

**FILE NO. 16**

**Research  
and  
Discovery on:**

**the Sanctuary  
and  
Prophecy Explained  
Book of Daniel  
Chapter 12**

## METHOD NO. 16

### THE SANCTUARY AND PROPHECY EXPLAINED: BOOK OF DANIEL CHAPTER 12

#### SUGGESTED METHOD:

- Read chapter 12 of Daniel and the explanation given in the Bible Companions.
- [WARNING: SECOND PAPAL SUPREMACY COMING SOON!](#)  
(See File No. 16, p. 6-16)
- Visit the Important Study on the Warning of Daniel 12

FILE NO. 16

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## THE SANCTUARY AND PROPHECY EXPLAINED: BOOK OF DANIEL CHAPTER 12

IT IS WRITTEN:

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Daniel 12:1

BIBLE COMPANIONS:

"Then I saw that Jesus would not leave the most holy place until every case was decided either for salvation or destruction, and that the wrath of God could not come until Jesus had finished His work in the most holy place, laid off His priestly attire, and clothed Himself with the garments of vengeance. Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and man, and God will keep silent no longer, but pour out His wrath on those who have rejected His truth. I saw that the anger of the nations, the wrath of God, and the time to judge the dead were separate and distinct, one following the other, also that Michael had not stood up, and that the time of trouble, such as never was, had not yet commenced.

The nations are now getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out. I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds until Jesus' work was done in the sanctuary, and then will come the seven last plagues. These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous; they thought that we had brought the judgments of God upon them, and that if they could rid the earth of us, the plagues would then be stayed. A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob's trouble. Then all the saints cried out with anguish of spirit, and were delivered by the voice of God. The 144,000 triumphed. Their faces were lighted up with the glory of God."

Early Writings. 36, 37.

FILE NO. 16

IT IS WRITTEN:

7 TIMES: "TIME OF THE END" - "FINISHED" - "THE END"

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Verse 4.

"And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" Verse 6.

"And when he shall accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." Verse 7.

"And I heard but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" Verse 8.

"And he said, Go thy way Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." Verse 9.

"But thou go thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." Verse 13.

BIBLE COMPANIONS:

"The time has come for Daniel to stand in his lot. The time has come for the light given him to go to the world as never before. If those for whom the Lord has done so much will walk in the light, their knowledge of Christ and the prophecies relating to Him will be greatly increased as they near the close of this earth's history."

MS 177, 1899.

IT IS WRITTEN: 1260, 1290, 1335 DAYS

"And I heard the man clothed in linen which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half (1260 days); and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." Verse 7.

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." Verse 11.

"Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." Verse 12.

**BIBLE COMPANIONS:**

"Let us read and study the 12th chapter of Daniel. It is a warning we shall all need to understand before the time of the end."

Letter 161, July 30, 1903.

**REFERENCES:**

It is written, the Bible, Daniel, Chapter 12

[To Obtain Books & Read More about the Warning in Daniel 12 Click Here](#)

The Bible Companions:

Letter 161, E.G. White, Author

Early Writings, "The Sealing", p. 36, E.W. White, Author

[The Great Controversy](#), Chapters 39 & 40

**File 16 - Appendix of Studies**

STUDY: [Warning: Second Papal Supremacy Coming Soon!](#)

(See File No. 16, p. 6-14)

STUDY: [Warning - Daniel 12 Important Study!](#)

(See File No. 16, p. 38-47)

FILE NO. 16

## **BOOKS OF DANIEL AND REVELATION ARE ONE**

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Daniel 12:1.

### **PURPOSE:**

- To demonstrate the parallel between the worldly governments established throughout the book of Daniel and striving against God's people and the heavenly government being established in the book of Revelation and entering into the final conflict.
- To establish the similitude between Babylon earthly government in Daniel and Babylon spiritual government in Revelation.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

"The books of Daniel and the Revelation are one. One is a prophecy, the other a revelation; one book is sealed, the other a book opened." Manuscript 59, 1900.

### **STUDY THE BOOK OF DANIEL:**

#### **PHYSICAL WARFARE AT WORK IN THE WORLD**

"Especially for the Last Days, read the book of Daniel. Call up, point by point, the history of the kingdoms there represented. Behold statesmen, councils, powerful armies, and see how God wrought to abase the pride of men, and lay human glory in the dust. God alone is represented as great. In the vision of the prophet He is seen casting down one mighty ruler, and setting up another. He is revealed as the monarch of the universe, about to set up His everlasting kingdom--the Ancient of days, the living God, the Source of all wisdom, the Ruler of the present, the Revealer of the future. Read, and understand how poor, how frail, how short-lived, how erring, how guilty is man in lifting up his soul unto vanity. . . .

The light that Daniel received direct from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon have come to pass." Letter 57, 1896.

**STUDY THE BOOK OF REVELATION:**  
**SPIRITUAL WARFARE AT WORK IN THE WORLD**

"Day by day the conflict between good and evil is going on. Why is it that those who have had many opportunities and advantages do not realize the intensity of this work? They should be intelligent in regard to this. God is the Ruler. By His supreme power He holds in check and controls earthly potentates. Through His agencies He does the work which was ordained before the foundation of the world.

As a people we do not understand as we should the great conflict going on between invisible agencies, the controversy between loyal and disloyal angels. Evil angels are constantly at work, planning their line of attack, controlling as commanders, kings, and rulers, the disloyal human forces. . . . I call upon the ministers of Christ to press home upon the understanding of all who come within the reach of their voice, the truth of the ministration of angels. Do not indulge in fanciful speculations. The Written Word is our only safety. We must pray as did Daniel, that we may be guarded by heavenly intelligences. As ministering spirits angels are sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. Pray, my brethren, pray as you have never prayed before. We are not prepared for the Lord's coming. We need to make thorough work for eternity."  
Letter 201, 1899.

"God gave the Revelation to Christ and Christ communicated the same to John... The instruction to be communicated to John was so important that Christ came from heaven to give it to His servant, telling him to send it to the churches. This instruction is to be the object of our careful and prayerful study; for we are living in a time when men who are not under the teaching of the Holy Spirit will bring in false theories. These men have been standing in high places, and they have ambitious projects to carry out. They seek to exalt themselves, and to revolutionize the whole showing of things. God has given us special instruction to guard us against such ones. He bade John write in a book that which should take place in the closing scenes of this earth's history." Manuscripts 129, 1905

**CHURCH AND STATE GOVERNMENT IN THE TIME OF DANIEL AND OUR TIME: THE IMAGE OF KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR**

"Iron and Clay Mingled is Churchcraft and Statecraft. We have come to a time when God's sacred work is represented by the feet of the image in which the iron was mixed with the miry clay. God has a people, a chosen

people, whose discernment must be sanctified, who must not become unholy by laying upon the foundation wood, hay, and stubble. Every soul who is loyal to the commandments of God will see that the distinguishing feature of our faith is the seventh-day Sabbath. If the government would honor the Sabbath as God has commanded, it would stand in the strength of God and in defense of the faith once delivered to the saints.

But statesmen will uphold the spurious sabbath, and will mingle their religious faith with the observance of this child of the papacy, placing it above the Sabbath which the Lord has sanctified and blessed, setting it apart for man to keep holy, as a sign between Him and His people to a thousand generations. The mingling of churchcraft and statecraft is represented by the iron and the clay. This union is weakening all the power of the churches. This investing the church with the power of the state will bring evil results. Men have almost passed the point of God's forbearance. They have invested their strength in politics, and have united with the papacy. But the time will come when God will punish those who have made void His law, and their evil work will recoil upon themselves." Manuscript 63, 1899.

**CONTROLLING OTHER MINDS IS HAVING THE MARK OF CAIN:**

"Any man, be he minister or layman, who seeks to compel or control the reason of any other man, becomes an agent of Satan, to do his work, and in the sight of the heavenly universe he bears the mark of Cain." Manuscript 29. 1911.

**CHARACTER OF EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY GOVERNMENTS:**

<p><b>BABYLON IN DANIEL &amp; REV.</b>          Dan. 2, 7, 8, 11, 12          Rev. 12, 13; 15-18          CHURCH &amp; STATE*</p>	<p><b>HEAVENLY IN REV.</b>          Rev.1-11          Rev. 14, 19-22          THEOCRACY*</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No freedom of conscience</li> <li>• Character: pride</li> <li>• Against God's Law</li> <li>• Against God's People</li> <li>• Has it's own mark: Sunday</li> <li>• Preparing an army for Last conflict:</li> <li>• New World Order, Papacy,</li> <li>• Lucifer as the head</li> <li>• Character ending: destruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows freedom</li> <li>• Love</li> <li>• Establish the Law</li> <li>• Protect them</li> <li>• Sign: Sabbath</li> <li>• Also preparing:</li> <li>• 144,000 &amp; Christ</li> <li>• as the head</li> <li>• Overcomer</li> </ul>
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\* **NOTE:**

- Earthly governments have existed ever since Cain rebelled against God and killed his brother Abel. From Nimrod to the tower of Babel, to Babylon to the papacy to today: these powers have the mark of Cain, controlling and compelling the minds of others in their way to worship the Creator.
- Theocracy existed from Adam in the Garden of Eden to the prophet Samuel. When Israel asked to have an earthly king to rule over them like the other nations, instead of God, the theocracy on earth ceased. It will be re-established by Christ on the earth made new.

**[ESTABLISHING AN EARTHLY ARMY TODAY: WATCH THE PROGRESS OF THE NEW WORLD ORDER AND READ ABOUT IT \(CLICK HERE\)](#)**

(See File 16, p. 17- 24)

## **THE PAPACY: A MAN MADE THEOCRACY**

READ [THE LETTER OF JOHN PAUL II REGARDING SUNDAY LEGISLATION, DIES DOMINI \(CLICK HERE\)](#), 1998 AND COMPARE WITH THIS ISSUE WRITTEN ABOUT 100 YEARS AGO.

NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN:

"ANYBODY CAN SEE AT A GLANCE THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL REFORM THEORY OF GOVERNMENT WOULD BE BUT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A THEOCRACY. AND THIS IS, IN FACT, WHAT THEY PROPOSE TO ESTABLISH. THEY SAY THAT "A REPUBLIC THUS GOVERNED IS OF HIM, THROUGH THE PEOPLE, AND IS AS REALLY AND TRULY A THEOCRACY AS THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL."

A MONTHLY READING OF THE NATIONAL W. C. T. U., WRITTEN BY MISS WILLARD, ON GOD IN GOVERNMENT, SAYS: "A TRUE THEOCRACY IS YET TO COME, [AND] THE ENTHRONEMENT OF CHRIST IN LAW AND LAW-MAKERS, HENCE I PRAY DEVOUTLY, AS A CHRISTIAN PATRIOT, FOR THE BALLOT IN THE HANDS OF WOMEN."

AND IN HER ANNUAL ADDRESS TO THE NATIONAL W. C. T. U. CONVENTION, OF 1887, MISS WILLARD SAID: "THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST 'MUST ENTER THE REALM OF LAW THROUGH THE GATEWAY OF POLITICS. . . . THERE ARE ENOUGH TEMPERANCE MEN IN BOTH [THE DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN PARTIES] TO TAKE POSSESSION OF THE GOVERNMENT AND GIVE US NATIONAL PROHIBITION IN THE PARTY OF THE NEAR FUTURE, WHICH IS TO BE THE PARTY OF GOD. . . . WE PRAY HEAVEN TO GIVE THEM NO REST . . . UNTIL THEY SHALL . . . SWEAR AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO CHRIST IN POLITICS, AND MARCH IN ONE GREAT ARMY 'UP TO THE POLLS TO WORSHIP GOD.' . . . I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THE PATIENT, STEADFAST WORK OF CHRISTIAN WOMEN WILL SO REACT ON POLITICS WITHIN THE NEXT GENERATION THAT THE PARTY OF GOD WILL BE AT THE FRONT."

NOW A MAN MADE THEOCRACY IS ONLY A SCHEME OF GOVERNMENT WHICH PUTS MAN IN THE PLACE OF GOD. THAT IS PRECISELY THE THEORY UPON WHICH THE PAPACY WAS BUILT,

AND THAT IS JUST WHAT THE PAPACY IS. THE NATIONAL REFORM THEORY IS IDENTICAL WITH THAT OF THE PAPACY; THEREFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL REFORM THEORY IN THIS GOVERNMENT WILL BE BUT THE SETTING UP OF A LIVING IMAGE OF THE PAPACY. ADVOCATING, AS THESE PARTIES ARE, THE PAPAL THEORY, IT IS NOT TO BE WONDERED AT THAT THEY ARE ANXIOUS TO SECURE THE CO-OPERATION OF THE PAPACY IN CARRYING THEIR SCHEME TO SUCCESS. THE CHRISTIAN STATESMAN IS THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE NATIONAL REFORM ASSOCIATION, AND IN AN EDITORIAL, DECEMBER 11, 1884, THAT PAPER SAID: "WE CORDIALLY, GLADLY, RECOGNIZE THE FACT THAT IN THE SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLICS, AND IN FRANCE AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, THE ROMAN CATHOLICS ARE THE RECOGNIZED ADVOCATES OF NATIONAL CHRISTIANITY, AND STAND OPPOSED TO ALL THE PROPOSALS OF SECULARISM. . . .

WHENEVER THEY ARE WILLING TO CO-OPERATE IN RESISTING THE PROGRESS OF POLITICAL ATHEISM, WE WILL GLADLY JOIN HANDS WITH THEM. IN A WORLD'S CONFERENCE FOR THE PROMOTION OF NATIONAL CHRISTIANITY--WHICH OUGHT TO BE HELD AT NO DISTANT DAY--MANY COUNTRIES COULD BE REPRESENTED ONLY BY ROMAN CATHOLICS."

AND IN THAT SAME PAPER, AUGUST 31, 1881, REV. SYLVESTER SCOVIL SAID: "THIS COMMON INTEREST ["OF ALL RELIGIOUS PEOPLE IN THE SABBATH"--SUNDAY] OUGHT BOTH TO STRENGTHEN OUR DETERMINATION TO WORK, AND OUR READINESS TO CO-OPERATE IN EVERY WAY WITH OUR ROMAN CATHOLIC FELLOW-CITIZENS. WE MAY BE SUBJECTED TO SOME REBUFFS IN OUR FIRST PROFFERS, AND THE TIME IS NOT YET COME WHEN THE ROMAN CHURCH WILL CONSENT TO STRIKE HANDS WITH OTHER CHURCHES--AS SUCH; BUT THE TIME HAS COME TO MAKE REPEATED ADVANCES, AND GLADLY TO ACCEPT CO-OPERATION IN ANY FORM IN WHICH THEY MAY BE WILLING TO EXHIBIT IT. IT IS ONE OF THE NECESSITIES OF THE SITUATION. THE NEXUS BETWEEN THE TWO GREAT DIVISIONS OF CHRISTIANITY ON QUESTIONS OF MORAL LEGISLATION IS A THING WORTHY THE CONSIDERATION OF OUR BEST MINDS AND OUR MEN OF LARGEST EXPERIENCE IN SUCH AFFAIRS."

IN PERFECT ACCORD WITH THIS IS THE ENCYCLICAL OF POPE LEO XIII., 1885, WHICH DIRECTS THAT "ALL CATHOLICS SHOULD DO ALL IN THEIR POWER TO CAUSE THE CONSTITUTIONS OF STATES, AND LEGISLATION, TO BE MODELED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF THE TRUE CHURCH, AND ALL CATHOLIC WRITERS AND JOURNALISTS SHOULD NEVER LOSE SIGHT, FOR AN INSTANT, FROM THE VIEW OF THE ABOVE PRESCRIPTIONS."

THEREFORE AS THE PURPOSE OF THE NATIONAL REFORM ASSOCIATION IS IDENTICAL WITH THAT OF ROME, IT IS ONLY TO BE EXPECTED THAT THEY SHOULD SHOW A READINESS TO "GLADLY JOIN HANDS." AND WHENEVER PROTESTANTISM GAINS CONTROL OF THE CIVIL POWER, WHETHER WITH OR WITHOUT THE AID OF ROME, THAT WILL BE BUT TO ERECT AN IMAGE OF THE PAPACY." The Great Controversy, Appendix, p. 689.

REFERENCE: Letter of John Paul II - Dies Domini  
(See File 16, p. 48-97)

### **CONCLUSION TO THE BOOK OF DANIEL**

#### TYPES OF EARTHLY GOVERNMENTS FROM DANIEL TIME TO TODAY:

Babylon: Church and State, Monarchy - Dictatorship under one ruler

Medo-Persia: Church and State - part Monarchy, part Military, leader could not change the decision alone, under a type of senate or congress.

Greece: Church and State, Military

Rome: Church and State, pagan Rome was under Emperors who claimed to be gods and worshipped as gods and papal Rome is under Popes who claim to be the Vicars of Christ on earth.

### **THE BOOK OF REVELATION 2 MAJOR LINES OF PROPHECY**

#### 1.PREPARATION OF GOD'S ARMY: REVELATION 1-11

- Chapter 1: 12 - Introduces Jesus in the Holy Place among the 7 Candlesticks
- Chapters 2 and 3 - present the 7 Churches and 7 Blessings to the overcomers.
- Chapter 4:1 shows an Open Door to the Most Holy Place where the throne of God is seen.
- Chapters 5 and 6 define the 7 seals

- Chapter 7: the 144000 which John could number, are sealed with the seal of the living God and the great multitude around the throne is introduced which cannot be numbered.
- Chapter 8 and 9: the sound of 7 trumpets is heard.
- Chapter 10 shows Jesus and a little book open with 7 thunders and the announcement is made in verse 7 that the Mystery of God shall be finished.
- Chapter 11 John is given a reed to measure the temple of God, the altar and the people who worship there: the investigative judgment is taking place while there is witnessing, the bottomless beast appears, makes war, kills, and finally a great earthquake... and the seventh trumpet is heard.

#### NOTE:

- For a study of all the Number 7 in Revelation, see study file 17.
- 7 Seals: Some Bible expositors have declared the 7 Seals as being in the past. But often prophecies of the Bible have dual applications. SDA Bible Commentaries, Vol. 1 p. 1017 "The Bible abounds in dual applications." Matthew 24 is a dual prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD and the destruction of the world at the end (Great Controversy, p. 36).

#### APPLICATION OF THE SEALS:

- **First seal: White horse:** army of overcomers prepared and sealed (144000)
- **Second seal: Red horse:** removes peace from the earth - since 1844 we have had WW1, WW2, KOREA, VIETNAM, DESERT STORM? and today...
- **Third seal: Black horse:** Economy fails: When USA shall pass a National Sunday Law (civil law), national apostasy will bring national ruin.
- **Fourth seal: Pale horse:** Universal Sunday Law (civil and religious law) brings persecution and death. Universal Death Decree brings the Time of Jacob's Trouble and final deliverance of the Saints.
- **Fifth seal:** Regarding the 5th seal (Rev. 6:9), we read:
- "When the fifth seal was opened, John the Revelator in vision saw beneath the altar the company that were slain for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. After this came the scenes described in the eighteenth of Revelation, when those who are faithful and true are called out from Babylon." Manuscript 39, 1906.

- **Sixth seal:** the Day of God's Wrath
- "I saw that Jesus would not leave the most holy place until every case was decided either for salvation or destruction, and that the wrath of God could not come until Jesus had finished His work in the most holy place, laid off His priestly attire, and clothed Himself with the garments of vengeance. Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and man, and God will keep silence no longer, but pour out His wrath on those who have rejected His truth. I saw the anger of the nations, the wrath of God, and the time to judge the dead were separate and distinct, one following the other, also that Michael had not stood up, and that the time of trouble, such as never was, had not yet commenced. The nations are now getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out." Early Writings, p. 36 - see also Great Controversy, chap. 39 & 40.
- **Seventh seal:** "Silence in heaven" - While the plagues are falling on the earth, Jesus is preparing with all His angels to return to the earth and take His people home to heaven! - see Great Controversy, chap. 41, 42.

#### READY FOR THE FINAL CONFLICT: REVELATION 12-22

- Chapter 12 shows the Great Controversy which started in heaven with the war between Lucifer and Michael, the prince of the host of angels. Michael and His angels won and Lucifer was thrown out of heaven and came here on the earth.
- Notice the woman (the apostolic Church that Christ established) who fled from the dragon twice: the first time v. 6, she fled to a place prepared for her and was fed for 1260 days/years (538 to 1798 AD) at the time of the Dark Ages when the Church of Rome pursued her, passed the Reformation and came to the Deadly Wound of the papacy inflicted by Napoleon in 1798 and as shown in Rev. 13: 3.
- The second time in Rev. 12:14, the woman is given eagle wings (eagle: standard of the Son of God) and fly into the wilderness for 3 1/2 years and the dragon, this time cast out a flood (people speak decree and law of death on his behalf) to carry her away. But the earth opens her mouth to help the woman and swallow up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. This is the remnant of the

woman (the Church of Christ) in the Last Days, she cannot buy or sell and she flees in the country first where she can feed from the garden and then to the mountain where the angels come and feed her during the Time of Jacob's Trouble. "The dragon was wrath with the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed." Rev. 12: 17.

- See Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28.
- Chapter 13 the Mark of the Beast is introduced - "The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes, for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided."
- Review and Herald, April 23, 1889.
- "This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed." Letter 11, 1910.
- "When the legislature frames laws which exalts the first day of the week (Sunday) and put it in the place of the seventh day, the devices of Satan will be perfected."
- Review and Herald, April 15, 1890.
- "The decree enforcing the worship of this day is to go forth to all the world. In a limited degree, it has already gone forth. In several places the civil power is speaking with the voice of a dragon..." Signs of the Times, May 6, 1897.
- Chapter 14 confirms the sealing of the 144000. They are those who live after probation is closed and pass over a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. Daniel 12:1.
- See Great Controversy, p. 648, 649.
- Chapters 15 and 16 describe the 7 last plagues.
- Chapters 17 and 18 announce the rise and fall of modern Babylon
- Chapter 19 Jesus is crowned King of kings and the theocracy is re-established at last.

- Chapter 20 Satan is send into captivity for a 1000 years and the Saints are with Jesus in heaven while the wicked are dead and the earth has her Jubilee of Rest.
- Chapter 21 John sees a new heaven and a new earth for the old heaven and the old earth as we know it now have passed away.
- Chapter 22 the dominion of the earth captured by Satan in Eden is returned to the Saints. The marriage of the Bride and the Bridegroom is consummated for ever.

