

Oath

Against Modernism

I, **NN**, firmly accept and embrace each and every doctrine defined by the Church's unerring teaching authority, and all that she has maintained and declared, especially those points of doctrine which directly oppose the errors of our time.

I profess that God, the beginning and the end of all things, can be known with certitude and His existence demonstrated by the natural light of reason from the things that are made, that is, from the visible works of creation, as a cause is known from its effects.

Secondly, I acknowledge and admit the external arguments for revelation, namely, divine facts, especially miracles and prophecies, as most certain signs of the divine origin of the Christian religion, and I hold that these are perfectly suited to the intelligence of every age and of all men, including our own times.

Thirdly, I also firmly believe that the Church, the guardian and teacher of God's revealed Word, was directly and absolutely instituted by Christ Himself, the true Christ of history, while He lived among us; and that the same Church was founded on Peter, the prince of the Apostolic hierarchy, and on his successors to the end of time.

Fourthly, I sincerely accept the doctrine of Faith in the same sense and with always the same meaning as it has been handed down to us from the Apostles through the officially approved Fathers. And therefore I wholly reject the heretical notion of the evolution of dogmas, according to which doctrines pass from one sense to another sense alien to that which the Church held from the start. I likewise condemn every erroneous notion to the effect that instead of the divine deposit of Faith entrusted by Christ to His spouse, the Church, and to be faithfully guarded by her, one may substitute a philosophic system or a creation of the human mind gradually refined by men's striving and capable of eventual perfection by indefinite progress.

Fifthly, I hold as certain and sincerely profess that faith is not a blind religious sense evolving from the hidden recesses of subliminal consciousness, and morally formed by the influence of heart and will, but that it is a real assent of the intellect to objective truth learned by hearing, an assent wherein we believe to be true whatever has been spoken, testified, and revealed by the personal God, our Creator and Lord, on the authority of God who is the perfection of truth. Furthermore, in all due reverence I submit to and fully uphold all the condemnations, declarations, and directions contained in the encyclical letter

Pascendi and in the decree *Lamentabili*, especially as regards what is called the history of dogmas. I also reject the error of those who allege that the Faith proposed by the Church may conflict with history, and that Catholic dogmas, in the sense in which they are now understood, cannot be reconciled with the actual origins of Christianity. I condemn and reject, moreover, the opinion put forth that a more learned Christian can assume a dual personality, one as believer and another as historian, thus making it permissible for the historian to maintain what his faith as a believer contradicts, or to lay down premises from which there follows the falsity or the uncertainty of dogmas, provided only that these are not directly denied. I likewise reject that method of determining and interpreting Sacred Scripture which, setting aside the Church's tradition and the analogy of faith and the norms of the Holy See, adopts the principles of the rationalists, and with equal arbitrariness and rashness regards textual criticism as the sole supreme rule. Moreover, I reject the opinion of those who hold that a teacher of the science of historical theology or a writer on the subject must first put aside any preconceived notions about the supernatural origin of Catholic tradition or about the divine aid promised for the continual preservation of each revealed Truth; or that the writings of individual Fathers must be interpreted solely by the data of science, without any reference to sacred authority, and with the same freedom of judgment usually accorded to any profane records.

Finally, I profess that I am far removed in general from the error of the modernists, who hold that there is nothing inherently divine in sacred tradition; or who, which is far worse, admit it in a pantheistic sense. For then there would remain only a bare simple fact, like the ordinary facts of history, to the effect that the system started by Christ and His Apostles still finds men to support it by their energy, shrewdness, and ability.

Therefore, I most firmly retain and will retain to my last breath the Faith of the Fathers of the Church, which has the supernatural guarantee of Truth, and which is, has been, and ever will be residing in the bishops who are the successors of the Apostles (*St. Irenæus 4. c. 26*). And this is not to be so understood that we may hold what seems better suited to the culture of a particular age, but rather that we may never believe nor understand anything other than the absolute and unchangeable Truth preached from the beginning by the Apostles (*Præser. c. 28*). All this I promise to keep faithfully, entirely, and sincerely, and to guard inviolably, and never to depart from it in any way in teaching, word, or writing. So I promise, so I swear, so help me God and His holy Gospels.