

## Must Give God His Due and Then Caesar

By Richard Joseph Michael Ibranyi

The first duty of Catholics no matter where they live or what they do is to love and obey God above all things:

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength.” (Deut. 6:5)

*Catholic Commentary*, Deut. 6:5: *Whole heart...soul...and strength*. God admits of no partner... We must give God the preference before all...”

“Jesus said to him: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets.” (Mt. 22:37-40)

Proof that a man truly loves God is that he obeys all of God’s commandments. Jesus says, “*If you love me, keep my commandments. ...He that loveth me not, keepeth not my words.*” (Jn. 14:15, 24) If Catholics want to be saved, they must obey all of God’s commandments. Jesus says, “*If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.*” (Mt. 19:17)

One of God’s commandments is that Catholics must obey their lawful rulers, even non-Catholic rulers, in all things but sin, things that unjustly threaten their lives, and things that are impossible. God the Son, Jesus Christ, commands Catholics to give Caesar his due:

“Tell us therefore what dost thou think, Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not? But Jesus knowing their wickedness, said: Why do you tempt me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the coin of the tribute. And they offered him a penny. And Jesus saith to them: Whose image and inscription is this? They say to him: Caesar’s. Then he saith to them: Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God, the things that are God’s.” (Mt. 22:17-21)

*Catholic Commentary*, Mk. 12:17: “...Christ clearly establishes here the strict obligation of paying to Caesar what belongs to Caesar...”

Therefore, the second duty of Catholics is to give their rulers their due. And this applies not only to Catholic rulers, but also non-Catholic rulers, as Caesar was a pagan. Echoing Christ, St. Paul teaches Catholics about this duty:

“Let every soul be subject to higher powers. For there is no power but from God: and those that are ordained of God. Therefore, he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist purchase to themselves damnation. For princes are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same. For he is God’s minister to thee, for good. But if thou do that which is evil, fear, for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil. Wherefore, be subject of necessity not only for wrath but also for conscience’ sake. For, therefore, also you pay tribute, for they are the ministers of God, serving unto this purpose. Render, therefore, to all men their dues. Tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.” (Rom. 13:1-7)

*Catholic commentary*, Rom. 13:1: “*Let every soul*, or every one, *be subject*, &c. Lest Christians should misconstrue their Christian liberty, he here teacheth them that every one (even priests and bishops) must be subject and obedient to princes, even to heathens, in secular matters, as they were at that time, as to laws that regarded the policy of the civil government, honoring them, obeying them, and their

laws, as it is the will of God, because the power they act by is from God. So that *to resist them*, is *to resist God*. And every Christian must obey them even for conscience-sake. Take notice that St. Paul does not say that there is no prince but from God, but only that there is no power but from God, meaning no lawful power, and speaking of true and just laws.”

Therefore, when God’s chosen people find themselves under the yoke of unbelievers, they must submit to that yoke in all things except sin, things that unjustly threaten their lives, and things that are impossible until God sees fit to deliver them by war or other legal means; that is, legal in the eyes of God.

Even though Catholics must give Caesar his due, they must first and foremost give God his due. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so much higher is obedience to God over obedience to Caesar. God, speaking through the prophet Isaias, says,

“My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are my ways exalted above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts.” (Isa. 55:8-9)

Catholics ruled by non-Catholics in non-Catholic lands would do well to think of themselves as Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon.

Joseph in Egypt: “He [Pharao] said therefore to Joseph... Thou shalt be over my house, and at the commandment of thy mouth all the people shall obey. Only in the kingly throne will I be above thee. And again Pharao said to Joseph: Behold, I have appointed thee over the whole land of Egypt. And he took his ring from his own hand and gave it into his hand. And he put upon him a robe of silk and put a chain of gold about his neck. And he made him go up into his second chariot, the crier proclaiming that all should bow their knee before him, and that they should know he was made governor over the whole land of Egypt. And the king said to Joseph: I am Pharao; without thy commandment no man shall move hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.” (Gen. 41:39-44)

Daniel in Babylon: “Then the king [of Babylon] advanced Daniel to a high station, and gave him many and great gifts. And he made him governor over all the provinces of Babylon, and chief of the magistrates over all the wise men of Babylon. And Daniel requested of the king, and he appointed Sidrach, Misach, and Abdenago over the works of the province of Babylon, but Daniel himself was in the king's palace.” (Dan. 2:48-49)

