



Proclaiming the Gospel

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." - Romans 1:16

July/August 2000
Vol. 9 No. 4

Editor - Evangelist Mike Gendron

Steps into Apostasy

*Love of Jesus is forsaken
False teaching is tolerated
Sin is tolerated
Repentance is ignored
Jesus is replaced*

Tell others about our web site!
www.pro-gospel.org

In This Issue

Rome's Apostasy	... 1
PTG Ministry	... 2
Seminars & Conferences	... 3
Letters from You	... 4
What in the World	... 6
Tools for Proclaiming	... 7
The Roman Catholic Road	... 8

Tracing Rome's Five Steps Into Apostasy

Two streams of Christianity have been operating side by side for nearly 2000 years. One stream is made up of *apostolic* churches whose members have been hated and persecuted by the world (Mat. 24:9). The other stream contains *apostate* churches whose members are loved by the world. The apostates follow doctrines of demons and grow worse and worse as the Day of our Lord approaches (2 Tim. 3:13). A question that is hotly debated among evangelicals today is: in which stream is the Roman Catholic Church? Is it "apostolic" as its clergy proclaims or "apostate" as its doctrines demonstrate? To answer the question let us investigate church history through the lens of the seven churches in the book of Revelation.

The letters Jesus wrote to these churches describe not only the conditions that existed in the churches at the end of the first century but also the conditions that would describe the church during different time periods in history. The seven epochs of church history that are commonly identified with each church are as follows:

Ephesus 33 to 100
Smyrna 100 to 316
Pergamos 316 to 615
Thyatira 615 to 1517
Sardis 1517 to 1750
Philadelphia 1750 to 1850
Laodicea 1850 to present

It is important to note that Jesus had something against five of these churches. As we study these rebukes against each church chronologically we can see a step by step progression of the professing church into apostasy. (Note: the "professing church" is made up of all who profess to be Christians,

both genuine believers and those who have never been born again).

Love Of Jesus Is Forsaken

The first step into apostasy is when the church forsakes its love for Jesus, a rebuke Jesus gave to the church at Ephesus (Rev. 2:4). With the growing persecution of Christians in the 2nd and 3rd centuries the professing church became more concerned about their well-being than their unwavering devotion to their Savior. Their minds were led astray from the purity of their devotion to Christ (2 Cor. 11:3). Thus when Constantine offered a halt to further persecution by making Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire, the church accepted. *For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money...lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God* (2 Tim. 3:2-4). This was hailed as a great victory for the church but ironically it was the beginning of her downward spiral into apostasy. Many believe this was the genesis of the Roman Catholic Church. After the wedding of church and state by Constantine, true believers began to come out of the apostate system.

False Teaching Is Tolerated

The second step into apostasy is when the church begins to compromise God's word with worldly teachings and traditions, a rebuke Jesus gave to the church of Pergamos (Rev. 2:14-15). The church, which had remained doctrinally pure and been sanctified by the truth of God's word, was now embracing paganism. *The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in ac-*

(see **Apostasy** on page 2)

(**Apostasy** from page 1)
cordance with their own desires (2 Tim 4:3). In 431 A.D. the Roman Church declared water baptism to be efficacious in regenerating the soul. This ritual enabled pagans to enter the church without repentance or faith. "Paganism survived...by an often indulgent Church. An intimate and trustful worship of saints replaced the cult of pagan gods...Statues of Isis and Horus were renamed Mary and Jesus...incense, processions, vestments, hymns which had pleased the people in older cults were domesticated and cleansed in the ritual of the Church...the world converted Christianity."¹



Sin Is Tolerated

Once a church has forsaken their love for Jesus and compromised His Word, the downward spiral continues as it begins to tolerate sin and sexual immorality. This was the rebuke Jesus gave to the church of Thyatira (Rev. 2:20-23). A major compromise by the Roman Church was to deny God's judgment upon *all* sin. A new category of sin called venial was contrived that did not warrant the punishment of hell. Whenever God's Word is perverted by man, the absolute standard for living sensibly, righteously and godly is impeached. This was evidenced by a period of blatant sexual immorality among Roman Catholic clergy from 615 to 1517 AD. By forbidding its clergy to marry (a doctrine of the devil) the church suffered through numerous sexual scandals (1 Tim. 4:3). In the 15th century Rome had more prostitutes than any city in the world because it had more celebrates.² Papal promiscuity led to the birth

of many known bastards, some of whom would later become popes themselves. Pope Pius II (1458-64) said Rome was "the only city run by bastards."³ Peter clearly communicated the rise of these false prophets: *They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you, having eyes full of adultery and that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children; forsaking the right way they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness* (2 Pet. 13-15).

