



On The Church In Bavaria

Officio Sanctissimo

Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII promulgated on December 22, 1887.

To Our Venerable Brethren the Archbishops and Bishops of Bavaria.

Venerable Brethren, Health and Apostolic Benediction.

Urged on by the most sacred duty of Our Apostolic office, We have striven earnestly and for a long time, as you yourselves know, that the affairs of the Catholic Church in Prussia should be somewhat improved, and, having been restored to a position of dignity, they should flourish with their former, and more than their former, honor. Which endeavors and labors of Ours have by God's aid and assistance so far succeeded that We have appeased former strife, and are filled with hope that the liberty of the Catholic name may be enjoyed there fully and in peace. But now it is Our desire to turn Our thoughts and cares with great earnestness towards the Bavarians. Not indeed because we think that the state of religion is the same in Bavaria as it was in Prussia, but We will and desire, that in that Kingdom also, which glories in the profession of the Catholic Faith received from its forefathers and ancestors, sundry inconveniences which militate against the liberty of the Catholic Church may be speedily abolished. That We may accomplish so salutary a desire, We wish to try every expedient which others may give, and to bring to bear upon it without delay the authority and aid We ourselves possess. And We also especially call upon you, O Venerable Brethren, and upon all those in Bavaria who by your operation have become Our dear children, that in whatever may seem to appertain to the care and propagation of the faith and of religion in your country, We may communicate with you so far as is in Our power, giving you counsel concerning them and confidently urging them on the rulers of the State.

2. In the sacred records of Bavaria are many circumstances, but We recall things unknown to you, concerning which the Church and the State may unite in a

common joy. For the Christian faith, from the time when its divine seed was sown in the bosom of your country by the care and great diligence of the holy Abbot Severinus, who stands out as the apostle of the country between the Danube and the Alps, and of other preachers of the gospel, sent forth and fixed its roots so deeply that thenceforward it has never been utterly eradicated either by the barbarity of superstition or the revolution and change of public affairs. Wherefore it came to pass about the end of the seventh century, that when Rupert, the holy Bishop of Worms, at the invitation of Theodore, Duke of Bavaria, went forth to stir up and increase the Christian faith in those parts, he found indeed, many, both professors of the faith and others desirous of embracing it, even in the midst of superstition. But that most excellent Prince Theodore himself, inflamed by zeal for the faith, undertook a journey to Rome, and prostrate at the Tombs of the Holy Apostles and, at the feet of the august Vicar of Jesus Christ, first afforded a most noble example of piety and of the union of Bavaria with this Apostolic See, which other excellent princes afterwards religiously followed. At the same time Cardinal Martinianus, Bishop of Sabina, was sent as legate to Bavaria by the Holy Pontiff Gregory II., who brought aid and assistance in Catholic affairs, with whom were associated Georgius and Dorotheus, both Cardinals of the Roman Church. Not long afterwards Corbinianus, Bishop of Munich, a man renowned for his holiness of life and contempt of the world, who confirmed and increased the effect of the apostolic labors of Rupert by an equal amount of labors, set out to visit the Sovereign Pontiff at Rome.

