

Bruno of Segni, A Pamphlet on Simoniacs, translated by W.L. North from the edition of E. Sackur in MGH Libelli de Lite II, (Hannover, 1892), pp.546-562.

The edition of Bruno's pamphlet On Simoniacs translated here consists of two works which are in many ways unrelated to each other in content and appear independently in the manuscript tradition. Part I, namely cc.1-9, contains a brief life and several miracles of Leo IX which are clearly intended to be delivered as a sermon on St. Leo IX's feast day. Part II, i.e. cc.10-16, presents a discussion of the validity of simoniacal ordinations and, more particularly, Bruno's response to the charge (going back to the time of Peter Damian and Humbert of Silva Candida) that if simony was as widespread a practice as reformers claimed, then the reformers themselves must be simoniacs — for who else could have ordained them but the simoniacal priesthood against which they were railing. In addition to responding to this charge with a detailed discussion of the relationship between intentionality and heretical behavior, Bruno also addresses other related issues such as the repeatability of certain sacraments and whether or not buying churches and church property constitutes an act of simony.

*Although the precise date of its composition is unknown, scholars have suggested, on the basis of Bruno's references to Hugh of Cluny, John of Tusculum, John of Porto, and Hubald of Sabina that the work was composed between 1094-1101. They have also viewed his discussion of simoniacal ordinations as intended to respond specifically to critics of Urban II and his supporters who, at the Council of Piacenza in 1095, favored the reinstatement in their clerical office of those coming from the Wibertine party, if they had not knowingly committed simony or received their ordination from a simoniac. In the translator's view, both the *Life* and the discussion of simoniacal ordinations were probably composed in late 1094 or early 1095 in preparation for Urban II's pastoral tour of northern Italy and France.*

ON SIMONIACS

Bruno, bishop of Segni, to all the faithful and all catholics. May the grace and peace of God, our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. The Psalmist speaks, saying: "Glorify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together."¹ (Ps.33:4) In this he most clearly teaches us that we, too, should invite whomever we can to the praise and glorification of God. For all the praise, virtue, and glory of the saints is applied to Him Who is wondrous in His saints.² He also says to his disciples: *Without me, you can do nothing.* (Jn. 15:5) In each [saint],

¹ Bruno is using the Septuagint translation.

² Cf.Ps.67:36.

He is crowned and in all He is honored. He Himself speaks in them, He Himself fights and wins in them. Both the faithful themselves and his servants therefore say, not inappropriately: *In God we shall do miracles, and He Himself shall bring our enemies to nought.*(Ps.17:14)

1. We shall therefore praise the saints of God, we shall honor the friends of God, because [God] Himself is praised and magnified in them, [God] who has given them so much glory, virtue, and magnificence. And so I ask: Glorify the Lord with me, and on this great festival of the blessed Leo, highest pontiff and universal pope, let us exalt his name together.

The whole world was placed in wickedness, sanctity had failed, justice had perished, and truth lay buried. Iniquity was king, avarice was lord, Simon magus held the Church, bishops and priests were given over to pleasure and fornication. Priests were not ashamed to take wives, they held their weddings openly, they contracted nefarious marriages, and endowed with laws those with whom, according to the laws, they should not live in the same house. For the sacred canons allow no other women to live together with this order than those women alone who are above all suspicion.³ But what is even worse than all this - hardly anyone was found who either was not a symoniac [himself] or had not been ordained by symoniacs. As a result, to this very day, there are some people who, because they argue wickedly and do not understand the dispensation of the Church, contend that starting from that time the priesthood failed in the Church. For they say: "If all were like this, i.e. if all either were symoniacs or had been ordained by symoniacs, you who are now [priests], how did you come to be here? Through whom did you pass, if not through them? There was no other way. Hence, those who ordained you received their orders from none

³ Council of Nicaea, c.3.

other than those who either were symoniacs or had been ordained by symoniacs." We shall respond to these people later, since this question requires no small discussion.

2. In the meantime, let us continue with what we have begun. Such was the Church, such were the bishops and priests, such were even the Roman pontiffs themselves, who should illuminate all the others. All the salt had lost its flavor, and there was nothing left with which it might be seasoned,⁴ and if the Lord Sabaoth had not left His seed for us, we would have been like Sodom and Gomorrah. Amidst this great tempest, the blessed Leo took up the episcopal see of the apostolic pinnacle, in order that such and so great a light as this, when placed atop the candelabra, might enlighten all who are in the house. He was, in fact, bishop of Toul, Bruno by name, noble by birth, beautiful in appearance but more beautiful in his sanctity, educated in letters, powerful in his doctrine, and adorned with [good] manners -- indeed, whatever things are necessary to this order, all these came together in him. And at such a moment, such a teacher, who was going to have such disciples, was truly necessary. And so religious men gathered together with the emperor Henry,⁵ a most prudent man in every way, and with the legates of the Romans who were there at the time, and strongly entreated the aforementioned bishop that, out of love for the princes of the apostles Peter and Paul, he would support the Roman church and not be afraid to give himself up to danger for the sake of the faith and the Christian religion.⁶ For

⁴ Cf. Lk.14:34.

