

FOUNDED UPON ROCK: PART XI THE DAWN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

I. In the early years of the twentieth century, the world was largely ruled by six empires (British, French, German, Austro-Hungarian, Russian, and Ottoman), two rising powers (the United States and Japan), a rapidly industrializing economy. The situation in each area of the world varied, with the Church facing challenges from many powers, but opportunities in Africa, Asia and the United States.

A. In the British Empire and Commonwealth, the situation was becoming more free, but there was still discrimination against Catholics in many areas.

1. In Great Britain itself, the Catholic Church was beginning to recover, as described by the great theologian and convert Blessed John Henry Newman in his famous “second spring” discourse. The Oxford movement had brought together Anglican and Catholic theologians and liturgists for common efforts. The Archdiocese of Westminster became the central see, with an Anglican convert Henry Edward Manning as the second Archbishop. And there was more of a flourishing of Catholic culture, with architecture, art and literature, such as the poetry of Fr. Gerard Manly Hopkins.

2. In Ireland, the faith had persevered, and in most of the land (except for northern Ireland) the large majority of people were Catholic.

a. Most of the land was still owned by English overlords. However, the Irish independence movement was strong, and sentiment for Irish independence was also common in Parliament. The lower house of Parliament in fact passed legislation for Irish independence in 1912 and 1913, but the House of Lords overruled it.

b. Irish seminaries were thriving and sending missionaries to other lands, including the United States and Africa.

3. In Canada, Australia and New Zealand, the Church was basically at liberty and was growing, although in Canada there was tension between the French speaking Catholics and the Irish Catholics.

B. In France, the government headed by the “citizen Emperor” Napoleon III was overthrown in 1871 after France lost the Franco-Prussian. Although there seemed to be popular support for a restored monarchy, the Third Republic abolished the monarch.

1. The government of the Third Republic was generally anti-Catholic, although the populace and the military remained majority Catholic.

2. The 1905 law on the separation of Church and state not only removed recognition of Catholicism as an official religion (along with Lutheranism, Calvinism and Judaism), but also made secularism the official government stance and imposed disabilities upon the Church, such as transforming all places of worship into government property

(although churches could still use them) and keeping military personnel from joining religious groups.

C. In the now united Germany, the “iron Chancellor” Otto von Bismark had tried to suppress the Catholic Church in the 1860s, Catholic persevered. He finally gave up on those efforts in 1871, but he nevertheless looked down upon the Church as overly pious and not fully loyal to Germany. The southern part of Germany remained mostly Catholic and the rest of Germany mostly Protestant.

D. The government of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was mostly Catholic, as the Emperor Frans Joseph certainly was. However, the Empire contained numerous nationalities and had large minorities of Protestants, Orthodox, Muslims, Jews and Roma (gypsies.) Navigating the interests of the different nationalities was ever a challenge for the Empire, which became effectively the junior partner to Germany in international affairs. Part of the effort to balance the different interests was to elevate the mostly Catholic Hungarian nobles to equal status in an 1867 agreement. However, the area of Bosnia-Herzegovenia, which was mostly Orthodox and Muslim, did not share as much in governance, resulting in a great deal of tension.

E. The Russian Empire was mostly Orthodox and led by the Czars, with Nicolas II.

1. Pope Pius IX has signed an agreement with the czar in 1847. However, the czars tended to accuse the Catholic Church of supporting the numerous rebellions that arose and suppressed her freedom greatly after 1861.

2. The Russian controlled areas in Poland and Lithuania remained mostly Catholic. However, the government still oppressed the Church and generally did not bishops into their own dioceses.

F. The Ottoman Empire was generally Muslim. However, in an effort to gain the support of the English and then the Germans, the Empire allowed more freedom to Christians as the 19th century continued on.

1. In the mid-19th century the Ottoman Empire looked to the British Empire for support. However, violence between Greeks and Turkish people broke out, especially in Cyprus, the British turned against this alliance. And so the Ottoman Empire then sought German support. And Kaiser Wilhelm II was particularly favorable toward the Ottoman Empire.

2. With British and other European help, Greece won independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1832 after a series of rebellions in the 1820s.