Repentance Is Ignored

The church of Sardis was exhorted to "hold fast and repent." But when a church loves the world more than Jesus, perverts God's word and practices sin without repentance, it faces certain death. Although the church of Sardis professed the name of Jesus, it was rebuked for being spiritually dead (Rev. 3:1). So it is with the apostate Roman Catholic Church. Many Catholics, who are dead in their sins, profess to be Christians but have never been born of the Spirit of God. They have a form of godliness but deny the Gospel and its power to bring life to who repent and believe (2 Tim. 3:5). Jesus offers a sobering warning to those who are Christians in name only: "*many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness'*" (Mat. 7:21-23).

Jesus Is Replaced

The last step into apostasy occurs when Jesus is no longer part of the Church as witnessed by the rebuke of the Laodicean church. Jesus is on the outside asking to be invited back in: "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me*" (Rev. 3:20). What a vivid picture this is of the Roman Catholic Church which has replaced the glorified Jesus Christ with the worship of a lifeless piece of bread. *For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of* (See **Apostasy** on page 8)

The Ministry of Proclaiming the Gospel

OUR PURPOSE

The ministry was established in 1991 and is incorporated in the State of Texas as a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation for the purposes of: 1) glorifying and serving Jesus Christ by proclaiming the Gospel of man's redemption; 2) establishing outreach and discipleship groups in evangelical churches for Roman Catholics to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ; 3) exposing any doctrines that oppose the Gospel so people will repent and come to a knowledge of truth.

OUR METHOD

In a spirit of love and humility, we teach evangelistic seminars, workshops, and home Bible studies to train and encourage other Christians to be effective witnesses to Roman Catholics. We also offer resources designed to teach and equip those who desire to labor in this huge mission field.

OUR NEWSLETTER

Proclaiming the Gospel's bi-monthly newsletter is designed to extend the purposes of the ministry throughout the world. The editor is Evangelist Mike Gendron, a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary and a former Roman Catholic of over 34 years.

OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, satisfied the righteous justice of God by paying the complete penalty for sin when He died as man's substitute on Calvary's cross. Any person who repents and receives Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior by grace through faith in His life, death and resurrection, ceasing to trust in anything else for salvation, becomes a child of God and receives the gift of eternal life, which can never be revoked.

OUR PROVISION

Everything we do is made possible through the prayers and financial support of those who share our burden for the lost. We recognize the sacrifices God's people make to sustain our work and pledge to use these resources effectively and efficiently. Donations (except for products) are tax deductible.

OUR BOARD OF REFERENCE

Kirby Anderson, President, Probe Ministries; Dr. J. Ronald Blue, President, CAM Int'l; John J. Dwyer, Editor, DFW Heritage; John Maisel, Director, East-West Int'l Ministries; Chuck Missler, Founder, Koinonia House; Pastor Tom Nelson, Denton Bible Church; Dr. David Reagan, Director, Lamb & Lion Ministry; Dr. John F. Walvoord, Chancellor, Dallas Theological Seminary.

Quick Quotes

"Christ's body is not made up of denominations, nor of presbyteries, nor of Christian societies; it is made up of saints chosen of God from before the foundation of the world, redeemed by blood, called by His Spirit, and made one with Jesus. We have always had a true ecumenicity. There is not a lost soul in the church invisible, and there is not a saved soul outside it. The early church did not grow by consolidation but by diffusion."

C.H. Spurgeon

"As an evangelical, I believe that the Roman Church is a false church and it teaches a false gospel. Indeed, I believe that the pope himself holds a false and unbiblical office." Pope John Paul has redefined Christianity and the gospel. "He has actually embraced all monotheists, both Jews and followers of Islam as long as they're sincere."

Albert Mohler, President

Southern Baptist Seminary (Larry King Live)

"New Evangelicalism is a theological and moral compromise of the deadliest sort. It is an insidious attack upon the Word of God."

Dr. Charles Woodridge

"One reason the church has so little influence over the world is because the world has so much influence over the church."

C.H. Spurgeon

Two Questions for Catholics to Ponder

Since your Catechism teaches that the perfect sacrifice of the Lord Jesus on Calvary's cross was unable to purge all your sins, how is that your time in purgatory can be shortened by the sacrifice of the Mass? If Christ's sacrifice was not sufficient to purify all sin, how is it that a re-presentation of it during the Mass can purge away sin?