⁵ Henry III.

⁶ Pope Damasus II had died in August of 1048. The meeting in Germany to which Bruno refers occurred in late 1048.

that race⁷ feared to live in this land of ours, since [they considered it] like passing from the healthiest of places to those ridden with sickness. But that blessed bishop was not afraid of the sickness of the place; rather he feared to ascend to the height of so great a church. So, too, is Moses read to have felt. For when the Lord wished to place him at the head of the people of Israel, he says: *I beseech you, Lord, send whom you are going to send.* (Ex.33:12) When [Leo] had finally been won over by their entreaties, he promised that he would do what they asked on one condition: "I am going to Rome," he says, "and once there, if the clergy and people elect me as their bishop voluntarily, I shall do what you ask. Otherwise, I shall not accept the election." Rejoicing, they confirmed his judgment and praised his condition.

⁷ I.e. those from the German Empire. Leo IX's predecessors Clement II (24 December 1046 - 9 October 1047) and Damasus II (17 July - 9 August 1048) had both died from illness after only a very short time in office.

Now then, in those days, there was a certain Roman monk named Hildebrand,⁸ an adolescent of noble disposition, brilliant wit and holy religion. The adolescent had come there⁹ both for the sake of learning and also in order that he might fight (militare) under the rule of Saint Benedict in some religious house (locus). Now the blessed bishop summoned this youth into his presence and, as soon as he learned his purpose, will, and religion, asked [Hildebrand] to return to Rome with him. To which [Hildebrand] answered: "No, I say." "Why not?" the bishop replies. "Because you are going to seize the Roman church not in accordance with the institutions of the canons but by means of secular and royal power," he says. Inasmuch as [Leo] was by nature a simple and most gentle man, he satisfied [Hildebrand's concerns] with patience, explaining everything just as he wished. Of course, in this action he imitated the example of the blessed Peter, whose successor he was soon to become. For after Peter baptized Cornelius, a gentile, that is, and one outside the religion of the Jews, and was rebuked by the other apostles because he approached a man who had a foreskin, he did not disdain giving them an explanation concerning all these things.¹⁰

⁸ Later Gregory VII (1073-1085); see below.

⁹ To Toul? To Lotharingia?

¹⁰ Cf. Acts 10:24-11:17.

And so when the bishop came to Rome, he brought the aforementioned monk with him. And he greatly served the blessed apostle Peter by bringing this man back with him, for through his counsel and wisdom the Roman church was to be ruled and governed for a time. This fellow is, in fact, Pope Gregory VII - but it belongs to another time and work to recount his prudence, constancy, and fortitude as well as his battles and labors. Now then, in accordance with Roman custom, Leo was elected as bishop by the clergy and people with great praise, then raised to the episcopal see of the blessed apostle Peter, and was called (in my opinion through the workings of Providence) Leo, when his name was changed.¹¹ For Leo from the tribe of Juda, from which this Leo traced his origin, conquered and, having become the mightiest of beasts, feared the attack of no one. Indeed, Leo's roar soon shook the earth, terrified the sacrilegious, upset the symoniacs, and wounded the army of married priests. For this most blessed pontiff, afire with the flame of the Holy Spirit, burned especially against symoniacs. He also confirmed the ancient canons in order that the order of clerics might live chastely and religiously. In this, condescending greatly when necessary through his power of dispensation [dispensatorie] and having mercy upon past [sins] by apostolic authority by imposing only a small penance, he admonished them not to commit such [sins] again. Yet because the pope was acting not according to his will, but out of necessity, this ought not be taken as an example, unless perchance a similar situation arises such as often forces the rectors of the Church to tolerate what cannot be corrected. Who can describe how much kindness he had for all, how great was his humility, how great was his mildness, how generous, how affable, how compassionate he was to all? He became *all things to all, in order to profit all*. (I Cor. 9:22) His speech, seasoned with salt, soothed the pious and terrified the

¹¹ Leo's election occurred on 12 February 1049.

impious.

3. But now let us come to those things which the Lord did through him, though we do not wish to write down everything that we have heard or found written down about him. Blessed Pope Gregory, whom we mentioned above, used to say many things about this man and it is from him, as I recall, that I heard the majority of what I've said up to now. Sometimes when he would speak about him to us who were listening, he began to rebuke us, and especially me (or so I believed because he kept his eyes intent upon me) because we were letting the deeds of the blessed Leo perish in silence and because we were not writing things which would be to the glory of the Roman church and [serve] as an example of humility to the many who listened. But because he poured out his words to no one in particular (in commune), not one wrote what he ordered to be written by all. Nor even now would I have written these things, if I had not been forced in a certain way to write them, as I shall make clear in what follows. May both popes have mercy on me, because I recognize that I have offended both in this.

