

SAINT PETER DAMIAN

APOLOGY OF THE MONKS AGAINST
THE CANONS

Apologeticus Monachorum adversus Canonicos

SABBATISMUS

Saint Peter Damian (1007–1072)
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Queruntur monachi, quod a coetu totius Ecclesiae per canonicos exclusi fuerint, cum ipsi ab apostolis, imo a prophetis suam traxerint originem. Severe quemdam arguunt, qui ausus est dicere: A monachis Ecclesiae sacramenta nullo pacto esse ministranda. Denique exemplo sanctorum Augustini, Hieronymi, Athanasii et decreto Bonifacii papae IV probant ligandi et solvendi potestatem monachos habere.

Cunctis amantissimis clericis ac canonicis, omnes unanimiter monachi.

Multum, fratres charissimi, si digni estis audire, miramur, quomodo vel ob quam causam conamini nos a consortio et unitate universalis Ecclesiae separare: cum constet a monachis, non a canonicis universalem Ecclesiam fundatam, gubernatam et a diverso errore cribratam. Apostoli nempe fundatores, et rectores Ecclesiarum nostro, non vestro more vivebant, ut Lucas evangelista in Actibus apostolorum refert (Act. I): et Philo disertissimus Judaeorum, in libris quos in laudem nostrorum conscripsit, primitivos Christianos monachos, non canonicos vocat; et habitacula eorum monasteria nuncupat ac quamplurima dicit, eos laudabilia egisse, et conscripsisse. Certe nostri, non vestri ordinis Moyses et Elias fuere (Exod. III; III Reg. XVII), eremum qui incofuerunt: nostri auctores greges prophetarum cum quibus reprobis Saul saepe cantavit (III Reg. XIX). Longum est paginas Veteris Testamenti revolvere, veniamus ad Novum, quod supra reliquimus. Apostolos certe, et successores eorum, si irreverberatis oculis paginas novi instrumenti percipitis, monachico non canonico more vivere invenietis, eisque potestatem ligandi atque solvendi (Matth. XVIII) concessam a Domino procul dubio reperietis. Quod si ita est, imo quia ita est, cur nos ab hoc privilegio separare conamini? Nescitis, quia quibus dixit Apostolus: Mortui enim estis, scilicet mundo (Coloss. III): eisdem dixit in alia Epistola: Nescitis, quia angelos judicabimus, quanto magis saecularia! (I Cor. VI.) Ergo si, sicut vos dicitis, mundo mortui sumus, scilicet vitiis, et peccatis, non erubescimus, quia idem Apostolus dicit: «Si autem mortui sumus cum Christo, credimus quia simul resurgemus cum ipso (II Tim. II; Rom. VI);» itemque: «Mihi vivere Christus est, et mori lucrum (Philipp. I);» et in alio loco: «Vivo autem, non jam ego, vivit vero in me Christus (Gal. II).» Sed ne turbarentur, qui se toties mortuos audissent, ait: «Nescitis quia angelos judicabimus, quanto magis saecularia!» (I Cor. VI.) Ecce nostra libertas. Quare? quia idem Apostolus dicit: «Ubi spiritus Domini, ibi libertas (II Cor. III).» Vae ergo nobis et vobis, si mortui non fuimus mundo. Si igitur mortui sumus mundo, et vivimus Deo, probabimus vos per omnia esse mentitos; quia dicitis: Nos ob hoc, quod mortui sumus mundo, non posse dispensare ecclesiastica. Sed quid vos extollitis?

The monks complain that they have been excluded by the canons from the assembly of the whole Church, since they themselves have drawn their origin from the apostles, and indeed from the prophets. They severely rebuke a certain person who dared to say: that the sacraments of the Church are in no way to be administered by monks. Finally, by the example of Saints Augustine, Jerome, Athanasius, and by the decree of Pope Boniface IV, they prove that monks have the power of binding and loosing.