While living and working in godless lands and being ruled by godless rulers, Joseph and Daniel maintained the faith and obeyed the rulers in all things except sin, things that unjustly threaten their lives, and things that were impossible. For example, Sidrach, Misach, and Abdenago disobeyed the king of Babylon when he commanded them to bow down and worship an image of one of his gods that he set up:

“And presently at that very time some Chaldeans came and accused the Jews, And said to king Nabuchodonosor: O king, live for ever: Thou, O king, hast made a decree that every man... shall prostrate himself, and adore the golden statue. And that if any man shall not fall down and adore, he should be cast into a furnace of burning fire. Now there are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the works of the province of Babylon, Sidrach, Misach, and Abdenago: these men, O king, have slighted thy decree. They worship not thy gods, nor do they adore the golden statue which thou hast set up. Then Nabuchodonosor in fury and in wrath, commanded that Sidrach, Misach, and Abdenago should be brought; who immediately were brought before the king. And Nabuchodonosor the king spoke to them, and said: Is it true, O Sidrach, Misach, and Abdenago, that you do not worship my gods nor adore the golden statue that I have set up? ...Sidrach, Misach, and Abdenago answered and said to king Nabuchodonosor: We have no occasion to answer thee

concerning this matter. For behold our God, whom we worship, is able to save us from the furnace of burning fire, and to deliver us out of thy hands, O king. But if he will not, be it known to thee, O king, that we will not worship thy gods, nor adore the golden statue which thou hast set up.” (Dan. 3:8-18)

Daniel’s enemies, moved by envy, influenced King Darius to pass a decree that no one in his lands must pray to any god for thirty days except to the king. But Daniel disobeyed this decree and thus continued to pray to the one true God, the God of Israel. And when he was caught doing so, his enemies informed the king:

“It seemed good to Darius, and he appointed over the kingdom a hundred and twenty governors to be over his whole kingdom. And three princes over them, of whom Daniel was one, that the governors might give an account to them, and the king might have no trouble. And Daniel excelled all the princes, and governors: because a greater spirit of God was in him. And the king thought to set him over all the kingdom whereupon the princes and the governors sought to find occasion against Daniel with regard to the king. And they could find no cause nor suspicion because he was faithful, and no fault nor suspicion was found in him. Then these men said: We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel unless perhaps concerning the law of his God. Then the princes, and the governors craftily suggested to the king, and spoke thus unto him: King Darius, live forever: All the princes of the kingdom, the magistrates, and governors, the senators, and judges have consulted together, that an imperial decree and an edict be published that whosoever shall ask any petition of any god or man for thirty days but of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, therefore, O king, confirm the sentence and sign the decree, that what is decreed by the Medes and Persians may not be altered nor any man be allowed to transgress it. So king Darius set forth the decree and established it. Now when Daniel knew this, that is to say, that the law was made, he went into his house and opening the windows in his upper chamber towards Jerusalem, he knelt down three times a day and adored, and gave thanks before his God, as he had been accustomed to do before. Wherefore, those men carefully watching him found Daniel praying and making supplication to his God. And they came and spoke to the king concerning the edict: O king, hast thou not decreed that every man that should make a request to any of the gods or men, for thirty days, but to thyself, O king, should be cast into the den of the lions? And the king answered them, saying: The word is true according to the decree of the Medes and Persians which it is not lawful to violate. Then they answered and said before the king: Daniel, who is of the children of the captivity of Juda, hath not regarded thy law nor the decree that thou hast made, but three times a day he maketh his prayer. Now when the king had heard these words, he was very much grieved; and in behalf of Daniel, he set his heart to deliver him and even till sunset he laboured to save him. But those men perceiving the king’s design, said to him: Know thou, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is that no decree which the king hath made may be altered. Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of the lions. And the king said to Daniel: Thy God, whom thou always servest, he will deliver thee. And a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den, which the king sealed with his own ring, and with the ring of his nobles that nothing should be done against Daniel. And the king went away to his house and laid himself down without taking supper, and meat was not set before him, and even sleep departed from him. Then the king rising very early in the morning went in haste to the lions’ den: And coming near to the den, cried with a lamentable voice to Daniel, and said to him: Daniel, servant of the living God, hath thy God, whom thou servest always, been able, thinkest thou, to deliver thee from the lions? And Daniel answering the king, said: O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel and hath shut up the mouths of the lions, and they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him justice hath been found in me, yea and before thee, O king,