Vatican Council II condemns with anathema anyone who does not believe in indulgences. Whenever this is pointed out to Catholics who don't believe in indulgences, they usually shrug their shoulders and say they don't believe the anathema either. Why is it they do not believe their church when it condemns them to hell, yet they believe their church when it tells them what is required for heaven?

More Double-Talk from the Catholic Catechism

In our continuing series on contradictions within the New Catechism of the Catholic Church (paragraph numbers in parenthesis) we investigate the Catholic doctrine of Mary never committing a sin. "Mary...was preserved from all stain of original sin and by special grace of God committed no sin of any kind during her whole earthly life." (411)

The Catholic Catechism contradicts itself by stating: "All men are implicated in Adam's sin, as St Paul affirms, 'By one man's disobedience...[all men] were made sinners'" (402). "By his sin Adam, as the first man, lost the original holiness and justice he had received from God, not only for himself but for all human beings" (416).

What does the Word of God say?

Only sinners need to be saved and Mary acknowledged her need for a savior when she said: "my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior" (Luke 1:47). She also acknowledged she was ceremonially unclean by bringing sacrifices to the temple for her purification (Luke 2:24). The Bible reveals "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

Where Mike Is Speaking

June 30 Filipino-American Baptist Church
Dallas, TX (214) 221-3212

July 5, 12 Believers Chapel
Dallas, TX (972) 231-5371

July 8 Faithful Word Assembly
Metairie, LA (504) 441-6222

July 11, 18, 25 Spring Park Fellowship
Garland, TX (972) 495-0485

Aug. 9 Edmund Christian Church
Edmund, OK (405) 348-1252

Aug. 25-27 Steeling the Mind Conf
Keystone, CO (800) 977-2177

Every Thursday 6:45 am at La Madeleine
(Campbell & Coit) Plano, TX

Contact PTG for more information

phone: (972) 495-0485

e-mail: ptg@pro-gospel.org

Steeling the Mind of America Conference

Join us in Keystone, Colorado Aug.25-27 and hear 15 biblically centered messages from Mike Gendron - *Doctrines of Demons*, John Ankerberg - *Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?*, Chuck Missler - *Prophecy Update*, Josh McDowell - *New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Alan Sears - *The Battle for Religious Freedom*, Kent Hovind - *Why Evolutionists Are Changing To Abrupt Appearance*, Ken Ham - *One Blood, The Biblical Answer To Racism*, Tommy Ice - *The Coming Anti-Christ*, Ed Hindson - *Jesus In Prophecy*, David Nobel - *Understanding The Times*, Woodrow Kroll - *Real Men Eat Verses* and Frank Peretti - *The Chart*. Accommodations will be at a Four Diamond hotel and conference center. For more detailed information or to register call Compass International at 1-800-977-2177.

Last Call for Apologetics and Biblelands Cruise

Join other friends of Proclaiming the Gospel for a week of seminary training with instructors Mike Gendron, Dr. Eugene Merrill of Dallas Theological Seminary, Dr. Robert Thomas of The Master's Seminary, and Dr. James White of Columbia Evangelical Seminary. They will train you to define, defend, and apply the authority of Scripture and the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy. Christian recording artist Steve Camp will be ministering in music during our journey on the Carnival Paradise. The cruise departs from Miami on October 15 for seven glorious days in the Caribbean, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. For more information please contact Anne Reynolds at 1-800-677-0830.

Our other cruise will take you to over 100 awe-inspiring biblical sites in Israel, Ephesus, Patmos, Philippi, Turkey and Greece plus the amazing pyramids of Egypt. And while you are cruising the beautiful Mediterranean you can attend an on-board Apologetics Conference with instructors Mike Gendron, John Ankerberg, Randall Price, John Morris, Ed Hindson and Frank Peretti. Please call 1-800-977-2177 for a colorful brochure that describes this one-of-a-kind tour scheduled for Nov. 1-12. Visit our web site at: www.pro-gospel.org to view a tour video.

Seeking His Truth

Letters to the Editor



I figure that the Lord left you to be the judge for our Father's Kingdom. **You attack us Catholics and our tradition saying that everything must be based on Scripture.** It may come as a surprise to you that there was no New Testament in the early church. Those Christians did not live according to what was written but through oral testimony and traditions. One interesting one is the Holy Eucharist, the center of our faith. This is the way I chose to worship Christ. One day we will know if its right or wrong. But it is not up to you to decide.