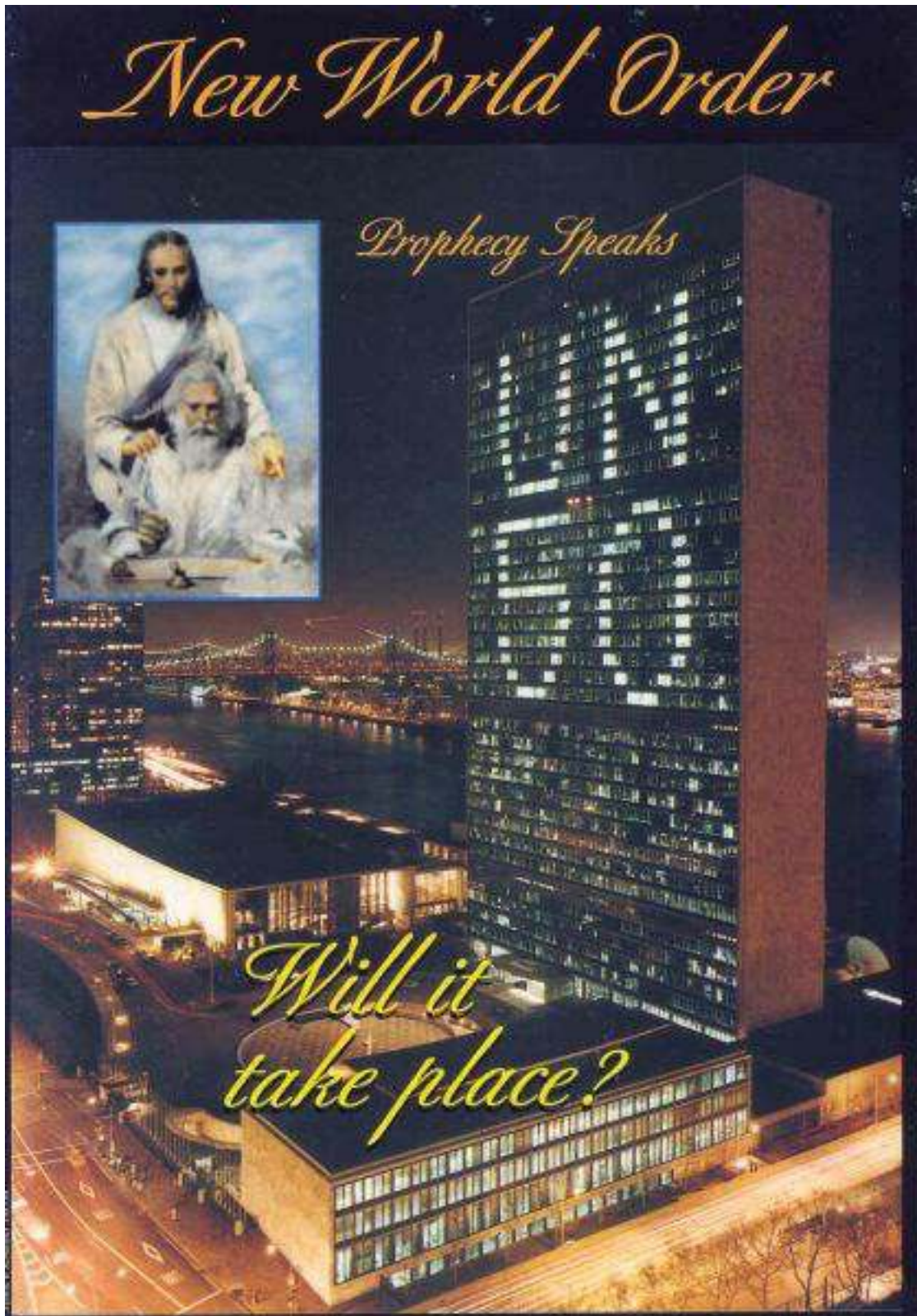
"The marriage represents the reception by Christ of His kingdom. The Holy City, the New Jerusalem, which is the capital and representative of the kingdom, is called "the bride, the Lamb's wife." Said the angel to John: "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." "He carried me away in the spirit," says the prophet, "and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." Revelation 21:9, 10... He will receive the New Jerusalem, the capital of His kingdom, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Daniel 7:14; Revelation 21:2. Having received the kingdom, He will come in His glory, as King of kings and Lord of lords, for the redemption of His people, who are to "sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob," at His table in His kingdom (Matthew 8:11; Luke 22:30), to partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb." The Great Controversy, p. 426.

[BABYLON THE GREAT AND THE BRIDE OF CHRIST](#)  
[\(CLICK HERE\)](#)

(See File 16, p. 25-37)



**Establishing An Earthly Army: Progress of a New World Order**



## BABYLON : THE WONDER OF OLD

The nature of the Babylonian empire is indicated by the head of gold. It was the golden kingdom of a golden age. Babylon, its metropolis, towered to a height never reached by any of its successors.

Situated in the garden of the east, it was laid out in a perfect square said to be twenty-four kilometres on each side. Surrounded by a wall estimated to have been more than sixty metres high and twenty-six metres thick, it had a moat or ditch around this of equal cubic capacity to the wall itself. The city was divided into squares by its main streets, each forty-five meters in width, crossing at right angles, every one of them straight and level. Its five hundred and seventy-six square kilometres of enclosed surface were laid out in luxuriant pleasure grounds and gardens interspersed with magnificent dwellings. This city had ninety-six kilometres of moat, ninety-six kilometres of outer wall, forty-eight kilometres of river wall through its centre, gates of solid brass, hanging gardens rising terrace above terrace till they equalled in height the walls themselves. It had a temple to Belas which was nearly five kilometres in perimeter and two royal palaces, one five and a half and the other twelve and a half kilometres in perimeter. Its subterranean tunnel under the river Euphrates connected these two palaces. It was a perfect arrangement for convenience, ornament and defence. The city seemed to have unlimited resources. Babylon, containing many things which were themselves wonders of the world, was itself another and still mightier wonder. This city, with the whole earth prostrate at her feet, sat like a queen in peerless grandeur.

Such was Babylon, with Nebuchadnezzar in the prime of life—bold, vigorous and accomplished. Seated upon its throne, Babylon, he thought, would stand forever.

## NEW WORLD ORDER : PAST AND PRESENT

As we consider the things that we see taking place in the world today, we will be astonished at how close the past parallels with the present. When we give attention to the New World Order and its introduction by the United States of America, through the United Nations Organisation, we will begin to see the final fulfilment of this prophecy. Rome's power is about to be fully restored. The nations of the world are signing international treaties with the "U.N." at an alarming rate. These treaties cover such things as the world's economy, the environmental issues, law and order, human rights, political philosophy and ideologies, immigration etc. How did Rome come to power in the past?

South and east of the Tiber River near its outlet to the sea, developed a group of tribes known as the "Latins". At first they occupied only a small plain less than thirty by forty miles in size. They called this plain "Latium".

No one in ancient Babylonia would ever have guessed that such a small group would control the strongest empire ever to rule the world. As the Latins or Romans gained military victories, they began to grant a type of citizenship to their defeated foes, entitling them to protection from the Roman state and courts. This citizenship allowed them to carry on commerce and business, but did not give them the right to vote. These communities were called 'allies'. These allies in return, placed their troops entirely at the disposal of Rome. Rome also annexed much foreign territory and scattered her own citizens in these Roman Colonies, or Satellite Nations throughout the territory of the allies. Eventually all of Italy was dotted with such communities made up of citizens of the Latin people.

The Roman senate by what the historian calls "clever statesmanship", made political agreements, and with military conquests gained rulership of the world using the armed forces supplied by these other countries, but always under the training and discipline of Latin leaders through the Roman Legions. By these skillful "alliances" and annexations Rome did indeed have a "King of Strong face", who was indeed "skillful of intrigues." Although his power was mighty it was not by his own power, but by the power of the armies of other nations brought under the discipline and control of Roman military leaders. Great numbers of the armies of Julius Caesar, and other Roman armies were from the Germanic tribes of Europe.

## GIVING UP FREEDOM FOR MORE SECURITY - SOUND FAMILIAR?

The Romans did indeed cause deceit to prosper in their hand, their allies were forced to supply troops for the Roman Legions. They had been allied to Rome, believing that this alliance would guarantee security, protection and the opportunity for increased commerce, and economic stability throughout the empire (a type of G.A.T.T or N.A.F.T.A. agreement). They were wooed into joining Rome by profession of "liberty" and the prospect of being part of a government without a king—"Republican in form"— offering freedom from tyranny. After being forced to supply troops and being heavily taxed by the Romans, these allies yielded the bulk of the spoils from over three hundred military victories to Rome. Thus that city and the Latins were enriched to a lofty prosperity at the expense of the rest of the empire.

The Roman Caesar did indeed magnify himself—citizens were forced to acknowledge him as lord on pain of death, which occasioned the death of multitudes of Christians. (The emperor eventually became an oriental sungod officially called the "invincible sun" whose birthday was on the 25th December). The Romans more than any other people to that time, did destroy the mighty and Holy People, he was even to stand up against the "prince of the host"— it was the Roman government that not only condemned scourged and crucified Jesus, but also attempted, with Roman soldiers to prevent the resurrection. But its power was broken without hand. It was not taken over by another empire, but gradually went into a process of internal decay until its territory was divided by the Barbarians. History testifies to the accuracy of the prophecy.

Dear friend, you and I have the privilege of witnessing the glorious fulfilment of this prophecy. As we contemplate the formation of "The New World Order", and its present day activities under the auspices of the United Nations we see a direct parallel between the rise of the Roman Empire two thousand years ago and the formation of the NEW WORLD ORDER. We witnessed in 1990 the extraordinary measures taken by the United Nations in summoning support from the nations of the world to form an alliance giving the United States of America the authority to go and fight the war against Iraq in the Middle East. What most people are not aware of is that this confederacy of nations fought under the U.N. flag. It was at this time that the United States president George Bush chose to announce to the world the formation of the New World Order.

## YOU CANNOT BE A SPECTATOR!

The religion and style of worship practiced in this Pagan heathen Empire was eventually absorbed into the papacy where we witness it in a disguised Christian form. What difference does it make then, whether you use idols or images in your worship of God? It makes this difference, it determines whether your worship is accepted by God. It reveals whether or not you are worshipping in spirit and truth. Worshipping idols and images makes you a part of the continuance in rebellion, to be counted a part of the devils great rebellion against Jesus and His Father in Heaven.

As you behold in your mind the magnification of the Little Horn—"The Roman Power"— at the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, as you see the real character of the two supernatural powers contending for the allegiance of the universe, on whose side do you choose to be? You cannot be a spectator. You must either conquer with Jesus or be conquered by Satan.

"MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND  
ABOMINATION OF THE EARTH."  
REVELATION 17: 5



## ROME AND THE SECRET SOCIETIES

If a New World Order was ever to be achieved, the power behind the scenes—Rome working through the many secret societies—would have to gain control of the United States of America, and use its prestige and economic influence to lead the rest of the nations into the order. Only America with its vast resources and technology, combined with the moral influence of the mighty Roman Catholic Church, can achieve that which the prophecy has indicated. The United States of America and its vast computer companies have designed both the hardware and software needed for centralised banking, along with its giant telecommunications companies and space programme to design and launch the satellites necessary to control such a style of government. Only The United States of America with its mighty dollar, the closest thing there is to a world currency, has the wealth and infrastructure to make it all happen. Through such policies as privatisation many public companies and facilities will become the property of giant multi-national corporations that are aligned to secret societies and the new world order, with paid and cable television networks providing the infrastructure necessary for the control of the basic requirements of society. Many fail to realise that the great media moguls of the world have been commissioned with the task of selling the idea and policies of the new world order to the people of the world.

The gulf war was needed for several reasons. However, the most important reason was to establish the U.S.A. as the undisputed super power and the one to lead the world into the New World Order, and show the other nations what they could expect if they refused to unite with the coming system. As the enforcer of the New World Order it is America's role to ensure that the nations cooperate. We are just beginning to understand what is meant by the "United States of America speaking as a dragon." Kings, rulers and governors have placed upon themselves the brand of Antichrist and are represented by the dragon, for satanic agencies have been moved from beneath, and they have inspired men to unite in a confederacy of evil. The only institution on the face of earth to fit such a description is the United Nations Organisation, and according to the prophecy, the U.S.A. would become its voice and in that capacity will exercise all the power of the first beast before him.

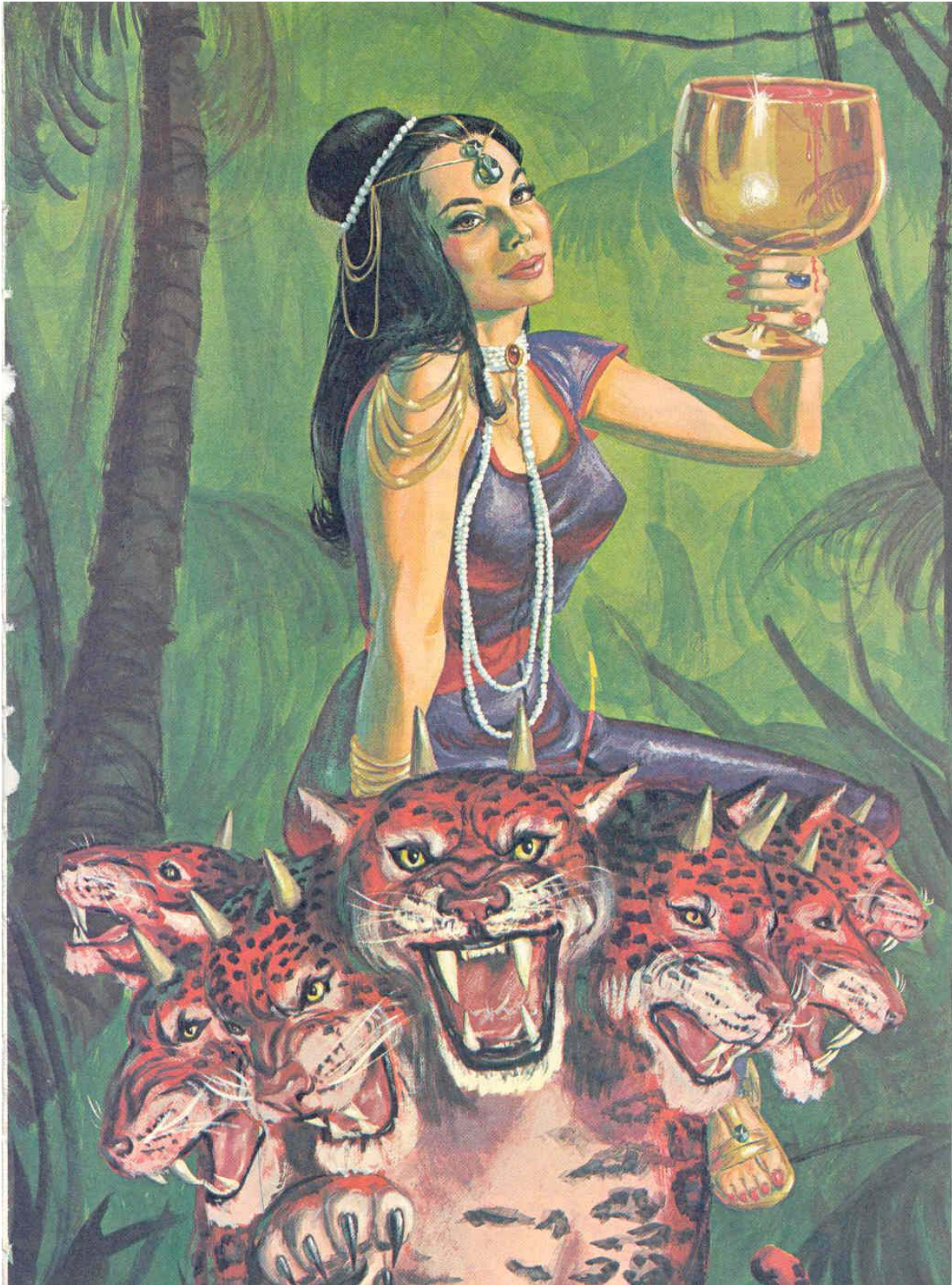
Looking back a little, we find that the first beast before him is the

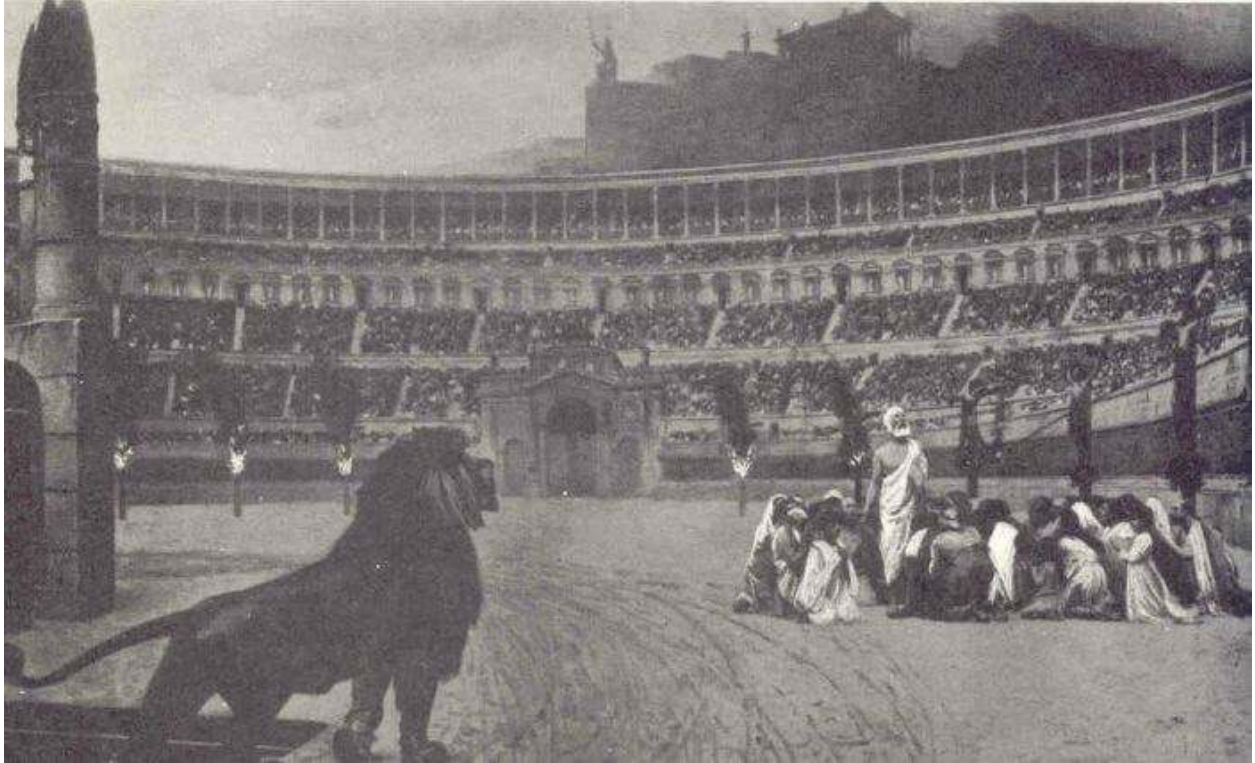
leopard, a symbol of the papacy. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that a so called protestant nation, America, will exercise the persecuting power of the papacy. This she does through the nations giving their sanction to the promulgation of erroneous policies and principles per medium of state laws. Let this principle once be established through and in the United States of America, that the church may employ or control the power of the state; that religious observances may be enforced by civil laws; in short, that the authority of church and state is to dominate the conscience; then the triumph of Rome is assured. One only has to observe the power of the United Nations exercised through America in such countries as Iraq, Haïti and Bosnia to mention just a few. All the power and resources she can muster will be used to coerce or force the world into cooperation. Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens in token of this miracle working power. By these miracles statesmen and citizens alike will be fastened in deception. Having gained their confidence and cooperation, the United States of America will then recommend that the nations make an image to the papacy. The deception accomplished by the working of the events of supernatural character, prepares the way for compliance with this demand for the formation of an image to the papacy (beast).

To understand what would constitute an image of the papal beast, we must first gain some definite idea of what constitutes the papacy itself. The papacy was a church clothed with civil power—an ecclesiastical body having authority to punish all dissidents with confiscation of goods, imprisonment, torture and death. What would be an image of the papacy? Another ecclesiastical establishment clothed with civil power, in other words, a union of church and state. Protestants will work upon the rulers of the land to establish laws that will restore the last ascendancy of the Roman power. Roman catholic principles will be taken under the care and protection of the state. This activity will be speedily followed by national ruin. As the prophecy indicates, "WORSHIP" is the hidden agenda. The inhabitants of the earth are required to bow in obeisance to this false system of religion. Severe penalties will be placed upon those who refuse to comply, with death being the ultimate penalty.



## BABYLON THE GREAT AND THE BRIDE OF CHRIST





MILLIONS GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR THEIR FAITH UNDER  
ROME'S POWER

To be consistent with Biblical analogy linking Egypt with atheistic philosophy, it would only be logical to expect that the next time that such a power re-emerges in prophecy it would still be characterised by its atheistic philosophy. It is generally agreed that during the French Revolution we see atheism re-emerge as the power that attacked the medieval church of the dark ages—The Papacy. This revolution was primarily an attack on Catholicism for it was the predominant religion of the day. The French Revolution was the result of centuries of persecution and cruelty, and eventually the nation of France rose up against the Papacy killing thousands of its priests and nuns. Bibles were confiscated and burned along with all other religious material. So determined were the French that they rebelled against all religion and tried to establish atheism in its place. In rejecting Romanism France rejected all religion with their leaders inaugurating the age of reason. Their efforts to destroy the Bible were not successful, for out of the ashes of this revolution the Bible has risen to world wide distribution. However, the philosophy of that revolution did not die, the seed had been sown and atheism was still alive in the hearts of the people until today it has developed into what we would call Communism. In the years that followed, the Communist philosophy made enormous inroads into many Catholic countries with a number renouncing their ties with the church in order to follow this new ideal. But as the prophecy states, Communism would not last, for the Papacy would recover from the deadly wound it received in 1798. That recovery began when in 1801 a concordant was signed between Napoleon and the Papacy. From that time the papacy decided on a programme that would see it attain spiritual control of the world. She desired to be established once again as the Mother Church.

That was the beginning. Political power was returned to the papacy in 1929 when Vatican State was established. Vatican City became a small but very significant city-state, under the control of no government on earth. It was a civil power in its own right. Newspapers reported this event as follows:

“Mussolini and Gasparri sign historic Roman Pact...heal wound of many years.”

**San Francisco Chronicle, Tuesday, February 12 1929. page 1**

Today we are witnessing the restoration of the papacy as a dominant world power, with many countries having established diplomatic ties with her, and America during the Reagan administration voting to send an ambassador to Rome to represent their interest at the Vatican. How did Rome attack Communism and bring about its demise? Only in recent years have we begun to learn a little of Rome's secret plans for this event. The collapse of Communism actually began in Poland through the solidarity movement. Most people in the west did not realise that solidarity was a child of the Papacy. Only through her influence did solidarity gain a foothold in Poland.

"...But the election of John Paul II, a Polish Pope in 1978 was the signal event, when he visited Poland in 1979 six million of his countrymen, a sixth of the population, turned out to see him. He proclaimed Christianity and Communism incompatible. The Church became the centre of political protest in Poland. With the Pope's support, solidarity was formed and John Paul II sent word to Moscow that if soviet forces crushed solidarity he would go to Poland and stand with his people. The soviets were so alarmed they hatched a plot to kill him. In 1981 the Pope was shot by a professional killer in St. Peters Square, miraculously he survived."

***Communism's Incredible Collapse—How it Happened.***  
**by Fred Barnes. Readers Digest March 1990.**

This incredible event was just as the prophecy of Daniel 11:40 had predicted. The King of the North would come against the King of the South like a whirlwind. However, if the prophecy was to be totally correct Rome would not be the sole instigator, she would have an active accomplice—The United States of America and President Reagan.

"On June 7, 1982, Reagan and John Paul met for fifty minutes at the Vatican. During that conversation the plot was hatched to eliminate Communism. In that meeting, Reagan and the Pope agreed to undertake a clandestine campaign to hasten the dissolution of the Communist Empire declares Richard Allen, Reagan's first national security adviser. This was one of the best kept secret alliances of all times." **Time magazine February 24, 1992 "The Holy Alliance"**

A confederacy was formed between the USA and Rome, to bring about the demise of Communism. Rome was on the move, assisted by Protestant America. She is destined to rule the world.

“Until solidarity's legal status was restored in 1989, it flourished underground, supplied, nurtured and advised largely by a network established under the auspices of Reagan and John Paul II. Tons of equipment—fax machines (the first in Poland), printing presses, transmitters, telephones, shortwave radios, video cameras, photocopiers, telex machines, computers, and word processors, were smuggled into Poland via channels established by priests and American agents and representatives of the AFL-CIO and European Labour Movements **ibid.**”

The key administration players were all devout Roman Catholics—C.I.A. Chief William Casey, Allen, Clark, Haig, Walters and William Wilson, Reagan's first ambassador to the Vatican. They regarded the U.S.-Vatican relationship as a Holy Alliance, the moral force of the Pope and the teachings of the church combined with their fierce Anti-Communism, and their notion of American democracy. Yet the mission would have been impossible without the full support of Reagan, who believed fervently in both the benefits and the practical application of Washington's relationship with the Vatican. One of the earliest goals as President Reagan says, was to recognise the Vatican as a State “and make them an ally”. **Ibid p.31**

Not only did Poland fall into the control of the papacy, but the entire Communist block began to fall like dominoes. Even the might of Russia could not withstand the push for freedom that was sweeping through Europe. Even Mikhail Gorbachev recognised the role that the Pope played in the downfall of Eastern Europe.

