

AMERICAN ULTRAMONTANISM

PATRICIA BYRNE, C.S.J.

Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut

GENERALLY TREATED as a European phenomenon,¹ ultramontanism has significantly shaped Catholic culture and theology in the United States. American Catholics, no less than European, trained their vision across the Alps; for them too, the life of the Church issued from Rome. Uninvolved in political aspects of ultramontanism, Americans were nevertheless true cultural ultramontanes, devout proponents of its ethos.² The ultramontane temper affected church life in the United States from workings of the hierarchy to details of the Catholic home, where a devotional revolution shaped patterns of prayer and religious sensibility from the middle of the 19th century until the dawn of Vatican II. That milieu, which many older Catholics remember as "traditional," was intimately connected with a specific and very Roman understanding of Church, one that came to be synonymous with "Catholic."³

The neo-ultramontane environment was a product of the 19th century and differed significantly from its predecessor of the same name.⁴

¹ Umberto Benigni, "Ultramontanism," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* 15 (1912) 125; Mary O'Callaghan, R.S.C.J., "Ultramontanism," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 14 (1967) 380; for longer treatments see Roger Aubert, *Le pontificat de Pie IX*, vol. 21 of *Histoire de l'Église*, ed. Augustin Fliche and Victor Martin (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1963) 262–310; idem, "La géographie ecclésiologique au XIX^e siècle," in M. Nédoncelle et al., *L'écclésiologie au XIX^e siècle* (Paris: Cerf, 1960) 11–55; John P. Boyle, "The Ordinary Magisterium: Towards a History of the Concept," *Heythrop Journal* 20 (1979) 380–98, 21 (1980) 14–29; Yves Congar, O.P., "L'écclésiologie de la Révolution française au Concile du Vatican, sous la signe de l'affirmation de l'autorité," in *L'écclésiologie au XIX^e siècle* 77–114; Richard F. Costigan, S.J., *Rohrbacher and the Ecclesiology of Ultramontanism* (Rome: Università Gregoriana, 1980); idem, "Tradition and the Beginning of the Ultramontane Movement," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 48 (1981) 27–46; and J. Derek Holmes, *The Triumph of the Holy See: A Short History of the Papacy in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Burns & Oates; and Shepherdstown, W. Va.: Patmos, 1978).

² Sandra Yocum Mize, "The Papacy in Mid-Nineteenth Century American Catholic Imagination" (Ph.D. diss., Marquette University, 1987); idem, "Defending Roman Loyalties and Republican Values: The 1848 Revolution in American Catholic Popular Literature," *Working Paper Series* 22 no. 1 (Notre Dame: Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism, 1990); and Patrick W. Carey, "American Lay Catholic Views of the Papacy," *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* 21 (1983) 105–30.

³ According to the 1912 *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "For Catholics it would be superfluous to ask whether Ultramontanism and Catholicism are the same thing: assuredly, those who combat Ultramontanism are in fact combatting Catholicism, even while they disclaim the desire to oppose it" (Benigni, "Ultramontanism" 125).

⁴ Ultramontanism received its definitive meaning in the Gallicanist conflicts of Louis XIV, but the term itself dates to the 1730s; see Joseph L. Altholz, "Ultramontanism," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion* 15.119–20, at 119.

The transformation of ultramontaniam—from a political and ecclesiastical power struggle in the 18th century to a mentality colored by personal devotion toward the pope in the 19th—was one of the most significant developments, symbolically and practically, in a century whose import is still being discovered.⁵ This article studies the development of ultramontaniam in the U.S. from the time of John Carroll to the present, examining the cultural and ecclesiological foundations of a phenomenon which dominated the thought and spirituality of American Catholicism during perhaps its most formative period.

EARLY-NINETEENTH-CENTURY CATHOLICISM

The neo-ultramontane attitude, which idealized the papacy and eventually made it the touchstone of infallibility for the entire Church, was absent from American Catholic thought well into the 19th century.⁶ John Carroll (1735–1815), first Catholic bishop of the U.S., held a standard 18th-century ecclesiology. While explicitly recognizing papal primacy, Carroll saw the Church, not as a rule of absolute monarchy, but as a communion of churches centered in Rome.⁷ Convinced that Americans would never tolerate that a church official “receive his appointment from a foreign state, and only hold it at the discretion of a foreign tribunal or congregation,”⁸ Carroll was elected bishop by the U.S. clergy in a vote of 24 to 2, on 18 May 1789, and only thereafter named to the see of Baltimore by the pope. His remarks on the bull of appointment show that he considered this the appropriate way to choose bishops:

The pope, according to the pretensions, which the see of Rome has always supported, says, he will nominate hereafter. But I conceive that the Clergy will have as good right to say, that the election shall be held by members of their own body, & that they never can, with safety, or will admit any Bishop who is not so constituted.⁹

⁵ James L. Heft, S.M., “From the Pope to the Bishops: Episcopal Authority from Vatican I to Vatican II,” in *The Papacy and the Church in the United States*, ed. Bernard Cooke (New York: Paulist, 1989) 55–78, at 57–58; and Clyde F. Crews, “American Catholic Authoritarianism: The Episcopacy of William George McCloskey, 1868–1909,” *Catholic Historical Review* 70 (1984) 560–80, at 560.

⁶ Mize, “The Papacy” 39, 52.

⁷ James Hennesey, S.J., “Catholicism in an American Environment: The Early Years,” *TS* 50 (1989) 657–75; and idem, “Papacy and Episcopacy in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century America,” *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia* 77 (1966) 175–89. I am indebted to Hennesey for the entire discussion of Carroll.

⁸ Carroll to John Thorpe, Maryland, near George-town, 17 February 1785 (*The John Carroll Papers*, edited by Thomas O’Brien Hanley, 3 vols. [Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1976] 1.162–63).

⁹ Carroll to John Ashton, Balt., 18 April 1790 (*Carroll Papers* 1.436–37; see James Hennesey, S.J., “An Eighteenth Century Bishop: John Carroll of Baltimore,” *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* 16 [1978] 171–204).

Carroll's ideas on infallibility, moreover, ran counter to the ultramontane doctrine which would triumph in the First Vatican Council. Typical of his era, he understood infallibility to reside "in the body of bishops united and agreeing with their head, the bishop of Rome." Infallibility of the pope alone he considered mere theological speculation: "With this opinion faith has no concern, everyone being at liberty to adopt it or reject it, as the reasons for or against may affect him."¹⁰ Quite similar notions, when articulated by Archbishop Peter Richard Kenrick of St. Louis in 1870, were labeled "semi-heretical" and condemned by the Congregation of the Index.¹¹

The first instance of ultramontanism emerged in the U.S. near the end of the 18th century in the context of a three-cornered struggle for ecclesiastical control involving parish trustees, their bishops, and Roman authorities. In 1799, in an attempt to override Bishop Carroll's control of German parishes, lay trustees of Holy Trinity in Philadelphia and St. John's in Baltimore sent Father Caesarius Reuter to Rome as their personal representative, claiming the ancient right of patrons to choose pastors and seeking establishment of a German episcopacy in the U.S.¹² While invoking Rome over the jurisdiction of the local ordinary proved a redundant theme in the American history of trusteeism, it was a question of petitioning an alternate court of appeal rather than of singular regard for the papacy.¹³ Early American ultramontanism had little in common with the version then budding in

¹⁰ An Address to the Roman Catholics of the United States of America by a Catholic Clergyman [Fall, 1784] (*Carroll Papers* 1.105–6). In 1846 Orestes Brownson, although an ardent ultramontane, declared: "A man may be a Catholic, without believing that the decision of the pope, unless assented to by the body of bishops, is to be regarded as infallible" ("Literary Policy of the Church of Rome," *Brownson Quarterly Review* [January 1846], in *The Works of Orestes A. Brownson*, collected and arranged by Henry F. Brownson [Detroit: T. Nourse, 1882–1887] 6.540).

¹¹ Peter Richard Kenrick, *Concio in Concilio Vaticano habenda et non habita* (Naples, 1870), in Raymond J. Clancy, C.S.C., "American Prelates in the Vatican Council," *Historical Records and Studies* 28 (1937) 93–131. The Vatican condemnation of the *Concio* was never published (Gerald P. Fogarty, S.J., *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy from 1870 to 1965*, paperback ed. [Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1985] 2–8; and James Hennesey, S.J., *The First Council of the Vatican: The American Experience* [New York: Herder and Herder, 1963] 315; see also Cuthbert Butler, O.S.B., *The Vatican Council: The Story Told from Inside in Bishop Ullathorne's Letters*, 2 vols. [London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1930] 2.176).

¹² Patrick W. Carey, *People, Priests, and Prelates: Ecclesiastical Democracy and the Tensions of Trusteeism* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1987) 233–78, at 241.

¹³ Trustees in Norfolk, steeped in Febronian theories of the autonomy of the local church, repeatedly petitioned Pius VII and the Roman Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, hoping to overrule the Archbishop of Baltimore in the appointment of their pastor. With little respect for what they called "the Machiavellic politics in the Roman Curia," they were nonetheless willing to use them to their purpose (Carey, *People, Priests, and Prelates* 236–37, 243–53; Peter Guilday, *The Catholic Church in Virginia (1815–1822)* [New York: The United States Catholic Historical Society, 1924] particularly 45–62; and James Hennesey, S.J., *American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States* [New York: Oxford, 1981] 98–100).