To all most beloved clerics and canons, all the monks in unison.

We wonder greatly, most beloved brothers, if you are worthy to hear, how or for what reason you attempt to separate us from the fellowship and unity of the universal Church: since it is established that the universal Church was founded, governed, and sifted from diverse error by monks, not by canons. For the Apostles, the founders and rectors of the Churches, lived in our manner, not yours, as Luke the evangelist relates in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 1): and Philo, the most eloquent of the Jews, in the books he wrote in praise of our own, calls the primitive Christians monks, not canons; and he names their dwellings monasteries and says very many things, that they did and wrote praiseworthy things. Certainly, Moses and Elijah, who inhabited the desert, were of our order, not yours (Exod. 3; 3 Kings 17): the companies of prophets with whom the reprobate Saul often sang were our authors (3 Kings 19). It is a long task to unroll the pages of the Old Testament; let us come to the New, which we left above. Certainly, if you perceive the pages of the new instrument with unblinded eyes, you will find that the Apostles and their successors lived in the monastic, not the canonical, manner, and you will without doubt discover that the power of binding and loosing (Matt. 18) was granted to them by the Lord. If this is so, or rather because it is so, why do you attempt to separate us from this privilege? Do you not know that to those to whom the Apostle said: "For you have died," namely to the world (Col. 3), he said in another Epistle: "Do you not know that we shall judge angels, how much more worldly things!" (1 Cor. 6). Therefore, if, as you say, we are dead to the world, that is, to vices and sins, we are not ashamed, because the same Apostle says: "But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also rise together with him (2 Tim. 2; Rom. 6);" and also: "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain (Phil. 1);" and in another place: "I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me (Gal. 2)." But lest they be disturbed who had heard themselves called dead so many times, he says: "Do you not know that we shall judge angels, how much more worldly things!" (1 Cor. 6). Behold our freedom. Why? because the same Apostle says: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (2 Cor. 3)." Woe, therefore, to us and to you, if we have not been dead to the world. If, therefore, we are dead to the world and live for God, we shall prove you to have lied in all things; because you say: that we, for the reason that we are dead to the world, cannot dispense ecclesiastical matters. But why do you exalt yourselves?

Recolite principia nostra, et vestra; et ex auctoritate Patrum, cui plus competat, collyriato lumine perjudicet.

Contra vos itaque multum conquerimur, quia quidam vestrorum ausus fuit temerario ore dicere: A monachis nullo modo communionem esse recipiendam; insuper etiam suscipientes excommunicavit, et in opprobrium nostrum, imo in condemnationem suam, et illorum recomunicare praecepit. Sed quid contra illum? Scimus, quia pene idiota est, et multorum criminum reus; ideoque juxta Salomonem, vitamus stulto respondere juxta stultitiam suam, ne similes ei efficiamur (Prov. XXVI). Sed, ne videamur succubuisse, respondere volumus stulto, ut idem Salomon admonet, juxta stultitiam suam, ne sapiens sibi esse videatur (Ibid.): et patenter ostendimus eum in rebaptizatorum sectam miserabiliter corruisse. Sed non mirum, si odium fraternum hoc promeruit; cum Joannes 523 Apostolus intonet, dicens: «Qui odit fratrem suum, in tenebris est, et in tenebris ambulat, et nescit quo eat; quoniam tenebrae obcaecerunt oculos ejus (I Joan. II).» Sed ne longius toxica illius veneni serpant, manifeste ostendimus antecessoribus nostris prae omnibus clericis, haec sacramenta licita fuisse contingere, et dispensare; sicut in vita B. Martini legitur, quod de vino a quodam anachoreta consecrato, a maximis et venerabilibus viris pro benedictione expetebatur: ante cujus fores saepe et episcopi, et comites benedictionis gratia pernoctarunt. Telesphorus denique apostolicus ex anachoretis fuisse comprobatur; Dionysius etiam, et Adeodatus, ac Stephanus nuper defunctus, ex monachis fuisse leguntur, qui tamen apostolicam sedem gloriosissime gubernarunt. Gregorius ex monasterio raptus, ac violenter infulatus, non solum suas protulit, sed etiam dispositiones aliorum meliorare studuit. Num etiam Martinum Turonensem omittendum putatis, cui astanti sacramento divino globus igneus apparuit? Forsan ex istorum manibus quia monachi fuerant, percipere sacramenta divina quisquam insanus prohibuit? Absit. Facessat ergo insana et proterva doctrina, et sanctorum Patrum sequatur auctoritas, quae etiam ex cujuscunque sacerdotis manibus sacramenta divina, non solum percipere, sed etiam dedignantes suscipere ab ecclesia separat, si tamen sacerdotes rectae fidei fuerint. Sufficient ista contradicentibus.