Let us first recount what we have heard was done through him in the regions of Gaul by the admirable power of God. Now when the blessed Leo was celebrating councils there¹² and many bishops were being accused of the heresy of simony, among others a certain fellow was accused who was held in greater suspicion than the rest. But when the accusation against him could not be proven by certain evidence, the pope promised him that [the bishop] himself would tell the truth about himself. But since he did not want to tell the truth and tried to conceal his iniquity in every way, the blessed Leo said to him: "If, as you say, you are not a simoniac and

¹² The most famous of these councils was that of Reims in 1049.

have not sinned against the Holy Spirit, say now, if you can: "Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit." After [the bishop] had said "Glory to the Father and to the Son," although he tried hard [to say it], he was completely unable to say "and to the Holy Spirit." And after he repeated it again and again and could in no way name the Holy Spirit when his mouth was open, it appeared clear to all that he had sinned against the Holy Spirit, whose name he could not say. All therefore gave thanks to God, since He had deigned to show them so new a sign and so unheard of a miracle. And so, because some were terrified by the judgment of this man, they came to the pope by themselves and, after accusing themselves, they revealed their consciences to him. At that time, too, when the abbot of Cluny, while still an adolescent of good promise, was asked by the blessed Leo if he ever had any ambition to lead so great a monastery himself, because he was a disciple of the Truth, he stated what was the case, saying: "According to the flesh, of course I have had [ambitions], but according to the spirit, I have not." So pleasing to all and praiseworthy was his response that it was immediately written in the hearts of all out of tremendous joy. Repeatedly they asked themselves what he had answered, in order that they might be able to retain his very words. He is now an old man, full of days, venerable to all and loveable to all, and he still rules that venerable monastery with the greatest wisdom - indeed, he is a man praiseworthy in every way, beyond compare, and of singular religion.

4. I also heard the blessed Gregory telling another miracle concerning this same pope, which I do not think should be passed over. "The blessed Leo," said Gregory, "had a certain teacher, a wise and truly religious man, who sent him a wooden cup, after he had received the pontificate of the Roman Church. The venerable pontiff considered this cup to be wonderfully precious and, out of

eneration for the blessed Remi, whose cup [the teacher] said it was, he usually drank from it more readily than from vessels of silver and gold. It just so happened, however, that it was once set down carelessly and fell to the ground, splitting into two pieces. When, as was customary, the blessed pontiff ordered that wine be brought to him, the servant (pincerna) stood there with a troubled look on his face, well aware of the damage which he had caused. The pontiff said to him: "Why are you acting like that?" "Because the cup is broken," he said. And the blessed Leo said: "Is it really broken?" And the servant said: "Broken, my lord." "Bring it to me," he said to the servant. When [the servant] brought it, the pontiff took it in his hands and, fitting the pieces together by matching the pieces at the points where they seemed to have formerly been attached, he held it for a little while in his hands and then returned it whole and unharmed to the servant, saying: "Go and mix [the wine]."" Gregory was present at this miracle and told us. Another man of not such great authority later told me that he was present and saw it, too.¹³

¹³ This miracle is also recounted by Desiderius (later Pope Victor III) in Book III of his Dialogues on the Miracles of St. Benedict, which is edited by G. Schwarz and A. Hofmeister in MGH Scriptores 30/2, pp.1143-44. Desiderius, like Bruno, also claims to have originally heard the story from Gregory VII.

5. While the blessed Leo was in Rome and was ruling the apostolic see in peace, many people came from the borders of Apulia with their eyes gouged out, their noses cut off, and their hands and feet chopped off, wretchedly lamenting the cruelty of the Normans. Whence it happened that this mildest of men, who was full of piety and mercy, had compassion for the tremendous affliction of those wretched people and attempted to humble the arrogance of that race.¹⁴ Yet, although he was truly zealous for God, it was perhaps not according to knowledge — would that he had not gone there himself but had just sent the army there to defend justice! But why say more? The armies of both sides clash, as the many go to battle the few. An immense slaughter occurs, and much blood is shed on this side and on that.¹⁵ The one side persists through their fortitude, the other through their multitude. The ones could say at their deaths, what we read that our Savior said in His passion: *They would not have power over us, unless it had been given to them from above.*¹⁶ And yet, why is it that the good are vanquished and the wicked emerge victorious? *O depth of the riches of [God's] wisdom and knowledge, how incomprehensible are His judgments, how untrackable are His ways?* (Rom.11:33) Those who fight for justice are conquered, those who fight against justice conquer. Nevertheless, the Apostle consoles us about such things when he says: *We know that all things are done to the good for those who love God.*(Rom.8:28) Whether they die or they live, it is good for them. Whatever happens to them is good for them. All things happen to them for the good, and death, in fact, works better than life for such people. For the death of His saints is precious in the sight of the Lord. Indeed, we

¹⁴ I.e. the Normans.

¹⁵ Bruno refers here to Leo's crushing defeat at the battle of Civitate which happened in May 1053.

¹⁶ Cf. Jn. 19:11.

should firmly believe and in no way doubt that all those who die for justice are placed among the martyrs. May He place them with the leaders (principes) of his people.¹⁷

¹⁷ Cf. Ps.112:8.

