

Question: What is the “restrainer” St. Paul refers to in his letter to the Thessalonians?

Answer: To better understand what or who the restrainer is, let us review Paul’s letter in which he addresses the matter:

“The day of the Lord is at hand. Let no one deceive you in any way. For unless the apostasy comes first and the lawless one is revealed, the one doomed to perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god and object of worship, so as to seat himself in the temple of God, claiming that he is a god - do you not recall that while I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. But the one who restrains is to do so only for the present, until he is removed from the scene. And then the lawless one will be revealed...” (2 Thes. 2:3-8).

“... the one whose coming springs from the power of Satan in every mighty deed and in signs and wonders that lie, and in every wicked deceit for those who are perishing because they have not accepted the love of truth so that they may be saved. Therefore, God is sending them a deceiving power so that they may believe the lie, that all who have not believed the truth but have approved wrongdoing may be condemned. But we ought to give thanks to God for you always, brothers loved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in truth” (2 Thes. 2:9-13).

The Greek word *apostasia* means “a rebellion; a falling away, a defecting from the true faith. Paul reveals that the rebellion (falling away from the faith) will take place before the “lawless one (a man)” is revealed. Now, this passage is key. Why must the apostasy precede the lawless one who sits himself in the Temple of God? Because the lawless one, whom many Church Fathers and Doctors refer to as “the Antichrist”, **is restrained** from making his public debut until the masses have been so deceived through his diabolic conspiracy with *occult forces* and with *the media (I will get to this in a moment)* and through their own complicity with evil that they know longer respect God’s sacred commandments.

Ss. Irenaeus, Cyril of Jerusalem, Ephraem, John Chrysostom, Augustine and Jerome, as well as *the Church Doctors* Ss. Aquinas, Bellarmine maintain that the evil male individual St. Paul refers to as “*the lawless one... the one doomed to perdition, who... exalts himself above every so-called god and object of worship, so as to seat himself in the temple of God, claiming that he is a god...*”, Paul is referring to none other than the Antichrist.

Now, what keeping the masses’ consciences formed according to God’s sacred laws and that is **restraining** antichrist from appearing is that teaching office that for over 2,000 years has been untiringly preaching and teaching the masses on God’s sacred laws, i.e., the supreme and universal teaching authority that derives from of the office of the papacy.

The 1st Vatican Council (1869-1870) sums it up in similar fashion:

“...whoever succeeds to the chair of Peter obtains... the primacy of Peter over the whole Church. So that what the truth has ordained stands firm, and blessed Peter perseveres in the rock-like strength he was granted, and does not abandon the guidance of the Church which he once received...

*To him (the Roman Pontiff)... full power has been given by our Lord Jesus Christ to tend, to rule and govern the universal Church... Both clergy and faithful, of whatever rite and dignity, both singly and collective, are bound to submit to this power by the duty of hierarchical subordination and true obedience, and this not only in matters concerning faith and morals, but also in those which regard the discipline and government of the Church throughout the world... he is the supreme judge of the faithful...*¹

Picking up the thread of the 5th Lateran and 1st Vatican Councils, the 2nd Vatican Council (1962-1965) declares:

*“The bishops, when they are teaching in communion with the Roman Pontiff, are to be respected by all as witnesses to the divine and catholic truth... The religious assent of the will and intellect is to be given in a special way to the authentic teaching authority of the Pontiff even when he is not speaking ex cathedra.*²

It is this world-wide authority of the office of the papacy that is restraining the Antichrist. It is this world-wide authority Christ granted to his Church when he said, “*Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly father. And I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it*” (Mt. 16.17-18). In these words, Christ does not tell Peter to build his church, but that *He himself* will build his own Church, thereby implying that through Peter (who represents all future Pontiffs) Christ shows us the path that leads to eternal life and warns us of the broad road that leads to perdition.

Today Christ’s teaching authority that abides in the magisterial teachings of the Pope and Bishops and bears with it the promise of Christ: *He who hears you, hears me; he who rejects you rejects me, he who rejects me, rejects Him who sent me*” (Lk. 10. 16).

But there will be a time when Antichrist will, for a while, usurp this authority, but it will be short-lived, for the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church at the helm of which stand the Roman Pontiff. It is when Antichrist has his ephemeral victory, that we are reminded of the words of the Book of revelation 13:11: “*Then I saw another beast come up out of the earth; it had two horns like a lamb's but spoke like a dragon. It wielded all authority...*”

¹ Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, Vatican Council I, vol. II, op. cit., pp. cap. II-IV, pp. 813-815.

