

"Watchman,
what of the night?"

"The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,
the hour and the end!"

Eze. 7:6 (Moffau)

DIES DOMINI

THE "NEW" THEOLOGY OF THE PAPACY REGARDING SUNDAY

LET'S TALK IT OVER - p. 7

Editor's Preface

In his Encyclical, *Ut Unum Sint* - "That All May Be One" - Pope John Paul II stated clearly the bottom line for that unity from Rome's viewpoint. He stated:

The Catholic Church, both in her praxis and in her solemn documents, holds that the communion of the particular Churches with the Church of Rome, and of their bishops with the Bishop of Rome, is - in God's plan - an essential requisite of full and visible communion. Indeed full communion, of which the Eucharist is the highest sacramental manifestation, needs to be visibly expressed in a ministry in which all the bishops recognize that they are united in Christ and all the faithful find confirmation for their faith.

In another Encyclical - *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* - "The Coming Third Millennium" - calling for a Jubilee in the year 2000, the Pope made one reference to Sunday. He wrote - "Every Sunday commemorates the day of the Lord's resurrection." In this same encyclical, the Pope suggested dialogue with the world's religions, noting that "the Jews and the Muslims ought to have a pre-eminent place." It is well known that both of these religions observe a different day of worship than Sunday. He indicated that in the Holy Land and Rome this Great Jubilee will be celebrated "simultaneously." As for Rome, there an "International Eucharistic Congress will take place." Then he added - "The year 2000 will be intensely eucharistic: in the Sacrament of the Eucharist the saviour... continues to offer himself to humanity as the source of divine life."

This year in connection with Pentecost, Pope John Paul II sent an Apostolic Letter to the Bishops of the Church bringing together the Eucharist and the observance of Sunday, Mary, and the "Most Holy Trinity." His main emphasis was to establish the "new" theology of Rome in respect to Sunday as had been set forth in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* released in 1994. Special attention has been given to the Papal choice of words in their "new" theology of Sunday, and the warning given in the Writings. See Editorial - "Let's Talk It Over."



Dies Domini

The "New" Theology of the Papacy Regarding Sunday

An Apostolic letter was sent from the Vatican, May 31, 1998, "To the Bishops, Clergy and Faithful of the Catholic Church on Keeping the Lord's Day Holy." The contents of the letter followed closely and served as an enlargement of the discussion of "The Third Commandment" found in the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* released in 1994. Gone now is the bold assertion that the Church "changed" the day of worship from the seventh to the first day of the week. In place of the claim to have "changed" the day, the new catechism reads -

Sunday is expressly distinguished from the sabbath which it follows chronologically every week; for Christians its ceremonial observance replaces that of the sabbath. In Christ's Passover, Sunday fulfills the spiritual truth of the Jewish sabbath and announces man's eternal rest in God. (Par. 2175)

In beginning his Apostolic Letter, Pope John Paul II seeks to unite the observance of Sunday as the Lord's day with the Early Church. He says - "The Lord's Day - as Sunday was called from Apostolic times - has always been accorded special attention in the history of the Church because of its close connection with the very core of the Christian mystery." He cites as evidence Revelation 1:10, and a text from a questionable epistle of Ignatius of Antioch dating from the same era.

The basic concept upon which the whole letter turns is the fact of the resurrection. The Pope wrote - "The Resurrection of Jesus is the fundamental event upon which the Christian faith rests" - citing I Cor. 15:14. Since that event occurred on the first day of the week, every Sunday, then, is an Easter. Further, the Day of Pentecost occurred on the first day of the week following the resurrection. In fact, the Pope chose the Day of Pentecost as the day on which to release this Apostolic Letter on the theology of Sunday. Thus we face a fact with double emphasis used to support the observance of Sunday.