3. But he to whom beyond others praise is certainly due, in that he nourished and cherished the faith in Bavaria, is St. Boniface, the Archbishop of Mayence, who also is celebrated in an undying and most trustworthy account as the father of Christian Germany, its Apostle and Martyr. He fulfilled the office of legate to the Roman Pontiffs Gregory the Second and Third, and Zachary, in whose favor he stood high, and in their name and by their authority he divided the country of Bavaria into dioceses, and thus, having constituted a regular hierarchy, handed on the faith which had been planted there to future generations. St. Gregory II., writing to Boniface himself, says: "The field of the Lord, which was lying waste, and had grown unfruitful through infidelity with the thorns of thistles, being tilled by the ploughshare of Thy doctrine, has received the seed of the word and brought forth an abundant harvest of faithfulness." (Ep. xiii. ad Bonifacium -- cfr. Labbeurm Collect. Conc. v., viii.) From that time the religion of the Bavarians remained safe and sure through all changes in civil affairs, although in course of time very sharply tried. For indeed there ensued those broils and contentions of the empire against the priesthood which were so bitter, enduring, and destructive; in these, however, there was more to rejoice than to sadden the Church in Bavaria. For with the most perfect unity they stood by Gregory XI., the lawful Pontiff, the unbridled violence of the contenders moving them to neither side, and in vain threatening them, and what was very trying, a long time afterwards, being in no way moved either by the power or attacks of the followers of Novatus, they always religiously observed the integrity of their faith and their ancient alliance with the Roman Church. Which courage and firmness of your fathers is to be the more lauded because this new

sect had brought into subjection nearly all their neighbors. Indeed to the Bavarians who lived in those unhappy times are very applicable the words of merited praise contained in a letter to their rulers which the above named Gregory II. had addressed long before to the Catholics of Thuringia, who had been imbued with the Christian faith by St. Boniface. "Acknowledging the constancy of your firm faith in Christ, which is well known to Us, since when the pagans endeavored to force you into an idolatrous worship, you replied in the fullness of your faith that you would rather die than violate that faith in Christ which you had once for all received; filled with all joy We give thanks as is right to our God and Redeemer, the Giver of all good things, by the assistance of Whose grace we desire to raise you to still better and greater things, that for the strengthening of the intention of your faith you may cleave with earnest minds to the Holy Apostolic See, and so far as the needs of our holy religion demand you may receive consolation from this Holy Apostolic See so well remembered by you as the spiritual mother of all the faithful, as indeed it is fitting that the joint heirs of a kingdom should receive from their royal parent. (Ep. v. Ad optimates Thuring -- cfe. Labbeum, ib.)

4. But although the grace of Our merciful God which in former times preserved and most graciously embraced your nation, bids Us to argue well, and be of good hope for the future, nevertheless We ought to strive, so far as lies in Our power, to do that which will be most efficacious in healing the wounds which Our religion may have received, or in warding them off while still threatening us, so that Our holy Christian doctrine and code of morals may daily spread and bear fruit more largely. This We do not say as though the Catholic faith were in want of greater and less timid defenders among you, for We know well, Venerable Brethren, that you, together with the larger and better part both of those in sacred orders and others, are by no means idly callous to the contests and dangers with which your Church is surrounded, therefore, as Our predecessor, Pius IX., in his most loving letters addressed to the Bishops of Bavaria, (Litt. Nihil Nobis gratius, 20 Feb. 1851) praised in the highest manner the great earnestness they displayed in preserving the sacred rights of the Church, so We also freely and openly give well-deserved praise to each one of those who have bravely undertaken and carried out the defense of their ancestral faith. But when Our provident God allows His Church to be vexed with grievous storms, He himself justly demands from Us dispositions and powers more prepared to assist her. But you, O Venerable Brethren, each one equally with Us, behold with grief the strange and unhappy times upon which the Church has fallen; you were amongst the first to notice the conditions in which you are placed, and the difficulties with which you have to contend. Wherefore you know by experience that your office has greater duties than formerly, and that to perform them well you ought to strive very earnestly for watchfulness, diligence, strength, and Christian prudence.

