

# THE REIGN OF CHRIST THE KING, OR THE MILLENNIUM OF PEACE

It is the key to the history of the Church and the triumphant resolution of the present spiritual, moral, and doctrinal decay of the world and of the Church. It is the light and the hope that shine forth after the great Apostasy and its climax in Antichrist, which define the last times before the Parousia, that is, the great manifestation of Christ in His Second Coming.

We are unquestionably living in those latter times foretold in Sacred Scripture, times that envelop the universe in an unmistakably apocalyptic atmosphere. The Apocalypse is the great prophecy of the revelation or manifestation of Christ in His second and definitive coming at the end of time, when the forces of evil will seem to have triumphed over the good and over the Church, which will appear eclipsed and in the hands of her fierce enemies, on the verge of perishing, yet divinely and miraculously sustained, reduced to a few faithful souls awaiting the coming of the great King from heaven to rescue His Church and judge her enemies, who hold her as though captive, awaiting her swift deliverance by her beloved Spouse.

Among the great signs of the latter times, there is, for example, the return of the Jewish diaspora, when in 1948 they entered the Holy Land after nearly two thousand years of exile throughout the world; or the repeated manifestations of the Blessed Virgin Mary: the Miraculous Medal in 1830, La Salette in 1846, Lourdes in 1858, Fatima in 1917, Syracuse in 1953, to name only the best known and those recognized by the Church.

The manifestations of the Virgin Mary from the nineteenth century onward are signs of the latter times, if we heed the great apocalyptic apostle of the modern age, Saint Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort.

It is regrettable that insufficient attention has been given to the profound apocalyptic significance of this great seventeenth-century saint, who also bears a notable affinity with the Society of Saint Pius X founded by Archbishop Lefebvre of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost, itself founded by Claude Poullart des Places, a friend of the saint, between whom there existed an apostolic pact. Poullart des Places would train the seminarians to whom Saint Louis delivered the conferences that would later become the treatise on The Love of Eternal Wisdom, and Saint Louis in

turn would take them for the apostolate, as may be seen here: *It would seem, then, that The Love of Eternal Wisdom is the fruit of conferences given by Montfort to the seminarians of Poullart des Places during his stay in Paris in 1703–1704. In these students he saw possible collaborators in the work of the missions, and thus one understands his concern to provide them with a solid and suitable spiritual formation.* (Oeuvres Complètes de Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, ed. du Seuil, 1966, p. 87).

According to the teaching of Saint Louis Grignion, the manifestation of the Blessed Virgin Mary was reserved for the latter times, as he states so clearly in the treatise on True Devotion: *Through Mary the salvation of the world began, and through Mary it must be brought to completion. Mary scarcely appeared at the first coming of Jesus Christ, lest men, still insufficiently instructed and enlightened concerning the Person of her Son, should be drawn away from Him by becoming too strongly and imperfectly attached to her, which would probably have happened had been known, because of the wondrous attractions which the Most High bestowed even upon her outward appearance. And this is so true that Saint Dionysius the Areopagite left it written that, when he beheld her, he would have taken her for a divinity, in view of her hidden attractions and incomparable beauty, had not the faith he professed told him otherwise. But at the second coming of Jesus Christ, Mary must be made known and revealed by the Holy Ghost, so that through her men may know, love, and serve Jesus Christ; for then those reasons will no longer remain which obliged the Holy Ghost to hide His Spouse during her earthly life and to manifest her but rarely since the Gospel began to be preached.* (Works of Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, B.A.C., 1954, no. 49, p. 466).

This is the reason why she is mentioned so little in the Gospels—a reason apocalyptic in character, if rightly understood.

The Saint continues in his treatise so that not the slightest doubt may remain: *God therefore wishes to reveal and make known Mary, the masterpiece of His hands, in these latter times.* (Ibid., no. 50, p. 467).

These latter times are bound up with the Parousia, or second coming of Our Lord; of this there can be not the least doubt, according to the Saint's own exposition: *As she was the way by which Jesus Christ came to us the first time, so shall she also be the way by which He will come the second time, though in a different manner. (...) Finally, Mary must be terrible to the devil and his followers as an army drawn up in battle array, especially in these latter times, because the devil, knowing that he has but little time—and less now than ever—to lose souls, redoubles every day his efforts and his assaults. He will soon stir up fresh persecutions and lay terrible snares for the faithful servants and the true children of Mary, whom it is far harder for him to overcome than the rest.* (Ibid., no. 50, pp. 467–468).

These apocalyptic latter times, related to the full manifestation of the Blessed Virgin, are connected with Antichrist, and not, as some inattentively suppose, deferred to some later age or another epoch. Thus Saint Louis says: *It is chiefly of those last and cruel persecutions of the devil, which will increase daily until the reign of Antichrist comes, that one must understand that first and celebrated prediction and curse uttered by God in the earthly paradise against the serpent.* (Ibid., no. 51, p. 468).

When the Saint wrote these things, he was thinking of events that would come about soon, and not of something lost in the remoteness of time and history, as may be seen in the following text: *I have said that all this shall come to pass especially at the end of the world, and indeed very soon...* (Ibid., no. 47, p. 463).

For Saint Louis Grignion, apocalyptic announcements are not something distant or far removed, but something near at hand. Consequently, every interpretation that relegates the Parousia to some remote, distant future, far from our own age, runs contrary to what this great saint taught—a saint raised up by God to enlighten us concerning the latter times, comparable in this respect to Saint Vincent Ferrer, whom he himself declared to be the angel of the Apocalypse, even raising a dead woman to life.

Father Faber, in his preface to the treatise on True Devotion in 1862, points to this very same idea: *Like Saint Vincent Ferrer, he comes forward as though he were already in the days immediately preceding the Last Judgment, announcing that he brings from God an authentic message: that greater honor must be rendered, wider knowledge must be had, and more ardent love must be shown toward His Most Holy Mother; and that this increase of devotion to Mary stands in intimate relation to the second coming of her Son.* (Ibid., p. 436).

Moreover, Father Faber wisely relates the Parousia to the reign of Christ, just as Saint Louis does from the very beginning of his Treatise on True Devotion: *Let anyone examine it for himself, and when he beholds the transformations it produces in his own soul, he will soon be convinced of the almost incredible efficacy of this devotion as a means for the salvation of men and for the coming of the reign of Christ.* (Ibid., p. 438). True devotion to the Blessed Virgin possesses an essential apocalyptic dimension, and to separate the two is to distort Saint Louis's message and corrupt true devotion to the Virgin Mary.

Saint Louis-Marie begins the Treatise on True Devotion by relating the reign of Christ and the Parousia to devotion to the Blessed Virgin, leaving no room for

doubt: *Jesus Christ came into the world through the Blessed Virgin, and through her He must also reign in the world. If, then, it is true that the knowledge and reign of Jesus Christ must come into the world, this can only be as a consequence of the knowledge and reign of the Blessed Virgin, she who brought Him into the world the first time and who will make Him triumph in the second.* (Ibid., no. 1, p. 439; and no. 13, p. 444).

Saint Louis-Marie clearly demonstrates the intimate connection between the latter times and devotion to Mary, Mother of God. The manifestation of the Virgin Mary is a fact that clearly points to the apocalyptic latter times of which the Scriptures speak.

All Marian manifestations from the past century onward are proof that we are undoubtedly in the latter times, at the end of the age that heralds the second coming of Christ.

Beginning in 1830 in Paris, there commenced a series of Marian apparitions which constitute irrefutable evidence that we are living in the latter times of the Apocalypse—something that cannot be passed over in silence.

Our Mother in heaven, with the apparition of the Miraculous Medal on the Rue du Bac in Paris, opened a series of apparitions and manifestations announcing the inauguration of the latter times, which, as Saint Louis-Marie indicates, are those reserved for true devotion.

Paris, the capital of France—a nation dechristianized under the impiety of the French Revolution of 1789, or rather the Judeo-Masonic Revolution—was chosen for the outpouring of her graces as a tender Mother in the face of the apostasy of a nation that had once been the glory of the Church in the days of Saint Louis, King of France, and which later became a forerunner of liberal anticlericalism.

The rays of light in the image symbolize the graces granted to the whole world, yet disregarded by men.

With La Salette, in France in 1846, Our Lady left a message unmistakably apocalyptic, wherein she announces the eclipse of the Church, the loss of the faith, and even Rome itself—not only losing the faith, but moreover becoming the seat of Antichrist. Nothing more grave, nothing more terrible, could be said. The harmony of this message with many chapters of the prophet Isaiah, and indeed with the whole of chapter 24, as Father Combe shows in his book *Le Secret de Mélanie et la Crise Actuelle*, written in 1906 on the eminently apocalyptic character of La Salette, leaves

no room for doubt. He writes: *The prophecy of La Salette alone is enough to make us certain of the events it announces. (...) The revelation of La Salette is more than a private revelation. A private revelation is given chiefly for the instruction and sanctification of the person to whom it is made, or of a few others; but La Salette is for the instruction and sanctification of the whole Church. (...) It is the Great News, said the Beautiful Lady: it is Mary's Apocalypse.* (p. 194).

For Father Combe, we are already in those latter times to which La Salette refers, as the very title of his book in some way suggests. He also cites and comments upon the words of Joseph de Maistre, the great nineteenth-century French writer: *We must be prepared for an immense event in the divine order... Fearful oracles announce that the times have arrived.* He adds that the generation among whom he lived would not see these things; consequently, it is we who shall see them. The oracles to which that great Christian thinker alluded—those oracles which, despite his genius, he studied with such care—are the numerous prophecies, some more ancient, others more recent, which announce that our age would not come to an end without a terrible blow such as the world had never seen. Many other prophecies later came to confirm those in which de Maistre firmly believed. Thus we dare to say that what gives us absolute certainty concerning the terrible predictions of La Salette is not only the great authority of this divine prophecy, closely bound to an apparition which the Church holds as certain, but also the fact that innumerable highly worthy prophecies have announced these same events. *We may affirm that almost all seers for more than a century, all those who died with a reputation for sanctity, all the servants of God declared venerable by the Church, or already beatified, or even canonized, have prophesied the unhappy age in which we find ourselves and have foretold that it will end with a lightning-stroke of divine justice.* (Ibid., pp. 187–188).

The judgment of Father Combe, confessor of Mélanie and a profound authority on La Salette by reason of his direct contact with the seer, is of great importance and deserves our most serious consideration, that it may assist us in understanding the message of La Salette. According to La Salette, the latter times, the Great Apostasy, the coming of Antichrist, the eclipse of the Church, and the loss of the Faith—even in Rome herself, transformed into the seat of Antichrist—are realities bound together and not to be sundered. That is to say, they are linked among themselves and refer not to separate ages or distant epochs, but to the latter times that shall culminate in the Parousia.

Concerning Antichrist, Father Combe points out that his ظهور is not distant or remote, any more than the great apostasy that is to precede him: *...the Antichrist has not yet been born, but he is near. And the general apostasy now in preparation, foretold by*

*the Apostle Saint Paul as having to precede immediately the son of perdition, likewise proves that he has not yet come, but that he is near: 'Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, unless there come a revolt first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.'* (2 Thess. 2:3). *Many private prophecies announce the near coming of Antichrist. But this prediction is far more explicit and far clearer in the Secret itself. There the Holy Virgin manifested herself at La Salette as Queen of the prophets, no less than Queen of the Church and of the Apostles.* (Ibid., pp. 130–131).

Antichrist will be possessed, as Mélanie explains in a letter to Father Combe: *It is said that Antichrist will be the devil incarnate; this means that he will be entirely possessed.* (Ibid., p. 132).

With regard to the eclipse of the Church foretold at La Salette, we have the following clarification from Father Combe: *The Church will be eclipsed. 1. It will not be known which is the true Pope. 2. The Holy Sacrifice will cease to be offered in churches and even in houses, in such wise that for a time there will be no more public worship. But I have seen, says Mélanie, that nevertheless the Holy Sacrifice will not cease: it will be offered in barns, in bedrooms, in cellars, and in underground places.* (Ibid., p. 137).

This is highly significant. The eclipse of the Church is related, on the one hand, to the Pope, since Rome will lose the faith and become the seat of Antichrist, so that men will not know which is the true Pope—whether because there are several at the same time, or because there is a succession of them, without knowing which are true and which are not. On the other hand, it is related to the Holy Mass, which will be abolished as a public act of worship and celebrated in secret. Even now, the true Mass is publicly celebrated in but few places, its celebration having been officially removed from churches and cathedrals.