Europe, where Joseph de Maistre's *Du Pape* appeared in 1819. Whereas trustees' church politics were shaped by Enlightenment and reform ideology, the new 19th-century ultramontane doctrine was a child of Romanticism.¹⁴ Appeals to Rome in the context of trusteeism lacked the emotional fervor toward the papacy which so characterized neo-ultramontaniam. Repeated invocation of papal arbitration did, however, serve ultimately to strengthen Roman involvement and control in the American church.¹⁵

Catholic life in the U.S. during the first 40 years of the 19th century remained virtually devoid of ultramontane sentiment. It was unknown to Anglo-American Catholicism, and the first waves of Irish immigrants had not yet been affected by Archbishop Cullen's Romanizing reform in their native land. Numerous issues of the *Boston Pilot* in 1840, for example, contain nothing at all about the pope, although the silence is not inhospitable. The *Pilot* carried a notice in January about Gregory XVI's improved health, and printed one of his allocutions under the heading "Foreign Catholic Intelligence—Rome." For Boston Catholics, news from Rome apparently could not compete with the latest from Ireland—whether it was a pastoral letter by the Archbishop of Tuam, the sad tale of a woman in Tralee who had cut her throat, or the sighting in Castlereagh of "a beautiful specimen of the greater spotted woodpecker (*Picus major*, Lin.)."¹⁶

The American hierarchy at this period wore the yoke of papal loyalty more lightly than they later would. Facing the onslaught of nativism, bishops at the Third Provincial Council of Baltimore in 1837 proclaimed themselves subject to no foreign political power, including the sovereign pontiff.¹⁷ In an American, Enlightenment-inspired version of an older Gallican theory, these bishops plainly separated the spiritual and temporal authority of the pope.¹⁸ Even such moderate Gallianism, however, would soon give way before the ultramontane tide.

ULTRAMONTANE REVOLUTION

Ultramontaniam was one of the most successful religious movements of the 19th century. According to Hugh McLeod, it provided an answer to the identity problem created for Catholics by the polarization of societies in the wake of revolution. In face of the need for identity and stability in a rapidly changing world, the Catholic Church offered the answer of *authority*, personified in the pope. While chal-

¹⁴ Mize, "The Papacy" 30–34, 37.

¹⁵ Carey, *People, Priests, and Prelates* 276–78.

¹⁶ *Boston Pilot*, 11 January 1840, 412–21; and *ibid.*, 25 January 1840, 2.

¹⁷ James Hennesey, S.J., "The Church in America," *America* 111 (17 October 1964) 449.

¹⁸ Carey, *People, Priests, and Prelates* 234–37.

lenging erastianism, ultramontane Catholicism sought to exercise a totalitarian influence similar to that of the former state churches, and to bring about the unity of a whole society.¹⁹

From the 1840s on, American Catholics were deeply affected by the new ultramontane spirit developing in Europe, although they invented their own brand. Sandra Yocum Mize attributes the growth of ultramontane feeling in the U.S. at mid-century to a campaign by Catholic apologists, launched with the publication in 1838 of Bishop Francis Patrick Kenrick's *The Primacy of the Apostolic See and the Authority of the General Councils Vindicated*.²⁰ American ultramontane apologetics was distinguished from the European by its claim that 19th-century popes actually affirmed American values, particularly liberty and social progress.²¹ This version of "Le pape et le peuple" held strong appeal for American Catholics struggling to reconcile their ecclesiastical loyalties with political republicanism. A strong image of the papacy served, moreover, as a center of identity for the widely divergent elements of an immigrant church.²²

While freely acknowledging the spiritual supremacy of the pope, American Catholics remained aloof from the political aspects of ultramontaniam, aspects intensified in Europe by the Italian *Risorgimento's* challenge to the temporal power. Deeply sympathetic to a beleaguered pope, American Catholics favored independence of the Papal States as enabling "the free and unsuspecting exercise of the spiritual functions of the Pontificate."²³ American support, however, stopped short of military involvement. In 1868 the Archbishops of Baltimore, Cincinnati, and New York issued a joint condemnation of attempts to recruit an American battalion to defend the papal states—an example, as Hennesey observes, of the unique American context of ultramontaniam, "where loyalty to the papacy was a religious loyalty" and had nothing to do with recruitment of troops.²⁴

American Catholic ecclesiology was strongly authoritarian throughout the 19th century, and increasingly Roman, but previous to Vatican I it embraced considerable debate on the locus of infallibility. As late as 1866 the American bishops continued to locate infallibility within the episcopal college:

¹⁹ Hugh McLeod, *Religion and the People of Western Europe 1789–1970* (New York: Oxford University, 1981) 36.

²⁰ Mize, "The Papacy" 49–52. Kenrick's work, *The Primacy of the Apostolic See and the Authority of the General Councils Vindicated, in a series of Letters to the Rt. Rev. J. H. Hopkins, Episcopal Bishop of Vermont* (Philadelphia: James Kay, 1838), underwent three revisions (1845, 1848, 1855) and a German translation in 1853 ("The Papacy" 50 and 78 n. 11).

²¹ Mize, "The Papacy" 40; see also 119–50.

²² *Ibid.*, 3, 42, 295, 306.

²³ *Ibid.* 196–239, at *Pastoral Letter of 1849* 216.

²⁴ Hennesey, "The Church in America" 449; Mize, "The Papacy" 222; and *idem*, "Defending Roman Loyalties and Republican Values."

Bishops, therefore, who are the successors of the Apostles, and whom the Holy Spirit has placed to rule the Church of God . . . agreeing and judging together with its head on earth, the Roman Pontiff, whether they are gathered in general councils, or dispersed throughout the world, are inspired from on high with the gift of inerrancy, so that their body or college can never fail nor define anything against doctrine revealed by God.²⁵

Four years later, the decrees of Vatican I would demand amendment of that ecclesiology, as illustrated by Bernard McQuaid of Rochester, who announced his submission to the conciliar definition of papal infallibility, but acknowledged, "to the last I opposed it; because somehow or other it was in my head that the Bishops ought to be consulted."²⁶

ROMANITA

The long papacy of Pius IX (1846–78) was the turning point during which the Catholic Church became identified with *romanità*, and in particular with the person of the pope. Derek Holmes observes that this profound metamorphosis affected the entire Catholic order:

The triumph of Ultramontanism was reflected not so much in the definition of papal infallibility as in the transformation of Catholicism within a generation. By establishing a Roman approach to devotion, discipline and theology throughout the Catholic Church, the Roman authorities were able to take over the leadership of the Church, while the first Vatican Council simply defined the structure of the Church in accordance with their understanding of it.²⁷

As noted above, one of the factors precipitating this change was the need for security and identity caused by massive social upheaval—defined for American Catholics in the challenge of immigration, nativist reaction, and the national trauma of the Civil War.²⁸ In face of these, a centralized Church and a papacy endowed with certain truth afforded a rock of stability, a sense of unshakable certitude and justifiable pride.

Amid forces exerted by deeper and wider social currents, the crisis over the temporal power of the papacy tipped the balance of Catholic sentiment in favor of Rome. The pope's gradual loss of secular power between 1861 and 1870 was matched by a steady increase of ultramontane feeling. With Italian unification swallowing the Papal States,

²⁵ Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore, *Collectio Lacensis* 3.413, cited in James Hennesey, S.J., "The Baltimore Council of 1866: An American Syllabus," *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia* 76 (1965) 171; Mize notes that the 1866 edition of Martin J. Spalding's preconciliar edition of *Evidences of Catholicity* echoes this position exactly, whereas the 1876 version accommodates the Vatican I decree ("The Papacy 278–79).

²⁶ Frederick J. Zwierlein, *The Life and Letters of Bishop McQuaid*, 3 vols. (Rochester: The Art Print Shop, 1925–1927) 2.63 [1926], cited in Gerald P. Fogarty, S.J., *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy* 1; and idem, "Archbishop Peter Kenrick's Submission to Papal Infallibility," *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* 16 (1978) 205–22.

²⁷ Holmes, *The Triumph* 135.

²⁸ Mize, "The Papacy" 3–4.

American bishops in 1866 authorized an annual collection in every parish for the pope.²⁹ American Catholic magazines and religious orders also sponsored papal subscriptions. *Ave Maria*, for example, featured regular reports of donations received, and in 1868 the *Catholic World* reinforced its appeal with a battle cry of ultramontanism: "The cause of the Catholic Church everywhere, and of every individual Catholic as a member of the church, is bound up with the cause of the pope, and is identical with it. . . . Every blow upon the head affects sensibly every member."³⁰ Sympathy for the suffering pontiff, reinforced by the doctrines of Vatican I, "enhanced the respect of clergy and faithful for the person of the pope, turning it indeed into something more akin to an emotional attachment with a colouring of mystical love and admiration."³¹ If personal devotion toward the pope was something new in the 19th century,³² it was entirely effective: Catholics' hearts were fixed on Rome.

Roman centralization was achieved, in addition to personal feeling for the pope, through standardization of ritual, education of seminarians, and direct papal influence in national churches. As the century progressed, appointment of bishops was increasingly appropriated by Rome, particularly in the expanding American and missionary churches, where there was no custom of monarchical nomination. Ordinaries were encouraged to submit questions of worship, discipline or theology to the Roman curia for judgment, and papal nuncios, formerly diplomatic representatives of the papacy, became direct channels of authority between the pope and the local church. Roman titles like *monsignor* were widely distributed, and the papal affiliation made a cardinal seem more important than a bishop.³³ The national seminaries founded or reestablished in Rome (the North American College in 1859), became seedbeds for ultramontane theology and many future ecclesiastical advancements began to depend on Roman education.³⁴ In France, where a variety of Gallican liturgies had been maintained, liturgy became a "symbolic battleground" between Gallican and ultramontane forces. Fostered by Dom Prosper Guéranger, the Roman rite and Gregorian chant stood for the romantic ideal of a return to medieval Christendom united under the pope.³⁵ This new "Gregorian re-

²⁹ Hennesey, *American Catholics* 165.