5. And firstly We urge and exhort you concerning the preparation and welfare of the clergy. For the clergy are like an army, which, as they obey the laws and perform their duties so that they may be of service to the Christian multitude under the authority of the bishops, will bring honor and stability to public affairs in

proportion to their number and discipline. Wherefore this has always been the first care of the Church that she should choose and bring up to the priesthood those young men, whose dispositions and desires afford a hope that they will persevere in the ministry of the Church (Conc. Trid., Sess. xxiii., de reform cxviii.), and again, that the young men should have been educated from their early years in piety and religion, before evil habits have gained possession of them as young men, (Conc. Trid., Sess. xxiii., de reform cxviii.), and for them she founded proper seats of training and seminaries, and laid down rules full of wisdom, especially in the holy Council of Trent (ibid.), so that this college of the ministers of God might be a perpetual seminary (ibid.). In several places indeed, certain laws are in force which, if they do not stop, yet hinder the clergy in their training and discipline. We deem that it behoves Us now as at other times openly to speak Our mind on this matter, which is of the greatest possible interest, and to preserve the holy law of the Church inviolate by every means in Our power. For indeed the Church, as a body, which is by its nature perfect, has an inalienable right of ordering and instructing its own forces, hurtful to none, helpful to many in that kingdom of peace which Jesus Christ founded upon earth for the salvation of the human race.

6. The clergy, however, will fulfill the duties committed to their charge fully and as a whole when, by the care of the bishops such a disposition of mind and intention has been brought about in the sacred seminaries as the dignity of the Christian priesthood and the natural change of times and manners require; they ought, indeed, to surpass others in the excellence of their teaching, and, which is the chief thing, in great reputation for virtue, so that they may attract the minds of men to it and lead them to its observance.

7. It is necessary that Christian wisdom, which abounds in a wonderful light, should shine before the eyes of all, so that the darkness of ignorance, which is the greatest enemy to religion, having been dispelled, the truth may shine forth far and wide, and happily reign. Nay more, it behoves that those manifold errors be refuted and dispelled which, taking their rise either in ignorance or wickedness or prejudiced opinions, perversely call away the minds of men from Catholic truth, and engender a certain hatred of it in their dispositions. This great duty, which is "to exhort in sound doctrine and to convince the gainsayers" (Ep. Tit. i., 9), belongs to the order of priests, who hold it legitimately, imposed by Christ our Lord when He sent them forth to teach all nations, by His divine power, "going into the whole world preach the gospel to every creature" (Mar. xvi. 15), equally plainly as the bishops, chosen in place of the apostles, are set over the Church of God, the priests are their assistants. If ever these duties have been fully and perfectly carried out it was in the first ages of our religion and in the following centuries during that great struggle with heathen tyranny which raged for so long a time, whence the priestly band and the most holy order of Fathers and Doctors whose wisdom and eloquence will be ever held in memory and admiration, obtained their great glory. For indeed Christian doctrine deeply treated of by them, fully explained, and most valiantly maintained, by that means spread forth the more its truth and divine excellence. On the other hand appeared the doctrine of the

heathens, confuted and despised even by the unlearned, as having no consistency, full of absurdities, useless. But in vain did the adversaries try to arrest and stop that course of Catholic wisdom; in vain did they seek objections from the schools of Greek philosophy, especially from those of Plato and Aristotle, with high-sounding words indeed. For our champions, declining not even that kind of contest, applied themselves to the learning and study of the heathen philosophers; having examined with the greatest diligence what each one of them had professed, they took these things into consideration one by one; they examined them, they compared them; many things were rejected or corrected by them; not a few were justly approved of and accepted; they also discovered and established by them, that those things which are proved to be false by human reason and intelligence, are in the same manner opposed to Christian doctrine, so that he who withstands and opposes this doctrine, of necessity equally withstands and opposes reason. Contests of this kind were entered into by our fathers, and splendid victories obtained, and these were achieved, not only by the virtue and arms of faith, but also by the aid of human reason; which indeed, guided by the light of divine wisdom, entered boldly upon the path of truth, from ignorance of many things, and as it were out of a forest of errors. This admirable agreement and consent of the faith with reason, although it has been honored by the learned works of many, yet as it were built up in one edifice and shown at one view, shines forth especially in that work of St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, and equally in the *Summa* of St. Thomas Aquinas, in which books, indeed, are contained whatever things were deeply thought out and considered by wise men, and in them we may seek for the beginnings and fount of that eminent school of learning called Christian theology. The memory of such illustrious examples should be remembered and cherished by the clergy, since in many ways ancient weapons are being sharpened by our adversaries, and nearly the same old battles are to be re-fought. Thus only the heathen formerly objected to the Christian religion, that they should not be led away from the ancient and accustomed rites of their divinities, but now the most iniquitous endeavor of wicked men contend that they should eradicate from Christian people all divine and most necessary teaching connected with Our holy faith, and that they may use them worse than the heathen, and may involve them in the greatest misery, namely, the subversion and contempt of all faith and religion. Of which impure plague, than which none is more detestable, those were the founders who attributed to man that by the light of nature each one could know and judge concerning doctrine divinely revealed by virtue of his own reason and judgment, and that there was no necessity to submit to the authority of the Church and the Roman Pontiff, whose sole right it is, by divine command and appointment to be the guardian of that doctrine, to hand it on and to judge truly concerning it. Thence the way easily opened, though to them it lay open most miserably, for denying and discarding all things and the powers of man: then insolently denying that there was any authority which emanated from God or even that there was a God, they at length lapsed into absurd theories of Idealism and Materialism. But this prostitution of the highest things, those who are named Rationalists or Naturalists do not hesitate to call by the false name of scientific and social progress, which in truth is nothing less than the destruction and ruin of both.