Throughout this discussion of the "new" theology of Rome on the observance of Sunday, there is a constant repeat of "Sunday Eucharist" or "Sunday Mass." (I counted their use at least 20x) Quoting from the new Catechism, John Paul II noted - "The Sunday celebration of the Lord's day and His Eucharist is at the heart of the Church's life." (Par. 32) Using philosophical reasoning and eisegetical interpretation of events which occurred on the Day of the Resurrection, he links the symbols which Christ gave to commemorate His death on Thursday night, and accomplished in reality in Himself on Fri-

day, to justify the celebration of Mass on Sunday. The pope wrote:

The close connection between the appearance of the Risen Lord and the Eucharist is suggested in the Gospel of Luke in the story of the two disciples of Emmaus, whom Christ approached and led to understand the Scriptures and then sat with them at table. They recognized Him when He "took bread, said the blessing, broke it and gave it to them." The gestures of Jesus in this account are His gestures at the Last Supper, with the clear allusion to the "breaking of bread," as the Eucharist was called by the first generation of Christians. (Par. 33)

There is no way that the sacrifice made on Calvary can be made an integral part of the resurrection. On Friday, He finished the first phase of His work for man's redemption. He rested in the tomb on the Sabbath day. He arose on the first day to a new work and to a new ministry. This distinction must be kept clear in our minds.

There is no question but that the resurrection is a fundamental event upon which the Christian faith rests, and was so emphasized in the New Testament. It is no accident either in the Divine arrangement of events that the year that Christ died, both the Resurrection and the day of Pentecost should come on the first day of the week. The Apostle Paul in proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia declared that this event fulfilled that which is "written in the second psalm, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee'" (Acts 13:33). And for what purpose? We read - "He that said to Him, Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee," also said - "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb. 5:5-6). He that called Him from the dead, and proclaimed Him His Son, fifty days later inaugurated Him into the High Priesthood (Acts 2:33). Thus the work for the realization of a new creation began on a first day - Jesus "was raised for our justification" (Rom. 4:25) - even as the original creation began on a first day. This fact the Roman Church does not want to recognize, as it substitutes for the Priestly work of Christ its own priestly orders, denying that there is only "one mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5).

That you, the reader, might sense the full import of what the Pope has written and its significance as it relates to the immediate future, it will be best to summarize the five chapters of this letter with the introduction and conclusion. It also needs to be kept in mind that the Pope's thinking is focused on the year 2000 as a crucial date in his agenda of events he wants to see transpire. (That date is not far off!) In the introduction, he wrote - "The coming of the Third Millennium, which calls believers to reflect upon the course of history in the light of Christ, also invites them to rediscover with new intensity

the meaning of Sunday: its 'mystery,' its celebration, its significance for Christian and human life." (Par. 3) In the transition from his introduction to the chapter sections of his letter, he added: "The duty to keep Sunday holy, especially by sharing in the Eucharist and by relaxing in a spirit of Christian joy and fraternity, is easily understood if we consider the many different aspects of this day. ... Sunday is a day which is at the very heart of the Christian life." (Par. 7)

Chapter 1 - Dies Domini

The "new" theology of Rome for the keeping of Sunday holy is based by Pope John Paul II in the Biblical theology of the Sabbath. He begins this chapter with the text - John 1:3 - "Through Him all things were made." Then he writes - "For the Christian, Sunday is above all an Easter celebration, wholly illumined by the glory of the Risen Christ. It is the festival of the 'new creation.' Yet when understood in depth, this aspect is inseparable from what the first pages of Scripture tell us of the plan of God in the creation of the world." Supporting Biblically the fact that "all things were created through Him and for Him" he suggests that "this active presence of the Son in the creative work of God is revealed fully in the Paschal mystery," an allusion to the Mass. Considering this a "Christocentric perspective," the Pope notes that in concluding His work at the creation of this world, God "blessed the seventh day and made it holy." "Then was born the 'Sabbath,' so characteristic of the first Covenant, and which in some ways foretells the sacred joy of the new and final Covenant. ... In order to grasp fully the meaning of Sunday, therefore, we must re-read the great story of creation and deepen our understanding of the theology of the 'Sabbath.'" (Par. 8) The pope is not denying the evidence of the Sabbath as the seventh day, he is simply holding to a concept that Sunday supplants the Sabbath God originally gave to man. To him the "new" creation is associated with the resurrection and is confirmed in the celebration of the Eucharist each Sunday as "Easter" is reaffirmed.

