cornelius a Lapide also interprets literally the text of 1 Cor. 15:23... 'The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished.' (...) And then shall come the universal resurrection and the Last Judgment."

"When the thousand years are passed, Satan shall be loosed and shall go forth to seduce the nations (...); the devil shall go on perverting the nations, and the forces of evil, that is, Gog and Magog, shall attack the saints and the holy city; but God shall cause them to be devoured by the fire which He will send down upon them."

Concerning chapter 21 of the Apocalypse, the same author comments on the universal restoration of all things, which brings to mind the motto of Saint Pius X, *Instaurare omnia in Christo* – “To restore all things in Christ” – which Archbishop Lefebvre renders, by way of explanation, as “to recapitulate all things in Christ.” Father Martín Sánchez thus speaks of the new heaven and the new earth: “Here, and likewise in Isaiah 65:17 ff., in 2 Peter 3:13, and in Romans 8:19 ff., we are told of the transfiguration of created things. (...) Hence this world shall not be annihilated, but renewed, and changed for the better; for, as Saint Jerome says: ‘The form passes away, not the substance. We shall not see other heavens and another earth, but the old and ancient ones transformed into better.’ Everything leads one to foresee that this also refers to the wondrous age of peace, since, according to Scripture, the universe, once renewed, is to serve as the setting for human life, because the whole creation shall share in the happiness of man (Rom. 8:19–22), and because there shall be new heavens and a new earth wherein justice shall dwell (2 Pet. 3:10–13). Then the earth shall be as though a new heaven anticipated (...). It is a renewal of this world, wherein fallen humanity dwelt, which, at last cleansed of every stain, shall be restored by God to a state equal, and even superior, to that in which it was created: a renewal which Scripture elsewhere calls the ‘palingenesis,’ the regeneration (Mt. 19:28), ‘the restitution of all things’ in their original state (Acts 3:21) (Crampon).”

And in his explanation of chapter 22, our author says, referring to the closing words of the Apocalypse, Come, Lord Jesus: “With this expression, which refers to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the Apocalypse comes to its end. After speaking to us of the great happiness reserved for the saints, it repeats: ‘Come quickly’; and by this admonition it wills that we should not fall asleep, but live watchfully, longing for His coming, that we may enjoy the blessedness foretold.”

Concerning millenarianism, Father Castellani in turn makes this clarification: “Real millenarianism teaches nothing other than that Apocalypse XX and I Corinthians XV can be interpreted literally without any breach of the Faith or any inconvenience whatsoever; that thus they were understood by the Apostolic Fathers, and after them, in the course of history,

by innumerable doctors and saints; that from this follows the probability of two resurrections, one partial and the other general, with a mystically glorious period of the Church Militant between them; and that this understanding readily resolves many obscure passages of Scripture and does honor to the greatness, truthfulness, and omnipotence of the Creator.” (Los Papeles..., p. 418).

“The whole of ancient tradition, en masse, throughout the first four centuries of the Church, understood in this chapter simply that there would be a long period of peace and prosperity in the world – whether a thousand years or else a very long time – after the return of Christ and the shining forth of His Parousia; that there would be two resurrections, one partial, of the martyrs and the latter saints, and another universal at the end, of both good and evil, which Saint Paul also teaches; that all this long span of time is perhaps what we designate by the name of the Last Judgment, which is described metaphorically at the close of the chapter – that is to say, its term and consummation are there described. The ‘Day of the Last Judgment’ certainly cannot be a solar day.” (El Apokalypsis, pp. 295–296).

On this latter point, Saint Augustine himself admits that the Day of the Last Judgment need not be a solar day: *“That which the whole Church of the true God confesses and approves – namely, that Christ shall descend from heaven to judge the living and the dead – this, we say, shall be the last day of the divine judgment, that is, the last time. For although it is not certain how many days this judgment shall last, no one can be ignorant, however slightly he may have read Holy Scripture, that in it ‘day’ is often put for ‘time.’”* (The City of God, Book XX, chapter 1). *“In sum, millenarianism consists in believing that the Judgment of God, which is a dogma of faith, is not a material day nor a geographical place, but a period and a state, an altogether supernatural cycle; and this not by rationalism or fantasy, but because it is found so written, to the letter, in the two great latter-day prophecies, Daniel and John, together with two corresponding texts of the Apostle Paul.”* (Los Papeles..., p. 412).

Although the allegorical interpretation predominates today, it was not always so – at least not during the first four centuries of the primitive Church. Moreover, Saint Augustine himself, who adopted the allegorical interpretation from the heretic Tyconius, its author in the fourth century, as Father Castellani points out (El Apok., p. 294), acknowledges that his new interpretation – he himself having formerly been a millenarian – is not certain; for: *“Saint Augustine warns that he does not know whether this interpretation is good or not, in which caution none of the present-day ‘allegorists’ imitate him, many of whom moreover brand as ‘heretical’ (and ridiculous, and Judaizing, and doltish, and gross, and disturbing) those who take no pleasure in it.”* (El Apok., pp. 294–295).

“But millenarianism and anti-millenarianism represent, in the reality of the present historical moment, two spirits, two ways of reading Scripture, and consequently of beholding the Church and the World. Hence the struggle.” (Los Papeles..., p. 412).

This is the reason why many today, albeit unconsciously, do not accept Patristic Millenarianism. Let us hope that this compilation may serve as a light to cast down the prejudices, and to make us more watchful than ever for the Parousia, for the Kingdom of Christ, and for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Fr. Basilio Méramo
Santa Fe de Bogotá, July 4, 2000
Feast of Our Lady, Refuge of
Sinners