8. Thus, indeed, Venerable Brethren, you may know and see why and in what way the younger members of the Church ought to be instructed in higher doctrines that they perform their duties with ease and utility at the present time. That these may be thoroughly grounded and accomplished in the study of humanities they should not enter upon the study of sacred theology before having undergone a preparation in philosophy. We mean that deep and real philosophy, the investigator of the loftiest problems, the best patron of truth: by virtue of which they themselves will not be tossed about nor carried away "by every wind of doctrine, by the wickedness of men, by the craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive" (Ephes. iv. 14), and will enable them to give to other doctrines the aid of truth, by the discussion and refutation of captious and deceptive theories. With this object we have already advised that the works of the great Aquinas should be in their hands, and should be constantly and carefully explained; and We have often laid stress upon the same thing with solemn words; and We believe that the best fruits are thence received by the clergy, and We shall confidently look for fruits still more excellent and abundant. Indeed, the method of the Angelic Doctor is admirably adapted for training minds, wonderfully fitted for use in making comments, in philosophizing, in discoursing forcibly and incontrovertibly: for it shows clearly each subject connected one with another in a continuous series, all however joined together and fitting into each other, all leading to the highest principles; then it raises one to the contemplation of God, Who is the efficient cause and strength and highest type of all things, to Whom finally all philosophy and man himself, such as he is, ought to be referred. Thus truly the knowledge of things are held together, as they are admirably shown, so also are they most firmly established by St. Thomas; by conflict with which knowledge, as the ancient sects of errors have entirely disappeared, so the new, unlike them rather in name and kind than in fact, as soon as they have put forth their heads fall, laid low by the same blows, as indeed many of Our writers have shown. Truly human reason desires to penetrate freely into the hidden and secret knowledge of things, nor can it do otherwise, but with Aquinas for Our author and master it does this more quickly and freely because it does it safely without any danger of passing over the boundaries of truth. For neither can you rightly call that liberty which gathers and scatters opinions according to its own will and pleasure, nay rather it is to be reputed the vilest license, Lying, and false science, a disgrace and slavery of the mind. He indeed is the true Doctor who walks within the confines of truth, who not only never differs from God, the Head and Fount of all truth, but is always strictly in accordance with Him and always follows Him when disclosing His secrets in any manner; who no less piously listens to the Roman Pontiff when speaking, reverses in him the divine authority and fully holds that "submission to the Roman Pontiff is necessary to salvation." (Opusc. contra errores Groecorum.) In his school, therefore, let the cleric be brought up and exercised both in philosophy and theology: for he will then be learned and strong as the mightiest to fight the sacred combats.