Discussing the Old Testament revelation, John Paul writes:

In the Creator's plan, there is both a distinction and a close link between the order of creation and the order of salvation. This is emphasized in the Old Testament, when it links the "shabbat" commandment not only with God's mysterious "rest" after the days of creation, but also with the salvation which He offers to Israel in the liberation from the slavery of Egypt. (Par. 12)

Thus, he says, "the Sabbath precept, which in the first Covenant prepares for the Sunday of the new and eternal Covenant, is therefore rooted in the depths of God's plan." (Par. 13) Again, the old "change" concept from the seventh to the first day is now in the "new" theology of Rome considered as a "supplanting," or to use their

word, it "replaces" the Sabbath, as well as locking into Sunday observance the blasphemous celebration of the Mass.

Interestingly, the Pope places the Sabbath, and by transition Sunday, as a moral precept of the Decalogue. In this context, he stated a perception, of which we need to take note. He wrote:

Unlike many other precepts, [the Sabbath] is set not within the context of strictly cultic stipulations but within the Decalogue, the "ten words" which represent the very pillars of the moral life inscribed on the human heart. In setting this commandment within the context of the basic structure of ethics, Israel and then the Church declare that they consider it not just a matter of community religious discipline but a defining and indelible expression of our relationship with God, announced and expounded by biblical (sic) revelation. This is the perspective within which Christians need to rediscover this precept today. (Ibid.)

The Pope noted that the Fourth Commandment (Third to them) began with "remember." Then he commented - "It is a call to awaken remembrance of the grand and fundamental work of God which is creation, a remembrance which must inspire the entire religious life of man and then fill the day on which man is called to rest. Rest therefore acquires a sacred value: the faithful are not only to rest as God rested, but to rest in the Lord." (Par.16) Then he observes that "remember" is also to be found in the repeat of the Law in Deuteronomy, where Israel was to recall their liberation from slavery. Again he emphasizes that these two "rememberings" "reveal the meaning of 'the Lord's Day' within a single theological vision which fuses creation and salvation." (Par. 17) "What God accomplished in Creation and wrought for His People in the Exodus has found its fullest expression in Christ's death and Resurrection. ... It was in the Paschal Mystery that humanity ... came to know its new 'exodus' into the freedom of God's children who can cry out with Christ, 'Abba, Father!' In the light of this mystery, the meaning of the Old Testament precept concerning the Lord's Day is recovered, perfected and fully revealed in the glory which shines in the face of the Risen Christ. We move from the 'Sabbath' to the 'first day after the Sabbath,' from the seventh to the first day: the dies Domini becomes the dies Christi." (Par. 18)

We cannot emphasize too strongly the "smooth" transition being attempted. Now no longer the boast: we have power to change the very day of worship. Rather, it is the very nature of the redemption provided which necessitates the transference to a new "Lord's Day." Never mind if the redemption was provided in the work which Jesus completed on the sixth day, it is now forged together in one service - the Eucharist - on the first day. In a sense it is a denial of the cross, and a contradiction of their own symbolism in the crucifix.

Chapter 2 - Dies Christi

The Pope begins this chapter with a quote from Pope Innocent I coupled with an undocumented assertion:

"We celebrate Sunday because of the venerable Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we do so not only on Easter but also at each turning of the week," so wrote Pope Innocent I at the beginning of the fifth century, testifying to an already well established practice which had evolved from the early years after the Lord's Resurrection. (Par. 19)

He continues -

In the light of this constant and universal tradition it is clear, that although the Lord's Day is rooted in the very work of creation and even more in the mystery of the biblical (sic) "rest" of God, it is nonetheless to the Resurrection of Christ that we must look in order to understand fully the Lord's Day. This is what the Christian Sunday does, leading the faithful each week to ponder and live the event of Easter, true source of the world's salvation. (ibid.)

Then why the crucifix?