“Now it can be said that everything which took place in Eastern Europe in recent years would have been impossible without the Pope's efforts and the enormous role, including the political role, which he played in the world arena. Pope John Paul II will play an enormous political role now that profound changes have occurred in European history.”

**Toronto Star, Canada. March 9, 1992 by Mikhail Gorbachev.**

Now that Communism had given way to the papacy, what are the aims of Rome today? We should not be deceived by the apparent gentleness with which she is wooing the western world today, for her aims are exactly the same as they were in the dark ages, total domination of the world. After John Paul II was shot in St Peters Square and was convalescing, it was reported that he received a vision, the only vision of his pontificate. The information revealed to him concerned the messages received by three young children at the shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in 1917. It was this event that John Paul was commemorating when the attempt was made on his life. After the vision the pontiff requested that the messages received by the girls be brought to him. It is said that the messages contained vital information relating to the world agenda for the Catholic Church. Roman Catholic scholar and former Vatican insider Malachi Martin, in his recent book "The Keys of This Blood", has some very interesting things to say, especially for students of prophecy. He says

"In the final analysis, John Paul II is a geopolitical pope who spent the first part of his pontificate establishing himself and his Holy See as authentic players in the millennium end game which during the same period of time has become the "only game in town" and in this last decade of the second millennium will absorb the energies, the efforts and the vital interests of the great powers in our world."

***The Keys of This Blood pp 638, 639.***

He is waiting rather for an event that will fission human history, splitting the immediate past from the oncoming future. It will be an event on public view in the skies, in the oceans and on the continental land masses of the planet. It will particularly involve our human sun, which every day lights up and shines upon the valleys, the mountains and the plains of this earth for our eyes. But on the day of this event, it will not appear merely as the master star of our so-called solar system. Rather it will be seen as the circumambient glory of the woman whom the apostle describes as "clothed with the sun" and giving birth to "a child who will rule the nations with a sceptre of iron." Fissioning it will be as an event, in John Paul's conviction of faith, for it will immediately nullify all the grand designs the nations are now forming and will introduce the grand design of man's maker. John Paul's waiting and watching time will then be over. His ministry as the servant of the grand design will then begin. **Ibid 639.**

## REVELATION CHAPTER 17

The subject of this chapter is great Babylon. In order to give a full presentation of it, John takes us back to recount some of the facts of her history. This apostate woman, as presented in this chapter, is a symbol of the Roman Catholic Church. Between this church and the kings of the earth there has been an illicit connection. With the wine of her fornication, her deceptive false principles and policies, the inhabitants of the earth have become unstable or as described "drunk". This prophecy is more definite than others applicable to the Roman power in that it distinguishes between church and state. We here have the woman, the church, seated upon a scarlet coloured beast, the civil authorities by which she is upheld and which she controls and guides to her own ends, as a rider controls the animal upon which he is seated. The vesture and decorations of this woman as brought to view in verse four, are in striking harmony with the application made of this symbol. Purple and scarlet are the chief colours in the robes of popes and cardinals, decked with gold and precious costly gems (silver is scarcely seen). From the golden cup in her hand, a symbol of purity of teaching and profession which should have contained only that which is unadulterated and pure, there came forth instead only abominable policies and teachings and still more abominable practices.

This woman is explicitly called Babylon. Is Rome then Babylon, to the exclusion of all other religious bodies? No. She cannot be from the fact that she is called the mother of harlots, which shows that there are other independent religious organisations that constitute the apostate daughters and belong to the same great family. Why should John wonder with great admiration when he saw the woman drunken with the blood of saints? Was persecution any strange thing in his day? Had he not seen Rome launch its most fiery anathemas against the people of his day, himself being in banishment under its cruel power at the time he wrote? Why then should he be astonished as he looked forward and saw Rome still persecuting the saints? The secret of his wonder and admiration was this, all the persecution he had witnessed had been from Pagan Rome, the open enemy of Christ. It was not strange that pagans should persecute the Christian Church. But when he looked forward and saw a professed Christian church persecuting the Christians he could but stand in awe and



amazement. This wild beast is a fitting symbol of Rome for it carries with it all the characteristics of this bloodthirsty empire. As the Roman Empire developed into the papacy, she took on an even more oppressive character. As an empire she had a long and uninterrupted existence. For nearly two thousand years she ruled the world not only in the religious areas of life, but she dominated the civil powers as well.

During the time of papal supremacy millions of people throughout Europe were savagely put to death for refusing to give homage to her policies and teachings. First it was pagan Rome that foresaw that should the gospel triumph her temples and altars would be swept away; therefore she summoned her forces to destroy the Apostolic Church. The fires of persecution were kindled. Christians were stripped of their possessions and driven from their homes. They endured a great fight of afflictions and great numbers sealed their testimony with their blood. Noble and slave, rich and poor, learned and ignorant were alike slain without mercy. The persecution was so great that Christians were forced to flee into the mountains of Italy as well as other parts of Europe. A small period of peace was experienced during the transition from Pagan Rome to Papal Rome. However, the accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the dark ages.

As her power increased, the darkness deepened. In all it is estimated that between fifty and one hundred million people were slaughtered by the Roman Power. And so she is seen by the prophet as being drunken with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs. Then we see in 1798, Rome was stripped of her civil authority. She no longer could use the governments of Europe to enforce her teachings upon the people. Here we see the three phases of the Roman Empire. During the years of her supremacy, she is referred to as the beast that "was". Then having lost her ability to use the civil powers, she enters a period of inactivity. This parallels the "is not" phase of the empire, from 1798 until our day. For it is now toward the close of the twentieth century that we look for the final phase of the prophecy to begin, a time when we shall see the Roman Church restored to power which is "the third phase", the one that is yet to come. During this phase the governments of the world will be deceived into surrendering their sovereignty. Through the United Nations Organisation we see the rise of the New World Order.

As the prophecy indicates, this move will undoubtedly culminate with the United States of America leading the world to unite under the papal head. The nations will be brought to their knees through accepting and embracing the policies of Rome, for they have indeed been drinking from the golden cup she is seen to have in her hand. This has brought instability to the countries. As they drink they seem to stagger from one crisis to another. Their economies are in turmoil with excessive amounts of foreign debt. The environmental movements will push for the preservation of their assets in order to pay those debts. All of these movements are being promoted via the United Nations in an effort to secure unity. They come together with one mind and one purpose—peace and security. They “give their power and strength unto the beast”—Rome. There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of evil. Thus is manifested the same arbitrary, oppressive power against religious liberty and freedom to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, as was manifested by the papacy when in the past it persecuted those who dared to refuse to conform with the religious rites and ceremonies of Romanism. As the prophecy indicates, the woman (the church, Romanism in the old world, Protestantism in the new) is sitting on the beast (the governments of the world). Based upon the word of God, the Bible, we can know without any doubt just who is behind the New World Order. It is the churches of Christendom brought together under the one head, the papacy. This will bring about a time of trouble such as the world has never seen. At that time God calls His people together and says,

“Come my people, enter thou into thy chamber, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment until the indignation be over past. For behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.” ISALAH 20:20.

## REVELATION CHAPTER 16

1. The dragon that represents the governments of the world.
2. The beast, the papacy.
3. The false prophet, the apostate protestant churches.

These will have joined hands with the papacy in persecuting those who refuse to go along with this confederacy of evil. Under the banner of the United Nations, the governments of the world have united, with the United States of America to be their voice, she speaks as a dragon. In this three fold union America will lead the way to persuade and force if necessary the nations of the world to accept the system of the "NEW WORLD ORDER". Silently and under cover are the religious elements working. Satan is assembling his forces under the banner of secret societies, and soon the call will go out for a religious leader of the world in order for unity among the nations to be achieved. Nothing will be left to chance. Spiritualism will have a tremendous influence upon the people as is depicted by the three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouths of the three representatives of evil. These spirits through their supernatural power will deceive the nations into accepting this false system of worship. Satan has long been preparing for his final effort to deceive the world. He has not yet reached the full accomplishment of his designs, but it will be reached in the last moments of time. The enmity of satan against good, will be manifest more and more as he brings his forces into activity in his last work of rebellion and if we are not fully aware of his designs every person will form an alliance with the powers of evil and join in battle against the ruler of the universe. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentations cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. The scenes to be enacted in our world are not yet even dreamed of. The coming struggle will be marked with a terrible intensity such as the world has never witnessed. This programme for world unity is the design of the New World Order, introduced to the nations of the earth under the banner of the United Nations and sold to the people through the media and parliamentary edicts. This will bring about a gathering of the nations to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.

God abhors indifference and disloyalty in a time of crisis. His special blessing accompanies the labours of men of action, men who will not swerve from the straight line of duty, but with divine energy will

inquire "who is on the Lords side?" Men who will not stop merely with the inquiry, but who will demand that those who choose to identify themselves with the truth shall step forward and reveal unmistakably their allegiance to the King of Kings. Their work is to catch the light of truth and let it shine forth to the world in clear steady rays. Fidelity to God is their motto. God cannot use men who in time of peril, when the strength, courage and influence of all are needed, are afraid to take a firm stand for the right. He calls for those that will do faithful battle against wrong, warring against principalities and powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places. It is to such as these that he will speak the words, "well done thou good and faithful servant." Those who have not had their attention drawn to the message of Armageddon, may find it a surprise to learn that the Bible does not depict a military conflict, but portrays the termination of the great conflict that has raged down through the ages. The prophet describes the great controversy between God and Satan, from the time they warred in Heaven until the consumption of all things. Soon all the inhabitants of the earth will have taken sides, either for or against the government of Heaven. The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the ages upon this battle we are now entering, the battle between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition. The agencies which will unite against the truth in this contest are now actively at work. The wicked have fully united with the powers of evil in their warfare against God. Now the conflict is not alone with satan but with men. As the conflict draws to a close, the sixth plague will be poured out upon the Great River Euphrates. This is a symbolic reference to those that support and uphold the system of false worship known as Babylon. Thus the people are destroyed making way for the deliverance of those who have stood firmly for truth. Why will these plagues fall? Because the people led on by the spiritual leaders and governments of the world have rebelled against the government of Heaven. They fall upon those who worship, a spiritual act, the beast and his image.

Dear reader, on whose side will you be found? Will you stand for truth? God is calling for people to take a stand and escape the wrath that is to come.

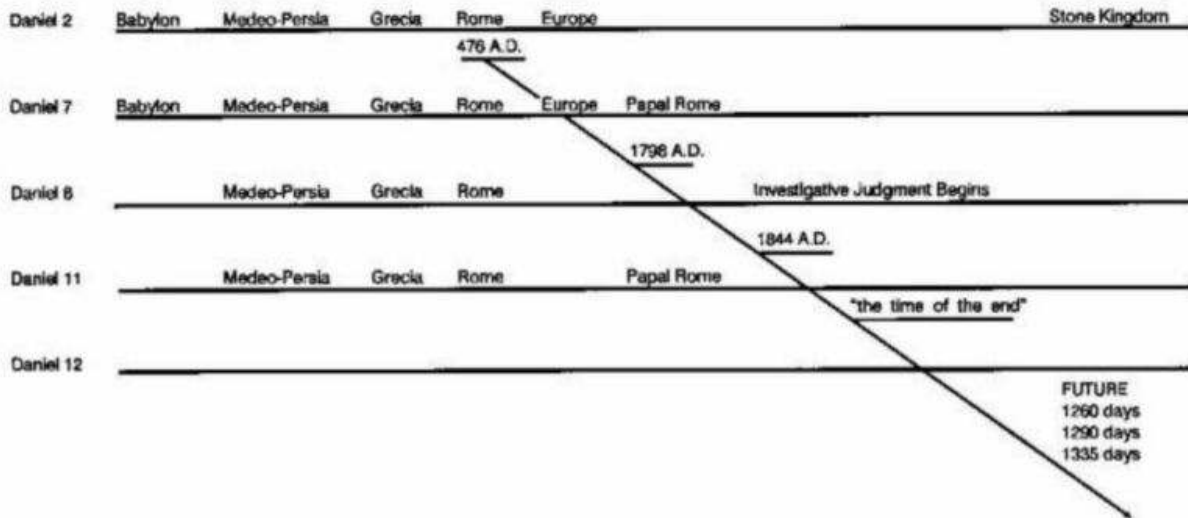
THE BRIDE OF CHRIST  
New Jerusalem, His Church



## WARNING! - DANIEL 12 IMPORTANT STUDY



## A DIAGRAM OF THE FORWARD PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL



## WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION?

1. Daniel 12 is "A WARNING" which we shall (future tense) all need to understand before the time of the end of the earth's history.
2. Daniel 12 concentrates on the "end," "when all these things shall be finished" and it pertains to the future.
3. The forward, progressive movement of the entire book of Daniel propels the last chapter (12) to endtime events and future fulfillment.
4. Prophecy is "history written in advance." It is the "unrolling of the scroll,"—a continuum of historical past, present and future. Prophetic expositors who apply Daniel 12 to future events are "historicists" not Jesuit "Futurists"!
5. Whereas the Daniel 8:14 timeline gave warning of the **beginning** of the Investigative Judgment, the Daniel 12 timelines are a warning of the nearness of the **closing** of the Investigative Judgment.
6. Daniel 12 must be treated in the same consistent manner as all other Scripture—with "THE LITERAL APPROACH."
7. Daniel 12 is written in literal language—not symbolism.
8. The literal language of Daniel 12 cannot be "decoded"—interpreted. It can be given only an historical application—applied to future events.
9. This book, **A WARNING** is not an "interpretation" of Daniel 12. It is an exposition or clarification of terms and an application of prophecy to future events.
10. The Daniel 12 timelines do not give a date, day nor hour for the Second Coming of Jesus. They do reveal that He is "near, even at the door."
11. The principles of integrity which are the basis for hermeneutic rules apply, not only to a study of Scripture, but also to the use of the writings of Ellen G. White:
  - a. One statement shall not destroy the effect of all others on the topic.
  - b. Statements must be understood in context.
  - c. Statements must be placed in correct circumstantial settings.
12. Spirit of prophecy statements, taken out of context and setting, are given perverse meanings which stifle prophetic studies.
13. The "Prophetic time[LINE] which ended in 1844" was the 2300 year-days of Daniel 8:14.
14. The "Prophetic periods which ended in 1844" were those periods within the 2300 years as interpreted in Daniel 9:24-27.
15. The "definite tracing" of prophetic time which ended in 1844, pertained to the computation and dating of the 2300 year-day prophecy.
16. Time will never be a test again as it was in 1844 because the "great test" or "final test" will concern the true Sabbath and the Law of God.
17. Many prophecies of Revelation, yet to be fulfilled, refer to time periods of definite specifications: a day, an hour, a half hour, a month, a year, one third of a day and a night.
18. God's people are forbidden to ignore or "take away" from Revelation any part and that includes the references to time.
19. The "Year-day Computation Principle" is a mathematical tool. It did not end in 1844.
20. The "Year-day Computation Principle" is a necessary tool to link Daniel and Revelation. It links the symbolic time of Revelation to the literal time of Daniel 12.
21. The time has come for the last generation to understand the three timelines of Daniel 12.
22. Daniel 12, when given a future application, is "a new development of truth" for this age, and as such is a **primary** application for the last generation.



## IN EVERY PROPHETIC TIMELINE OF DANIEL, ROME IS BROUGHT TO VIEW

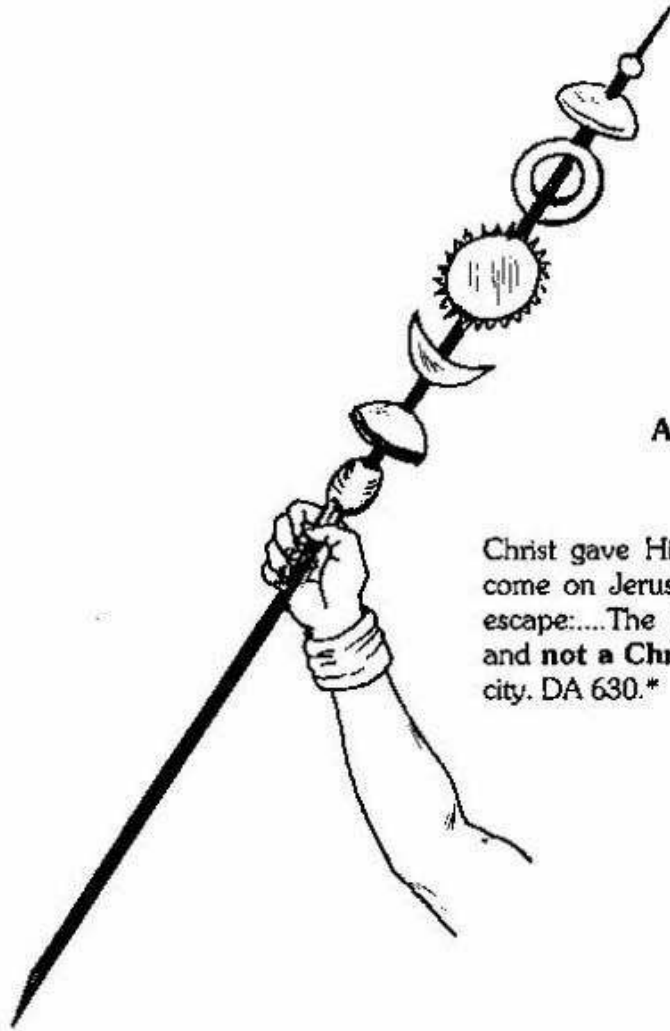
			<b>ROME IS THE</b>
Daniel 2	The Image	The Legs of Iron	Iron
Daniel 7	The Beasts	The Fourth Beast	Little Horn
Daniel 8	The Horns	The Little Horn	Transgression of Desolation
Daniel 11	The Kings	(Verse 15-45)	Abomination that Maketh Desolate
Daniel 12	(No Symbols—only a name)		Abomination that Maketh Desolate

The legs of the image, and **iron** and clay, representing Rome, continue until “all the chaff is blown away.” The fourth beast of Daniel 7 continues even with its “little horn” until Daniel saw it destroyed, and “given to the burning flame.” Daniel 7:11. In every timeline **Rome** continues until the end of time! It is one of the main characters of Daniel and Revelation. It is, in every age since its beginning, the great persecutor and desolator of God’s people. In the days of Jesus, it was the Roman Empire (Pagan Rome) which “made desolate” or persecuted God’s people. It was Rome which ruled over the Jews, gave authority to crucify Jesus, and persecuted the early Christians.

It was Papal Rome which persecuted (desolated) the Christian Church according to the prophecies of Daniel 7:25, Revelation 12:6, 14, and Revelation 13:2, 3 for one thousand two hundred and sixty years during what was known as the Papal Supremacy over Europe. It was Papal Rome which received a deadly wound in 1798, but which has been healing ever since. It is Rome, in the future, that will be a healed power. In Revelation 13, it will establish **Papal Supremacy (No. 2)**. It will reign not merely over Europe but “all the world shall wonder after the beast.” Revelation 13:3-7.

In the days when Jesus answered His disciples, he referred to the armies of Rome as the **abomination of desolation**. He spoke of Rome as the **abomination** and the destruction of Jerusalem, which was to occur in 70 A.D., as the **desolation**. It is a fact that the Roman Empire fell and Rome was sacked in 476 A.D., but in its place arose Papal Rome, and it is this phase of Rome on which we need to fasten our vision!\*

\* Note: The Hebrew word for “abomination” is **Shigguts**. It was applied to unclean fouls and that which was displeasing to God. This word was also applied to the heathen nations which worshiped idols and which were basically sun worshipers. These nations were known for their filthy practices and especially for their blood-thirsty religious rituals in which human sacrifices and all kinds of cruelty abounded. Papal Rome exalted and absorbed the Pagan (abomination) practices, and the prophet John saw her “drunken with the blood of the saints of Jesus,” which was the “desolation” of God’s people.



### A standard of Rome

Christ gave His disciples a sign of the ruin to come on Jerusalem, and He told them how to escape:....The Christians obeyed the warning, and **not a Christian perished** in the fall of the city. DA 630.\*

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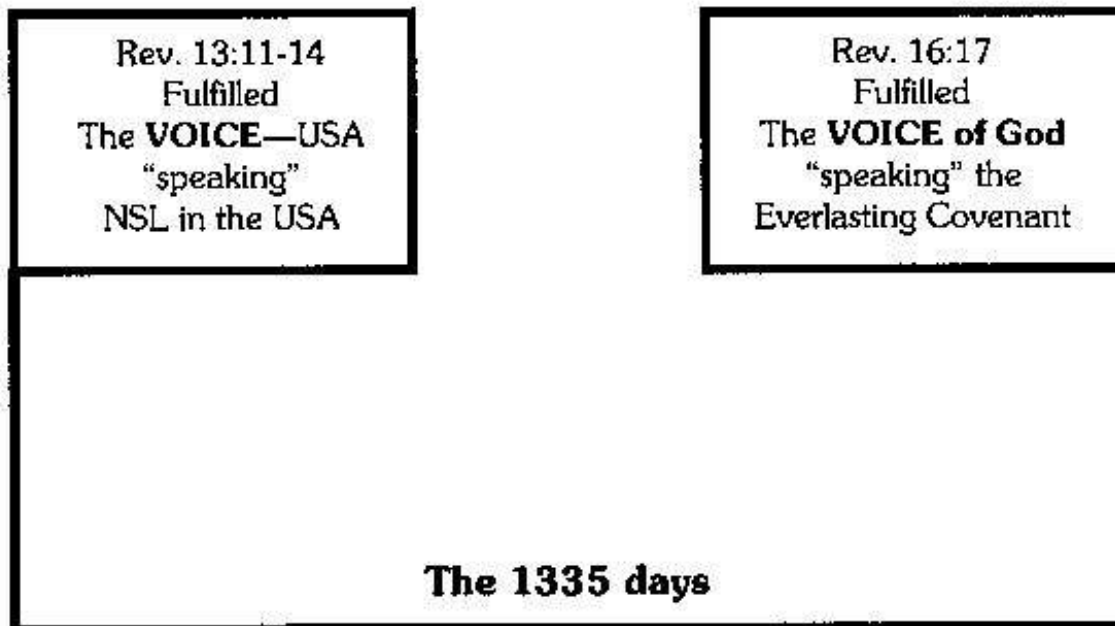
\* Note: The book *God Cares*, by C. Mervyn Maxwell, Vol.2, p.28, shows a picture of the Roman soldier's standard having on it the symbols of Roman sunworship—specifically the sun and tokens of sunworship.

1. Daniel 12 and Matthew 24 ask the same question: "How long shall it be to the end?"
2. Daniel 12 and Matthew 24 contain related answers—both are warnings to focus on the "abomination of desolation"
3. The "abomination of desolation" is Rome: past and future
  - a. Pagan Rome in 70 A.D. destruction of Jerusalem
  - b. Papal Rome in the future as described in Revelation 13 and Daniel 12
4. Daniel 12 "abomination of desolation" is the counterpart of the Revelation 13 "beast"
5. Matthew 24 presents a dual question: It provides a dual answer application
  - a. The first application pertains to the 70 A.D. destruction of Jerusalem
  - b. The second application pertains to the end of the world—specifically to a National Sunday Law in the United States of America
6. The **WARNING** as given in Matthew 24:15 and Daniel 12 is the legislation of a National Sunday Law in the United States of America and is to God's people:
  - a. A signal to flee the large cities for the mountains
  - b. A signal that National Ruin is soon to follow
  - c. A signal that the "Final Test" is in operation
  - d. A signal that the Judgment of the Living has begun
  - e. A signal that the final "shaking" will occur immediately
  - f. A signal of the nearness of the close of probation (first for the church and then for the world)
  - g. A signal that the Latter Rain is about to begin
  - h. A signal that the Loud Cry—third angel's message is to go to all the world in the power of the fourth angel of Revelation 18
  - i. A signal that persecution will soon begin
  - j. A signal that the timelines of Daniel 12 have begun
7. The "Seal of the living God" takes place in the forehead or mind
8. The "Seal of the living God" prepares God's people to live through the seven last plagues without a Mediator
9. THE WARNING comes, not just from the book of Daniel and its three timelines, but is reinforced by Matthew 24 and Revelation 13-18
10. The fact that these prophecies are opened up to God's people at this time is a signal that these events will happen in the very near future.

