

Scripture Scholars, Ancient and Modern

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The Fathers of the Douay-Rheims Bible

The bloody oppression of Catholics in England—which followed on the heels of Henry VIII’s schism from the Roman Church—obliged those who would remain faithful to the ancient religion either to go underground or seek refuge on foreign soil. The clergy who had taken charge of preserving the study of Sacred Scriptures within the English-speaking world, were among those who were compelled to forsake their native land for a spiritual home beyond the shores of Britain. Their escape had become imperative if their work, which would benefit souls for generations to come, was to continue unencumbered. Among the learned clerics who were forced to flee were the biblical scholars of Oxford who eventually settled at Douay, in Flanders.

After the persecutions in England had subsided somewhat, the remaining faithful were still fending off attacks upon pure doctrine, and false interpretations of Sacred Scripture by the adherents of Anglicanism. Since expertise with the Latin language was very limited among the common folk, English Catholics needed a version of the Holy Bible in their language, accurately translated from the Latin Vulgate (the only Catholic Bible available at the time), by which to support the major tenets of the Faith. How the English clergy-in-exile responded to this necessity, is recounted here by *The Catholic Encyclopedia*:

“The work of preparing such a version was undertaken by the members of the English College at Douay, in Flanders, founded by William Allen (afterwards Cardinal) in 1568. The chief share of the translating was borne by Dr. Gregory Martin, formerly of St. John’s College, Oxford. His text was revised by Thomas Worthington, Richard Bristowe, John Reynolds, and Allen himself—all of them Oxford men. A series of notes [annotations] was added, designed to answer the theological arguments of the Reformers; these were prepared by Allen, assisted by Bristow and Worthington.

“... they translated directly, not from the original Hebrew or Greek, but from the Latin Vulgate of St. Jerome. This had been declared authoritative for Catholics by the Council of Trent; but it was also commonly admitted that the text was purer than in any manuscripts at that time extant in the original languages . . .

“In the year 1578, owing to political troubles, the college was temporarily transferred from Douay . . . to Rheims, and during its sojourn there, in 1582, the *New Testament* was published, and became consequently known as the *Rheims Testament* . . . The Old Testament was delayed by want of means, until the whole Bible was eventually published in two quarto volumes, in 1609 and 1610 . . . Thus the *New Testament* appeared nearly thirty years before the Anglican *Authorized Version*, and although not officially mentioned [by Protestants], as one of the versions to be consulted, it is now commonly recognized to have had a large influence on the *King James Version* . . . The *Rheims Testament* was reprinted twice at Antwerp in 1600 and 1621, and a fourth edition was issued at Rouen in 1633. Then it was allowed to rest for over a century, before a fifth edition appeared, with some slight changes, dated 1728, but without any place of publication stated. It is believed to have been printed in London and was edited by Dr. Challoner (afterwards bishop), and Father Blyth, a Carmelite. The Douay Bible was never, after this, printed abroad. A sixth edition of the *Rheims Testament* was printed at Liverpool in 1788, and a seventh dated Dublin, 1803, which was the last Catholic edition. Several Protestant editions have appeared, the best known being a curious version by Rev. William Fulke, first published in 1589, with the Rheims text and that of the *Bishops’ Bible* in parallel columns. A Protestant edition of the *Rheims Testament* was also brought out by Leavitt of New York, in 1834 . . .”¹

Following this concise history of the Douay-Rheims (original Catholic, English-language) Bible, the *Catholic Encyclopedia* next provides this significant piece of information:

“Although the Bibles in use at the present day [1908] by the Catholics of England and Ireland are popularly styled the Douay Version, they are most improperly so called; they are founded, with more or less alteration, on a series of revisions undertaken by Bishop Challoner in 1749-52 . . . He brought out three editions of the *New Testament*, in 1749, 1750, and 1752 respectively, and one of the *Old Testament* in 1750. The changes introduced by him were so considerable that, according to Cardinal Newman, they “almost amounted to a new translation”. So also, Cardinal Wiseman wrote, “To call it any longer the Douay or Rheimsish Version is an abuse of terms. It has been altered and modified until scarcely any verse remains as it was originally published.” In nearly every case Challoner’s changes took the form of approximating to the [Anglican] Authorized Version, though his three editions of the New Testament differ from one another in numerous passages . . .”²