The pope traces the transition from the "Jewish Sabbath" to the worship on Sunday, noting that both days were observed at first. Then he comments:

A comparison of the Christian Sunday with the Old Testament vision of the Sabbath prompted theological insights of great interest. In particular there emerged the unique connection between the Resurrection and Creation. Christian thought spontaneously linked the Resurrection, which took place on "the first day of the week," with the first day of the cosmic week: the day of the creation of light. This link invited an understanding of the Resurrection as the beginning of a new creation, the first fruits of which is the glorious Christ, "the first born of all creation" and "the first born from the dead." (Par. 24)

This led to another "smooth" explanation of a transition previously admitted in Roman Catholic writings in "uncoated" terms. *The Catholic World*, a monthly magazine of "General Literature and Science," describes the transition in these words - "The church took the pagan philosophy and made it the buckler of faith against the heathen. She took the pagan Roman Pantheon, temple of all the gods, and made it sacred to all the martyrs; as it stands to this day. She took the pagan Sunday and made it the Christian Sunday. She took the pagan Easter and made it the feast we celebrate this season." (March, 1894) Now note John Paul's explanation under the heading of "The day of Christ-Light":

This Christocentric vision sheds light upon another

symbolism which Christian reflection and pastoral practice ascribed to the Lord's Day. Wise pastoral intuition suggested to the Church the christianization of the notion of Sunday as "the day of the sun," which was the Roman name for the day. ... This was in order to draw the faithful away from the seduction of the cults which worshipped the sun, and to direct the celebration of the day to Christ, humanities true "sun." (Par. 27)

Closing this chapter, John Paul refers to Sunday as "an indispensable day." Observing that "what began as a spontaneous practice became a juridical sanctioned norm" by the beginning of the third century. Inasmuch then as "the Lord's Day has structured the history of the Church through two thousand years," he asks, "How could we think that it will not continue to shape her future?" Therefore, he concludes - "Given its many meanings and aspects, and its link to the very foundations of the faith, the celebration of the Christian Sunday remains, on the threshold of the Third Millennium, an indispensable element of our Christian identity." (Par. 30)

Here and there throughout his letter, the Pope lets historical fact escape his manipulation as in this concluding paragraph of Chapter II. Sunday observance was a "spontaneous" practice without any Divine authorization, and not until the Third Century were any laws made, civil or ecclesiastical, demanding its observance. Further, the Apostle Paul himself had warned what was coming and which had already begun in his day - apostasy from the truth for personal exaltation (Acts 20:29-30; II Thess. 2:7).

Chapter III - Dies Ecclesiae

The subtitle of the Chapter is - "The Eucharistic Assembly: Heart of Sunday." The first paragraph declares - "As the day of the Resurrection, Sunday is not only a remembrance of a past event, it is a celebration of the living presence of the Risen Lord in the midst of His own people." The pope indicates that those who have received "the grace of baptism are not saved as individuals alone, but as members of the Mystical Body, ... They have become 'one' in Christ." "The assembly of Christ's disciples embodies from age to age the image of the first Christian community" who "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the blessing of bread and the prayers." (Par. 31)

To the pope, the use of the terms in Scripture, "the breaking of bread" or "the blessing of bread" means the Eucharist. Immediately in comment, he declared - "The Eucharist is not only a particularly intense expression of the reality of the Church's life, but also in a sense its 'fountain-head.' The Eucharist feeds and forms the Church." Thus "the mystery of the Church is savoured, proclaimed and lived supremely in the Eucharist." While the "ecclesial dimension intrinsic" to the Eucha-

rist is realized in each such service, "it is expressed most especially on the day when the whole community comes together to commemorate the Lord's Resurrection" - Sunday.