**In Conclusion:** THE WARNING is not merely to provide for physical safety in leaving the large cities but is of greater importance a **signal for God's people to prepare spiritually** for the Seal of God and the shaking which precedes it. **THE WARNING** helps them to cooperate with God as they near the close of probation.

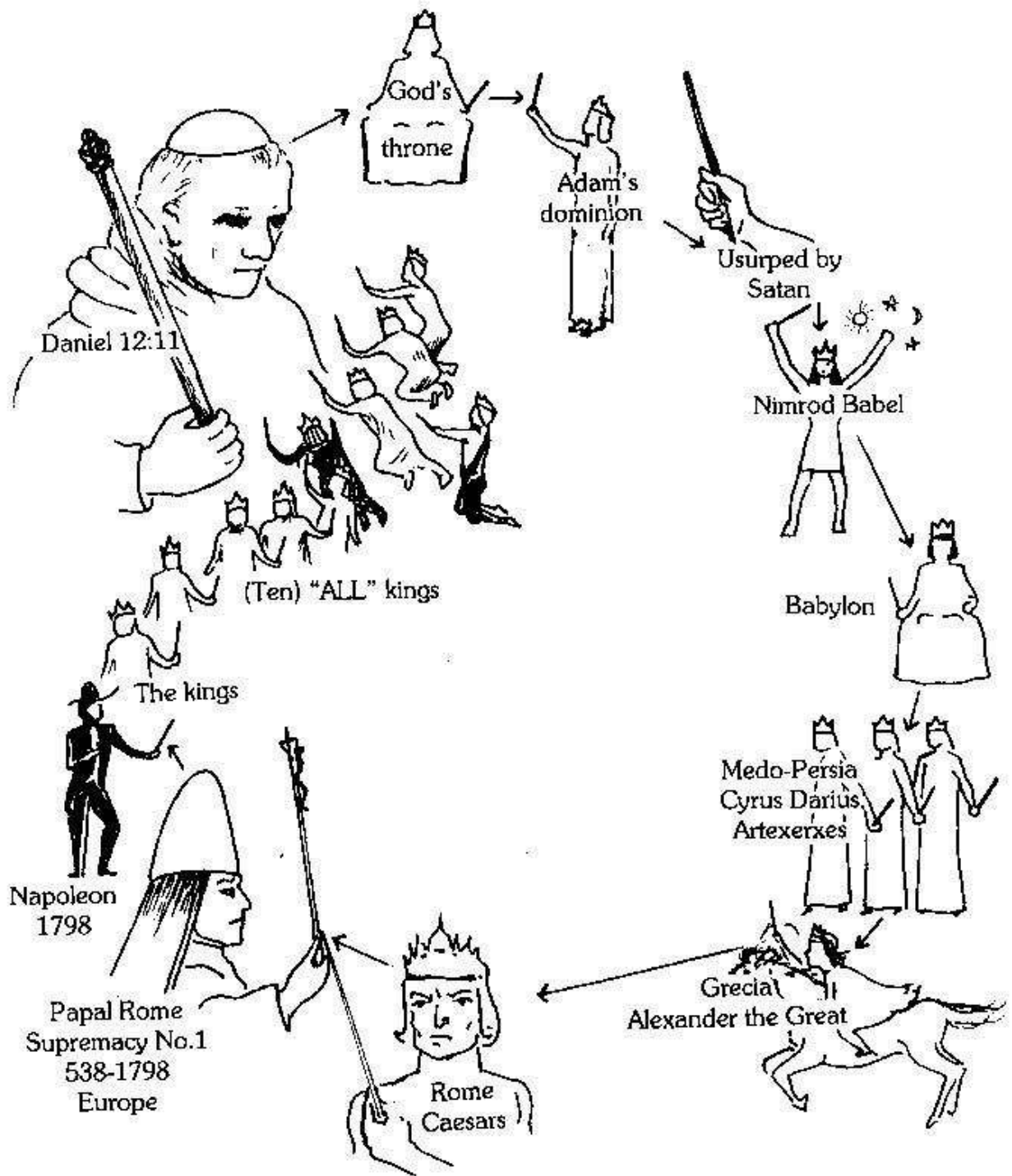
## THE 1335 DAYS TIMELINE OF DANIEL 12:12

**Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. Dan. 12:12.**



**WAIT (for the) BLESSING**

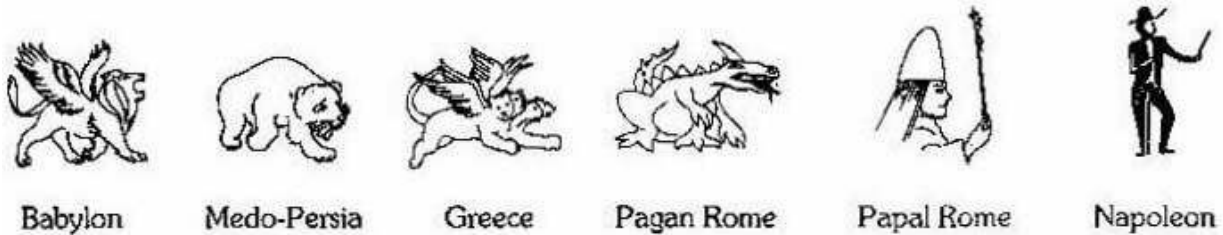
**THE CYCLE OF THE SCEPTER OF POWER**  
 (The "tamyid" Continuum-"daily")



The author, Maxwell, recognizes the transfer of the scepter of power, seat and authority from Pagan Rome to Papal Rome as a continuum, the very essence of an identification of the meaning of the “daily.” He wrote:

The true fulfillment of the little horn of Daniel 8 can only be the Roman Empire and its successor, the Roman Church.... [I]n their **beastlike** aspects, Pagan and Christian Rome constituted a **continuum**. The Roman bishop was successor to the Roman emperor. C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares* (Boise: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1981) Vol. I, p. 154.

Of course, the succession from Pagan Rome to Papal Rome was just one step in the continuum which is illustrated below:



It is important to understand that the Roman Empire was a church-state union of political and religious power. Its religion was Paganism or sun worship. Therefore, when the scepter of state power was transferred, Paganism was a part of the transaction! It was by the absorption of Pagan worship and an exaltation of it that the Papacy gained favor in the Roman Empire and thereby acquired the scepter of power!

Therefore the “daily”—scepter of power, seat, and authority (with its Pagan culture and religion) was **absorbed and exalted** by Papal Rome. It was all one package! Therefore, in Daniel 8:11 the word, RUWM, is used to indicate that the “daily”—scepter of power was “taken away” from Pagan Rome by **absorption and exaltation** of the Pagan culture and worship into Papal Rome. Therefore, Roman Catholicism has been called “Baptised Paganism.”

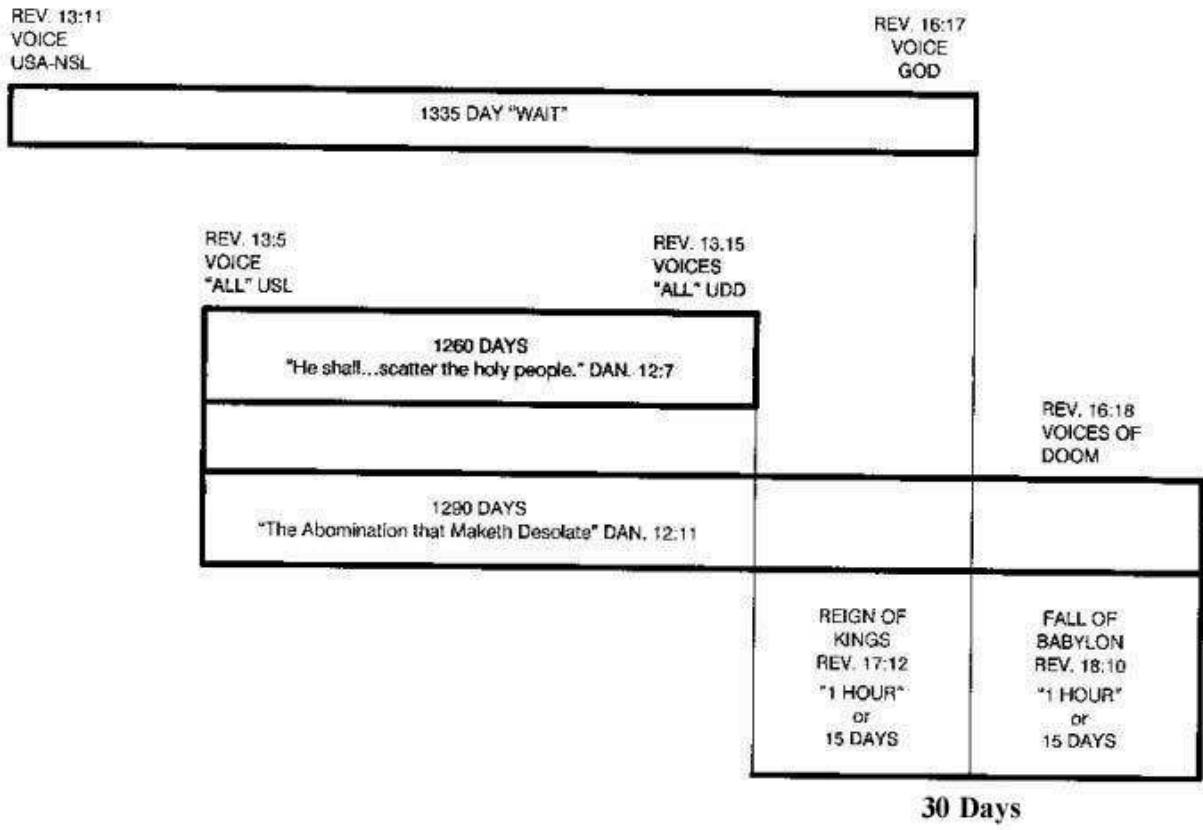
In regard to the future Papal Supremacy, as described in Daniel 12 and Revelation 13, the “daily”—scepter of power will be “taken away” (using a different Hebrew word, CUWR). In a different kind of process, the scepter now held by many “kings”—governments of earth, will be willingly laid aside. They will then place the Papal king upon his throne and the scepter in his hand! The scepter is “taken away” from the kings of the earth, from governments, kindreds, tongues, and nations, and given to the “abomination that maketh desolate” (Daniel 12:11).

It was in this framework that the pioneers of Adventism viewed Daniel 8. They understood the “daily” to refer to the transfer of the scepter of power, seat, and authority from Pagan Rome to Papal Rome. They also understood the interlacing of Paganism (sun worship) with the state religion of Pagan Rome. They knew that it was the absorption and exaltation of sun worship-paganism that brought Papal Rome into a position to grasp the scepter. They “abbreviated” all this into such statements as:

...the “daily”...was Paganism.... Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation* (Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1944), pp. 176, 177, 282, 285.

Paganism—the “daily” of Daniel 8:12 was taken away.... S.N. Haskell. *The Story of Daniel the Prophet*, (Lancaster, Mass: The Bible Training School, 1908), p. 112. Facsimile reproduction by Southern Publishing Assn., Nashville, TN. 1977.

### The Daniel 12 Timelines (1260, 1290, 1335 Days)





John Paul II Apostolic Letters 1998

APOSTOLIC LETTER  
**DIES DOMINI**  
OF THE HOLY FATHER  
JOHN PAUL II  
TO THE BISHOPS, CLERGY AND FAITHFUL  
OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
ON KEEPING THE LORD'S DAY HOLY

My esteemed Brothers in the Episcopate  
and the Priesthood,  
Dear Brothers and Sisters!

1. The Lord's Day — as Sunday was called from Apostolic times(1) — has always been accorded special attention in the history of the Church because of its close connection with the very core of the Christian mystery. In fact, in the weekly reckoning of time Sunday recalls the day of Christ's Resurrection. It is Easter which returns week by week, celebrating Christ's victory over sin and death, the fulfilment in him of the first creation and the dawn of "the new creation" (cf. 2 Cor 5:17). It is the day which recalls in grateful adoration the world's first day and looks forward in active hope to "the last day", when Christ will come in glory (cf. Acts 1:11; 1 Th 4:13-17) and all things will be made new (cf. Rev 21:5).

Rightly, then, the Psalmist's cry is applied to Sunday: "This is the day which the Lord has made: let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps 118:24). This invitation to joy, which the Easter liturgy makes its own, reflects the astonishment which came over the women who, having seen the crucifixion of Christ, found the tomb empty when they went there "very early on the first day after the Sabbath" (Mk 16:2). It is an invitation to relive in some way the experience of the two disciples of Emmaus, who felt their hearts "burn within them" as the Risen One walked with them on the road, explaining the Scriptures and revealing himself in "the breaking of the bread" (cf. Lk 24:32,35). And it echoes the joy — at first



uncertain and then overwhelming — which the Apostles experienced on the evening of that same day, when they were visited by the Risen Jesus and received the gift of his peace and of his Spirit (cf. Jn 20:19-23).

2. The Resurrection of Jesus is the fundamental event upon which Christian faith rests (cf. 1 Cor 15:14). It is an astonishing reality, fully grasped in the light of faith, yet historically attested to by those who were privileged to see the Risen Lord. It is a wondrous event which is not only absolutely unique in human history, but which lies at the very heart of the mystery of time. In fact, "all time belongs to [Christ] and all the ages", as the evocative liturgy of the Easter Vigil recalls in preparing the Paschal Candle. Therefore, in commemorating the day of Christ's Resurrection not just once a year but every Sunday, the Church seeks to indicate to every generation the true fulcrum of history, to which the mystery of the world's origin and its final destiny leads.

It is right, therefore, to claim, in the words of a fourth century homily, that "the Lord's Day" is "the lord of days".(2) Those who have received the grace of faith in the Risen Lord cannot fail to grasp the significance of this day of the week with the same deep emotion which led Saint Jerome to say: "Sunday is the day of the Resurrection, it is the day of Christians, it is our day".(3) For Christians, Sunday is "the fundamental feastday", (4) established not only to mark the succession of time but to reveal time's deeper meaning.

3. The fundamental importance of Sunday has been recognized through two thousand years of history and was emphatically restated by the Second Vatican Council: "Every seven days, the Church celebrates the Easter mystery. This is a tradition going back to the Apostles, taking its origin from the actual day of Christ's Resurrection — a day thus appropriately designated 'the Lord's Day'."(5) Paul VI emphasized this importance once more when he approved the new General Roman Calendar and the Universal Norms which regulate the ordering of the Liturgical Year.(6) The coming of the Third Millennium, which calls believers to reflect upon the course of history in the light of Christ, also invites them to rediscover with new intensity the meaning of Sunday: its "mystery", its celebration, its significance for Christian and human life.

I note with pleasure that in the years since the Council this important theme has prompted not only many interventions by you, dear Brother Bishops, as teachers of the faith, but also different pastoral strategies which — with the support of your clergy — you have developed either individually or jointly. On the threshold of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, it has been my wish to offer you this Apostolic Letter in order to support your pastoral efforts in this vital area. But at the same time I wish to turn to all of you, Christ's faithful, as though I were spiritually present in all the communities in which you gather with your Pastors each Sunday to celebrate the Eucharist and "the Lord's Day". Many of the

insights and intuitions which prompt this Apostolic Letter have grown from my episcopal service in Krakow and, since the time when I assumed the ministry of Bishop of Rome and Successor of Peter, in the visits to the Roman parishes which I have made regularly on the Sundays of the different seasons of the Liturgical Year. I see this Letter as continuing the lively exchange which I am always happy to have with the faithful, as I reflect with you on the meaning of Sunday and underline the reasons for living Sunday as truly "the Lord's Day", also in the changing circumstances of our own times.

4. Until quite recently, it was easier in traditionally Christian countries to keep Sunday holy because it was an almost universal practice and because, even in the organization of civil society, Sunday rest was considered a fixed part of the work schedule. Today, however, even in those countries which give legal sanction to the festive character of Sunday, changes in socioeconomic conditions have often led to profound modifications of social behaviour and hence of the character of Sunday. The custom of the "weekend" has become more widespread, a weekly period of respite, spent perhaps far from home and often involving participation in cultural, political or sporting activities which are usually held on free days. This social and cultural phenomenon is by no means without its positive aspects if, while respecting true values, it can contribute to people's development and to the advancement of the life of society as a whole. All of this responds not only to the need for rest, but also to the need for celebration which is inherent in our humanity. Unfortunately, when Sunday loses its fundamental meaning and becomes merely part of a "weekend", it can happen that people stay locked within a horizon so limited that they can no longer see "the heavens".(7) Hence, though ready to celebrate, they are really incapable of doing so.

The disciples of Christ, however, are asked to avoid any confusion between the celebration of Sunday, which should truly be a way of keeping the Lord's Day holy, and the "weekend", understood as a time of simple rest and relaxation. This will require a genuine spiritual maturity, which will enable Christians to "be what they are", in full accordance with the gift of faith, always ready to give an account of the hope which is in them (cf. 1 Pt 3:15). In this way, they will be led to a deeper understanding of Sunday, with the result that, even in difficult situations, they will be able to live it in complete docility to the Holy Spirit.

5. From this perspective, the situation appears somewhat mixed. On the one hand, there is the example of some young Churches, which show how fervently Sunday can be celebrated, whether in urban areas or in widely scattered villages. By contrast, in other parts of the world, because of the sociological pressures already noted, and perhaps because the motivation of faith is weak, the percentage of those attending the Sunday liturgy is strikingly low. In the minds

of many of the faithful, not only the sense of the centrality of the Eucharist but even the sense of the duty to give thanks to the Lord and to pray to him with others in the community of the Church, seems to be diminishing.

It is also true that both in mission countries and in countries evangelized long ago the lack of priests is such that the celebration of the Sunday Eucharist cannot always be guaranteed in every community.

6. Given this array of new situations and the questions which they prompt, it seems more necessary than ever to recover the deep doctrinal foundations underlying the Church's precept, so that the abiding value of Sunday in the Christian life will be clear to all the faithful. In doing this, we follow in the footsteps of the age-old tradition of the Church, powerfully restated by the Second Vatican Council in its teaching that on Sunday "Christian believers should come together, in order to commemorate the suffering, Resurrection and glory of the Lord Jesus, by hearing God's Word and sharing the Eucharist, and to give thanks to God who has given them new birth to a living hope through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (cf. 1 Pt 1:3)".(8)

7. The duty to keep Sunday holy, especially by sharing in the Eucharist and by relaxing in a spirit of Christian joy and fraternity, is easily understood if we consider the many different aspects of this day upon which the present Letter will focus our attention.

Sunday is a day which is at the very heart of the Christian life. From the beginning of my Pontificate, I have not ceased to repeat: "Do not be afraid! Open, open wide the doors to Christ!".(9) In the same way, today I would strongly urge everyone to rediscover Sunday: Do not be afraid to give your time to Christ! Yes, let us open our time to Christ, that he may cast light upon it and give it direction. He is the One who knows the secret of time and the secret of eternity, and he gives us "his day" as an ever new gift of his love. The rediscovery of this day is a grace which we must implore, not only so that we may live the demands of faith to the full, but also so that we may respond concretely to the deepest human yearnings. Time given to Christ is never time lost, but is rather time gained, so that our relationships and indeed our whole life may become more profoundly human.

## CHAPTER I

### **DIES DOMINI**

#### **The Celebration of the Creator's Work**

**"Through him all things were made"** (Jn 1:3)

8. For the Christian, Sunday is above all an Easter celebration, wholly illumined by the glory of the Risen Christ. It is the festival of the "new creation". Yet, when

understood in depth, this aspect is inseparable from what the first pages of Scripture tell us of the plan of God in the creation of the world. It is true that the Word was made flesh in "the fullness of time" (Gal 4:4); but it is also true that, in virtue of the mystery of his identity as the eternal Son of the Father, he is the origin and end of the universe. As John writes in the Prologue of his Gospel: "Through him all things were made, and without him was made nothing that was made" (1:3). Paul too stresses this in writing to the Colossians: "In him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible ... All things were created through him and for him" (1:16). This active presence of the Son in the creative work of God is revealed fully in the Paschal Mystery, in which Christ, rising as "the first fruits of those who had fallen asleep" (1 Cor 15:20), established the new creation and began the process which he himself will bring to completion when he returns in glory to "deliver the kingdom to God the Father ..., so that God may be everything to everyone" (1 Cor 15:24,28).

Already at the dawn of creation, therefore, the plan of God implied Christ's "cosmic mission". This Christocentric perspective, embracing the whole arc of time, filled God's well-pleased gaze when, ceasing from all his work, he "blessed the seventh day and made it holy" (Gn 2:3). According to the Priestly writer of the first biblical creation story, then was born the "Sabbath", so characteristic of the first Covenant, and which in some ways foretells the sacred day of the new and final Covenant. The theme of "God's rest" (cf. Gn 2:2) and the rest which he offered to the people of the Exodus when they entered the Promised Land (cf. Ex 33:14; Dt 3:20; 12:9; Jos 21:44; Ps 95:11) is re-read in the New Testament in the light of the definitive "Sabbath rest" (Heb 4:9) into which Christ himself has entered by his Resurrection. The People of God are called to enter into this same rest by persevering in Christ's example of filial obedience (cf. Heb 4:3-16). In order to grasp fully the meaning of Sunday, therefore, we must re-read the great story of creation and deepen our understanding of the theology of the "Sabbath".

**"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Gn 1:1)**

9. The poetic style of the Genesis story conveys well the awe which people feel before the immensity of creation and the resulting sense of adoration of the One who brought all things into being from nothing. It is a story of intense religious significance, a hymn to the Creator of the universe, pointing to him as the only Lord in the face of recurring temptations to divinize the world itself. At the same time, it is a hymn to the goodness of creation, all fashioned by the mighty and merciful hand of God.

"God saw that it was good" (Gn 1:10,12, etc.). Punctuating the story as it does, this refrain sheds a positive light upon every element of the universe and reveals the secret for a proper understanding of it and for its eventual regeneration: the

world is good insofar as it remains tied to its origin and, after being disfigured by sin, it is again made good when, with the help of grace, it returns to the One who made it. It is clear that this process directly concerns not inanimate objects and animals but human beings, who have been endowed with the incomparable gift and risk of freedom. Immediately after the creation stories, the Bible highlights the dramatic contrast between the grandeur of man, created in the image and likeness of God, and the fall of man, which unleashes on the world the darkness of sin and death (cf. Gn 3).

10. Coming as it does from the hand of God, the cosmos bears the imprint of his goodness. It is a beautiful world, rightly moving us to admiration and delight, but also calling for cultivation and development. At the "completion" of God's work, the world is ready for human activity. "On the seventh day God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done" (Gn 2:2). With this anthropomorphic image of God's "work", the Bible not only gives us a glimpse of the mysterious relationship between the Creator and the created world, but also casts light upon the task of human beings in relation to the cosmos. The "work" of God is in some ways an example for man, called not only to inhabit the cosmos, but also to "build" it and thus become God's "co-worker". As I wrote in my Encyclical Laborem Exercens, the first chapters of Genesis constitute in a sense the first "gospel of work".(10) This is a truth which the Second Vatican Council also stressed: "Created in God's image, man was commissioned to subdue the earth and all it contains, to rule the world in justice and holiness, and, recognizing God as the creator of all things, to refer himself and the totality of things to God so that with everything subject to God, the divine name would be glorified in all the earth".(11)

The exhilarating advance of science, technology and culture in their various forms — an ever more rapid and today even overwhelming development — is the historical consequence of the mission by which God entrusts to man and woman the task and responsibility of filling the earth and subduing it by means of their work, in the observance of God's Law.

