

The Reign of Christ the King, or the Millennium of Peace

It is the key to the history of the Church and the triumphant outcome of the present spiritual, moral, and doctrinal decline of the world and of the Church. It is the light and the hope after the great Apostasy and its climax in the Antichrist, which mark the last times before the Parousia, or great manifestation of Christ, in His Second Coming.

We are, beyond doubt, in those last times designated in Sacred Scripture, which now envelop the universe in an unmistakably apocalyptic atmosphere. The Apocalypse is the great prophecy of the revelation or manifestation of Christ in His second and definitive coming at the end of time, when the forces of evil shall seem to have triumphed over good and over the Church; when the Church shall appear eclipsed and delivered into the hands of her fierce enemies, on the very brink of succumbing, yet divinely and miraculously sustained, reduced to a handful of faithful souls awaiting the great King from Heaven, who shall come to rescue His Church and to judge her enemies, who hold her, as it were, captive, while she awaits her swift deliverance by the beloved Bridegroom.

One of the great signs of the last times, among others, is the return from the diaspora of the Jews, when in 1948 they entered the Holy Land after almost two thousand years of exile throughout the world; or again, the repeated manifestations of the Blessed Virgin Mary: the Miraculous Medal in 1830, La Salette in 1846, Lourdes in 1858, Fatima in 1917, Syracuse in 1953, to name only the best known and those recognized by the Church.

The manifestations of the Virgin Mary from the nineteenth century onward are signs of the last times, if we attend to the great apocalyptic apostle of modern times, Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort.

It is regrettable that sufficient heed has not been given to the profound apocalyptic significance of this great seventeenth-century saint, who bears a close kinship with the Society of Saint Pius X, founded by Archbishop Lefebvre of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost. That congregation had been founded by Claude Poullart des Places, a friend of the saint, between whom there existed an apostolic pact. Poullart des Places would form the seminarians for whom Saint Louis delivered the conferences that would later become the treatise on *The Love of Eternal Wisdom*; and Saint Louis, in turn, would take them for the apostolate, as may be seen here: *“It seems, indeed, that The Love of Eternal Wisdom was the fruit of conferences given by Montfort to the seminarians of Poullart des Places during his stay in Paris in 1703–1704. In these students he saw possible collaborators in the work of the missions, and thus one understands his concern to give them a solid and well-adapted spiritual formation.”* (Oeuvres Complètes de Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, ed. du Seuil, 1966, p. 87).

According to the thesis of Saint Louis Grignion, the manifestation of the B.V.M. was reserved for the last times, as he so clearly affirms in the treatise on *True Devotion*: *“Through Mary the salvation of the world began, and through Mary it must be consummated. Mary scarcely allowed herself to be seen at the first coming of Jesus Christ, in order that men, as yet but little instructed and enlightened concerning the person of her Son, might not turn away from Him by attaching themselves too ardently, though imperfectly, to her—something which would probably have occurred if had she been known, on account of the admirable*

attractions which the Most High had placed even in her outward appearance. And this is so true that Saint Dionysius the Areopagite left it written that, when he beheld her, he would have taken her for a divinity, by reason of her hidden charms and incomparable beauty, had not the faith which he professed told him otherwise. But in the second coming of Jesus Christ, Mary must be known and revealed by the Holy Ghost, in order that through her men may know, love, and serve Jesus Christ; for then those reasons shall no longer subsist which obliged the Holy Ghost to hide His Spouse during her life, and to manifest her only rarely since the Gospel was preached.” (Works of Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, B.A.C., 1954, no. 49, p. 466).

This is the reason why she is so little mentioned in the Gospels—a reason, if rightly considered, of an apocalyptic order.

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

These last times are related to the Parousia, or second coming of the Lord; and on this point there can be not the least doubt, according to what the Saint sets forth: *“As she is the way by which Jesus Christ came to us the first time, so shall she also be the way when He comes the second time, though in a different manner. (...) Finally, Mary must be terrible to the devil and his followers as an army set in battle array, chiefly in these last times; because the devil, knowing that he has but little time, and now less than ever, to destroy souls, redoubles each day his efforts and his assaults. He shall soon stir up new persecutions and lay terrible snares for the faithful servants and true children of Mary, whom he finds it much harder to overcome than the others.”* (Ibid., no. 50, pp. 467–468).

These apocalyptic last times, related to the full manifestation of the Most Blessed Virgin, are bound up with the Antichrist, and not—as some absent-mindedly defer them—to some later or different age. Thus Saint Louis says: *“It is chiefly of these last and cruel persecutions of the devil, which shall increase day by day until the reign of Antichrist comes, that one must understand that first and famous prediction and curse of God, thundered forth in the earthly Paradise against the serpent.”* (Ibid., no. 51, p. 468).

When the Saint wrote this, he thought that these things would take place soon, and not as something lost in the remoteness of times and history, as may be seen in the following text: *“I have said that all that has been set forth above shall come to pass chiefly toward the end of the world, and very soon...”* (Ibid., no. 47, p. 463).

For Saint Louis Grignion, the apocalyptic announcements are not something distant or exceedingly remote, but something near. Therefore, every interpretation that pushes the Parousia away as something remote, distant, and far removed from our own age is contrary to what was taught by this great saint, placed by God to enlighten us concerning the last times, comparable to Saint Vincent Ferrer—the angel of the Apocalypse, as he affirmed when raising a dead woman to life.

Father Faber, in his preface to the treatise on True Devotion in 1862, points to this same idea: *“Like Saint Vincent Ferrer, he goes forward as though he were living in the days immediately preceding the Last Judgment, announcing that he bears from God an authentic message: that greater honor must be rendered to His Most Holy Mother, that she must be more widely known and more ardently loved, and that this increase of devotion to Mary is intimately connected with the second coming of her Son.”* (Ibid., p. 436).

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

Saint Louis-Marie begins the *Treatise on True Devotion* by relating the kingdom of Christ and the Parousia to devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin, in such a way that no doubt can remain: “*Jesus Christ came into the world through the Most Blessed Virgin, and through her He must also reign in the world.*” “*If, then, it is certain that the knowledge and reign of Jesus Christ shall come into the world, it will be only as a necessary consequence of the knowledge and reign of the Most Blessed Virgin, who brought Him into the world the first time and who shall cause Him to triumph the second.*” (Ibid., no. 1, p. 439, and no. 13, p. 444).

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

All the Marian manifestations beginning in the last century are proof that we are undoubtedly in the last times, at the end of times, which herald the second coming of Christ.

Beginning in 1830 in Paris, a series of Marian apparitions commenced; they are an irrefutable sign that we find ourselves in the last times of the Apocalypse, a fact that cannot be passed over in silence.

Our Mother from Heaven, with the apparition of the Miraculous Medal in the Rue du Bac in Paris, opens a series of apparitions and manifestations announcing the beginning of the last times; and, as Saint Louis-Marie indicates, these are the times reserved for true devotion.

Paris, the capital of France—a nation dechristianized under the impiety of the French Revolution of 1789, or rather the Judeo-Masonic Revolution—was chosen as the place where she would pour out her graces as a tender Mother before the apostasy of a nation that had once been the glory of the Church in the days of Saint Louis, King of France, and that became the precursor of liberal anticlericalism.

The rays of light in the image symbolize the graces granted to the whole world, graces which men fail to heed.

With La Salette, in France, in 1846, Our Lady leaves a distinctly apocalyptic message, wherein she announces the eclipse of the Church, the loss of the Faith, and this in Rome itself, which not only shall lose the Faith but shall also become the seat of the Antichrist — more, and worse, could hardly be said. The agreement with many chapters of the Prophet Isaias, and with the whole of chapter 24, as Father Combe shows in his book *Le Secret de Mélanie et la Crise Actuelle*, written in 1906, concerning the eminently apocalyptic character of La Salette, leaves no doubt whatever, for he says: “*The prophecy of La Salette alone is sufficient for us to be certain of the events it announces. (...) The revelation of La Salette is more than a private revelation. A private revelation is*

given chiefly for the instruction and sanctification of the person to whom it is made, or of a few others; but La Salette is for the instruction and sanctification of the whole Church. (...) It is the Great News, said the Beautiful Lady: it is the Apocalypse of Mary.” (p. 194).

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

The judgment of Father Combe, confessor of Mélanie and a profound authority on La Salette by reason of his direct contact with the seer, is of great importance and must be carefully borne in mind, serving as a support for our understanding of the message of La Salette. According to La Salette, the last times, the Great Apostasy, the coming of the Antichrist, the eclipse of the Church, and the loss of the Faith — even in Rome, become the Seat of the Antichrist — are facts related to one another and do not admit separation; that is, they are connected, and do not refer to distinct ages or separate times, but to the last times, which shall culminate in the Parousia.

Concerning the Antichrist, Father Combe points out that his appearance is not distant or remote, and the same is true of the great apostasy that precedes him: “*...the Antichrist has not been born, but he is near. And the general apostasy now being prepared, foretold by the Apostle Saint Paul as that which must immediately precede the son of perdition, likewise proves that he has not come, but that he is near: ‘Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, unless there come a revolt first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.’* (2 Thess. 2:3). Many private prophecies announce the approaching coming of the Antichrist. But this prediction is far more explicit and clearer in the Secret itself. There the Most Holy Virgin manifested herself at La Salette as *Queen of the Prophets, no less than Queen of the Church and of the Apostles.*” (Ibid., pp. 130–131).

The Antichrist shall be a possessed man, as Mélanie makes clear in a letter to Father Combe: “*It is said that the Antichrist shall be the devil incarnate; this means that he shall be entirely possessed.*” (Ibid., p. 132).

Regarding the eclipse of the Church announced at La Salette, we have the following precision from Father Combe: “*The Church would be eclipsed. 1. It will not be known who the true Pope is. 2. The Holy Sacrifice will cease to be offered in the churches and even in houses, in such a way that for a time there will be no more worship for the public. But I have seen, says Mélanie, that nevertheless the Holy Sacrifice will not cease: it is offered in barns, in bedrooms, in wine-cellars and in basements.*” (Ibid., p. 137).

Most significantly, the eclipse of the Church is related, on the one hand, to the Pope, for Rome shall lose the Faith and shall become the seat of the Antichrist, and it will not be known who the true Pope is — whether because there is more than one at the same time, or because there is a succession of them, without knowing which are true and which are not. On the other hand, it is related to the Holy Mass, which shall be abolished as public worship and celebrated in hiding. The true Mass is publicly celebrated today in only a few places, its celebration having been officially abolished from the churches and cathedrals.