More than this, Father Combe points to the aim of Freemasonry to secure an antipope: *...we know today that Freemasonry has changed its tactics: its plan will be to have an antipope...* (Ibid., p. 95). Therefore, the possibility is not excluded that one or more antipopes may govern the Church while she remains eclipsed. The Venerable Bartholomew Holzhauser, in his commentary on the Apocalypse, *Révélation du Passé et de l'Avenir* (1650), expresses the same idea of a future antipope destroying Holy Church: *Concerning the abominable and perverse idolatrous Antipope, who rends the Church of the West and will cause the first beast to be adored (XIII:11–18). XIII, 11: 'And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon.'* *This beast is a false prophet who will announce the son of perdition as though he were the Christ, and he will be the assisting arm by which Antichrist will work astonishing*

*deeds (...) 'He had two horns like a lamb,' because he will be an apostate Christian who will raise himself up secretly and fraudulently (...) he will occupy the pontifical see (...) (p. 91).*

Mélanie writes in one of her letters, dated September 30, 1894, that there will be two doubtful Popes: *But before that time of the final tribulations there will twice be a peace of short duration, two Popes corrupted, crushed, and doubtful.* (Jean Vaquié, *Bénédictins et malédictions*, ed. D.M.N., 1987, p. 143).

Concerning the nearness of Antichrist's appearance, Saint Pius X declared at the very beginning of his pontificate, in his first encyclical *E Supremi Apostolatus*, dated October 4, 1903: *There is no doubt that whoever considers all these things must readily admit that this falling away of souls is, as it were, a foretaste and a prelude of the evils that must be expected at the end of time; or even that the son of perdition spoken of by the Apostle may already be dwelling in this world.*

In the book of Father Arminjon, which so greatly aided Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus by satisfying her desire for knowledge and wisdom, one reads in a footnote: *...it must be concluded that the opinion which holds the near coming of Antichrist is more probable than the opinion that regards his advent as distant.* (*Fin du Monde Présent et Mystère de la Vie Future* [1881], Office Central de Lisieux, 1970, p. 63).

And in that same work, in harmony with La Salette, there is mention of the Church without a helmsman—that is to say, without a Pope, or under a false pope, an antipope: *At the moment when the tempest shall be most violent, when the Church shall be without a pilot, when the unbloody Sacrifice shall have ceased everywhere, when all shall seem humanly lost, then, says Saint John, two witnesses shall arise.* (*Ibid.*, pp. 54–55).

After La Salette came the apparition of Lourdes on February 11, 1858. Concerning this, Father and Doctor Iván Cadavid writes in his book *The Tears of Mary in Syracuse and the Enigma of Our Perilous Days* (1954): *For the third time the Mother of heaven presents herself to the world with the same message, and in that same French nation so beloved of the Virgin, yet also the very nation that gave rise to the dissolving germs of all societies through the principles of the Revolution of 1789. This message of Lourdes appears to be the final call of grace to apostate France.* (Ed. San Juan Eudes, 5th ed., Bogotá, 1958, p. 61).

The apparition of Lourdes, in addition to the Virgin's declaration, *I am the Immaculate Conception*—a dogma by which, in these latter times of the present age, the Most Holy Trinity wills to exalt the Mother of God, as Saint Louis Grignon

indicates—repeatedly exhorts the world to penance in the face of the impiety of apostate France and of the world that followed her evil example.

The fourth great Message and apparition of our sweet heavenly Mother took place at Fatima on May 13, 1917: *Men must amend their lives and ask pardon for their sins... The third secret is related to the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary... and concerns something terrible that will precede the complete Reign of the Heart of Mary.* (Ibid., p. 65).

Post tenebras lux. After so dark a chastisement, there shall come the foretold total Reign of Mary, and with it peace, virtue, and holiness... in the world. (Ibid., p. 115).

*God reserved the reign of Mary for the latter times. If through Mary the salvation of the world began—we repeat with Saint Grignion de Montfort—through Mary it must be brought to completion. Since Mary is the way by which Christ came into us the first time. She shall also be so when He comes the second.* (Ibid., p. 44).

The last message recognized by the Church is that of Syracuse, when in 1953, from August 29 to September 1, she did nothing but weep in silence; and thus: *Syracuse seems to be the crowning point of all the heavenly appeals.* (Ibid., p. 32). *...the tears of the Virgin at Syracuse accord with many circumstances foretold in various apocalyptic prophecies, and thus become the logical conclusion of the Marian messages within the reign of the Virgin, fixed by several post-New Testament saintly prophets for the 'latter times' (Grignion de Montfort, Don Bosco, Anne Catherine Emmerich, and the very message of Fatima).* (Ibid., p. 92).

*Clearly we may deduce that this inconsolable weeping is nothing other than the epilogue of Fatima and perhaps the corroboration of the prophecies of La Salette and Heede, which in turn harmonize with the other apocalyptic prophecies of Saint Malachy, Don Bosco, Saint Pius X, Saint Gaspar del Bufalo, Blessed Anna Maria Taigi, and so forth.* (Ibid., p. 83).

The great promise—*In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph*—what does it signify? *There would still remain the universal chastisement, the 'little end of the world,' which will be brief yet terrible, for, as we shall see, 'three quarters of the world' would perish. Once such a chastisement has been fulfilled, there will come the complete Reign of the Immaculate Heart of Mary: the peace, tranquility, and religious spirit that will precede the true end.* (Ibid., p. 32).

*Mary now takes the place of the ancient patriarchs and prophets. Let us recall Lourdes, Fatima, and so forth. This new and important mission of hers is entirely in accord with the prophetic words of Saint Grignion de Montfort, who says: 'Just as Mary was the way by which the Redeemer came into the world the first time, so she will again be the path of His second coming (the Parousia).' And he adds: 'The Reign of Mary is reserved for the latter times.' In the same sense speak Saint John Bosco, Saint Catherine Emmerich, and the Marian Messages, especially La Salette and Fatima. (Ibid., p. 32).*

*Everything seems to indicate: 1. That we are at 'the beginning of the end,' that is to say, that within these forty years<sup>1</sup> that separate us from the year 2000 post Christum, the final battles of the earth and the last chastisements of mortals may take place. 2. That after such upheavals and trials, there will take place here in the world that reign of justice so often announced in Sacred Scripture, and now in the Marian Messages... Both the Apocalypse (mysterious and allegorical) and the other biblical texts, as well as the prophecy of Saint Malachy and the hypotheses of certain commentators, seem to agree with the messages of the Virgin concerning a certain judgment and universal chastisement of the world by the Supreme Judge, in order to purify it and dispose it for His complete reign here upon earth. (Ibid., pp. 92–93). [1]*

The triumph, in the end, of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is the complete Reign of Our Lady, which is identified with the total and perfect Reign of Christ upon earth; for just as Our Lord came through Mary, so also He shall come and reign through Mary Most Holy, as Saint Louis Grignion so often affirms.

Monsignor Delassus likewise speaks of a triumph of the Church after the Apostasy, once the world and the Church have been purified: *Once the tribulations and anguishes have passed, God will purify Holy Church and revive the spirit of His elect by a means beyond all human foresight. After all this, there shall be in the Church of God so complete a reform and so blessed a renewal of holy pastors, that my spirit trembles in the Lord when I think upon it (...) The Bride of Christ is now as though disfigured (...) The nations estranged from the Church, drawn back by the sweet fragrance of Jesus Christ, shall return to the fold and be converted to the true Pastor and Bishop of their souls. Give thanks to the Lord for that great peace which He will deign to grant the Church after this storm. (La Mission Posthume de Sainte Jeanne d'Arc et le Règne Social de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ, ed. Sainte Jeanne d'Arc, 1983, pp. 352–353).*

The true and only New Era of the social Reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ is proclaimed by Monsignor Delassus together with Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint

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<sup>1</sup> This was written in 1954.

Joan of Arc: *It does not seem rash to think that after this harsh and lengthy trial, Christendom and the world shall enter another cycle—the one announced by Saint Catherine of Siena and many other seers, the one for which the words and deeds of Joan of Arc had prepared the way, and which seems suspended from the day of her martyrdom to that of her canonization: the era of the kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ...* (Ibid., pp. 355–356).

Monsignor Delassus in turn asks: *What shall be the duration of that era? Who can say? Yet we know that God has ordered all things by measure, by number, and by weight. Now God employed forty centuries to prepare the coming of the Son of Man. Would not such a preparation seem disproportionate if it were only the opening of a reign destined to last but a few years—the years of Saint Louis’s rule, so quickly followed by a decline that would end, in our own day, after a few brief gleams, in universal apostasy and the end of the world? A conviction shared by several of those who have attempted to interpret the divine revelations consigned in Sacred Scripture leads them to believe that the reign of Christ over all nations will extend through long centuries. Likewise, apart from the Messianic prophecies and their interpretation, eminent minds such as Joseph de Maistre thought that, far from being in the last days of the world, we are still only in the first centuries of the Church.* (Ibid., p. 356).

That is to say, the best is yet to come: the consummation of all things in what would be the Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ upon earth, all under one Shepherd and forming one fold.

For this reason Monsignor Delassus says that we are in the prelude of Christ’s reign: *Let us adopt this supposition: that we are in the first centuries of the Church, and that all that has taken place from Pentecost until our own day has been but the prelude to the reign of the Divine Redeemer over all nations...* (Ibid., p. 357).

The Parousia is a promise of hope: *Our hope is not the universal Republic, which the material and moral revolution now unfolding in the world is preparing, but rather Christendom restored—Christendom brought to its perfection through the reign of Christ, accepted, welcomed with gratitude and joy by all nations: Unum ovile et unus Pastor.* (Ibid., p. 359). This is the great promise: universal unity in Christ the King, and not in the false ecumenism of Vatican II and of John Paul II, which will culminate in the false peace of Antichrist.

Father Emmanuel, so renowned in France for his holiness and reputation, speaks of the triumph of the Church after the Great Apostasy of Antichrist and after the Parousia of Our Lord in these terms: *God has willed that the destinies of the Church of His only Son should be traced beforehand in the Scriptures... The Church, being destined in all things to be conformed to Our Lord, shall undergo before the end of the world a supreme*

*trial which will be a true passion... an exclusively religious drama shall unfold and encompass the whole universe.* (La Sainte Église, ed. Clovis, 1997, pp. 255–257). Archbishop Lefebvre wrote the preface to the previously unpublished articles that were issued before the edition collecting them into a single work.

*Never shall evil have been seen more unbridled... The Church, like Our Lord, shall be delivered over defenseless to the executioners who will crucify her in all her members; but they shall not be permitted to break her bones, which are the elect... The trial shall be limited, shortened for the sake of the elect; and the elect shall be all the truly humble. Finally, the trial shall end in an unheard-of triumph of the Church, comparable to a resurrection. At that time, and even amid the preludes of the supreme crisis, the Church shall see the remnants of the nations converted. But her keenest consolation shall be the return of the Jews. The Jews shall be converted, whether before or during the triumph of the Church...* (Ibid., p. 259).

This triumph of the Church, comparable to a resurrection, or to a true restoration and recapitulation of all things in Christ the King—as Saint Pius X enshrined in his motto—shall not come to pass until after the impiety and great apostasy that will culminate in Antichrist, who shall be overthrown by the Parousia of the Lord: *Let no man deceive you by any means. For there must first come the apostasy, and the man of sin must be revealed, the son of perdition... Thus the end of the world shall not come until there is first manifested that terribly wicked and impious man whom Saint Paul designates as the man of sin, the son of perdition.* (Ibid., pp. 261–262).

*Of what apostasy does Saint Paul speak to us? It is not a partial defection, for he says in an absolute manner, the apostasy. Alas, it can be understood only of the apostasy en masse of Christian societies, which shall socially and civilly renounce their baptism; of the defection of those nations which Jesus Christ, in Saint Paul's vigorous expression, has made fellow-heirs with His Church (Eph. 3:6). Only such an apostasy will make possible the manifestation and dominion of the personal enemy of Jesus Christ—in a word, of Antichrist.* (Ibid., pp. 262–263).

We see, then, that this is a General or Universal Apostasy, brought about through the mass defection of Christian peoples or nations—that is, through the apostasy of the nations of the Gentiles, socially and civilly renouncing the faith they received in Baptism, as today we may observe in the collapse of the faith throughout the whole world, thus bringing about almost literally what Christ foretold concerning His second coming, and what Father Emmanuel points out: *Our Lord said: 'Do you think that the Son of Man, when He comes, will find faith on the earth?'* (Luke 18:8). *The divine Master foresaw the decline of faith in an aged world.* (Ibid., p. 263).

This aging, this senescence, this decrepitude, is likewise noted by Saint Augustine in reference to the Church at the end of time, as we may see in Dom Lefebvre's commentary on the Missal: *At last Jesus ends His life with the sacrifice of Golgotha, soon followed by the triumph of His Resurrection; and the Church, like her divine Head, will then appear overcome and nailed to the Cross, although she will win the decisive victory. 'The Body of Christ, which is the Church, just like the human body, was once young, though at the end of the world it will have an appearance of old age' (St. Augustine).* (Post-Pentecost Season, Historical Exposition, 1938, p. 714).