Because "the obligatory presence of the community" is required, "the Sunday Eucharist expresses with greater emphasis its inherent ecclesial dimension. ... in celebrating the Eucharist, the community opens itself to communion with the universal Church imploring the Father to 'remember the Church throughout the world' and make her grow in the unity of all the faithful with the Pope and with the Pastors of the particular Churches, until love is brought to perfection." (Par. 34) It is in this sense that John Paul perceived of "dies Domini" as also "dies Ecclesiae." He emphasized that nothing "is as vital or as community-forming as the Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and His Eucharist." (Par. 35) "The Sunday assembly is the privileged place of unity: it is the setting for the celebration of the sacramentum unitatis which profoundly marks the Church as a people gathered 'by' and 'in' the unity of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Par. 36)

At this point, we need to pause and consider the significance of what the pope has written. He uses the word, "community." The question is, is this term used as synonymous with "parish" which he also uses in these paragraphs which clearly indicates the local Roman Church, or is he giving it an "ecumenical" meaning? If the latter, then the Apostolic Letter is plainly stating that the Eucharist is perceived as the basis of unity with Rome. This concurs with the position taken by Cardinal Edward Cassidy, President of the Vatican Council for Promoting Christian Unity, at the seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1991, when at a press conference he declared "that sharing the Eucharist is the 'ultimate sign and seal' of church unity." (EPS 91.02.74)

Further, the "unity" envisioned is a "unity" in the central doctrine of the Roman Church. In the *Handbook of Today's Catholic*, one reads - "The mystery of the Trinity is the central doctrine of Catholic Faith. Upon it is based all the other teachings of the Church." (p. 11) Much more than merely an urging by the Pope for Roman Catholics to give more personal attention to Sunday observance, this Apostolic Letter has overtones of moving the Christian community into full doctrinal unity with the Papacy.

The pope affirms that "at the table of the Bread of Life, the Risen Lord becomes really, substantially and enduringly present." (Par. 39) "The Mass in fact truly makes present the sacrifice of the Cross. Under the species of the bread and wine, upon which has been invoked the outpouring of the Spirit who works with absolutely unique power in the words of consecration, Christ offers Himself to the Father in the same act of sacrifice by

which He offered Himself on the Cross." (Par. 43)

In this description of what supposedly happens at the Roman Eucharist is a "softening" of the previous teaching. The "new" theology of Rome is stating that "the Spirit" works with "unique power in the words of consecration" to turn the "bread" into the actual body of Christ. The "old" position of Rome as stated by Augustine is "He that created (if I may say so) gave me the power to create Him; and He that created without me is Himself created by me" (*Dignity and Duties of the Priest*, p. 33). Biblically, the once-for-all time sacrifice of Christ was accomplished "through the eternal Spirit" (Heb. 9:14). However, when He arose, Christ was enthroned as the High Priest who "ever liveth to make intercession" in the presence of God (Heb. 7:25). The papal position of a non-bloody sacrifice in the Mass is retained. The Pope quoted - "In this divine sacrifice which is accomplished in the Mass, the same Christ who offered Himself once and for all in a bloody manner on the altar of the Cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner." (*ibid.*)

In this declaration is the clearest evidence that there is no salvation available in the Roman Eucharist. The Scriptures clearly teach that "without shedding of blood in no remission" (Heb. 9:22). The celebration of the Roman Mass, no matter how John Paul wishes to re-word it, is still blasphemy against God, His name, and His tabernacle (Rev. 13:6).

The issue of the Sunday Eucharist has other overtones which involve a perceptive understanding of what is involved in the seal of God and the mark of the beast. One section of this chapter involves, "The Sunday obligation." John Paul declares that "the Eucharist is the very heart of Sunday." He cites the history of the Church's attitude toward a faithful obligation to celebrate the Eucharist on Sunday. He then noted that the Code of Canon Law of 1917 gathered the tradition of the previous centuries into a universal law. It states that "on Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are bound to attend Mass." "This is the teaching of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and it is easy to understand why, if we keep in mind how vital Sunday is for the Christian life" (Par. 47).

We do not worship a day; we worship *on* a day. On Sabbath, we worship the God who created. This is the very essence of the First Angel's Message, as he announced the commencement of the end-time struggle (Rev. 14:6-7). The Pope is calling for a renewal of worship on Sunday. But what is worshipped? A piece of man-made bread blasphemously declared to be God. The issue is more than a day. It is who we worship on that day. The earthly powers may enact laws forbidding "work" on Sunday (this presents an opportunity to witness), but when they seek to enforce the "obligation" of the Roman Code of Canon Law that "the faithful are

bound to attend the Mass," then the line is clearly drawn "between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition" (*Great Controversy*, p. 582).