Moreover, Father Combe points out the purpose of Freemasonry to have an antipope: “...we know today that Freemasonry has changed its tactics: its plan will be to have an antipope...” (Ibid., p. 95). Thus, the possibility is not excluded of having one or more antipopes governing the Church, which shall be eclipsed. The Venerable Bartholomew Holzhauser, in his commentary on the Apocalypse, *Revelation du Passé et de l’avenir* (1650), expresses the same idea of a future antipope destroying the Holy Catholic Church: “Of the abominable and perverse idolatrous Antipope, who tears apart the Church of the West and shall cause the first beast to be adored (XIII:11–18). XIII, 11: ‘And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon.’ This beast is a false prophet who shall announce the son of perdition as though he were the Christ, and shall be the helping arm by which the Antichrist will work astonishing things (...) ‘He shall have two horns like a lamb,’ because he shall be an apostate Christian who shall rise up secretly and fraudulently (...) he shall occupy the pontifical see (...).” (p. 91).

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

Concerning the approaching appearance of the Antichrist, Saint Pius X said at the beginning of his pontificate, in his first encyclical, *E Supremi Apostolatus*, of October 4, 1903: “It is beyond doubt that whoever considers all this will have to admit outright that this perversion of souls is, as it were, a foretaste and a prelude of the evils which we must expect at the end of time; or he will even think that the son of perdition, of whom the Apostle speaks, already dwells in this world.”

In the book by Father Arminjon, which so greatly aided Saint Thérèse, satisfying her desires for knowledge and wisdom, it is said in a footnote: “...one must conclude that the opinion of the approaching event of the Antichrist is more probable than the opinion which regards his coming as remote.” (*Fin du Monde Présent et Mystère de la Vie Future*, 1881, Office Central de Lisieux, 1970, p. 63).

And in this book, in agreement with La Salette, mention is made of the Church without a pilot — or, what amounts to the same thing, without a Pope, or with a false Pope, an antipope: “At the moment when the storm shall be most violent, when the Church shall be without a pilot, when the unbloody Sacrifice shall have ceased everywhere, when all shall seem, humanly speaking, to be lost, then, says Saint John, two witnesses shall be seen to arise.” (Ibid., pp. 54–55).

After La Salette, we have the apparition of Lourdes on February 11, 1858. Concerning this, Father and Doctor Iván Cadavid tells us in his book *The Tears of Mary in Syracuse and the Enigma of Our Perilous Days* (1954): “For the third time, the Mother from Heaven presents herself with the same message to the world, and in the same French nation so beloved of the Virgin, yet also the source of the dissolving germs of all societies through the principles of the Revolution of 1789. This message of Lourdes seems

to have been the final call of grace in apostate France.” (Ed. San Juan Eudes, 5th ed., Bogotá, 1958, p. 61).

The apparition of Lourdes, besides the Virgin’s manifestation — *“I am the Immaculate Conception”* — a dogma by which, in these last times of the present century, the Most Holy Trinity wills to exalt the Mother of God, as Saint Louis Grignion indicates, repeatedly exhorts to penance in the face of the impiety of apostate France and of the world, which followed her evil example.

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

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

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

The last message recognized by the Church is that of Syracuse, when in 1953, from August 29 to September 1, she did nothing but weep in silence; and thus: *“Syracuse seems to be the crowning close of all the heavenly appeals.”* (Ibid., p. 32). *“...the weeping of the Virgin at Syracuse accords with many circumstances announced in various apocalyptic prophecies, and it comes to be the logical conclusion of the Marian messages within the reign of the Virgin, appointed by several post-testamentary holy prophets for the ‘last times’ — Grignion de Montfort, John Bosco, Anne Catherine Emmerich, and the very message of Fatima.”* (Ibid., p. 92).

“We may clearly deduce that this inconsolable weeping is nothing other than the epilogue of Fatima and, perhaps, the corroboration of the prophecies of La Salette and of Heede, which in turn agree with the other apocalyptic prophecies of Saint Malachy, Don Bosco, Saint Pius X, Saint Gaspar del Bufalo, Blessed Anna Maria Taigi, and others.” (Ibid., p. 83).

The great promise — *“In the end, or finally, my Immaculate Heart shall triumph”* — what does it mean? *“What would now remain is the universal chastisement, the ‘little end of the world,’ which shall be brief but terrible; for, as we shall see, ‘three quarters of the world’ would perish. Once such a chastisement has been fulfilled, there shall come the complete Reign of the Immaculate Heart of Mary: the peace, tranquility, and religious spirit that shall precede the true end.”* (Ibid., p. 32).

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

“Everything seems to indicate: 1. That we are at ‘the beginning of the end’; that is, that within these forty years¹ which separate us from the year two thousand post Christum, the final battles of the earth and the final chastisements upon mortals may take place. 2. That after such upheavals and trials, there shall take place here in the world that reign of justice so often announced in Sacred Scripture, and now in the Marian Messages... Both the Apocalypse — mysterious and allegorical — and the other biblical texts, the prophecy of Saint Malachy itself, and the hypotheses of certain commentators, seem to agree with the messages of the Virgin regarding a certain judgment and universal chastisement of the world by the Supreme Judge, in order to purify it and dispose it for His complete reign here upon earth.” (Ibid., pp. 92–93).

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

Monsignor Delassus also speaks of a triumph of the Church after the Apostasy, once the world and the Church have been purified: *“Once the tribulations and anguish have passed, God shall purify Holy Church and revive the spirit of His elect by a means that escapes all human foresight. After all this, there shall be in the Church of God so complete a reform and so blessed a renewal of holy pastors that, when I think upon it, my spirit trembles in the Lord (...) the Spouse of Christ is now, as it were, disfigured (...) the nations estranged from the Church, drawn by the sweet fragrance of Jesus Christ, shall return to the fold and be converted to the true Pastor and Bishop of their souls.*

Give thanks to the Lord for this great peace which He shall deign to grant to the Church after this tempest.” (La Mission Posthume de Sainte Jeanne d’Arc et le Règne Social de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ, ed. Sainte Jeanne d’Arc, 1983, pp. 352–353).

The true and only New Era of the social reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ is proclaimed by Monsignor Delassus together with Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint Joan of Arc: *“It does not seem rash to think that, after this hard and prolonged trial, Christendom and the world shall enter into another cycle: that which Saint Catherine of Siena and many other seers have announced; that which the words and deeds of Joan of Arc had prepared, and which seems to have been suspended from the day of her martyrdom until the day of her canonization: the era of the kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ...” (Ibid., pp. 355–356).*

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

¹ This was written in 1954.

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

For this reason Monsignor Delassus says that we are in the prelude to the kingdom of Christ: *“Let us adopt this supposition: that we are in the first centuries of the Church; that all that has passed from Pentecost until our own days has been the prelude of the reign of the divine Redeemer over all nations...”* (Ibid., p. 357).

he Parousia is a promise of hope: *“We have hope, not in the universal Republic, which prepares the material and moral revolution now taking place in the world, but in restored Christendom — Christendom brought to its perfection through the reign of Christ, accepted and received with gratitude and joy by all nations: Unum ovile et unus Pastor.”* (Ibid., p. 359). This is the great promise: universal unity in Christ the King, and not in the false Ecumenism of Vatican II and of John Paul II, which shall culminate in the false peace of the Antichrist.

Father Emmanuel, so well known in France for his reputation and sanctity, speaks of the triumph of the Church after the Great Apostasy, the Antichrist, and the Parousia of Our Lord in these terms: *“God has willed that the destinies of the Church of His only-begotten Son should be traced beforehand in the Scriptures... The Church, having to be in all things like Our Lord, shall suffer, before the end of the world, a supreme trial which shall be a true passion... an exclusively religious drama shall unfold and shall envelop the entire universe.”* (La Sainte Église, ed. Clovis, 1997, pp. 255–257). Archbishop Lefebvre wrote the preface to the unpublished articles that were printed before the edition of the work in which they were compiled.

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

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

“Of what apostasy does Saint Paul speak to us? It is not a question of a partial defection, since he speaks absolutely: the apostasy. It can, unhappily, be understood only of the mass apostasy of Christian societies, which socially and civilly shall renounce their baptism; of the defection of those nations which Jesus Christ, according to the forceful expression of Saint Paul, has made co-participants with His Church (Eph. 3:6). This apostasy alone shall make possible the manifestation and dominion of the personal enemy of Jesus Christ — in a word, of the Antichrist.” (Ibid., pp. 262–263).

We see, then, that this is a General or Universal Apostasy through the mass defection of Christian peoples or nations; that is, the apostasy of the nations of the Gentiles, by their social and civil renunciation of the Faith received in baptism, as we may see today before the defection from the Faith in the world throughout the whole world, thus almost literally fulfilling what Christ announced concerning His second coming, as Father Emmanuel points out: *“Our Lord*

said: *Do you think that the Son of Man, when He cometh, shall find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:8). The divine Master saw faith declining in an aged world.*" (Ibid., p. 263).

This aging, this decay, this decrepitude, Saint Augustine himself indicates with regard to the Church at the end of time, as we may see in Dom Lefebvre's commentary in the Missal: *"At last Jesus ends His life with the sacrifice of Golgotha, soon followed by the triumph of His resurrection; and the Church, like her divine Head, shall then appear defeated and nailed to the Cross, although she shall gain the decisive victory. The Body of Christ, which is the Church, like the human body, was once young, though at the end of the world it shall have an appearance of decay" (Saint Augustine).*" (Time after Pentecost, Historical Exposition, 1938, p. 714).

As Father Emmanuel warns, it is not the winds — the maxims of the world — that cause the faith to waver; rather, it is the Catholic peoples, fascinated by material comfort, who reject the Faith, the dogma, as untimely: *"It is not that the winds of the age can make this inextinguishable flame tremble, but that societies, intoxicated by material well-being, reject it as inconvenient."* (Ibid., p. 263).

Astonishing though it is, this calls to mind the official rejection by the Vatican Curia of the Kingship of Christ the King, judged to be untimely, as was made manifest by the Nuncio of Bern, Archbishop Marchioni, on March 31, 1976, in Bern, to Archbishop Lefebvre, when the latter asked him what had become of the Social Reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ: *"You know, now it is impossible; perhaps in some distant future? At present that reign is in individuals; we must open ourselves to the masses... the Social Reign of Our Lord is something difficult at the present time..."* (They Have Uncrowned Him, ed. Saint Pius X, 1987, pp. 102–103).

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

How can one fail to fall into the claws of the Antichrist if, as Father Emmanuel warns, the Catholic political power is the obstacle² that prevents his manifestation? *"He [Saint Paul] had undoubtedly shown them the Roman Empire transformed: a Christian power arising in the place of a pagan power; the authority of the Caesars passing into the hands of the baptized, who would use it to extend the kingdom of Jesus Christ. And for this reason he could add: So long as this state of things endures, remain at peace; the Antichrist shall not appear... Thus the Christian political power is what shall prevent the sect from reaching its objective."* (La Sainte Église, p. 266).