Jeffrey R., Internet

The Lord left us **His word** to judge people. Jesus said, "the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day" (John 12:48). He rebuked religious leaders for nullifying His word with their tradition (Mark 7:13) **Christians are exhorted to use His Word to correct, rebuke and reprove those who hold to false teaching** (Zech 8:16; 2 Tim. 3:16; 4:2). The early church used the Hebrew Scriptures to judge the apostle Paul who wrote over half of the new testament (Acts 17:11). Paul, in turn, urges us to hold firm to the traditions that the apostles **had already passed on** (2 Thes. 2:15). He warned us to avoid being held captive by the traditions of men (Col. 2:8). The Eucharist is a tradition of men based on a faulty hermeneutical interpretation of the sixth chapter of John. If the Eucharist were an apostolic tradition you would see priests offering it as an ongoing sacrifice for sin in the first century church. Yet there is not one mention of this in the Book of Acts, the history book of the first century church.

I am a Catholic and have completed every course ever offered in Bible Study Fellowship (BSF). I therefore, consider myself somewhat knowledgeable of the Bible. Both my church and BSF teach that we are to **never, ever question a person's salvation.** Who are you to judge? There are many disputable practices, among true Christians, but as BSF teaches, the **deciding factor** in any Christian observance is **whether we do them for the Lord.** I invite you to step away from your

computer and get your nose out of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and spend some time celebrating mass (mass is a celebration, not a sacrifice). You will find we are not held in bondage by Catholicism. I have attended many services within other denominations, and even consider changing faiths, but found them lacking in the fullness and **joy of the celebration of mass.** I have always felt totally secure in my salvation and so has every other Catholic I have ever known.
A.R., Dallas, TX

It would be wise to verify the truthfulness of all teachings with the Scriptures (Acts 17:11). You will discover that Jesus questioned the salvation of Nicodemus (John 3:10). James questioned the salvation of professing Christians who showed no evidence of their faith (James 2:14-26). Paul questioned the salvation of the Judaizers who professed to know God but denied Him by their deeds (Titus 1:16). So when I question the salvation of Catholics I am following biblical examples. Catholics also deny Jesus Christ as their all-sufficient Savior by their actions. You should also be aware that doing things for the Lord is not and never has been the deciding factor! Matthew records an example of those who thought they were Christians because of what they did in the name of Jesus. In the end Jesus says the most sobering words anyone could ever hear, "Depart from me I never knew you" (Mat 7:21-23). The fact that you consider it "joy" to have your "Jesus" perpetually immolated as a sacrificial victim for sins every day on Catholic altars is indeed appalling to those who love the true Jesus. Do you not know that after Jesus suffered through the excruciating pain of His onetime sacrifice for all sin for all time, He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30)? Do you not know that when you say you are "totally secure in your salvation" you are condemned by Catholic dogmas? If you are not really in bondage to Catholicism then come out of her and do not participate in her sins any longer. May God convict you that worshipping a wafer as God is as sinful as worshipping a golden calf as God. The seriousness of this sin of idolatry is evi-

denced by God ordering all the idolators put to death? (Ex. 32:27-28)

Your ministry is so substantial and so needed! As I read in your newsletter the vehement responses you receive as you present the truth in love, I don't know how you endure it. **We know that God gives you and your precious wife all the grace you need to do what He has called you to do,** but we want to encourage you. There are many ministries that could disappear without significantly affecting the Kingdom, but yours is not such a ministry. We encourage you to keep on presenting the truth in its entirety.
Pastor J.H., McKinney, TX

I have been meeting with a group of Catholic friends along with their priest. They totally reject my views (of the Bible). None of them have much scriptural knowledge, but I have found your publications to be very useful in pointing them to the Word of God. That is my advantage. Some are very fanatical and take it personally. I want to share the truth about our Lord Jesus and I need all the help I can get. **The only way to their hearts is speaking the truth boldly in love.**

J. Z., Abu Dhabi, UAE

I've heard some Christians suggest that **we should not use tracts, books, videos that "attack" (refute) Catholic doctrines** because it might offend Catholics and become a hindrance to presenting the Gospel to them. I would like your opinion on this matter.