6. We have passed over much and chosen a few things from a multitude, because we were commanded to write not the whole, but only a part of the whole. Behold — rumor flies, the earth is filled [with the news?], and everywhere there is talk that a battle has occurred and that the soldiers of Christ and the army of the saints have been beaten. Then, the pitiful pontiff returned to Benevento, a city faithful and friendly to St. Peter. When they learned of the pontiff's approach, the entire city rushes out to meet him — men and women, youths and maidens, the old and the young, yet not as if for a procession, but for weeping and lamentation. Standing in wonder, [the people] watch them coming from afar; now the pope draws nearer with bishops and clerics preceding him, their faces sad and their heads hanging. After the venerable pope comes among them and blesses them with his raised hand, clamor and wailing rise up to heaven and the entire earth resounds with weeping and laments. In such a procession he enters the city and amidst such psalmody he comes to the church. After remaining there for a time, he returns to Rome and in each city [along the way] the lamentation and tears begin anew. For what man could keep himself from tears who had seen him going out with such an army, but saw him later return with only clerics, bereft of that noble knighthood. Then, when he reached Rome, he hastened as soon as possible to the church of the blessed apostle Peter and commended to him on bended knee and with great devotion the souls of those who, obedient unto death out of love for him, had not been afraid to shed their blood to defend justice.¹⁸ And while he remained there, it was shown to him through a revelation in a dream that he soon would leave this world. He therefore ordered the bishops, cardinals, and other clerics to be summoned to him and exhorted

¹⁸ Bruno here collapses Leo's expedition to Civitate in May 1053 and his return from Benevento in March 1054 into a single event.

them with great kindness to live chastely and fight bravely against the heresy of simony; and he said to them:

You should know, my brothers, that I am going to leave this world in a few days. For last night I, although unfortunate and unworthy of the see of this church, was in another life through a vision, and because of this, it now wearies me to live in this life. But I greatly rejoice that I saw there among the martyrs of Christ those brothers and friends of mine who died after following me to Apulia in defense of justice. They were well adorned and holding palms in their hands so that those who thought that they had been beaten may know in this way that they are the victors. And this is true. For everything which is born from God conquers the world, and our faith is this victory which conquers the world. They all were shouting, saying to me in a loud voice: "Come, O our beloved, in the morning you shall be with us, because we have achieved so great a glory as this through you." But I heard others saying, from a different part: "No, but on the third day you shall come to us." Therefore if, after the third day, I am still in this life, you may know that what I saw was not true.

But no one should be surprised if malignant spirits wished to terrify the man to whom such happy news was announced in a vision, [spirits] who long ago dared to approach our Lord and Savior Himself. For thus says the Lord Himself: *For the prince of the world comes, but he has nothing on me.* Then he says: *Go my brothers, each to his own house. Tomorrow return to me.* (Jn.14:30) That entire night [Leo] prayed to the Lord down upon bended knees. When morning came, he ordered his tomb to be prepared. The bishops and priests assembled once again, just as that most blessed man had ordered them to do the day before. While they remained in the church, he said as he sat on his bed:

Hear me, our brothers and fellow bishops, and all you who have assembled here. Above all, I order you not to sell the lands of the church, the vineyards, the castles, the dwellings, and the rest of the Church's property, and that no one wish to defend them as his own possession. Do not have the practice of swearing. Beware of your relatives. Do no injury to the servants of the blessed Peter who come here nor deceive them in your dealings with them (negotiis). Give tithes freely from all that you possess.

Then, turning to the cross, he poured forth great prayers for all to the Lord, asking and

entreating Him on bended knee that He might deign to forgive them all their sins. And when he had done this, again gazing to heaven, he said:

Lord Jesus Christ, good pastor who put on a servant's form for our sake, who chose twelve apostles for the conversion of all the nations, and who said to your blessed apostle Peter: "Whatever you bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth, shall also be loosed in heaven," I, his unworthy vicar, beseech your immense clemency that you absolve those servants, my brothers, who were killed because of their love of justice, from all their sins and lead them into the repose of the blessed. And Lord, absolve those whom I excommunicated and convert them to the way of truth. Destroy the heresy of simony and all heretical depravity, and deign to bless and protect your faithful Beneventans who received me so honorably and served me richly in your name, as well as the rest of the faithful. For You are God, blessed forever and ever. Amen.

After he ceased speaking, they remained there a short while and then returned, each one to his own home. Throughout that night, just as on the previous one, he remained in vigils and prayer. Then, on the following day, namely the third which was the last day in this life for the blessed Leo, the highest pontiff, they all assembled with much greater frequency. Rising, the blessed pontiff went before the altar and remained in prayer for almost an hour, greatly weeping. Returning thence to his bed, he had a brief talk with them. When this was done, he called the bishops to him and, after he made his confession, he received the holy body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then he laid back down on the bed and a little while later, fell asleep in the Lord. Rising, one of the bishops touched him, thinking that he was still alive and just sleeping. When they realized that he had already died, everyone soon gathered from all sides and made great lamentations over him. The blessed pontifex died on 19 April in the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is glory and honor forever and ever. Amen.¹⁹

¹⁹ For his account of the events and exhortations preceding Leo IX's death, Bruno clearly used, at times

verbatim the earlier account of Libuin, subdeacon of the Church of Rome, On the death of Pope Leo IX. This source is edited in J.M. Watterich, Pontificum Romanorum Vitae, v.1 (Leipzig, 1862; repr. Aalen, 1966), pp.170-177.