Chapter IV - Dies Hominis

In this chapter the pope again relates Sunday to the Sabbath. After stating that "the Christian Sunday [is] a true 'time of celebration,' a day given by God to men and women for their full human and spiritual growth," he declares:

This aspect of the Christian Sunday shows in a special way how it is the fulfillment of the Old Testament Sabbath. On the Lord's Day, which - as we already have said - the Old Testament links to the work of creation and the Exodus, the Christian is called to proclaim the new creation and the new covenant brought about in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. Far from being abolished, the celebration of creation becomes more profound within a Christocentric perspective, being seen in the light of God's plan "to unite all things in [Christ], things in heaven and things on earth." The liberation of the Exodus also assumes its full meaning as it becomes a remembrance of the universal redemption accomplished by Christ in His Death and Resurrection. More than a "replacement" for the Sabbath, therefore, Sunday is its fulfillment, and in a certain sense its extension and full expression in the ordered unfolding of the history of salvation, which reaches its culmination in Christ. (Par. 59) In this perspective, the biblical theology of the "Sabbath" can be recovered in full, without compromising the Christian character of Sunday. (Par. 60)

It is the duty of Christians therefore to remember that, although the practices of the Jewish Sabbath are gone, surpassed as they are by the "fulfillment" which Sunday brings, the underlying reasons for keeping "the Lord's Day" holy - inscribed solemnly in the Ten Commandments - remain valid, though they need to be reinterpreted in the light of the theology and spirituality of Sunday. (Par. 62)

What does this mean? "This is why Christians [Note the "new" reasoning, "Christians" not the Papacy] called as they are to proclaim the liberation won by the blood of Christ, felt that they had the authority to transfer the meaning of the Sabbath to the day of the Resurrection." (Par. 63)

What next? "When through the centuries, she has made laws concerning Sunday rest, the Church has had in mind above all the work of slaves and workers, certainly not because this work was any less worthy when compared with the spiritual requirements of Sunday observance, but rather because it needed greater regulation to lighten its burden and thus enable everyone to keep the Lord's Day holy. In this matter, my predecessor Pope

Leo XIII in his Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* spoke of Sunday rest as a worker's right which the State must guarantee." (Par. 66)

"Therefore, also in the particular circumstances of our own time, Christians will naturally strive to ensure that civil legislation respects their duty to keep Sunday holy, in any case, they are obliged in conscience to arrange their Sunday rest in a way which allows them to take part in the Eucharist, refraining from work or activities which are incompatible with the sanctification of the Lord's Day." (Par. 67)

Little, if any comment, is needed to note the import of these words of the Pope. Further the use of the terms, "fulfillment," and "replacement" are not without significance.

Chapter V - Dies Dierum

The intent of this chapter is to relate Sunday to the Roman Liturgical Year. To the pope Sunday is "the natural model for understanding and celebrating these feast days." In connection with the "Solemnity of Pentecost," he noted that it "takes on special importance, celebrating as it does the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles gathered with Mary and inaugurating the mission to all peoples." (Par. 76)

Conclusion

John Paul II concludes that "the spiritual and pastoral riches of Sunday, as it has been handed to us by tradition, are truly great." Because of this, "the faithful should be convinced that they cannot live their faith or share fully in the life of the Christian community unless they take part regularly in the Sunday Eucharistic assembly. The Eucharist is the full realization of the worship which humanity owes to God, and it cannot be compared to any other religious experience." (Par. 81) Here the line is again clearly drawn. We worship either Him who made all things, or a "god" created by man. We will receive either the "seal of God," or we will receive "the mark of the beast."

As to be expected, the pope entrusted "this Apostolic Letter to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin" because for one reason, "Mary is always present in the Christian Sunday." Why? "It is the mystery of Christ itself which demands this: indeed, how could she who is Mater Domini and Mater Ecclesiae fail to be equally present on the day which is both dies Domini and dies Ecclesiae?"