9 But it is scarcely possible to express how great is the utility of the light of doctrine which shines from the clergy, and is poured among the different orders of

Christian people, if indeed it shines as it were from a beacon of virtue. For in the precepts which tend to the correction of men's morals, the acts of their masters are of more avail than their precepts, nor will any easily feel confidence when dealing with one whose deeds do not accord with his words and precepts. We turn Our eyes and minds to Jesus Christ; who, as He is the truth, has taught Us what We ought to believe, as He is the life and way, has offered Himself to Us a perfect example, how We should lead a good life and eagerly seek after Our final good. He Himself desired His disciples to be ordered and perfected after His own pattern, "so let your light shine," that is in doctrine "before men, that they may see your good works," not differing from the principles of your doctrine "and glorify your Father Who is in heaven" (Mat. v. 16.), having combined together the doctrine and excellence of the gospel which He committed to them to preach. It is right that those precepts should be divine by which the life of priests is ordered and directed. Above all it is necessary that they persuade themselves and have it almost written in their minds, that they are now no longer in the companionship of God, and though passing their time in the communion of the world, still live the life of Christ our Lord. Who if they really live by Him and in Him, will in no way seek "those things which are their own," but will be entirely taken up with "those things which belong to Jesus Christ" (Philipp. ii. 21), nor will they receive the empty favor of men, but will seek after the solid favor of God; they will, moreover, abstain from and abhor these lower and contemptible things, and industriously trying to become rich in heavenly blessings, will generously and gladly pour them forth, as is the part of holy charity; further, they will never permit themselves to oppose or prefer their own to the judgment and will of the bishops, but by obeying and giving way to them as bearing the person of Christ, they will obtain most happily in the Lord's vineyard abundance of most choice fruit which will remain with them forever. But whosoever severs himself in thought or will from his shepherd and from the chief of shepherds, the Roman Pontiff, is in no way joined to Christ, "he that heareth you heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me" (Luke x. 16). but whosoever is separated from Christ scatters rather than gathers together -- whence, moreover, is evident the kind and measure of consideration due to men who are placed in positions of public authority. For it is by no means intended that any one should desire to deny or derogate from their rights; rather those are to be diligently observed by other citizens, and especially carefully by priests: "Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's." (Matt. xxii. 21.) For those functions are most noble and honorable which God the highest lord and ruler has imposed upon men who are princes, that, by counsel, reason, and all care of justice they should govern, preserve, and increase the state. Wherefore let the clergy carefully attend to and perform every duty as citizens, not after the manner of one who is servile, but of one who holds them in reverence, on account of religion, not on account of fear; at the same time with due observance, maintaining their own dignity, being both citizens and priests of God. But if it should happen that the civil power should invade the rights of God and of His Church, then let a marked example be set by priests, as every Christian man ought to persevere in the path of duty during times of religious trouble; let him bear many things in silence, with unstained virtue; let him be cautious in bearing evil deeds, nor let him ever assent or consent to the

wicked in any matter; but if it be a question of choice which he should do, whether the laws of God were to be broken or men pleased let him freely use that memorable and most dignified answer of the Apostles: "We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts v. 29.)

10. To this, as it were foreshadowed type of educating young men destined to sacred ends, it is Our desire and right that We should add what appertains to youth in general: for We are exceedingly anxious as to its education, that it should be rightly and very fully carried out, both as regards mental culture and training the disposition. The Church has always cherished the age of youth in her maternal embrace, for its guardianship she has most lovingly undertaken many labors and prepared many aids for it; among which is the foundation of many orders of religious men which might train young people in science and learning, and might especially inculcate Christian wisdom and virtue. Under such auspices it would come to pass that piety towards God would easily imbue their tender minds, after which the duty of man towards himself, his neighbor, and his country having been duly set before them, there is every hope that they would bring forth fruit in due season. There is therefore a just cause of grief to the Church when she sees her little ones torn away from her at the tenderest age and forced into schools where either the knowledge of God is passed over in silence, or but a maimed and perverted idea of it taught; where there is nothing to stem the torrent of error, no faith in divine revelation, no place where the truth may defend itself. But truly, to forbid the Catholic Church to use her influence in the abodes of science and literature, is most injurious, since the duty of teaching religion, that subject indeed, which no man careful of his eternal salvation can neglect, has been given by God to His Church, but to no other society of men has it been given, nor can any other association take it for itself, she therefore claims it as her undoubted right, and complains when it is neglected.