### **"Shabbat": the Creator's joyful rest**

11. If the first page of the Book of Genesis presents God's "work" as an example for man, the same is true of God's "rest": "On the seventh day God finished his work which he had done" (Gn 2:2). Here too we find an anthropomorphism charged with a wealth of meaning.

It would be banal to interpret God's "rest" as a kind of divine "inactivity". By its nature, the creative act which founds the world is unceasing and God is always at work, as Jesus himself declares in speaking of the Sabbath precept: "My Father is working still, and I am working" (Jn 5:17). The divine rest of the seventh day does not allude to an inactive God, but emphasizes the fullness of

what has been accomplished. It speaks, as it were, of God's lingering before the "very good" work (Gn 1:31) which his hand has wrought, in order to cast upon it a gaze full of joyous delight. This is a "contemplative" gaze which does not look to new accomplishments but enjoys the beauty of what has already been achieved. It is a gaze which God casts upon all things, but in a special way upon man, the crown of creation. It is a gaze which already discloses something of the nuptial shape of the relationship which God wants to establish with the creature made in his own image, by calling that creature to enter a pact of love. This is what God will gradually accomplish, in offering salvation to all humanity through the saving covenant made with Israel and fulfilled in Christ. It will be the Word Incarnate, through the eschatological gift of the Holy Spirit and the configuration of the Church as his Body and Bride, who will extend to all humanity the offer of mercy and the call of the Father's love.

12. In the Creator's plan, there is both a distinction and a close link between the order of creation and the order of salvation. This is emphasized in the Old Testament, when it links the "shabbat" commandment not only with God's mysterious "rest" after the days of creation (cf. Ex 20:8-11), but also with the salvation which he offers to Israel in the liberation from the slavery of Egypt (cf. Dt 5:12-15). The God who rests on the seventh day, rejoicing in his creation, is the same God who reveals his glory in liberating his children from Pharaoh's oppression. Adopting an image dear to the Prophets, one could say that in both cases God reveals himself as the bridegroom before the bride (cf. Hos 2:16-24; Jer 2:2; Is 54:4-8).

As certain elements of the same Jewish tradition suggest,(12) to reach the heart of the "shabbat", of God's "rest", we need to recognize in both the Old and the New Testament the nuptial intensity which marks the relationship between God and his people. Hosea, for instance, puts it thus in this marvellous passage: "I will make for you a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the ground; and I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I will make you lie down in safety. And I will betroth you to me for ever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness; and you shall know the Lord" (2:18-20).

**"God blessed the seventh day and made it holy" (Gn 2:3)**

13. The Sabbath precept, which in the first Covenant prepares for the Sunday of the new and eternal Covenant, is therefore rooted in the depths of God's plan. This is why, unlike many other precepts, it is set not within the context of strictly cultic stipulations but within the Decalogue, the "ten words" which represent the very pillars of the moral life inscribed on the human heart. In setting this commandment within the context of the basic structure of ethics, Israel and then

the Church declare that they consider it not just a matter of community religious discipline but a defining and indelible expression of our relationship with God, announced and expounded by biblical revelation. This is the perspective within which Christians need to rediscover this precept today. Although the precept may merge naturally with the human need for rest, it is faith alone which gives access to its deeper meaning and ensures that it will not become banal and trivialized.

14. In the first place, therefore, Sunday is the day of rest because it is the day "blessed" by God and "made holy" by him, set apart from the other days to be, among all of them, "the Lord's Day".

In order to grasp fully what the first of the biblical creation accounts means by keeping the Sabbath "holy", we need to consider the whole story, which shows clearly how every reality, without exception, must be referred back to God. Time and space belong to him. He is not the God of one day alone, but the God of all the days of humanity.

Therefore, if God "sanctifies" the seventh day with a special blessing and makes it "his day" par excellence, this must be understood within the deep dynamic of the dialogue of the Covenant, indeed the dialogue of "marriage". This is the dialogue of love which knows no interruption, yet is never monotonous. In fact, it employs the different registers of love, from the ordinary and indirect to those more intense, which the words of Scripture and the witness of so many mystics do not hesitate to describe in imagery drawn from the experience of married love.

15. All human life, and therefore all human time, must become praise of the Creator and thanksgiving to him. But man's relationship with God also demands times of explicit prayer, in which the relationship becomes an intense dialogue, involving every dimension of the person. "The Lord's Day" is the day of this relationship par excellence when men and women raise their song to God and become the voice of all creation.

This is precisely why it is also the day of rest. Speaking vividly as it does of "renewal" and "detachment", the interruption of the often oppressive rhythm of work expresses the dependence of man and the cosmos upon God. Everything belongs to God! The Lord's Day returns again and again to declare this principle within the weekly reckoning of time. The "Sabbath" has therefore been interpreted evocatively as a determining element in the kind of "sacred architecture" of time which marks biblical revelation.(13) It recalls that the universe and history belong to God; and without a constant awareness of that truth, man cannot serve in the world as co-worker of the Creator.

### **To "keep holy" by "remembering"**

16. The commandment of the Decalogue by which God decrees the Sabbath observance is formulated in the Book of Exodus in a distinctive way: "Remember

the Sabbath day in order to keep it holy" (20:8). And the inspired text goes on to give the reason for this, recalling as it does the work of God: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy" (v. 11). Before decreeing that something be done, the commandment urges that something be remembered. It is a call to awaken remembrance of the grand and fundamental work of God which is creation, a remembrance which must inspire the entire religious life of man and then fill the day on which man is called to rest. Rest therefore acquires a sacred value: the faithful are called to rest not only as God rested, but to rest in the Lord, bringing the entire creation to him, in praise and thanksgiving, intimate as a child and friendly as a spouse.

17. The connection between Sabbath rest and the theme of "remembering" God's wonders is found also in the Book of Deuteronomy (5:12-15), where the precept is grounded less in the work of creation than in the work of liberation accomplished by God in the Exodus: "You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with mighty hand and outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day" (Dt 5:15).

This formulation complements the one we have already seen; and taken together, the two reveal the meaning of "the Lord's Day" within a single theological vision which fuses creation and salvation. Therefore, the main point of the precept is not just any kind of interruption of work, but the celebration of the marvels which God has wrought.

Insofar as this "remembrance" is alive, full of thanksgiving and of the praise of God, human rest on the Lord's Day takes on its full meaning. It is then that man enters the depths of God's "rest" and can experience a tremor of the Creator's joy when, after the creation, he saw that all he had made "was very good" (Gn 1:31).

### **From the Sabbath to Sunday**

18. Because the Third Commandment depends upon the remembrance of God's saving works and because Christians saw the definitive time inaugurated by Christ as a new beginning, they made the first day after the Sabbath a festive day, for that was the day on which the Lord rose from the dead. The Paschal Mystery of Christ is the full revelation of the mystery of the world's origin, the climax of the history of salvation and the anticipation of the eschatological fulfilment of the world. What God accomplished in Creation and wrought for his People in the Exodus has found its fullest expression in Christ's Death and Resurrection, though its definitive fulfilment will not come until the Parousia, when Christ returns in glory. In him, the "spiritual" meaning of the Sabbath is fully realized, as Saint Gregory the Great declares: "For us, the true Sabbath is



the person of our Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ".(14) This is why the joy with which God, on humanity's first Sabbath, contemplates all that was created from nothing, is now expressed in the joy with which Christ, on Easter Sunday, appeared to his disciples, bringing the gift of peace and the gift of the Spirit (cf. Jn 20:19-23). It was in the Paschal Mystery that humanity, and with it the whole creation, "groaning in birth-pangs until now" (Rom 8:22), came to know its new "exodus" into the freedom of God's children who can cry out with Christ, "Abba, Father!" (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6). In the light of this mystery, the meaning of the Old Testament precept concerning the Lord's Day is recovered, perfected and fully revealed in the glory which shines on the face of the Risen Christ (cf. 2 Cor 4:6). We move from the "Sabbath" to the "first day after the Sabbath", from the seventh day to the first day: the dies Domini becomes the dies Christi!

CHAPTER II  
**DIES CHRISTI**  
**The Day of the Risen Lord**  
**and of the Gift**  
**of the Holy Spirit**

**The weekly Easter**

19. "We celebrate Sunday because of the venerable Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we do so not only at Easter but also at each turning of the week": so wrote Pope Innocent I at the beginning of the fifth century,(15) testifying to an already well established practice which had evolved from the early years after the Lord's Resurrection. Saint Basil speaks of "holy Sunday, honoured by the Lord's Resurrection, the first fruits of all the other days";(16) and Saint Augustine calls Sunday "a sacrament of Easter".(17)

The intimate bond between Sunday and the Resurrection of the Lord is strongly emphasized by all the Churches of East and West. In the tradition of the Eastern Churches in particular, every Sunday is the anastàsimos hemèra, the day of Resurrection,(18) and this is why it stands at the heart of all worship.

In the light of this constant and universal tradition, it is clear that, although the Lord's Day is rooted in the very work of creation and even more in the mystery of the biblical "rest" of God, it is nonetheless to the Resurrection of Christ that we must look in order to understand fully the Lord's Day. This is what the Christian Sunday does, leading the faithful each week to ponder and live the event of Easter, true source of the world's salvation.

20. According to the common witness of the Gospels, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead took place on "the first day after the Sabbath" (Mk 16:2,9; Lk 24:1; Jn 20:1). On the same day, the Risen Lord appeared to the two disciples

of Emmaus (cf. Lk 24:13-35) and to the eleven Apostles gathered together (cf. Lk 24:36; Jn 20:19). A week later — as the Gospel of John recounts (cf. 20:26) — the disciples were gathered together once again, when Jesus appeared to them and made himself known to Thomas by showing him the signs of his Passion. The day of Pentecost — the first day of the eighth week after the Jewish Passover (cf. Acts 2:1), when the promise made by Jesus to the Apostles after the Resurrection was fulfilled by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (cf. Lk 24:49; Acts 1:4-5) — also fell on a Sunday. This was the day of the first proclamation and the first baptisms: Peter announced to the assembled crowd that Christ was risen and "those who received his word were baptized" (Acts 2:41). This was the epiphany of the Church, revealed as the people into which are gathered in unity, beyond all their differences, the scattered children of God.

### **The first day of the week**

21. It was for this reason that, from Apostolic times, "the first day after the Sabbath", the first day of the week, began to shape the rhythm of life for Christ's disciples (cf. 1 Cor 16:2). "The first day after the Sabbath" was also the day upon which the faithful of Troas were gathered "for the breaking of bread", when Paul bade them farewell and miraculously restored the young Eutychus to life (cf. Acts 20:7-12). The Book of Revelation gives evidence of the practice of calling the first day of the week "the Lord's Day" (1:10). This would now be a characteristic distinguishing Christians from the world around them. As early as the beginning of the second century, it was noted by Pliny the Younger, governor of Bithynia, in his report on the Christian practice "of gathering together on a set day before sunrise and singing among themselves a hymn to Christ as to a god".(19) And when Christians spoke of the "Lord's Day", they did so giving to this term the full sense of the Easter proclamation: "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil 2:11; cf. Acts 2:36; 1 Cor 12:3). Thus Christ was given the same title which the Septuagint used to translate what in the revelation of the Old Testament was the unutterable name of God: YHWH.

22. In those early Christian times, the weekly rhythm of days was generally not part of life in the regions where the Gospel spread, and the festive days of the Greek and Roman calendars did not coincide with the Christian Sunday. For Christians, therefore, it was very difficult to observe the Lord's Day on a set day each week. This explains why the faithful had to gather before sunrise.(20) Yet fidelity to the weekly rhythm became the norm, since it was based upon the New Testament and was tied to Old Testament revelation. This is eagerly underscored by the Apologists and the Fathers of the Church in their writings and preaching where, in speaking of the Paschal Mystery, they use the same Scriptural texts which, according to the witness of Saint Luke (cf. 24:27, 44-47), the Risen Christ himself would have explained to the disciples. In the light of these texts, the

celebration of the day of the Resurrection acquired a doctrinal and symbolic value capable of expressing the entire Christian mystery in all its newness.

### **Growing distinction from the Sabbath**

23. It was this newness which the catechesis of the first centuries stressed as it sought to show the prominence of Sunday relative to the Jewish Sabbath. It was on the Sabbath that the Jewish people had to gather in the synagogue and to rest in the way prescribed by the Law. The Apostles, and in particular Saint Paul, continued initially to attend the synagogue so that there they might proclaim Jesus Christ, commenting upon "the words of the prophets which are read every Sabbath" (Acts 13:27). Some communities observed the Sabbath while also celebrating Sunday. Soon, however, the two days began to be distinguished ever more clearly, in reaction chiefly to the insistence of those Christians whose origins in Judaism made them inclined to maintain the obligation of the old Law. Saint Ignatius of Antioch writes: "If those who were living in the former state of things have come to a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath but keeping the Lord's Day, the day on which our life has appeared through him and his death ..., that mystery from which we have received our faith and in which we persevere in order to be judged disciples of Christ, our only Master, how could we then live without him, given that the prophets too, as his disciples in the Spirit, awaited him as master?".(21) Saint Augustine notes in turn: "Therefore the Lord too has placed his seal on his day, which is the third after the Passion. In the weekly cycle, however, it is the eighth day after the seventh, that is after the Sabbath, and the first day of the week".(22) The distinction of Sunday from the Jewish Sabbath grew ever stronger in the mind of the Church, even though there have been times in history when, because the obligation of Sunday rest was so emphasized, the Lord's Day tended to become more like the Sabbath. Moreover, there have always been groups within Christianity which observe both the Sabbath and Sunday as "two brother days".(23)

### **The day of the new creation**

24. A comparison of the Christian Sunday with the Old Testament vision of the Sabbath prompted theological insights of great interest. In particular, there emerged the unique connection between the Resurrection and Creation. Christian thought spontaneously linked the Resurrection, which took place on "the first day of the week", with the first day of that cosmic week (cf. Gn 1:1 - 2:4) which shapes the creation story in the Book of Genesis: the day of the creation of light (cf. 1:3-5). This link invited an understanding of the Resurrection as the beginning of a new creation, the first fruits of which is the glorious Christ, "the first born of all creation" (Col 1:15) and "the first born from the dead" (Col 1:18).

25. In effect, Sunday is the day above all other days which summons Christians to remember the salvation which was given to them in baptism and which has

made them new in Christ. "You were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead" (Col 2:12; cf. Rom 6:4-6). The liturgy underscores this baptismal dimension of Sunday, both in calling for the celebration of baptisms — as well as at the Easter Vigil — on the day of the week "when the Church commemorates the Lord's Resurrection",<sup>(24)</sup> and in suggesting as an appropriate penitential rite at the start of Mass the sprinkling of holy water, which recalls the moment of Baptism in which all Christian life is born.<sup>(25)</sup>

### **The eighth day: image of eternity**

26. By contrast, the Sabbath's position as the seventh day of the week suggests for the Lord's Day a complementary symbolism, much loved by the Fathers. Sunday is not only the first day, it is also "the eighth day", set within the sevenfold succession of days in a unique and transcendent position which evokes not only the beginning of time but also its end in "the age to come". Saint Basil explains that Sunday symbolizes that truly singular day which will follow the present time, the day without end which will know neither evening nor morning, the imperishable age which will never grow old; Sunday is the ceaseless foretelling of life without end which renews the hope of Christians and encourages them on their way.<sup>(26)</sup> Looking towards the last day, which fulfils completely the eschatological symbolism of the Sabbath, Saint Augustine concludes the Confessions describing the Eschaton as "the peace of quietness, the peace of the Sabbath, a peace with no evening".<sup>(27)</sup> In celebrating Sunday, both the "first" and the "eighth" day, the Christian is led towards the goal of eternal life.<sup>(28)</sup>

### **The day of Christ-Light**

27. This Christocentric vision sheds light upon another symbolism which Christian reflection and pastoral practice ascribed to the Lord's Day. Wise pastoral intuition suggested to the Church the christianization of the notion of Sunday as "the day of the sun", which was the Roman name for the day and which is retained in some modern languages.<sup>(29)</sup> This was in order to draw the faithful away from the seduction of cults which worshipped the sun, and to direct the celebration of the day to Christ, humanity's true "sun". Writing to the pagans, Saint Justin uses the language of the time to note that Christians gather together "on the day named after the sun",<sup>(30)</sup> but for believers the expression had already assumed a new meaning which was unmistakably rooted in the Gospel.<sup>(31)</sup> Christ is the light of the world (cf. Jn 9:5; also 1:4-5, 9), and, in the weekly reckoning of time, the day commemorating his Resurrection is the enduring reflection of the epiphany of his glory. The theme of Sunday as the day illuminated by the triumph of the Risen Christ is also found in the Liturgy of the Hours<sup>(32)</sup> and is given special emphasis in the Pannichida, the vigil which in the Eastern liturgies

prepares for Sunday. From generation to generation as she gathers on this day, the Church makes her own the wonderment of Zechariah as he looked upon Christ, seeing in him the dawn which gives "light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" (Lk 1:78-79), and she echoes the joy of Simeon when he takes in his arms the divine Child who has come as the "light to enlighten the Gentiles" (Lk 2:32).

### **The day of the gift of the Spirit**

28. Sunday, the day of light, could also be called the day of "fire", in reference to the Holy Spirit. The light of Christ is intimately linked to the "fire" of the Spirit, and the two images together reveal the meaning of the Christian Sunday.(33) When he appeared to the Apostles on the evening of Easter, Jesus breathed upon them and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (Jn 20:22-23). The outpouring of the Spirit was the great gift of the Risen Lord to his disciples on Easter Sunday. It was again Sunday when, fifty days after the Resurrection, the Spirit descended in power, as "a mighty wind" and "fire" (Acts 2:2-3), upon the Apostles gathered with Mary. Pentecost is not only the founding event of the Church, but is also the mystery which for ever gives life to the Church.(34) Such an event has its own powerful liturgical moment in the annual celebration which concludes "the great Sunday", (35) but it also remains a part of the deep meaning of every Sunday, because of its intimate bond with the Paschal Mystery. The "weekly Easter" thus becomes, in a sense, the "weekly Pentecost", when Christians relive the Apostles' joyful encounter with the Risen Lord and receive the life-giving breath of his Spirit.

### **The day of faith**

29. Given these different dimensions which set it apart, Sunday appears as the supreme day of faith. It is the day when, by the power of the Holy Spirit, who is the Church's living "memory" (cf. Jn 14:26), the first appearance of the Risen Lord becomes an event renewed in the "today" of each of Christ's disciples. Gathered in his presence in the Sunday assembly, believers sense themselves called like the Apostle Thomas: "Put your finger here, and see my hands. Put out your hand, and place it in my side. Doubt no longer, but believe" (Jn 20:27). Yes, Sunday is the day of faith. This is stressed by the fact that the Sunday Eucharistic liturgy, like the liturgy of other solemnities, includes the Profession of Faith. Recited or sung, the Creed declares the baptismal and Paschal character of Sunday, making it the day on which in a special way the baptized renew their adherence to Christ and his Gospel in a rekindled awareness of their baptismal promises. Listening to the word and receiving the Body of the Lord, the baptized contemplate the Risen Jesus present in the "holy signs" and confess with the Apostle Thomas: "My Lord and my God!" (Jn 20:28).

### **An indispensable day!**

30. It is clear then why, even in our own difficult times, the identity of this day must be protected and above all must be lived in all its depth. An Eastern writer of the beginning of the third century recounts that as early as then the faithful in every region were keeping Sunday holy on a regular basis.(36) What began as a spontaneous practice later became a juridically sanctioned norm. The Lord's Day has structured the history of the Church through two thousand years: how could we think that it will not continue to shape her future? The pressures of today can make it harder to fulfil the Sunday obligation; and, with a mother's sensitivity, the Church looks to the circumstances of each of her children. In particular, she feels herself called to a new catechetical and pastoral commitment, in order to ensure that, in the normal course of life, none of her children are deprived of the rich outpouring of grace which the celebration of the Lord's Day brings. It was in this spirit that the Second Vatican Council, making a pronouncement on the possibility of reforming the Church calendar to match different civil calendars, declared that the Church "is prepared to accept only those arrangements which preserve a week of seven days with a Sunday".(37) Given its many meanings and aspects, and its link to the very foundations of the faith, the celebration of the Christian Sunday remains, on the threshold of the Third Millennium, an indispensable element of our Christian identity.

## CHAPTER III

### **DIES ECCLESIAE**

#### **The Eucharistic Assembly: Heart of Sunday**

#### **The presence of the Risen Lord**

31. "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mt 28:20). This promise of Christ never ceases to resound in the Church as the fertile secret of her life and the wellspring of her hope. As the day of Resurrection, Sunday is not only the remembrance of a past event: it is a celebration of the living presence of the Risen Lord in the midst of his own people.

For this presence to be properly proclaimed and lived, it is not enough that the disciples of Christ pray individually and commemorate the death and Resurrection of Christ inwardly, in the secrecy of their hearts. Those who have received the grace of baptism are not saved as individuals alone, but as members of the Mystical Body, having become part of the People of God.(38) It is important therefore that they come together to express fully the very identity of the

Church, the ekklesia, the assembly called together by the Risen Lord who offered his life "to reunite the scattered children of God" (Jn 11:52). They have become "one" in Christ (cf. Gal 3:28) through the gift of the Spirit. This unity becomes visible when Christians gather together: it is then that they come to know vividly and to testify to the world that they are the people redeemed, drawn "from every tribe and language and people and nation" (Rev 5:9). The assembly of Christ's disciples embodies from age to age the image of the first Christian community which Luke gives as an example in the Acts of the Apostles, when he recounts that the first baptized believers "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (2:42).

### **The Eucharistic assembly**

32. The Eucharist is not only a particularly intense expression of the reality of the Church's life, but also in a sense its "fountain-head".(39) The Eucharist feeds and forms the Church: "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Cor 10:17). Because of this vital link with the sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Lord, the mystery of the Church is savoured, proclaimed, and lived supremely in the Eucharist.(40)

This ecclesial dimension intrinsic to the Eucharist is realized in every Eucharistic celebration. But it is expressed most especially on the day when the whole community comes together to commemorate the Lord's Resurrection. Significantly, the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that "the Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and his Eucharist is at the heart of the Church's life".(41)

33. At Sunday Mass, Christians relive with particular intensity the experience of the Apostles on the evening of Easter when the Risen Lord appeared to them as they were gathered together (cf. Jn 20:19). In a sense, the People of God of all times were present in that small nucleus of disciples, the first fruits of the Church. Through their testimony, every generation of believers hears the greeting of Christ, rich with the messianic gift of peace, won by his blood and offered with his Spirit: "Peace be with you!" Christ's return among them "a week later" (Jn 20:26) can be seen as a radical prefiguring of the Christian community's practice of coming together every seven days, on "the Lord's Day" or Sunday, in order to profess faith in his Resurrection and to receive the blessing which he had promised: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe" (Jn 20:29). This close connection between the appearance of the Risen Lord and the Eucharist is suggested in the Gospel of Luke in the story of the two disciples of Emmaus, whom Christ approached and led to understand the Scriptures and then sat with them at table. They recognized him when he "took the bread, said the blessing, broke it and gave it to them" (24:30). The gestures of Jesus in this account are his gestures at the Last Supper, with the clear

allusion to the "breaking of bread", as the Eucharist was called by the first generation of Christians.

### **The Sunday Eucharist**

34. It is true that, in itself, the Sunday Eucharist is no different from the Eucharist celebrated on other days, nor can it be separated from liturgical and sacramental life as a whole. By its very nature, the Eucharist is an epiphany of the Church;(42) and this is most powerfully expressed when the diocesan community gathers in prayer with its Pastor: "The Church appears with special clarity when the holy People of God, all of them, are actively and fully sharing in the same liturgical celebrations — especially when it is the same Eucharist — sharing one prayer at one altar, at which the Bishop is presiding, surrounded by his presbyters and his ministers".(43) This relationship with the Bishop and with the entire Church community is inherent in every Eucharistic celebration, even when the Bishop does not preside, regardless of the day of the week on which it is celebrated. The mention of the Bishop in the Eucharistic Prayer is the indication of this.