B. O., Naplate, IL

My opinion or anyone else's should not matter. What does the Scripture say? (Gal. 4:30). While Paul was preaching in Athens he examined the Greeks' objects of worship and pointed out their **ignorance.** Paul refuted their erroneous beliefs about God by proclaiming He does not "dwell in temples made with hands," nor is "the Divine Nature like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man." Paul preached the good news of Jesus **and called them to repent of their false beliefs.** As we witness to Catholics we must call them to repent of their works that nullify the saving grace of God (Rom. 11:6). Like the Greeks, Catholics also believe the Divine Nature is an image (the Eucharist) formed by the thought of man (transubstantiation) and that Jesus lives in tabernacles made with human hands. Catholics must be called to repent of this idolatrous practice.

Thank you for writing and publishing such a tremendous, thorough study as *Preparing Catholics for Eternity*. I hope it gets very wide circulation and bears much fruit. Your **Biblical References for Catholic Doctrines** **bookmarks are wonderfully structured "heart openers" and may cause some unknowing people to become "Bible openers"**. You're doing a great work! We continue to pray for you.

D.C., Plano, TX

I have found your website challenging to my positive experiences with Catholicism. I recognize your concerns for Catholics and I will study them in-depth before possibly becoming a Catholic. I have been living in Mexico for the past five months, and have witnessed massive devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe. I have also read of scientific investigations that are unable to explain the "tilma" (the cloak of Juan Diego with the Virgin's image). Some might say the image is simply a design of Satan. But **would Satan use this apparition to convert millions of Aztecs to Catholicism** and accept the Virgin Mary as their patroness? If this baffling tilma is not a work of Satan, then to what else can it be, if not the will of God?

J.N., Internet Mexico

We know that Satan "has blinded the minds of the unbelieving that they might not see the light of the Gospel or the glory of Christ who is the image of God" (2 Cor. 4:4). Through apparitions, Satan can disguise himself as an angel of light for the purpose of leading people away from Christ and His Word (2 Cor. 11:14). By offering a distracting image of Mary, Satan can lead people astray from a pure devotion to Christ (2 Cor. 11:3). Satan will also do everything in his power to divert sinners away from the Word of God which has the power to bring spiritually dead sinners to life in Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:23, Jas. 1:21). Mediocre discernment is no match for professional deception. When you look at Catholicism in light of God's Holy Word, you will find it is a cleverly crafted counterfeit of Christianity. It teaches a false gospel that holds its adherents dead in their sins. Those who become Catholics because of an image of Mary are playing right into Satan's hands. It's disconcerting to see people travel hundreds of miles and spend thousands of dollars to seek misleading messages from apparitions when they can open their Bible and receive a sure message from Jesus.

Thank you for loving Roman Catholics.
N.L., Denton, TX

In Chicago there is a large Catholic Church called, *Mary Seat of Wisdom*. **They have de-throned God with this new Mary!** If Mary is the seat of wisdom, where does that leave God, the creator of Mary? I hope you will set the record straight in your newsletter! With wisdom comes authority and we know that comes from God alone, exclusively! All praise to our risen Lord!

L.O., Brainerd, MN

Many Catholic Churches are named after Mary and the saints but this should not surprise us since the merits of Mary and the saints are commingled with Christ's merits in the Vatican treasury. According to paragraph 1477 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church the pope has the power to transfer these merits from this invisible treasury to "holy souls" in purgatory to shorten their time of suffering. This explains why God does not receive all honor, glory and praise from Catholics.

I was raised in the Protestant faith and was even involved with a ministry that works on college campuses. After years of searching and studying I came to the Roman Catholic faith. So I do not appreciate the misconceptions that you spread about my Faith. It is one of the most unchristian acts a person can do. You may want to meditate on this quote from Mother Teresa: **"I have always said we should help a Hindu become a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim and a Catholic a better Catholic."** As Christians we are to be united in Christ, but your attacks make the abyss between us even greater. I pray that you will realize that true evangelization is in seeking out the unchurched not those who already follow Jesus.
Deacon C.M., Forney, TX

You mention three different faiths you have experienced - the Protestant faith, the Catholic faith and your faith, none of which can save you. It is the faith of the apostles that was once for all delivered to the saints that we are to believe, proclaim and earnestly contend for (Jude 4). Saving faith is a faith without works, in Christ without Mary, by grace without merit, and according to the Scriptures not Tradition. Many who followed Jesus did not have this kind of faith (John 6:66). Rather than meditating on the erroneous words of Mother Teresa why not meditate on the truthful

words of Jesus: "No one comes to the Father but through Me" (John 14:6). The abyss that separates us can be no greater than the abyss between heaven and hell.