³⁰ *Ave Maria* 6 (12, 19, and 26 February, 1870); and "A Word about the Temporal Power of the Pope," *Catholic World* 6 (October 1867–March 1868) 529–30.

³¹ Victor Martin, *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 11, col. 1895, cited in Roger Aubert, *The Church in a Secularized Society*, trans. Janet Sondheimer (New York: Paulist, 1978) 67.

³² Heft, "Episcopal Authority" 57–58.

³³ Holmes, *The Triumph* 135–36; Aubert, *The Church* 68; and J. M. R. Tillard, O.P., *The Bishop of Rome*, trans. John De Salqé (Wilmington: Glazier, 1983) 33–34.

³⁴ Heft, "Episcopal Authority" 58–59.

³⁵ Austin Gough, "The Roman Liturgy, Gregorian Plain-chant and the Gallican Church," *Journal of Religious History* 11 (1980–81) 536; R. W. Franklin, "Guéranger: A

form" was endorsed in the U.S. by the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884, and soon became normative for the universal church.³⁶ Such Romanizing trends, together with a massive devotional revolution, effected a uniformity of discipline, liturgy, and piety which really meant the "adoption throughout the Church of a religious 'life style' analogous to that of Italy."³⁷

DEVOTIONALISM AND PAPAL PRESTIGE

For the majority of Catholics, the most consequential element in the process of Romanization was the emergence of a devotional piety which invoked symbols both spiritually powerful and uniquely adaptable to the new ecclesiology. The cultural roots of this devotionalism were strongly sentimental, antiintellectual, and politically illiberal. Thin on scholarly content, ultramontane piety relied on a pervasive emotionalism and earned the accusation of infantilism.³⁸ Its iconography was insipid and mass-produced—sky-blue Marys, rosy Sacred Hearts, and chocolate St. Josephs.³⁹ Nevertheless, it did have a significant redeeming effect in focusing Catholic spirituality on a God of love, and, in the U.S., of providing a cohesive system well suited to the needs of an immigrant church.⁴⁰

Romanization of piety began to appear in prayer books in the U.S. after 1840. In her study of American devotionalism, Ann Taves notes the papal influence in promoting certain devotions by enriching them with indulgences.⁴¹ The greatest proponent of Italianate devotions in the English-speaking world was Frederick William Faber, whose treatises and hymns were immensely popular on both sides of the Atlantic. A strong rise in Marian piety and devotion to the Sacred Heart throughout the century coincided with papal initiative but was not confined to strict ultramontanes. The new devotionalism spoke to acute needs of people of the age, and it was an expression, however unpolished or sentimental, of their religious faith.⁴²

Nineteenth-century Marian and eucharistic devotions served directly to enhance papal prestige. In 1854, Pius IX—outside a council

View on the Centenary of his Death," *Worship* 49 (1975) 318–28; and B. Heurtebizer, "Guéranger, Prosper-Louis-Pascal," in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 6.1894–98.

³⁶ William Busch, "From Other Times: A Voice of a Plenary Council," *Orate Fratres* 15 (21 September 1941) 452–58, cited by Joseph P. Chinnici, O.F.M., *Living Stones: The History and Structure of Catholic Spiritual Life in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1989) 173.

³⁷ Aubert, *The Church* 57.

³⁸ Ralph Gibson, *A Social History of French Catholicism 1789–1914* (London/New York: Routledge, 1989) 265; and McLeod, *Religion and the People* 36–38.

³⁹ On Saint-Sulpice art, see Gibson, *A Social History* 154–55.

⁴⁰ Chinnici 37–51; and Gibson, *A Social History* 265–67.

⁴¹ Ann Taves, *The Household of Faith: Roman Catholic Devotions in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1986) 27.

⁴² Aubert, *The Church* 6, 117–24; and Holmes, *The Triumph* 83, 138–40.

and therefore specifically by virtue of papal authority—defined the dogma of Mary's Immaculate Conception. The subsequent apparitions at Lourdes were quickly interpreted as a heavenly stamp of approval on the papal definition:

At the end of 1854 the immortal Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. . . . And then, only three years later, the Holy Virgin appearing to a child says to her: I am the Immaculate Conception: I want a chapel built here in my honor. Doesn't she seem to want to consecrate with a monument the infallible oracle of the successor of St. Peter?⁴³

The same idea was reiterated at the canonization of St. Bernadette in 1933, and again in Pius XII's 1958 Lourdes centenary encyclical.⁴⁴

Eucharistic adoration in the form of the Forty Hours devotion was authorized for the entire U.S. by the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore.⁴⁵ Adoration of Jesus personally present in the Blessed Sacrament spoke to immigrant rootlessness and, in the hostile context of nativism, became a religious symbol of suffering from insult and neglect. By midcentury, it had merged with devotion to the Sacred Heart in a theme of reparation.⁴⁶ In Europe, Sacred Heart devotion carried French legitimist allusions. It had, moreover, been denounced as "cardiolatry" by the Enlightenment-oriented, Jansenist-inspired and Gallican-leaning Synod of Pistoia in 1786.⁴⁷ Thus conveniently assorting perceived friends and foes of the papacy on opposite sides, devotion to the Sacred Heart became widespread in the Church during the 1850s, when Pius IX extended the feast to the Universal Church. Establishment in 1861 of the Jesuit *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, together with the beatification of Margaret Mary Alacoque in 1864, lent impetus to the movement, and "First Friday" practice became a staple of American Catholic life. As the 20th century dawned, at midnight on 31 December 1899, Leo XIII consecrated the human race to the Sacred Heart, and his successor Pius X encouraged "enthronement" of the Sacred Heart of Jesus within the family. The ultramontane right placed growing emphasis on recognition of the Sacred Heart as sover-

⁴³ Episcopal decree verifying the apparition of Lourdes, translated in Thomas A. Kselman, *Miracles and Prophecies in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University, 1983) 224 n. 26.

⁴⁴ Holmes, *The Triumph* 140–41.

⁴⁵ Eucharistic devotions were encouraged by the Baltimore Synod of 1791, but Neumann established the first schedule for diocesan observance in the diocese of Philadelphia from 1853 (Chinnici, *Living Stones* 28; Joseph Masson Champlin, "Forty Hours Devotion," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 5.1036; and Taves, *Household of Faith* 31).

⁴⁶ Chinnici, *Living Stones* 31, 46–48, 78; and Taves, *Household of Faith* 31–34. The thematic unity of Eucharist, Sacred Heart, and reparation, common since the visions of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque (1747–90), was given official status by Leo XIII in the encyclical *Annum sacrum*, 25 May 1899 (Aubert, *The Church* 121).

⁴⁷ Holmes, *The Triumph* 6. Pistoia was condemned and Sacred Heart devotions affirmed by Pius VI in the bull *Auctorem fidei*, 28 August 1794.

eign in society, an idea whose theocratic overtones echoed in the establishment of the Feast of Christ the King by Pius XI in 1925.⁴⁸

Reparation and eucharistic devotion fit admirably the campaign to elicit loyalty to an embattled papacy in mid-19th-century Italy. But proinfallibilists went dangerously far when they added a third element to the Sacred Heart-eucharistic configuration, likening the pope to the suffering Christ and to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. "Devotion to the Pope," a sermon of Father Faber published in the U.S. in 1860, suggested that, in addition to the Incarnation and the Eucharist, "the Sovereign Pontiff is a third visible presence of Jesus amongst us. . . . The Pope is the Vicar of Jesus on earth. . . . He is the visible shadow cast by the Invisible Head of the Church in the Blessed Sacrament."⁴⁹ At Vatican I Bishop Gaspard Mermillod of Geneva, an ardent infallibilist, "preached openly before the council on 'the three incarnations of the Son of God,' that is, in the womb of Our Lady, in the Eucharist, and in the pope."⁵⁰ Although demonstrating the extremes to which it could go, this florid rhetoric should not obscure the power of ultramontane devotionism, precisely in touching hearts and drawing them securely within the Roman orbit.⁵¹ Devotionally inspired loyalty to the institutional Church in the person of the pope proved a strong lever for reinforcing the position of the proinfallibilists at Vatican I and played a large part in American response to the Council's decrees.

VATICAN I (1869-1870)

There was no discernible "American" ecclesiological policy at Vatican I. The U.S. bishops were deeply divided in their views; collectively they embraced an entire spectrum of opinion. On the one hand, Bishop Edward Fitzgerald of Little Rock, for reasons that remain obscure, cast one of the two negative votes out of 535 for *Pastor aeternus*.⁵² On the other, Augustus Martin of Natchitoches placed fellow bishops who opposed the definition in two categories: "[some] more or less avowed enemies of the Holy See, others those who from their youth have sucked the poison of heresy."⁵³ Peter Richard Kenrick, archbishop of

⁴⁸ Aubert, *The Church* 120-21; and "Quas primas," 11 December 1925, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 17 (1925) 593-610. Nineteenth-century French political overtones of Sacred Heart devotion are described by Gibson, *A Social History*, 148-49, citing P. Boutry and M. Cinquin, *Deux Pèlerinages au XIX^e siècle: Ars et Paray-le-Monial* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1980).

⁴⁹ Cited in Taves, *Household of Faith* 104-5.

⁵⁰ Hennesey, *First Vatican* 103; Louis Veuillot ascribed "Rerum PIUS [*sic*, for Deus] tenax vigor" to Pius IX (Holmes, *The Triumph* 152-53).

⁵¹ Jay P. Dolan describes it as "fostering a loyalty that was spiritually meaningful as well as institutionally desirable" (*Catholic Revivalism: The American Experience 1830-1900* [Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1978] 195-96).