Now, it should be noted that in most cases, what passes today as the “Douay-Rheims Bible” is nothing more than the corrupted and truncated Challoner version, which is almost completely devoid of the comprehensive annotations of the Douay Fathers. The Douay commentaries, which were based largely upon the writings of the early Church Fathers, were expurgated by Challoner, for the sake of reducing the size and cost of Bibles distributed to the faithful. But this greatly diminished the value of later editions of the Catholic Bible that were to follow. For, virtually all versions printed from 1800 to the present day are lacking the exhaustive explanations of key biblical passages, which had been included (with the scripture texts) by the Douay Fathers to assist the English-speaking faithful in defending the Catholic religion. The notations in 19th and 20th century editions of the “Catholic” Bible are woefully deficient in content, and the ideas expressed therein differ significantly from the learned opinions of the church fathers found in earlier editions. This is especially true regarding the prophetic works found in both the Old Testament and New Testament.

Numerous commentaries on Sacred Scripture, which were published in the original 1582 *Douay-Rheims New Testament*, specifically and clearly describe the plight of the Church, the papacy, and the Mass in the last days. From those writings it is clearly evident that the Church Fathers of past centuries foresaw the future takeover of the Vatican by the forces of Antichrist, the overthrow of the Pope, and the abolition of the Holy Mass in the latter days.

The eventual suppression of the Holy Sacrifice was implied by St. Matthew, according to the Church’s eminent scripture scholars, Doctors William Allen, Thomas Worthington, and Richard Bristow. In their comprehensive annotations on Matthew 24:15, regarding the verse, “when you shall see the abomination of desolation . . . standing in the holy place . . .”, the Oxford Fathers at Douay give the following interpretation:

“... the abomination of desolation foretold, was partly fulfilled in diverse profanations of the Temple of Jerusalem, when the sacrifice and service of God was taken away. But specially it shall be fulfilled by Antichrist and his Precursors, **when they shall abolish the holy Mass, which is the Sacrifice Of Christ’s Body and Blood, and the only sovereign worship due to God in His Church** . . . By which it is plain that the heretics of those days will be special fore-runners of Antichrist.”³

In their commentary on II Thessalonians 2:3-4, Fathers Allen, Worthington, and Bristow interpreted the passage, “the son of perdition . . . sitteth in the temple of God,” to mean that:

“Antichrist . . . shall rule over the whole world, and specifically prohibit that principal worship instituted by Christ in His Sacraments . . . by taking away the sacrifice of the altar . . .”⁴

As regards the conditions for the Church in the “latter days,” the Douay Fathers stated further that:

“St. Augustine . . . and St. Jerome . . . think that this sitting of Antichrist in the temple, doth signify his sitting in the Church of Christ, rather than in Solomon’s temple. Not as though he should be a chief member of the Church of Christ . . . But . . . that **this Antichristian revolt here spoken of, is from the Catholic Church; and Antichrist, if he ever were of or in the Church, shall be a renegade out of the Church, and he shall usurp upon it by tyranny, and by challenging worship, religion, and government thereof** . . . And this is to sit in the temple or against the Temple of God, as some interpret. If any Pope did ever this, or shall do, then let the Adversaries [*Protestants*] call him Antichrist.”⁵

In the commentaries of the English Fathers at Douay, on the 17th Chapter of the Apocalypse (again, found in the unabridged annotations from the original Douay-Rheims Bible), which pertain to the Pope, it is written that:

“... in the beginning of the Church, Nero and the rest of the persecuting Emperors (which were figures of Antichrist) did principally sit in **Rome, so also the great Antichrist shall have his seat there**, as it may well be (though others think that Jerusalem rather shall be his principal city) yet even then shall **neither the Church of Rome, nor the Pope of Rome be Antichrist, but shall be persecuted by Antichrist, and driven out of Rome**, if it be possible. For, to Christ’s Vicar and the Roman Church he will bear as much good will as the Protestants now do, and he shall have more power to persecute him and the Church, than they have.”⁶

Henry Cardinal Manning

Henry Edward Manning, D.D., once an influential cleric of the Church of England, converted to the Catholic faith in 1851. He entered the seminary and thereafter advanced rapidly through the ranks of the priesthood, having been consecrated as Archbishop of Westminster in 1865, and appointed as cardinal, just ten years later. Midway between those two promotions, Henry Manning achieved renown throughout the Catholic world by his assistance to Pope Pius IX in the drafting of the dogmatic decree on Papal Infallibility, which was promulgated at the First Vatican Council, in 1870.