Sed quia nimis periculosum est obmutescere velle, introducimus et alios testes, Basilium scilicet, Athanasium, et Augustinum, nec non et Hieronymum sacrae legis interpretem, Marinianum quoque Ravennatem episcopum, et Augustinum Anglorum praesulem, quos nulli dubium est monachos fuisse. Nunquidnam Romani praesules, quos praediximus, vel isti, quos nunc retulimus, quia monachi fuerunt, minus laudabiles habiti sunt? Non utique. Forsitan episcopos, presbyteros, diacones non ordinarunt, quis insanus audeat dicere?

Recall our origins, and yours; and from the authority of the Fathers, let him judge with enlightened eye to whom the greater part belongs.

We therefore complain greatly against you, because a certain one of your number dared to say with a rash mouth: "Communion is in no way to be received from monks"; moreover, he even excommunicated those who did receive it, and to our shame, or rather to his own condemnation, he commanded them to be re-communicated by others. But what is to be said against him? We know that he is almost an idiot and guilty of many crimes; therefore, according to Solomon, we avoid answering a fool according to his folly, lest we become like him (Proverbs 26). But, lest we seem to have yielded, we wish to answer the fool, as the same Solomon advises, according to his folly, lest he seem wise to himself (Ibid.): and we openly show that he has miserably fallen into the sect of the rebaptizers. But it is no wonder if fraternal hatred has brought this about; since John the Apostle thunders, saying: "He who hates his brother is in darkness, and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going; because the darkness has blinded his eyes (1 John 2)." But lest the toxins of that poison creep further, we clearly show that for our predecessors, before all other clerics, it was lawful to handle and dispense these sacraments; just as it is read in the life of the Blessed Martin that wine consecrated by a certain anchorite was sought for a blessing by the greatest and most venerable men: before whose doors both bishops and counts often spent the night for the sake of a blessing. Finally, Telesphorus the apostolic is proven to have been from the anchorites; Dionysius also, and Adeodatus, and Stephen, recently deceased, are read to have been from the monks, who nevertheless most gloriously governed the apostolic see. Gregory, seized from the monastery and violently invested with the miter, not only brought forth his own dispositions, but also strove to improve the dispositions of others. Do you think that Martin of Tours should also be omitted, to whom, while he was present at the divine sacrament, a globe of fire appeared? Perhaps some madman forbade receiving the divine sacraments from the hands of these men because they were monks? Far from it. Let this insane and insolent doctrine therefore cease, and let the authority of the Holy Fathers be followed, which separates from the church not only those who refuse to receive the divine sacraments from the hands of any priest whatsoever, but also those who disdain to receive them, provided the priests are of the right faith. These things will suffice for those who contradict.

But because it is too dangerous to wish to remain silent, we introduce other witnesses as well, namely Basil, Athanasius, and Augustine, and also Jerome, the interpreter of the sacred law, Marinianus the bishop of Ravenna, and Augustine the prelate of the English, of whom there is no doubt that they were monks. Were the Roman prelates, whom we mentioned before, or these whom we have now recounted, held to be less praiseworthy because they were monks? Not at all. Perhaps they did not ordain bishops, priests, and deacons—what madman would dare to say so?