As Father Emmanuel warns, it is not the winds of the age—the maxims of the world—that make faith totter, but rather that Catholic peoples, bewitched by material comfort, reject the faith and dogma as untimely: *It is not that the winds of the age can make this inextinguishable flame waver, but rather that societies, intoxicated by material well-being, reject it as untimely.* (Ibid., p. 263). Astonishing though it is, this calls to mind the official rejection by the Vatican Curia of the Kingship of Christ the King, judged to be inopportune, as was stated by the Nuncio in Bern, Monsignor Marchioni, on March 31, 1976, in Bern, to Archbishop Lefebvre, when the latter asked what had become of the Social Reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ: *You know, at present it is impossible; perhaps in some distant future? At present that reign is in individuals; one must open oneself to the masses... the Social Reign of Our Lord is something difficult at present...* (Le Destronaron, ed. San Pio X, 1987, pp. 102–103).

It is incredible that a Nuncio, spokesman of Rome and of the Pope, should say such a thing; more incredible still is the coincidence with what Father Emmanuel had pointed out. Yet such are the facts, and facts speak for themselves to those willing to see.

How, then, shall one not fall into the claws of Antichrist, if, as Father Emmanuel warns, Catholic political power is the obstacle<sup>2</sup> that restrains his manifestation: *He [St. Paul] had shown him without any doubt the Roman Empire transformed, a Christian power arising in the place of a pagan power, the authority of the Caesars passing into the hands of the baptized, who would use it to extend the reign of Jesus Christ; and he was therefore able to add: As long as this state of things endures, remain at*

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<sup>2</sup> The obstacle, it would seem, according to the words of Saint Pius X, is the empire of truth upheld by the Church, for he says: "When this doctrine can no longer be kept incorrupt, and when the empire of truth is no longer possible in this world, then the Son of God will appear a second time. But until that final day we must keep the sacred deposit intact and repeat the glorious declaration of Saint Hilary: 'It is better to die in this age than to corrupt the chastity of truth.'" (Pie X, Jérôme Dal-Gal, O.M.Conv., 1953, pp. 107–108). And we could add: the Immaculate Virginity of Truth, which today is being openly corrupted and even violated. The empire of truth includes everything that until now ~~has been~~ affirmed as possibly constituting the obstacle:—the Roman order, the faith, the Holy Mass, and so forth.

*peace; Antichrist will not appear... Therefore political Christian power is what will prevent the sect from attaining its objective. (La Sainte Église, p. 266).*

*By turning its back on the faith, the world goes forth into darkness... By renouncing Jesus Christ, it must needs fall, willingly or unwillingly, into the claws of Satan, who is rightly called the prince of darkness. It cannot remain neutral; there can be no independence. Its apostasy places it directly under the power of the devil and of his agents. The learned Estius, studying the text of the Apostle, says that this apostasy began with Luther and Calvin. Such is its point of departure... Today it tends toward its consummation. It is called the Revolution, that is, the insurrection of man against God and against His Christ. Its formula is laicism, which is the elimination of God and of His Christ... For a long time there has reigned a semi-apostasy... Shall we, the baptized, yes or no, allow the apostasy to be consummated, which in a short time will bring forth Antichrist? (Ibid., pp. 263–265).*

*Antichrist, the synthesis of all false prophets: It is clear, from what has gone before, that Antichrist will present himself to the world as the most complete type of those false prophets who fascinate the masses and lead them into every excess under the pretext of religious reform. (Ibid., p. 275).*

This explains the fascination that John Paul II exerts upon the masses while directing the most frightful religious reform that can be imagined. One understands how Archbishop Lefebvre could come to say, in reference to John Paul II, that he was—or seemed to be—the Antichrist, when he declared: *I think we can speak of dechristianization, and that these people who occupy Rome today are antichrists. (Conference at Ecône, September 14, 1987).*

The concordance between the works of Antichrist, the Pseudo-Prophet, and the actions of John Paul II is astonishing, as may be seen from what Father Emmanuel says: *It is altogether credible, moreover, that Antichrist, in order to establish himself, will lead on all the partisans of false religions. He will present himself as full of respect for freedom of worship, one of the maxims and one of the lies of the revolutionary beast. (Ibid., p. 281).* Do we not see John Paul II proclaiming religious liberty and freedom of worship everywhere, gathering with the leaders of all false religions at Assisi in 1986 and at the Vatican, in Saint Peter's Square, in 1999? And all this with the appearance of the lamb: *They shall have the appearance of the lamb. They shall brandish the evangelical maxims of peace, concord, liberty, and human fraternity; and beneath these appearances they shall propagate the most shameful atheism. They shall have the appearance of the Lamb. (Ibid., p. 202).*

Just as John Paul II and the whole Vatican hierarchy proclaim in the name of the Second Vatican Council. And all this in order to proclaim, together with Judaism and its offspring—communism and capitalism, fused into a technocratic and social syncretism—the paradise upon earth; for *they maintain that humanity, on the path of indefinite progress, will one day find its paradise upon earth.* (Ibid., p. 314).

For Father Emmanuel, the nineteenth century was already at the prelude of the crisis and of the appearance of Antichrist: *Holding that we are witnessing the preludes of the crisis that will lead to the appearance of Antichrist upon the stage of the world, we refrain from specifying times and seasons... Yet we may discern the approach of the final crisis, seeing before our very eyes the satanic plan being woven and unfolded, of which that appearance will be the crowning point.* (Ibid., pp. 344–345).

There is here an astonishing chain of connections that cannot be severed at whim or by exegetical prejudice, if we are to remain faithful to the clear and sure guidance of Saint Louis Grignion. Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is reserved for its full manifestation in the latter times; and these latter times are marked by the Great Apostasy, which shall culminate in Antichrist; and he, in turn, shall be overthrown by the Parousia of the Lord, whereupon shall begin the triumph of the Church through the complete reign of Jesus and Mary upon this earth. So simple a truth is denied only because of the anti-millenarian prejudice that has invaded the minds of Churchmen, preventing them from seeing clearly. In what follows, we shall do no more than bring forward the texts which allow us, once again, to ground what has here been affirmed.

First of all, Saint Louis Grignion, missionary and prophet of great spiritual gifts, does no more than say with insistence what only one unwilling to hear could fail to hear, and what only one unwilling to see could fail to see: *...Mary's power over all the devils will shine forth especially in the latter times, when Satan will lie in wait for her heel, that is to say, for her humble slaves and her poor children, whom she will raise up to wage war against him. They shall be little and poor in the eyes of the world, and abased before others like the heel, trodden under foot and oppressed, as the heel is in relation to the other members of the body... [but who] in union with Mary shall crush the head of the devil and cause Jesus Christ to triumph.* (Op. cit., no. 54, pp. 470–471).

And these: *They shall be the true apostles of the latter times, to whom the Lord of Hosts shall give speech and strength to work wonders and win glorious spoils from His enemies. They shall sleep without gold or silver, and, what is more, without anxious care, in the midst of other priests, ecclesiastics, and clerics, inter medios cleros; and yet they shall*

*have the silver wings of the dove, in order to go with the pure intention of the glory of God and the salvation of souls wherever the Holy Ghost calls them... (Ibid., no. 58, p. 472).*

Saint Louis Grignon not only associates the Blessed Virgin Mary with the Second Coming, but teaches moreover that this Second Coming, or Parousia of Christ, has as its object His reign upon earth, as may be seen in the following text: *...if my loving Jesus should come once again into the world in all His glory, as most certainly He shall, in order to reign there, He will choose no other road for His journey than that of the divine Mary, through whom He came so surely and so perfectly the first time. The difference between the one coming and the other is that the first was secret and hidden, whereas the second will be glorious and resplendent; yet both are perfect, because both are accomplished through Mary. (Ibid., no. 158, p. 527).*

This same idea is also found in no. 13, p. 444, which we cited above. In the book *The Secret of Mary*, the Saint masterfully relates devotion to the Virgin with the second coming and the reign of Christ: *Thus, just as through Mary God came into the world the first time in humility and self-emptying, could it not also be said that through Mary He will come a second time, as the whole Church expects Him, in order to reign everywhere and to judge the living and the dead? How and when—who knows? But this I know well: that God, whose thoughts are farther removed from ours than heaven is from earth, will come at a time and in a manner least expected by men, even by those most learned and most versed in Holy Scripture, which on this point remains very obscure. Nevertheless, it must still be believed that, at the end of time, and perhaps sooner than one thinks, God will raise up great men filled with the Holy Ghost and with the spirit of Mary, through whom this divine Sovereign will work great wonders upon earth, in order to destroy sin therein and establish the reign of Jesus Christ her Son over the corrupt world... (Ibid., nos. 58–59, p. 290).*

Let no one say that the Saint is unclear or that he has failed plainly to express his thought: through Mary the reign of Jesus shall come at the end of time after His Parousia. So true is this that the Saint had first written, as the note at the beginning of the *Treatise on True Devotion* in the French edition indicates: *Montfort had first written: It was through the Blessed Virgin that Jesus Christ came into the world the first time, and it is likewise through her that He must come the second. Mary was but little known at the first coming of her Son, but she must be far more known at the second. If she remained hidden at the first coming, it was by a marvelous dispensation, in order that her Son Jesus might be better known. But she shall be revealed at the second, so that the reign of her Son—perfect knowledge and total kingship—may come upon earth.*

Yet so deep-rooted is the anti-millenarian sentiment that has invaded almost all the intervening voices in the Church, that in the notes to the works of Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, published by the B.A.C., Madrid, 1954, they feel compelled to dispel every appearance of millenarianism—misunderstood, even in its spiritual and patristic sense—from the Saint's text, which says: *At the second coming of Jesus Christ, Mary must be made known and revealed by the Holy Ghost, so that through her men may know, love, and serve Jesus Christ; for then those reasons will no longer remain which obliged the Holy Ghost to hide His Spouse during her lifetime and to manifest her but rarely since the Gospel was first preached.* To this they append the following remark: *...this has nothing whatever to do with millenarian opinions... There is nothing, therefore, in Montfort's predictions that is not in conformity with orthodoxy...* (Ibid., note 77, p. 467).

The commentator who, in the last analysis, deems every form of millenarianism to lie outside orthodoxy does not realize that, if this were so, then the Holy Fathers who professed spiritual or patristic millenarianism during the first four or five centuries of the Church—where it was a common doctrine, as Father Florentino Alcañiz shows in his work *Ecclesia Patristica et Millenarismus* (Granada, 1933)—would have been heterodox. This amounts to nothing less than spitting upward. The anti-millenarian persecution is a fact, as may be seen from the following comment of Father Castellani, which gives us some idea of the matter: *In sum, there are three interpretations of Chapter XX: one condemned by the Church, that of Cerinthus, namely 'carnal millenarianism'; and two that are neither condemned nor defined, and are therefore two free 'options.'* But today there is a kind of conspiracy that prevents the ancient exegesis and makes Saint Augustine's allegorical interpretation *de facto* obligatory by means of punishments or threats. And how do I know this? First, from myself, from the testimony of my own experience, which cannot lie; for I was accused of being a millenarian, and I continue to be accused by the Presbyter Doctor Mejía (who is no doctor), and a number of punishments have come upon me for being a millenarian, though without ever saying that this was the reason—anonymous punishments... and then also by several persons I have known, quite eminent men, who were persecuted for the same cause, for being millenarians, of whom I shall mention the principal ones: Fr. Víctor Anzoátegui, Doctor in Scripture from the Gregorian in Rome. He declared himself a millenarian. Freely speaking, he was pursued without respite... 2° Fr. Antonio Van Rixtel, S.C.J., a Dutchman, professor of Scripture, a very learned and intelligent man... 3° Fr. Florentino Alcañiz wrote in Rome his doctoral thesis in Sacred Scripture on 'The Patristic Church and the Parousia,' professor at the seminary of Sardinia and later at Granada; when he published his Latin book, strictly scientific, in 1933, he was driven from his chairs and later sent to Buenos Aires, where he gave me his thesis that I might translate it... Many others I have known, though less closely, such as the eminent Jesuit scripturist Fr. Rovira, who wrote the article 'Parousia' in the

*Espasa Encyclopedia, and others...* (Catecismo para Adultos, ed. Patria Grande, Buenos Aires, 1979, pp. 179–181).

For all these reasons, it is hardly surprising that the mere mention of the term Millenarianism should now be met in ecclesiastical circles with distrust and contempt; the disastrous result being that, on the eve of the Parousia, we find ourselves intellectually and spiritually disarmed, not knowing what to hold fast to amid the general apostasy of the nations. And this is indeed a fact, and a most lamentable one. Moreover, errors are dearly paid for, according to their gravity.