Four years before his reception of episcopal orders, Manning delivered a series of lectures, which were published together in London under the title, *The Present Crisis of the Holy See*. The year was 1861, and the last remnants of the Pope’s temporal realm were being stripped from his hands by the Masonic, revolutionist movement that had swept across Italy. Manning recognized in those dire events the foretaste of far greater perils to come, for the papacy, the Church and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Drawing from ecclesiastical sources ancient and modern, Manning was able to predict with chilling accuracy the then future tribulations that would threaten to exterminate the Mystical Body of Christ in the “latter days.” Here below is but a sample of Manning’s analysis of the upheavals in his day and what they would portend for our own time:

“... those who claim toleration for every form of opinion, and who teach that the office of the civil governor is never to enter into controversies of religion, but that all men should be left free in their belief, and the conscience of all men be at liberty before God — even they make one exception, and, in the strangest contradiction to all their principles or, at least, their professions, maintain that as the Catholic Church is not only a form of doctrine, but also a power of government, it must be excepted from the general toleration. And this is precisely the point of future collision. It is the very reason why the Archbishops of Cologne, Turin, Cagliari, and the like, went . . . into exile; why nineteen Sees are . . . vacant in Sardinia. Why, in Italy, Bishops are, at this day [1861], cast out from their Episcopal thrones; it is for the reason that in this land [England] the Protestant religion is established instead of Catholic truth, and that thrones once filled by the Bishops of the universal Church are now occupied by those whom the royalties of England, and not the royalties of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, have chosen and set up. It is the same old contest, old as Christianity itself, which has been from the beginning, first with pagan, and then with heretic, and then with schismatic, and then with infidel, and will continue to the end. The day is not far off when the nations of the world, now so calm and peaceful in the stillness of their universal indifference, may easily be roused, and penal laws [against Catholics] once more may be found in their statute-books.

“... This leads on plainly to the marks, which the prophet [Malachias] gives of the persecution of the last days. Now, there are three things which he has recorded. In the foresight of prophecy he saw and noted these three signs. The first, that **the continual sacrifice shall be taken away**; the next, that **the sanctuary shall be occupied by the abomination which maketh [it] desolate**; the third, that **‘the strength’ and ‘the altar**,’ as he described it, **shall be cast down**: and these are the only three I will notice.

“Now, first of all, what is this ‘**taking away of the continual sacrifice**’?

“It was taken away in type at the destruction of Jerusalem. The sacrifice of the Temple, that is of the lamb, morning and evening, in the Temple of God, was entirely abolished with the destruction of the Temple itself. Now, the Prophet Malachias says: ‘From the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles; and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation.’ [*Malachias*, 1:11] This passage of the prophet has been interpreted by the Fathers of the Church, beginning with St. Irenaeus, St. Justin Martyr, and I know not how many besides, to be the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist, the true Paschal Lamb which came in the place of the type — namely, the sacrifice of Jesus Himself on Calvary renewed perpetually and continued forever in the sacrifice on the altar . . .

“The Holy Fathers who have written upon the subject of Antichrist, and of these prophecies of Daniel, without a single exception, as far as I know, — and they are the Fathers both of the East and of the West, the Greek and the Latin Church — all of them unanimously, — say that in the latter end of the world, during the reign of Antichrist, the holy sacrifice of the altar will cease. [Malvenda, Liber VIII, chapter 4.] In the work on the end of the world, ascribed to St. Hippolytus, after a long description of the afflictions of the last days, we read as follows: ‘**The Churches shall lament with a great lamentation, for there shall be offered no more oblation nor incense, nor worship acceptable to God. The sacred buildings of the churches shall be as hovels; and the precious body and blood of Christ shall not be manifest in those days; the Liturgy shall be extinct; the chanting of psalms shall cease; the reading of Holy Scriptures shall be heard no more. But there shall be upon men darkness, and mourning upon mourning, and woe upon woe.**’ [Hippolytus, *Liber de Constatin. Mandi*, § 34.] Then, the Church shall be scattered, driven into the wilderness, and shall be for a time, as it was in the beginning, invisible, hidden in catacombs, in dens, in mountains, in lurking-places; for a time it shall be swept, as it were, from the face of the earth. Such is the universal testimony of the Fathers of the early centuries. . . .