3. The Ottoman and Russian Empire were fighting throughout the 19th century. In the 1850s the British and French supported them to balance Russia. However, Russia prevails in the 1877-1878 Russio-Turkish War, leading to the independence of Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro. The other European powers intervened to prevent a total collapse of that Empire. These efforts began to make the Russian Orthodox Church effectively equal to the Greek Orthodox Church in prestige over that branch of Christianity.

4. Largely in order to protect the Suez Canal, Britain effectively over Egypt as a protectorate even though it officially belonged to the Ottoman Empire.

5. Italy gained control of Libya after a war in 1911 and 1912. When Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria then declared war on the Empire in 1913, the other European powers again intervened to prevent a collapse of the Empire.

6. In the early 20th century, there were still a number of Christian Armenians in eastern Turkey and other Christians, especially Greek speaking throughout the remainder of the Empire. Christians were able to visit the Holy Land, with the Franciscans largely running the Catholic portion of the sites. The Ottoman Empire in fact considered Catholics to some degree an ally against the Orthodox opponents of the Empire.

G. In the United States, waves of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe brought more Catholics and Orthodox people to this country, alongside the many Chinese immigrants coming into the Western part of the country.

1. Until 1921, there were no numerical limits on immigration to the United States, although there were health restrictions and questions about loyalty. With the revolutions in southern and eastern Europe and America's increasing prosperity, immigration increased dramatically during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Between 1881 and 1920 over 23 million immigrants came to the United States, mostly from those areas. These immigrants were mostly Catholic, with many Orthodox and Jewish people as well.

2. In many places the immigrants were welcomed and in fact ethnic neighborhoods sprung up in many cities. However, there was also a nativist and anti-Catholic backlash, as exemplified in such things as Pollock jokes and many parodies, including political cartoons by Thomas Nash. There was also a racial element to many anti-immigrant policies, not only against Asians and Africans, but also against Slavs, Italians and many non-Anglo-Saxon people.

3. The Church began expanding with the establishment of new orders (e.g., Sisters of Charity, Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters, and the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament) and new schools and universities (e.g., Notre Dame in 1832, Catholic University of America in 1887.) Religious sisters became very prominent, growing from 900 in 1840 to 135,000 by 1930.

4. The United States bishops began meeting in plenary councils, particularly in Baltimore, starting in 1852. These meetings resulting in more organized teaching and planning, leading for example to the first Baltimore Catechism in 1885.

5. Catholics were eager to assert their identity as Americans as well, which led to much more creativity and engagement in culture, including the formation of the Knights of Columbus in 1882. There was sometimes an excessive desire to have local control of parishes and even dioceses and to downplay differences between the branches of Christianity, leading to the Americanism controversy. Thus, for example, Leo XIII both commended the Church in America for her evangelization in his 1895 letter *Lingiqua*

oceani, but also expressed concerns over an excessively individualistic mentality in his 1899 letter *Testem benevolentiae nostrae*. The United States bishops insisted that they were faithful to Catholic teachings and mostly kept control over the church.

6. The United States bishops were favorable to the rights of immigrants and of labor (e.g., Knights of Labor), although also opposing secret societies and ethnic groups running their own churches independent of the dioceses.

H. In Spain, the 1851 concordat gave government support to the Church, but also allowed a great deal of interference in Church affairs. In Italy, dealings with the Vatican improved under the reigns of Leo XIII and St. Pius X, but there was no formal recognition. The Portuguese government was supportive of the faith until the 1910 revolution, which led to anti-Church regulations and even persecution of many clergy. Despite the setbacks, the public in all three countries remained predominately Catholic.

I. In Japan, the Church was free to proclaim the faith after 1867. She was able to make some progress on conversions and welcoming back refugees. The Catholic priests who were finally able to minister to the island did find a small community that had endured for 250 years of persecution. But the number of converts was never particularly large.

J. In China, largely under French and British rule, missionaries were allowed to operate relatively freely until the early 1900s. However, the Tibetan revolt of 1905 did lead to a great deal of violence against Christians. And then the 1911 Revolution, leading to the Republic of China, caused more discrimination against Christians. Many local priests, including Fr. Frederic-Vincent Lebbe, advocated for a Church with more native clergy. Until the communist takeover, his influence, along with the memories of helpful missionaries such as Matteo Ricci, helped the Church persevere in China.