In order to have some notion of Millenarianism—or Millenism, as Father Castellani prefers, since milenarismo is grammatically incorrect<sup>3</sup>—we shall quote the Latin thesis *Ecclesia Patristica et Millenarismus* by Father Alcañiz, published in 1933 and translated into Spanish, as it were framed with Father Castellani's own commentary: *Millenarianism may be distinguished into three classes, according to the way it developed in history: 1) Crude, or carnal, or Jewish Millenism (Cerinthus); 2) Spiritual Millenism (the patristic exegesis); 3) The mixed form (many modern authors). The second existed before the first, but it was not called 'spiritual millenism' until after the appearance of the heresy of Cerinthus; for until then there had been no need to distinguish it from anything else, and it was simply the common exegesis.*

1. *The heresy of Cerinthus, whose exact technical name is—or should be—chiliasm, imagined for the righteous after their resurrection a joyful life lasting many centuries, in the manner of the Old Testament (to avoid using Saint Jerome's fierce epithets, for which UNESCO in our day would call him anti-Semitic); that is, with marriages, the begetting of children, circumcision, vengeance against the unbelieving, animal sacrifices, and the rest of the prescriptions of the Law of Moses—in short, a life not very different from the present mortal one, except far more prosperous and happy. Moreover, this millenarianism interprets in a crudely literal sense both the City of the New Jerusalem, which in Saint John and Ezekiel we have seen, and likewise all the other promises of the Prophets—hills flowing with milk and honey, great banquets and feastings, and so on. All this, according to that view, would have to be fulfilled during the Thousand Years as compensation for the labors and sufferings of the righteous in this evil age. That, and nothing more, is the Messiah. As can readily be seen, it differs but little from the earthly kingdom dreamed of by the Pharisees, and sought to obtain from Christ then and there (tacataca) by force and without delay.*
2. *Spiritual millenarianism attributes to the risen just neither marriages nor revelries, nor anything prescribed by the Mosaic Law, nor great banquets as though they were either*

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<sup>3</sup> Catecismo para Adultos, ed. Patria Grande, Buenos Aires, 1979. (Catechism for Adults).

*reward or necessary sustenance; and everything that Scripture, by tropes or oriental images, promises concerning happiness in Paradise or in the New Jerusalem, it declares must be understood symbolically, purging away whatever might appear incongruous, or to the Saints ridiculous, puerile, or unseemly. (...) 3. The third kind of millenism, which we call 'mixed' and which others call 'mitigated,' attributes to the risen just neither marriages, nor military triumphs, nor carnivals, nor the restoration of the rites of the Old Testament; but it interprets literally the earthly prosperity and temporal goods described by the ancient Prophets, and delights, so to speak, in the restoration of the earthly Paradise. Within this doctrine many gradations may be found, according to how much or how little its advocates borrow from the other two poles of millenism, the spiritual and the crude. Crude millenism, attributed to Cerinthus, was embraced by many heretics during the patristic period, and seems to have constituted a danger in the time of Jerome and Augustine. Spiritual millenism was held by almost all the Fathers of the early centuries, by many Catholics today, and always throughout history by some theologians, as we shall see. Mixed millenism was held by some of the Holy Fathers, though by few in the primitive Church. (The Patristic Church and the Parousia, ed. Paulinas, Buenos Aires, pp. 77–80).*

There is an interpretation sometimes confused with millenarianism, though it is not millenarianism, and it is followed, among others, by Cornelius a Lapide and Knabenbauer, as Father Alcañiz and Father Castellani rightly observe: *A position which is not millenarianism—though it is sometimes confused with it—was held by some of the Holy Fathers and, in our own day, by not a few theologians and exegetes. This opinion consists essentially in positing a certain lapse of time, more or less long—and here there reigns enormous variety—between the downfall of Antichrist and the second coming of Christ; during that interval, the Church would enjoy her greatest diffusion, holiness, and glory throughout the whole world, in accordance with the prophecies. (The Church..., p. 80).*

Spiritual millenarianism was the common and ordinary doctrine of the first four centuries of the Church. Afterwards it fell into oblivion, through the strange turns of history and through human errors in which even great saints played a part. Saint Jerome, while combating—quite rightly—carnal millenarianism, and in order that its defenders might not claim Saint Augustine as even a remote support, pressed him not to interpret the Apocalypse literally. Augustine then turned to an allegorical interpretation, abandoning the literal interpretation that was spiritual millenarianism, though without ever condemning it, as is now often claimed through sheer ignorance. We may see this from what Saint Augustine himself acknowledges after changing his opinion: *Thus, because Scripture says that 'one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day,' after six thousand*

*years had been completed as six days, there would follow the seventh day as a kind of Sabbath and rest in the last thousand years; that is to say, the saints would rise again to celebrate and enjoy this Sabbath. This opinion would be tolerable if it held that during that Sabbath they would enjoy certain spiritual delights in the presence of the Lord, for there was a time when I myself was of this opinion. But since they say that those who then rise again are to occupy themselves with extravagant carnal banquets in which there will be such an abundance of foods and drinks that they will not merely show no moderation, but will exceed even the bounds of credibility itself. By no means can such things be believed except by carnal men. Those who are spiritual, and who give credence to such fictions, are called in Greek Chiliasts, which, translated literally, means Millenarians. (The City of God, Book XX, ch. 7).*

From this it is evident that the whole question of Millenarianism does not lie in expecting the Reign of Christ upon earth after His Parousia or Second Coming, but rather, as the great Saint Augustine affirms, in the carnalizing of that reign, in the grossly fleshly debasements which constitute not only a crude and vulgar error, but an intolerable heresy.

But from there to going to the opposite extreme and condemning as heretical every form of millenarianism is not only an error as crude and gross as the former, but itself a heresy as well; for that would be to condemn the primitive Church and the Holy Fathers who peacefully and confidently held Patristic or spiritual Millenarianism.

Father Castellani bears witness to this when he explains: *There are three millenniums—or rather, three forms of millenism, as one should say, since ‘millenarianism’ is grammatically incorrect. One is spiritual millenism, which consists simply in interpreting literally what Saint John says in the Apocalypse—nothing more. That is, in taking it as something that is truly going to happen, however difficult or strange it may seem. Thus almost all the Fathers of the first four centuries understood that chapter, beginning with the very first century, when the Apostles were still alive. They believed quite peacefully that there would be a Reign of a Thousand Years, and that the Church would be exceedingly prosperous and would in fact be ruled by Jesus Christ, after the Parousia—that is, after Jesus Christ has descended to vanquish Antichrist. Saint Justin Martyr, Saint Irenaeus, Tertullian, Lactantius, Saint Ambrose, and Saint Augustine in his youth understood it in this way. I myself translated from the Latin, word for word, all the testimonies and all the authors in sequence, which Father Florentino Alcañiz made available to me, in the book *The Patristic Church and the Parousia*. All this would no doubt have continued thus, had it not been for the stumbling-block of carnal millenism. A Jew named Kerinthos, or Cerinthus (4th century), founded a heretical sect upon a grossly Judaic interpretation of chapter XX, which attracted many followers and was condemned by Eugene IV in the Bull *Cantate Domino* (1441),*

together with a whole list of heretics (the Ebionites, Arius, Paul of Samosata, etc.), though not precisely for carnal millenism, but for having denied the Divinity of Christ (see Denzinger, no. 710). Yet carnal millenism was also condemned—not by a Pope or a Council, but by what is called the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church.

Not a single word of Kerinthos has come down to us, and what we know of him comes from the Doctors who opposed him, above all Saint Jerome. They say that he preached a very great triumph of the Jews, who were to dominate the entire world, take vengeance on their enemies, and indulge in grand revelries and feasts. Some add that, according to this Kerinthos, they would also enjoy abundant sexual pleasures. This is not certain; Saint Augustine omits it. We know what he taught only from the Holy Fathers who refuted him, and nothing more. Then something curious came to pass: Saint Jerome, writing from Palestine, where the new heresy was spreading rapidly, wrote to Saint Augustine—who was still a young man and held him in great veneration—sternly rebuking him because, in Sermon 259, where Saint Augustine declared that he himself was a millenarian, he was “lending support to the heresy, which Jerome termed Jewish fables, and urging him to interpret the Apocalypse in another way. He frightened Saint Augustine, and Augustine then devised an *allegorical interpretation* of chapter XX of the Apocalypse which—may God forgive me, for it pains me to say it—is such a blunder and such a misstep on the part of the Holy Doctor as great as his talent itself. One is moved to tears when reading it in Book XX of the Civitas Dei, and one feels ashamed for Saint Augustine—not ashamed of him.”

To put it briefly, chapter XX of the Apocalypse would then be poetry. But if that is so, what is to prevent the rest of the Apocalypse, and indeed all of Scripture, from being allegory, or poetry? According to that interpretation, the triumph of the Church is this triumph that we now know—and it is not very triumphant. In heaven it is triumphant, but here below it is not. The thrones of the twelve Apostles who are to judge all men are taken to mean the sees of bishops, and so on with all the rest... The devil, removed by an Angel and bound for a thousand years, is said to signify that now the devil does not have much power or strength to tempt men; and that is not true. He has tremendous force even now. And thus, by interpreting everything allegorically, it undoes the prophecy of Scripture and exposes Scripture itself to being overthrown altogether by turning it into poetry—and worse still, into bad poetry, as the impious have said, such as Aldous, who remarked that Scripture was a somewhat savage poetry from the Stone Age and attacked the Bible by saying that it was worth nothing and was bad poetry. Thus that allegorical interpretation is a fall on Saint Augustine’s part, out of deference to Saint Jerome. He devised that new interpretation and said: ‘I do not say that this is the only possible interpretation; there is another, and I dare not condemn it, because it has been followed by many Saints and many Martyrs.’ And Saint Jerome, who was furious against the millenarians of his own time, says the same: ‘We dare

*not condemn millenism, because many Saints, Doctors, and Martyrs have followed it.' And yet now people dare to do so; there are many who condemn pure millenism and try to have those punished who hold it. They are not the best representatives of the Catholic Church, either in learning or in quality, who today sustain a kind of conspiracy against spiritual millenism. (Cat. pp. 176–178).*

To condemn spiritual Millenarianism is to condemn the primitive Church of the first four centuries, and that is impossible; for, as Father Castellani rightly points out: *...the Church will never condemn the patristic opinion, for the very same reason that Saint Augustine and Saint Jerome refused to condemn it—namely, because many Holy Fathers and Martyrs held it, as both of them say; that is, the Church will not saw off the branch on which she sits, which is Tradition. That is what the Protestants did. (Cat. pp. 181–182).*

Menéndez y Pelayo, in his renowned work *History of the Spanish Heterodox*, Book VI, Chapter IV, says with regard to millenarianism and Father Lacunza, after posing the question, *May Father Lacunza be counted among the Spanish heterodox?: An ancient and venerable tradition, both among the Hebrews and among Christians, accepted and confirmed by some of the Apostolic Fathers and by the apologist Saint Justin, held that the present state of the world will perish within the sixth millennium. For them, the six days of Genesis were at once the account of what had been and an announcement and prophecy of what was to come. In six days the fabric of the world had been made, and six thousand years it would endure in its present state, after which justice and goodness would reign upon the earth, with all prevarication and iniquity banished away. This seventh millennium is commonly called the reign of the millenarians or chiliasts. Saint Jerome (on chapter 20 of Jeremiah) did not dare to embrace it, nor did he dare to condemn it, since many saints and Christian martyrs had adopted it; and thus he held that each person was free to follow his own opinion, reserving all judgment to God. What was, of course, anathematized was the view of the carnal millenarians, who supposed that those thousand years would be spent in continual banquets, revelries, and sensual delights. The opinion of the pure or spiritual millenarians found in the eighteenth century a most fervent defender in the Chilean Jesuit Father Lacunza, one of the exiles, a man so spiritual and so given to prayer that even his own opponent, Father Bestard, says of him that 'every day he remained motionless in prayer for more than five long hours, his face pressed to the ground.'* (...) From 1824 onward, the work was placed on the Roman Index, reason enough for it to remain under a note and suspicion of error. But not every forbidden book is heretical; (...) the following question at once suggests itself: *Was The Coming of the Messiah condemned for its millenarian doctrine, or for some other secondary matter? (...) all know that the question of millenarianism—spiritual millenarianism, that is—is a matter of opinion; and although the opinion of the temporal reign of Jesus Christ upon earth has against it almost all the Fathers,*

*theologians, and commentators from the end of the fifth century onward, beginning with Saint Augustine and Saint Jerome, it is likewise true that more ancient Fathers professed it, and that the Church has defined nothing on the matter. At most, the thesis which Father Lacunza, with great apparatus of biblical learning and no little subtlety of intellect, seeks to uphold, may be called unusual and singular. It must not be accounted heresy to affirm, as he does, that Jesus Christ is to come in glory and majesty not only to judge men, but also to reign for a thousand years over His just ones in the renewed and purified world, which shall be as it were a reflection of the heavenly Sion.*

This just and wise judgment of Don Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo—which ought to be kept in mind lest one sin through ignorance, which is often somewhat rash—is, in Father Castellani’s opinion, the finest thing ever written on millenarianism, as is clear from his words: *Menéndez y Pelayo, in Chapter IV of Book VI of The Heterodox, which he wrote on Lacunza—one of the best modern exegetes of Scripture and the greatest millenist now extant (the greatest of all were the earliest Fathers of the Church)—wrote an appendix to Chapter IV of Book VI which is the best thing ever written on Lacunza and on millenism, and there he says: ‘as everyone knows, spiritual or pure millenism is a free opinion.’ Well, not everyone knows this, and nowadays some do not wish to know it.* (Cat. p. 179).