² Ibid., p. 869.

Satan who works through the Antichrist wishes to control not only all wealth and resources this planet offers (as even the poorest can refuse to consent to his imposing will), he wishes to also possess all moral authority.

Now, why would God allow this? St. Paul tells us, “the lawless one will be revealed, the one whose coming springs from the power of Satan in every mighty deed and in signs and wonders that lie, and in every wicked deceit for those who are perishing because they have not accepted the love of truth so that they may be saved. Therefore, God is sending them a deceiving power so that they may believe the lie, that all who have not believed the truth but have approved wrongdoing may be condemned. (2 Thes. 2:8-12).

How does Antichrist come to usurp his authority?

Pope Pius XI (1857-1939 A.D.) intimates the answer when he writes of subversive secret organizations:

*“There is... explanation for the rapid diffusion of the **communistic ideas** now (1937) seeping into every nation, great and small, advanced and backward, so that no corner of the earth is free from them. This explanation is to be found in a propaganda so truly diabolical that the world has perhaps never witnessed its like before. It is directed from one common center. It is shrewdly adapted to the varying conditions of diverse peoples. It has at its disposal great financial resources, gigantic organizations, international congresses, and countless trained workers. It makes use of pamphlets and reviews, of cinema, theater and radio, of schools and even universities. Little by little it penetrates into all classes of the people and even reaches the better-minded groups of the community, with the result that few are aware of the poison which increasingly pervades their minds and hearts.*

A... powerful factor... is the conspiracy of silence on the part of a large section of the non-Catholic press of the world. We say conspiracy, because it is impossible otherwise to explain how a press usually so eager to exploit even the little daily incidents of life has been able to remain silent for so long... and that it should have relatively so little to say concerning a world organization...³ This silence is due in part to short-sighted policy, and is favored by

³ With regard to this “world organization”, that has “one common center”, numerous pontiffs of the past century have recognized its emerging phenomenon via “globalization” through a “one world order”, e.g., Popes Leo XIII, John XXIII, Paul VI and John Paul II. Pope John Paul II relates as follows: “After all this scientific and technical progress, and even because of it, the problem remains: how to build up a new order of society based on a more balanced human relationship between political communities on a national and international level?” (Pope John Paul II, *Mater et Magistra*, n. 212); “Be not afraid. Open wide the doors for Christ. To his saving power open the boundaries of states, economic and political systems, the vast fields of culture, civilization, and development” (Witness to Hope, George Weigel, Zondervan 2009, p.262). That globalization is not in itself “evil” or that it is to be shunned simply because it is a global movement is noted by Pope John Paul II: “Globalization, a priori, is neither good nor bad. It will be what people make of it” (Address to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, April 27th, 2001).

In recent years, Pope Benedict XVI spoke of the potential threats of an attempt at globalization or a new world order that does not respect the Christian moral principle of subsidiarity. Such dangers are found in Pope

various occult forces which for a long time have been working for the overthrow of the Christian Social Order.

When the Apostles asked the Savior why they had been unable to drive the evil spirit from a demoniac, Our Lord answered: 'This kind is not cast out but by Prayer and Fasting.' So, too, the evil which today torments humanity can be conquered only by a world-wide holy crusade of prayer and penance. We ask especially the contemplative Orders, men and women, to redouble their prayers and sacrifices to obtain from Heaven efficacious aid for the Church in the present struggle. Let them implore also the powerful intercession of the Immaculate Virgin who, having crushed the head of the serpent of old, remains the sure Protectress and Invincible 'Help of Christians'."

If **Pope Pius XI** refrains from mentioning the name of this *world organization that has one common center from which in a conspiracy of silence with the media that shrouds its identity, and favoured by occult forces, seeks the overthrow of the Christian Social Order*", Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich does not.¹

In her mystical visions **Blessed Emmerich** beheld this world organization and describes it in a work, entitled, *The Life and Revelations of Anne Catherine Emmerich*:

*"I always see these 'Illuminati' in a certain connection with the coming of antichrist... For, by their secrets, by their injustice, they forward the accomplishment of the mystery of iniquity."*⁴

I see new martyrs, not of the present but of the future... I saw the secret societyⁱⁱ undermining the great Church (St. Peter's) and near them a horrible beast that arose out of the sea.