I have done no offence. Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and he commanded that Daniel should be taken out of the den. And Daniel was taken out of the den and no hurt was found in him because he believed in his God. And by the king's commandment those men were brought that had accused Daniel, and they were cast into the lions' den, they and their children and their wives, and they did not reach the bottom of the den before the lions caught them and broke all their bones in pieces." (Dan. 6:1-24)

While the apostles and Jesus' other followers obeyed their pagan rulers in pagan Rome, they obeyed God above all things. When commanded to obey men and in so doing disobey God, "*Peter and the apostles answering, said: We ought to obey God rather than men.*" (Acts 5:29)

Therefore, if there is ever a conflict between obeying God and obeying Caesar, then God must be obeyed and Caesar disobeyed; that is, if one wants to be saved: "*If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.*" (Mt. 19:17) If men want to be saved, they must disobey anyone or anything that would make them disobey God. Hence, if a non-Catholic ruler tries to force Catholics to sin against the faith or morals, or unjustly threatens their lives, or to do the impossible, Catholics must disobey him.

The Catholic Church is God's Mystical Body on earth. She is God's voice and arm of justice, mercy, and sanctification on earth. St. Paul teaches that "*The Church of the living God [is] the pillar and ground of the truth.*" (1 Tim. 3:15) And Jesus decrees, "*He [that] will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican.*" (Mt. 18:17) Therefore, as high as the heavens are above the earth, so much higher is obedience to the Catholic Church over obedience to Caesar, be he a Catholic or a non-Catholic ruler. Consequently, a Catholic is first and foremost a member and citizen of the Catholic Church before he is a member of a race or citizen of a nation. It is a Catholic's utmost allegiance to God and not to his race or family or nation that will save him. St. John teaches that

"As many as received him [Jesus], he gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in his name. Who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (Jn. 1:12-13)

Men are not saved by their blood and flesh; that is, by their race and family. Nor are they saved by the will of men; that is, by the rulers of nations. Men are saved by their faith in and obedience to the true God and his Catholic Church, as proved by their obedience to all of God's commandments as taught by the Catholic Church. St. Paul teaches that "*You are all the children of God by faith, in Christ Jesus.*" (Gal. 3:26) Therefore, men are not children of God by race, family, or the rulers of their lands, but by the Catholic Church and faith. Earthly nations can only give men temporary material things, all of which will pass away. Only the Catholic Church can give men the spiritual things they need to save their souls and attain everlasting life. As high as spiritual things are above temporal things, so is the authority of the Catholic Church and her rulers above the temporal authority of national rulers. Even though Boniface VIII and Leo XIII were apostate antipopes, they teach the truth in this regard:

Apostate Antipope Boniface VIII, *Unam Sanctum*, 1302: "We must recognize the more clearly that spiritual power surpasses in dignity and in nobility any temporal power whatever, as spiritual things surpass the temporal. ...For with truth as our witness, it belongs to spiritual power to establish the terrestrial power and to pass judgement if it has not been good. Thus is accomplished the prophecy of Jeremias concerning the Church and the ecclesiastical power: 'Behold to-day I have placed you over nations, and over kingdoms' and the rest. Therefore, if the terrestrial power err, it will be judged by the spiritual power..."

Apostate Antipope Leo XIII, *Sapientiae Christianae*, 1890: "5. Now, if the natural law enjoins us to love devotedly and to defend the country in which we had birth, and in which we were brought up, so that every good citizen hesitates not to face

death for his native land, very much more is it the urgent duty of Christians to be ever quickened by like feelings toward the Catholic Church. For the Church is the holy City of the living God, born of God himself, and by him built up and established. Upon this earth, indeed, she accomplishes her pilgrimage, but by instructing and guiding men she summons them to everlasting happiness. We are bound, then, to love dearly the country whence we have received the means of enjoyment this mortal life affords, but we have a much more urgent obligation to love, with ardent love, the Church to which we owe the life of the soul, a life that will endure forever. For fitting it is to prefer the good of the soul to the well-being of the body, inasmuch as duties toward God are of a far more hallowed character than those toward men.”