7. On the day after the death of blessed Leo, a certain woman came from the region of Tuscia and as she climbed up the stairs, she began to be vexed by a demon and to utter dire sounds and great howls. After she had said the name of the blessed Leo, she was pulled to his tomb by those who were there. One of the bishops interrogated the demon which was vexing her, saying: "I adjure you by Him Who lives and reigns forever to tell us if Pope Leo has power (potestas) among the saints." And responding, [the demon] said: "Truly the Leo about whom you ask is among the saints and possesses great power among them, and that evil-doer shall cast me today from this house which I have had in my possession for nine years and two months." At that time, however, a certain other unfortunate woman who was there, began to criticize (derogare) the blessed Leo and say: "The Pope Leo who had so many men killed shall put the demons to flight! Truly, the moment he shall put demons to flight, I shall be queen and make all those whom he killed in his wickedness rise again." Scarcely had she finished saying these words when she, suddenly seized by the demon, began to be extraordinarily (mirabiliter) vexed. That other woman whom we said came from the region of Tuscia, however, was freed. Then, all who were present were turned to wonder and admiration and began to shout and say: "Holy Leo, spare us, holy Leo, indulge us, have pity on us for we have greatly sinned." In that same hour, two crippled people (contracti) who were unable to walk by themselves, were also healed. And on this same day, around evening, a certain deaf and mute man who, to top off his great misfortune, was held in the grip of a most serious paralysis, [this fellow] came to the tomb of the blessed. As soon as he approached the tomb, he became healthy and sound and received the power of speech as well as of hearing. Truly the Lord Christ did many other miracles in these days through the

blessed Leo, in order that He might reveal to us, His faithful, of what merit [Leo] was.

8. That miracle which that outstanding fellow Bishop John of Porto related to me, should also not be passed over. For he said that a bishop of the city of Curia from the transalpine regions had come to Rome during almost these same days, and in his company there was a dwarf (homunculus) who, being mute from infancy, had never spoken. Those serving the bishop brought him with them on their saddles, because he was a truly faithful and fitting person to watch over their packs. Now then, one day when the aforementioned bishop was still staying in the city, that mute man about whom we have spoken, entered the church of the blessed Peter. When he saw the crowds of people flowing in from all around to the tomb of the blessed Leo, he went there as well. Then, after the by-standers realized that he was mute, as they normally do with such people, they began to indicate to him with certain signs that he should humble himself at the tomb of the blessed man, pour forth his prayers, and to pray the Savior of all for his own health (salus). They indicated to him that this was the tomb in which the blessed Leo rested. Indeed, the fame of his virtue had already been widely diffused, and many who came there from all around were healed of various maladies. Consequently, that fellow approached the tomb and prostrated himself with his entire body on the ground. And after he lay there for a long time, he fell asleep, weighed down by sleep. But when he awoke a little while later, he arose and began to speak so clearly (absolute) that it was as if he had never suffered any impediment. All were amazed, all rejoiced, all exulted; nor was it enough to hear him once. It was delightful to ask him questions and to hear him speaking and responding. Finally he returned to his companions. When they heard him speaking, truly joyful with great admiration, they led him before the

bishop. The bishop asked him how all this had happened to him. That fellow told the whole [story] in order. He said that he had seen the blessed Leo and while he was sleeping in front of his tomb, [Leo] approached and, putting his fingers into the man's mouth, released his tongue which had been tied for so long.²⁰

9. But the time urges me to explain what I promised above, namely that I did not dictate these words without being ordered to do so (sine imperio). For this past Lenten season, when we were in Rome, one day when we gathered together at the church, that truly venerable man, John, bishop of Tusculum, came up to me where I was standing and, in the presence of Hubald, that most religious fellow and bishop of Sabina, and certain others, said to me: "I have been sent to you as a messenger." I was standing there, interested in what he wished to say to me. Then he said: "Pope Leo orders you to give him one hundred thousand solidi." But I said: "What are you telling me?" And he said: "I am telling you the truth, thus does he command you," and then he began to recount to me what he had seen in order.

Last night when I was asleep, the blessed Leo appeared to me in my dreams in his pontifical garb (cum pontificali apparatu) saying: "Go and tell the bishop of Segni that he should give me one hundred thousand solidi. And when I thought to myself that you are not so wealthy that you would be able to give him so much money, sensing my thoughts he said: "Go and tell him to give me one hundred thousand or fifty thousand." He commands this of you. Therefore attend to what you are going to answer him.