“The writers of the Church tell us that in the latter days the city of Rome will probably become apostate from the Church and Vicar of Jesus Christ; and that Rome will again be punished, for he will depart from it; and the judgment of God will fall on the place from which one reigned over the nations of the world. For what is it that makes Rome sacred, but the presence of the Vicar of Jesus Christ? What has it that should be dear in the sight of God, save only the presence of the Vicar of His Son? Let the Church of Christ depart from Rome, and Rome will be no more in the eyes of God than Jerusalem of old. Jerusalem, the Holy City, chosen by God, was cast down and consumed by fire, because it crucified the Lord of Glory; and the city of Rome, which has been the seat of the Vicar of Jesus Christ for eighteen hundred years, if it become apostate, like Jerusalem of old, will suffer the like condemnation. And, therefore, the writers of the Church tell us that the city of Rome has no prerogative except only that the Vicar of Christ is there; and if it become unfaithful, the same judgments which fell on Jerusalem, hallowed though it was by the presence of the Son of God, of the Master, and not the disciple only, shall fall likewise upon Rome.”

Cardinal Manning continues . . .

“The apostasy of the city of Rome from the Vicar of Christ, and its destruction by Antichrist may be thought so new to many Catholics, that I think it well to recite the text of theologians, of greatest repute. First, Malvenda, who writes expressly on the subject, states as the opinion of Ribera, Gaspar Melus, Viegas, Suarez, Bellarmine, and Bosius, that Rome shall apostatize from the faith, **drive away the Vicar of Christ**, and return to its ancient paganism. Malvenda’s words are: ‘But Rome itself in the last times of the world will return to its ancient idolatry, power, and imperial greatness. **It will cast out its Pontiff**, altogether apostatize from the Christian faith, terribly persecute the Church, shed the blood of martyrs more cruelly than ever, and will recover its former state of abundant wealth, or even greater than it had under its first rulers.’ [Melvenda, *de Antichristo*, Liber IV, chapter 5.]

“Lessius says: ‘In the time of Antichrist, Rome shall be destroyed, as we see openly from the thirteenth chapter of the Apocalypse;’ and again: ‘The woman whom thou sawest is the great city, which hath kingdom over the kings of the earth, in which is signified Rome in its impety, such as it was in the time of St. John, and shall be again at the end of the world.’ [Lessius, *de Antichristo demonstratio XIII*] And Bellarmine [says]: ‘In the time of Antichrist, Rome shall be desolated and burnt, as we learn from the sixteenth verse of the seventeenth chapter of the *Apocalypse*.’ [Bellarmine, *de Summo Pontifice*, Liber IV, chapter 4.] On which words the Jesuit Ebermann comments as follows: ‘We all confess with Bellarmine that the Roman people, a little before the end of the world, will return to paganism, and **drive out the Roman Pontiff**.’

“Viegas, on the eighteenth chapter of the Apocalypse says: ‘Rome, in the last age of the world, after it has apostatized from the faith, will attain great power and splendor of wealth, and its sway will be widely spread throughout the world, and flourish greatly. Living in luxury and the abundance of all things, it will worship idols, and be steeped in all kinds of superstition, and will pay honor to false gods. And because of the vast effusion of the blood of martyrs which was shed under the emperors, God will most severely and justly avenge them, and it shall be utterly destroyed, and burned by a most terrible and afflicting conflagration.’

“Finally, Cornelius à Lapidè sums up what may be said to be the common interpretation of theologians. Commenting on the same eighteenth chapter of the Apocalypse, he says: ‘These things are to be understood of the city of Rome, not that which is, nor that which was, but that which shall be at the end of the world. For then the city of Rome will return to its former glory, and likewise its idolatry and other sins, and shall be such as it was in the time of St. John, under Nero, Domitian, Decius, &c. For from Christian it shall again become heathen. **It shall cast out the Christian Pontiff**, and the faithful who adhere to him. It shall persecute and slay them. It shall rival the persecutions of the heathen emperors against the Christians. For so we see Jerusalem was first heathen under the Canaanites; secondly, faithful under the Jews; thirdly, Christian under the Apostles; fourthly heathen again under the Romans; fifthly, Saracen under the Turks.’