"Turning its back upon the Faith, the world goes toward darkness... Renouncing Jesus Christ, it must, willingly or unwillingly, fall into the claws of Satan, who is called the prince of darkness. It cannot remain neutral; there can be no independence. Its apostasy places it directly under the power of the devil and of his agents. The learned Estius, studying the text of the Apostle, says that this apostasy began with Luther and Calvin. This is the point

² The obstacle is, it seems, according to the words of Saint Pius X, the empire of truth maintained by the Church, since he says: *"When this doctrine can no longer be kept incorrupt, and when the empire of truth is no longer possible in this world, then the Son of God shall appear a second time; but until that last day we must keep intact the sacred deposit and repeat the glorious declaration of Saint Hilary: 'Better to die in this age than to corrupt the chastity of truth'"* (Pius X, Jérôme Dal-Gal, O.M.Conv., 1953, pp. 107–108). And we might add: the Immaculate Virginity of Truth, which today is being openly corrupted and even violated. The empire of truth includes everything that until now has been affirmed as what could be the obstacle: the Roman order, the Faith, the Holy Mass, and so forth.

of departure... Today it tends toward its consummation. It is called the Revolution, which is the insurrection of man against God and against His Christ. Its formula is secularism, which is the elimination of God and of His Christ... For a long time now a semi-apostasy has reigned... Shall we, or shall we not — we who are baptized — allow the apostasy to be consummated, which shall soon bring the Antichrist?” (Ibid., pp. 263–265).

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

This explains the fascination exercised by John Paul II over the masses, as he leads the most dreadful religious reform imaginable. Thus one understands how Archbishop Lefebvre could come to say, referring to John Paul II, that he was — or seemed to be — the Antichrist, when he said: *“I believe that we may speak of dechristianization, and that these persons who occupy Rome today are antichrists.”* Conference at Écône, September 14, 1987.

The agreement between the works of the Antichrist — the Pseudo-prophet — and the actions of John Paul II is astonishing, as may be seen from what Father Emmanuel says: *“It is very credible, too, that the Antichrist, in order to rise, shall lead all the partisans of false religions. He shall proclaim himself full of respect for freedom of worship, one of the maxims and one of the lies of the revolutionary beast.”* (Ibid., p. 281).

Do we not see John Paul II proclaim religious liberty and freedom of worship everywhere, meeting with all the leaders of all the false religions at Assisi in 1986, and in the Vatican, in Saint Peter’s Square, in 1999? And all this with the appearance of the lamb: *“They shall have the appearance of the lamb. They shall unfurl the evangelical maxims of peace, concord, liberty, and human fraternity; and beneath these appearances they shall propagate the most shameful atheism. They shall have the appearance of the Lamb.”* (Ibid., p. 202).

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

For Father Emmanuel, already in the nineteenth century one was in the prelude of the crisis and of the appearance of the Antichrist: *“Considering that we are witnessing the preludes of the crisis which shall bring about the appearance of the Antichrist upon the stage of the world, we refrain from determining the times and moments... We may foresee the final crisis, seeing the satanic plan — of which he shall be the crowning point — being woven and unfolding before our eyes.”* (Ibid., pp. 344–345).

There is here an astonishing concatenation which cannot be broken by caprice or by exegetical prejudice, if we are faithful to the clear and sure orientation of Saint Louis Grignion. Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is reserved, in its full manifestation, for the last times; and these are characterized by the Great Apostasy, which shall culminate in the Antichrist; and he shall be defeated by the Parousia of the Lord, thereby inaugurating the triumph of the Church with the complete reign of Jesus and Mary upon this earth. This, which is so simple, is denied by the anti-millennialist prejudice that has invaded the men of the Church, preventing them from

seeing clearly. What follows shall do no more than bring forward the texts which allow us, once again, to establish what has been affirmed.

In the first place, Saint Louis Grignion, missionary and prophet endowed with great spiritual gifts, does nothing other than insistently declare it; only one who does not wish to hear shall be deaf, and only one who does not wish to see shall be blind: “...the power of Mary over all the devils shall shine forth particularly in the last times, when Satan shall lay snares for her heel, that is, for her humble slaves and her poor children, whom she shall raise up to wage war against him. They shall be little and poor according to the world, and cast down before others like the heel, trodden underfoot and oppressed, as the heel is in relation to the other members of the body... [but] in union with Mary, they shall crush the head of the devil and cause Jesus Christ to triumph.” (Op. cit., no. 54, pp. 470–471).

And these: “They shall be the true apostles of the last times, to whom the Lord of hosts shall give word and strength to work wonders and to win glorious trophies over His enemies. They shall sleep without gold or silver, and, what is more, without anxieties, in the midst of the other priests, ecclesiastics, and clerics — *inter medios clericos* — and nevertheless they shall have the silvered wings of the dove, to go, with the pure intention of the glory of God and the salvation of souls, wherever the Holy Ghost calls them...” (Ibid., no. 58, p. 472).

Saint Louis Grignion associates the Virgin Mary not only with the Second Coming, but also teaches that this Second Coming, or Parousia of Christ, has as its object His reign upon the earth, as may be seen in the following text: “...if my lovable Jesus, in all His glory, comes once more into the world — as it is certain that He shall come — to reign therein, He shall choose no other path for His journey than that of the divine Mary, by whom He came so surely and so perfectly the first time. The difference between the one coming and the other shall be that the first was secret and hidden, and the second shall be glorious and resplendent; but both are perfect, because both shall be accomplished through Mary.” (Ibid., no. 158, p. 527).

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

Let it not be said that the Saint is unclear, or that he does not clearly express what his thought is: through Mary shall come the reign of Jesus at the end of times, after His Parousia. So much is this the case that the Saint had first written, as the note at the beginning of the *Treatise on True Devotion* in the French edition indicates: “Montfort had first written: through the Most Blessed Virgin, Jesus Christ came into the world the first time, and through her also He must come the second. Mary was very little known at the first advent of her Son, but she must be much more known at the second. If she was hidden at the first advent, it was by an admirable economy, in order that her Son Jesus might be better known. But she shall be revealed at the second, so that the kingdom of her Son — perfect knowledge and total reign — may come upon the earth.”

But so deeply rooted is the anti-millennialist sentiment that has invaded almost all the interstices of the Church, that in the notes to the works of Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, edited by the B.A.C., Madrid, 1954, the editors feel compelled to frighten away any semblance of millennialism — misunderstood, even the spiritual and patristic kind — from the Saint's text, which says: *"In the second coming of Jesus Christ, Mary must be known and revealed by the Holy Ghost, in order that through her men may know, love, and serve Jesus Christ; for then those reasons shall no longer subsist which obliged the Holy Ghost to hide His Spouse during her life, and to manifest her only rarely since the Gospel was preached."* To this the following observation is added: *"...it has nothing to do with millennialist opinions... Nothing, therefore, in the Montfortian predictions, that is not in conformity with orthodoxy..."* (Ibid., note 77, p. 467).

The commentator who, in the end, considers all millennialism to be outside orthodoxy, does not realize that, in that case, the Holy Fathers who professed spiritual or patristic millennialism during the first four or five centuries of the Church — it being the common doctrine, as Father Florentino Alcañiz shows in his work *Ecclesia Patristica et Millenarismus*, Granada, 1933 — would have been heterodox. This is no different from spitting upward. The anti-millennialist persecution is a fact, as we may see from the following comment by Father Castellani, to give us some idea: *"In summary, there are three interpretations of Chapter XX: one condemned by the Church, that of Cerinthus, that is, 'carnal millennialism'; and two neither condemned nor defined, which are therefore two free 'options.' But today there is a kind of conspiracy which prevents the ancient exegesis and makes the allegorical interpretation of Saint Augustine obligatory in practice by means of punishments or threats. And how do I know this? First, from myself, from the experience of my own, which cannot lie; for I was accused of being a millenarian, and I am still so accused, by the priest-doctor — who is no doctor — Mejía; and there have come upon me a number of punishments for being a millenarian, though without saying that this was the reason: anonymous punishments... And afterward, from several persons whom I have known, quite eminent men, who were persecuted for this, for being millenarians, of whom I shall mention the principal ones: Father Víctor Anzoátegui, Doctor in Scripture from the Gregorian University in Rome. He openly declared himself a millenarian. He says that they persecuted him without rest... Secondly, Father Antonio Van Rixtel, S.C.J., a Dutchman, professor of Scripture, a very learned and intelligent man... Thirdly, Father Florentino Alcañiz, who made in Rome his doctoral thesis in Sacred Scripture on 'The Patristic Church and the Parousia'; professor at the Seminary of Sardinia and later at that of Granada. Upon publishing his Latin book, strictly scientific in character, in 1933, he was expelled from his chairs and later sent to Buenos Aires, where he gave me his thesis so that I might translate it... Many others I have known, though less closely, such as the eminent Jesuit Scripture scholar Father Rovira, who wrote the article 'Parousia' in the *Enciclopedia Espasa*, and others..."* (Catecismo para Adultos, ed. Patria Grande, Buenos Aires, 1979, pp. 179–181).

For all this, it is no wonder that the mere mention of the term Millenarianism is today an object of mistrust and contempt in ecclesiastical circles, with the disastrous result that, on the eve of the Parousia, we find ourselves intellectually and spiritually disarmed, not knowing what to hold to amid the general apostasy of the nations. And this, indeed, is a most lamentable fact. Moreover, errors are dearly paid for, according to their importance.

In order to have some notion of Millenarianism — or Milenismo, as Father Castellani indicates, since Milenarismo is grammatically incorrect³ — we shall cite the Latin thesis *Ecclesia Patristica et Millenarismus* by Father Alcañiz, from 1933, which was translated into Spanish and, as it were, framed with his own commentaries by Father Castellani:

“Millenarianism may be distinguished into three classes, according as it developed in history: 1) crude, carnal, or Judaic millenism — Cerinthus or Kerinthos; 2) spiritual millenism — the patristic exegesis; 3) mixed millenism — that of many moderns. The second existed before the first, but it was not called ‘spiritual millenism’ until after the appearance of the heresy of Cerinthus or Kerinthos; for there was then no one from whom it had to be distinguished, and it was simply the common exegesis.

The heresy of Cerinthus, whose exact technical name is — or ought to be — ‘cibiliasm,’ imagined for righteous men, after their resurrection, a joyful life of many centuries, after the manner of the Old Testament — not to use the fierce epithets of Saint Jerome, whom in our day UNESCO would call antisemitic — that is, with marriages, the procreation of children, circumcision, vengeance against the infidels, animal sacrifices, and the other prescriptions of the Law of Moses; in short, a life not very different from the present mortal one, but far more prosperous and happy.

Moreover, this millenarianism interprets in a crudely literal sense both the City of the New Jerusalem, which we saw in Saint John and Ezechiel, and all the other promises of the Prophets: the hills flowing with milk and honey, great banquets and revelries, and what not. All this would have to be fulfilled during the Thousand Years as compensation for the labors and sorrows of the just in this evil time. This, and nothing more, is the Messiah. As can be seen, it does not differ greatly from the earthly kingdom of earth which the Pharisees dreamed of and which they tried to wrest, tacataca, from Christ. (...)