An forsitan poenitentiam criminosis non imposuerunt, et absolutionem, ut compete-
bat, benignissime non addidere? Utique facere potuerunt.

Nunc igitur requirite sancta octo concilia, 524 et maxime sextum, et septimum
concilium; ibique invenietis monachis licitum fuisse disputare, absque ullo scrupulo
in conspectu concilii super omnes qui aderant. Sed jam sufficiant.

Veniamus ad consecrationem, quam, dispensante Deo, per episcopos accepimus.
Nunquid nos aliter, quam canonici consecramur, quis insipiens audeat dicere? Nemo.
Nam utrisque in commune benedictionem a Domino infundi episcopus obnixe
deposcit. Et dum consecrat sigillatim, obnixe deposcit cunctis sacerdotibus, dicens:
Consecrentur, Domine, manus istae, ut quidquid benedixerint, benedicta sint, et
quidquid consecraverint, consecrata sint. Ecce communis benedictio. Unde ergo
divortium? Longum est ista prosequi.

Videamus nostrorum, vestrorumque vestimentorum figuram. Agite utrumque.
Prophetae et apostoli nostro an vestro vestitu usi sunt? Forsitan dicetis, nostro. Et ubi
est illud, quod de Elia legitur: «Vir pilosus, et zona pellicea accinctus renibus (IV Reg.
I);» et de ipso, et similibus Paulus dicit: «Circuierunt in melotis, et in pellibus caprinis
(Hebr. XI);» et de Joanne Baptista, Joannes evangelista: «Zona, inquit, pellicina circa
lumbos ejus (Matth. III; Marc. I);» Petro quoque angelus imperat: «Praecinge te, et
calcea te caligas tuas (Act. XII);» de Pauli quoque zona Agabus dixit: «Virum cujus
haec zona est, Judaei in Hierusalem alligabunt, et tradent in manus gentium (Act.
XXI).» Horum ergo Patrum indumenta nullatenus nominatim Scriptura poneret,
nisi eis privatim usi fuissent. Quod si vobis dubium videtur, saltem vestrorum
partium testimonio aurem accommodate. Legite collationes Patrum, quas Eucherius
Lugdunensis episcopus elimato sermone abbreviare studuit; et si nobis credere non
vultis, saltem illius litterae credite. Nam nos, eo doctore, hanc paginam exaravimus.
Igitur non solum praedictos Patres in vestitu sequimur, sed insuper sublimissimam
coelorum curiam, quod vobis durum est audire. Seraphim scilicet, quis dubitet sex
alas habere? dicente Scriptura: «Sex alae uni, et sex alae alteri (Isa. VI).» Enimvero et
nos sex alis velamur, videlicet duabus in capite, et duabus dextera laevaue, et duabus
ante, et retro. Si autem haec incredibilia vobis videntur, perquirite quod Bonifacius
in nostrorum tuitione composuit; et si adhuc contraire vultis, morum vestrorum ac
vestimentorum auctores ex auctoritate Patrum edicite: et quod nobis apponitis, testi-
moniis probate: et si vita comes fuerit, altiora quam diximus, juvante Deo, dicenda
sperate.

Sit nomen Domini benedictum.

Or perhaps they did not impose penance on the sinful, and most kindly add absolution, as was fitting? They were certainly able to do so.

Now, therefore, consult the eight holy councils, 524 and especially the sixth and seventh councils; and there you will find that it was lawful for monks to dispute, without any scruple, in the sight of the council above all who were present. But let these things suffice for now.