Just as a body without a soul is dead, so is a Catholic dead who places the body of an earthly nation over the concerns of Catholic Church and thus of his soul: “*Health of the soul in holiness of justice is better than...a sound body*” because “*the body without the spirit is dead.*” (Eccu. 30:15; Jam. 2:26) Only the Catholic Church has the power from God to make the spirit alive and holy. Only the Catholic Church has the power to rule, teach, and sanctify souls in the name and by the power of the one true God, the Catholic God. Jesus gave this command to His apostles and their successors, the popes and Catholic bishops:

“Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.” (Mt. 28:19-20)

That Jesus will be with his apostles until the consummation of the world proves that the original apostles would have successors who would carry on their mission, and these successors are none other than popes and other Catholic bishops.

Catholics must always remember that their true home is in heaven with God and in the world to come after Jesus’ second coming. Catholics, then, must also remember that “*they are pilgrims and strangers on the earth.*” (Heb. 11:13) King David says, “*The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord’s throne is in heaven.*” (Ps. 10:5) “*To thee have I lifted up my eyes, who dwellest in heaven.*” (Ps. 122:1) Men can only lift up their eyes to God through his Catholic Church, who shows to men God, his heaven and the paradise to come. God’s Catholic Church can be compared to supernatural eyeglasses that men need to see supernatural spiritual things about God and to see them clearly. Only through the Catholic Church can men see the supernatural spiritual things of God. This is what Christ primarily meant when he said that he came to make the blind see: “*Jesus said: For judgment I am come into this world that they who see not, may see ...to preach deliverance to the captives, and sight to the blind.*” (Jn. 9:39; Lk. 4:19) With their eyes primarily focused on heaven and the paradise to come through the Catholic Church, Catholics will not be led astray by sinful commands from nations and their earthly rulers. Laws that are sinful or not reasonable are not binding in the eyes of God. Even though Leo XIII was an apostate antipope, he teaches the truth in this regard:

Apostate Antipope Leo XIII, *Libertas Praestantissimum*, 1888: “Likewise, the liberty of those who are in authority does not consist in the power to lay unreasonable and capricious commands upon their subjects, which would equally be criminal and would lead to the ruin of the commonwealth; but the binding force of human laws is in this, that they are to be regarded as applications of the eternal law, and incapable of sanctioning anything which is not contained in the eternal law, as in the principle of all law. Thus, St. Augustine most wisely says: ‘I think that you can see, at the same time, that there is nothing just and lawful in that temporal law, unless what men have gathered from this eternal law’. If, then, by anyone in authority, something be sanctioned out of conformity with the principles of right reason, and consequently hurtful to the commonwealth, such an enactment can have

no binding force of law, as being no rule of justice, but certain to lead men away from that good which is the very end of civil society.”

Hence, if a Catholic’s duty to obey God through His Catholic Church ever conflicts with his duty to Caesar, then God speaking through his Catholic Church, must be obeyed and Caesar disobeyed. In this case Catholics are obliged to disobey Caesar if they do not want to sin and place themselves in a state of damnation:

Apostate Antipope Leo XIII, *Sapientiae Christianae*, 1890: “6. Moreover, if we would judge aright, the supernatural love for the Church and the natural love of our own country proceed from the same eternal principle, since God himself is their Author and originating cause. Consequently, it follows that between the duties they respectively enjoin, neither can come into collision with the other. We can, certainly, and should love ourselves, bear ourselves kindly toward our fellow men, nourish affection for the State and the governing powers, but at the same time we can and must cherish toward the Catholic Church a feeling of filial piety, and love God with the deepest love of which we are capable. The order of precedence of these duties is, however, at times, either under stress of public calamities or through the perverse will of men, inverted. For, instances occur where the State seems to require from men as subjects one thing, and religion from men as Christians quite another; and this, in reality, without any other ground than that the rulers of the State either hold the sacred power of the Church of no account or endeavor to subject it to their own will. Hence arises a conflict and an occasion through such conflict of virtue being put to the proof. The two powers are confronted and urge their behests in a contrary sense; to obey both is wholly impossible. No man can serve two masters, for to please the one amounts to contemning the other.