⁵² Hennesey, *First Vatican* 280-81. The best treatments of the American bishops at Vatican I remain those of Butler and Hennesey.

⁵³ Hennesey, *First Vatican* 97, citing Martin to Perché, Rome, 18 January 1870.

St. Louis, stood out among the antiinfallibilists at Vatican I by his blunt and persistent opposition. Butler describes him as "perhaps the stiffest opponent of the definition," for which he was the object of much criticism both during and after the council.⁵⁴ Hennesey concludes that the true unifying theme behind the American bishops' activities at the council was pastoral concern: those who opposed the definition did so for reasons which were chiefly pragmatic and rooted in American experience, such as Archbishop Martin Spalding of Baltimore, a moderate ultramontane who was at pains to explain to his flock that they need fear no conflict between papal infallibility and true liberty.⁵⁵

In general, the U.S. Catholic press, like Spalding, was moderately proinfallibilist, although in a few cases stridently so.⁵⁶ Publication of the decree on infallibility, when it came, failed to provoke the furor feared by some American bishops. Opposition had been swept away in a tide of sympathy and concern for the besieged pope when Italian troops invaded Rome. Georgetown students greeted Archbishop Martin J. Spalding's return from the Council in 1870 with a propapal demonstration "against the dastardly . . . outrages inflicted upon our Holy Father."⁵⁷ The edition of *Ave Maria* for 3 September 1870 simply carried the text of *Pastor aeternus* in full, without any comment. The lasting effects of an ultramontane triumph appeared rather in the business-as-usual articles of the same issue: refutations of various reports in the secular press of what had gone on at the Council and a serialized account of the apparitions at Lourdes.⁵⁸ The defensive and devotional tenor of late-19th-century Catholicism had been solidified in ardent loyalty to the papal monarch whose authority was now absolute and unassailable.

Two prominent lay Catholic journalists, James McMaster and Orestes Brownson, unyielding foes of what they considered the twin evils of liberalism and Gallicanism, championed a radical ultramontane position. McMaster, editor of the New York *Freeman's Journal*, violently opposed "rancid Gallicanism" and spied a "spirit of heresy and schism rampant" among American bishops who supported the conciliar minority. Bent on exterminating "the dirty snake of Gallicanism," McMaster accused bishops who left the Council early (in order to avoid voting "no" to *Pastor aeternus*) of fostering a "new phase of Protestant-

⁵⁴ Butler, *The Vatican Council* 2.176.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 294, 328–31. On Spalding's role in promoting a compromise proposal at the Council, see *ibid.* 107–17; Mize, "The Papacy" 270; and Thomas W. Spalding, *Martin John Spalding: American Churchman* (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1973) 283–325.

⁵⁶ Hennesey, *First Vatican* 119–21, 292–93.

⁵⁷ Reception by the Clergy and Laity of Baltimore, Washington and Georgetown, of his Grace, the Most Rev. Archbishop Spalding, on his Return from the Council of the Vatican: with the Resolutions and Protests Against the Sacrilegious Invasion of Rome and the Papal States (Baltimore: John Murphy, 1870) 33, cited in Mize, "The Papacy" 227–28.

⁵⁸ *Ave Maria* 6 (1870) 561–64.

ism.”⁵⁹ Brownson, a self-styled “ultra-ultramontane,”⁶⁰ expressed similar views, making sympathy for this position a litmus test of Catholic orthodoxy. He lauded Pius IX for his “great feat” accomplished at the Vatican Council:

stripping liberal and compromising Catholics, who say in the same breath “Good Lord” and “Good Devil,” of all their Catholic pretensions, and compelling them to take their side, either to be firm and staunch adherents of the Holy See and upholders of the papal supremacy and infallibility, or to cease to call themselves Catholics.⁶¹

Both McMaster and Brownson, like many clerics of the time, were innocent of any serious knowledge of church history.⁶² They granted the empirical context of ideas like Gallicanism and papal infallibility little significance, and therefore small opportunity of being nuanced by tradition. Their vitriolic attacks on Catholics of a different mind caricature a wider development within the Church, by which a “good” Catholic came more and more to mean “ultramontane.”⁶³

The huge success of ultramontane Catholicism was organically rooted in the fact that the spirit of the times was congenial to it. In 19th-century society, authority was such a tortured issue that a centralized, authoritarian, monarchical Church seemed an answer to frightening problems of social fragmentation, intellectual uncertainty, and political revolution. Papal monarchy remained the last and sure vestige of the old order, and many Catholics felt secure in an ecclesiology which defined Church as “the society of the faithful governed by the pope,” God’s infallible deputy on earth.⁶⁴ As remarked by Derek Holmes, the popes, however reactionary, “could not have carried the church with them, if they had not spoken for the convictions of most of the clergy and the laity.”⁶⁵ For American Catholics, the new image of the papacy provided a sense of unity among themselves and of moral superiority which allowed them to envision their Church in a leading role, bringing the American republic to the realization of its own true values.⁶⁶ Paradoxically, a persecuted minority had found identity and a triumphal sense of mission in the very institution which made them so despised.

ULTRAMONTANISM ENTRENCHED

The new prominence of the papacy in the final decades of the 19th century signalled the passing of an era in American Catholic history,

⁵⁹ *Freeman's Journal*, 29 January 1870, 19 March 1870, 26 November 1870, and 13 August 1870, cited in Hennessey, *First Vatican* 59–60, 119, 274, 284.

⁶⁰ Mize, “The Papacy” 46 n. 34.

⁶¹ “Papal Infallibility,” *Brownson's Quarterly Review* 1 [Ser. 7] (1873) 332–33.

⁶² Costigan, “Tradition and the Beginning of the Ultramontane Movement” 28–29.

⁶³ See letter of Napoleon J. Perché to Augustus Martin of Natchitoches, cited in Hennessey, *First Vatican* 185–86.

⁶⁴ Aubert, *The Church* 59.

⁶⁵ Holmes, *The Triumph* 287; see Tillard, *The Bishop* 34.

⁶⁶ Mize, “The Papacy” 295–306.

but it was hardly noticed.⁶⁷ Up to that time, American bishops had governed their church through a series of nine councils held in Baltimore between 1829 and 1866,⁶⁸ but Vatican I seemed to signal the end of such collegial procedure. The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884 was summoned at the behest of the Vatican, with the intention of bringing the American Church firmly in line with Rome. Plans originally were drawn up by the Propaganda, and Archbishop Gibbons was chosen to act as a delegate of the Sovereign Pontiff only when the American hierarchy protested the appointment of an Italian.⁶⁹ It proved to be the last American episcopal council. In the 1890s papal control of the Church in the U.S. was further strengthened by the presence of a personal representative of the Vatican in Washington and by the ultimate defeat in 1899 of the Americanizing movement.⁷⁰

The conflict raging between liberal and conservative views within U.S. Catholicism during the 1890s was cast by Thomas Preston, vicar general for Archbishop Corrigan, in terms of Americanist vs. Romanist sympathies:

Here in New York we are loyal Catholics. We are devoted to the Holy See, we do not believe in the great folly and absurdity of Americanizing the Catholic church. We propose to Catholicize America. We are entirely Roman in all our actions and affections.⁷¹

Roman affections were animated by the establishment of an Apostolic Delegation at Washington on January 4, 1893, headed by Archbishop Francesco Satolli, and details of American church life were thenceforth increasingly decided by Rome.⁷² Initially sought by liberal American bishops, the appointment of an Apostolic Delegate went sour when Satolli turned against them.⁷³ By 1895 he returned to the Vatican, where, as a cardinal, he headed an investigation of the U.S. Church which ended in Leo XIII's condemnation of Americanism in 1899. In

⁶⁷ Hennesey, *First Vatican* 293–94.

⁶⁸ Peter Guilday, ed., *A History of the Councils of Baltimore, 1791–1884* (New York, 1932).

⁶⁹ Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy* 30–31; and “The Catholic Hierarchy in the United States between the Third Plenary Council and the Condemnation of Americanism,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 11 (Summer 1993) 19–35, at 21.

⁷⁰ For a concise analysis, see Thomas E. Wangler, “Americanist Beliefs and Papal Orthodoxy: 1884–1889,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 11 (Summer 1993) 37–51.

⁷¹ Thomas Scott Preston to Archbishop Domenico Jacobini, 2 January 1890, cited in Robert Emmet Curran, S.J., *Michael Augustine Corrigan and the Shaping of Conservative Catholicism in America 1878–1902* (New York: Arno, 1978) 309.

⁷² Among those who welcomed the direct link with Rome were sisters, who felt keenly the iron control of local bishops (Patricia Byrne, “Sisters of St. Joseph, Americanization of a French Tradition,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 5 [1987] 241–72, at 269; see also Gerald P. Fogarty, “The Bishops versus Religions Orders: The Suppressed Decrees of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore,” *The Jurist* 33 [1973] 384–98).

⁷³ Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy* 130–42; and idem, “The Catholic Hierarchy” 28–31.

retrospect, it is certain that a liberal "Americanizing" movement, which stressed the importance of the local church and cultural adaptation, was doomed to failure in face of a Roman administration intent on centralizing the life of the Church under a comprehensive papal monarchy.⁷⁴

By the turn of the century, the ultramontane church was a *fait accompli*. Following the Vatican Council, a growing number of people tended "to identify the Holy See with the Church, in fact if not in law."⁷⁵ In truth, the *aura* of infallibility, the mantle of authority (which increasingly extended to the Roman Congregations), counted more than the actual definition or any explicit exercise of infallibility on the part of the pope.