Spiritual millenarianism attributes to the resurrected just neither weddings nor feasts nor anything commanded by the Mosaic Law, nor great banquets as either reward or necessity of sustenance; and everything which Scripture, by tropes or Eastern images, promises concerning happiness in Paradise or in the New Jerusalem, it declares must be understood symbolically, squeezing out all that would appear incongruous and, to the Saints, ridiculous, puerile, or unbecoming. (...)

The third kind of millenism, which we call “mixed” and others call “mitigated,” attributes to the resurrected just neither weddings nor military triumphs nor carnivals nor the restoration of the rites of the Old Testament; but it interprets with literalism the earthly prosperity and temporal goods described by the ancient Prophets, and delights, as it were, in the restoration of the earthly Paradise. In this doctrine many degrees may be found, according as its authors and adherents borrow more or less from the two opposite millenisms: the spiritual and the crude.

Crude millenism, attributed to Cerinthus, was embraced by many heretics during the patristic period; and it seems to have constituted a danger in the time of Jerome and Augustine. Spiritual millenism was held by almost all the Fathers of the first centuries, by many Catholics today, and always, throughout history, by some theologians, as we shall see. Mixed millenism was held by some Holy Fathers, though few of the primitive Church.” (The Patristic Church and the Parousia, ed. Paulinas, Buenos Aires, pp. 77–80).

There is an interpretation which is confused with millenarianism, though it is not such, and which is followed, among others, by Cornelius a Lapide and Knabenbauer, as Father Alcañiz and Father Castellani rightly observe: *“A position which is not millenarianism — and is sometimes confused with it — was held by some Holy Fathers and, today, by not a few theologians and exegetes. This opinion basically consists in placing a certain more or less lengthy interval of time — and here there reigns an immense variety — between the disaster of the Antichrist and the Second Coming of Christ; then the Church, in*

her greatest diffusion, sanctity, and glory throughout the whole world, according to the prophecies.” (The Church..., p. 80).

Spiritual millenarianism was the common and ordinary doctrine of the first four centuries of the Church. Later it fell into oblivion by those turns of life, through human errors in which great saints intervened — such as Saint Jerome, who, in order to combat, quite rightly, carnal millenarianism, and lest it should have even a remote supposed support in Saint Augustine, pressured him not to interpret the Apocalypse literally. Augustine then turned to an allegorical interpretation, abandoning the literal interpretation which was spiritual millenarianism, yet without ever condemning it, as some today pretend out of sheer ignorance. This may be seen from what Saint Augustine himself acknowledges after having changed his opinion:

“So, because Scripture says that ‘one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day,’ once six thousand years had been completed as six days, there would follow the seventh day, as a sabbath and rest, in the last thousand years; that is to say, the saints would rise again to celebrate and enjoy this sabbath. This opinion would be tolerable if they understood that in that sabbath they were to have certain spiritual gifts and delights through the presence of the Lord, for there was a time when I also held this opinion. But since they say that those who shall then have risen are to occupy themselves with excessive carnal banquets, in which... which they tried to wrest, tacataca, from Christ. (...)

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From this it is seen that the whole problem of Millenarianism does not lie in expecting the Kingdom of Christ upon earth after His Parousia or Second Coming, but rather, as the great Saint Augustine affirms, in the carnalization, or carnal baseness, which constitutes not only a crude and gross error, but also an intolerable heresy.

But from this to going overboard — or going too far — and condemning all millenarianism as heretical is not only an error as crude and gross as the former, but is itself also a heresy; for it would mean condemning the primitive Church and the Holy Fathers who peacefully and calmly held and believed in Patristic or spiritual Millenarianism.

Father Castellani bears witness to this when he explains: *“There are three millenniums — as one must say, because milenarismo is grammatically incorrect. One is spiritual millenarianism, which consists simply in interpreting literally what Saint John says in the Apocalypse — nothing more. It means taking that as something that is going to happen, however difficult or strange it may appear. Thus did almost all the Fathers of the first four centuries understand that chapter, beginning with the first century, when the Apostles were still living. They calmly believed that there would be a Kingdom of a Thousand Years; and that in it the Church would be exceedingly prosperous and would in fact be ruled by Jesus Christ, after the Parousia — that is, after Jesus Christ had descended to conquer the Antichrist.*

Saint Justin Martyr, Saint Irenaeus, Tertullian, Lactantius, Saint Ambrose, and Saint Augustine in his youth understood it thus. I have translated from the Latin all the testimonies literally, and all the authors in sequence, which Father Florentino Alcañiz provided me, in the book The Patristic Church and the Parousia. All this would doubtless have continued in that way, had it not been for the stumbling-block of carnal millenism.

A Jew named Kerinthos, or Cerinthus, in the fourth century, founded a heretical sect upon a Judaic and gross interpretation of chapter XX, which had many followers and was condemned by Eugene IV in the Bull Cantate Domino in 1441, together with a string of heretics — the Ebionites, Arius, Paul of Samosata, and others — though not precisely for carnal millenism, but for having denied the Divinity of Christ; see Denzinger, no. 710.

Yet carnal millenism was also condemned, not by a Pope or Council, but by what is called the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church.”

“Of Kerinthos not a single word remains to us; and what we know of him comes from the Doctors who combated him, above all Saint Jerome. They say that he preached a very great triumph of the Jews, who were to dominate the whole world, take vengeance upon their enemies, and enjoy great revelries and feasts. Some add that, according to this Kerinthos, they would also enjoy abundant sexual pleasures. This is not certain; Saint Augustine omits it. We know what he said only through the Holy Fathers who refuted him, and nothing more.

Then something curious happened: Saint Jerome, from Palestine, where the new heresy was growing greatly, wrote to Saint Augustine, who was still young and who venerated him, sharply rebuking him because, with his sermon 259, in which Saint Augustine said that he was a millenarian, he was “helping the heresy” which Jerome called “Judaic fables,” exhorting him to interpret the Apocalypse in another way. He frightened Saint Augustine, and Augustine then devised an “allegorical interpretation” of chapter XX of the Apocalypse which — may God forgive me, for it pains me to say it — is a piece of nonsense and a stumbling of the Holy Doctor as great as his genius. It makes one weep when one reads it in book 20 of The City of God, and one feels ashamed for Saint Augustine — not of him.

“To say it briefly, chapter XX of the Apocalypse would be poetry; but if this is so, what prevents the rest of the Apocalypse, and even all Scripture, from being allegories — that is, poetry? According to that interpretation, the triumph of the Church is this triumph which we know, and which is not very triumphant. In Heaven it is triumphant, but not here below. The thrones of the twelve Apostles who are to judge all men are the sees of the bishops; and thus he proceeds with all the rest... The devil, who is taken away by an Angel and chained for a thousand years, he says signifies that now the devil does not have much power or strength to tempt men; and that is not true. He has a barbarous power now. And so, continually, he interprets everything allegorically, undoes the prophecy of Scripture, and exposes all Scripture to being overthrown by turning it into poetry — and worse still, bad poetry, as the impious have said, such as Aldous, who observed that Scripture was a somewhat savage poetry from the Stone Age, and attacked the Bible saying that it was worth nothing and was bad poetry.

“Thus that allegorical interpretation is a fall of Saint Augustine out of consideration for Saint Jerome. He made that new interpretation and said: ‘I do not say that this is the only possible interpretation; there is another, and that other one I do not dare to condemn, because it has been followed by many Saints and many Martyrs.’ And Saint Jerome, who was furious against the millenarians of his time, says the same: ‘We do not dare to condemn millenism, because many Saints, Doctors, and Martyrs have followed it.’ And now, it turns out, they do dare; there are many people who condemn pure millenism and try to have those who follow it punished. Those who today have a kind of conspiracy against spiritual millenism are not the best of the Catholic Church, neither in learning nor in quality.” (Cat., pp. 176–178).

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

Menéndez y Pelayo, in his renowned work History of the Spanish Heterodox, book VI, chapter IV, says concerning millenarianism and Father Lacunza, after posing the question, *“Can Father Lacunza be counted among the Spanish heterodox?”*:

“An ancient and venerable tradition, both among the Hebrews and among Christians, accepted and confirmed by some of the Apostolic Fathers and by the apologist Saint Justin, affirmed that the present state of the world shall perish within the sixth millennium. For them, the six days of Genesis were, at once, a narrative of what had passed and an announcement and prophecy of what was to come. In six days the fabric of the world had been made, and six thousand years it was to endure in its present state; thereafter justice and goodness would reign upon the... earth, all prevarication and iniquity having been banished. This seventh millennium of years is commonly called the kingdom of the millenarians or chiliasts. Saint Jerome, commenting on chapter 20 of Jeremiah, did not dare either to follow this opinion or to condemn it, since many Christian saints and martyrs had adopted it; wherefore he holds that each man may lawfully follow his own opinion, reserving all to the judgment of God.

What was indeed anathematized was the opinion of the carnal millenarians, who supposed that those thousand years were to be spent in continual banquets, revelries, and sensual delights. The opinion of the pure or spiritual millenarians had, in the eighteenth century, a most fervent defender in the Chilean Jesuit Father Lacunza, one of the exiles, a man so spiritual and so given to prayer that even his own opponent, Father Bestard, says of him that “every day he persevered motionless in prayer for five long hours, his face fastened to the ground.” (...)

From 1824 onward, the work was placed on the Roman Index — reason enough for it to remain under note and suspicion of error. But not every prohibited book is heretical; (...) and at once this question arises: Was The Coming of the Messiah condemned for its millenarian doctrine, or for some other secondary question? (...) We all know that the question of millenarianism — spiritual millenarianism, that is — is open to opinion; and although the opinion of the temporal reign of Jesus Christ upon earth has against it almost all the Fathers, theologians, and commentators from the end of the fifth century onward, beginning with Saint Augustine and Saint Jerome, it is also true that other, more ancient Fathers professed it, and that the Church has defined nothing. At most, the thesis which Father Lacunza, with great display of biblical erudition and no small subtlety of mind, seeks to vindicate may be branded as unusual and singular. It must not be held as heresy to affirm, as he does, that Jesus Christ shall come in glory and majesty, not only to judge men, but to reign for a thousand years over His just ones in the renewed and purified world, which shall be, as it were, a translation of the heavenly Sion.”

This just and wise consideration of Don Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo ought to be kept in mind, lest one sin through ignorance — which is usually somewhat daring. According to Father Castellani, it is the best thing that has been written on millenarianism, as may be seen here: *“Menéndez y Pelayo, in chapter IV of book VI of The Heterodox, which he wrote on Lacunza — who is one of the best modern exegetes of Scripture and the greatest millenarian now existing, though the greatest were the first Fathers of the Church — wrote an appendix to chapter IV of book VI, which is the best thing that has been written on Lacunza and on millenism. There he says: ‘As everyone knows, spiritual or pure millenism is a free opinion.’ Well, not everyone knows this; and today some do not wish to know it.”* (Cat., p. 179).

Let all this suffice, then, so that we may not continue with senseless prejudices against spiritual millenarianism, which ought to be the object of our hope, as it was in the primitive Church: the anxious and ardent expectation of the Parousia of the Lord. Thanks to this, the fervor and holiness of the first faithful were kept on high.