K. In the rest of Asia, including Vietnam and Korea, missions were gradually expanding. European influence did help missionaries have a certain amount of freedom.

L. The Indian subcontinent (modern day India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh) was mostly Hindu, but with a large Muslim population spread throughout. British rule allow missionaries to operate. But the law frequently forbade “insulting” local religions, which could make evangelization tricky. For the most part, the government and missionaries and government tried to respect local customs, but had to draw the line on some violent practices such as the suttee, the burning of widows after their husbands death. The caste system also contravened Christian ideas of equality.

M. The populace of Latin American countries were mostly Catholic, but the governments could be extremely varied.

1. Latin American countries had mostly gained independence from Spain, Portugal and other countries in the 19th century. Establishing new governments was often difficult, with civil war, corruption, and dictatorship quite common.

2. The situation could go from one extreme to the other. Some governments supported the Church and in fact often forbade other religions. But other new governments both

saw the hierarchical structure as a threat and Church lands as an opportunity for wealth. There was also some popular resentment against the wealth of the Church.

3. For example, in Mexico, the 1824 constitution made Catholicism the official religion and restricted other religions, although that provision was not particularly enforced. But then in the 1850s, not only was the government support withdrawn, but the government confiscated most Church property. The Revolution of 1910 led to even more restrictions.

4. Columbia enacted more and more restrictions on the Church from 1849 to 1884, when the issue was resolved and the liberty of the Church restored.

5. Brazil gained independence in 1822 and was led by a monarchy. The monarchy made Catholicism the official state religion, but also often tried to interfere in Church affairs. There was a revolution in 1889, leading to a republic. The new constitution established religious freedom and equality. Many clergy and laity welcomed the change because it gave them more independence.

N. Missions were expanding in Africa as communication and transportation became easier and a relative peace eventually prevails.

1. With their technological edge, the European powers conquered almost all of Africa in the 19th century. The 1884 Berlin Conference divided the continent up among these nations, with Britain and France obtaining the largest shares. As unjust as the foreign domination was, it did allow the missionaries more ability to bring the Gospel inland.

2. Many missionary orders were founded or sent new groups to Africa. Cardinal Charles Lavigerie, the archbishop of Algiers, founded the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) in 1868 and the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa (White Sisters) in 1869.

3. The missionaries, Catholic and Protestant, gradually made progress into the interior of Africa. The Scottish Congregationalist Dr. David Livingstone led a mission into modern day Zambia and Angola in 1867. Henry Morton Stanley's rediscovery of him in 1871 made him a great inspiration to missionaries.

4. The martyrdom of Catholic and Anglican Christians by king Mwanga II of Uganda (who was willing to allow Christianity, but on his own decadent terms) also inspired many missionaries and new converts in Africa.

II. Intellectually, modernism, pietism and various forms of spirituality contested in popular thought. The Church navigated the different challenges to take what was best from the modern era, while defending the ancient faith.

- A. Modernism, and pietism competed for popularity in Christianity.
1. Modernism was (and is) the view that there is no permanent formulation of the truth, and that the truths that help in bygone ages are ever being superseded.
 - a. Modernism downplayed the wisdom of the ages and a view that modern discoveries make older ideas obsolete.
 - b. Scientific discoveries and theories could lead to a belief that all of human nature and behavior is deterministic and can be described in mechanistic terms.
 - c. Some less rationalist varieties, such as Freudianism, understand that human nature is too complex for neat formulas and technology, but still approach even human nature in a secularist fashion.
 - d. Some more moderate varieties recognize that there is a God, but downplay any supernatural influences or need for Revelation.
 2. Reacting against these views is fideism, which says that reason has no role to play in religion or philosophy, for those fields are beyond it.
 - a. A more moderate version would say that, once one has revelation, one can use reason to develop it. But it would maintain that, until one has revelation, reason is wholly inadequate to perceive the things of God.
 - b. Other versions would even reject the role of reason in developing theology.
 - c. In American, the fundamentalist movement largely started with Milton and Lyman Stewart's 12 volume 1910 work The Fundamentals, which described what they considered to be "the fundamentals of the faith," i.e., Biblical inspiration and infallibility, the virgin birth of Jesus, the atonement won by the death of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus, and the historical reality of the miracles of Jesus. Alone, there was nothing remarkable about these claims. What would make them influential was the reassertion of the plain meaning of Scripture against the scientific revolution.
 3. These views came to a head, partially in Darwinist thought, secularist notions of history (e.g. Hegelianism) and modern psychology. But, even within Christianity, many people argued that some books were not strictly historical and other books (e.g., Isaiah) were not written by the traditionally understood author. For example, many theories arose about the Pentateuch, when it was written and how much it is historical. Likewise, there were efforts to

distinguish between “the Christ of faith” described in the Gospels and the “historical Jesus.”