But because of its special solemnity and the obligatory presence of the community, and because it is celebrated "on the day when Christ conquered death and gave us a share in his immortal life", (44) the Sunday Eucharist expresses with greater emphasis its inherent ecclesial dimension. It becomes the paradigm for other Eucharistic celebrations. Each community, gathering all its members for the "breaking of the bread", becomes the place where the mystery of the Church is concretely made present. In celebrating the Eucharist, the community opens itself to communion with the universal Church,(45) imploring the Father to "remember the Church throughout the world" and make her grow in the unity of all the faithful with the Pope and with the Pastors of the particular Churches, until love is brought to perfection.

### **The day of the Church**

35. Therefore, the dies Domini is also the dies Ecclesiae. This is why on the pastoral level the community aspect of the Sunday celebration should be particularly stressed. As I have noted elsewhere, among the many activities of a parish, "none is as vital or as community-forming as the Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and his Eucharist".(46) Mindful of this, the Second Vatican Council recalled that efforts must be made to ensure that there is "within the parish, a lively sense of community, in the first place through the community celebration of Sunday Mass".(47) Subsequent liturgical directives made the same point, asking that on Sundays and holy days the Eucharistic celebrations held normally in other churches and chapels be coordinated with the celebration in the parish church, in



order "to foster the sense of the Church community, which is nourished and expressed in a particular way by the community celebration on Sunday, whether around the Bishop, especially in the Cathedral, or in the parish assembly, in which the pastor represents the Bishop".(48)

36. The Sunday assembly is the privileged place of unity: it is the setting for the celebration of the sacramentum unitatis which profoundly marks the Church as a people gathered "by" and "in" the unity of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.(49) For Christian families, the Sunday assembly is one of the most outstanding expressions of their identity and their "ministry" as "domestic churches",(50) when parents share with their children at the one Table of the word and of the Bread of Life. We do well to recall in this regard that it is first of all the parents who must teach their children to participate in Sunday Mass; they are assisted in this by catechists, who are to see to it that initiation into the Mass is made a part of the formation imparted to the children entrusted to their care, explaining the important reasons behind the obligatory nature of the precept. When circumstances suggest it, the celebration of Masses for Children, in keeping with the provisions of the liturgical norms,(51) can also help in this regard.

At Sunday Masses in parishes, insofar as parishes are "Eucharistic communities", (52) it is normal to find different groups, movements, associations and even the smaller religious communities present in the parish. This allows everyone to experience in common what they share most deeply, beyond the particular spiritual paths which, by discernment of Church authority,(53) legitimately distinguish them. This is why on Sunday, the day of gathering, small group Masses are not to be encouraged: it is not only a question of ensuring that parish assemblies are not without the necessary ministry of priests, but also of ensuring that the life and unity of the Church community are fully safeguarded and promoted.(54) Authorization of possible and clearly restricted exceptions to this general guideline will depend upon the wise discernment of the Pastors of the particular Churches, in view of special needs in the area of formation and pastoral care, and keeping in mind the good of individuals or groups — especially the benefits which such exceptions may bring to the entire Christian community.

### **A pilgrim people**

37. As the Church journeys through time, the reference to Christ's Resurrection and the weekly recurrence of this solemn memorial help to remind us of the pilgrim and eschatological character of the People of God. Sunday after Sunday the Church moves towards the final "Lord's Day", that Sunday which knows no end. The expectation of Christ's coming is inscribed in the very mystery of the Church(55) and is evidenced in every Eucharistic celebration. But, with its specific remembrance of the glory of the Risen Christ, the Lord's Day recalls with

greater intensity the future glory of his "return". This makes Sunday the day on which the Church, showing forth more clearly her identity as "Bride", anticipates in some sense the eschatological reality of the heavenly Jerusalem. Gathering her children into the Eucharistic assembly and teaching them to wait for the "divine Bridegroom", she engages in a kind of "exercise of desire",<sup>(56)</sup> receiving a foretaste of the joy of the new heavens and new earth, when the holy city, the new Jerusalem, will come down from God, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev 21:2).

### **The day of hope**

38. Viewed in this way, Sunday is not only the day of faith, but is also the day of Christian hope. To share in "the Lord's Supper" is to anticipate the eschatological feast of the "marriage of the Lamb" (Rev 19:9). Celebrating this memorial of Christ, risen and ascended into heaven, the Christian community waits "in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ".<sup>(57)</sup> Renewed and nourished by this intense weekly rhythm, Christian hope becomes the leaven and the light of human hope. This is why the Prayer of the Faithful responds not only to the needs of the particular Christian community but also to those of all humanity; and the Church, coming together for the Eucharistic celebration, shows to the world that she makes her own "the joys and hopes, the sorrows and anxieties of people today, especially of the poor and all those who suffer".<sup>(58)</sup> With the offering of the Sunday Eucharist, the Church crowns the witness which her children strive to offer every day of the week by proclaiming the Gospel and practising charity in the world of work and in all the many tasks of life; thus she shows forth more plainly her identity "as a sacrament, or sign and instrument of intimate union with God and of the unity of the entire human race".<sup>(59)</sup>

### **The table of the word**

39. As in every Eucharistic celebration, the Risen Lord is encountered in the Sunday assembly at the twofold table of the word and of the Bread of Life. The table of the word offers the same understanding of the history of salvation and especially of the Paschal Mystery which the Risen Jesus himself gave to his disciples: it is Christ who speaks, present as he is in his word "when Sacred Scripture is read in the Church".<sup>(60)</sup> At the table of the Bread of Life, the Risen Lord becomes really, substantially and enduringly present through the memorial of his Passion and Resurrection, and the Bread of Life is offered as a pledge of future glory. The Second Vatican Council recalled that "the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist are so closely joined together that they form a single act of worship".<sup>(61)</sup> The Council also urged that "the table of the word of God be more lavishly prepared for the faithful, opening to them more abundantly the treasures of the Bible".<sup>(62)</sup> It then decreed that, in Masses of Sunday and holy days of obligation, the homily should not be omitted except for serious

reasons.(63) These timely decrees were faithfully embodied in the liturgical reform, about which Paul VI wrote, commenting upon the richer offering of biblical readings on Sunday and holy days: "All this has been decreed so as to foster more and more in the faithful 'that hunger for hearing the word of the Lord' (Am 8:11) which, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, spurs the People of the New Covenant on towards the perfect unity of the Church".(64)

40. In considering the Sunday Eucharist more than thirty years after the Council, we need to assess how well the word of God is being proclaimed and how effectively the People of God have grown in knowledge and love of Sacred Scripture.(65) There are two aspects of this — that of celebration and that of personal appropriation — and they are very closely related. At the level of celebration, the fact that the Council made it possible to proclaim the word of God in the language of the community taking part in the celebration must awaken a new sense of responsibility towards the word, allowing "the distinctive character of the sacred text" to shine forth "even in the mode of reading or singing".(66) At the level of personal appropriation, the hearing of the word of God proclaimed must be well prepared in the souls of the faithful by an apt knowledge of Scripture and, where pastorally possible, by special initiatives designed to deepen understanding of the biblical readings, particularly those used on Sundays and holy days. If Christian individuals and families are not regularly drawing new life from the reading of the sacred text in a spirit of prayer and docility to the Church's interpretation,(67) then it is difficult for the liturgical proclamation of the word of God alone to produce the fruit we might expect. This is the value of initiatives in parish communities which bring together during the week those who take part in the Eucharist — priest, ministers and faithful(68) — in order to prepare the Sunday liturgy, reflecting beforehand upon the word of God which will be proclaimed. The objective sought here is that the entire celebration — praying, singing, listening, and not just the preaching — should express in some way the theme of the Sunday liturgy, so that all those taking part may be penetrated more powerfully by it. Clearly, much depends on those who exercise the ministry of the word. It is their duty to prepare the reflection on the word of the Lord by prayer and study of the sacred text, so that they may then express its contents faithfully and apply them to people's concerns and to their daily lives.

41. It should also be borne in mind that the liturgical proclamation of the word of God, especially in the Eucharistic assembly, is not so much a time for meditation and catechesis as a dialogue between God and his People, a dialogue in which the wonders of salvation are proclaimed and the demands of the Covenant are continually restated. On their part, the People of God are drawn to respond to this dialogue of love by giving thanks and praise, also by demonstrating their

fidelity to the task of continual "conversion". The Sunday assembly commits us therefore to an inner renewal of our baptismal promises, which are in a sense implicit in the recitation of the Creed, and are an explicit part of the liturgy of the Easter Vigil and whenever Baptism is celebrated during Mass. In this context, the proclamation of the word in the Sunday Eucharistic celebration takes on the solemn tone found in the Old Testament at moments when the Covenant was renewed, when the Law was proclaimed and the community of Israel was called — like the People in the desert at the foot of Sinai (cf. Ex 19:7-8; 24:3,7) — to repeats its "yes", renewing its decision to be faithful to God and to obey his commandments. In speaking his word, God awaits our response: a response which Christ has already made for us with his "Amen" (cf. 2 Cor 1:20-22), and which echoes in us through the Holy Spirit so that what we hear may involve us at the deepest level.(69)

### **The table of the Body of Christ**

42. The table of the word leads naturally to the table of the Eucharistic Bread and prepares the community to live its many aspects, which in the Sunday Eucharist assume an especially solemn character. As the whole community gathers to celebrate "the Lord's Day", the Eucharist appears more clearly than on other days as the great "thanksgiving" in which the Spirit-filled Church turns to the Father, becoming one with Christ and speaking in the name of all humanity. The rhythm of the week prompts us to gather up in grateful memory the events of the days which have just passed, to review them in the light of God and to thank him for his countless gifts, glorifying him "through Christ, with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit". The Christian community thus comes to a renewed awareness of the fact that all things were created through Christ (cf. Col 1:16; Jn 1:3), and that in Christ, who came in the form of a slave to take on and redeem our human condition, all things have been restored (cf. Eph 1:10), in order to be handed over to God the Father, from whom all things come to be and draw their life. Then, giving assent to the Eucharistic doxology with their "Amen", the People of God look in faith and hope towards the eschatological end, when Christ "will deliver the kingdom to God the Father ... so that God may be everything to everyone" (1 Cor 15:24, 28).

43. This "ascending" movement is inherent in every Eucharistic celebration and makes it a joyous event, overflowing with gratitude and hope. But it emerges particularly at Sunday Mass because of its special link with the commemoration of the Resurrection. By contrast, this "Eucharistic" rejoicing which "lifts up our hearts" is the fruit of God's "descending" movement towards us, which remains for ever etched in the essential sacrificial element of the Eucharist, the supreme expression and celebration of the mystery of the kenosis, the descent by which

Christ "humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even death on a Cross" (Phil 2:8).

The Mass in fact truly makes present the sacrifice of the Cross. Under the species of bread and wine, upon which has been invoked the outpouring of the Spirit who works with absolutely unique power in the words of consecration, Christ offers himself to the Father in the same act of sacrifice by which he offered himself on the Cross. "In this divine sacrifice which is accomplished in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once and for all in a bloody manner on the altar of the Cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner".(70) To his sacrifice Christ unites the sacrifice of the Church: "In the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ becomes also the sacrifice of the members of his Body. The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer and work, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire a new value".(71) The truth that the whole community shares in Christ's sacrifice is especially evident in the Sunday gathering, which makes it possible to bring to the altar the week that has passed, with all its human burdens.

### **Easter banquet and fraternal gathering**

44. The communal character of the Eucharist emerges in a special way when it is seen as the Easter banquet, in which Christ himself becomes our nourishment. In fact, "for this purpose Christ entrusted to the Church this sacrifice: so that the faithful might share in it, both spiritually, in faith and charity, and sacramentally, in the banquet of Holy Communion. Sharing in the Lord's Supper is always communion with Christ, who offers himself for us in sacrifice to the Father".(72) This is why the Church recommends that the faithful receive communion when they take part in the Eucharist, provided that they are properly disposed and, if aware of grave sin, have received God's pardon in the Sacrament of Reconciliation,(73) in the spirit of what Saint Paul writes to the community at Corinth (cf. 1 Cor 11:27-32). Obviously, the invitation to Eucharistic communion is more insistent in the case of Mass on Sundays and holy days.

It is also important to be ever mindful that communion with Christ is deeply tied to communion with our brothers and sisters. The Sunday Eucharistic gathering is an experience of brotherhood, which the celebration should demonstrate clearly, while ever respecting the nature of the liturgical action. All this will be helped by gestures of welcome and by the tone of prayer, alert to the needs of all in the community. The sign of peace — in the Roman Rite significantly placed before Eucharistic communion — is a particularly expressive gesture which the faithful are invited to make as a manifestation of the People of God's acceptance of all that has been accomplished in the celebration(74) and of the commitment to mutual love which is made in sharing the one bread, with the demanding words of Christ in mind: "If you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember

that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Mt 5:23-24).

### **From Mass to "mission"**

45. Receiving the Bread of Life, the disciples of Christ ready themselves to undertake with the strength of the Risen Lord and his Spirit the tasks which await them in their ordinary life. For the faithful who have understood the meaning of what they have done, the Eucharistic celebration does not stop at the church door. Like the first witnesses of the Resurrection, Christians who gather each Sunday to experience and proclaim the presence of the Risen Lord are called to evangelize and bear witness in their daily lives. Given this, the Prayer after Communion and the Concluding Rite — the Final Blessing and the Dismissal — need to be better valued and appreciated, so that all who have shared in the Eucharist may come to a deeper sense of the responsibility which is entrusted to them. Once the assembly disperses, Christ's disciples return to their everyday surroundings with the commitment to make their whole life a gift, a spiritual sacrifice pleasing to God (cf. Rom 12:1). They feel indebted to their brothers and sisters because of what they have received in the celebration, not unlike the disciples of Emmaus who, once they had recognized the Risen Christ "in the breaking of the bread" (cf. Lk 24:30-32), felt the need to return immediately to share with their brothers and sisters the joy of meeting the Lord (cf. Lk 24:33-35).

### **The Sunday obligation**

46. Since the Eucharist is the very heart of Sunday, it is clear why, from the earliest centuries, the Pastors of the Church have not ceased to remind the faithful of the need to take part in the liturgical assembly. "Leave everything on the Lord's Day", urges the third century text known as the Didascalia, "and run diligently to your assembly, because it is your praise of God. Otherwise, what excuse will they make to God, those who do not come together on the Lord's Day to hear the word of life and feed on the divine nourishment which lasts forever?".(75) The faithful have generally accepted this call of the Pastors with conviction of soul and, although there have been times and situations when this duty has not been perfectly met, one should never forget the genuine heroism of priests and faithful who have fulfilled this obligation even when faced with danger and the denial of religious freedom, as can be documented from the first centuries of Christianity up to our own time.

In his first Apology addressed to the Emperor Antoninus and the Senate, Saint Justin proudly described the Christian practice of the Sunday assembly, which gathered in one place Christians from both the city and the countryside.(76) When, during the persecution of Diocletian, their assemblies were banned with

the greatest severity, many were courageous enough to defy the imperial decree and accepted death rather than miss the Sunday Eucharist. This was the case of the martyrs of Abitina, in Proconsular Africa, who replied to their accusers: "Without fear of any kind we have celebrated the Lord's Supper, because it cannot be missed; that is our law"; "We cannot live without the Lord's Supper". As she confessed her faith, one of the martyrs said: "Yes, I went to the assembly and I celebrated the Lord's Supper with my brothers and sisters, because I am a Christian".(77)

47. Even if in the earliest times it was not judged necessary to be prescriptive, the Church has not ceased to confirm this obligation of conscience, which rises from the inner need felt so strongly by the Christians of the first centuries. It was only later, faced with the half-heartedness or negligence of some, that the Church had to make explicit the duty to attend Sunday Mass: more often than not, this was done in the form of exhortation, but at times the Church had to resort to specific canonical precepts. This was the case in a number of local Councils from the fourth century onwards (as at the Council of Elvira of 300, which speaks not of an obligation but of penalties after three absences)(78) and most especially from the sixth century onwards (as at the Council of Agde in 506).(79) These decrees of local Councils led to a universal practice, the obligatory character of which was taken as something quite normal.(80)

The Code of Canon Law of 1917 for the first time gathered this tradition into a universal law.(81) The present Code reiterates this, saying that "on Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to attend Mass".(82) This legislation has normally been understood as entailing a grave obligation: this is the teaching of the Catechism of the Catholic Church,(83) and it is easy to understand why if we keep in mind how vital Sunday is for the Christian life.

48. Today, as in the heroic times of the beginning, many who wish to live in accord with the demands of their faith are being faced with difficult situations in various parts of the world. They live in surroundings which are sometimes decidedly hostile and at other times — more frequently in fact — indifferent and unresponsive to the Gospel message. If believers are not to be overwhelmed, they must be able to count on the support of the Christian community. This is why they must be convinced that it is crucially important for the life of faith that they should come together with others on Sundays to celebrate the Passover of the Lord in the sacrament of the New Covenant. It is the special responsibility of the Bishops, therefore, "to ensure that Sunday is appreciated by all the faithful, kept holy and celebrated as truly 'the Lord's Day', on which the Church comes together to renew the remembrance of the Easter mystery in hearing the word of God, in offering the sacrifice of the Lord, in keeping the day holy by means of prayer, works of charity and abstention from work".(84)

49. Because the faithful are obliged to attend Mass unless there is a grave impediment, Pastors have the corresponding duty to offer to everyone the real possibility of fulfilling the precept. The provisions of Church law move in this direction, as for example in the faculty granted to priests, with the prior authorization of the diocesan Bishop, to celebrate more than one Mass on Sundays and holy days,(85) the institution of evening Masses(86) and the provision which allows the obligation to be fulfilled from Saturday evening onwards, starting at the time of First Vespers of Sunday.(87) From a liturgical point of view, in fact, holy days begin with First Vespers.(88) Consequently, the liturgy of what is sometimes called the "Vigil Mass" is in effect the "festive" Mass of Sunday, at which the celebrant is required to preach the homily and recite the Prayer of the Faithful.

Moreover, Pastors should remind the faithful that when they are away from home on Sundays they are to take care to attend Mass wherever they may be, enriching the local community with their personal witness. At the same time, these communities should show a warm sense of welcome to visiting brothers and sisters, especially in places which attract many tourists and pilgrims, for whom it will often be necessary to provide special religious assistance.(89)

#### **A joyful celebration in song**

50. Given the nature of Sunday Mass and its importance in the lives of the faithful, it must be prepared with special care. In ways dictated by pastoral experience and local custom in keeping with liturgical norms, efforts must be made to ensure that the celebration has the festive character appropriate to the day commemorating the Lord's Resurrection. To this end, it is important to devote attention to the songs used by the assembly, since singing is a particularly apt way to express a joyful heart, accentuating the solemnity of the celebration and fostering the sense of a common faith and a shared love. Care must be taken to ensure the quality, both of the texts and of the melodies, so that what is proposed today as new and creative will conform to liturgical requirements and be worthy of the Church's tradition which, in the field of sacred music, boasts a priceless heritage.

#### **A celebration involving all**

51. There is a need too to ensure that all those present, children and adults, take an active interest, by encouraging their involvement at those points where the liturgy suggests and recommends it.(90) Of course, it falls only to those who exercise the priestly ministry to effect the Eucharistic Sacrifice and to offer it to God in the name of the whole people.(91) This is the basis of the distinction, which is much more than a matter of discipline, between the task proper to the celebrant and that which belongs to deacons and the non-ordained faithful.(92) Yet the faithful must realize that, because of the common priesthood received in



Baptism, "they participate in the offering of the Eucharist".(93) Although there is a distinction of roles, they still "offer to God the divine victim and themselves with him. Offering the sacrifice and receiving holy communion, they take part actively in the liturgy",(94) finding in it light and strength to live their baptismal priesthood and the witness of a holy life.

### **Other moments of the Christian Sunday**

52. Sharing in the Eucharist is the heart of Sunday, but the duty to keep Sunday holy cannot be reduced to this. In fact, the Lord's Day is lived well if it is marked from beginning to end by grateful and active remembrance of God's saving work. This commits each of Christ's disciples to shape the other moments of the day — those outside the liturgical context: family life, social relationships, moments of relaxation — in such a way that the peace and joy of the Risen Lord will emerge in the ordinary events of life. For example, the relaxed gathering of parents and children can be an opportunity not only to listen to one another but also to share a few formative and more reflective moments. Even in lay life, when possible, why not make provision for special times of prayer — especially the solemn celebration of Vespers, for example — or moments of catechesis, which on the eve of Sunday or on Sunday afternoon might prepare for or complete the gift of the Eucharist in people's hearts?

This rather traditional way of keeping Sunday holy has perhaps become more difficult for many people; but the Church shows her faith in the strength of the Risen Lord and the power of the Holy Spirit by making it known that, today more than ever, she is unwilling to settle for minimalism and mediocrity at the level of faith. She wants to help Christians to do what is most correct and pleasing to the Lord. And despite the difficulties, there are positive and encouraging signs. In many parts of the Church, a new need for prayer in its many forms is being felt; and this is a gift of the Holy Spirit. There is also a rediscovery of ancient religious practices, such as pilgrimages; and often the faithful take advantage of Sunday rest to visit a Shrine where, with the whole family perhaps, they can spend time in a more intense experience of faith. These are moments of grace which must be fostered through evangelization and guided by genuine pastoral wisdom.

### **Sunday assemblies without a priest**

53. There remains the problem of parishes which do not have the ministry of a priest for the celebration of the Sunday Eucharist. This is often the case in young Churches, where one priest has pastoral responsibility for faithful scattered over a vast area. However, emergency situations can also arise in countries of long-standing Christian tradition, where diminishing numbers of clergy make it impossible to guarantee the presence of a priest in every parish community. In situations where the Eucharist cannot be celebrated, the Church recommends that the Sunday assembly come together even without a priest,(95) in keeping

with the indications and directives of the Holy See which have been entrusted to the Episcopal Conferences for implementation.(96) Yet the objective must always remain the celebration of the Sacrifice of the Mass, the one way in which the Passover of the Lord becomes truly present, the only full realization of the Eucharistic assembly over which the priest presides in persona Christi, breaking the bread of the word and the Eucharist. At the pastoral level, therefore, everything has to be done to ensure that the Sacrifice of the Mass is made available as often as possible to the faithful who are regularly deprived of it, either by arranging the presence of a priest from time to time, or by taking every opportunity to organize a gathering in a central location accessible to scattered groups.

### **Radio and television**

54. Finally, the faithful who, because of sickness, disability or some other serious cause, are prevented from taking part, should as best they can unite themselves with the celebration of Sunday Mass from afar, preferably by means of the readings and prayers for that day from the Missal, as well as through their desire for the Eucharist.(97) In many countries, radio and television make it possible to join in the Eucharistic celebration broadcast from some sacred place.(98) Clearly, this kind of broadcast does not in itself fulfil the Sunday obligation, which requires participation in the fraternal assembly gathered in one place, where Eucharistic communion can be received. But for those who cannot take part in the Eucharist and who are therefore excused from the obligation, radio and television are a precious help, especially if accompanied by the generous service of extraordinary ministers who bring the Eucharist to the sick, also bringing them the greeting and solidarity of the whole community. Sunday Mass thus produces rich fruits for these Christians too, and they are truly enabled to experience Sunday as "the Lord's Day" and "the Church's day".