CULT OF THE POPES

A personal cult of the popes, both by-product and instrument of ultramontane sentiment, had its heyday in the years between the pontificates of Leo XIII and Pius XII. Catholics lionized the popes, and eagerly studied details of their daily regime. A journalist's account of a consistory in 1883 describing the attire of Leo XIII in vivid detail (silk, sash, shoes) ended dramatically: "From and around his neck hung a heavy gold chain, pendant to which was his only decoration—the cross. 'A bright gold cross, that Jews might kiss and Infidels adore.'"⁷⁶ A news caption in 1903 described a recently appointed American bishop's impressions of the nonagenarian pope: "Amazed at his Intellect. Seemed to Compress in 15 Minutes All the New Bishop Had Learned in Nearly Two Months."⁷⁷ Following the death of Leo XIII, newspapers published a glut of information, some of it astonishing. One account described the former pope's habit of wiping his pen "on the white sleeve of his immaculate robe." An article from a Roman correspondent of *Figaro*, "Giving Sidelights Upon Pontiff's Character," included fondness for his snuffbox, and his custom of taking large pinches which fell on his clothing and the carpet—"Little heaps are found where the Pope has stayed for any length of time."⁷⁸

Catholics at the beginning of the 20th century relished such intel-

⁷⁴ Fogarty sees the Romanization of the American hierarchy epitomized in the appointment of William Henry (later Cardinal) O'Connell in 1906 as successor to the see of Boston (*The Vatican and the American Hierarchy* 195–207).

⁷⁵ Aubert, *The Church* 69.

⁷⁶ Newspaper clipping, title not included [pencil, "July 12th 1903"], Bound Scrapbook [itself a document of popular ultramontaniam], 131 numbered pages, Archives of the Carmel of Baltimore, RG IV, HDBC, Ser. 2 & 3, Box 3 (hereafter Scrapbook).

⁷⁷ Interview of Bishop Rooker of Jaro, Philippines, with Leo XIII [pencil, "July 12th 1903"], Scrapbook, Archives of the Carmel of Baltimore. Fogarty notes that Rooker's political ambitions required distance from his former liberal allies (*The Vatican and the American Hierarchy* 200).

⁷⁸ *Baltimore American*, 21 July 1903; and *The Baltimore News* [pencil, "July 6"], Scrapbook, Archives of the Carmel of Baltimore.

ligence because, for them, the pope had become bigger than life, and emotional identification with the pope was carefully inculcated. An American woman, in a make-believe letter to the late pontiff, recalled her introduction to Leo XIII as a child in 1900:

I was in the baby room of dear old St. Patrick's school and Sister Mary Berchmans . . . pointed to your picture and told us wide-eyed youngsters that you were the Pope, the Head of the Church. She said you took the place of Christ on Earth, that you spoke for Christ. We were always to love you and to pray for you, she said, and that was why we were to call you "Father—Holy Father." She had us all repeat very solemnly after her: "I love our Holy Father, Pope Leo the Thirteenth."⁷⁹

Affective bonding with the pope, combined with institutional centralization in Rome, touched every segment of the faithful. Loyalty to the papacy firmly separated American Catholics from Protestants, and if the former lacked social prestige, they possessed unshakable truth. American working-class Catholics aware of *Rerum novarum* felt the Pope was on their side.⁸⁰ At the parish level, thanks to liturgical reforms under Pius X, mixed choirs and soloists were discouraged, and Gregorian chant was established as the preferred music for Catholic worship.⁸¹ Choirs and organists struggled with the beautiful and difficult chant for over 60 years, but never succeeded in getting congregations wholeheartedly involved. Schools for Gregorian chant, notably the Pius X School of Liturgical Music at Manhattanville College, were established in the U.S. In 1943, James W. Connerton, C.S.C. noted with satisfaction: "No longer can it be said truthfully that only the Anglicans can sing Gregorian properly. Like all movements sponsored by the Holy See this one has succeeded."⁸²

The beatification of Pius X in 1951 and his subsequent canonization in 1954 added enormously to papal prestige, placing an image of pope-as-saint to the fore.⁸³ Ecclesiological and devotional ultramontanist

⁷⁹ Mary Gordon, "A Letter to Leo XIII," *America* (13 February 1932) 456.

⁸⁰ Mize, "The Papacy" 301.

⁸¹ *Motu proprio, Tra le sollecitudini* (22 November 1903). Its effects were satirized in 1916 by James Joyce ("The Dead," in *Dubliners*, The Viking Critical Library [New York: Penguin, 1969] 194.)

⁸² James W. Connerton, C.S.C., "Forty Years after Motu Proprio," *Ave Maria* 50 (18 December 1943) 777; see Catherine A. Carroll, R.S.C.J., *A History of the Pius X School of Liturgical Music 1916–1969* (Privately printed: Society of the Sacred Heart, St. Louis, 1989); and Costigan, "Tradition and the Beginning of the Ultramontane Movement" 37.

⁸³ Since then four more popes have been proposed for canonization: Pius IX, Pius XII, John XXIII, and Paul VI, as opposed to five in the preceding 1,000 years (Kenneth L. Woodward, *Making Saints: How the Catholic Church Determines Who Becomes a Saint, Who Doesn't, and Why* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990] 16, 280–335, 377; Gerald M. Costello, "Paul VI Did More than Ban the Pill," *U.S. Catholic* 58 [October 1993] 48; and Peter Hebblethwaite, *Paul VI: The First Modern Pope* [New York: Paulist, 1993] 395, 448–52, 514–24, 664).

coalesced in the powerful image of sanctity.⁸⁴ Positive emphasis on a merciful God, so strong in ultramontane eucharistic devotion, inspired a high point in the papacy of Pius X, with the decrees of 1905 recommending daily reception of communion and, five years later, communion for children.⁸⁵ This implicit recognition of the holiness of the faithful has to be recognized as one of the greatest achievements of ultramontane devotionalism.

A different side of ultramontane progress is found in the codification of canon law, begun under Pius X and put into effect in 1918, which guaranteed central government of the Church and encouraged a tendency to see norm and uniformity as the measure of church life. Ulrich Stutz, German historian of canon law, judges the code "thoroughly papal, thoroughly Vatican . . . both in form and content."⁸⁶ The strong ultramontanist spirit among American bishops from the early 1920s,⁸⁷ moreover, resulted in the Roman code's being enforced in the U.S. with a very un-Roman thoroughness.

Religious orders, in adopting new rules revised to match the Code, were brought more than ever before into homogeneous uniformity. Many women's congregations, desiring to escape the tyrannical rule of a local bishop, sought pontifical status, and began to submit minutiae to Rome for approval. Headquarters of international orders, male and female, were transferred to Rome. Under Pius XII, the Roman orientation of religious congregations was used to promote a renewal, which, coinciding with educational developments in the U.S., occasioned the Sister Formation Movement—much enhanced because sisters understood they were following "the mind of the Church," which meant the mind of Rome.⁸⁸

The laity too derived an ecclesial identity through papal promotion (particularly under Pius XI) of Catholic Action, defined as "the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy." The tendency toward centralization of lay movements culminated in Pius XII's call-

⁸⁴ The saint who personified ultramontane spirit for Catholics of this century was Thérèse Martin (1873–1897), who captured the imagination of an era, undoubtedly because she herself was so much part of it (Thérèse of Lisieux, *Story of a Soul: The Autobiography of St. Thérèse of Lisieux*, trans. John Clarke, O.C.D. [Washington: Institute of Carmelite Sources, 1976] 134–35; Barbara Corrado Pope, "A Heroine without Heroics: The Little Flower of Jesus and Her Times," *Church History* 57 [1988] 46–60; and Gibson, *A Social History* 266–67).

⁸⁵ Decrees *Sacra Tridentina Synodus* (20 December 1905) and *Quam singulari* (8 August 1910).

⁸⁶ *Motu proprio Arduum sane* (19 March 1904); and Stutz, as cited in Hasler, *How the Pope Became Infallible*, trans. Peter Heinegg (Garden City: Doubleday, 1981) 255.

⁸⁷ John Tracy Ellis, in Aubert, *The Church* 312; and Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy* 195–206.

⁸⁸ *The Mind of the Church in the Formation of Sisters, Selections from Addresses Given During the Six Regional Conferences and the First National Meeting of the Sister Formation Conference 1954–1955*, ed. Ritamary Bradley, C.H.M. (New York: Fordham University, 1956).

ing to Rome the first congress of the Lay Apostolate in 1951.⁸⁹ Despite germinating criticism of the hierarchy by educated and socially activist lay Catholics, one of them, Donald Thorman, on the eve of Vatican II still ascribed lay dissatisfaction in parishes to a failure of pastors and bishops to implement the insights of Roman authorities.⁹⁰

PIUS XII

Pius XII is the transitional figure in the history of ultramontane feeling. While his era inaugurated the path to Vatican II, it also modelled the quintessence of papal devotionism, described by *Life* in 1955 as the "Strange Mute Magic" of Pope Pius XII.⁹¹ Pius XII represented the charismatic peak of ultramontane papacy, certainly in his dogmatic definition of the Assumption of Mary (1 November 1950), but no less in his austere and authoritarian style, enhanced by his appearance: "the image of Pius XII—thin, ascetic, aristocratic, eyes uplifted behind rimless spectacles, arms extended to embrace the world—imposed itself as the icon of the papacy itself."⁹² *Collier's* carried a photo essay on Pius XII at the time of the allied bombing of Rome on 19 July 1943. Memorable pictures show the pontiff among the crowds, arms outstretched in the gesture typically his.⁹³ This awe-inspiring pope felt it necessary, toward the end of his regime, to deny "the desire for 'centralization' that many reproachfully ascribe to the Holy See." He insisted his was not "a system of government which claims all power for itself, decides everything, directs everything, reducing subordinates to the status of mere instruments."⁹⁴ Such, however, was precisely the view Americans at midcentury were likely to have of the papacy, and to take for granted.