11. Further We must beware, and the greatest care should be taken, that in schools which have either wholly or partially cast aside the authority of the Church, the young should incur no danger nor receive any injury to their Catholic faith or good morals. In which indeed the skill of the clergy and other good men will be of great avail, both if they exert themselves that the knowledge of religion should not only not be driven out of those schools where it exists, but should occupy its due place, and be taught by competent teachers of known ability; and if also they could find and put into operation any other safeguards, by which that knowledge may be imparted to their scholars incorrupt and satisfactorily. The counsel and co-operation of the heads of families will also be of use, wherefore there is need of warning and exhorting them as far as lies in Our power most earnestly, that they should consider what great and holy duties God has imposed upon them with respect to the education of their children, that they may know their religion and be of good behavior, serving God religiously; but that they themselves act wrongly if they commit their children at a docile and guileless age to the care of questionable teachers. In these duties, which devolve upon them with the procreation of their children, let the heads of families know that there are the same rights inherent

both by nature and justice, and that they ate of such a kind that no one can free himself from them, since it is impossible by any human power to be dispensed from those duties which man owes to God. Let, then, parents consider well that they have a great responsibility to bear in the education of their children, and a still greater one in bringing them up to look for a better and more perfect life, that of the soul, which when they are themselves unable to superintend, it is their part to procure the aid of others, so that their children may hear and receive that knowledge of religion which is necessary for every man from approved teachers. Now, indeed, there is not infrequently a most excellent example of piety and munificence, in that where there are no public schools open except those which are called "neutral," Catholics have opened certain establishments of their own at great labor and expense and maintain them with an equal zeal. It is greatly to be wished that these excellent and safe refuges of youth should be established more and more where the necessities of circumstances or places require. Nor must We pass over in silence the fact that the Christian education of youth redounds greatly to the advantage of the State itself. Indeed, numberless and very great losses are to be feared for that State in which the method and discipline of education is devoid of religion or, what is worse, is opposed to it. For immediately that supreme and divine rule is laid aside and despised, by whose admonition we are commanded to reverence the authority of God and in reliance upon the same God, to hold all His teachings with the most assured faith, there is a tendency of human science to fall into most grievous errors especially those of materialism and rationalism. Hence it follows that each man is allowed to follow his own judgment and inclination as to what he understands, and still more as to what he does, and forthwith the public authority of those in power is weakened and destroyed: for it would be wonderful indeed if those obeyed and endured the rule of man, who entertain the baneful opinion that they are in no way bound by the governance and rule of God. For once destroy the foundations on which all authority rests and the bond of human society is loosened and destroyed, there will be no State; a tyranny full of violence and cunning will take possession of all things. But surely can any State by reliance upon its own powers ward off so great a calamity? Can any State do so while refusing the aid of the Church? Can any State do so when absolutely opposing the Church? The matter stands open and clear to every prudent person. Prudence in affairs of State itself demands that their part in teaching and educating the young should be left to the bishops and clergy, and great care should be taken that the most noble duty of instructing others should not be left in the hands of those who are either careless and lax in their religion or openly averse to the Church. What, however, would be still more intolerable would be that men of this character should be selected as professors of religious knowledge, which is the most important of all.