## CHAPTER IV

### **DIES HOMINIS**

#### **Sunday: Day of Joy, Rest and Solidarity**

#### **The "full joy" of Christ**

55. "Blessed be he who has raised the great day of Sunday above all other days. The heavens and the earth, angels and of men give themselves over to joy".(99) This cry of the Maronite liturgy captures well the intense acclamations of joy which have always characterized Sunday in the liturgy of both East and West. Moreover, historically — even before it was seen as a day of rest, which in any case was not provided for in the civil calendar — Christians celebrated the weekly day of the Risen Lord primarily as a day of joy. "On the first day of the week, you

shall all rejoice", urges the Didascalia. (100) This was also emphasized by liturgical practice, through the choice of appropriate gestures. (101) Voicing an awareness widespread in the Church, Saint Augustine describes the joy of the weekly Easter: "Fasting, is set aside and prayers are said standing, as a sign of the Resurrection, which is also why the Alleluia is sung on every Sunday". (102)

56. Beyond particular ritual forms, which can vary in time depending upon Church discipline, there remains the fact that Sunday, as a weekly echo of the first encounter with the Risen Lord, is unfailingly marked by the joy with which the disciples greeted the Master: "The disciples rejoiced to see the Lord" (Jn 20:20). This was the confirmation of the words which Jesus spoke before the Passion and which resound in every Christian generation: "You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn to joy" (Jn 16:20). Had not he himself prayed for this, that the disciples would have "the fullness of his joy" (cf. Jn 17:13)? The festive character of the Sunday Eucharist expresses the joy that Christ communicates to his Church through the gift of the Spirit. Joy is precisely one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 14:17; Gal 5:22).

57. Therefore, if we wish to rediscover the full meaning of Sunday, we must rediscover this aspect of the life of faith. Certainly, Christian joy must mark the whole of life, and not just one day of the week. But in virtue of its significance as the day of the Risen Lord, celebrating God's work of creation and "new creation", Sunday is the day of joy in a very special way, indeed the day most suitable for learning how to rejoice and to rediscover the true nature and deep roots of joy. This joy should never be confused with shallow feelings of satisfaction and pleasure, which inebriate the senses and emotions for a brief moment, but then leave the heart unfulfilled and perhaps even embittered. In the Christian view, joy is much more enduring and consoling; as the saints attest, it can hold firm even in the dark night of suffering. (103) It is, in a certain sense, a "virtue" to be nurtured.

58. Yet there is no conflict whatever between Christian joy and true human joys, which in fact are exalted and find their ultimate foundation precisely in the joy of the glorified Christ, the perfect image and revelation of man as God intended. As my revered predecessor Paul VI wrote in his Exhortation on Christian joy: "In essence, Christian joy is a sharing in the unfathomable joy, at once divine and human, found in the heart of the glorified Christ". (104) Pope Paul concluded his Exhortation by asking that, on the Lord's Day, the Church should witness powerfully to the joy experienced by the Apostles when they saw the Lord on the evening of Easter. To this end, he urged pastors to insist "upon the need for the baptized to celebrate the Sunday Eucharist in joy. How could they neglect this encounter, this banquet which Christ prepares for us in his love? May our sharing in it be most worthy and joyful! It is Christ, crucified and glorified, who comes

among his disciples, to lead them all together into the newness of his Resurrection. This is the climax, here below, of the covenant of love between God and his people: the sign and source of Christian joy, a stage on the way to the eternal feast". (105) This vision of faith shows the Christian Sunday to be a true "time for celebration", a day given by God to men and women for their full human and spiritual growth.

### **The fulfilment of the Sabbath**

59. This aspect of the Christian Sunday shows in a special way how it is the fulfilment of the Old Testament Sabbath. On the Lord's Day, which — as we have already said — the Old Testament links to the work of creation (cf. Gn 2:1-3; Ex 20:8-11) and the Exodus (cf. Dt 5:12-15), the Christian is called to proclaim the new creation and the new covenant brought about in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. Far from being abolished, the celebration of creation becomes more profound within a Christocentric perspective, being seen in the light of the God's plan "to unite all things in [Christ], things in heaven and things on earth" (Eph 1:10). The remembrance of the liberation of the Exodus also assumes its full meaning as it becomes a remembrance of the universal redemption accomplished by Christ in his Death and Resurrection. More than a "replacement" for the Sabbath, therefore, Sunday is its fulfilment, and in a certain sense its extension and full expression in the ordered unfolding of the history of salvation, which reaches its culmination in Christ.

60. In this perspective, the biblical theology of the "Sabbath" can be recovered in full, without compromising the Christian character of Sunday. It is a theology which leads us ever anew and in unflinching awe to the mystery of the beginning, when the eternal Word of God, by a free decision of love, created the world from nothing. The work of creation was sealed by the blessing and consecration of the day on which God ceased "from all the work which he had done in creation" (Gn 2:3). This day of God's rest confers meaning upon time, which in the sequence of weeks assumes not only a chronological regularity but also, in a manner of speaking, a theological resonance. The constant return of the "shabbat" ensures that there is no risk of time being closed in upon itself, since, in welcoming God and his *kairoi* — the moments of his grace and his saving acts — time remains open to eternity.

61. As the seventh day blessed and consecrated by God, the "shabbat" concludes the whole work of creation, and is therefore immediately linked to the work of the sixth day when God made man "in his image and likeness" (cf. Gn 1:26). This very close connection between the "day of God" and the "day of man" did not escape the Fathers in their meditation on the biblical creation story. Saint Ambrose says in this regard: "Thanks, then, to the Lord our God who accomplished a work in which he might find rest. He made the heavens, but I do

not read that he found rest there; he made the stars, the moon, the sun, and neither do I read that he found rest in them. I read instead that he made man and that then he rested, finding in man one to whom he could offer the forgiveness of sins". (106) Thus there will be for ever a direct link between the "day of God" and the "day of man". When the divine commandment declares: "Remember the Sabbath day in order to keep it holy" (Ex 20:8), the rest decreed in order to honour the day dedicated to God is not at all a burden imposed upon man, but rather an aid to help him to recognize his life-giving and liberating dependence upon the Creator, and at the same time his calling to cooperate in the Creator's work and to receive his grace. In honouring God's "rest", man fully discovers himself, and thus the Lord's Day bears the profound imprint of God's blessing (cf. Gn 2:3), by virtue of which, we might say, it is endowed in a way similar to the animals and to man himself, with a kind of "fruitfulness" (cf. Gn 1:22, 28). This "fruitfulness" is apparent above all in filling and, in a certain sense, "multiplying" time itself, deepening in men and women the joy of living and the desire to foster and communicate life.

62. It is the duty of Christians therefore to remember that, although the practices of the Jewish Sabbath are gone, surpassed as they are by the "fulfilment" which Sunday brings, the underlying reasons for keeping "the Lord's Day" holy — inscribed solemnly in the Ten Commandments — remain valid, though they need to be reinterpreted in the light of the theology and spirituality of Sunday: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you. Six days you shall labour, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. Then you shall do no work, you, or your son, or your daughter, or your servant, or your maid, or your ox, or your ass, or any of your beasts, or the foreigner within your gates, that your servant and maid may rest as well as you. You shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God commanded that you keep the Sabbath day" (Dt 5:12-15). Here the Sabbath observance is closely linked with the liberation which God accomplished for his people.

63. Christ came to accomplish a new "exodus", to restore freedom to the oppressed. He performed many healings on the Sabbath (cf. Mt 12:9-14 and parallels), certainly not to violate the Lord's Day, but to reveal its full meaning: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mk 2:27). Opposing the excessively legalistic interpretation of some of his contemporaries, and developing the true meaning of the biblical Sabbath, Jesus, as "Lord of the Sabbath" (Mk 2:28), restores to the Sabbath observance its liberating character, carefully safeguarding the rights of God and the rights of man. This is why Christians, called as they are to proclaim the liberation won by the blood of

Christ, felt that they had the authority to transfer the meaning of the Sabbath to the day of the Resurrection. The Passover of Christ has in fact liberated man from a slavery more radical than any weighing upon an oppressed people — the slavery of sin, which alienates man from God, and alienates man from himself and from others, constantly sowing within history the seeds of evil and violence.

### **The day of rest**

64. For several centuries, Christians observed Sunday simply as a day of worship, without being able to give it the specific meaning of Sabbath rest. Only in the fourth century did the civil law of the Roman Empire recognize the weekly recurrence, determining that on "the day of the sun" the judges, the people of the cities and the various trade corporations would not work. (107) Christians rejoiced to see thus removed the obstacles which until then had sometimes made observance of the Lord's Day heroic. They could now devote themselves to prayer in common without hindrance. (108)

It would therefore be wrong to see in this legislation of the rhythm of the week a mere historical circumstance with no special significance for the Church and which she could simply set aside. Even after the fall of the Empire, the Councils did not cease to insist upon the arrangements regarding Sunday rest. In countries where Christians are in the minority and where the festive days of the calendar do not coincide with Sunday, it is still Sunday which remains the Lord's Day, the day on which the faithful come together for the Eucharistic assembly. But this involves real sacrifices. For Christians it is not normal that Sunday, the day of joyful celebration, should not also be a day of rest, and it is difficult for them to keep Sunday holy if they do not have enough free time.

65. By contrast, the link between the Lord's Day and the day of rest in civil society has a meaning and importance which go beyond the distinctly Christian point of view. The alternation between work and rest, built into human nature, is willed by God himself, as appears in the creation story in the Book of Genesis (cf. 2:2-3; Ex 20:8-11): rest is something "sacred", because it is man's way of withdrawing from the sometimes excessively demanding cycle of earthly tasks in order to renew his awareness that everything is the work of God. There is a risk that the prodigious power over creation which God gives to man can lead him to forget that God is the Creator upon whom everything depends. It is all the more urgent to recognize this dependence in our own time, when science and technology have so incredibly increased the power which man exercises through his work.

66. Finally, it should not be forgotten that even in our own day work is very oppressive for many people, either because of miserable working conditions and long hours — especially in the poorer regions of the world — or because of the persistence in economically more developed societies of too many cases of

injustice and exploitation of man by man. When, through the centuries, she has made laws concerning Sunday rest, (109) the Church has had in mind above all the work of servants and workers, certainly not because this work was any less worthy when compared to the spiritual requirements of Sunday observance, but rather because it needed greater regulation to lighten its burden and thus enable everyone to keep the Lord's Day holy. In this matter, my predecessor Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical Rerum Novarum spoke of Sunday rest as a worker's right which the State must guarantee. (110)

In our own historical context there remains the obligation to ensure that everyone can enjoy the freedom, rest and relaxation which human dignity requires, together with the associated religious, family, cultural and interpersonal needs which are difficult to meet if there is no guarantee of at least one day of the week on which people can both rest and celebrate. Naturally, this right of workers to rest presupposes their right to work and, as we reflect on the question of the Christian understanding of Sunday, we cannot but recall with a deep sense of solidarity the hardship of countless men and women who, because of the lack of jobs, are forced to remain inactive on workdays as well.

67. Through Sunday rest, daily concerns and tasks can find their proper perspective: the material things about which we worry give way to spiritual values; in a moment of encounter and less pressured exchange, we see the true face of the people with whom we live. Even the beauties of nature — too often marred by the desire to exploit, which turns against man himself — can be rediscovered and enjoyed to the full. As the day on which man is at peace with God, with himself and with others, Sunday becomes a moment when people can look anew upon the wonders of nature, allowing themselves to be caught up in that marvellous and mysterious harmony which, in the words of Saint Ambrose, weds the many elements of the cosmos in a "bond of communion and peace" by "an inviolable law of concord and love". (111) Men and women then come to a deeper sense, as the Apostle says, that "everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for then it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer" (1 Tim 4:4-5). If after six days of work — reduced in fact to five for many people — people look for time to relax and to pay more attention to other aspects of their lives, this corresponds to an authentic need which is in full harmony with the vision of the Gospel message. Believers are therefore called to satisfy this need in a way consistent with the manifestation of their personal and community faith, as expressed in the celebration and sanctification of the Lord's Day.

Therefore, also in the particular circumstances of our own time, Christians will naturally strive to ensure that civil legislation respects their duty to keep Sunday holy. In any case, they are obliged in conscience to arrange their Sunday rest in

a way which allows them to take part in the Eucharist, refraining from work and activities which are incompatible with the sanctification of the Lord's Day, with its characteristic joy and necessary rest for spirit and body. (112)

68. In order that rest may not degenerate into emptiness or boredom, it must offer spiritual enrichment, greater freedom, opportunities for contemplation and fraternal communion. Therefore, among the forms of culture and entertainment which society offers, the faithful should choose those which are most in keeping with a life lived in obedience to the precepts of the Gospel. Sunday rest then becomes "prophetic", affirming not only the absolute primacy of God, but also the primacy and dignity of the person with respect to the demands of social and economic life, and anticipating in a certain sense the "new heavens" and the "new earth", in which liberation from slavery to needs will be final and complete. In short, the Lord's Day thus becomes in the truest sense the day of man as well.

### **A day of solidarity**

69. Sunday should also give the faithful an opportunity to devote themselves to works of mercy, charity and apostolate. To experience the joy of the Risen Lord deep within is to share fully the love which pulses in his heart: there is no joy without love! Jesus himself explains this, linking the "new commandment" with the gift of joy: "If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept the Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this that my own joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: that you love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 15:10-12).

The Sunday Eucharist, therefore, not only does not absolve the faithful from the duties of charity, but on the contrary commits them even more "to all the works of charity, of mercy, of apostolic outreach, by means of which it is seen that the faithful of Christ are not of this world and yet are the light of the world, giving glory to the Father in the presence of men". (113)

70. Ever since Apostolic times, the Sunday gathering has in fact been for Christians a moment of fraternal sharing with the very poor. "On the first day of the week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn" (1 Cor 16:2), says Saint Paul referring to the collection organized for the poor Churches of Judaea. In the Sunday Eucharist, the believing heart opens wide to embrace all aspects of the Church. But the full range of the apostolic summons needs to be accepted: far from trying to create a narrow "gift" mentality, Paul calls rather for a demanding culture of sharing, to be lived not only among the members of the community itself but also in society as a whole. (114) More than ever, we need to listen once again to the stern warning which Paul addresses to the community at Corinth, guilty of having humiliated the poor in the fraternal agape



which accompanied "the Lord's Supper": "When you meet together, it is not the Lord's Supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal, and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the Church of God and humiliate those who have nothing?" (1 Cor 11:20-22). James is equally forceful in what he writes: "If a man with gold rings and in fine clothing comes into your assembly and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, 'Take a seat here, please', while you say to the poor man, 'Stand there', or, 'Sit at my feet', have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?" (2:2-4).

71. The teachings of the Apostles struck a sympathetic chord from the earliest centuries, and evoked strong echoes in the preaching of the Fathers of the Church. Saint Ambrose addressed words of fire to the rich who presumed to fulfil their religious obligations by attending church without sharing their goods with the poor, and who perhaps even exploited them: "You who are rich, do you hear what the Lord God says? Yet you come into church not to give to the poor but to take instead". (115) Saint John Chrysostom is no less demanding: "Do you wish to honour the body of Christ? Do not ignore him when he is naked. Do not pay him homage in the temple clad in silk only then to neglect him outside where he suffers cold and nakedness. He who said: 'This is my body' is the same One who said: 'You saw me hungry and you gave me no food', and 'Whatever you did to the least of my brothers you did also to me' ... What good is it if the Eucharistic table is overloaded with golden chalices, when he is dying of hunger? Start by satisfying his hunger, and then with what is left you may adorn the altar as well". (116)

These words effectively remind the Christian community of the duty to make the Eucharist the place where fraternity becomes practical solidarity, where the last are the first in the minds and attentions of the brethren, where Christ himself — through the generous gifts from the rich to the very poor — may somehow prolong in time the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves. (117)

72. The Eucharist is an event and programme of true brotherhood. From the Sunday Mass there flows a tide of charity destined to spread into the whole life of the faithful, beginning by inspiring the very way in which they live the rest of Sunday. If Sunday is a day of joy, Christians should declare by their actual behaviour that we cannot be happy "on our own". They look around to find people who may need their help. It may be that in their neighbourhood or among those they know there are sick people, elderly people, children or immigrants who precisely on Sundays feel more keenly their isolation, needs and suffering. It is true that commitment to these people cannot be restricted to occasional Sunday gestures. But presuming a wider sense of commitment, why

not make the Lord's Day a more intense time of sharing, encouraging all the inventiveness of which Christian charity is capable? Inviting to a meal people who are alone, visiting the sick, providing food for needy families, spending a few hours in voluntary work and acts of solidarity: these would certainly be ways of bringing into people's lives the love of Christ received at the Eucharistic table.

73. Lived in this way, not only the Sunday Eucharist but the whole of Sunday becomes a great school of charity, justice and peace. The presence of the Risen Lord in the midst of his people becomes an undertaking of solidarity, a compelling force for inner renewal, an inspiration to change the structures of sin in which individuals, communities and at times entire peoples are entangled. Far from being an escape, the Christian Sunday is a "prophecy" inscribed on time itself, a prophecy obliging the faithful to follow in the footsteps of the One who came "to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to captives and new sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Lk 4:18-19). In the Sunday commemoration of Easter, believers learn from Christ, and remembering his promise: "I leave you peace, my peace I give you" (Jn 14:27), they become in their turn builders of peace.

## CHAPTER V

### **DIES DIERUM**

#### **Sunday: the Primordial Feast, Revealing the Meaning of Time**

##### **Christ the Alpha and Omega of time**

74. "In Christianity time has a fundamental importance. Within the dimension of time the world was created; within it the history of salvation unfolds, finding its culmination in the 'fullness of time' of the Incarnation, and its goal in the glorious return of the Son of God at the end of time. In Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, time becomes a dimension of God, who is himself eternal". (118)

In the light of the New Testament, the years of Christ's earthly life truly constitute the centre of time; this centre reaches its apex in the Resurrection. It is true that Jesus is God made man from the very moment of his conception in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, but only in the Resurrection is his humanity wholly transfigured and glorified, thus revealing the fullness of his divine identity and glory. In his speech in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia (cf. Acts 13:33), Paul applies the words of Psalm 2 to the Resurrection of Christ: "You are my Son, this day I have begotten you" (v. 7). It is precisely for this reason that, in celebrating the Easter Vigil, the Church acclaim the Risen Christ as "the Beginning and End, the Alpha and Omega". These are the words spoken by the

celebrant as he prepares the Paschal candle, which bears the number of the current year. These words clearly attest that "Christ is the Lord of time; he is its beginning and its end; every year, every day and every moment are embraced by his Incarnation and Resurrection, and thus become part of the 'fullness of time'". (119)

75. Since Sunday is the weekly Easter, recalling and making present the day upon which Christ rose from the dead, it is also the day which reveals the meaning of time. It has nothing in common with the cosmic cycles according to which natural religion and human culture tend to impose a structure on time, succumbing perhaps to the myth of eternal return. The Christian Sunday is wholly other! Springing from the Resurrection, it cuts through human time, the months, the years, the centuries, like a directional arrow which points them towards their target: Christ's Second Coming. Sunday foreshadows the last day, the day of the Parousia, which in a way is already anticipated by Christ's glory in the event of the Resurrection.

In fact, everything that will happen until the end of the world will be no more than an extension and unfolding of what happened on the day when the battered body of the Crucified Lord was raised by the power of the Spirit and became in turn the wellspring of the Spirit for all humanity. Christians know that there is no need to wait for another time of salvation, since, however long the world may last, they are already living in the last times. Not only the Church, but the cosmos itself and history are ceaselessly ruled and governed by the glorified Christ. It is this life-force which propels creation, "groaning in birth-pangs until now" (Rom 8:22), towards the goal of its full redemption. Mankind can have only a faint intuition of this process, but Christians have the key and the certainty. Keeping Sunday holy is the important witness which they are called to bear, so that every stage of human history will be upheld by hope.

### **Sunday in the Liturgical Year**

76. With its weekly recurrence, the Lord's Day is rooted in the most ancient tradition of the Church and is vitally important for the Christian. But there was another rhythm which soon established itself: the annual liturgical cycle. Human psychology in fact desires the celebration of anniversaries, associating the return of dates and seasons with the remembrance of past events. When these events are decisive in the life of a people, their celebration generally creates a festive atmosphere which breaks the monotony of daily routine.

Now, by God's design, the great saving events upon which the Church's life is founded were closely linked to the annual Jewish feasts of Passover and Pentecost, and were prophetically foreshadowed in them. Since the second century, the annual celebration of Easter by Christians — having been added to the weekly Easter celebration — allowed a more ample meditation on the

mystery of Christ crucified and risen. Preceded by a preparatory fast, celebrated in the course of a long vigil, extended into the fifty days leading to Pentecost, the feast of Easter — "solemnity of solemnities" — became the day par excellence for the initiation of catechumens. Through baptism they die to sin and rise to a new life because Jesus "was put to death for our sins and raised for our justification" (Rom 4:25; cf. 6:3-11). Intimately connected to the Paschal Mystery, the Solemnity of Pentecost takes on special importance, celebrating as it does the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles gathered with Mary and inaugurating the mission to all peoples. (120)

77. A similar commemorative logic guided the arrangement of the entire Liturgical Year. As the Second Vatican Council recalls, the Church wished to extend throughout the year "the entire mystery of Christ, from the Incarnation and Nativity to the Ascension, to the day of Pentecost and to the waiting in blessed hope for the return of the Lord. Remembering in this way the mysteries of redemption, the Church opens to the faithful the treasury of the Lord's power and merits, making them present in some sense to all times, so that the faithful may approach them and be filled by them with the grace of salvation". (121)

After Easter and Pentecost, the most solemn celebration is undoubtedly the Nativity of the Lord, when Christians ponder the mystery of the Incarnation and contemplate the Word of God who deigns to assume our humanity in order to give us a share in his divinity.

78. Likewise, "in celebrating this annual cycle of the mysteries of Christ, the holy Church venerates with special love the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, united forever with the saving work of her Son". (122) In a similar way, by inserting into the annual cycle the commemoration of the martyrs and other saints on the occasion of their anniversaries, "the Church proclaims the Easter mystery of the saints who suffered with Christ and with him are now glorified". (123) When celebrated in the true spirit of the liturgy, the commemoration of the saints does not obscure the centrality of Christ, but on the contrary extols it, demonstrating as it does the power of the redemption wrought by him. As Saint Paulinus of Nola sings, "all things pass, but the glory of the saints endures in Christ, who renews all things, while he himself remains unchanged". (124) The intrinsic relationship between the glory of the saints and that of Christ is built into the very arrangement of the Liturgical Year, and is expressed most eloquently in the fundamental and sovereign character of Sunday as the Lord's Day. Following the seasons of the Liturgical Year in the Sunday observance which structures it from beginning to end, the ecclesial and spiritual commitment of Christians comes to be profoundly anchored in Christ, in whom believers find their reason for living and from whom they draw sustenance and inspiration.

79. Sunday emerges therefore as the natural model for understanding and celebrating these feast-days of the Liturgical Year, which are of such value for the Christian life that the Church has chosen to emphasize their importance by making it obligatory for the faithful to attend Mass and to observe a time of rest, even though these feast-days may fall on variable days of the week. (125) Their number has been changed from time to time, taking into account social and economic conditions, as also how firmly they are established in tradition, and how well they are supported by civil legislation. (126)

The present canonical and liturgical provisions allow each Episcopal Conference, because of particular circumstances in one country or another, to reduce the list of Holy Days of obligation. Any decision in this regard needs to receive the special approval of the Apostolic See, (127) and in such cases the celebration of a mystery of the Lord, such as the Epiphany, the Ascension or the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, must be transferred to Sunday, in accordance with liturgical norms, so that the faithful are not denied the chance to meditate upon the mystery. (128) Pastors should also take care to encourage the faithful to attend Mass on other important feast-days celebrated during the week. (129)

80. There is a need for special pastoral attention to the many situations where there is a risk that the popular and cultural traditions of a region may intrude upon the celebration of Sundays and other liturgical feast-days, mingling the spirit of genuine Christian faith with elements which are foreign to it and may distort it. In such cases, catechesis and well-chosen pastoral initiatives need to clarify these situations, eliminating all that is incompatible with the Gospel of Christ. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that these traditions — and, by analogy, some recent cultural initiatives in civil society — often embody values which are not difficult to integrate with the demands of faith. It rests with the discernment of Pastors to preserve the genuine values found in the culture of a particular social context and especially in popular piety, so that liturgical celebration — above all on Sundays and holy days — does not suffer but rather may actually benefit. (130)

## **CONCLUSION**

81. The spiritual and pastoral riches of Sunday, as it has been handed on to us by tradition, are truly great. When its significance and implications are understood in their entirety, Sunday in a way becomes a synthesis of the Christian life and a condition for living it well. It is clear therefore why the observance of the Lord's Day is so close to the Church's heart, and why in the Church's discipline it remains a real obligation. Yet more than as a precept, the observance should be seen as a need rising from the depths of Christian life. It is crucially important that all the faithful should be convinced that they cannot live

their faith or share fully in the life of the Christian community unless they take part regularly in the Sunday Eucharistic assembly. The Eucharist is the full realization of the worship which humanity owes to God, and it cannot be compared to any other religious experience. A particularly efficacious expression of this is the Sunday gathering of the entire community, obedient to the voice of the Risen Lord who calls the faithful together to give them the light of his word and the nourishment of his Body as the perennial sacramental wellspring of redemption. The grace flowing from this wellspring renews mankind, life and history.