Let all this suffice to keep us from persisting in senseless prejudices against spiritual millenarianism, which ought rather to be the object of our hope, just as in the primitive Church the anxious and ardent expectation of the Parousia of the Lord sustained the fervor and holiness of the first faithful. Today, amid a crisis of faith without historical precedent in the Church, that very thing which would give us strength and keep us steadfast in the midst of darkness and defections from the faith—a sign of the latter times—is taken from us: the source of life and hope in the glorious return of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The notion or idea of triumph is something that runs throughout the Church and her faithful. The question is how that triumph shall come to pass, and the crucial point is whether it will be brought about by the direct intervention of Christ the King—by His appearing and His kingdom (2 Tim. 4:1)—or without such intervention.

We know that for Saint Louis Grignion de Montfort the triumph comes through the Parousia and through the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is enough to recall what he says so insistently: *If, then, it is true that the knowledge and reign of Jesus Christ must come into the world, it is no less true that this will be accomplished only as a*

*consequence of the knowledge and reign of the Blessed Virgin, she who brought Him into the world the first time and who will make Him triumph in the second. (Op. cit., no. 13, p. 444).*

The words of Saint Paul, *I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, by His appearing and His kingdom* (2 Tim. 4:1), are understood by Saint Louis-Marie within the following apocalyptic and millenarian context: *Just as through Mary God came into the world the first time in humility and self-emptying, could it not also be said that through Mary He will come a second time, as the whole Church expects Him, in order to reign everywhere and to judge the living and the dead?* (The Secret of Mary, no. 58, p. 290).

There can be no slightest doubt as to the thought and mind of Saint Louis-Marie, unless one is blinded by the prejudice of anti-millenarian poison; for the same idea reappears, nourishing his whole spirituality: *...and if my loving Jesus comes once again into the world in all His glory (as He most certainly shall) in order to reign there, He will choose no other road for His journey than that of the divine Mary, through whom He came so securely and so perfectly the first time. (Ibid., no. 158, p. 527).*

Saint Louis-Marie identifies the Parousia with the reign of Christ, and this is spiritual or patristic millenarianism. According to the Saint, the triumph comes after the Parousia and not before, as in the other interpretation which expects a triumph without the second coming of Our Lord. Others, such as Cornelius a Lapide, Knabenbauer, and the like, expect a triumph after the defeat of Antichrist, but before the Parousia.

All speak and hope for a triumph. Some expect it without any divine intervention at all: these are the evolutionists, who await a triumph through the merely immanent forces of history and time. Others admit a divine intervention at least for the defeat of Antichrist and his wicked reign of false peace and prosperity, and they place the triumph between that defeat of Antichrist and the Parousia—that is, after Antichrist and before the Second Coming of the Lord. Others place the triumph after the Parousia, which is preceded by all that has been foretold for the latter times: the Great Apostasy and the reign of Antichrist. But the triumph is before the end of the world—that is to say, throughout all the time extending from the Parousia until the end of the world—and these are the spiritual millenarians.

Let us recall the Burning Prayer of Saint Louis-Marie, which is eminently apocalyptic and millenarian. Here are a few passages: *It is time to do what Thou hast promised; Thy divine Law is broken; Thy Gospel is abandoned; torrents of iniquity flood the whole earth and sweep away even Thy servants; the whole earth lies desolate; impiety sits*

*enthroned; Thy sanctuary is profaned and the abomination stands in the holy place. Wilt Thou leave all things thus abandoned?... Is it not necessary that Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and that Thy kingdom should come? Hast Thou not shown beforehand to some of Thy friends a future renewal of Thy Church?... All creatures, even the most insensible, groan beneath the weight of the innumerable sins of Babylon and cry out for Thy coming to restore all things. (Op. cit., p. 597).*

It is more than clear that, for Saint Louis-Marie, the triumph must come through the intervention of Christ in His Parousia. This excludes any triumph before the Parousia, for the triumph is moreover the reign of Christ upon earth after His second coming. Throughout his writings, the Saint identifies Parousia, Triumph, and Reign. Those who do not see this see nothing and understand nothing of Saint Louis-Marie.

A proof of anti-millenarian prejudice, or simply of fear toward anything that might smell of millenarianism, is found in the notes of the B.A.C. edition of the Complete Works of Saint Louis-Marie Grignion, which seek at all costs to exclude any identification of the Saint with millenarianism, as may be seen in one of the notes to the Treatise on True Devotion: *Knowing that the writings of Saint Louis de Montfort are especially approved and recommended by the Church, no one should imagine that they contain an error condemned by her, such as carnal millenarianism. One might, however, think that the most devout author partakes of the spiritual millenarianism admitted by some Holy Fathers and still followed by various modern writers, though generally set aside by theologians. Yet it does not seem that our saint's predictions can be interpreted in that sense. The long note continues, and one sees there a confused mixture of ideas and concepts revealing the tangle that prevails concerning what spiritual millenarianism truly is. Further on, in its eagerness to reject every form of millenarianism, it reads: But this knowledge and reign of Jesus Christ, which not only Saint Montfort but many others, and even the Supreme Pontiffs in their encyclicals, await, has nothing to do with millenarian opinions, for it does not suppose long duration, peace, and prosperity—things foreign to the character of the Church militant and ill-suited to the preaching of Christ, who left persecution as an inheritance to His disciples. There is therefore nothing in these predictions that is not in conformity with orthodoxy; and within orthodoxy, with the opinions most widely followed and best founded. (Note no. 77, pp. 466–467).*

Poor author of that note. Yet, as so often happens, ignorance is rash. So then spiritual millenarianism is not in conformity with orthodoxy—which comes to the same thing as saying that the common doctrine of the Church during the first four centuries was not in conformity with orthodoxy. What a glaring confusion that betrays: either lack of memory or lack of knowledge.

Moreover, to say that a long duration of peace and prosperity is foreign to the character of the Church Militant and ill-suited to Christ's preaching, because He left persecution as an inheritance, is simply to show no understanding whatever of the matter. By the same argument one would refute what Our Lady said at Fatima: *In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph*, thereby promising peace. The Apocalypse states literally that there shall be a reign of peace for a thousand years, or a long duration; Christ promised that the world shall become one fold under one Shepherd.

The countless prophecies of the Old Testament and of the New Testament would seem to the author of that note to be mere chaff—though he likely has scarcely any notion of them. Here are but a few, by way of illustration:

*Near is the great day of the Lord; it is near, and comes with exceeding swiftness... Therefore wait for Me, saith the Lord, in the day of My resurrection that is to come; for My determination is to gather the nations and assemble the kingdoms, and then to pour out upon them My indignation and all the fury of My wrath; for the fire of My zeal shall devour the earth. For then will I purify the lips of the nations, that all of them may call upon the name of the Lord and serve Him under one yoke. (Zeph. 1:14; 3:8–9).*

*O sword, awake against My shepherd, and against the man that cleaveth unto Me, saith the Lord of hosts: strike the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn My hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass in all the land, saith the Lord, that two parts therein shall be scattered and shall perish, but the third part shall be left therein. And I will bring that third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on My name, and I will hear them graciously. I will say: Thou art My people; and they shall say: Thou art my God and Lord. (Zech. 13:7–9).*

*For behold, the Lord shall come with fire, and His chariots like a rushing whirlwind, to render His wrath in indignation, and His rebuke with flames of fire. For the Lord, surrounded with fire and armed with His sword, shall judge all flesh; and great shall be the number of those whom the Lord shall slay... But I come to gather together their works and their thoughts, and to assemble them with all nations of every land and tongue; and they shall come and shall see My glory. And I will set a sign among them, and of those that are saved I will send unto the nations beyond the sea—to Africa, to Lydia, to the bow-bearing peoples, to Italy, to Greece, to the farthest islands, to peoples who have never heard of Me nor seen My glory. And those messengers shall declare My glory among the nations, and shall bring all your brethren from all nations as an offering unto the Lord, leading them on horses,*

*in chariots, in litters, on mules, and in carriages to My holy mountain Jerusalem. (Isa. 66:15–20).*

*And I will set up one Shepherd over My sheep, and He shall feed them, even My servant David: He shall feed them, and He shall be their Shepherd. (Ezek. 34:23).*

*...what manner of holiness and godliness ought ye to practice as you await and hasten the Parousia of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? But according to His promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein justice dwelleth. (2 Pet. 3:11–12).*

*For the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. (Rom. 8:21).*

And let us take care not to be like those of whom Saint Peter speaks, who call the Parousia of the Lord into question: *Knowing this first, that in the last days there shall come deceivers scoffers, walking according to their own lusts, and saying: 'Where is the promise of His Parousia?'* (2 Pet. 3:3–4).

*I have other sheep also that are not of this fold; them too I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. (John 10:16).*

Pius XII, speaking of the second coming of Christ, declares: *...and the struggle shall cease, and peace shall shine forth. Come, Lord Jesus! Humanity has no strength to remove the stone which it has fashioned with its own hands in trying to hinder Thy return. Send Thy angel, O Lord, and make our night as bright as day. How many hearts await Thee! How many souls are consumed with longing to hasten the day when Thou alone shalt live and reign in hearts! Come, O Lord Jesus! There are so many signs that Thy return is not far off!* (Easter Message, April 21, 1957).

Moreover, in his 1958 Resurrection Message, as Father Martín Sánchez cites in his work *Israel and the Prophecies*, Pius XII says: *Before the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, descends from heaven from God, adorned as a bride decked out for her spouse, man shall enjoy true happiness upon the earth. Human dignity shall be respected, needs shall be met, and there shall be enjoyed a true and very long era of order, peace, and justice. (p. 143).*

In harmony with all this, Father Benjamín Martín Sánchez, Doctor of Sacred Scripture and author of various highly illuminating works on eschatology, says: *Sacred Scripture announces an admirable age of universal peace and holiness, which is to take place after the judgment of the nations, when the Jewish people shall be converted and*

*all the enemies of Christ shall be exterminated.* (Israel and the Prophecies, ed. Verbo Divino, Navarra, 1976, p. 140).

Concerning this future peace, which is the object of the biblical prophecies and of the restoration of the new Israel—Jews and Gentiles converted to the Church—Father Martín Sánchez writes: *The Prophets announce a new age in which there shall never again be wars. And who does not see that such prophecies still remain to be fulfilled? Some suppose that these are images of the Messianic peace, whether that which existed under Augustus or the spiritual peace of souls... but I do not think this can be admitted: 1. Because the obvious reading of the sacred text speaks of a social and perfect peace. And this prophecy has not been fulfilled, since history bears witness that there have always been wars, and ever more savage ones, with no sign that the peoples may ever come definitively to agreement. 2. Because this peace described in the Bible shall take place 'in the latter part of the days,' at the end of time, when the Lord shall be adored and known as 'the God of all the earth,' 'when the knowledge of Yahweh shall flood the world' (...). 'Then peace shall be the work of justice, or holiness, and the fruit of holiness shall be rest and security forever.' (Isa. 32:15 ff.). When this shall come to pass, will not the unending peace painted by the Prophets then be realized? (...) It is impossible to see perfect peace in the present order. It shall certainly come, but in the time foretold by the Prophets, when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, and each man shall know how to fulfill his duty without the need of public force or any coercion whatever. Only then shall the empire of Christ be established upon the earth with a peace that shall have no end (Isa. 9:7). And then too, as Zechariah says, He shall cut off the chariots and the bow of war 'and He shall proclaim peace unto the nations, and His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River even to the ends of the earth (9:10). The reign of the Messiah shall be universal and peace-giving. (...) Jesus Christ, at His first coming, did not come—according to Scripture—to bring the peace proclaimed by the Prophets (Matt. 10:34). Social peace shall not be fulfilled except in the eschatological reign they announce, when Antichrist has been overthrown and Satan has been cast down with all his followers, the deceivers of the nations..." (Ibid., pp. 120–122).*

With regard to the new Israel, Father B. Martín Sánchez states: *It is commonly said that the 'new Israel' is what Saint Paul calls 'the Israel of God' (Gal. 6:16), that is, the Church of Christ. Yet, while she may indeed be called the 'new Israel' inchoately, she is not such in her fullness until the conversion of Israel en masse has taken place. Properly speaking, the 'new Israel' can be none other than that in which the promises made by God through His prophets are to be fulfilled in their plenitude, and then all things shall be made new, as Holy Scripture tells us (...). Only then, when Jews and Gentiles alike shall definitively be the holy people of God, shall all things be truly new.* (Ibid., p. 108).

