

**Question:** When the Antichrist soon comes will he kill Christians (even the Pope), put an end to the perpetual sacrifice of the Mass and leave the Church without a shepherd, a hierarchy or the Sacraments?

**Answer:** In answer to your third question on *Antichrist's persecution of Christians, abolishment of the perpetual sacrifice and leaving the Church without a shepherd, the hierarchy or the Sacraments*, inasmuch as the Church is the pillar and foundation of truth (1 Tim. 3:15) that enjoys the guarantee of immunity from destruction (Mt. 16:18) and guidance of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 16:13) by Jesus Christ himself, it cannot remain without a shepherd, the hierarchy or the Sacraments. Let us recall that despite the early-century persecution of Christianity that forced all Christians into hiding, underground into the Catacombs and abroad to various countries, the Church, however small, remained intact with its shepherds, hierarchy and Sacraments. Moreover even after the death of every Roman Pontiff, during that interim period pending the election of a new Roman Pontiff, the Church does not remain deprived of its shepherd bishops and priests who, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, continue to instruct Christ's flock and administer the Sacraments.

With regard to the various Antichrist's of the past, early Church Tradition, in particular the testimony of several Church Fathers, refer to an eschatological Antichrist as a male individual who will be endowed with extraordinary charisma to win over the masses, with powers to work miracles, raise the dead, make fire fall from the sky, cause images to speak, persecute all Christians and put an end to the perpetual sacrifice. Noteworthy is that, as in the past, when the antichristian persecution breaks out and Christians are hunted and killed – even at the hands of radical Muslim forces that have already taken over by brute force most of the middle East, with Israel and Syria doing their best to thwart the radical Islamic invasion – the Church, however reduced to its smallest size ever, will not remain deprived of its shepherd bishops and priests who, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, continue to instruct Christ's flock and administer the Sacraments, even clandestinely. Hence the promise and guarantee of Jesus Christ himself: *“And so 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. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven”* (Mt. 16:18-19); *“I am with you always, to the close of the age”* (Mt. 28:20).

It is noteworthy that several mystics whose writings are approved have foretold the emergence of an “invalidly” elected Pope whose freemasonic affiliation wishes to subversively overthrow the tradition and teachings of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, not one Church-approved prophet or mystic who has foretold the rise of an antipope (the Catholic Church has already witnessed over 30 antipopes and emerged unscathed) has ever attributed this title to a “validly” elected Pope, but rather to a usurper of the papal throne whose election is clearly

“invalid”. This point is pivotal as it reveals the enduring importance of a valid papal election, and the papal office that serves to safeguard the faith.

Case and point. It is claimed that shortly before his death in 1226, St. Francis of Assisi spoke to his friars of a period of future turmoil in which an invalid papal election would ensue. Francis’ use of the expression of a pope who is “*not canonically elected*” suggests a papal election that does not meet the canonical requirements for a valid papal election. The text alleges Francis as having stated, “*The devils will have unusual power, the immaculate purity of our Order, and of others, will be so much obscured that there will be very few Christians who will obey the true Sovereign Pontiff and the Roman Church with loyal hearts and perfect charity. At the time of this tribulation a man, not canonically elected, will be raised to the Pontificate, who, by his cunning, will endeavour to draw many into error and death.*”<sup>1</sup>

What is certain is that God’s prophets never impugn papal authority, although they alert the faithful to an immanent period in which the true and “validly” elected Pope will be exiled and possibly martyred, and during his exile, an “invalid” papal election will occur. Blessed Anne-Maria Taigi (1769-1837) prophesied the exile of the true Roman Pontiff when she affirmed, “*Religion shall be persecuted, and priests massacred. Churches shall be closed, but only for a short time. The Holy Father shall be obliged to leave Rome*”.<sup>2</sup>

St. Pope Pius X (1835-1914) reaffirms Blessed Anna-Maria’s vision: “*I saw one of my successors taking to flight over the bodies of his brethren. He will take refuge in disguise somewhere; and after a short retirement [exile] he will die a cruel death.*”<sup>3</sup> *The present wickedness of the world is only the beginning of the sorrows which must take place before the end of the world.*”<sup>4</sup>

Other prophecies foretell the exile of a Roman Pontiff followed by a formal schism. Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich (1774-1824) offers three riveting illustrations: “*I had another vision of the great tribulation... It seems to me that a concession was demanded from the clergy that could not be granted. I saw many older priests, especially one, who wept bitterly. A*