Let us come to the consecration, which, by God's dispensation, we have received through bishops. Would any fool dare to say that we are consecrated differently than the canons? No one. For the bishop earnestly asks that a blessing from the Lord be poured out upon both in common. And while he consecrates each one individually, he earnestly asks for all priests, saying: "May these hands be consecrated, O Lord, so that whatever they bless may be blessed, and whatever they consecrate may be consecrated." Behold, a common blessing. Whence, then, the separation? It would be tedious to pursue these matters further.

Let us examine the fashion of our garments, and of yours. Consider both. Did the prophets and apostles use our attire or yours? Perhaps you will say, ours. And where is that which is read of Elijah: "A hairy man, and with a girdle of leather girt about his loins (4 Kings 1);" and of him and others like him, Paul says: "They wandered about in sheepskins, in goatskins (Hebrews 11);" and of John the Baptist, John the Evangelist says: "A leathern girdle, he says, about his loins (Matthew 3; Mark 1);" to Peter also the angel commands: "Gird thyself, and put on thy sandals (Acts 12);" and of Paul's girdle Agabus said: "The man that owneth this girdle, the Jews shall bind in Jerusalem, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles (Acts 21)." Therefore, Scripture would by no means have mentioned the garments of these Fathers by name, unless they had used them privately. But if this seems doubtful to you, at least lend an ear to the testimony of your own party. Read the Conferences of the Fathers, which Eucherius, bishop of Lyon, took pains to abridge in polished language; and if you do not wish to believe us, at least believe his writing. For we, with him as our teacher, have composed this page. Therefore, we not only follow the aforementioned Fathers in our attire, but also the most sublime court of heaven, which is a hard saying for you to hear. Namely, the Seraphim; who would doubt that they have six wings? As Scripture says: "Six wings for one, and six wings for the other (Isaiah 6)." Indeed, we too are veiled with six wings: namely, two on the head, and two on the right and left, and two before and behind. But if these things seem incredible to you, investigate what Boniface composed in defense of our ways; and if you still wish to contradict, declare the authors of your customs and garments from the authority of the Fathers: and what you charge against us, prove with testimonies: and if life remains, hope that, with God's help, higher things than we have said will be said.

Blessed be the name of the Lord.

525-526 DECRETUM BONIFACII PAPAE. Quod monachi presbyterii honore decorati, potestatem habent ligandi et solvendi. (Ab auctoritate Bonifacii IV, Pont. Max. 16, qu. 1, ap. Decr. Grat.)

«Sunt nonnulli nullo dogmate fulti, audacissime quidem, zelo magis amaritudinis quam dilectionis inflammati, asserentes monachos, quia mundo mortui sunt et Deo vivunt, sacerdotalis officii potentia indignos; neque poenitentiam, neque Christianitatem largiri, neque absolvere posse per sacerdotalis officii divinitus sibi injunctam potestatem, sed omnino labuntur. Nam si ex hac causa veteres aemuli vera praedicarent, apostolicae compar sedis beatissimus Gregorius monachico cultu pollens, ad summum nullatenus apicem conscenderet, cui quidem haec ligandi solvendique potestas a Deo summa conceditur: Augustinus quoque ejusdem sanctissimi Gregorii discipulus, Anglorum praedicator egregius: et Pannoniensis Martinus beatissimus, cujus sanctitatis famam longe lateque diffusam totus personat mundus; alii quoque quamplurimi viri sanctissimi, pretiosissimo monachorum habitu fulgentes, nequaquam annulo pontificali subarrharentur. Sed quia monachi fuerunt, praedictis uti prohibentur? Neque enim B. Benedictus monachorum praeceptor almificus, hujus rei aliquo modo fuit interdictor; sed eos saecularium negotiorum edixit expertes fore tantummodo (S. BENED. Reg., cap. 4). Quod quidem apostolicis documentis et omnium sanctorum Patrum institutis, non solum monachis, sed etiam canonicis maximopere imperatur. «Nemo enim militans Deo, implicat se negotiis saecularibus (I Tim. II).» Nos vero tantorum Patrum instituti exemplis, quibus est periculosissimum refragari, credimus a sacerdotibus monachis ligandi solvendique officium, Deo operante, digne administrari, si eos digne contigerit hoc ministerio sublimari. Quod incunctanter affirmat quisquis statum monachorum et habitum potestatemque evidenter considerat. Verbi gratia, angelus Graece, Latine nuntius sonat. Sacerdotes igitur, monachi atque canonici, qui quotidie Dei praecepta populo nuntiant, angeli vocantur, ratione non incongrua. Sed unusquisque angelicus ordo, quanto claritatem Dei vicinius contemplatur, tanto majori virtute ejus divinitati adhaerens, sine dubio roboratur: eorum cherubim ordo eximius praedicatur, quorum figuram monachorum cultus competenter habere comprobatur. Nam uti cherubim, ita monachi sex alis velantur. Duabus quidem in capucio, quo caput tegitur; aliis vero duabus, quibus pedes teguntur, verisimilibus demonstratur assertionibus. Illud vero cucullae, quod brachiis ostenditur, alias duas alas esse dicimus, et id tandem, quod dicitur, sex alarum numerum certissime impleri asseritur.