CCC, 675: *Before Christ's second coming the Church must pass through the final trial that will shake the faith of many believers. The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on*

Benedict XVI's encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*: "As society becomes ever more globalized, it makes us neighbours but does not make us brothers" (Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, n. 19); "The principal new feature has been the explosion of worldwide interdependence, commonly known as globalization. Paul VI had partially foreseen it, but the ferocious pace at which it has evolved could not have been anticipated" (Pope Benedict XVI, *Ibid.*, n. 33); "In the face of the unrelenting growth of global interdependence, there is a strongly felt need, even in the midst of a global recession, for a reform of the United Nations Organization, and likewise of economic institutions and international finance, so that the concept of the family of nations can acquire real teeth" (Pope Benedict XVI, *Ibid.*, n.67); "In order not to produce a dangerous universal power of a tyrannical nature, the governance of globalization must be marked by subsidiarity, articulated into several layers and involving different levels that can work together. Globalization certainly requires authority, insofar as it poses the problem of a global common good that needs to be pursued. This authority, however, must be organized in a subsidiary and stratified way, if it is not to infringe upon freedom..." (Pope Benedict XVI, *Ibid.*, n.57).

Given the foregoing, it is clear that Pope Benedict XVI is not interested in just any new world order; rather he makes it clear that the Catholic Church has a responsibility is to guide those who are actually bringing about this world government so as to effectively promote an "anthropological and ethical framework around the common good" (Pope Benedict XVI, *Ibid.*, n. 32).

⁴ P. 405

earth will unveil the 'mystery of iniquity' in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth. The supreme religious deception is that of Antichrist, a pseudo-messiansim by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh."

Eucharist

Now, without the papacy, there is nothing uniting the members of the Church, and this is precisely what Satan wants: his dictum is, "Divine and conquer!" So once Satan has removed the papacy (for a time *only*), he will then abolish the perpetual sacrifice – the Eucharist. Why the Eucharist? The Vatican II Council provides the answer. In its conciliar documents it affirms that the Eucharist is "the summit and source of the Christian life" (*Lumen Gentium*, 11); "Each must share frequently in the Sacraments, the Eucharist especially, and in liturgical rites" (*Ibid.*, 42); "In the house of prayer the most Holy Eucharist is celebrated and preserved. There the faithful gather, and find help and comfort through venerating the presence of the Son of God our Savior, offered us on the sacrificial altar. This house must be well kept and suitable for prayer and sacred action. There, priests and the faithful are called to respond with grateful hearts to the gift of Him who through His humanity constantly pours divine life into the members of His Body... The other Sacraments, as well as every ministry of the Church and every work of the apostolate, are linked with the holy Eucharist and are directed toward it. For the most Blessed Eucharist contains the Church's entire spiritual wealth, that is, Christ Himself, our Passover and living bread. Through His very Flesh [we have eternal life! Jn. 6:53], made vital and vitalizing by the Holy Spirit, He offers life to men. They are thereby invited and led to offer themselves, their labors, and all created things together with Him" (*Presbiterorum Ordinis*, 5); the "work of our redemption is accomplished" through His Eucharistic offering (*Lumen Gentium*, 3); "From the liturgy, therefore, and especially from the Eucharist, as from a fountain, grace is channeled into us; and the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God, to which all other activities of the Church are directed as toward their goal, are most powerfully achieved..." the faithful must have the required dispositions to receive communion worthily (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 55); etc.

Conclusion

Let us now connect the dots:

Pope Pius XI warns mankind of "a world organization that has one common center from which in a conspiracy of silence with the media that shrouds its identity, and favoured by occult forces, seeks to for the overthrow of the Christian Social Order".

Blessed Emmerich refers to this one world organization as the Freemasons and the Illuminati, which constitutes a form of religious deception.

The Church Catechism warns mankind of “*unveiling of the ‘mystery of iniquity’ in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth, known as the Antichrist, a false Messiah who will glorify himself in Temple of God.*”

ⁱ *Divini Redemptoris*, Pope Pius XI, Encyclical Letter on Atheistic Communism promulgated on March 19, 1937, nn. 17, 18, 59.

ⁱⁱ Throughout her visions Blessed Emmerich specifically mentions the “Illuminati” and the “Freemasons” as secret societies most dangerous to the Catholic Church.