Today, in the midst of a crisis of faith without historical precedent in the Church, the one thing that would give us life and sustain us amid the darkness and defections from the Faith — signs

of the last times — is wrested from us: the fountain of life and hope in the glorious return of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The notion or idea of triumph is something that stands forth in the midst of the Church and her faithful. The question is how that triumph shall come to pass, and the crucial issue is whether it shall be through the direct intervention of Christ the King — by His appearing and His kingdom (II Tim. 4:1) — or without such intervention.

We know that, for Saint Louis Grignion de Montfort, the triumph comes by the Parousia and through the Virgin Mary. It is enough to recall what he insistently says: *“If, then, it is certain that the knowledge and reign of Jesus Christ in the world must come, it is no less certain that this shall be accomplished only as a consequence of the knowledge and reign of the Most Blessed Virgin, who brought Him into the world the first time and who shall cause Him to triumph in the second.”* (Op. cit., no. 13, p. 444).

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

There can be not the slightest doubt as to the thought and mind of Saint Louis-Marie, unless one is possessed by the prejudice of the anti-millennialist venom; for the same idea reappears, nourishing his whole spirituality: *“...and if my lovable Jesus, with all His glory, comes once again into the world — as it is certain that He shall come — to reign therein, He shall choose no other path for His journey than that of the divine Mary, by which He came so surely and so perfectly the first time.”* (Ibid., no. 158, p. 527).

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

All expect and speak of a triumph. Some do so without any divine intervention at all — these are the evolutionists, who expect a triumph through the sole immanent forces of history and time. Others admit a divine intervention, at least for the defeat of the Antichrist and of his iniquitous kingdom of false peace and prosperity, and they place the triumph between that defeat of the Antichrist and the Parousia, that is, after the Antichrist and before the Second Coming of the Lord. Others place the triumph after the Parousia, which is preceded by all that has been foretold for the last times: the Great Apostasy and the reign of the Antichrist. But the triumph is before the end of the world; that is, the whole span of time from the Parousia to the end of the world — and these are the spiritual millenarians.

Let us recall the Ardent Prayer of Saint Louis-Marie, which is eminently apocalyptic and millenarian. Here are some passages: *“It is time to do what Thou hast promised; Thy divine law is broken, Thy Gospel is abandoned; torrents of iniquity inundate the whole earth and carry away even Thy servants; the whole earth is laid waste; impiety sits upon the throne; Thy sanctuary is profaned, and the abomination stands in*

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

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

A proof of the anti-millennialist prejudice, or of a simple fear of anything that may bear even the odor of millenarianism, is found in the notes of the B.A.C. edition of the Complete Works of Saint Louis-Marie Grignion, which wish at all costs to discard any identification of the Saint with millenarianism, as may be seen in one of the notes to the Treatise on True Devotion: *“Since the writings of Saint Louis de Montfort have been especially approved and recommended by the Church, no one will think that they contain an error condemned by her, such as carnal millenarianism. One might, however, think that the most pious author shares in the spiritual millenarianism admitted by some Holy Fathers and still followed by various modern writers, though generally rejected by theologians. But it does not seem that the predictions of our saint can be interpreted in that sense.”* And the long note continues, revealing a mixture of ideas and confused notions that show the entanglement reigning over what spiritual millenarianism truly is. Farther on, with the same eagerness to reject every kind of millenarianism, one reads: *“But this knowledge and reign of Jesus Christ, which not only Saint Montfort but also many others, and even the Supreme Pontiffs in their encyclicals, expect, has nothing to do with millenarian opinions, for it does not suppose a long duration, peace, and prosperity—things foreign to the character of the Church Militant and ill-suited to the preaching of Christ, who left persecution as the inheritance of His disciples. There is, therefore, nothing in these predictions that is not in conformity with orthodoxy, and, within orthodoxy, with the opinions most commonly followed and best founded.”* (Note no. 77, pp. 466–467).

Poor author of that note; but, as so often happens, ignorance is bold. So then spiritual millenarianism is not in conformity with orthodoxy—which comes to the same as saying that the common doctrine of the Church during the first four centuries was not in conformity with orthodoxy. What a bewilderment this shows: either a lack of memory or a want of knowledge—that is, ignorance.

To say, moreover, that a long duration of peace and prosperity is foreign to the character of the Church Militant and ill accorded with the preaching of Christ, who left persecution as an inheritance, is simply to have no notion of what one is saying; for by the same argument one would refute what Our Lady said at Fatima: *“In the end my Immaculate Heart shall triumph,”* thereby promising peace. The Apocalypse says quite literally that there shall be a kingdom of peace for a thousand years—or a long duration. Christ promised that the world shall become one fold under one shepherd.

The innumerable prophecies of the Old and New Testaments would be mere chaff to the author of that note, who most likely has no notion of them; here are some, by way of illustration:

“The great day of the Lord is near; it is near and hasteth exceedingly... Therefore wait for Me, saith the Lord, in the day of My resurrection that is to come; for My resolve is to gather the nations and to assemble the kingdoms;

and then I shall pour out upon them My indignation, all My wrath and fury, so that the fire of My zeal shall devour the earth. For then I shall give to the peoples purified lips, that all of them may call upon the name of the Lord and serve Him under one yoke.” (Soph. 1:14; 3:8–9).

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

“For behold, the Lord shall come in fire, and His chariots like a rushing whirlwind, to render His anger in fury and His rebuke with flames of fire. For the Lord, surrounded with fire and armed with His sword, shall judge all flesh; and great shall be the number of those whom the Lord shall slay... But I shall come to gather together their works and their thoughts, and to assemble them with all nations of every country and tongue; and they shall come before Me and shall see My glory. And I shall set a sign of salvation in the midst of them; and from those who are saved I shall send men to the nations beyond the sea — to Africa, to Lydia, to peoples skilled with the bow, to Italy, to Greece, to the farthest islands, to nations that have never heard of Me nor seen My glory. And these messengers shall declare My glory among the nations, and they shall bring all your brethren from every nation as an offering to the Lord, bringing them on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules, and in carriages to My holy mountain Jerusalem.” (Is. 66:15–20).

“And I shall set over My sheep one shepherd to feed them, even My servant David’s son: he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.” (Ezech. 34:23).

“...what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the Parousia of the day of God, by which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? But we look, according to His promise, for new heavens and a new earth, wherein justice dwelleth.” (II Pet. 3:11–12).

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

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

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

Pius XII, speaking of the Second Coming of Christ, says: *“...and the struggle shall cease, and peace shall shine forth. Come, Lord Jesus! Humanity has not the strength to remove the stone which it itself has fashioned in attempting to hinder Thy return. Send Thy angel, O Lord, and make our night shine like the day. How many hearts await Thee! How many souls are consumed with longing to hasten the day when Thou alone shalt live and reign in hearts! Come, O Lord Jesus! There are so many signs that Thy return is not far off!”* (Easter Message, April 21, 1957).

Moreover, in his 1958 Resurrection Message, Pius XII, as Father Martín Sánchez cites him in his work *Israel and the Prophecies*, says: *“Before the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, descends from heaven from God, adorned as a bride decked out for her spouse, man shall enjoy true happiness upon earth. Human*

dignity shall be respected, needs shall be satisfied, and there shall be enjoyed a true and very long era of order, peace, and justice” (p. 143).

In harmony with all this, Father Benjamín Martín Sánchez, Doctor in Sacred Scripture and author of several very enlightening works on eschatology, says: “*Sacred Scripture announces an admirable age of universal peace and holiness, which shall take place after the judgment of the nations, when the Jewish people are converted and all the enemies of Christ are exterminated.*” (Israel and the Prophecies, ed. Verbo Divino, Navarre, 1976, p. 140).

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

Concerning the new Israel, Father B. Martín Sánchez writes: “*It is commonly said that the ‘new Israel’ is what Saint Paul calls ‘the Israel of God’ (Gal. 6:16), namely, the Church of Christ. Yet, while she may be called the ‘new Israel’ inchoately, she is not so in her fullness so long as the conversion of Israel in the mass has not yet come to pass. Properly speaking, the ‘new Israel’ can be none other than that in which the promises made by God through His prophets shall be fulfilled in their entirety; and then all shall be new, as Holy Scripture tells us (...). Only, therefore, when Jews and Gentiles alike shall definitively be the holy people of God, shall all things be truly new.*” (Ibid., p. 108).

The glorious second coming of Jesus Christ is the great object of our hope, if we turn to Sacred Scripture, in Saint Paul’s Epistle to Titus, where he exhorts him that “*we should live soberly, justly, and godly in this world, looking for the blessed hope and the glorious coming of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*” (Tit. 2:12–13). The Parousia is the blessed hope, according to the very word of God. Hence Saint Peter also says: “*Set all your hope upon the grace which shall be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ*” (I Pet. 1:13).

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

As Father B. Martín Sánchez rightly warns: *“Everything seems to foreshadow that a new world is drawing near. There are prophetic utterances which speak to us of the coming of a glorious reign upon the earth, and for some these are unintelligible, or else they regard them as merely symbolic. Our task is first to penetrate the literal sense of the text, in order to see what the Holy Ghost has expressed through the sacred author, and not what, in our own opinion, he meant to say. Prophecies do not spring from man, but from God, for it is He who moved the prophets to consign them to the Bible”* (II Pet. 1:20–21). *“And if the prophecies referring to the first coming of Jesus Christ were fulfilled literally, why should not those likewise be fulfilled which refer to the last times and to His second advent? The last times, which were inaugurated with the first coming of Christ, shall one day reach their fullness with His return to the earth.”* (Ibid., p. 79).

These are wise and illuminating words, which we ought to heed with greater care, lest we go astray in so weighty a matter, as also this further clarification by the same author: *“In speaking of the ‘last times,’ in which terrible struggles against the Church shall be witnessed, it must be kept very much in mind that by this we do not mean to affirm that ‘the end of the world’ is then arriving, as we have already said; rather, after these times, which shall be times of calamity, there shall come the glorious and definitive triumph of the Church over the powers of evil.”* (Ibid., p. 98).

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

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

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

Everything points to the triumph of the Church of Christ — a complete and universal triumph after the defeat of the Antichrist and the binding of Satan for a long period, identified in Sacred Scripture by a thousand years. On this Father Martín Sánchez writes: *“Here we refrain from fixing the precise duration of the millennial peace, limiting ourselves to saying that it shall begin when he [the devil] is chained ‘that he may no more seduce the nations.’ These thousand years — which in biblical language signify a long and indeterminate period — precisely because Satan and the evil spirits shall then be fettered, shall be years without wars, but rather the flourishing age of peace and admirable blessedness already described; holiness shall reign everywhere, and the triumph of the Church of Christ shall be complete.*

“The Bible speaks to us of this victory and of a peaceful reign of Christ for future times. It shall be an age in which men shall live more holily upon the earth, because then the whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord (Is. 11:8); and this is what we are indeed compelled to admit. During this age all diabolical power shall be eliminated, and there shall be no power but that of Christ, at the end of which He shall deliver up the kingdom

to God the Father' (I Cor. 15:24–25). (...) Created things shall undergo transformation, and this world shall be renewed and changed for the better, as we have already said with Saint Jerome: 'we shall not see other heavens and another earth, but the old and ancient ones changed into something better.'