It astounds me why more "born again" Christians do not see the obvious heresies and blasphemies of the Roman Catholic system. Why would believers insult and grieve the Lord Jesus who saved them by embracing apostasy? **A compromiser is one who serves God in such a way so as not to offend the Devil.**

Rev. E. W., Port Jefferson Station, NY

I picked up your pamphlet entitled *Roman Catholicism: Scripture vs. Tradition* at the Austin Club. It's been a while since I received anything so critical of the history and teaching of Catholicism. **You must have had an absolutely dreadful experience sometime during your 37 years as a Catholic.** And that experience has motivated you to crusade against all Catholics...the good, the bad, and the ugly. I have been a Roman Catholic for all of my 70 years but never has any priest or lay person suggested there is some spiritual or human benefit in attacking another Christian religion. Instead, Catholic clergy always stressed the winning of souls to Jesus Christ and tolerance of the beliefs of others.

B.L., Austin, TX

Since our pamphlet quotes verbatim from the Catholic Bible and the Catholic Catechism, which did you find critical of Catholic teaching? My most dreadful experience as a Catholic came after I understood the Gospel and realized I would have spent a Christ-less eternity in hell had I died adhering to Catholic teaching. It is now my heart's desire to proclaim this glorious Gospel so others who have been deceived can be saved. Your church and many others teach that salvation is based on what man does for God rather than believing what God has done for man through the Lord Jesus.

Please submit questions or comments to:

Mike Gendron
Proclaiming the Gospel
P.O. Box 940871
Plano, TX 75094
e-mail: ptg@pro-gospel.org
web site: www.pro-gospel.org



Congress Honors Pope

The House will award the Congressional Gold Medal to Pope John Paul II in recognition of his contributions to peace and religious understanding. The legislation, which passed 416-1, praised the spiritual leader of 1 billion Catholics for dedicating his pontificate "to the freedom and dignity of every individual human being" and using "his moral authority to hasten the fall of godless totalitarian regimes." Rep. Jim Leach, R-Iowa, who introduced the bill, said the former Polish bishop who became pope 22 years ago "has sundered despotism and ennobled faith by displaying courage and conviction." Congress has also awarded the Gold Medal to Cardinal John O'Connor and Mother Teresa. (AP, 5/23/00)

Priesthood Loses Credibility

In his book, *The Changing Face of the Priesthood*, Donald B. Cozzens suggests that the priesthood is, or is becoming, a gay profession. He warns that "the scandal of clergy misconduct with minors has cast a long shadow on the credibility and authority of priests and bishops - a shadow that will last well into the 21st century." This slender volume of somber reflections on the priesthood by the rector of a Catholic seminary has become an unexpected hit among priests, raising eyebrows with its unsparing discussion of celibacy, homosexuality, and sexual abuse among the clergy. In the book, Cozzens asserts that priests "stand awash in a floodlight of suspicion in the eyes of contemporary American culture. The recent clerical scandals of sexual misconduct with young boys have severely tarnished their collective reputation. They have lost their innocence." To insist that there is simply no correlation between mandatory celibacy and

the present crisis over clergy misconduct with minors looks like bureaucratic bullying as long as the Vatican remains opposed to discussion concerning the systems undergirding the priestly lifestyle," Cozzens writes. Not infrequently the sexual contacts and romantic unions among gay seminarians create intense and complicated webs of intrigue and jealousy leading to considerable inner conflict. The straight seminarian, meanwhile, feels out of place and may interpret his inner destabilization as a sign that he does not have a vocation to the priesthood. "Some will think that this book is disloyal to the Church and the priesthood, but I hope that it is an act of loyalty. I think that we as Christians don't have to be afraid of the truth. But I love being a priest, and I love the Church," Cozzens said. The book has received positive reviews in Catholic periodicals. (Boston Globe, 6/3/2000)

Anglican & Catholic Unity

Anglicans and Roman Catholics have formed a joint commission to consider unification. Bishops from 13 regions around the world, meeting in Toronto, formed a new commission to grapple with issues that have been at the center of the 400-year-old split between Anglicans and Catholics. It is expected to begin its work by the end of the year, the leaders said. Local congregations will feel the effects of decisions made by the commission, said Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey, who led the meeting along with Cardinal Edward Cassidy, president of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. Differences remain over the role of women, who are not eligible for ordination as Catholic priests, and distribution of power in a unified Catholic-Anglican church, bishops from both churches said. (AP, 5/23/00)