The glorious second coming of Jesus Christ is the great object of our hope, if we refer ourselves to the Sacred Scriptures in Saint Paul's Epistle to Titus, when he exhorts him that *we should live soberly, justly, and godly in this world, awaiting the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.* (Titus 2:12–13). The Parousia is the blessed hope according to the very word of divine revelation. Hence Saint Peter likewise says: *Set all your hope upon the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* (1 Pet. 1:13).

Saint John concludes the Apocalypse by saying: *Come, Lord Jesus* (Apoc. 22:20—the famous Maranatha), and by this he invites us to ask for His second coming or Parousia, just as in the Our Father we in fact pray, *Thy kingdom come.*

As Father B. Martín Sánchez observes: *Everything seems to foreshadow that a new world is drawing near. There are prophetic expressions that speak to us of the coming of a glorious reign upon the earth, and which for some are unintelligible, or else are regarded as merely symbolic. Our task is first to penetrate the literal sense of the text, in order to see what the Holy Ghost has expressed through the sacred author, and not what, in our own judgment, he might have wished to say. Prophecies do not originate in man, but in God; for it is He who has moved the prophets to record them in the Bible (2 Pet. 1:20–21). And if the prophecies concerning the first coming of Jesus Christ were fulfilled literally, why should not those likewise be fulfilled which refer to the latter times and to His second advent? The latter times, which began with the first coming of Christ, shall one day reach their fullness in His return to the earth.* (Ibid., p. 79).

These are wise and illuminating words, and we ought to heed them more attentively, lest we go astray on so momentous a subject. The same author makes this further clarification: *When speaking of the 'latter times,' in which terrible struggles against the Church shall be witnessed, it is important to keep very clearly in mind that by this we do not mean to affirm that 'the end of the world' has arrived, as we have already said; rather, after these times—which shall be times of calamity—there shall come the glorious and definitive triumph of the Church over the powers of evil.* (Ibid., p. 98).

Only within this apocalyptic and eschatological context can the words of the Virgin at Fatima be rightly understood: In the end, my Immaculate Heart shall triumph.

We must be prepared and await His coming, as Father B. Martín Sánchez points out, while also recalling the words of Pope Pius XII: *'Come, Lord Jesus! There are so many signs that Thy return is not far off...'* Thus spoke Pius XII in his address of April 21, 1957. (Ibid., p. 100).

And, recalling the words of Saint Pius X and of Pius XII, he says further on: *What can we expect from a humanity that is drifting ever farther from God? Already Saint Pius X, in his first Encyclical (1903), said: 'Can we ignore, Venerable Brethren, the disease so deep and so grave that afflicts human society, more than in times past? This disease is the abandonment of God and apostasy. Whoever considers these things has the right to believe that such perversity of mind may be the beginning of the evils foretold for the end of time...' And Pius XI, in Miserentissimus Redemptor, observes that amid the upheavals of his pontificate one might discern the dawn of that beginning of sorrows which is to bring us to the 'man of sin...'* (Ibid., p. 106). Paradoxically, it was precisely in the time of Pius XI that Sister Lúcia pointed to the aurora borealis on the night of January 28–29, 1928, as a sign of the events foretold in the message of Fatima.

Everything points toward the triumph of the Church of Christ—a complete and universal triumph after the defeat of Antichrist and the binding of Satan for a long period, identified in Sacred Scripture as a thousand years. Concerning this, Father Martín Sánchez writes: *Here we refrain from determining the exact duration of the millennial peace, limiting ourselves to saying that it will begin when he [the devil] has been bound 'so that he may no longer lead the nations astray.'* These thousand years—which in biblical language signify a long and indeterminate period—will be, precisely because Satan and the evil spirits are in chains, an era without wars, but rather the flourishing age of peace and admirable blessedness already described. Holiness shall reign everywhere, and the triumph of the Church of Christ shall be complete. The Bible speaks to us of this victory and of a peaceful reign of Christ in times to come. It shall be an age in which men shall live more holily upon earth, because the whole earth shall then be filled with the knowledge of the Lord (Isa. 11:8); and this is what we are certainly constrained to admit. During this age every diabolical power shall be eliminated, and there shall be no power save that of Christ, at the end of which 'He shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father' (1 Cor. 15:24–25). (...) Created things shall undergo transformation, and this world shall be renewed and changed for the better, as we have already said with Saint Jerome: 'We shall not see other heavens and another earth, but the old and ancient ones changed into something better.' Everything leads us to foresee that the age of which the poets speak shall indeed be glorious, and like heaven anticipated upon earth. The great Pontiff Pius XII said in 1958: 'Before the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, descends from heaven from God, adorned as a bride decked out for her spouse, man shall enjoy true happiness upon the earth. Human dignity shall be respected, needs shall be satisfied, and there shall be enjoyed a true and very long era of order, peace, and justice' (Resurrection Message). The definitive triumph of the reign of Christ and of His Church shall come and shall take place with the total destruction of the enemies of Christ Himself and of man: error and sin. (Ibid., pp. 142–143).

In another of his books, Father B. Martín Sánchez again insists that one must not confuse the latter times — in which the judgment of the nations will take place — with the end of the world: *Since some lamentably confuse the 'latter times' with the 'end of the world,' I shall first make this point precise and clarify it by the words of the prophets. As I already indicated in the prologue, the 'latter times,' according to the Bible, are characterized by the lack of faith and are the last times of the Messianic era, which we might call the 'times of unbelief.' The following biblical texts, which we shall cite later, prove this (2 Pet. 3:3–4; Jude 17–18; 2 Tim. 3:1–5; 2 Thess. 2:1 ff.; etc.). In these times there shall take place the judgment of the nations, or a great chastisement upon the world, frequently announced by the prophets because men live far from God and with their backs turned toward the Gospel of Christ. From this chastisement the world shall emerge purified, and this purification shall be followed by an age of admirable peace and holiness, in which Christ is to reign 'from one end of the earth to the other,' and in which 'all His enemies shall fall at His feet' and render Him homage, while the Church shall then enjoy a glorious triumph. (The Latter Times, ed. Círculo, Zaragoza, 1975, p. 13). And further on we read: The Day of the Lord announced by the prophet shall be a judgment upon all the nations, which shall receive their chastisement (Nácar-Colunga), and note well that after this judgment there will remain survivors who call upon the name of God; therefore it is clear that from this judgment there shall remain survivors who invoke the name of God. Hence 'the Day of the Lord,' on which He will exercise His judgment upon all the nations, is not the end of the world, the one being distinct from the other. (Ibid., p. 17).*

In the Creed it is confessed that Christ shall come to judge the living and the dead, together with the resurrection of the flesh and life everlasting; which would be a useless repetition if different things were not being referred to, as Father Castellani points out. For if the coming to judge the living and the dead were simply unto eternal life, why then add another article concerning everlasting life, especially in a symbol of the faith, which is a synthesis of the fundamental dogmas and therefore excludes all superfluous repetition?

Here is what Father Castellani says: *In the Oriental form of the Creed it is said: Christ shall come to judge the living and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end. Now if the Millennial Kingdom is not admitted, then this must refer to the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, to eternal life. Why then add another article saying, 'I believe in eternal life,' or life everlasting? In the 'symbols,' whose principal condition ought to be brevity, superfluous repetitions are not permitted. Moreover, those words, 'to judge the living and the dead,' do not seem to signify the Universal Judgment in the sense of the allegorists; for this Judgment, according to the mind of the Church and of all Catholics, takes place after the resurrection of the flesh, whereas the judgment in the Apostles' Creed is placed before it. For it says first, 'He shall come to judge the living and the dead,' and at the end adds, 'and in the resurrection of*

*the flesh.’ This order in the Creed runs counter to the allegorist doctrine. On the other hand, this order agrees with the millenist view; for according to it, there comes first what Saint Paul says in 2 Timothy 4:1, namely, ‘to judge the living and the dead by His Return and His Kingdom’; and at the end, after the temporal Kingdom, the general resurrection and the Judgment of all, which may perhaps encompass the whole period called the Thousand Years—whatever their precise duration may be—and not merely a single ‘day’ of twenty-four hours for ‘the day of the Lord’ in Scripture does not mean a day of twenty-four hours. Likewise, in Scripture, ‘to judge’ very often means ‘to reign,’ since ancient kings were simply the ‘judge’ who ‘rendered to each man what was his,’ which is the very essence of the virtue of justice. Christ, however, by His kingdom, shall both reign and judge: for He shall inflict punishment upon Antichrist and his followers, and He shall raise up and crown the just. Afterwards, the general Resurrection and the Final Judgment shall be but the concluding act and consummation of His Kingdom; and for that reason it was rightly placed at the end in the Creed. (...)*

*“Thirdly, the Millenists add that the phrase ‘to judge the living and the dead’ does not make good sense in the contrary view; for if it takes place by means of the resurrection, then there are no longer any living to judge, since all are dead... and brought back to life; or else there are no dead, whichever way one wishes to put it. But if one wishes to make the phrase ‘living and dead’ signify ‘just and sinners,’ there arises the difficulty that such a metaphorical mode of speech is wholly foreign to the symbols, wherein the principal dogmas are presumed to be expressed with the greatest brevity, clarity, and directness. In the millenist view, however, those words fit perfectly well: for the living are judged, and the dead—or risen—are judged at the Second Advent; and indeed in the very order that the Creed expresses, for first the living are judged, since the reign, and therefore the judgment implied in it, is exercised over the living; and afterwards the dead are judged by means of the general resurrection. But after the Final Judgment comes eternal life, and that life is not the destruction of Christ’s Kingdom but its completion; so that, in the proper sense, the Millennial Kingdom shall have no end—which verifies the words of the Creed: ‘whose Kingdom shall have no end.’ (The Patristic Church, pp. 296–298).*

Saint Augustine himself admits that the Day of Judgment does not necessarily correspond to a solar day, but may be a longer period: *What the whole Church of the true God confesses and approves—that Christ shall judge the living and the dead—this, we say, shall be the last day of the divine judgment, that is, the final time. For although it is not certain how many days this judgment shall last, no one is ignorant, provided he has read Sacred Scripture even with the slightest care, that in it the word day is often used for a period of time. (The City of God, Book XX, chapter 1).* Thus one sees that, according to Saint Augustine’s own judgment, there are today many ignorant persons who rigidly

imagine that the Day of Judgment must be a solar day of twenty-four hours; and what is lamentable is that they pass for masters and doctors.

Moreover, Saint Augustine, like every true saint, being humble, acknowledges that the allegorical interpretation—which he made his own under the tremendous pressure of Saint Jerome, abandoning the millenarian one lest it should seem to support the carnal or Judaizing millenarians—is not certain, as Father Castellani points out: *Saint Augustine warns that he does not know whether this interpretation is the correct one or not—a restraint imitated by none of the present-day ‘allegorists,’ many of whom, moreover, accuse as ‘heretics’ (and ridiculous, and Judaizers, and fools, and coarse men, and disturbers) those who do not care for it.* (El Apokalypsis, p. 294).

And if one looks closely, speaking of Judaizing, nothing is more Judaizing than the supposed triumph of the Church by the mere forces of history, without the divine intervention of the second coming of Christ the King in glory and majesty—that is to say, the proclamation of a triumph before the Parousia, as ecumenism and modernist progressivism would have it, and as, regrettably, many wrongly interpret the message of Fatima: *In the end my Immaculate Heart shall triumph.* Nothing could be more judaizing than a triumph of the Church without the Parousia: *But what could be more Judaizing than to expect a great earthly triumph of the Church before the second coming of Christ?* (Ibid., p. 87). How many Judaizers there are without even knowing it. This once again shows the state of decay within the clergy.

Anti-Catholicism consists in a falsified Catholicism, and not in the other things that, in a distracted way, we might still legitimately imagine or suppose. So points the following text of Father Castellani, where allusion is made to the city of Antichrist, the Harlot Capital: *Had we not already agreed that, according to the prophet, it must be a port city, capitalist and anti-Catholic—or rather, a falsified Catholicism?* (The Papers..., p. 246).