12. It is likewise a matter of extreme importance, Venerable Brethren, that you should warn and guard your flocks against the dangers arising from the contagion of Freemasonry. We have in a special Encyclical Letter shown how full of evil and danger to the State is this sect of darkness, and We have pointed out means to contract and destroy its influence. The faithful can never be sufficiently warned

against this wicked faction, for although from the very beginning it conceived a deep hatred against the Catholic Church, and has ever since increased and inflamed it, its enmity is not always openly displayed, but more often exercises itself in an underhand and hypocritical way, especially among the young, who inexperienced and wanting in wisdom, are sadly ensnared by its deceits often concealed by appearances of piety and charity. As to being cautious in regard to those outside the Catholic faith, keep to what the Church prescribes, so that intercourse with them or the depravity of their doctrines may not become a source of danger to a Christian people. We know and regret, as you do, that Our power to ward off such dangers does not equal Our zeal and Our desire to do so; nevertheless We do not think it useless to excite your pastoral solicitude and to stimulate at the same time the activity of Catholics, so that our united efforts may turn aside, or at least lessen obstacles set in the way of Our common desires. And We exhort you in the words of Our predecessor Leo the Great: "Be full of pious zeal for religion, and let the anxiety of all the faithful be aroused against the most cruel enemies of souls." (Serm. xv. c. 6). Therefore throwing off their torpid neglect let all good persons embrace the cause of religion and of the Church as their own, and let them fight faithfully and constantly on her behalf. Too often the wicked are confirmed in their wickedness and their power for evil, and win the day by the sluggishness and timidity of good persons. The efforts and zeal of Catholics have not indeed always the effect intended and to be expected; but at heart they serve to restrain the enemy and at the same time to encourage the feeble and timid, even without counting the advantages gained from the satisfaction of having fulfilled a duty. Moreover, We are not ready to admit that the zeal and activity of Catholics cannot attain their end if properly guided and with perseverance. For it ever has chanced and will happen that enterprises most surrounded with difficulties end happily, provided, as We have said they are carried out with courageous energy, guided and aided by Christian prudence. And indeed truth, naturally desired by all men, will sooner or later win men's minds. Truth may be tried and oppressed by intellectual troubles and diseases, but it can never be destroyed. All that has gone before seems to apply in a special way to Bavaria. For by God's grace, since it ranks among Catholic kingdoms, it must keep and nourish rather than accept that Divine faith which it received from its forefather. Moreover, they who in the people's name make laws to govern the kingdom are mostly Catholics, as are also many of its citizens and inhabitants, and therefore We doubt not they will aid with their utmost strength the Church, their mother, in her many trials. If all unite their efforts as energetically and actively as they ought, there will, by God's grace, be reason to rejoice at the happy results of their zeal. We recommend to all such union, for as there is nothing so baneful as discord, there is concord of spirit, when in united force they are brought to bear for some common purpose. Effectively the laws give Catholics an easy way of seeking to amend the condition and order of the State and to desire and will a constitution which, if not favorable and well-intentioned towards the Church, shall at least, as justice requires, be not harshly hostile. It would be unjust to accuse or blame any one amongst us who has recourse to such means, for those means, used by the enemies of Catholicity to obtain and to extort, as it were, from rulers laws inimical

to civil and religious freedom, may surely be used by Catholics in an honorable manner for the interests of religion and in defense of the property, privileges, and right divinely granted to the Catholic Church, and that ought to be respected with all honor by rulers and subjects alike.

