



Qui Nuper

On Pontifical States

Encyclical Of Pope Pius IX

June 18, 1859

To Our Venerable Brothers, the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries in Friendship and Communion with the Apostolic See.

Venerable Brethren: Greetings and the Apostolic Blessing.

The revolutionary movement throughout Italy against legitimate princes has broken out even in regions close to those of the papal territory. The flames of this conflagration, as it were, have invaded some of Our own Provinces; moved by this pernicious example and driven by incitement from outside, certain of them have withdrawn from Our paternal rule. They seek, although with few supporters, to become subject to that Italian Government which for these last years has acted as an adversary to the Church and its legitimate rights and sacred ministry. We reprove and grieve over the actions of this rebellion by which only a certain part of the people in these troubled provinces unjustly respond to Our paternal cares and concerns. We declare openly that temporal power is necessary to this Holy See, so that for the good of religion it can exercise spiritual power without any hindrance. These most cunning enemies of the Church seek to wrest away its temporal sovereignty.

2. In the midst of such turmoil We sent you the present letter in order to seek some consolation in Our sorrow. Moreover, on this occasion We also exhort you to make it your concern to do what we read that Moses prescribed once to Aaron, the high priest of the Hebrews (Nm 16): "Take the censor, fill it with fire from the altar, put incense in it and hurry to the people to perform the rite of atonement over them. For wrath has come down from the Lord and the plague has begun." Likewise we exhort you to pour forth prayers as those holy brothers, Moses and Aaron, who "threw themselves face downward on the ground, and cried out, 'O God of the spirits that gives life to every living thing, will you be angry with all the people for the sins of a few?'" (Nm 16).

3. This is why we send you the present letter, from which we take no small

consolation because we are confident that you will respond abundantly to Our desires and concerns. Moreover We openly affirm that endowed with virtue from God as the result of the prayers of the faithful, We will suffer any danger and any bitterness before We forsake in any way the apostolic office. Nor will We permit anything against the sanctity of the oath by which We were bound when, however undeservingly, We ascended the supreme seat of the prince of the apostles, the citadel and bulwark of the Catholic faith. As you carry out your pastoral offices, We pray that everything may turn out happy and successful for you, venerable brothers, and We lovingly grant as a sign of heavenly blessing the apostolic blessing to you and your flocks.

Given in Rome at St. Peter's, 18 June 1859, in the 14th year of Our Pontificate.