

The Council of Trent of 1562, Archbishop Del Fosso: How the Foundation of Roman Catholic Authority was Laid



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The Council of Trent meeting in Santa Maria Maggiore church, Trent. (Artist unknown; painted late 17th century.)

FRIDAY MORNING MANNA

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Jesus told the religious leaders of His day: “*Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: . . . In vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandments of God, you hold the Traditions of men . . . All too well you reject the commandments of God that you may keep your Tradition . . . Making the word of God of no effect through your Tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.*” Mark 7: 6, 7, 9, 13, N.K.J.V.

The information below is from *The Great Controversy* by E.G. White Plus Supplementary material by the editor of HARVESTTIME BOOKS, P. O. Box 300, Altamont, TN 37301 U.S.A. (From the editor’s “Four Major Events in History,” supplementary materials).

I recommend this new particular edition (I have several different editions in my library) for its supplementary and illustrated materials that enables the first-time reader quickly see the big picture from a choice cavalcade of historical facts supporting Biblical prophecy of what I have long considered “the handbook of the last days” authored by the inspired writer, Ellen G. White. Now this from the supplementary materials of the editor of Harvestime Books:

“1. [Year] 1562—DEL FOSSO SPEAKS AT THE COUNCIL OF TRENT: *The day the foundation of Roman Catholic authority was laid.*”

Many historians consider these to be one of the three most important events in Catholic history. Protestants had declared that all doctrine must be brought to the test of the inspired Word; and any concept not found there must be rejected. *This deep truth lies at the heart of Protestantism.* (Italics mine). Rome was determined to overthrow that truth. But how to do it was the question; for there was a division in the Church over the primacy of Tradition.

“Down through the centuries, in every dispute over worship, doctrine, or practice, Rome had always declared Tradition—the sayings of popes and councils—to be superior to the Scripture. But how could they defend putting the words of men above the Word of God? It was not until **January 1562**, that the question was finally settled.

“Every basic modern doctrine of Catholicism finds its foundation in the decisions affirmed in the *Council of Trent* (1545-1563), initially convened by Pope Paul III, to figure out ways to oppose the Protestant faith. But, in the council, there was an ongoing battle over this matter of Tradition. It would be embarrassing to officially codify the fact that the opinions of men, not the Bible, was the basis of the beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church!

“What reasoning could be offered for placing Tradition above the Holy Scriptures, *as the highest authority*? In other words, what excuse could be given for declaring the uninspired words of men to be superior to the Bible? This was a real crisis.

“There was much bickering upon this point. Protestantism was making a powerful attack on papal beliefs—*specifically because* they were based on Tradition. Since Roman Catholic Tradition was nothing more than a hodgepodge collection confused sayings and borrowed pagan practices of earlier times, many of the archbishops and cardinals attending this important council hesitated to make official that they all knew that Tradition was the basis of the Roman Catholic Church. The problem was that there was just no reason they could offer for placing Tradition above the Bible.

“*But then came the deciding point—and it came as a surprise. What is not generally known is that the entire argument was settled in one day.*

“When Gaspar del Fosso, the Archbishop of Reggio, stood up and spoke on January 18, 1562, he decided (once and for all!) the entire future course of Catholicism. Rising to his feet and calling for attention, he wholeheartedly praised Tradition, and then made bitter jibes at those who wanted to downgrade its supremacy in the Church. Since others had already spoken in defense of tradition, **what was it that made Del Fosso’s speech so decisive? It was this:** (emphasis mine):

“First, he reasoned that the Church of Rome was founded on tradition: and the Church and its beliefs would soon perish without it. Then he gave his **punch line**: He told the assembled delegates the great proof that the doctrine of ‘Tradition-above-Scripture’ must be right—as the fact that, *centuries earlier—and quite apart from any Scriptural comma* the Church had changed the seventh-

day Sabbath, *which God Himself had commanded*, to Sunday, the first day of the week!

“*Del Fosso declared that this proved Tradition to be more important than the Bible—for Church Tradition had presumed to change the very law of God itself—and had apparently succeeded! And what is more—Del Fosso climaxed—the Protestants were obeying Rome and keeping Sunday also!* [Itals. mine]. They were obeying Catholic Tradition, which totally proves Tradition to be superior.