The question and answer section of *Sign* magazine reveals exceptional interest in the pope and his authority, a subject which the editor, Aloysius McDonagh, C.P., considered quite plain "in any ungarbled version of the Scriptures." Responding to the question whether it was possible "for a malevolent Pope or Council to deliberately falsify in proclaiming a doctrine as of faith or morals, or by a pseudo canonization," he replied, "They who are endowed with infallibility are so

⁸⁹ Catholic Action in substance was promoted by numerous papal documents, including Leo XIII, *Sapientiae christianae* (10 January 1890); Pius X, *Il fermo proposito* (11 June 1905) and *Pieni l'animo* (28 July 1906); and Pius XI, *Ubi arcano Dei consilio* (23 December 1922); see Debra Campbell, "The Struggle to Serve: From the Lay Apostolate to the Ministry Explosion," in *Transforming Parish Ministry* 201–280, at 251.

⁹⁰ Donald J. Thorman, *The Emerging Layman* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1962) 37; see Campbell 254.

⁹¹ Emmet John Hughes, *Life*, Special Issue: Christianity (26 December 1955) 158–60.

⁹² Peter Hebblethwaite, *In the Vatican* (Bethesda: Adler and Adler, 1986) 30.

⁹³ James A. Bishop, "Rome's Black Monday," *Collier's* (23 October 1943) 22.

⁹⁴ "The State of Perfection: An Address of Pope Pius XII to the Second World Congress of the States of Perfection, December 11, 1957" ("*Sous la maternelle*"), *The Pope Speaks* 4 (Winter 1957–58) 264–72, at 271.

graced as to share a divine prerogative. Hence, their infallible pronouncements are foolproof."⁹⁶ In the case of Pius XII, personal intellectual gifts reinforced the image of a superman. An obituary in *Our Sunday Visitor* described him as "one of the most brilliant men in the world." In addition to his remarkable fluency in languages, the pope was credited with having "predicted [in 1943] the development of atomic energy, discussing at the same time the disintegration of uranium when bombarded by intra-neutrons."⁹⁶ It is difficult to see why such a person would *not* decide and direct everything, or have any need for subordinates other than as instruments.

Visits of famous personages to the pope consistently made news: actors, singers, even astronauts.⁹⁷ American Catholics displayed untiring interest in every kind of intelligence about the pope—when he went to Castelgandolfo, what he ate for breakfast, what he had to say on every subject imaginable. This, plus their unparalleled fidelity of observance, confirmed Cardinal Spellman's claim "that the Hierarchy, the priests, the religious and faithful of the United States are second to the people of no country in the world, I repeat, of no country in the world, in their devotion to the Vicar of Christ."⁹⁸

American Catholics found another source of identification with Rome, since it was highly compatible with their own sense of patriotism, in the well-known anticommunist policy of popes Pius XI and XII. American feelings of being embattled by "the Reds" merged with the Catholic Church's apprehension of the modern world in a new version of fortress mentality. Writing in *Ave Maria* in 1932, Stanley B. James lamented a pervasive spirit of compromise even in formerly reliable countries, so that "the Church is left to carry on the war alone." He viewed Pius XI as providentially prepared to meet the challenge of the times: "Before ever he came to the throne of St. Peter, Pius XI had been near enough to militant Communism to feel the hot breath of its hatred for all things Catholic."⁹⁹ Following World War II, a ferocious anticommunism served to unite American Catholics in a consensus that went much deeper than their sharp divisions over McCarthyism.¹⁰⁰ They found their public image polished, furthermore, by a

⁹⁶ Aloysius McDonagh, C.P., "Sign Post," *Sign* 29 (March 1950) 33; and *ibid.* 28 (December 1948) 35.

⁹⁶ "Pius XII," in *Seventy Years of Our Sunday Visitor 1912-1982*, ed. Robert P. Lockwood (Huntingdon: Our Sunday Visitor, 1982) 161.

⁹⁷ *Our Sunday Visitor*, 9 May 1948; *The Catholic Review*, 26 July 1957; *idem*, 1 August 1958; and *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly Edition in English, 27 February 1969.

⁹⁸ Archives of the Archdiocese of New York, Spellman to Montini, New York, Apr. 17, 1953 (copy), cited in Gerald P. Fogarty, S.J., "The Vatican and the American Church since World War II," in *The Papacy and the Church in the United States* 119-40, at 125.

⁹⁹ Stanley B. James, "The Counter-Revolution and Its Leader," *Ave Maria* 36 (24 September 1932) 385, 388.

¹⁰⁰ For a judicious treatment of the spectrum of Catholic opinion on McCarthy, see Vincent P. De Santis, "American Catholics and McCarthyism," *The Catholic Historical Review* 51 (1965) 1-30.

connection in the popular mind between anticommunism and Catholicism, an alliance enhanced by the brand of patriotic Catholicism expounded in Dr. Tom Dooley's *Deliver Us from Evil*.¹⁰¹

The anticommunist position of some Catholics was so doctrinaire they could not imagine economic or social conditions' seriously affecting political morality, let alone papal teaching, on the subject. In 1968, a professor of government at Georgetown University, dealing with the charge that *Pacem in terris* provided an "opening to the left," insisted: "American Catholics must realize that the Holy See is not a party to the 'Cold War' and cannot be expected to sacrifice the interests of the 'Church of Silence' to what many might consider to be the interests of American foreign policy."¹⁰² By the time of *Pacem in terris*, however, an era had passed. The 1963 play by Rolf Hochhuth, *The Deputy*, had impugned the character of Pius XII and evoked emotional rebuttals and serious counterarguments¹⁰³—but it had dared to place him on a level with other human beings. In John XXIII, the ultramontane style of papacy which had reached its mythic peak under Pius XII was humanized, and thereby remythologized. Totally disarmed by John XXIII, the press used headlines like "Modern Pope, Modern Ideas," and "The Old Order Changeth."¹⁰⁴

DECLINE OF ULTRAMONTANISM

American Catholic response to three controversial encyclicals between 1930 and 1968 suggests a waning ultramontane spirit. When *Casti connubii* was issued in 1931,¹⁰⁵ ultramontane loyalties were high, and the encyclical's uncompromising stand on sexual morality in marriage (occasioned by Lambeth's liberalization of the Anglican position on birth control) served to reinforce a triumphalist sense of moral superiority among Catholics.¹⁰⁶

In general, opinion on *Casti connubii* divided along confessional

¹⁰¹ Donald F. Crosby, *God, Church, and Flag: Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and the Catholic Church, 1950–1957* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1978), 162–218 passim; James Terence Fisher (who is critical of Dooley), *The Catholic Counterculture in America, 1933–1962* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1989) 142–66; and Fogarty, "The Vatican and the American Church" 128–29.

¹⁰² Victor C. Ferkiss, "Pacem in Terris: An Opening to the Left?" *Catholic World* 198 (1963) 100–108.

¹⁰³ Rolf Hochhuth, *The Deputy*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, preface by Albert Schweitzer (New York: Grove, 1963).

¹⁰⁴ Paul Hoffman, *O Vatican! A Slightly Wicked View of the Holy See* (New York: Corqdon & Weed, 1984) 19–27; and *The Catholic Review*, 10 July 1959.

¹⁰⁵ *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 22 (1930) 539–92 (the encyclical was issued 8 January 1931, under the date of 31 December 1930).

¹⁰⁶ The *New York Times* announced the encyclical on 9 January 1931 (Arnaldo Corlese, "Pope Pius XI, in Encyclical, Condemns Trial Marriage, Divorce and Birth Control," 1, 16; encyclical text 14–16). Commentaries in the *New York Times* include "Roma Dixit," 10 January 1931, 14; and P. W. Wilson, "The Pope's Encyclical Falls on a World of Social Change," 11 January 1931, X.11.

lines, with numerous non-Catholic reviewers labeling it obscurantist: "the Roman Catholic church sets itself squarely against social progress" . . . "Here is a tenth-century mind at work on twentieth-century problems" . . . "Catholics are the cream of the Fundamentalists."¹⁰⁷ Where critics saw outdated science, however, Catholic defenders recognized tested certainty:

And now comes the Ancient Authority. The Ancient Authority of the Papacy reasserting the ancient covenants and the hallowed sanctities of the marriage institution. Above the babble of side-show criers, who would expose and violate every most intimate domestic decency, every most traditional fireside sanctity, comes the voice of Pius XI.¹⁰⁸

Among the "side-show criers" were feminists. Margaret Sanger had denounced it "ridiculous to brand as immoral certain modern ideas on marriage because they do not agree with what Saint Augustine thought fifteen centuries ago."¹⁰⁹ Her once-radical "birth control" movement was steadily gaining ground, including legal protection, in the U.S., and Catholic contraceptive practice began gradually and silently to change as well.¹¹⁰ According to American Catholic apologists of the 1930s, however, the authority of the pope remained unassailable:

since he writes as the supreme legislator and teacher in matters of morality, his injunctions are binding and demand unqualified acceptance and obedience on the part of Catholics. . . . *Roma locuta est, causa finita est.*¹¹¹

The National Councils of Catholic Men and Catholic Women issued statements in support of the papal teaching, and an essay by Hilaire Belloc in *America* declared, "It has the authentic *Tu es Petrus* about it,

¹⁰⁷ Mrs. F. Robertson Jones, president of the American Birth Control League, and John Haynes Holmes, pastor of the Community Church of New York, cited in "Encyclical Stirs Wide Comment Here," *New York Times*, 10 January 1931, 3; and Professor Barnes, in "Lindsey and Barnes Assail Encyclical," *ibid.*, 19 January 1931, 14.