"All leads us to foresee that the age of which the poets speak shall indeed be glorious, and like Heaven anticipated upon earth. The great Pontiff Pius XII said in 1958: 'Before the holy city, the new Jerusalem, descends from heaven from the side of God, adorned as a bride decked out for her spouse, man shall enjoy true happiness upon earth. Human dignity shall be respected, needs shall be satisfied, and there shall be enjoyed a true and very long age of order, peace, and justice' (Resurrection Message). The definitive triumph of the reign of Christ and of His Church shall come and shall take place with the total destruction of the enemies of Christ Himself and of man: error and sin." (Ibid., pp. 142–143).

In another of his books, Father B. Martín Sánchez insists that one must not confuse the last times — in which the judgment of the nations shall take place — with the end of the world: "Since some lamentably confuse the 'last times' with the 'end of the world,' I shall first make this point precise and clarify it by the words of the prophets. As I already indicated in the prologue, the 'last times,' according to the Bible, are characterized by the lack of faith, and they are the last times of the Messianic age — what we might call the 'times of unbelief.' The following biblical texts, which we shall cite presently, prove this (2 Pet. 3:3–4; Jude 17–18; 2 Tim. 3:1–5; 2 Thess. 2:1 ff.; etc.). In these times there shall take place the judgment of the nations, or a great chastisement upon the world, which the prophets frequently announce because men live far from God and with their backs turned to the Gospel of Christ. From this chastisement the world shall emerge purified, and this purification shall be followed by an age of admirable peace and holiness, in which Christ shall reign 'from one end of the earth to the other,' and in which 'all His enemies shall fall at His feet' and render Him homage, the Church then enjoying a glorious triumph." (The Last Times, ed. Círculo, Zaragoza, 1975, p. 13).

And farther on we read: "The day of the Lord which the prophet announces shall be a judgment upon all the nations, which shall receive their chastisement" (Nácar-Colunga). "And let it be noted that after this judgment there shall remain survivors who invoke the name of God; therefore it is clear that from this judgment there shall remain survivors who invoke the day of the Lord. Consequently, the 'day of the Lord,' in which He shall exercise His judgment upon all the nations, is not the end of the world, but something distinct from it." (Ibid., p. 17).

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

Here is what Father Castellani says: "In the Creed in its Eastern form it is said: Christ shall come to judge the living and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end. Now if the millennial Kingdom is not admitted, then this is a question of the Kingdom of Heaven—that is, eternal life. Why then add another article which says: 'I believe in life everlasting,' or enduring? In the 'symbols,' whose chief condition must be brevity, superfluous repetitions are not permitted.

"Moreover, those words, 'to judge the living and the dead,' do not seem to signify the Universal Judgment in the sense of the allegorists; for this Judgment, in the mind of the Church and of all Catholics, takes place after the resurrection of the flesh; whereas the judgment in the Apostles' Creed is placed before it, since it first says, 'He shall come to judge the living and the dead,' and at the end adds, 'and in the resurrection of the flesh.' This order

of the Creed runs contrary to the allegorist doctrine. On the other hand, this order agrees with the millenarian doctrine; for according to it, first comes what Saint Paul says in II Timothy 4:1, namely, 'to judge the living and the dead by His Return and His Kingdom'; and at the end, after the temporal Kingdom, the general resurrection and the Judgment of all, which perhaps is the whole period called the Thousand Years—whatever their precise number may be—and not a single 'day' of only twenty-four hours for the day of the Lord" in Scripture does not signify a day of twenty-four hours. Likewise, "to judge" in Scripture very often means "to reign," since the ancient kings were simply the "Judge" who "gave to each his due," which constitutes the virtue of Justice. Christ, however, by His kingdom shall both reign and judge, because He shall inflict punishment upon the Antichrist and his followers, and shall raise up and crown the just; afterward, the general Resurrection and the Final Judgment shall be but the final act and consummation of His Kingdom, and for that reason they were rightly placed at the end in the Creed. (...)

"Thirdly, the Millenarians add, the phrase 'to judge the living and the dead' does not make good sense in the contrary opinion; for if it occurs by the resurrection, then there are no longer any living to judge, all being dead... and restored to life; or else there are no dead, as one may prefer. But if one wishes the clause 'the living and the dead' to signify 'the just and sinners,' then there arises the inconvenience of a metaphorical manner of speaking altogether foreign to the Creeds, wherein it is presumed that the principal dogmas are expressed with the greatest brevity, clarity, and straightforwardness.

"But in the millenarian opinion, these words run most fittingly: for the living are judged, and the dead—or resurrected—are judged at the Second Advent; and indeed in the order in which the Creed states it: first the living are judged, since the reigning, and the judgment implied in it, are exercised over the living; and afterward the dead are judged by means of the general resurrection. But after the Final Judgment shall come eternal life; and that life is not the destruction of Christ's Kingdom, but its completion, so that in a true sense the Millennial Kingdom shall have no end. This verifies the words of the Creed: 'whose Kingdom shall have no end.'" (The Patristic Church..., pp. 296–298).

Saint Augustine himself admits that the Day of Judgment does not necessarily correspond to a solar day, but may be a more extended period: *"This, which the whole Church of the true God confesses and approves—namely, that Christ shall judge the living and the dead—we call the last day of the divine judgment, that is, the last time. For although it is not certain how many days this judgment shall last, no one is ignorant, however slightly he may have read Holy Scripture, that therein the word day is often used for time."* (The City of God, book 20, chapter 1).

Thus it is seen that, according to Saint Augustine's judgment, there are today many ignorant men who think rigidly that the Day of Judgment is a solar day of twenty-four hours; and the lamentable thing is that they pass for teachers or doctors. Moreover, Saint Augustine, who like every true saint is humble, acknowledges that the allegorical interpretation—which he made his own under the tremendous pressure of Saint Jerome, abandoning the millenarian interpretation lest it seem to support the carnal or Judaizing millenarians—is not certain, as Father Castellani notes: *"Saint Augustine warns that he does not know whether this interpretation is the right one or not, in which caution none of the present-day 'allegorists' imitate him. Many of them, moreover, accuse as 'heretics'—and as ridiculous, and Judaizers, and fools, and coarse men, and troublemakers—those who do not care for it."* (El Apokalypsis, p. 294).

And if one looks well at the matter, speaking of Judaizing, nothing is more Judaizing than the supposed triumph of the Church by the sole forces of history without the divine intervention of

the Second Coming of Christ the King in glory and majesty—that is, to proclaim a triumph before the Parousia, as ecumenism and modernist progressivism pretend, and, unfortunately, as many wrongly interpret the message of Fatima: *“In the end my Immaculate Heart shall triumph.”* Nothing could be more judaizing than a triumph of the Church without the Parousia: *“But what could be more Judaizing than to expect a great earthly triumph of the Church before the second coming of Christ?”* (Ibid., p. 87). How many Judaizers there are, without even knowing it; this once again shows the state of decadence of the clergy.

Anti-Catholicism consists in a falsified Catholicism, and not in other things which, distractedly, we may still legitimately imagine or suppose, as the following text from Father Castellani points out, where allusion is made to the city of the Antichrist, the Harlot Capital: *“Had we not agreed that, according to the prophet, it must be a port city, capitalist and anti-Catholic—or rather, a falsified Catholicism?”* (Los Papeles..., p. 246).

And we have, moreover, an Antichrist identified with a Catholicism without Cross or Parousia, such as that of the post-conciliar New Church: *“...the most complete and subtle falsification of Christianity that can be imagined: an ideal of comfortable, luxurious, and entertaining life, with much sex appeal, of course, and framed by a few vague and diluted Christian dogmas that commit one to nothing. (...) It is the ideal of the added things before the Kingdom, or added things without the Kingdom, or the Millennial Kingdom already realized and without Christ—that is, Christianity purged of the Cross of Christ and of His Second Coming... This is the true Antichrist! If this invades the world, as it is invading it now, and at last dominates it... This is an exceedingly seductive false religion: worse, if possible, than communism.”* (Ibid., p. 246).

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

Father José Rovira, S.J., author of the article Parousia in the Enciclopedia Espasa, says concerning the reign of Christ upon earth, or the happy millennium of peace and prosperity: *“The Parousia is nothing other, as we have said, than the second coming of Christ. Christ Jesus shall come from Heaven, where He ascended in His glorious Ascension (Acts 1:9–11), but He shall not come as He came the first time, when the Word was made flesh (...) rather, He shall come and appear with glory, with glory and splendor (...) after the sun has been darkened and the moon has not given her light and the stars have fallen, then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man—probably the Cross—and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming upon the clouds of Heaven with great power and glory (Matt. 24:30; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27). (...)*

“But among all descriptions, the foremost is that which the Apostle Saint John gives us of this coming in chapter 19 of the Apocalypse, where he describes Him as a warrior King who goes forth to battle against the Antichrist (...) Christ shall not come alone; being King, He shall come accompanied by His court (...) with His angels (Matt. 26:27), (...) with His saints (Jude 14–15). Thereafter shall follow the resurrection of the saints. It is true that on this point theologians and interpreters are not in agreement, for they commonly say that the resurrection must be of all together and at the same time; but this must be understood of the general resurrection. This particular resurrection of the saints, however, shall be as a privilege; and just as Christ rose, and with Christ other saints also rose, as Saint Matthew (27:52–53), who, as Saint Thomas probably holds (S.Th., Suppl., q. 77, a. 1, ad

3), did not return to die again, so likewise it may be admitted that, when Christ shall appear in His second coming to destroy the Antichrist, not all the saints shall rise by privilege, but only some. (...)

According to this, Saint Paul clearly distinguishes, at the coming of Christ, two classes or kinds of just men who shall be joined unto Him. The one are the dead, who shall rise first; they shall rise incorruptible. The others are the living, who shall not die, but shall be transformed from mortal and corruptible into incorruptible and immortal, and together with the others shall be caught up through the air upon the clouds of heaven to meet Christ. (...)

“The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were completed.” Saint John seems to indicate two classes or kinds of the elect: the first are those beheaded for the testimony of Jesus—that is, the martyrs, whether all or some, and in the first place the Apostles, to whom Christ Himself promised that, in the regeneration, they should sit upon twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel; the others are those who did not adore the beast nor receive his mark, though they were not martyred but are still alive, for otherwise there would be no need to distinguish them from the martyrs. (...)

Another effect of the coming of Christ shall be the destruction of the Antichrist.”