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<sup>1</sup> [\*Works of the Seraphic Father St. Francis of Assisi\*](#), London: R. Washbourne, 1882, pp. 248-250.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed Anna-Maria Taigi, in *Catholic Prophecy*, Yves Dupont, *The Coming Chastisement*, Tan Books and Pub., Inc., IL, 1973, p.45. Although the Pope may have to flee Rome and remain in exile and, as St. Pope Pius X says, “there die a cruel death”, he will be succeeded by another “validly” elected Pope. Blessed Anna-Maria Taigi and Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich describe the events that culminate in a new, “valid” papal election. After the Church has been without a Pope for some time, a new conclave will be convened to elect his valid successor: “*After the three days of darkness, St. Peter and St. Paul, having come down from heaven [understood in a metaphoric sense] will preach in the whole world and designate a new Pope. A great light will flash from their bodies and will settle upon the cardinal who is to become Pope. Christianity, then, will spread throughout the world*” (Ibid.).

<sup>3</sup> If the pontiff will die “a cruel death,” it is not a death without God’s divine assistance. Some of the greatest spiritual giants underwent deaths deemed by many in a certain sense as cruel, beginning with Jesus Christ himself.

<sup>4</sup> Saint Pope Pius X, 20<sup>th</sup> century, in *Catholic Prophecy*, p.22.

*few younger ones were also weeping... It was as if people were splitting into two camps.<sup>5</sup> I was taken to Rome where the Holy Father, plunged in affliction, is still concealed in order to elude dangerous exigencies... If the Pope leaves Rome, the enemies of the Church will get the upper hand... I saw them intercepting or turning away the roads that led to the Pope. When they did succeed in getting a Bishop according to their liking, I saw that he had been intruded contrary to the will of the Holy Father; consequently, he possessed no legitimate authority.<sup>6</sup>*

*“...plans formed for the blending of religious creeds, the suppression of papal authority... I saw no Pope, but a bishop prostrate before the High Altar. In this vision I saw the church bombarded by other vessels... It was threatened on all sides... They built a large, extravagant church which was to embrace all creeds with equal rights... but in place of an altar were only abomination and desolation. Such was the new church to be...”<sup>7</sup>*

Zechariah 13:7-8 reveals, “*Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is my associate, says the Lord of hosts. Strike the shepherd that the sheep may be dispersed, and I will turn my hand against the little ones. In all the land, says the Lord, two thirds of them shall be cut off and perish, and one third shall be left.”*

In the approved messages of Our Lady of La Salette the Blessed Virgin Mary revealed to Melanie Calvat and Maximin Giraud, “*Rome will lose the faith and become the seat of Antichrist.*”<sup>8</sup>

Admittedly, history has borne witness to several “invalid” papal elections that the Church never acknowledged, including the 14<sup>th</sup> century schism in which the two Popes Gregory XI and Clement VII claimed the throne simultaneously – one was an imposter vested with false authority by a few nationalist cardinals who held an invalid conclave, namely Clement VII. What made this conclave *invalid* was the absence of the full body of cardinals and subsequently the required 2/3’s majority vote. The criteria that determine the “validity” of a papal election is not only a 2/3’s majority vote of the full consistory of cardinals, but, if the true pope is alive and even in exile, his expressed consent, otherwise no conclave may be held in attempt to elect another.

Therefore the prophecies predicting the pope’s flight or exile from Rome do not signify a validly elected pope’s abdication of office, but they indicate the infiltration of an imposter who was never validly or canonically elected. In Sacred Scripture God never leaves his flock untended, but on account of sin he tests his flock for a short period as gold is tested in the fire in

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<sup>5</sup> *The Life and Revelations of Anne Catherine Emmerich*, Very Rev. Carl E. Schmöger (Rockford: Tan), Vol. II [message of April 12, 1820].

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 290, 292, 303, 310.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 346, 349, 353.

<sup>8</sup> Message of Our Lady of La Salette dated September 19, 1846. After a thorough investigation, the bishop of Grenoble ruled in favor of the La Salette apparitions.

order that it may emerge purer, holier and with greater faith. From all this one thing emerges as absolutely certain: Every validly elected Pope is the true Vicar of Christ on earth, and he alone enjoys “*supreme, full and immediate authority*”.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, Vatican Council I, vol. II, Washington DC [1990], cap. II-IV, p. 923.