And we have, moreover, an Antichrist identified with a Catholicism without Cross and without Parousia, like that of the post-conciliar New Church: *...the most complete and subtle falsification of Christianity that one could dream of: an ideal of a comfortable, luxurious, and entertaining life, with plenty of ‘sex appeal,’ of course, and framed by a few vague and diluted Christian dogmas that bind one to nothing. (...) It is the ideal of the added things before the Kingdom, or added things without the Kingdom, or the Millennial Kingdom already realized and without Christ—that is to say, Christianity purged of the Cross of Christ and of His Second Coming... This is the true Antichrist! If this invades*

*the world, as in fact it is invading it, and in the end comes to dominate it... This is a supremely seductive false religion: worse, if possible, than communism. (Ibid., p. 246).*

Though both are worse, as he explains farther below, and their fusion shall be the work of the Pseudo-Prophet: *...and it is more than probable that one day they will be fused together, for they proceed from one and the same spirit—that of the Garden of Eden and of paradise upon earth. And the one who will bring about the fusion shall be the second Beast, the Beast of the Earth, ‘which had two horns like the Lamb and spoke like the dragon.’ (Ibid., p. 246).*

Father José Rovira, S.J., author of the article Parousia in the Espasa Encyclopedia, says of the reign of Christ upon earth, or the happy millennium of peace and prosperity: *The Parousia is nothing other, as we have said, than the second coming of Christ. Christ Jesus shall come from heaven, to which 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 with glory, with glory and splendor (...) after the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall, then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man (probably the Cross), and then shall all the tribes of the earth lament, and they shall see the Son of Man coming upon the clouds of heaven with great power and glory (Matt. 24:30; Mark 13:26; Luke 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 describes Him as a warrior-king who goes forth to wage battle against Antichrist. (...) Christ shall not come alone; being King, He shall come attended by His court (...) with His angels (Matt. 26:27) (...) with His saints (Jude 14–15). (...) There shall follow afterwards 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 must be that of all together and at one and the same time; but this must be understood of the general resurrection. Yet this particular resurrection of the saints shall be as a privilege; and just as Christ rose, and with Christ other saints also rose, as Saint Matthew (27:52–53), who, as Saint Thomas probably holds (S.Th., Suppl., q. 77, a. 1, ad 3), did not die again. So too it may be admitted that when Christ appears at His second coming to destroy Antichrist, not all the saints, but only some, shall rise again by way of privilege. (...) According to this, Saint Paul clearly distinguishes at the coming of Christ two classes or orders of just men who shall be gathered unto Him. The first are the dead, who shall rise first and shall rise incorruptible; the second are 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. (...) “The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished. Saint John seems to indicate two classes or orders of the elect: the first are those who were 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 to judge the twelve tribes of Israel; the others are those who did not adore the beast nor receive his mark, though they may not have been martyred but still be living, for otherwise there would be no reason to distinguish them from the martyrs. (...) Another effect of Christ's coming shall be the destruction of Antichrist.

*(...) Then, therefore, Christ shall come to destroy him and to save and deliver His own. (...) 'Then shall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord shall slay'—properly, 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 (Apoc. 19:11–21) (...). Once the anti-theocratic powers have been destroyed and the devil bound and imprisoned, there shall then follow the reign of Christ and of the saints. This reign is foretold by the prophet Daniel in the seventh chapter of his prophecy.[4] (...) 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 reign of Christ and of the saints—a reign that shall be upon the earth or under heaven, as Daniel says, a reign in which power shall belong to the people of the Most High saints, to which people all kings shall render service and obedience. (...) See, for example, what Cornelius a Lapide says: 'Then, once the kingdom of Antichrist has been destroyed, the Church shall reign over the whole earth, and from Jews and Gentiles there shall be made one fold under one Shepherd.' After this there shall follow the uprising or rebellion of Gog and Magog against the city of the saints, which, as we shall likely see, is distinct from the persecution of Antichrist. Then later the fire of the conflagration (...) and at last all shall end with the final resurrection and the Last Judgment (...). And Saint Paul (1 Cor. 15:24–28) likewise says 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—composed of Jews and Gentiles and spread throughout the whole earth—shall continue, 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 this kingdom of the saints upon earth as continuing into that which comes after the judgment. But for the present we are speaking only of the kingdom of the saints upon earth, of 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, such as Tirini and a Lapide, say that this reign is to last but a short time; others say nothing of its duration; others suppose or affirm that it shall last a long time (...). On this point the millenarians, basing themselves on 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 last a thousand years.*

Father Benjamín Martín Sánchez summarizes the millenarian doctrine in *The New Testament Explained*, ed. Apostolado Mariano, Seville, 1988, note on chapter 20 of the Apocalypse, in the following way: *Millenarianism is the belief of those who have said that Jesus Christ shall reign upon the 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 the Bible) in a millenarianism upon earth; and if anyone dislikes the word 'millenarianism,' let him say instead 'a wondrous age of peace' lasting a thousand or thousands of years, which shall take place after the death of Antichrist and in the wake of the universal judgment of the nations, aided by the fact that Satan's action shall be bound or restrained. Then the converted Jews shall enjoy the fruits of their conversion, the faith shall multiply, the Church of Christ shall obtain 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 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 turn unto Yahweh, and all the families of the nations shall worship before Him. For the kingdom is Yahweh's, and He shall rule over the nations' (Ps. 22:28–29).*

*"At the end of the days (v. 1)... I will gather, saith the Lord, her that halted' (that is, the scattered or dispersed of Israel) '... and I will make her a mighty people, and Yahweh shall reign over them in Mount Sion from henceforth and forever' (Mic. 4:6 ff.).*

*"And Yahweh shall be King over all the earth; and Yahweh shall be one, and His name one' (Zech. 14:19).*

*"Then' (after the great judgment of the nations) 'will I restore to the peoples pure lips, that all may call upon the name of the Lord' (Zeph. 3:9).*

*"And the new covenant, which began to be fulfilled in the New Law, and which was announced by Jeremiah (31:31–34), shall reach its fullness with the conversion of Israel. Then, saith the Lord: "I will put My law in their hearts... and they shall no longer have to teach one another... for all shall know Me. And then the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of Yahweh (Isa. 11:9). When Israel is converted and purified from her sins, the deserts shall bloom, they shall be turned into fruitful fields, and they shall yield*

harvests and produce of flocks such as have never been known before (Ezek. 36:33–35). To these texts one would have to add many more from Isaiah, Micah, Zechariah, 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. (Note well that this shall not be in heaven, but upon earth, something real, and therefore a fact—the so-called millenarianism, or the age of peace). (...) Some have wished to understand the *first resurrection* spiritually, as the passage from birth into the life of grace; yet they are unconvincing, because the text speaks of martyrs who died for the faith. Pirot says: *Some contemporary Catholic critics, for example Calmes, admit the literal interpretation of the passage we are studying. The millennium would be inaugurated by a resurrection of the martyrs alone, as distinct from the rest of the dead.* Saint Irenaeus had already identified the first resurrection as that of the just. I believe we may confirm this with 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 1 Thess. 4:14–16: *Those who died in Christ shall rise first...* The scriptural scholar Cornelius a Lapide also interprets literally the text of 1 Cor. 15:23. The rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were completed. (...) And then shall come the universal resurrection and the Final Judgment." (...) *After the thousand years Satan shall be loosed and shall go forth to seduce the nations (...). The fact remains that the devil shall go about corrupting the nations, and the powers 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 that He will make descend upon them.*

On chapter 21 of the Apocalypse, the same author comments with regard to the universal restoration of all things, which calls to mind the motto of Saint Pius X, *Omnia instaurare in Christo*—to restore all things in Christ—and which Archbishop Lefebvre translates, by way of explanation, as to recapitulate all things in Christ. Thus Father Martín Sánchez says concerning the new heaven and the new earth: *Here we are told of the transfiguration of created things, and likewise in Isaiah 65:17 ff., in 2 Peter 3:13, and in Romans 8:19 ff. (...) Hence we conclude that this world shall not be annihilated, but renewed and changed for the better, for as Saint Jerome says: 'It is the form that passes, not the substance. We shall not see other heavens and another earth, but the old and ancient ones changed into something better.'* Everything leads us to foresee that this too refers to the wondrous age of peace, since according to the Scriptures 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 come new heavens and a new earth in which justice shall dwell (2 Pet. 3:10–18). Then the earth shall be like a new heaven anticipated beforehand (...). It is a renewal of this very world in which fallen humanity lived, which, finally cleansed of every stain, shall be restored by God to a state equal to, and even higher than, that in which it was created—a renewal which Scripture elsewhere calls the

'palingenesia,' the regeneration (Matt. 19:28), 'the restitution of all things' to their primitive state (Acts 3:21) (Crampon).

And in his explanation of chapter 22, the same author says, referring to the final words of the Apocalypse, Come, Lord Jesus: *With this expression, which refers to the second coming of Jesus Christ, the Apocalypse comes to an end. After speaking to us of the great happiness reserved for the saints, it repeats: 'Come quickly,' and by this warning it means that we must not fall asleep, but live in vigilance, longing for His coming, that we may enjoy the blessedness that has been announced.*

Father Castellani—let us recall that he was a sacred theologian officially authorized by Pius XII, which empowered him to teach Theology and Sacred Scripture universally, and to publish books without the nihil obstat, unless, in the place where they were issued, there existed a title identical to his own; for there is no superior rank, and such faculties were granted only two or three times in a century—explains Millenarianism as follows: *It is the opinion which interprets the very same passage in the literal sense. It is divided into spiritual and carnal, or, by another name, crude.*

*"Carnal Millenarianism designates the Judaizing and fanciful tendency which, in the early centuries, imagined a temporal and worldly triumph of Christ, similar to that which Pharisaism in fact demanded of Him during His earthly life, together with a whole train of satisfactions, revenges, and gross delights for the risen, in which animal fantasy ran utterly wild. This excessive chiliasm was condemned by the Church, after having also aroused the somewhat excessive wrath of Saint Jerome. As a spiritual attitude, however, this millenarianism has by no means ceased to exist even today; for example, in certain Protestant sects, and in the mystique of the great modern imperialisms. Spiritual Millenarianism may be summed up in these words of Hallo: 'A millennium is foretold in SCRIPTURE; that period has not yet occurred; what precisely it consists in, and in detail, we do not know; when it comes, we shall know.' Thus expressed, with discretion and agnosticism, that chiliasm has never been condemned by the Church, nor —audemus dicere— would it ever be, for the simple reason that the Church is not about to condemn the majority of the Holy Fathers of the first five centuries, among them the very greatest... (See Ecclesia Patristica et Millenarismus, Expositio Historica, by Florentino Alcañiz, S.J., Doctore et Magistro Aggregato Facultati Philosophicae in Universitate Gregoriana, Granada, 1933)."*

*What the Church did not long ago was to forbid, by a decree of the Holy Office, the teaching of a mitigated millenarianism clearly defined in the very text of the prohibition, which naturally may not lawfully be extended, because odiosa sunt restringenda; namely: 'The millenarianism of those who teach that before the Final Judgment, whether with or*

*without the prior resurrection of the just, Christ would return to the earth to reign bodily.’ This decree is dated July 9, 1941. The decree *ut jacet* also caught, in its wording, the so-called evolutionist exegetes, since according to them Christ already reigns bodily—from the Most Blessed Sacrament—from His Resurrection until the End of the World. But it did not seem to touch the sensible millenarians. Another declaratory decree was issued three years later (A.A.S., 1944, p. 212), in which the word *corporaliter* was changed to *visibiliter*. According to this, what is excluded is the teaching not only of crude millenarianism, but also of the carnal-mitigated form, which imagines a temporal Kingdom of Christ after the manner of the empires of this world, with its court in Jerusalem, its palace, its ceremonies and festivities, its visible and continual presence—and even its Minister of Agriculture...—‘theology for Negroes,’ as Ramón Doll says, akin to the heaven portrayed in the film GREEN PASTURES.*

*We teach and believe neither of these two millenarianisms—needless to say. We simply apply here to the APOKALYPSIS what is called in exegesis the eschatological system, in opposition to the historical system and the allegorical system. And to the preposterous critic, who has read my little book so badly and judges it with such acrimony, I content myself with copying for him a few lines from two authorities in exegetical matters; first, my master at the Gregorian, 1929–1931, Rev. Fr. Silvio Rosadini: ‘Recolere ante omnia iuvabit... millenarismum, speciatim illum purum et spiritualem nunquam ab Ecclesia damnatum fuisse. Insuper, verum non est regnum millenarium esse necessariam consequentiam hujus systematis... Sunt qui Apocalypsim eschatologice explicant et tamen quodcumque millenarium regnum rejiciunt... Sunt e contrario plures, alia systemata sectantes, qui hoc modo regnum millenarium Capitis XX exponunt (Silvius Rosadini, S.J., INST. INTRODUCT. IN LIBROS NOVI TESTAMENTI, vol. III, p. 112, Rome, 1931, Apud Aedes Universitatis Gregor.).*

*Another authority, closer to our own day, no less respectable, and infinitely timely, is found in the two notes written on this question by Monsignor Dr. Juan Straubinger in his direct translation from the Greek, annotated and commented, of the New Testament, published by Dedebec in 1948, pp. 383 and 384, on Saint John, XX, 5 and 6. The summary of this thorny question there given by the learned professor of the Seminary of La Plata seems to us to coincide so exactly with our own thought, as it was set forth in this book six years ago, that we wish to place upon it a crowning seal, making our own, in conclusion, each and every one of his weighty and most exact words.*

*Here they are: The first resurrection. Here is one of the passages most diversely commented upon in all Sacred Scripture. In general, this expression is taken in an allegorical sense: life in the state of grace, the spiritual resurrection of the soul in Baptism, the grace of conversion, the soul’s entrance into eternal glory, the renewal of the Christian spirit through great saints and founders of religious orders (Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Dominic, etc.),*

or something similar. Bail, author of the voluminous *SUMMA CONCILIORUM*, carries his liberty in allegorizing the *SCRIPTURES* so far as to choose to call the resurrection of the reprobate the first resurrection, because, he says, they shall have no resurrection other than the bodily one, since they do not rise unto glory. According to this, verse 6 would be praising the reprobate, since it calls blessed and holy the one who attains the first resurrection.