B. There were also movements to experiment in religion, which could have both positive and negative impacts.

1. There were desires for more enthusiastic and informal methods of prayer. Thus, for example, in America the Pentecostalist movement began with the Asuza Street Revival in 1906. Protestantism got largely away from the theology of grace to preaching about moral reform. On a related point, in America and England, the Holiness Movement, led by the likes of Dwight Moody and many American and British Methodists, promoted a notion of human perfectability even on earth..
2. Likewise, missionaries in Africa and Asia were trying to adapt prayer services to their cultures.
3. Bible societies promoted the regular reading of Scriptures and Bible studies as lay led prayer groups became more common.
4. Literature and poetry, even on non-theological topics, became a more common way of living out the faith. In America, the likes of Ben Hur by Lew Wallace and In His Steps by Charles Sheldon (the source of the phrase “What would Jesus do?") became classics. In Britain, the writings of George MacDonald, the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Anglican then Catholic G.K. Chesterton gained popularity, as did The Betrothed by Alexandro Manzoni in Italy.
5. There was also more dialogue between Christian denominations and even between Christians and non-Christians. In 1910, numerous Protestant Churches sent a total of 1200 representatives to the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh. This conference is often considered to be the beginning of the ecumenical movement.
6. More negatively, vague spiritualities tended towards bizarre directions, such as astrology, palm reading, séances and other attempts to consult the dead.

C. The Church tried to sort out what was positive and negative in these trends.

1. The Church never had an issue with scientific theories about the age of the world. And in fact the monk Gregory Mandel largely began the science of

genetics. The issue was with the claim that humans are nothing more than evolved primates or that evolution happened by chance.

2. To help reconcile emerging scientific and historic research with the faith, Pope Leo XIII created the Pontifical Biblical Commission in 1903. Among its holdings was the 1909 conclusion that there was only one couple at the beginning of the human race.
3. While fully supporting, the Church took a firm stance against modernism. In 1907, St. Pius X condemned modernism in his encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*. The Holy Office followed up with further instructions in its 1909 *Lamentabili Sane Exitu*. In 1910, St. Pius X instructed all clergy and theologians to take the oath against modernism.

D. In response to calls for liturgical reform, the Church began making certain modifications and preparing for more.

1. As the twentieth century dawned, there was a great deal of interest in a liturgical renewal that would get the people more involved.
 - a. Dom Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960) of the Benedictine monastery in Mont Cesar in Belgium, emphasized the active participation of the faithful at Mass, especially in his 1914 book Liturgy in the Life of the Church.
 - b. Dom Odo Casel (1886-1948), abbot of the Benedictine monastery at Maria Laach in Germany, emphasized the fact that the Mass is a timeless mystery that brings about a current transformation. The people thus must respect the unity and mystery of the Mass, but also actively make it their own.
 - c. In 1918, Fr. Romano Guardini (1885-1968), a priest of the diocese of Mainz, Germany wrote The Spirit of the Liturgy, in which he emphasized the delightfulness of liturgy, emphasizing that, like all of the most joyful things, it is not meant to be “practical,” but rather enriching of the spirit.
2. Responding to these calls, Pope St. Pius X encouraged more participation in the liturgy. In 1903, Pope St. Pius X issued the moto proprio *Tre Le Sollecitudini*, he focused on Church music and encouraged the active participation of the faithful, especially in that context. In 1905, he encouraged frequent communion in the decree *Sacra Tridentina Synodus*. And in 1910, he published *Quam Singulari*, which lowered the age of First Communion to 7. In that year he also allowed the “dialogue Mass,” which involved more participation by the faithful.