“(...) Then, therefore, Christ shall come to destroy him and to save and deliver His own. (...) ‘Then shall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord shall slay’—properly, remove from the midst—‘with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming’ (2 Thess. 2:8). And Saint John says the same in the Apocalypse (Apoc. 19:11–21). (...) Once the anti-theocratic powers have been destroyed and the devil chained and imprisoned, there shall then follow the kingdom of Christ and of the saints. This kingdom the prophet Daniel foretells in the seventh chapter of his prophecy.⁴ (...)

In this text it is clearly foretold that after the destruction of the Antichrist and of the other anti-theocratic powers there shall follow not only a triumph, but a kingdom of Christ and of the saints—a kingdom that shall be upon the earth, or under heaven, as Daniel says; a kingdom in which power shall belong to the people of the Most High saints, whom all the kings shall serve and obey. (...)

See, for example, what Cornelius a Lapide says: ‘Then, once the kingdom of the Antichrist has been destroyed, the Church shall reign over the whole earth, and of Jews and Gentiles there shall be made one fold under one shepherd.’ Thereafter shall follow the uprising or rebellion of Gog and Magog against the city of the saints, which, as we shall see, is probably distinct from the persecution of the Antichrist. Then later shall come the fire of the conflagration (...) and finally all shall end with the last resurrection and the final judgment (...). And Saint Paul (1 Cor. 15:24–28) also says that Christ shall reign until He has put all His enemies beneath His feet, and the last of all to be destroyed shall be death. After this Christ shall deliver up His kingdom to the Father, and then God shall be all in all.”

“We have seen that, according to the prophecy of Daniel (7:26–27), immediately after the death of the Antichrist the world shall not come to an end, but the Church shall continue, composed of Jews and Gentiles and spread throughout the whole earth, and the saints shall exercise power and sovereignty, and all the kings of the world shall serve and obey them. (...) And although Daniel says that His kingdom shall be everlasting, this is because he presents this kingdom of the saints upon earth as continuing into that which follows after the judgment. But for the present we are speaking only of the kingdom of the saints upon earth, of the kingdom of the saints prior to the final judgment, and this, of course, is not to be eternal (...). Some interpreters, even among those who admit the reign of the saints upon earth, say, like Tirini and a Lapide, that this reign shall last but a short time; others say nothing of its duration; others suppose or affirm that it shall endure for a long time (...). On this point the

millenarians, relying on the Apocalypse (20:1–9), admitted that after the death of the Antichrist there shall be a reign of Christ and of the saints upon earth which is to last a thousand years.”

Father Benjamín Martín Sánchez summarizes the millenarian doctrine, in *The New Testament Explained*, ed. Apostolado Mariano, Seville, 1988, in the note to chapter 20 of the Apocalypse, in the following manner:

“Millenarianism is the belief of those who have said that Jesus Christ shall reign upon the earth with His saints in a new Jerusalem for the space of a thousand years before the day of judgment. (...) I firmly believe—after a careful study of the Bible—in a millenarianism upon earth; and if the word ‘millenarianism’ is displeasing to anyone, let it be called a ‘marvelous age of peace’ of a thousand or of thousands of years, which shall take place after the death of the Antichrist and in the wake of the universal judgment of the nations, to which there shall contribute the chaining, or repression, of Satan’s action.

Then the converted Jews shall reap the fruits of their conversion, the Faith shall be multiplied, the Church of Christ shall attain a definitive triumph, and the prophecy of ‘one fold under one shepherd’ shall be fulfilled. And in their turn the following prophecies, which have not yet been fulfilled, shall also find their accomplishment:

‘He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth (...). All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him’ (Ps. 72:8, 11).

‘All the ends of the earth shall remember and be converted unto Yahweh, and all the kindreds of the nations shall adore in His sight. For the kingdom is Yahweh’s, and He shall rule the nations’ (Ps. 22:28–29).

‘At the end of days (v. 1)... I will gather, saith the Lord, her that was driven out’—that is, the straying or scattered ones of Israel—‘...and I will make her a mighty people, and Yahweh shall reign over them in Mount Sion from henceforth even forever’ (Mic. 4:6 ff.).

‘And Yahweh shall reign over all the earth, and Yahweh shall be one, and His name one’ (Zech. 14:19).

‘Then’—that is, after the great judgment of the nations—‘I will restore to the peoples pure lips, that all may invoke the name of the Lord’ (Soph. 3:9).

And the new covenant, which began to be fulfilled in the New Law, announced by Jeremias (31:31–34), shall reach its fullness with the conversion of Israel. Then, saith the Lord, ‘I will put My law in their hearts... and they shall no longer have need to teach one another... for all shall know Me.’ And ‘then the whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahweh’ (Is. 11:9). When Israel is converted and purified from its sins, the deserts shall blossom, they shall become orchards, and there shall be harvests of fruits and production of cattle such as has never been known (Ezech. 36:33–35).

To these texts many more would have to be added from Isaias, Micheas, Zacharias, and other prophets, who speak to us of the great peace of this age, of temporal well-being, of Jerusalem as the capital of the Christian world, and so forth. (Let it be noted that this shall not be in Heaven, but upon earth—something real, and therefore a fact: such millenarianism, or age of peace). (...) Some have wished to understand the “first resurrection” spiritually, as the passage from birth into the life of grace; yet they do not convince, because the text speaks of martyrs who died for the Faith. Pirot says: “Some contemporary Catholic critics, for example Calmes, admit the literal interpretation of the passage we are studying. The millennium would be inaugurated by a resurrection of the martyrs alone, to the exclusion of the other dead.” Saint Irenaeus, too,

already identified the first resurrection as that of the just. I believe we may confirm this with these two texts: 1 Cor. 15:23, where Saint Paul speaks of an order in the resurrection: *“First Christ, then those who belong to Christ at His coming, afterward the end...”*; and also 1 Thess. 4:14–16: *“Those who died in Christ shall rise first...”* The Scripture scholar Cornelius a Lapide also interprets literally the text of 1 Cor. 15:23. *“The rest of the dead did not live until the thousand years were past. (...) And then shall come the universal resurrection and the final judgment.”* (...) *“When the thousand years are ended, Satan shall be loosed and shall go forth to seduce the nations (...). The fact is that the devil shall go on corrupting the nations, and the forces of evil—that is, Gog and Magog—shall attack the saints and the holy city; but God shall cause them to be devoured by the fire that He shall make to descend upon them.”*

On chapter 21 of the Apocalypse, the same author comments concerning the universal restoration of all things, which calls to mind the motto of Saint Pius X, *Omnia instaurare in Christo*—to restore all things in Christ—and which Archbishop Lefebvre renders, by way of explanation, as: to recapitulate all things in Christ. Thus Father Martín Sánchez says of the new heaven and the new earth: *“Here, and also in Isaiah 65:17 ff., in 2 Peter 3:13, and in Romans 8:19 ff., we are told of the transfiguration of created things. (...) Hence, this world shall not be annihilated, but renewed, and changed for the better; for, as Saint Jerome says: ‘the form passes, not the substance. We shall not see other heavens and another earth, but the old and the ancient changed into better.’ Everything leads us to foresee that this also refers to the marvelous age of peace, since according to the Scriptures the universe, once renewed, must serve as the setting for human life, because the whole creation shall take part in man’s happiness (Rom. 8:19–22), and because there shall come new heavens and a new earth wherein justice shall dwell (2 Pet. 3:10–18). Then the earth shall be as a new heaven anticipated (...). It is a renewal of this world in which fallen mankind lived, which, finally freed from every stain, shall be restored by God to a state equal and even superior to that in which it was created: a renewal which Scripture elsewhere calls the ‘palingenesis,’ the regeneration (Matt. 19:28), ‘the restitution of all things’ to their primitive state (Acts 3:21),”* (Crampon).

And in his explanation of chapter 22, the same author says, referring to the closing words of the Apocalypse, *Come, Lord Jesus*: *“With this expression, which refers to the second coming of Jesus Christ, the Apocalypse ends. After speaking to us of the great happiness reserved for the saints, it repeats: ‘Come quickly’; and by this warning it intends that we should not fall asleep, but live watchfully, longing for His coming in order to enjoy the blessedness announced.”*

Father Castellani—whom we recall was a sacred theologian bulado by Pius XII, which empowered him to teach Theology and Sacred Scripture universally, and to publish books without the nihil obstat, unless in the place where they were published there already existed a title identical to his own— since there is no higher degree, and these were granted only two or three times in a century — explains the matter of Millenarianism as follows:

“It is the opinion which interprets the same passage in the literal sense. It is divided into spiritual and carnal, or, by another name, crude.

Carnal millenarianism designates the Judaizing and fanciful tendency which, in the early centuries, imagined a temporal and worldly triumph of Christ, akin to that which Pharisaism in His lifetime had in fact demanded of Him, together with a train of satisfactions, revenges, and gross delights for the risen, in which animal fantasy ran riot. This excessive chiliasm was condemned by the Church, after it had aroused the wrath — somewhat excessive as well — of Saint Jerome. As a spiritual attitude, this millenarianism has not ceased to subsist even today; for example, in certain Protestant sects and in the mystique of the great modern imperialisms.

Spiritual Millenarianism may be summed up in these words of Hallo: 'A millennium is foretold in SCRIPTURE; that period has not yet come; what exactly it consists in, and in detail, we do not know; when it comes, we shall know.' Thus expressed, with discretion and agnosticism, that chiliasm has never been condemned by the Church, nor — audemus dicere — would it ever be, for the simple reason that the Church is not going to condemn the majority of the Holy Fathers of the first five centuries, among them the greatest..." (See *Ecclesia Patristica et Millenarismus, Expositio Historica*, by Florentino Alcañiz, S.J., Doctore et Magistro Aggregato Facultati Philosophicae in Universitate Gregoriana, Granada, 1933).

"What the Church has done in more recent times has been to forbid, by a decree of the Holy Office, the teaching of a mitigated millenarianism clearly defined in the very prohibition itself, which naturally it is not lawful to extend, for odiosa sunt restringenda; namely: 'The millenarianism of those who teach that before the final judgment, whether preceded or not by the resurrection of the just, Christ would return to the earth to reign bodily.' This decree is of July 9, 1941. The decree ut jacet also laid hold, as it stood, upon the exegetes called evolutionists, since according to them Christ already reigns bodily — from the Most Blessed Sacrament — from His Resurrection until the End of the World. But it did not touch, it would seem, the sensible millenarians. Another declaratory decree was issued three years later (A.A.S., 1944, p. 212), in which the word corporaliter was changed to visibiliter. According to this, there remains excluded the teaching not only of crude millenarianism, but also of the carnal-mitigated kind, which imagines a temporal Kingdom of Christ after the manner of the empires of this world, with His court in Jerusalem, His palace, His ceremonies and festivities, His visible and continual presence — and even His Minister of Agriculture... — 'theology for negroes,' as Ramón Doll says, resembling the heaven of the film GREEN PASTURES.