“Such they believe will be the history of Rome: pagan under the emperors, Christian under the Apostles, faithful under the Pontiffs, apostate under the Revolution, and pagan under Antichrist. Only Jerusalem could sin so formally and fall so low; for only Jerusalem has been so chosen, illumined, and consecrated. And as no people were ever so intense in their persecutions of Jesus as the Jews, so I fear will none ever be more relentless against the faith than the Romans.”⁷

Father Sylvester Berry

It was the learned opinion of the eminent, 20th Century scripture scholar, Father E. Sylvester Berry that the 12th and 13th chapters of the *Apocalypse* of St. John foretell a usurpation of the papal see by the false prophet of Antichrist resulting in great tribulations befalling the Catholic Church. Fr. Berry points out that it is the papacy, which is the principal target of those who seek to establish the reign of Antichrist. Heresy, schism and the introduction of false worship upon the altars of Catholic churches are, thus, to be the direct results of the removal of the true Pope from the See of Rome, and subsequent occupation of the Chair of Peter by the forces of Antichrist.

Here in Sylvester Berry’s writings, published 37 years before the pivotal 1958 Conclave, is a scenario amazingly close to what has actually happened to the Church and the papacy in our time:

“In the foregoing chapter [12] St. John outlines the history of the Church from the coming of Antichrist until the end of the world. . . . In this chapter he shows us the true nature of the conflict. It shall be a war unto death between the Church and the powers of darkness in a final effort to destroy the Church and thus prevent the universal reign of Christ on earth.

“Satan will first attempt to destroy the power of the Papacy and bring about the downfall of the Church through heresies, schisms and persecutions that must surely follow . . . he will raise up Antichrist and his prophet to lead the faithful into error and destroy those who remain steadfast. . . . The Church, the faithful spouse of Jesus Christ, is represented as a woman clothed in the glory of divine grace . . .

“... In this passage there is an evident allusion to some particular son of the Church whose power and influence shall be such that Satan will seek his destruction at any cost. This person can be none other than the Pope to be elected in those days. The Papacy will be attacked by all the powers of hell. In consequence the Church will suffer great trials and afflictions in securing a successor upon the throne of Peter.

“The words of St. Paul to the Thessalonians may be a reference to the Papacy as the obstacle to the coming of Antichrist: ‘You know what withholdeth, that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity already worketh; only that he who now holdeth, do hold until he be taken out of the way. And then that wicked one shall be revealed.’

“... St. John . . . sees in heaven a red dragon with seven heads and ten horns. . . . The dragon is Satan red with the blood of martyrs, which he will cause to flow. The meaning of the seven heads and ten horns must be sought in the description of the beast that represents Antichrist where they symbolize kings or worldly powers. [*II Thessalonians* 2:6-7] . . . Satan’s attacks against the Church will be organized and carried out by the governments and ruling powers of those days.

“With the beast of Antichrist only the horns have diadems as symbols of royalty or governing power. The heads are branded with names of blasphemy. (*Apocalypse*, 13:1) Hence they symbolize the sins and errors that will afflict the Church . . . in this final struggle to prevent the universal reign of Christ all forms of sin and error will be marshaled against the Church . . . all errors which have afflicted the Church may be summed up in these seven: Judaism, paganism, Arianism, Mohammedanism, Protestantism, rationalism, and atheism.

“The dragon is seen in heaven which is here a symbol of the Church, the kingdom of heaven on earth. This indicates that the first troubles of those days will be inaugurated within the Church by apostate bishops, priests, and peoples,—the stars dragged down by the tail of the dragon.

“... The dragon stands before the woman, ready to devour the child that is brought forth. In other words, **the powers of hell seek by all means to destroy the Pope elected in those days.**

“... It is now the hour for the powers of darkness. The new-born Son of the Church is taken ‘to God and to his throne.’ **Scarcely has the newly elected Pope been enthroned when he is snatched away** by martyrdom. The ‘mystery of iniquity’ gradually developing through the centuries, cannot be fully consummated while the power of the Papacy endures, but now he that ‘withholdeth is taken out of his way.’ During the interregnum ‘that wicked one shall be revealed’ in his fury against the Church.” [*In his interpretation of the Apocalypse, Fr. Berry suggests that it will the martyrdom of the Pope, immediately after his election, that will precipitate an extended interregnum, causing manifold tribulations to be visited upon the faithful. However, the suppression of a true Pope, and the intense agony suffered by the rightful Pontiff, who watches helplessly as the Church is ravaged by demonic powers usurping his see for a generation, could certainly be compared to a type of prolonged martyrdom.*]

“It is a matter of history that **the most disastrous periods for the Church were times when the Papal throne was vacant, or when anti-popes contended with the legitimate head of the Church. Thus also shall it be in those church days to come.**

“The Church deprived of her chief pastor must seek sanctuary in solitude there to be guided by God Himself during those trying days . . . In those days the Church shall . . . find refuge and consolation in faithful souls, especially in the seclusion of the religious life.