525-526 DECREE OF POPE BONIFACE. That monks adorned with the honor of the presbyterate have the power of binding and loosing. (From the authority of Boniface IV, Supreme Pontiff, 16, q. 1, in the *Decretum* of Gratian.)

There are some, supported by no dogma, who, inflamed more by a zeal of bitterness than of love, most audaciously assert that monks, because they are dead to the world and live for God, are unworthy of the power of the priestly office; and that they can neither grant penance, nor confer Christianity, nor absolve through the power of the priestly office divinely enjoined upon them; but they are altogether mistaken. For if, for this reason, the ancient rivals were preaching the truth, the most blessed Gregory, a peer of the apostolic see, distinguished in the monastic life, would by no means have ascended to the highest summit, to whom indeed this highest power of binding and loosing is granted by God; nor would Augustine, the disciple of that same most holy Gregory and outstanding preacher to the English; nor the most blessed Martin of Pannonia, the fame of whose sanctity the whole world proclaims far and wide; nor very many other most holy men, resplendent in the most precious habit of monks, have ever been betrothed with the pontifical ring. But because they were monks, are they forbidden to use the aforementioned powers? For neither was the Blessed Benedict, the nourishing teacher of monks, in any way an interdictor of this matter; but he decreed only that they should be free from secular business (St. Benedict, Rule, ch. 4). This, indeed, is most earnestly commanded by the apostolic documents and the institutes of all the holy Fathers, not only for monks, but also for canons. «For no one serving as a soldier for God entangles himself in secular affairs (II Tim. 2:4).» We, however, instructed by the examples of so many Fathers, whom it is most perilous to oppose, believe that the office of binding and loosing is worthily administered by monk-priests, with God's help, if it befalls them to be worthily elevated to this ministry. Anyone who evidently considers the state, habit, and power of monks affirms this without hesitation. For example, *angelus* in Greek sounds as *nuntius* (messenger) in Latin. Therefore, priests, monks, and canons, who daily announce the precepts of God to the people, are called angels, for a not incongruous reason. But each angelic order, the more closely it contemplates the clarity of God, is without doubt strengthened by adhering to His divinity with greater virtue; of these, the order of Cherubim is proclaimed preeminent, and the monastic way of life is proven to possess their figure fittingly. For like the Cherubim, so are monks veiled with six wings. That there are two in the hood, by which the head is covered, and two others by which the feet are covered, is demonstrated by plausible assertions. Indeed, that part of the cowl which is shown for the arms, we say are the other two wings, and thus it is most certainly asserted that what is said—the number of six wings—is fulfilled.

Decertantes igitur monasticae professionis presbyteros sacerdotalis potentiae arceri officio omni modo praecipimus, ut ab huiusmodi nefandis ausibus reprimantur in posterum, quia quanto quisque est celsior, tanto est et in his potentior.