Vatican Tightens Grip

The Vatican has tightened its controls over who may teach theology at the 235 Catholic colleges and universities in the United States, which have 701,000 students. Theologians must have a "commitment and responsibility to teach authentic Catholic doctrine and to refrain from putting forth as Catholic teaching anything contrary" to it, and must seek formal approval from their local bishops, news reports said. The directives strongly encourage the schools to have a president and majority of the faculty, staff, and board members who are "Catholics committed to the Church." The directives will help the schools "maintain their Catholic identity," said Joseph A. Fiorenza, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. U.S. bishops will begin a yearlong discussion with university presidents and theologians on how to implement the rules before they are put in place next May. Critics say the guidelines will inhibit academic freedom and discourage non-Catholics from attending Catholic schools. (Religion Today, 6/9/00)

Fatima Secret Revealed

In a dramatic revelation, the Vatican disclosed on Saturday that the so-called third secret of Fatima foretold the 1981 assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II. The Roman Catholic Church revealed the prophecy during a ceremony in Fatima, Portugal, in which Pope John Paul II beatified two children who said the Virgin Mary spoke to them in Fatima several times in 1917. The ceremony coincided with the 19th anniversary of the attempted assassination of John Paul and the 83rd anniversary of the day the Virgin Mary is first thought to have appeared to the children. After years of speculation, including fears that the third vision told of apocalypse, the "third part of the secret of Fatima" speaks of a "bishop clothed in white" who "falls to the ground, apparently dead, under a burst of gunfire." The Vatican believes the prophecy refers to the attempted assassination of John Paul, who was shot May 13, 1981 at St. Peter's Square in Rome. The pope credits the Virgin Mary with saving his life. The secret of Fatima inspired hundreds of books and even prompted a 1981 plane hijacking by a man who wanted the Vatican to reveal it. Since 1930, when the Church declared the visions to be worthy of belief, Fatima's fame has spread. The town of about 8,000 draws about 5 million pilgrims a year. (CNN, 5/13/00)

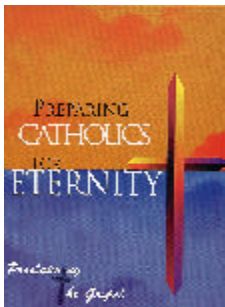
TOOLS FOR PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL

STARTER KIT

Witnessing Tools for Reaching Roman Catholics. An assortment of **125 tracts** and bookmarks; **2 audio messages** - *Motivations to Proclaim the Gospel* and *Essential Elements of the Gospel*; **3 books** - *Preparing Catholics for Eternity*, *What Every Catholic Should Ask*, and *Conversations with Catholics*; and **2 videos** - *Equipping the Saints* and *Another Jesus Another Gospel*. Code: BSTART, Sug. Don. \$65

BOOKS

Preparing Catholics For Eternity by Mike Gendron. Over 100 of the most frequently asked questions by Catholics are answered with the power, authority and confidence of God's Word. An excellent discipleship tool that is rich with Scripture. We have heard encouraging reports of Catholics being set free from the legalistic bondage of their church! Learn how to witness effectively by establishing the Bible as the supreme authority for truth and the imperishable seed that brings forth life. Start your own Scripture study with Catholics and former Catholics and experience the joy of seeing those dead in their sins come alive in Christ! Code: BPCE, Sug. Don. \$12.



One Minute After You Die by Erwin Lutzer. A preview of your final destination. How can we prepare for our final moment and help others to do the same? A book that will move unbelievers to consider God's justice. Code: BONE, Sug. Don. \$9.

TRACTS & BOOKLETS

Roman Catholicism: Scripture vs. Tradition. See how the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* stands in opposition to the Bible. Also view a brief history of the Catholic Church, an historical time-line of traditions, and a glossary of Catholic terms. Effective for objectively exposing the errors of Catholicism and leading Catholics to the Gospel truth. Over 200,000 in print. *Also in Spanish.* Code: PTRACT, Sug. Don. 25 for \$6; 100 for \$20; 250 for \$46; 500 for \$89.

Are You Being Deceived? A plea for Catholics to examine their faith and their source for truth. A persuasive argument is given to trust God's Word instead of man's teachings and traditions. *Also in Spanish* Code: PAUBD, Sug. Donation 25 for \$5.

Biblical References to Catholic Doctrines. Bookmarks with the Scriptures that expose the error of Catholic teaching. Code: PMARK, Sug. Don. 20 for \$4.

What Every Catholic Should Ask by James McCarthy. Raises important questions every Catholic should ask and consider in light of God's holy word. Code: PASK, Sug. Don. \$5.