¹⁰⁸ P. J. Carroll, "The Latest Encyclical," *Ave Maria* 33 (7 February 1932) 181. Editorial commentary in the Catholic press was universally positive (*Ave Maria* [14 February 1931]; *Commonweal* 13 [1931] 309; and *Catholic Action* 14 [July 1933] 4).

¹⁰⁹ Sanger, cited in "Assails Encyclical Views," *New York Times*, 13 January 1931, 3. William I. Lonergan, S.J., listed among those who "gnashed their teeth" at the encyclical "the pseudo-scientific intelligentsia and radical workers in modern feminine movements promoting eugenics, birth control, and sterilization of the unfit," and he saw "feminine emancipation" as one of the evils condemned by Pius XI ("The Christian Idea of Marriage," *America* 44 [24 January 24 1931] 379).

¹¹⁰ "The new generation of Roman Catholics is quietly disregarding the teachings of that Church about birth control. There are fifty-four clinics in the United States giving contraceptive information, and in every one of them the Roman Catholic women come in equal numbers with the Protestants and the Jews" (Charles Francis Potter [admittedly an unfriendly witness], cited in "Encyclical Stirs Wide Comment Here," *New York Times*, 10 January 1931, 3; see also William H. Shannon, *The Lively Debate: Response to Humanae Vitae* [New York: Sheed & Ward, 1970] 4-7, 24-27).

¹¹¹ W. Lonergan, "The Christian Idea of Marriage" 379-80.

and thereby rejoices my heart."¹¹² Three decades would pass before Catholics engaged in any public criticism of church policy on sexuality and birth control.

Humani generis, issued by Pius XII, 12 August 1950, had relatively little popular impact, but it caused tumult in theological circles.¹¹³ The issues it treated—the underpinnings of theology and the relationship of ecclesiastical authority to truth—were key to papal teachings on birth control, but the immediate question advanced was the relationship of Catholic theology to Thomism and existentialism.¹¹⁴ While *Humani generis* was frankly recognized as a reprimand to the “new theology” of progressive French schools at Fourvières and Le Saulchoir,¹¹⁵ negative response was strongly muted.¹¹⁶

Typical of the popular press, *Ave Maria* saluted the encyclical as a “Pillar of Truth,” and *The Catholic World* ran an essay defending scholasticism as an indispensable tool of the intellectual apostolate.¹¹⁷ Jordan Aumann, a Dominican, identified the scholarly problematic when he queried, “Isn’t Thomism Outmoded?” but affirmed his complete acceptance of the encyclical’s authority, and instead challenged contemporary Thomists to relevant philosophical discourse.¹¹⁸ Simultaneously, a debate between Monsignor Joseph C. Fenton and Gustave Weigel, S.J. was carried on in the pages of the *American Ecclesiastical Review* and *Theological Studies*.¹¹⁹ It revolved around a critical issue

¹¹² “Marriage: Resolution Adopted by National Council of Catholic Men,” and “Marriage and the Family: Resolution Adopted by National Council of Catholic Women,” *National Catholic Welfare Council Review*, 13 (November 1931) 4, 16; and Hilaire Belloc, “The Papacy Under Fire,” *America* 46 (13 February 1932) 454.

¹¹³ *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 42 (561–78). The *New York Times* ran Camille M. Cianfarra, “Pope Bids Clergy Reject Deviation” (22 August 1950, 1, 16) and printed the text of the encyclical in the same issue, but little else. A bibliography of commentaries on *Humani generis* was published by Gustave Weigel, S.J., “Current Theology: Gleanings from the Commentaries on *Humani generis*,” *TS* 12 (December 1951) 520–26.

¹¹⁴ Gustave Weigel, S.J., “The Historical Background of the Encyclical *Humani generis*,” *TS* 12 (June 1951) 208–230.

¹¹⁵ Associated with scholars such as Jean Daniélou, S.J., Henri de Lubac, S.J., Marie-Dominique Chenu, O.P., and Yves Congar, O.P., the term “new theology” was used by Pius XII in his allocution to the Fathers of the Twenty-ninth Congregation of the Society of Jesus, 17 September 1946, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 28 (1946) 385; he addressed the topic to the Dominican General Chapter in the same year, *ibid.* 387 (Cyril Vollert, S.J., “*Humani generis* and the Limits of Theology,” *TS* 12 [March 1951] 18–19). See also Robert Barrat, “From France: Reaction to the Encyclical,” *Commonweal* 52 (6 October 1950) 628–30; Weigel, “Gleanings,” and particularly, “Historical Background” 217–18.

¹¹⁶ According to Weigel, “Without exception, the Catholic theologians who commented on the pronouncement considered it most important, most timely, and most satisfactory . . . no one can dismiss the common consent on this point by insinuating that some were speaking with their tongues in their cheeks” (“Gleanings” 526).

¹¹⁷ Eugene M. Burke, C.S.P., “The Intellectual Apostolate and *Humani Generis*,” *Catholic World* 172 (Oct. 1950–May 1951) 269–76; and *Ave Maria*, 16 September 1950.

¹¹⁸ *Integrity* 5 (1951) 31–41.

¹¹⁹ Joseph Clifford Fenton, “The *Humani generis* and Its Predecessors,” *American*

raised by *Humani generis*, the relationship of the authority of scholarly investigation to the teaching authority of the pope. While Fenton defended the Holy Father's ordinary magisterium and likened *Humani generis* to *Quanta cura* and *Pascendi*, Weigel attempted to sort out the limits of freedom in the theological enterprise. He trod carefully, however, in the delicate matter of the relationship between papal authority and the autonomy of theologians:

Humani generis dealt with domestic issues; it was a purely family affair. There was no gagging of an opposition, because there could be none. The greenest tiro in Catholic theology understands that pontifical directives are of the essence of his discipline. There is no legitimate resentment when they are given, any more than a football team legitimately resents the presence and activity of referees, without whom there could be no game, no order, and no progress.¹²⁰

This painful ecclesiological issue would surface again, and the theological ferment surrounding it was symptomatic of the potential for the substantial change in Catholic thought that would emerge in Vatican II. In the early 1950s, however, ultramontane ecclesiology held firm. In the most scholarly Catholic theological journal in the U.S., for example, it was argued: in response to the assertion that "the Pope rules the church autocratically, we can only answer that this is the will of Christ."¹²¹

After the Second Vatican Council, and in part because of it, Paul VI's *Humanae vitae* (29 July 1968) created an absolute storm of controversy.¹²² Although one of the earliest and best treatments had been Bernard Lonergan's "Finality, Love, Marriage" in 1943, its thought was never developed due to Vatican opposition.¹²³ In the five years immediately prior to the encyclical, however, Catholic theologians, physicians, clergy, and laity had begun to voice serious questions about the traditional doctrine on contraception.¹²⁴ In *Humanae vitae*,

Ecclesiastical Review 123 (1950) 452–58, "The Lesson of the *Humani generis*," *ibid.* 359–78, and "The *Humani generis* and the Holy Father's Ordinary Magisterium," *ibid.*, 125 (1951) 53–62; Gustave Weigel, S.J., "Gleanings," and "Historical Background."

¹²⁰ "Gleanings" 526 n. 2. Vollert argued that "theological research may go on and must go on," but welcomed papal intervention because truth is absolutely protected by the authority of the teaching office (20–23).

¹²¹ Edward A. Ryan, S.J., "Some Limits and Causes of the Centralization of the Church," *TS* 11 (1950) 546.

¹²² *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 60 (1968) 481–503. For an overview of the U.S. conflict, see Charles E. Curran, Robert E. Hunt et al., *Dissent in and for the Church: Theologians and Humanae Vitae* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969) particularly 3–27.

¹²³ *TS* 4 (1943) 477–510. A statement of the Holy Office, 29 March 1944, condemned any opinion denying the generation and education of children as the primary end of marriage or holding that any secondary ends were not subordinate (Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., Introduction, in *Collection: Papers by Bernard Lonergan, S.J.* [New York: Herder and Herder, 1967] xxi).

¹²⁴ Review of literature found in John J. Lynch, "Notes on Moral Theology," *TS* 26 (June 1965) 242–79; William Birmingham, *What Modern Catholics Think about Birth*

when Paul VI essentially reaffirmed *Casti connubii's* prohibition of contraception, for the first time in living memory, Catholics publicly disagreed. The sweep of American opinion ranged from the adamantly conservative papal supporters who cited the encyclical as "an infallible definition of doctrine" or scored opponents for "their open contempt for the pope,"¹²⁵ to studied indifference: "I don't care what the Pope says. . . . I've made my decision, and couldn't care less about the people at the Vatican who are designing another Galileo case."¹²⁶ The day after the encyclical was issued, 87 theologians in the United States signed a statement, released at a press conference at the Mayflower Hotel, declaring that they objected "to the ecclesiology implied and the methodology used. . . . The encyclical consistently assumes that the church is identical with the hierarchical office. . . . Furthermore, the encyclical betrays a narrow and positivistic notion of papal authority."¹²⁷ The manifesto eventually gained over 600 signatories and enjoyed the explicit backing of theological authorities like Bernard Häring and Bernard Lonergan.¹²⁸ U.S. Catholic bishops, allowing the encyclical was not infallible, nevertheless upheld papal teaching in a way that provided less room for equivocation than did numerous other national hierarchies.¹²⁹

The laity were outspoken. *Commonweal* carried a severe critique in which Jordan Bishop identified the central problem in the notion of papal authority as defined by Vatican I. He complained that the doctrine of infallibility "has given birth to numerous progeny of doubtful legitimacy," and noted that "the habit of defining truth by authority" was not credible to contemporary thought.¹³⁰ Although his perspective

Control (New York: New American Library, 1964); Louis Dupré (whose articles in *Cross Currents* 14 [Winter 1964] 63–85, *Commonweal* 80 [5 June 1964] 336–42, and *National Catholic Reporter* [28 April 1965] were developed in his *Contraception and Catholics* [Baltimore: Helicon, 1964]); John T. Noonan, Jr., *Contraception: A History of Its Treatment by the Catholic Theologians and Canonists* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1965; enlarged ed. 1986); *The Experience of Marriage*, ed. Michael Novak (New York: Macmillan, 1964); and John Rock, *The Time Has Come* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963).