“That morning, Del Fosso made it clear that **Sunday sacredness was the pivotal proof of the entire doctrinal structure of Catholicism**[emphasis mine]. His logical speech settled the matter. The tone of the gathering changed. *Never again in the councils of Rome would a question be raised in regard to the supreme authority of Papal Tradition.* The fact that Rome had changed God’s Sabbath to the Papal Sunday, and Protestants [whether Evangelical, Pentecostal, Orthodox, Non-denominational, etc] carefully obey the papacy in this matter, was the ‘proof’ needed to forever establish Rome’s authority. A Catholic historian explains:

‘Finally at the last opening [session] on the eighteenth of January 1562, their last scruple was set aside’ the **Archbishop of Reggio** made a speech in which he openly declared that *Tradition stood above Scripture.* The authority of the Church could not therefore be bound to the authority of the Scriptures; because the Church had changed the Sabbath into Sunday, not by the command of Christ, but its own authority. With this, to be sure, the last illusion was destroyed, and it was declared that *Tradition does not signify antiquity, but continual inspiration.*’ – *J.H. Holtzman, Canons and Traditions, p. 263.*

“Henceforth, statements like these could be made:

‘Like two sacred rivers flowing from Paradise, the Bible and divine Tradition contain the word of God, the precious gems of revealed truth . . . Of the two, Tradition is to us more clear and safe,’ — *Joseph F. Di Bruno (Italian Catholic writer), Catholic Belief, 1884 ed., p. 45.*

‘Some of the truths that have been handed down to us by Tradition, and are not recorded in the Sacred Scriptures, are the following: that there are just seven sacraments; that there is a Purgatory: th the new law [Roman Catholic ‘Canon

Law’], Sunday should be kept holy instead of the Sabbath: that infants should be baptized: and that there are precisely seventy-two books in the Bible [66 books in our Bible that are inspired, plus 6 apocryphal books].’—*Francis J. Butler, Holy Family Catechism, No. 3. P.63. Butler (1859-?) was a Boston Catholic priest and author of a series of catechisms.*

“Because of the decision made at the Council of Trent, Catholic writers boast of the fact that they changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and declare it the MARK of their authority. Read again what they say on p. 392 [of this Great Controversy edition]:

‘Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change [of the Sabbath to Sunday] was her act . . . AND THE ACT IS A MARK of her ecclesiastical authority in religious things.’ – *From the Office of Cardinal Gibbons, through Chancellor H. F. Thomas, November 11, 1895.*

‘The observance of Sunday by the PROTESTANTS is an HOMAGE they pay in spite of themselves to the AUTHORITY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.’ – *Monsignor Louis Segur, Plain Talk About the Protestantism Today, p. 213.*

“Q. How prove you that the church hath power to command feasts and holy days?

“A. BY THE VERY ACT of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of, and therefore they fondly contradict themselves by keeping Sunday strictly and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same church

“Q. How prove you that?

“A. Because BY KEEPING SUNDAY they ACKNOWLEDGE THE CHURCH’S POWER to ordain feasts and to command them under sin.’ – *The Douay Catechism, p. 59.*

‘PROVE TO ME from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. THERE IS NO SUCH LAW IN THE BIBLE. It is the law of the holy Catholic Church alone.

‘The Bible says, ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ THE CATHOLIC CHURCH SAYS, ‘NO. By my divine power, I ABOLISH THE

SABBATH DAY and command you to keep holy the first day of the week.’ And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the holy [Roman] Catholic Church!’ – *Priest Thomas Enright, CSSR president Redemptorist College, Kansas City, MO., in a lecture at Hartford, Kansas, February 18, 1884, and published in the American Sentinel [R.C. journal], June 1893, p. 173.*”

SOME NOTABLE NEWS YEAR-END 2017:

The Year of the Silence Breakers: “*Women Speaking Out Changed 2017. Will It Be A Permanent Shift?*” By Lisa Belkin, 12-27-2017.

“Time magazine dubbed 2017 the year of the silence breakers, as powerful men who misused their powers were brought down by the women they wronged. By while it’s true that 47 men have been forced out of prominent positions this calendar year, with another 26 suspended, on leave or under investigation, this cultural comeuppance arguably began the year before, on July 2016.” (Read the rest).

Where are their Ultra-Rich and Super Powerful Fellow Muslim Believers?: “*In Myanmar, Hatred for Rohingya Muslims Runs so Deep that a Diplomat called them ‘Ugly as Ogres’—and Got Promoted.*” By Shashank Bengali, LA Times Contact Reporter 12-27-2017.

“In Myanmar [formerly, Burma], hatred for the Rohingya runs far deeper than the fears over Islamist terrorism that the army used to justify a ruthless, four-month crackdown in the western state of Rakhine. Soldiers have killed, raped or maimed thousands of Rohingya, according to international human rights groups, and more than 640,000 have fled across the border to refugee camps in Bangladesh.

“The antipathy toward the small Muslim minority—in a country that is 90 percent Buddhist—is a virulent brew of ethnic, economic and *religious nationalism* promulgated for decades by the military, and spread easily via social media across a population with some of the lowest education levels in Southeast