Therefore, as "the word [is] proclaimed in the Sunday assembly, the faithful look to the Virgin Mary, learning from her to keep it and ponder it in their hearts. With Mary, they learn to stand at the foot of the Cross, offering to the Father the sacrifice of Christ. ... From Sunday to Sunday, the pilgrim people follow in the footsteps of

Mary, and her maternal intercession gives special power and fervour to the prayer which rises from the Church to the Most Holy Trinity."

In the pope's Letter, there is found the suggestion that the Eucharistic Sunday is linked to the second coming of Christ. He writes that "the Christian Sunday... springing from the Resurrection ... cuts through human time, the months, the years, the centuries, like a directional arrow which points them towards their target: Christ's Second Coming. Sunday foreshadows the last day, the day of the Parousia." (Par. 75) In the Conclusion, the pope affirms - "From Sunday to Sunday, enlightened by Christ, [the Roman Church] goes forward towards the unending Sunday of the Heavenly Jerusalem," and Rev. 21:23 is quoted. (Par. 84) One cannot escape the conviction that the groundwork is being laid in this Apostolic Letter for the coming of Satan as Christ with the declaration that he merely transferred from the Sabbath to the day of the Resurrection, its sacred obligations.

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Let's Talk It Over

We have not been left in darkness as to the order of events that will mark and are marking the close of the age. While the second coming of Christ has been declared to be as a thief in the night even by Jesus Himself (Luke 12:39-40), Paul says that as children of light, "that day should not overtake you as a thief" (I Thess. 5:4). The Messenger of the Lord in an article captioned, "Let the Trumpet Give a Certain Sound" (R&H, Dec. 13, 1892), outlined a series of events and connected them with conjunctive adverbs of time. (The paragraph in context will be reproduced facsimile in the October issue of WWN, p. 6) Suffice for now, will be a brief listing of the events given there, in order:

- 1) "After the truth [Context would indicate that truth to be the Sabbath] has been proclaimed as a witness to all nations, every conceivable power of evil will be set in operation, ..." It is not saying that all nations will accept the Sabbath, but the evidences of its binding claims will be given in witness to all nations.
- 2) "Then there will be a removing of the landmarks, and an attempt to pull down the pillars of our faith."
- 3) "A more decided effort will be made to exalt the false Sabbath and to cast contempt upon God Himself by supplanting the day He has blessed and sanctified."
- 4) "This false Sabbath is to be enforced by an oppressive law."

Event #1: That which confirms the fulfilment of this beginning point is the fulfilment of Christ's own prophecy as given in

Luke 21:24. For detailed documentation, see the manuscript, *The Hour and the End*.

Event #2 is affirmed in an event of 1967, the date for the beginning of #1, which gave recognition to the Association of Adventist Forums. This Forum has been foremost in questioning the fundamentals of the Truth committed in trust to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It was from their podium that Dr. Desmond Ford launched his attack on the Sanctuary teaching.

Event #3: It is difficult to conceive of any greater contempt to be cast on God than the Eucharist as perceived and emphasized by Rome. This current Apostolic Letter, while admitting the binding claims of the Ten Commandments, and the establishment of the Sabbath by God Himself, even inferring that the Lord's Day of the Old Testament was the Sabbath, seeks to justify the "new" Lord's Day as a "replacement" of; "fulfilment" of; "reinterpretation" of; and "surpassing" the original Sabbath. *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary* gives as the single synonym for "supplant," the word, "replace," the exact word used in the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Par. 2175).

Event #4 follows - an enforcement of this "supplanted" Lord's Day.

Are we prepared to meet the subtlety of the Pope's reasoning; to meet his questionable Scriptural eisegesis? It should be clear to the most casual reader that the cornerstone of this "new" theology is the uniting of the sacrificial work of Jesus on the Cross with its Eucharistic celebration of the Resurrection. This strikes directly at the Sanctuary truth given to Adventists as a sacred trust.

Much study remains to be done so that every ray of the advancing light of truth may be incorporated into "the righteousness of Christ which is pure unadulterated truth." In the final conflict upon which we are now entering none will be victorious unless robed in that righteousness.

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