¹²⁵ John H. Ryder, S.J., "Pope Paul's 'Humanae Vitae' as an Infallible Definition of Doctrine," *Social Justice Review* 62 (1969) 17–21; and Russell Kirk, "Paul VI and the Power that Withholds," *The Critic* 27 (1968–1969) 42–47. *Triumph* hailed *Humanae vitae* as "a courageous reaffirmation of Christian truth" and invited dissenting priests to leave the Church (cited by John Leo, "Dissent is Voiced," *New York Times*, 30 July 1968, 21; see *ibid.*, 1 August 1968, 28).

¹²⁶ Maryann Napoli, "a young Manhattan housewife and mother of two," cited in John Leo, "Dissent is Voiced," *New York Times*, 30 July 1968, 21.

¹²⁷ Text of statement in Curran, *Dissent* 24–26; see Dierdre Carmody, "Catholic Expects in Strong Dissent on Edict by Pope," *New York Times*, 31 July 1968, 1, 16.

¹²⁸ Curran, *Dissent* 10, 23, 206.

¹²⁹ *Human Life in Our Day*, Pastoral Letter, 27 November 1968 (Washington: U.S. Catholic Conference). See *Humanae Vitae and the Bishops: The Encyclical and the Statements of the National Hierarchies*, ed. John Horgan (Shannon: Irish University, 1972); *The Lively Debate* 117–46, 213–16; and *Dissent* 8, 9, 20, 197–201.

¹³⁰ "Papal Infallibility and All That," *Commonweal* 90 (8 August 1969) 481–84.

was not shared by all, it represented a new or long-forgotten phenomenon in the American Catholic church—"the laity talking back to the hierarchy" on a theological issue.¹³¹ Each of the five lay American members of the Pontifical Study Commission on Family, Population, and Birth Problems expressed significant difficulty with the encyclical's conclusions.¹³²

Catholic opposition to *Humanae vitae* included public demonstrations providing fodder for the media, but the most forceful protest of all came from the silent but massive practice of Catholics to the contrary.¹³³ In this way, by 1968 numerous Roman Catholics had already moved away from unchallenged acceptance of papal authority. Directly or indirectly, the entire controversy regarding *Humanae vitae* reflected Catholics' attitudes toward the papacy, and for numerous Americans it spelled their disenchantment with the ultramontane, authoritarian paradigm of church government.¹³⁴ Some American Catholics were *blasé*, like a woman in Hackensack who said, "The papacy is an outmoded institution, something like the English monarchy . . ." ¹³⁵ Others, however, encountered the deepest challenge they had ever experienced in their twin allegiance to pope and Church—heretofore inseparable loyalties were now in tension. As Bernard Häring commented in regard to his public dissent from *Humanae vitae*, "If our own personal convictions would be at stake, reverence and love toward the Holy Father would be a sufficient motive for me to be silent forever."¹³⁶ What for American Catholics had served as a universally

¹³¹ *The Lively Debate* 176–92, at 177. A Gallup poll showed 54% of American Catholics opposed to the papal ban on contraception, 28% in favor, and 18% silent, *New York Times*, 1 September 1968, 46.

¹³² Dr. André Hellegers, gynecologist at Johns Hopkins, objected, for to him it meant that "the scientific method of inquiry is irrelevant to Roman Catholic theology"; Pat and Patty Crowley of the CFM movement voiced misgivings about rhythm in light of their own study of Catholic couples; Doctors Thomas K. Burch and John R. Cavanaugh stated their objection publicly, for which the latter became subject to formal investigation by the Catholic University of America (*Contraception: Authority and Dissent*, ed. Charles E. Curran [New York: Herder & Herder, 1969] 217; Patrick Crowley, *National Catholic Reporter*, 7 August 1968; *The Lively Debate* 184–86, 210–12; and *Dissent* xvi, 8, 10).

¹³³ John Giles Milhaven, "The Grounds of the Opposition to 'Humanae Vitae,'" *Thought* 44 (1969) 343. A study of birth control practices in the U.S. conducted by Drs. Raymond Potvin of Catholic University, Charles Westoff of Princeton, and Norman Ryder of the University of Wisconsin found 78% of American Catholic wives surveyed using some form of contraception, and two-thirds of these, a method other than rhythm (Jane E. Brody, "Religion Appears as a Lesser Factor in Most Areas," *New York Times*, 30 July 1968, 22). On demonstrations in Washington, see *ibid.*, 3 September 1968, 29; and *ibid.*, 23 September 1968, 1.

¹³⁴ Andrew M. Greeley attributed the disaffection of American Catholics from their church almost entirely to *Humanae vitae* ("Council or Encyclical?" *Review of Religious Research* 18 [Fall, 1976], 3–24, at 6, 13, 15, 18).

¹³⁵ Mary Louise Birmingham, Catholic housewife and editor, quoted in *New York Times*, 30 July 1968, 21.

¹³⁶ *National Catholic Reporter*, 7 August 1968, cited in *The Lively Debate* 168. The

binding ideology was shattered, and the ultramontane papacy, instead of a rallying point and center of identity, became a criterion of dispute.

Since 1968, other events have augmented the tension between Roman authority and American church life. While ultramontanism still provides a strong locus of identity for many conservative Catholics (some, disaffected with their local churches, have regularly used Rome as a court of appeal during the past few decades),¹³⁷ liberals have had little hesitation in laying considerable blame for problems in the Church today at the door of the Vatican. The question of being a "good" Catholic is alive again, and progressive and conservative forces in the U.S. have deeply divided answers, and deeply divided ideas about the proper use of papal authority.

CONCLUSION

For over 100 years, ultramontane Catholicism addressed profound issues of identity for American Catholics. In the U.S., where Catholicism developed in a hostile environment, the ultramontane ethos provided immense security and emphasized the distinction of the Catholic community. But as the separatist status of Roman Catholics disappeared, so did their separate, devotional, ultramontane culture. The demise of devotionalism in Catholic life over the past 25 years is no accident. It is not the result of the Council, but a symptom of the passing of a strong and largely successful worldview.

Problems unanswered in the ultramontane solution have again surfaced: What is the relationship of reason and authority? What is the dynamic of authentic church government amid diversified populations? And perhaps above all, how can we know what is true? Catholics who are American find that, on the one hand, absolutist appeals to church authority raise suspicions of an un-American medievalism, while on the other, the Church's cry for social justice assaults received attitudes and an individualist culture commonly accepted in the U.S. There is grave need to address the intellectual concerns bypassed in the ultramontane synthesis. A new, but still ahistorical approach can only lead to a similarly faulty ecclesiological construct. We are now witnessing the erosion of a church system of clericalization, confirmed by the Council of Trent, and concentrated in Vatican I to a point of focus in one person, the pope. It passed because the tenor of the era which sustained it—a world of stratified societies, certain knowledge

same dialectic inspired Karl Rahner's "Zur Enzyklika 'Humanae vitae,'" *Stimmen der Zeit*, September 1968 (translated by David E. Schlaver, *National Catholic Reporter*, 18 September 1968; and by David Bourke in *Theological Investigations* [New York: Crossroad, 1974] 11.263–75).

¹³⁷ James Hitchcock, "Catholic Activist Conservatism in the United States," in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1991) 116.

of any kind, or competent leadership in the hands of one person—has disappeared. The temper of the time is different from that of 1870, and whatever the definition of a “good” Catholic in a post-Vatican II age, it will have to be made on grounds other than it was in Vatican I.

Ultramontanism has earned a rather bad name. It had many bad features. Nonetheless, it presents a strong challenge to contemporary Catholicism in light of the disintegration and fragmentation of today’s Church. If its answers have proven unacceptable—in truth too simple—for present reality, its questions remain. In tandem with crucial yet unresolved philosophical issues is the striking lack of any popular spirituality as engaging, and therefore pervasive, as ultramontane devotionism.¹³⁸ Many American Catholics have to admit sharing with writer Heinze R. Kuehn a nagging and painful “you can’t go home again feeling.”¹³⁹ It would seem that Catholicism in this country has not, or not yet, evolved a religious culture adequate to carry the ecclesiology of Vatican II. Without dreaming futilely of return to an unrealistic and unicultural model, the Church in the U.S. has still to root itself in an ecclesiology strong and deep enough to provide a common sense of identity and religious nurture.

¹³⁸A more optimistic picture than mine is drawn by Joseph Chinnici in *Living Stones* 175–76; idem, “Broadening the Horizons: The Historian in Search of the Spirit,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 8 (Winter/Spring 1989) 2; and Robert M. Hamma, “The Changing State of Spirituality: 1968 and 1993,” *America* 169 (27 November 1993) 8–10.

¹³⁹Heinze R. Kuehn, “Catholic Itinerary,” *American Scholar* 55 (1986) 477–91, at 477; see idem, “Turning to Silence,” *America* 126 (13 May 1972) 506–8. The malaise described by Kuehn is, perhaps, what Bernard Lonergan called “a crisis not of faith but of culture”: the old has gone, and it has not been adequately replaced. The resolution, he concludes, will require a center “strong enough to refuse half-measures and insist on complete solutions even though it has to wait” (“Dimensions of Meaning,” in *Collection* 265–67).