“... Our Divine Savior has a representative on earth in the person of the Pope upon whom He has conferred full powers to teach and govern. Likewise, **Antichrist will have his representative in the false prophet who will be endowed with the plenitude of papal powers to deceive the nations.**

“... As indicated by the resemblance to a lamb, **the prophet will probably set himself up in Rome as a sort of antipope during the vacancy of the papal throne** . . .

“... The ‘**abomination of desolation**’ has been wrought in many Catholic churches by heretics and apostates who have broken altars, scattered relics of martyrs and desecrated the Blessed Sacrament. At the time of the French Revolution a lewd woman was seated upon the altar of the cathedral in Paris and worshipped as the goddess of reason. **Such things but faintly foreshadow the abominations that will desecrate churches in those sorrowful days** when Antichrist will seat himself at the top to be adored as God.

“... **Antichrist and his prophet will introduce ceremonies to imitate the Sacraments of the Church. In fact there will be a complete organization - a church of Satan set up in opposition to the Church of Christ.** Satan will assume the part of God the Father; Antichrist will be honored as Savior, and his prophet will usurp the role of Pope. Their ceremonies will counterfeit the Sacraments . . .”⁸

Father Herman Kramer

In 1955, Fr. Herman Bernard Kramer published his commentaries in *The Apocalypse* of St. John, under the title of *The Book of Destiny*. He arrived at many of the same conclusions as previous Catholic scripture scholars, but he provided a specificity within his interpretations of the last, and most mysterious book of *The Holy Bible*, that was unmatched by earlier literature on the “last days.” His book, which was a work to which he devoted his whole life, was published three years before the fateful Conclave of 1958. Fr. Kramer could not have had direct, foreknowledge of the sinister machinations, already in progress, to overthrow the Pope before he could leave the secret conclave which would elect him. Thus, the scholar’s comments on the 12th Chapter of *The Apocalypse*, as shown below, are all the more astounding:

“The ‘sign’ in heaven is that of a woman with child crying out in her travail and anguish of delivery. . . . In that travail, she gives birth to some definite ‘person’ who is to RULE the Church with a rod of iron (verse 5). It then points to a conflict waged within the Church to elect one who was to ‘rule all nations’ in the manner clearly stated. In accord with the text this is **unmistakably a PAPAL ELECTION**, for only Christ and his Vicar have the divine right to rule ALL NATIONS. . . . **But at this time the great powers may take a menacing attitude to hinder the election of the logical and expected candidate by threats of a general apostasy, assassination or imprisonment of this candidate if elected. This would suppose an extremely hostile link in the governments of Europe towards the Church, because an extended interregnum in the papacy is always disastrous and more so in a time of universal persecution. If Satan would contrive to hinder a papal election, the Church would suffer great travail** . . .

The thought that agents of the world powers, hostile to the Church, would actually cooperate with the election of the Pope, to facilitate his secret overthrow while still in the secluded conclave, seems not to have occurred to Fr. Kramer, at first, when he wrote these lines. He speaks only of their contrivance to “hinder the election” by threats of “apostasy, assassination or imprisonment”, and worse, which were actually used to intimidate, paralyze and silence the newly elected Pope and his cardinals, while the enemy went about their work of destruction.

Father Kramer continues:

“... A second ‘sign’ appears in heaven having a hostile relationship to the first. It is a blood-red dragon and is a horrible contrast to the first figure of divine beauty. . . . This red dragon . . . brings the Church into great distress at that time. . . . No fiercer enemy of God and man has appeared in Christian times than Communism, and strange to say, RED is its emblematic color. Communism may by that time have gained control of the governments of Europe.”