The Pontifical Biblical Commission, in its decree of August 20, 1941, condemned the abuses of allegorism, once again recalling the so-called golden rule, according to which no arguments may be drawn from allegorical interpretation. Even so, one must here acknowledge the apocalyptic style. In 1 Corinthians XV, 23, where Saint Paul treats of the order of the resurrection, we have seen that some of the Fathers interpret this text literally as referring to a true first resurrection, apart from that mentioned by Saint Matthew in XXVII, 52–53 (the resurrection of the saints at the death of Jesus), and that even so cautious an exegete as Cornelius a Lapide upholds it. Cf. 1 Thess. IV, 16; 1 Cor. VI, 2–3; 2 Tim. II, 16 and following; and Phil. III, 11, where Saint Paul uses the word *exanástasis* and adds *ten ek nekróon*, that is, literally, the resurrection out from among the dead. It seems probable, then, that Saint John is here thinking of a privilege granted to the saints—without prejudice to the general resurrection—and not of an allegory, since Saint Irenaeus, relying on the testimony of the presbyters who were disciples of Saint John, identifies as the first resurrection that of the just (cf. Luke XIV, 14 and XX, 35).

The new Nacar-Colunga version sees in this first resurrection a privilege of the holy martyrs, 'to whom belongs the palm of victory. Since they were the ones who above all bore the weight of the struggle with their Captain, they shall receive a reward not granted to the other dead, and this is to judge—which, in the biblical sense, is equivalent to ruling and governing the world together with their Captain, to whom, because He humbled Himself unto death, it was given to reign over the whole universe' (Phil. II:8 ff.). See Phil. III:10–11; 1 Cor. XV:23 and 52 and notes; Luke XIV:14 and XX:35; Acts IV:2. With whom they reigned a thousand years. Fillion says on this point: 'After reading a great many pages on these lines, we do not believe it possible to give a wholly satisfactory explanation of them.' On this point there was much debate in past centuries over the so-called question of millenarianism, or the interpretation which, taking the millennium literally as the reign of Christ, places those thousand years of verses 2–7 between two resurrections, distinguishing as the first the resurrection of verses 4–6, attributed only to the just, and as the second and general resurrection that mentioned in verses 12–13 for the Final Judgment. The history of this interpretation was summarized in a few brief lines in an interview published by the *REVISTA ECLESIASTICA DE BUENOS AIRES* in May 1941, saying that 'tradition, which in the early centuries inclined in favor of millenarianism, has since the fifth century pronounced itself against this doctrine in almost unanimous fashion.'

*The Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office cut short the discussion by declaring, in its decree of July 21, 1944, that the doctrine 'which teaches that before the Final Judgment, with a prior resurrection of many of the dead or without it, Our Lord Jesus Christ would come visibly to this earth to reign, non se puede enseñar con seguridad (tuto doceri non posse).' For the reader's information, we transcribe the commentary given by the great Pirot-Clamer edition of the Bible on this passage: 'The literal interpretation: several Christian authors of the early centuries thought that Christ would reign for a thousand years in Jerusalem (verse 9) before the Final Judgment. The author of the Epistle of Barnabas (XV, 4-9) is an ardent millenarian; for him, the millennium is inserted into a complete theory of the duration of the world, parallel to the duration of the week of Genesis: 6,000 + 1,000 years. Saint Papias is a naïve millenarian; Saint Justin, more cautious, nevertheless thinks that millenarianism forms part of orthodoxy (DIALOGO CON TRIFON, 80-81). Saint Irenaeus likewise (CONTRA LAS HEREJÍAS, V, 28,3), followed by Tertullian (CONTRA MARCIÓN, III, 24). In Rome, Saint Hippolytus became its champion against the priest Caius, who, precisely in order to strike down millenarianism more easily, denied the Johannine authenticity of the APOKALYPSIS.'*

*Pirot here recounts the controversy against certain schismatic millenarians in which Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria 'compelled the head of the sect to confess himself vanquished,' and then continues: 'Among those counted more or less openly among the supporters of millenarianism are also Apollinaris of Laodicea, Lactantius, Saint Victorinus of Pettau, Sulpicius Severus, and Saint Ambrose. Saint Jerome, for his part, ordinarily so vehement, shows toward these men a certain indulgence (Sobre Isaías, book 18). Saint Augustine, who would later give the interpretation destined to become classical, had himself for a time previously professed the opinion he would afterwards combat. From that point onward millenarianism fell into oblivion, though not without leaving curious survivals, such as the prayers to obtain the... ..grace of the first resurrection, recorded in ancient liturgical books of the West (Dom Leclercq).*

*Further on, Pirot cites the decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, which we transcribed at the beginning, and continues: 'Some contemporary Catholic critics, for example Calmet, also admit the literal interpretation of the passage we are studying. The millennium would then be inaugurated by a resurrection of the martyrs alone, to the exclusion of the other dead. The spiritual interpretation: This exegesis,' Pirot goes on to say, 'commonly accepted by Catholic authors, is that which Saint Augustine developed at length. Augustine makes this period begin with the Incarnation, because he professes the theory of recapitulation, whereas, in John's perspective, the thousand years are inserted at a determined point in the series of events. It is the Church Militant,' Augustine continues, 'that reigns with Christ until the consummation of the ages; the first resurrection must be understood spiritually as birth into the life of grace (Col. III, 1-2; Phil. III, 20; cf. John V, 25);*

*the thrones of verse 4 are those of the Catholic hierarchy, and it is this same hierarchy that has the power to bind and to loose. We should be inclined,' Pirot concludes, 'to be less precise in that identification. Doubtless we have here an image meant to make us understand the greatness of the Christian: he sits, because he reigns (Matt. XIX, 28; Luke XXII, 30; I Cor. VI, 3; Eph. I, 20, and II, 6; Apoc. I, 6, and V, 9).'* Thus far the notes of Monsignor Straubinger. (Cristo ¿Vuelve... pp. 68–71).

Father Castellani, for his part, makes the following clarification on the subject in another of his works: *Real millenarianism teaches nothing other than that Apokalypsis XX and I Corintios XV may be interpreted literally without any breach of the faith or any inconvenience whatever; that the Apostolic Fathers understood them thus, and after them, in the course of history, innumerable doctors and saints as well; 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 is worthy of the greatness, truthfulness, and omnipotence of the Creator.* (Los Papeles... p. 418).

*The whole of ancient tradition, taken as a whole during the first four centuries of the Church, understood in this chapter quite simply that there would be a long period of peace and prosperity in the world (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 of the final saints, and another universal at the end, of the good and the wicked alike, which Saint Paul also affirms; and that this whole long span is perhaps what we designate by the name of the Final Judgment, which is described metaphorically at the end of the chapter—that is to say, its conclusion and consummation are there described. The 'Day of the Final Judgment' certainly cannot be a solar day.* (El Apokalypsis, pp. 295–296).

On this last point, Saint Augustine himself admits that the Day of Final Judgment is not necessarily a solar day: *What the whole Church of the true God confesses and approves—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 final time. For although it is not certain how many days this judgment shall last, no one is ignorant, however slightly he may have read Sacred Scripture that in it day is often used for time.* (The City of God, Book 20, chapter 1).

*In sum, millenarianism consists in believing that the day of judgment, which is a dogma of faith, is not a material day and a geographical place, but rather a period and a state, an entirely supernatural cycle; and this not by rationalism or fantasy, but because it is found*

so written literally in the two great final prophecies, Daniel and John, together with two corresponding texts of the Apostle Paul. (Los Papeles... p. 412).

Although the allegorical interpretation predominates today, this 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 Donatist heretic Tyconius, its author in the fourth century, as Father Castellani points out, acknowledges that his new interpretation—he himself had  $\alpha\mu\alpha$  been millenarian—is not certain, for: *Saint Augustine warns that he does not know whether this interpretation is correct or not, a restraint imitated by none of the present-day 'allegorists,' many of whom, moreover, brand as 'heretics' (and ridiculous, and Judaizing, and fools, and coarse men, and disturbers) those who do not care for it.* (El Apok. pp. 294–295).

Let it suffice, from all that has been said, to recall what Monsignor Cristino Morrondo records in his magnificent work: *Cornelius a Lapide, in his Commentary on the Prophet Daniel VII-27, although in various places throughout his voluminous work he raises unceasing objections to the millenarians, was nevertheless compelled, by the evidence of the sacred text, to set forth its conditions, saying: 'And the kingdom and the power and the greatness of the kingdom that is under heaven shall be given to the people of the Saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is everlasting, and all kings shall serve and obey Him... I say that it is certain that this reign of Christ and of the Saints shall come, and that this reign shall not be merely spiritual, like that which He has always had upon earth, whether when the Saints were persecuted or when it was subject to persecutions and tribulations, but that this reign shall be bodily and glorious; that is to say, the Saints with their bodies and their souls shall reign with Christ here upon earth, just as they shall reign eternally in heaven. But I believe that this reign shall begin upon earth at the moment when Antichrist has been put to death, for once he is dead and stripped of his dominions, the Church shall reign throughout the whole universe, and the fold shall be composed of Jews and Gentiles; and afterwards the kingdom shall be transferred to heaven and endure for all eternity.'* (Catástrofe y Renovación, ed. Tipografía de El Pueblo Católico, Jaén, 1924, p. 215).

Let us remain with the warning given by Father Castellani to those who expect a triumph of the Church without the Parousia, or before the Parousia: *It is the very same carnal dream of the Jews which caused them to deceive themselves concerning Christ. These are millenarians in reverse. They most fiercely deny the metahistorical Millennium after the Parousia, which is in Scripture; and they posit a Millennium that is not in Scripture, produced by the sole forces of history—in other words, an infrahistorical solution to History—just like the impious 'progressivists,' such as Condorcet, Auguste Comte, and Kant. Which amounts to denying the supernatural intervention of God in*

*History; and at bottom, the very divine inspiration of Sacred Scripture. (...) El Apokalypsis is today the sole antidote against those 'pseudo-prophets.'* (El Apok. p. 367).

For this reason, the difference among the faithful in the apocalyptic latter times—which are our own—shall be this: *What distinguishes true Christians is that they await the Second Coming.* (Los Papeles... p. 426). Hence we must not forget what Father Castellani says: *The faithful of the latter times shall be saved only by an immense charity, a heroic faith, and firm hope in the Second Coming.* (Los Papeles... p. 135).

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

This is the reason why many today, unconsciously, do not accept Patristic Millenarianism. May this compilation serve as a light to dispel prejudices, so that we may stand more watchful than ever, and that our faith may be enkindled and our hope increase in the swift coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Glory and Majesty; and thus may the great promise be fulfilled, that we may be one (ut unum sint), all forming one fold under one Shepherd, with the triumph of Christ the King and of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, remaining ever faithful to the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church, in the midst of the Great Tribulation of the latter times, forming the little flock (Luke 12:32), to whom the heavenly Father shall give the eternal kingdom.

Fr. Basilio Méramo  
Santa Fe de Bogotá  
July 25, 2000  
Feast of Saint James the Greater