VIDEOS

A Woman Rides The Beast by Dave Hunt. Eight remarkable clues prove the woman's identity beyond any reasonable doubt. The book contains over 800 footnotes, many from Roman Catholic authoritative sources. Book Code: BRIDE, Sug. Don. \$13. Video Code: VRIDE, Sug. Don. \$20.

Catholicism: Crisis of Faith by James McCarthy. Our most effective tool for opening the eyes of Catholics to the truth of the Gospel. The truth is spoken in love and with compassion! Former Catholic priests and nuns explain why they had to leave the Catholic Church. Also available in Spanish. Code: VCATH, Sug. Donation \$20.

Is the Roman Catholic Church Apostolic or Apostate by Mike Gendron. Presented at Word of Life - Florida. See description under audio tapes. Code: VRCAA, Sug. Don. \$18.

Effective Witnessing to Catholics by Mike Gendron. A pair of videos developed using *Powerpoint* slides that will equip you for witnessing to the world's largest and most neglected mission field - The Roman Catholic Church. The first video **Another Jesus, Another Gospel** has been effective in showing Catholics the true Jesus that saves sinners completely and forever. **Equipping the Saints** will prepare you for laboring in the fields white for harvest. Share them with your Catholic loved ones - they may be converted by seeing the good news of Jesus! Code: VPAIR, Sug. Don. \$29

To order, return this form
with check payable to:

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____



P.O. Box 940871
Plano, Texas 75094

Your gift that exceeds the suggested
donation of product ordered is tax deductible.

Code	Product Description	Qty.	Don.	TOTAL
Please enclose a gift to cover shipping and handling				
Gift to support the ministry of <i>Proclaiming the Gospel</i>				
TOTAL ENCLOSED				

If you would like to receive future newsletters via e-mail instead of regular mail please contact us.



Proclaiming the Gospel

P.O. Box 940871
Plano, TX 75094

NONPROFIT
ORG. U.S.
POSTAGE PAID
DALLAS, TX
Permit NO. 2650

"I do not nullify the
grace of God; for if
righteousness
comes through the
Law, then Christ
died needlessly."
(Galatians 2:21).

The Roman Catholic Road

- ◆ There is none righteous, not even one, *except Mary*.
- ◆ All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, *except Mary*.
- ◆ Adam's sin resulted in condemnation to all men *but can be washed away by water baptism*.
- ◆ For the wages of sin is *penance* (usually three Hail Marys and three Our Fathers).
- ◆ The second death is the lake of fire *but it can be avoided by declaring that your sins are venial instead of mortal*.
- ◆ God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ *dies for us over 200,000 times each day on Catholic altars around the world*.
- ◆ If you confess to a priest and believe in your heart God raised Jesus from the dead, you shall be saved, *provided you are baptized, obey the commandments, receive the sacraments, perform good works and merit the graces needed for salvation*.

Let us point our Catholic loved ones to the biblical Roman Road for salvation.

(Apostasy from page 2)

the incorruptible God for an image (Rom. 1:21-23). The Catholic Church has also replaced Jesus as the *only* way of salvation by declaring itself necessary for salvation⁴ and as the only mediator by declaring Mary the mediatrix.⁵ The church of Laodicea also boasted of being rich and in need of nothing yet unaware of its spiritual poverty. So it is with the Roman Church which has now become the richest institution in the world.

The Roman Catholic Church is not alone in yielding to these 5 steps of apostasy. Since the reformation there are now a number of protestant churches, denominations, seminaries and ministries in different stages of apostasy. What are we to do? Are there biblical exhortations to follow? If you are one of God's elect worshipping in an apostate church, the message is clear: "*come out from their midst and be separate*" says the Lord. "*And do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me*" says the Lord Almighty. (2 Cor. 6:17-18). If you are a believer in the midst of apostasy, the message is also clear: *do not par-*

ticipate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them (Eph. 5:11). *Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God...do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds* (2 John 9-11).

As we witness the great apostasy enveloping the world, it is both discouraging and encouraging. Yes it is indeed discouraging to see so many being deceived and falling away from the true faith. However, it is also encouraging because we know these things must take place before the Lord Jesus returns in glory (2 Thes 2:3). Let us be faithful to the one who has called us out of darkness into the glorious light of His Son!

Endnotes

¹Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization* (Simon and Schuster, 1950)

² Ibid

³ Dave Hunt, *A Woman Rides the Beast* (Harvest House, 1994)

⁴ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Ignatius Press, 1994), para. 846

⁵ Ibid, para. 969