82. It is with this strong conviction of faith, and with awareness of the heritage of human values which the observance of Sunday entails, that Christians today must face the enticements of a culture which has accepted the benefits of rest and free time, but which often uses them frivolously and is at times attracted by morally questionable forms of entertainment. Certainly, Christians are no different from other people in enjoying the weekly day of rest; but at the same time they are keenly aware of the uniqueness and originality of Sunday, the day on which they are called to celebrate their salvation and the salvation of all humanity. Sunday is the day of joy and the day of rest precisely because it is "the Lord's Day", the day of the Risen Lord.

83. Understood and lived in this fashion, Sunday in a way becomes the soul of the other days, and in this sense we can recall the insight of Origen that the perfect Christian "is always in the Lord's Day, and is always celebrating Sunday". (131) Sunday is a true school, an enduring programme of Church pedagogy — an irreplaceable pedagogy, especially with social conditions now marked more and more by a fragmentation and cultural pluralism which constantly test the faithfulness of individual Christians to the practical demands of their faith. In many parts of the world, we see a "diaspora" Christianity, which is put to the test because the scattered disciples of Christ can no longer easily maintain contact with one another, and lack the support of the structures and traditions proper to Christian culture. In a situation of such difficulty, the opportunity to come together on Sundays with fellow believers, exchanging gifts of brotherhood, is an indispensable help.

84. Sustaining Christian life as it does, Sunday has the additional value of being a testimony and a proclamation. As a day of prayer, communion and joy, Sunday resounds throughout society, emanating vital energies and reasons for hope. Sunday is the proclamation that time, in which he who is the Risen Lord of history makes his home, is not the grave of our illusions but the cradle of an ever new future, an opportunity given to us to turn the fleeting moments of this life into seeds of eternity. Sunday is an invitation to look ahead; it is the day on which the Christian community cries out to Christ, "Marana tha: Come, O

Lord!" (1 Cor 16:22). With this cry of hope and expectation, the Church is the companion and support of human hope. From Sunday to Sunday, enlightened by Christ, she goes forward towards the unending Sunday of the heavenly Jerusalem, which "has no need of the sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light and its lamp is the Lamb" (Rev 21:23).

85. As she strains towards her goal, the Church is sustained and enlivened by the Spirit. It is he who awakens memory and makes present for every generation of believers the event of the Resurrection. He is the inward gift uniting us to the Risen Lord and to our brothers and sisters in the intimacy of a single body, reviving our faith, filling our hearts with charity and renewing our hope. The Spirit is unfailingly present to every one of the Church's days, appearing unpredictably and lavishly with the wealth of his gifts. But it is in the Sunday gathering for the weekly celebration of Easter that the Church listens to the Spirit in a special way and reaches out with him to Christ in the ardent desire that he return in glory: "The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'" (Rev 22:17). Precisely in consideration of the role of the Spirit, I have wished that this exhortation aimed at rediscovering the meaning of Sunday should appear in this year which, in the immediate preparation for the Jubilee, is dedicated to the Holy Spirit.

86. I entrust this Apostolic Letter to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, that it may be received and put into practice by the Christian community. Without in any way detracting from the centrality of Christ and his Spirit, Mary is always present in the Church's Sunday. It is the mystery of Christ himself which demands this: indeed, how could she who is Mater Domini and Mater Ecclesiae fail to be uniquely present on the day which is both dies Domini and dies Ecclesiae?

As they listen to the word proclaimed in the Sunday assembly, the faithful look to the Virgin Mary, learning from her to keep it and ponder it in their hearts (cf. Lk 2:19). With Mary, they learn to stand at the foot of the Cross, offering to the Father the sacrifice of Christ and joining to it the offering of their own lives. With Mary, they experience the joy of the Resurrection, making their own the words of the Magnificat which extol the inexhaustible gift of divine mercy in the inexorable flow of time: "His mercy is from age to age upon those who fear him" (Lk 1:50). From Sunday to Sunday, the pilgrim people follow in the footsteps of Mary, and her maternal intercession gives special power and fervour to the prayer which rises from the Church to the Most Holy Trinity.

87. Dear Brothers and Sisters, the imminence of the Jubilee invites us to a deeper spiritual and pastoral commitment. Indeed, this is its true purpose. In the Jubilee year, much will be done to give it the particular stamp demanded by the ending of the Second Millennium and the beginning of the Third since the Incarnation of the Word of God. But this year and this special time will pass, as we look to other jubilees and other solemn events. As the weekly "solemnity",

however, Sunday will continue to shape the time of the Church's pilgrimage, until that Sunday which will know no evening.

Therefore, dear Brother Bishops and Priests, I urge you to work tirelessly with the faithful to ensure that the value of this sacred day is understood and lived ever more deeply. This will bear rich fruit in Christian communities, and will not fail to have a positive influence on civil society as a whole.

In coming to know the Church, which every Sunday joyfully celebrates the mystery from which she draws her life, may the men and women of the Third Millennium come to know the Risen Christ. And constantly renewed by the weekly commemoration of Easter, may Christ's disciples be ever more credible in proclaiming the Gospel of salvation and ever more effective in building the civilization of love.

My blessing to you all!

From the Vatican, on 31 May, the Solemnity of Pentecost, in the year 1998, the twentieth of my Pontificate.

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(1) Cf. Rev 1:10: "Kyriake heméra"; cf. also the Didaché 14, 1, Saint Ignatius of Antioch, To the Magnesians 9, 1-2; SC 10, 88-89.

(2) Pseudo-Eusebius of Alexandria, Sermon 16: PG 86, 416.

(3) In Die Dominica Paschae II, 52: CCL 78, 550.

(4) Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium, 106.

(5) Ibid.

- (6) Cf. *Motu Proprio Mysteriorum Paschalis* (14 February 1969): AAS 61 (1969), 222-226.
- (7) Cf. Pastoral Note of the Italian Episcopal Conference "Il giorno del Signore" (15 July 1984), 5: *Enchiridion CEI* 3, 1398.
- (8) Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 106.
- (9) Homily for the Solemn Inauguration of the Pontificate (22 October 1978), 5: AAS 70 (1978), 947.
- (10) No. 25: AAS 73 (1981), 639.
- (11) Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 34.
- (12) For our Jewish brothers and sisters, a "nuptial" spirituality characterizes the Sabbath, as appears, for example, in texts of *Genesis Rabbah* such as X, 9 and XI, 8 (cf. J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah*, vol. I, Atlanta 1985, p. 107 and p. 117). The song *Leka Dôdi* is also nuptial in tone: "Your God will delight in you, as the Bridegroom delights in the Bride ... In the midst of the faithful of your beloved people, come O Bride, O Shabbat Queen" (cf. *Preghiera serale del sabato*, issued by A. Toaff, Rome, 1968-69, p. 3).
- (13) Cf. A. J. Heschel, *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man* (22nd ed., 1995), pp. 3-24.
- (14) "Verum autem sabbatum ipsum redemptorem nostrum Iesum Christum Dominum habemus": *Epist.* 13, 1: CCL 140A, 992.
- (15) *Ep. ad Decentium* XXV, 4, 7: PL 20, 555.
- (16) *Homiliae in Hexaemeron* II, 8: SC 26, 184.
- (17) Cf. *In Io. Ev. Tractatus* XX, 20, 2: CCL 36, 203; *Epist.* 55, 2: CSEL 34, 170-171.
- (18) The reference to the Resurrection is especially clear in Russian, which calls Sunday simply "Resurrection" (*Voskresenie*).
- (19) *Epist.* 10, 96, 7.
- (20) Cf. *ibid.* In reference to Pliny's letter, Tertullian also recalls the *coetus antelucani* in *Apologeticum* 2, 6: CCL 1, 88; *De Corona* 3, 3: CCL 2, 1043.
- (21) *To the Magnesians* 9, 1-2: SC 10, 88-89.
- (22) Sermon 8 in the Octave of Easter 4: PL 46, 841. This sense of Sunday as "the first day" is clear in the Latin liturgical calendar, where Monday is called *feria secunda*, Tuesday *feria tertia* and so on. In Portuguese, the days are named in the same way.
- (23) Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *De Castigatione*: PG 46, 309. The Maronite Liturgy also stresses the link between the Sabbath and Sunday, beginning with the "mystery of Holy Saturday" (cf. M. Hayek, *Maronite [Eglise]*, *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, X [1980], 632-644).]

- (24) Rite of Baptism of Children, No. 9; cf. Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, No. 59.
- (25) Cf. Roman Missal, Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Holy Water.
- (26) Cf. Saint Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 27, 66: SC 17, 484-485. Cf. also Letter of Barnabas 15, 8-9: SC 172, 186-189; Saint Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho* 24; 138: PG 6, 528, 793; Origen, *Commentary on the Psalms*, Psalm 118(119), 1: PG 12, 1588.
- (27) "Domine, praestitisti nobis pacem quietis, pacem sabbati, pacem sine vespera": Confess., 13, 50: CCL 27, 272.
- (28) Cf. Saint Augustine, *Epist.* 55, 17: CSEL 34, 188: "Ita ergo erit octavus, qui primus, ut prima vita sed aeterna reddatur".
- (29) Thus in English "Sunday" and in German "Sonntag".
- (30) *Apologia* I, 67: PG 6, 430.
- (31) Cf. Saint Maximus of Turin, *Sermo* 44, 1: CCL 23, 178; *Sermo* 53, 2: CCL 23, 219; Eusebius of Caesarea, *Comm. in Ps.* 91: PG 23, 1169-1173.
- (32) See, for example, the Hymn of the Office of Readings: "Dies aetasque ceteris octava splendet sanctior in te quam, Iesu, consecras primitiae surgentium (Week I); and also: "Salve dies, dierum gloria, dies felix Christi victoria, dies digna iugi laetitia dies prima. Lux divina caecis irradiat, in qua Christus infernum spoliat, mortem vincit et reconciliat summis ima" (Week II). Similar expressions are found in hymns included in the Liturgy of the Hours in various modern languages.
- (33) Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, VI, 138, 1-2: PG 9, 364.
- (34) Cf. John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter Dominum et Vivificantem* (18 May 1986), 22-26: AAS 78 (1986), 829-837.
- (35) Cf. Saint Athanasius of Alexandria, *Sunday Letters* 1, 10: PG 26, 1366.
- (36) Cf. Bardesanes, *Dialogue on Destiny*, 46: PS 2, 606-607.
- (37) *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium*, Appendix: Declaration on the Reform of the Calendar.
- (38) Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church Lumen Gentium*, 9.
- (39) Cf. John Paul II, *Letter Dominicae Cenaе* (24 February 1980), 4: AAS 72 (1980), 120; *Encyclical Letter Dominum et Vivificantem* (18 May 1986), 62-64: AAS 78 (1986), 889-894.
- (40) Cf. John Paul II, *Apostolic Letter Vicesimus Quintus Annus* (4 December 1988), 9: AAS 81 (1989), 905-906.
- (41) No. 2177.
- (42) Cf. John Paul II, *Apostolic Letter Vicesimus Quintus Annus* (4 December 1988), 9: AAS 81 (1989), 905-906.

- (43) Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium, 41; cf. Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church *Christus Dominus*, 15.
- (44) These are the words of the Embolism, formulated in this or similar ways in some of the Eucharistic Prayers of the different languages. They stress powerfully the "Paschal" character of Sunday.
- (45) Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Certain Aspects of the Church as Communion *Communio* (28 May 1992), 11-14: AAS 85 (1993), 844-847.
- (46) Speech to the Third Group of the Bishops of the United States of America (17 March 1998), 4: *L'Osservatore Romano*, 18 March 1998, 4.
- (47) Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium, 42.
- (48) Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery *Eucharisticum Mysterium* (25 May 1967), 26: AAS 59 (1967), 555.
- (49) Cf. Saint Cyprian, *De Orat. Dom.* 23: PL 4, 553; *De Cath. Eccl. Unitate*, 7: CSEL 31, 215; Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 4; Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium, 26.
- (50) Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (22 November 1981), 57; 61: AAS 74 (1982), 151; 154.
- (51) Cf. Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, Directory for Masses with Children (1 November 1973): AAS 66 (1974), 30-46.
- (52) Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery *Eucharisticum Mysterium* (25 May 1967), 26: AAS 59 (1967), 555-556; Sacred Congregation for Bishops, Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops *Ecclesiae Imago* (22 February 1973), 86c: *Enchiridion Vaticanum* 4, 2071.
- (53) Cf. John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* (30 December 1988), 30: AAS 81 (1989), 446-447.
- (54) Cf. Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, Instruction *Masses for Particular Groups* (15 May 1969), 10: AAS 61 (1969), 810.
- (55) Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 48-51.
- (56) "Haec est vita nostra, ut desiderando exerceamur": Saint Augustine, *In Prima Ioan. Tract.* 4, 6: SC 75, 232.
- (57) Roman Missal, Embolism after the Lord's Prayer.
- (58) Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 1.

- (59) Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 1; cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Dominum et Vivificantem* (18 May 1986), 61-64: AAS 78 (1986), 888-894.
- (60) Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 7; cf. 33.
- (61) *Ibid.*, 56; cf. *Ordo Lectionum Missae, Praenotanda*, No. 10.
- (62) Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 51.
- (63) Cf. *ibid.*, 52; Code of Canon Law, Canon 767, 2; Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, Canon 614.
- (64) Apostolic Constitution *Missale Romanum* (3 April 1969): AAS 61 (1969), 220.
- (65) The Council's Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* speaks of "*suavis et vivus Sacrae Scripturae affectus*" (No. 24).
- (66) John Paul II, Letter *Dominicae Cena*e (24 February 1980), 10: AAS 72 (1980), 135.
- (67) Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*, 25.
- (68) Cf. *Ordo Lectionum Missae, Praenotanda*, Chap. III.
- (69) Cf. *Ordo Lectionum Missae, Praenotanda*, Chap. I, No. 6.
- (70) Ecumenical Council of Trent, Session XXII, Doctrine and Canons on the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, II: DS 1743; cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1366.
- (71) *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1368.
- (72) Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery *Eucharisticum Mysterium* (25 May 1967), 3b: AAS 59 (1967), 541; cf. Pius XII, Encyclical Letter *Mediator Dei* (20 November 1947), II: AAS 39 (1947), 564-566.
- (73) Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1385; cf. also Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church concerning the Reception of Eucharistic Communion by Divorced and Remarried Faithful (14 September 1994): AAS 86 (1994), 974-979.
- (74) Cf. Innocent I, Epist. 25, 1 to Decentius of Gubbio: PL 20, 553.
- (75) II, 59, 2-3: ed. F. X. Funk, 1905, pp. 170-171.
- (76) Cf. *Apologia I*, 67, 3-5: PG 6, 430.
- (77) *Acta SS. Saturnini, Dativi et aliorum plurimorum Martyrum in Africa*, 7, 9, 10: PL 8, 707, 709-710.
- (78) Cf. Canon 21, Mansi, Conc. II, 9.
- (79) Cf. Canon 47, Mansi, Conc. VIII, 332.
- (80) Cf. the contrary proposition, condemned by Innocent XI in 1679, concerning the moral obligation to keep the feast-day holy: DS 2152.

(81) Canon 1248: "Festis de praecepto diebus Missa audienda est": Canon 1247, 1: "Dies festi sub praecepto in universa Ecclesia sunt...omnes et singuli dies dominici".

(82) Code of Canon Law, Canon 1247; the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, Canon 881, 1, prescribes that "the Christian faithful are bound by the obligation to participate on Sundays and feast days in the Divine Liturgy or, according to the prescriptions or legitimate customs of their own Church sui iuris, in the celebration of the divine praises".

(83) No. 2181: "Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin".

(84) Sacred Congregation for Bishops, Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops *Ecclesiae Imago* (22 February 1973), 86a: *Enchiridion Vaticanum* 4, 2069.

(85) Cf. Code of Canon Law, Canon 905, 2.

(86) Cf. Pius XII, Apostolic Constitution *Christus Dominus* (6 January 1953): AAS 45 (1953), 15-24; *Motu Proprio Sacram Communionem* (19 March 1957): AAS 49 (1957), 177-178. Congregation of the Holy Office, Instruction on the Discipline concerning the Eucharist Fast (6 January 1953): AAS 45 (1953), 47-51.

(87) Cf. Code of Canon Law, Canon 1248, 1; Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, Canon 881, 2.

(88) Cf. *Missale Romanum, Normae Universales de Anno Liturgico et de Calendario*, 3.

(89) Cf. Sacred Congregation of Bishops, Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops *Ecclesiae Imago* (22 February 1973), 86: *Enchiridion Vaticanum* 4, 2069-2073.

(90) Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 14; 26; John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Vicesimus Quintus Annus* (4 December 1988), 4; 6; 12: AAS 81 (1989), 900-901; 902; 909-910.

(91) Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 10.

(92) Cf. Interdicasterial Instruction on Certain Questions concerning the Collaboration of Lay Faithful in the Ministry of Priests *Ecclesiae de Mysterio* (15 August 1997), 6; 8: AAS 89 (1997), 869; 870-872.

(93) Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 10: "in oblationem Eucharistiae concurrunt".

(94) *Ibid.*, 11.

(95) Cf. Code of Canon Law, Canon 1248, 2.

(96) Cf. Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, Directory for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest *Christi Ecclesia* (2 June 1988): *Enchiridion Vaticanum* 11, 442-468; Interdicasterial Instruction on Certain Questions

concerning the Collaboration of Lay Faithful in the Ministry of Priests *Ecclesiae de Mysterio* (15 August 1997): AAS 89 (1997), 852-877.

(97) Cf. Code of Canon Law, Canon 1248, 2; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Letter *Sacerdotium Ministeriale* (6 August 1983), III: AAS 75 (1983), 1007.

(98) Cf. Pontifical Commission for Social Communications, *Instruction Communio et Progressio* (23 May 1971), 150-152; 157: AAS 63 (1971), 645-646; 647.

(99) This is the Deacon's proclamation in honour of the Lord's Day: cf. the Syriac text in the Missal of the Church of Antioch of the Maronites (edition in Syriac and Arabic), Jounieh (Lebanon) 1959, p. 38.

(100) V, 20, 11: ed. F. X. Funk, 1905, p. 298; cf. *Didache* 14, 1: ed. F. X. Funk, 1901, p. 32; Tertullian, *Apologeticum* 16, 11: CCL 1, 116. See in particular the Epistle of Barnabas, 15, 9: SC 172, 188-189: "This is why we celebrate as a joyous feast the eighth day on which Jesus was raised from the dead and, after having appeared, ascended into heaven".

(101) Tertullian for example tells us that on Sunday it was forbidden to kneel, since kneeling, which was then seen as an essentially penitential gesture, seemed unsuited to the day of joy. Cf. *De Corona* 3, 4: CCL 2, 1043.

(102) Ep. 55, 28: CSEL 342, 202.

(103) Cf. Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face, *Derniers entretiens*, 5-6 July 1897, in: *Oeuvres complètes*, Cerf - Desclée de Brouwer, Paris, 1992, pp. 1024-1025.

(104) Apostolic Exhortation, *Gaudete in Domino* (9 May 1975), II: AAS 67 (1975), 295.

(105) *Ibid.* VII, l.c., 322.

(106) Hex. 6, 10, 76: CSEL 321, 261.

(107) Cf. The Edict of Constantine, 3 July 321: *Codex Theodosianus* II, tit. 8, 1, ed. T. Mommsen, 12, p. 87; *Codex Iustiniani*, 3, 12, 2, ed. P. Krueger, p. 248.

(108) Cf. Eusebius of Caesarea, *Life of Constantine*, 4, 18: PG 20, 1165.

(109) The most ancient text of this kind is can. 29 of the Council of Laodicea (second half of the fourth century): Mansi, II, 569-570. From the sixth to the ninth century, many Councils prohibited "opera ruralia". The legislation on prohibited activities, supported by civil laws, became increasingly detailed.

(110) Cf. Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* (15 May 1891): *Acta Leonis XIII* 11 (1891), 127-128.

(111) Hex. 2, 1, 1: CSEL 321, 41.

(112) Cf. Code of Canon Law, Canon 1247; Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, Canon 881, 1; 4.

(113) Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 9.

(114) Cf. also Saint Justin, *Apologia I*, 67, 6: "Each of those who have an abundance and who wish to make an offering gives freely whatever he chooses, and what is collected is given to him who presides and he assists the orphans, the widows, the sick, the poor, the prisoners, the foreign visitors — in a word, he helps all those who are in need": PG 6, 430.

(115) *De Nabuthae*, 10, 45: "Audis, dives, quid Dominus Deus dicat? Et tu ad ecclesiam venis, non ut aliquid largiaris pauperi, sed ut auferas": CSEL 322, 492.

(116) *Homilies on the Gospel of Matthew*, 50, 3-4: PG 58, 508-509.

(117) Saint Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 13, 11-12 to Pammachius: CSEL 29, 92-93. The Roman Senator is praised because, by combining participation in the Eucharist with distribution of food to the poor, he in a sense reproduced the Gospel miracle.

(118) John Paul II, *Apostolic Letter Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (10 November 1994), 10: AAS 87 (1995), 11.

(119) *Ibid.*

(120) Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 731-732.

(121) *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 102.

(122) *Ibid.*, 103.

(123) *Ibid.*, 104.

(124) *Carm.* XVI, 3-4: "Omnia praetereunt, sanctorum gloria durat in Christo qui cuncta novat, dum permanet ipse": CSEL 30, 67.

(125) Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 1247; *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, Canon 881, 1; 4.

(126) By general law, the holy days of obligation in the Latin Church are the Feasts of the Nativity of the Lord, the Epiphany, the Ascension, the Body and Blood of Christ, Mary Mother of God, the Immaculate Conception, the Assumption, Saint Joseph, Saints Peter and Paul and All Saints: cf. *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 1246. The holy days of obligation in all the Eastern Churches are the Feasts of the Nativity of the Lord, the Epiphany, the Ascension, the Dormition of Mary Mother of God and Saints Peter and Paul: cf. *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, Canon 880, 3.

(127) Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 1246, 2; for the Eastern Churches, cf. *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, Canon 880, 3.

(128) Cf. *Sacred Congregation of Rites, Normae Universales de Anno Liturgico et de Calendario* (21 March 1969), 5, 7: *Enchiridion Vaticanum* 3, 895; 897.

(129) Cf. *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*, ed. typica 1995, No. 230.

(130) Cf. *ibid.*, No. 233.

(131) *Contra Celsum VIII*, 22: SC 150, 222-224.

m VIII, 22: SC 150, 222-224.

(131) *Contra Celsum VIII*, 22: SC 150, 222-224.



Liturgico et de Calendario (21 March 1969), 5, 7: Enchiridion Vaticanum 3, 895; 897.

(129) Cf. Caeremoniale Episcoporum, ed. typica 1995, No. 230.

(130) Cf. *ibid.*, No. 233.

(131) Contra Celsum VIII, 22: SC 150, 222-224.

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