Then, anxious, I began to think to myself what this vision might be indicating to me and a little while later I asked the bishop if the blessed Leo had ordered me to give, to lend, or to pay back that money. And he responded: "No, it was `to give". Then, I was somewhat comforted. For it

²⁰ This miracle is also recounted by Desiderius (Dialogues, MGH SS 30/2, p.1145).

makes a big difference whether we have to give something or to pay it back. I was afraid lest I had perchance offended him in some respect [on account of] which I would have necessarily to release [myself] from debt and pay it back. Furthermore, I recalled that his feast was formerly celebrated in our church, but because I behaved negligently, the entire feast itself ceased [to be celebrated] there. May he have mercy on me because I recognize that I have sinned not a little in this.

When I returned home from the church and recounted this vision to our clerics, they expressed to me the very things which I had already conceived in my own mind. For they said: "We think that the money which the blessed Leo requires from you is nothing other than that you write something about him which befits his memory. Truly this is your money. Nor does he seem to need any other [kind] of money." I was pleased that the interpretation (intellectus) of the others agreed with my own; and indeed knowledge is well signified by money. It is also understood in this way in the Gospel in the passage where our Savior shares the talents with his servants.²¹ Yet why does he require one hundred or fifty thousand? In fact, of these two numbers the former is perfect, the latter imperfect. For a thousand one hundred times or one hundred a thousand times make one hundred thousand. Both of these numbers, i.e. one hundred and one thousand, are perfect because they have no place for increase. For something is imperfect as long as it can increase in some respect. Yet although the number one hundred or one thousand can, in fact, be replicated, it cannot increase. It is therefore perfect. Indeed, everyone who counts concludes after he reaches one hundred or one thousand and begins again from one. The number fifty is imperfect because, placed in the middle of one hundred, it does

²¹ Cf. Mt.25:15.

not constitute the end and can be extended further. Therefore, since that most blessed man ordered me to give him fifty thousand solidi because (as it seemed to him and to the person to whom he was speaking) I was not able to give him one hundred thousand, what else does this mean but that I should begin to recount perfectly (perfecte) the things which relate to his praise and glory? I have therefore given him fifty thousand solidi, because I could not give him one hundred, i.e. either because I could not recount everything perfectly - for not everything has come to my attention - or because I have recounted certain things as I was able. Yet I pray, most blessed pontiff, that you may consider these little gifts of mine pleasing and that by your holy prayers before our savior Jesus Christ, you may gain [for me] His forgiveness of my debts, Who lives and reigns as God with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen

10. And now it remains for us to respond to that question which we promised to address earlier. We have already said that at that time, in the days of the blessed Leo, the Church had been so corrupted that hardly anyone might be found who either was not a simoniac or had not been ordained by a simoniac. As a result, even unto this day, there are found certain people who, because they argue wrongly and do not properly understand the dispensation of the Church, contend that from that time the priesthood in the Church failed. For they say:

If everyone was like this, i.e. if all either were simoniacs or had been ordained by simoniacs, you who are now priests - where did you come from? By way of whom, if not them, did you pass? There was no other way. Hence those who ordained you, received their orders from those men, and from no others, who either were simoniacs or had been ordained by simoniacs.

It is to this question that we must respond therefore. But first it is fitting to state what simoniacs are and why they are called this. Then, [we shall argue] that there is a big difference between simoniacs and those who have been ordained by simoniacs but who did not know that

[their ordinands] were simoniacs. For if one is ordained by a bishop whom one does not doubt is simoniacal, little indeed separates him in status (in ordine) from the one by whom he is ordained. He knows that he is a thief and a robber, and that he has received nothing else in his ordination than a curse and the power to curse. All simoniacs are thus ordained as Simon himself was ordained. To him the blessed Peter says during his own ordination: *May your money be with you in perdition, because you thought that the gift of the Holy Spirit is possessed through money.* (Acts 8:20) Simoniacs, therefore, are those who try to buy the gift of God i.e., the grace of the Holy Spirit. Yet, whether they buy or do not buy, if they offer only money and promise to give something for this grace, they are simoniacs. For Simon himself did not buy anything because there was no one who would sell. Yet because he wanted to buy, he is cursed nonetheless. And truly he left this curse to all his disciples as an inheritance. Simoniacs are named after Simon [because] they imitate him in this action. For after Simon was baptized by Philip, he stayed with him. When he saw that many miracles and virtues were done by the apostles, he offered them money, saying: *Give me this power, in order that upon whomever I shall lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit.*(Acts 8:19) To him, as we just said above, the blessed Peter says: *May your money be with you in perdition, because you thought that the gift of God is possessed through money: truly you have no share or lot in this word.*(Acts 8:20-1)

