

Are You Also Excommunicated?

IF YOU are one of the 138,000,000 people in the world that were born and raised as "Protestants", then you are already excommunicated by the Roman Catholic Hierarchy. This means that you are looked upon with the blackest contempt by the Vatican, being cursed and damned with the Devil and his angels. Says the *Catholic Encyclopedia*:

With the foregoing exceptions [infidels, pagans, Mohammedans, and Jews], all who have been baptized are liable to excommunication, even those [protestants] who have never belonged to the true Church, since by their baptism they are really her subjects, though of course rebellious ones. Moreover, the Church excommunicates not only those who abandon the true faith to embrace [protestant] schism or heresy, but likewise the members of heretical and schismatic communities who have been born therein.

All those belonging to such lodges as the Masonic, Fenians, Independent Order of Good Templars, Odd Fellows, Sons of Temperance, or the Knights of Pythias, are also excommunicated.

This is "canon law" which the Roman Catholic Hierarchy seeks to enforce on the pretext that it is God's law. The authority for excommunication, they claim, is based on the teachings of Christ and the apostles, as found in the following scriptures: Matthew 18: 15-19; 1 Corinthians 5: 3-5; 16: 22; Galatians 1: 8, 9; 1 Timothy 1: 20; Titus 3: 10. But the

Hierarchy's excommunication, as a punishment and "medicinal" remedy (*Catholic Encyclopedia*), finds no support in these scriptures. In fact, it is altogether foreign to Bible teachings.—Hebrews 10: 26-31.

Where, then, did this practice originate? The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says that papal excommunication is not without pagan influence, "and its variations cannot be adequately explained unless account be taken of several non-Christian analogues of excommunication." The superstitious Greeks believed that when an excommunicated person died the Devil entered the body, and therefore, "in order to prevent it, the relatives of the deceased cut his body in pieces and boil them in wine." Even the Druids had a method of expelling those who lost faith in their religious superstitions. It was therefore after Catholicism adopted its pagan practices, A.D. 325, that this new chapter in religious excommunication was written.

Thereafter, as the pretensions of the Hierarchy increased, the weapon of excommunication became the instrument by which the clergy attained a combination of ecclesiastical power and secular tyranny that finds no parallel in history. Princes and potentates that opposed the dictates of the Vatican were speedily impaled on the tines of excommunication and hung over persecution fires. Not

only individuals, but whole countries, were so treated: France, in 998; Germany, in 1102; England, in 1208. Even Rome itself was excommunicated in 1155. Luther and his forty-one "errors" were similarly "cursed" in 1520. Likewise Napoleon in 1809 and Victor Emmanuel in 1860.

The excommunication of Frederick II furnishes a good example of the dire effects produced by these papal "curses" in the thirteenth century.

Five times king and emperor as he was, Frederick, placed under the ban of the church, led henceforth a doomed existence. The mendicant monks stirred up the populace to acts of fanatical enmity. To plot against him, to attempt his life by poison or the sword, was accounted virtuous. . . . Hunted to the ground and broken-hearted, Frederick expired at the end of 1250.—*Encyclopedia Britannica*.

Excommunication as a papal force was greatly reduced with the fall of the "Holy Roman Empire". So much so that this generation does not observe such

ruthless consequences of the past befalling Tito and his associates who were recently excommunicated. (See *Awake!* November 22, 1946.)

In recounting all of these facts one is at a loss to find an explanation why the "crimes" of Tito and his associates are greater than (or as great as) those of Franco, Mussolini and Hitler, and their gang of cutthroats. Only when we turn to the *Catholic Encyclopedia* do we find the answer. There it is stated:

The Church's right to excommunicate is based on her status as a spiritual society, whose members, governed by legitimate authority, seek one and the same end through suitable means. Members who, by their obstinate disobedience, reject the means of attaining this common end deserve to be removed from such a society.

Here, then, is the explanation why the Axis dictators were not excommunicated. They were 'seeking the one and same end' with the Roman Catholic Church.

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