

**Mt. St. Michael**  
**CATHOLIC DOCTRINE CLASS**

**“A Study of *Tumultuous Times* – Part II”**  
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**ALL AUDIO RECORDINGS AND STUDY SHEETS OF ALL CLASSES MAY BE DOWNLOADED FROM**

<http://tinyurl.com/TumultTimes>

**May 29, 2018**

***Part I – Who Is Ultimately Responsible for the Universal Loss of Faith? Infallibility, review of Sedevacante theological position, pp. 559-567***

**A. Two cardinal principles**

1. A true Pope must be a Catholic. Formal heresy before election would *prevent* him from holding the Papal Office; formal heresy after election would cause him to *lose* the Papal Office.
  - a. Formal heresy is defined as “pertinacious denial of a teaching of divine and catholic faith.”
2. A true Pope is infallible in his official teaching and ruling the Church. Whether this is ordinary (“day to day”) or extraordinary (“solemn pronouncements”) makes no difference. He is a sure guide in all his definitive pronouncements.
  - a. *Wherefore, by divine and catholic faith all those things are to be believed which are contained in the word of God as found in scripture and tradition, and which are proposed by the church as matters to be believed as divinely revealed, whether by her solemn judgment or in her ordinary and universal magisterium.* – Vatican Council I, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Session 3, April 24, 1870

**B. Requirements NOT necessary for a true Pope, although greatly needed and to be desired**

1. Great prudence, wisdom, and knowledge
2. Great holiness

**C. How a true Pope loses his office**

1. Voluntary
  - a. Resignation
  - b. Falling into formal heresy
2. Involuntary
  - a. Falling into perpetual insanity
  - b. Death

**D. Juridical Declaration needed in the case of a Pope losing his office**

1. Voluntary
  - a. Resignation – this is done by the statement of the Pope himself. No one has to “accept” his resignation for it to be effective.
  - b. Falling into formal heresy – this is done by the Cardinals, or, in their default, by the bishops of the Church. *Remember, the Cardinals (or bishops) do NOT, indeed CANNOT depose a Pope. They only declare that he has deposed himself.*
2. Involuntary (“God willed, or permitted it”)
  - a. Falling into perpetual insanity – this is done by the Cardinals

- b. Death – this is done by the Cardinal Camerlengo, the one officially appointed by a Pope to preside over matters when he dies (akin to a doctor or coroner signing a death certificate)

#### **E. What to do when a juridical declaration is lacking**

1. A Conclave to elect a new Pope cannot take place without it! The Church operates on laws, just like the State, and personal judgments cannot substitute for decisions that bind all the members of a society.
2. We are not prevented from acting reasonably! Indeed, we have the duty on a personal and moral basis to separate ourselves from one we know not to be a true Pope.
3. *Objection:* “You don’t have the authority to judge the Pope!” Answer: True, we do not have the authority to make a juridical judgment, but we are not deaf, blind, and dumb, either. One who *manifestly* departs from the Catholic Faith must be avoided at our own spiritual peril!
  - a. We avoid criminals in society who go about inflicting harm, even before they are found to be *legally* guilty of their crimes.
  - b. One does not need authority to draw necessary conclusions, e.g.  $5 + 5 = 10$  or  $3 \times 4 = 12$ . It is a necessary conclusion that a *manifest* heretic cannot be an infallible Vicar of Christ, nor even a Catholic, even without a juridical evaluation.
  - c. Read pp. 560-562 of *Tumultuous Times*
4. *Objection:* “What about Vatican I’s solemn teaching about “perpetual successors in the Primacy? How can there be no Pope for now 60 years?” Answer: Nowhere has the Church defined how much maximum time can elapse from the death of one Pope and the accession of the next. Indeed, some approved theologians have speculated that this can happen for a lengthy period of time.
  - a. *For this reason it has always been necessary for every church – that is to say, the faithful throughout the world – to be in agreement with the Roman Church because of its more effective leadership. In consequence of being joined, as members to head, with that see, from which the rights of sacred communion flow to all, they will grow together into the structure of a single body. Therefore, if anyone says that it is not by the institution of Christ the Lord Himself (that is to say, by divine law) that blessed Peter should have perpetual successors in the primacy over the whole church; or that the Roman Pontiff is not the successor of blessed Peter in this primacy: let him be anathema. – Vatican Council I, First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ, Session 4, July 18, 1870*

#### **F. Conclusion**