This, then, is Simon's ordination. Thus are simoniacs ordained who offer money. Why? Because they think "that the gift of God is possessed by means of money." But what blessing do they receive? Let the blessed Peter tell you, whose voice is most efficacious and whose curse penetrates to the core: *May your money be with you in perdition.* This is the blessing given to

them. This prayer is intoned over their nefarious heads. Thus are they blessed, thus are they consecrated, thus are they ordained. For as soon as they offer money, to whomever they may offer it, the apostle, their consecrator, is present. Indeed, although they may be sanctified by catholic bishops — something which often happens, in fact — the apostle is nevertheless there among them. Let them say what they will, let them pour out chrism upon their heads - Simon Peter shall still not change his sentence, because he is not unaware of what they have offered, how much they have offered, and to whom they have offered it. They bless, he curses, they are deceived, but he cannot be deceived. They think that these men are catholic, they think that they have been canonically elected, and because of this they bless them. Yet, if they knew them, they, too, would have said along with the apostle: *May your money be with you in perdition*. Rightly therefore is their blessing turned into a curse, because God looks not at the lips, but at the heart. Indeed, Jacob feared this when he was sent by his mother to his father in order that [Isaac] might bless him unknowingly and said: *Don't you know that my brother Esau is a hairy man and I am smooth-skinned? Therefore if my father should take hold of me and feel, I fear lest he think that I wanted to trick him and bring down a curse upon me instead of a blessing*. (Gen.27:21) Yet [Jacob] should not have been afraid, because he was sent by his mother. These men, however, are not sent by their mother, these men are not sent by the Church, they who trick Isaac, they who deceive the bishops, they who wish to snatch their father's blessing like a thief through robbery. As a consequence, a curse is not undeservedly called down upon them instead of a blessing. For those men alone are sent by the mother, those men alone are sent by the Church, who are sent to their fathers, who are sent to their bishops to be blessed and consecrated, not through money, not through any promise, not through secular power, but rather solely through an election of the

clergy and people which is itself pure and without depravity.

Now then, we have spoken about the consecration of Simon, we have spoken about the consecration of simoniacs - how they are ordained, how they are consecrated, how the Apostle Peter curses them, and how the blessing of the bishops is turned into a curse for them. After this, when they have been thus ordained, thus consecrated, thus cursed, and thus infected with leprosy, they arrive at the churches entrusted to them. There, since they are obviously a person of this kind, everything they do is in vain and without profit — except for baptism and wise counsel, which even they often give. Now we shall discuss how these things may be understood.

11. Because baptism consists not in the faith of the giver but in the faith of those who receive it, it is good regardless of by whom it is given. But where there is no catholic faith, baptism does not work. Consequently, whoever is baptized outside the Church is not released from sin before he returns to the Church. For the remission of sins in no way occurs except within the Church. Nonetheless, it can happen that a faithful person on some occasion is baptized outside the Church, but because the person is in the Church in his mind, he also receives the remission of sins outside. Yet if he is such a person, he would return to the Church, from which he had never departed, also in his body and in his way of life. Otherwise, if he is baptized outside, remains outside, and when baptized, has no wish to return — for such a man as this, no remission of sins in fact occurs for the moment. Yet why is this surprising since even those who are baptized within [the Church] — and who are undoubtedly cleansed of all their sins — perish forever if they leave [the Church] and do not return to it before they die? The ark indicated this; for everything which was placed within it was saved, while everything found outside perished. Also,

listen to what the Lord says: *I am the vine and you are the branches; whoever remains in me, and I in him, shall bear much fruit. If someone does not remain in me, let him be cast out like branches and dried, and they shall gather him up and throw him in the fire and he shall burn.*

(Jn.15:5-6) Therefore if Christ is the vine, Christians are the branches; and just as branches cannot live if separated from the vine, so neither Christians cannot [live] if separated from the body of Christ. The body of Christ is the Church. Therefore, let whoever does not wish to be separated from Christ, remain in the body of Christ in order that he may be able to be a member of Christ. For if he should not remain in the body of Christ, if he should not remain in the unity of the Church, he shall be cast out and dry up like [dead] branches. And what else? The malignant spirits shall gather him up. For whoever is separated from the Church is handed over to them. And what will they do? They shall cast him into the fire. Why? *That he may burn.*

The words are Christ's, we do not seek other canons.

Thus it is clear that no one shall be saved outside the Church, whether he was baptized within it or outside of it. Why is this? Again, let the Lord himself speak: *If someone does not remain in me, let him be cast out like [dead] branches and they shall gather him up, throw him into the fire, and he shall burn.* (Jn.15:6) Hence, if the person perishes who was sometimes in Christ but who does not remain in Him, how shall the person not perish who was never in Him and did not remain in Him? For whoever is baptized outside the Church never was nor ever shall be in Christ unless he should be joined to the Church before he departs this life — for he never was nor ever shall be in the body of Christ. For if he is separated from the body of Christ, he is no longer a member of Christ. Moreover, the body of Christ is not outside the Church.

Otherwise the Church itself would be outside itself — since the Church is the body of Christ —

and this is impossible.