Here, Fr. Kramer could have used the term “Judeo-Freemasonry” interchangeably with “Communism,” since the former gave life to the latter. Also, the color red of the Communist flag originated with the red emblem of the Jewish banking House of Rothschild, which means “red shield.” While the governments of Western European have never become formally Communist, most have been under the tight grip of Freemasonry for many years, and have thus covertly participated with the Masonic “superpowers” in the plot to overthrow the Catholic Church.

Father Kramer continues:

“... It would then erect almost insurmountable difficulties for the holding of a conclave to elect a pope. . . . Satan knows how extensively an interregnum in the papacy would favor his success in recovering the ancient lordship over the world. . . . As a dragon, Satan through the evil world-powers of that time will enter the Church, interfere with her liberty and perpetrate by stealthy suggestions having long before discovered his cunning designs for the episcopate will now endeavor by threats of force to hinder the election of the worstiant candidate for the papacy . . .”

In this context, the writings of Giuseppe Siri, quoted below, take on special significance:

“... **The seclusion of the conclave is even more necessary today; with modern means, with modern techniques, without complete seclusion, it would not be possible to gain an election against the pressures from outside powers. Today some superpowers (and even some lesser powers) have too great an interest in owning, for their part, through either compliance or weakness [of church leaders], the greatest moral authority in the world. And they would do everything in their power to accomplish this. The pressures to overturn the substance of the law of the conclave would be driven by the desire to obtain this very result.”** [*See Appendix: Giuseppe Siri - The Election of the Roman Pontiff*.]

From the lines above, it may be inferred that during Siri’s time, not only the European powers, but also the “superpowers” (the U.S.S.R. and U.S.A.—whose governments were both created by Freemasonry) were motivated to “overturn” the “law of the conclave” for their own purposes.

Father Kramer continues:

“... **Some eminent cardinal may be particularly outstanding** in his efforts to stem the tide of demoralization of bishops and priests. **Satan will know, and the world-powers will know, that he is the likely choice for the papacy, and that if elected, he will . . . exercise his supreme jurisdiction to inaugurate measures of reform.** Satan knows that his own hopes of a rich harvest of souls will then be dashed to the ground. Hence he must avert the election or have the Pope assassinated when elected. . . . **Satan’s intention is to subject the newly elected Pope also to the purposes of the world-powers or to plot his death. He may contrive an assurance of safety and immunity from harm for the Cardinals to convene for the election the more easily to take the Pope-elect prisoner.”**

Here, Fr. Kramer provides, with great precision, the “punch-line” to the 1958 Conclave conundrum and its aftermath. Intimidation, coercion, and trickery were employed to gain the compliance of the just-elected, and overthrown Pope, while blackmail and all manner of deception were carried out against the frightened and confused old Cardinals, to secure their perpetual silence.

Fr. Kramer thus concludes his commentary on the12th chapter of *The Apocalypse*:

“The dragon will want to intimidate the new Pope into non-interference - to let affairs run and develop as heretofore. **In that way would he ‘devour the son’ absorb the papacy and alone direct and rule the world.**”¹⁰ ↑

^[1] Bernard Ward, The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. V, The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., 1908, page 140

^[2] Bernard Ward, The Catholic Encyclopedia, page 140.

^[3] Matthew 24:15 - “Annotations,” The New Testament, 1582, The English College of Rheims, John Fogny, page 71

^[4] Thessalonians 2:3-4 - “Annotations,” The New Testament, page 558.

^[5] Thessalonians 2:3-4 - “Annotations,” The New Testament, page 558.

^[6] The Apocalypse 17:5 - “Annotations,” The New Testament, page 731.

^[7] Henry Edward Cardinal Manning, The Present Crisis of the Holy See, 1861, Burns and Lambert, London, pages 79 & 87-90.

^[8] Rev. E. Sylvester Berry, The Apocalypse of St. John, 1921, The Catholic Church Supply House, Columbus, Ohio, pages 120-138.

^[9] Giuseppe Siri, «Renovatio», VII [1972], fasc. 2, pages. 155-156; as quoted in: Opere Del Giuseppe Cardinale Siri - Vol. 13: Il Dovere Dell’Ortodossia: “L’Elezione Del Romano Pontifice,” 1987, Giardini Editori E Stampatori, Piza, pages 53-54.

^[10] Rev. Herman Bernard Kramer, The Book of Destiny, 1955, Buechler Publishing Company, Belleville, Illinois, reprinted by Tan Books, Rockford Illinois, pages 277-85.