*"We neither teach nor believe either of these two millenarianisms — needless to say. We simply apply here to the APOKALYPSIS what in exegesis is called the eschatological system, as opposed to the historical system and the allegorical system. And to the preposterous critic, who has read my little book so poorly and judges it with such acrimony, I content myself with copying for him a few lines from two authorities in matters of exegesis; first, my teacher at the Gregorian from 1929 to 1931, Rev. Fr. Silvio Rosadini: 'Recolere ante omnia juvabit... millenarismum, speciatim illum purum et spirituale nunquam ab Ecclesia damnatum fuisse. Insuper, verum non est regnum millenarium esse necessariam consequentiam hujus sistematis... Sunt qui Apocalypsim eschatologicè explicant et tamen quodcumque millenarium regnum rejiciunt... Sunt e contrario plures, alia systemata sectantes, qui hoc mod regnum millenarium Capitis XX exponunt'. "It will be useful, before all else, to recall, millenarianism, especially the pure form of it and spiritual millenarianism has never been condemned by the Church. Moreover, it is not true that the millenarian kingdom is a necessary consequence of this system... There are those who explain the Apocalypse eschatologically and yet reject every sort of millenarian kingdom... There are, on the contrary, many who, while following other systems, explain in this way the millenarian kingdom of chapter XX." (Silvius Rosadini, S.J., *Introductio in Libros Novi Testamenti*, vol. III, p. 112, Rome, 1931, Apud Aedes Universitatis Gregorianae).*

"Another authority, closer to our own time and no less respectable, and indeed infinitely timely, are the two notes which Monsignor Doctor Juan Straubinger wrote on this question in his annotated and commented direct translation from the Greek of the New Testament, published by Dedebeq, 1948, pp. 383 and 384, on Saint John, XX:5 and 6. The summary of this thorny question which the learned professor of the Seminary of La Plata there gives seems to us to coincide so exactly with our own thought, as set forth in this book six years ago, that we wish to place upon it a golden crown by making at the end every one of his weighty and most exact words our own."

"Here they are: The first resurrection. Here is one of the passages of Sacred Scripture most diversely interpreted. In general, this expression is taken in an allegorical sense: the life of grace, the spiritual resurrection of the soul in

baptism, the grace of conversion, the entrance of the soul into eternal glory, the renewal of the Christian spirit through great saints and founders of religious orders (Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Dominic, and so forth), or something of the sort. Bail, author of the voluminous *Summa Conciliorum*, carries his freedom to allegorize the Scriptures so far as to choose to call the first resurrection that of the reprobate, because, he says, they shall have no resurrection save the bodily one, since they do not rise unto glory. According to this, verse 6 would be praising the reprobate, since it calls blessed and holy the one who attains the first resurrection.”

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

“The new Nacar-Colunga version sees in this first resurrection a privilege of the holy martyrs, ‘to whom belongs the palm of victory. Since they above all bore the weight of the struggle together with their Captain, they shall receive a reward not granted to the other dead, and this is to judge, which in the biblical sense is equivalent to ruling and governing the world together with their Captain, to whom, because He humbled Himself unto death, it was given to reign over the whole universe’ (Phil. 2:8 ff.). See Phil. 3:10–11; 1 Cor. 15:23 and 52, and the notes; Luke 14:14 and 20:35; Acts 4:2. ‘And they reigned with Him a thousand years.’ Fillion says on this point: ‘After having read very numerous pages on these lines, we do not believe it possible to give an entirely satisfactory explanation of them.’ On this point there has been much debate in past centuries over the so-called question of millenarianism, or that interpretation which, taking the millennium literally as the reign of Christ, places those thousand years of verses 2–7 between two resurrections, distinguishing as the first the resurrection of verses 4–6, attributed only to the just, and as the second and general resurrection that mentioned in verses 12–13 for the Final Judgment. The history of this interpretation was summarized in a few lines in an interview published by the *Revista Eclesiástica de Buenos Aires* in May 1941, which said that ‘tradition, which in the first centuries inclined in favor of millenarianism, has from the fifth century onward declared itself against this doctrine in almost unanimous fashion.’”

“The Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office cut short the discussion by declaring, in its decree of July 21, 1944, that the doctrine ‘which teaches that before the final judgment, whether with the prior resurrection of many dead or without it, Our Lord Jesus Christ would come visibly to this earth to reign, cannot be safely taught (*tuto doceri non posse*).’ For the reader’s information, we transcribe the commentary given by the great Pirot-Clamer edition of the Bible on this passage: ‘The literal interpretation: several Christian authors of the early centuries thought that Christ would reign for a thousand years in Jerusalem (v. 9) before the Final Judgment. The author of the Epistle of Barnabas (XV, 4–9) is a fervent millenarian; for him, the millennium is inserted into a complete theory of the duration of the world, parallel to the duration of the week of Genesis: 6,000 + 1,000 years. Saint Papias is a naive millenarian; Saint Justin, more cautious, nevertheless thinks that millenarianism forms part of orthodoxy (*Dialogue with Trypho*, 80–81). Saint Irenaeus likewise (*Against Heresies*, V, 28, 3), followed by Tertullian (*Against Marcion*, III, 24). In Rome, Saint Hippolytus became champion against the

priest Caius, who precisely denied the Johannine authenticity of the APOKALYPSIS in order more easily to overthrow millenarianism.”

“Piroi here recounts the controversy against certain schismatic millenarians, in which Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria ‘forced the leader of the sect to confess himself vanquished,’ and he continues: ‘Among the more or less explicit supporters of millenarianism may also be counted Apollinaris of Laodicea, Lactantius, Saint Victorinus of Pettau, Sulpicius Severus, and Saint Ambrose. For his part, Saint Jerome, usually so vehement, shows toward these men a certain indulgence (On Isaiah, book 18). Saint Augustine, who was to give the interpretation destined to become classical, had קודם professed for a time the opinion which he would later combat. From then on millenarianism fell into oblivion, though not without leaving curious survivals, such as the prayers to obtain the grace of the first resurrection, recorded in ancient liturgical books of the West (Dom Leclercq).”

“Farther on Piroi cites the decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, which we transcribed at the beginning, and continues: ‘Some contemporary Catholic critics, for example Calmet, also admit the literal interpretation of the passage under study. The millennium would be inaugurated by a resurrection of the martyrs alone, to the exclusion of the other dead. The spiritual interpretation: this exegesis,’ Piroi goes on to say, ‘commonly admitted by Catholic authors, is the one which Saint Augustine set forth at length. Augustine makes this period begin with the Incarnation, because he professes the theory of recapitulation, whereas, in John’s perspective, the thousand years are inserted at a determined point in the series of events. It is the Church militant,’ Augustine continues, ‘which reigns with Christ until the consummation of the ages; the first resurrection must be understood spiritually as birth into the life of grace (Col. III, 1–2; Phil. III, 20; cf. John V, 25); the thrones of verse 4 are those of the Catholic hierarchy, and it is that hierarchy itself which has the power to bind and loose. We should be tempted,’ Piroi concludes, ‘to be less precise in that identification. Without doubt, we have here an image intended to make understood the greatness of the Christian: he sits, because he reigns (Matt. XIX, 28; Luke XXII, 30; I Cor. VI, 3; Eph. I, 20 and II, 6; Apoc. I, 6 and V, 9).” Up to this point run the notes of Monsignor Straubinger. (Christ, Is He Returning...?, pp. 68–71).

For his part, Father Castellani further clarifies the matter in another of his works: “Real millenarianism teaches nothing other than that Apokalypsis XX and I Corinthians XV may be interpreted literally without any breach of the Faith or any inconvenience whatever; that thus the Apostolic Fathers understood them, and after them, throughout the course of history, innumerable doctors and saints; that from this follows the probability of two resurrections, one partial and one general, with a mystically glorious period of the Church Militant between them; and that this understanding easily resolves many obscure passages of Scripture and does honor to the greatness, truthfulness, and omnipotence of the Creator.” (Los Papeles..., p. 418).

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

On this last point, Saint Augustine himself admits that the day of the Final Judgment may not be a solar day: “That which the whole Church of the true God confesses and approves — namely, that Christ shall descend from Heaven to judge the living and the dead — this we call the last day of the divine judgment, that is, the last time. For although it is not certain how many days this judgment shall last, no one is ignorant,

however lightly he may have read Holy Scripture, that therein day is often used for time.” (The City of God, book 20, chapter 1).

“In sum, millenarianism consists in believing that the day of judgment, which is a dogma of faith, is not a material day and a geographical place, but a period and a state, an altogether supernatural cycle; and this not by rationalism or fantasy, but because it is found thus written literally in the two great final prophecies, Daniel and John, together with two corresponding texts of the Apostle Paul.” (Los Papeles..., p. 412).

Although the allegorical interpretation is the one that predominates today, it was not always so, at least not during the first four centuries of the primitive Church. Moreover, Saint Augustine himself, who took the allegorical interpretation from the heretic Tyconius the Donatist, its author in the fourth century, as Father Castellani points out, acknowledges that his new interpretation—he himself having previously been millenarian—is not certain; for: *“Saint Augustine warns that he does not know whether this interpretation is good or not, in which none of the present-day ‘allegorists’ imitate him. Many of them, moreover, accuse as ‘heretics’—and as ridiculous, and Judaiizers, and blockheads, and coarse men, and troublemakers—those who do not care for it.”* (El Apok., pp. 294–295).

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

Let us hold fast to the warning given by Father Castellani to those who expect a triumph of the Church without the Parousia, or before the Parousia: *“It is the very same carnal dream of the Jews which made them deceive themselves regarding Christ. These are millenarians in reverse. They most fiercely deny the metabistorical Millennium after the Parousia, which is in Scripture; and they set up a Millennium that is not in Scripture, by the work of historical forces alone—that is, an infra-historical solution of History—just like the impious ‘progressives,’ such as Condorcet, Auguste Comte, and Kant; which amounts to denying the supernatural intervention of God in History, and, at bottom, the very divine inspiration of Holy Scripture. (...) The Apokalypsis is the only current antidote against those ‘pseudo-prophets.’”* (El Apok., p. 367).

For this reason, the difference that shall mark the faithful in these apocalyptic last times—which are ours—shall be this: *“What distinguishes true Christians is that they await the Second Coming.”* (Los Papeles..., p. 426). Hence one must never forget what Father Castellani says: *“The faithful of the last times shall be saved only by an immense charity, a heroic faith, and a firm hope in the Second Coming.”* (Los Papeles..., p. 135).

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

This is the reason why many today, albeit unconsciously, do not accept Patristic Millenarianism. Let us hope that this compilation may serve as a light to cast down prejudices and to make us more watchful than ever, so that our faith may be rekindled and our hope may grow in the near coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Glory and Majesty, and that thus the great promise may be fulfilled, that we may be one (*ut unum sint*), all being one fold under one Shepherd, with the triumph of Christ the King and of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, remaining always faithful to the Holy Roman Catholic Apostolic Church amid the Great Tribulation of the last times, forming that little flock (Luke 12:32) to whom the heavenly Father shall give the eternal kingdom.

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Santa Fe de Bogotá
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