Episcopus debet canere missam in ordinatione presbyteri, similiter et abbas in ordinatione monachi; quia remissio peccatorum est. Propter hoc relinquet rex regnum, et summus pontifex pontificatum, episcopus episcopatum, comes comitatum, et multi divites utriusque sexus suas possessiones in saeculo, et venient in monasterium ad serviendum Deo. Absit ut monachus vivens sub regula vel abbate, subjiciatur aliis hominibus. Nefas est dicere: Monachus non habet potestatem ligandi atque solvendi, ut quidam dicunt, quia mortui sunt. Vere mortui sunt huic saeculo, sicut sancti apostoli fuerunt. Nunquid sancti apostoli non habuerunt potestatem ligandi et solvendi, ex quibus unus dicebat: «Si enim mortui sumus cum Christo, credimus quia simul vivemus cum eo?» (Rom. VI.) Quis melius potest dicere, solvere vel ligare peccantem, quam qui solutus est a Deo a peccatis. Quis melius valet animas dare Deo, quam ille qui proximus est ei? Qui dentes huiusmodi stridunt circa monachos, infelices sunt, et verba eorum vana. Sed audite cur talia dicunt. Lex enim dicit: Si quis clericus in adulterio vel in aliquo crimine fuerit deprehensus, aut ipse confessus, aut ab aliis revictus, juxta concilia trecentorum decem et octo Patrum, ad honorem non potest redire, nisi per dignam poenitentiam. Ex qua re multa ira et invidia inflammati circa monachos, vel circa catholicos viros die noctuque optant insidias invenire, qualiter possint eos injuste illaqueare. Qui enim sua peccata nullatenus valent purgare, quomodo possunt aliena dimittere? Nunquid potest caecus caecum ducere? Itaque qui res vel honores Ecclesiae subtrahere voluerit, anathema sit. Quid ultra dicam? Convertimini et videte quia nil melius est quam relinquere saeculum et sequi Deum, qui dicit: «Venite ad me, omni et ego vos requiescere faciam (Matth. XI).»

Sit nomen Domini benedictum.

Therefore, we command that those who contend that priests of the monastic profession should be barred from the office of sacerdotal power be in every way repressed from such nefarious undertakings in the future, because the higher anyone is, the more powerful he is in these matters.

The bishop must sing the mass in the ordination of a priest, and similarly the abbot in the ordination of a monk; because it is the remission of sins. On account of this, the king will leave his kingdom, and the supreme pontiff his pontificate, the bishop his bishopric, the count his earldom, and many wealthy persons of either sex their possessions in the world, and they will come into the monastery to serve God. Let it be far from a monk living under a rule or an abbot to be subjected to other men. It is a crime to say: A monk does not have the power of binding and loosing, as some say, because they are dead. Truly they are dead to this world, just as the holy apostles were. Did the holy apostles not have the power of binding and loosing, of whom one said: "For if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live together with him?" (Rom. 6:8). Who can better say, loose or bind a sinner, than he who has been loosed by God from sins? Who is better able to give souls to God than he who is closest to Him? Those who gnash their teeth in this way around monks are wretched, and their words are vain. But hear why they say such things. For the law says: If any cleric should be caught in adultery or in any crime, either having confessed himself or being convicted by others, according to the councils of the three hundred and eighteen Fathers, he cannot return to honor, except through worthy penance. From which matter, being inflamed with much anger and envy toward monks, or toward catholic men, day and night they desire to find snares, so that they may be able to ensnare them unjustly. For those who are in no way able to purge their own sins, how can they forgive those of others? Can the blind lead the blind? Therefore, let him who wishes to take away the things or honors of the Church be anathema. What more shall I say? Be converted and see that nothing is better than to leave the world and follow God, who says: "Come to me, everyone, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

Blessed be the name of the Lord.