“7. As to which should be preferred no one ought to balance for an instant. It is a high crime indeed to withdraw allegiance from God in order to please men, an act of consummate wickedness to break the laws of Jesus Christ in order to yield obedience to earthly rulers, or, under pretext of keeping the civil law, to ignore the rights of the Church; ‘we ought to obey God rather than men.’ This answer, which of old Peter and the other Apostles were used to give the civil authorities who enjoined unrighteous things, we must in like circumstances give always and without hesitation. No better citizen is there, whether in time of peace or war, than the Christian who is mindful of his duty; but such a one should be ready to suffer all things, even death itself, rather than abandon the cause of God or of the Church...

“10. But, if the laws of the State are manifestly at variance with the divine law, containing enactments hurtful to the Church, or conveying injunctions adverse to the duties imposed by religion, or if they violate in the person of the supreme Pontiff the authority of Jesus Christ, then, truly, to resist becomes a positive duty, to obey, a crime... Here anew it becomes evident how unjust is the reproach of sedition; for the obedience due to rulers and legislators is not refused, but there is a deviation from their will in those precepts only which they have no power to enjoin. Commands that are issued adversely to the honor due to God, and hence are beyond the scope of justice, must be looked upon as anything rather than laws. You are fully aware, venerable brothers, that this is the very contention of the Apostle St. Paul, who, in writing to Titus, after reminding Christians that they are ‘to be subject to princes and powers, and to obey at a word,’ at once adds: ‘And to be ready to every good work.’ Thereby he openly declares that, if laws of men contain injunctions contrary to the eternal law of God, it is right not to obey them. In like manner, the Prince of the Apostles gave this courageous and sublime answer to those who would have deprived him of the liberty of preaching the Gospel: ‘If it be just in the sight of God to hear you rather than God, judge ye, for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.’ (Acts 4:19)

“11. Wherefore, to love both countries, that of earth below and that of heaven above, yet in such mode that the love of our heavenly surpass the love of our earthly

home, and that human laws be never set above the divine law, is the essential duty of Christians, and the fountainhead, so to say, from which all other duties spring.”

Let us listen to a nominal Catholic (Catholic in name only) who obeyed men rather than God by placing his allegiance to his nation over his allegiance to the Catholic God and his Catholic Church. This man is John F. Kennedy, thirty-fifth President of the United States, from 1961 to 1963. He publicly declared that he was an American first and a Catholic second:

*Catholics and American Culture*, apostate Mark S. Massa, S.J., Chap. 6, “A Catholic for President?”, p. 137: “His address to the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Washington, D.C., represented one of Kennedy’s most direct expositions of his views on church and state, birth control, and diplomatic relations with the Vatican. In it Kennedy emphasized, yet again, what he felt had been his position since the outset of his campaign: ‘There is only one legitimate question...Would you, as President, be responsive in any way to ecclesiastical pressures or obligations of any kind that might in any fashion influence or interfere with your conduct of that office in the national interest? My answer was—and is—no...I am not the Catholic candidate for President. I am the Democratic party’s candidate for President who happens to be Catholic. I do not speak for the Catholic Church on issues of public policy, and no one in that Church speaks for me.’”<sup>1</sup>

Catholicism was near the bottom of Kennedy’s list of priorities. Kennedy put politics before God, before the Catholic faith and Catholic Church. He schismatically rebelled against the Catholic Church’s authority over him by saying that no one in the Church speaks for him. In so doing he abandoned the Catholic Church and faith to which he owed primary allegiance. By saying “no one in that [Catholic] Church speaks for me,” Kennedy rejected and denied his Catholic duty to be subject to the Roman Pontiff by listening to and obeying the pope and the Catholic Church above and before any other person or thing. He says that when he rules as President, he will not do so as a Catholic, which is a denial of Christ and his Catholic Church in favor of Judeo-Masons whose cause he served by default. Jesus teaches that

“No man can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one, and love the other: or he will sustain the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” (Mt. 6:24)

“He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.” (Mt. 12:30)

“He that shall deny me before men, I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven.” (Mt. 10:33)

Even though Leo XIII was an apostate antipope, he speaks the truth in this regard. And is so doing, condemns nominal Catholic rulers like President John Kennedy:

Apostate Antipope Leo XIII, *Sapientiae Christianae*, 1890: “33. As to those who mean to take part in public affairs, they should avoid with the very utmost care two criminal excesses: so-called prudence and false courage. Some there are, indeed, who maintain that it is not opportune boldly to attack evil-doing in its might and when in the ascendant, lest, as they say, opposition should exasperate minds already hostile. These make it a matter of guesswork as to whether they are for the Church or against her, since on the one hand they give themselves out as professing the Catholic faith, and yet wish that the Church should allow certain opinions, at variance with her teaching, to be spread abroad with impunity. They moan over the loss of faith and the perversion of morals, yet trouble themselves not to bring any remedy; nay, not seldom, even add to the intensity of the mischief through too much

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<sup>1</sup> Footnote from book: “The Responsibility of the Press: Address to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, Washington, D.C., April 21, 1960,” in “*Let the Word Go Forth*”: *The Speeches, and Writings of John F. Kennedy*, ed. Theodore Sorensen (New York: Delacorte Press, 1988), 126, 128.”

forbearance or harmful dissembling. These same individuals would not have any one entertain a doubt as to their good will towards the Holy See; yet they have always a something by way of reproach against the supreme Pontiff... 34. The prudence of men of this cast is of that kind which is termed by the Apostle Paul 'wisdom of the flesh' and 'death' of the soul, 'because it is not subject to the law of God, neither can it be.'"

### **What Catholics must not and must give to Caesar**

Catholics living in non-Catholic nations and under non-Catholic rulers must not give Caesar his due in the following things:

- In things that are sinful; that is, in things that are sins against the Catholic faith and morals
- In things that are impossible
- In things that unjustly threaten their lives
- In things a pope or other legitimate authority decrees that Catholics must not give to Caesar, some of which ordinarily can be given to Caesar.

Catholics living in non-Catholic nations and thus under non-Catholic rulers must give Caesar his due in the following things:

Catholics must pay taxes, even if some of the taxes go to sinful things, such as the building and maintenance of pagan temples. For example, Jesus commanded the apostles and his other followers to pay taxes to pagan Rome, even though some of those taxes went to the building and maintenance of pagan temples and other sinful things. (Mt. 22:17-21) However, Catholics must not pay taxes if a legitimate Catholic authority decrees that they must not pay taxes.

- Catholics can join non-Catholic armies and fight in their wars, provided they do not have to do anything sinful and provided a legitimate Catholic authority has not forbid them to do so. The famous Theban Legion was a Catholic Legion in the pagan Roman army that fought valiantly. Many of your martyrs in the early days of the Catholic Church were soldiers in the pagan Roman army. They fought for pagan Rome as long as they were not commanded to do something sinful. Hence, when the army commanded that Catholic soldiers must offer sacrifice to or show reverence to false gods or idols, they refused and were either martyred, imprisoned, or kicked out of the army. For example, the Catholic soldiers of the Theban Legion were commanded to reverence false gods and idols but refused and thus were martyred.
- If allowed to vote, Catholics must vote for the lesser evil, provided a legitimate Catholic authority has not forbid them to vote.<sup>2</sup>
- Catholics can be rulers and politicians and hold other offices, provided they do not have to do anything sinful and provided a legitimate Catholic authority has forbid them to do so. Think of Joseph in pagan Egypt who was second in authority under Pharaoh, and of Daniel in pagan Babylon was the top governor.
- Catholics must pledge allegiance to the non-Catholic nations and rulers, provided there is nothing sinful in the pledge.

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<sup>2</sup> See RJMI book *On Voting for the Lesser Evil*.

- Catholics must pray for their non-Catholic rulers.

When living under non-Catholic nations and rulers, Catholics must tolerate evil things but they must not consent to them or respect them. Hence they must tolerate idols, false gods, and sins of immorality but they must never consent to these things or respect them. For example, a Catholic who is present during a meeting of non-Catholic rulers who invoke their false gods must tolerate this and can remain silent, but he must not consent to the false gods or respect them. Think of Joseph when he was at the court of Pharaoh when Pharaoh was praised as “god on earth.” Joseph remained silent and did not condemn it every time he heard it, but he did not consent to or respect this title.

For more information on how Catholics are to behave in non-Catholic nations and under non-Catholic rulers, see RJMI book *Catholic Captivity*.

*For the glory of God; in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Michael, St. Joseph, Ss. Joachim and Anne, St. John the Baptist, the other angels and saints; and for the salvation of men*

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