13. Of the rights of the Church that it is Our duty everywhere and always to maintain and defend against all injustice, the first is certainly that of enjoying the full freedom of action she may need in working for the salvation of souls. This is a divine liberty, having as its author the only Son of God, Who by shedding of blood, gave birth to the Church Who established it until the end of time, and chose Himself to be its Head. This liberty is so essential to the Church, a perfect and divine institution, that they who attack this liberty at the same time offend against God and their duty. For as We have elsewhere more than once shown, God established His Church to protect and distribute what is of supreme good to souls, by their nature superior to all others, and to bring men, by means of faith and grace, to a new life in Jesus Christ, a life that ensures eternal salvation. Since the character and rights of any society are fixed by its reason for existing and by the end it aims at, in accordance with the terms of its existence, and conformably with its object, it naturally follows that the Church is a society as distinct from civil society as their reason for existence and ends are different; it follows that she is an indispensable society, for all mankind, since all are called to a Christian life, and so they who refuse to enter it, or leave it are separated for ever from life eternal; and it is a society eminently independent, and above all others, because of the excellence of the heavenly and immortal blessings towards which it tends. But an essentially free institution requires, as all may see, freedom to use the means necessary for its operations. The Church therefore needs, as proper and necessary means, the power of handing down Christian doctrine, of giving the Sacraments, of exercising divine worship, of regulating and ruling all ecclesiastical discipline, with which gifts and offices God willed that His Church should be invested and strengthened, and by an admirable providence willed too that She alone should possess. To Her alone has He given in charge all He has revealed to men and established as sole interpreter, judge, and mistress, most wise and infallible, of the truth, whose precepts states as well as individuals must hear and accept. It is equally certain that He has given the Church full freedom to judge and decide as to the things that may best suit Her ends. Wherefore it is unjustly that the civil powers take offense at the freedom of the Church, since the principle of civil and religious power is one and the same, namely, God. Therefore there can be no discord between them, nor mutual obstacles nor encroachments, for God cannot be at variance with Himself, and there cannot be conflict between His works; rather there is between them a marvelous harmony of causes and effects. It is clear likewise that when the Catholic Church, obeying Her Master's will, carries far and wide her standard among nations, she does not invade the territory of the civil power, and interferes with it in no way, but, on the contrary, protects and guards those nations, just as the Christian law does not cloud the light of human reason but adds to its brilliancy by turning it aside from falsities into which human nature easily falls, or in opening to it a newer and wider intellectual horizon.

14. In regard to Bavaria arrangements were made between the Holy See and that country, which were ratified and made binding by reciprocal treaties. Although the Holy See granted great concessions in making a convention touching its rights, nevertheless in its wonted manner it has religiously kept the whole of these arrangements, and has never done anything that might give rise to conflict. Wherefore it is earnestly to be hoped that they may be faithfully kept on both sides, not only according to the letter, but according to the spirit in which they were made. Once indeed this harmony was broken, but a decree of Maximilian I. restored it, and Maximilian II. confirmed it in a fair and just manner by sanctioning some opportune modifications. These modifications have, however, We know, been lately abrogated. We, nevertheless, on account of the religious prudence of the prince who governs the kingdom of Bavaria, are confident that he who inherits the rank and faith of the Maximilians, will himself safeguard Catholic interests by removing obstacles that bar their way, and that he will favor their development. Consequently, the Catholics, who form the majority of the people, and whose love of country and respect for authority are conspicuous, if they see that in a matter of such moment, their desires are taken into account and satisfied, will increase their love and respect for a prince, as sons for their father, and, following his counsels for the welfare and honor of the kingdom, they will fulfill them to the uttermost limits of their power.

15. Such, Venerable Brothers, is what the duty of Our Apostolic office compels Us to say to you. It only remains to implore in common and with assurance, the help of God, and to this end, let us take as Our intercessors, the ever Glorious Virgin Mary and the heavenly patrons of Bavaria, so that He may hear our united prayers and graciously grant to the Church peace and freedom, and that, thanks to Him, Bavaria may enjoy glory and prosperity daily increasing. As a promise of these heavenly favors, and in witness of Our special goodwill, We earnestly bestow on you, Venerable Brothers, to you, the clergy and people confided to your care, the Apostolic Blessing.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, the 22nd day of December, in the year MDCCCLXXXVII., the tenth of Our Pontificate.