Consequently, baptism cannot be given and cannot benefit [the person] outside the Church. For although baptism which is given outside the Church does have the form of the sacrament, it does not have the virtue of the sacrament; it has the form, of course, because it is done in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It does not have the virtue, because it does not effect the remission of sins. Why then are those who come from the heretics not rebaptized? Do you want to hear why? Because they have the form of baptism, i.e. because they have already been reborn from the water at the invocation of the Trinity. It still remains for them to be reborn as well in the Holy Spirit who effects the remission of sins in them — something which the visible form cannot give. For unless someone should be reborn from the water and the Holy Spirit, he shall not enter the kingdom of God. Indeed, both are necessary there - the form of the sacrament and the virtue of the sacrament. For neither the water without the Spirit nor the Spirit without the water releases a person from sin. The form of the sacrament can be given both inside and outside [the Church], but the virtue of the sacrament is not given unless the person is inside the Church.

This is why the Roman pontiffs, filled with the spirit of God, decreed with remarkable providence that those who come [to the Church] from the heretics should in no way be rebaptized because they [already] have the form of baptism; but because they do not have the virtue of this sacrament, upon the invocation of the Holy Spirit, which cannot be given by the heretics, they are confirmed with sacred chrism through the imposition of hands. Perhaps you require an authority for this? It shall be given to you. Indeed, this is truly necessary because all do not seem to agree

on this judgment, namely that those who come from the heretics should not in fact be rebaptized but should rather be confirmed again with sacred chrism. In particular, the blessed Augustine says: *Injury should be done to no sacrament.*²² In this matter, he seems to differ greatly from others. For what is the injury of a sacrament if not the repetition of that sacrament? Yet we have abundant examples and authorities [showing] that certain sacraments are repeated. I said "certain" because the repetition of baptism and of sacred orders are not allowed to occur. This is why in the African councils we read, in fact: *Rebaptisms, reordinations, and translations of bishops are not allowed to occur.*²³ At the Council of Nicaea, in contrast, it is decreed concerning the Paulianists that those coming to the Church should be baptized again and their clerics ordained again, if they should be worthy.²⁴ In this [canon], it is clearly shown that this should be done among the [Paulianists] alone and not among others. For these [heretics] were not baptized in accordance with the form of the Church, i.e. in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In this respect they differed even from other heretics, who maintained the form of the Church in baptisms. For if they had been baptizing according to the form of baptism which we just mentioned, obviously such a law would not have been specially promulgated concerning them, especially since it is said with regard to all the other heretics, that those coming to the Church are neither rebaptized nor reordained but are reconciled to the Church by the imposition of the bishop's hand alone. Furthermore, the entire Church agrees that these two sacraments, i.e. baptism and sacred orders, should not be repeated, and there is no

²² Letter 87 against the Donatists, c.9.

²³ Council of Carthage, III, c.38.

²⁴ Council of Nicaea, c.19.

dissension among the saints. Hence, when the blessed Augustine states: *The imposition of hands, like baptism, should not be repeated,*²⁵ he is speaking about that kind of imposition of hands about which the Apostle says to the apostle Timothy: *Lay your hands on no one in haste.* (I Tim.5:22) For both the act of signing with chrism and the reconciliation of penitents are called "the imposition of hands". Hence the sacred canons also forbid bishop to impose their hands on clerics who are among the other penitents.

²⁵ On Baptism against the Donatists, III, c.16.

12. But that it is permitted to repeat certain sacraments, is demonstrated most plainly by the frequent practice (usus) of the Church and one example of the blessed Gregory. For every day we see the consecrations of churches repeated, and not only out of necessity but also according to the wishes of the bishops. Indeed, certain canons even order that if an altar should be moved, it should be consecrated again.²⁶ In addition, the blessed Gregory, as he himself attests, consecrated a certain church in Subura in Rome because it had been held by the Arians for a long time.²⁷ How much its consecration or reiteration was accepted by God is shown by the virtues and miracles which the Lord worked there on the very days during which [the church] was consecrated. How then is it true that injury should not be done to any sacrament?

Using the following authority of the saints I shall prove likewise that the consignation of chrism should be repeated among heretics. For Pope Eusebius²⁸ says the following concerning this consignation:

Keeping to the rule of the Roman Church, we order that all of the heretics who are converted by the grace of God and, believing in the name of the Holy Trinity, have been baptized, be reconciled through the imposition of hands.

and a little later he added, in speaking about this imposition of hands:

The sacrament of the imposition of hands should be maintained with great veneration. This cannot be performed by anyone but the highest priests. For even in the time of the apostles, it is neither read nor known to have been performed by anyone other than the apostles themselves. Nor can or should this ever be performed by anyone else (as has

²⁶ Grat. Decr., De consecratione, D.I c.19, Pope Hyginus.

²⁷ Cf. John the Deacon, Vita Gregorii II, c.31. This example is also cited by Deusdedit in his Libellus contra invasores, symoniacos et reliquos scismaticos c.II §9 (LdL II, p.326) to argue a similar point about the reiterability of certain sacraments.

²⁸ Pope Eusebius (18 April 308 - exiled September 308) is remembered in the Liber Pontificalis for having reconciled heretics in Roman through the imposition of hands, cf. The Book of Pontiffs, translated by R. Davis (Liverpool Translated Texts for Historians, V), (Liverpool, 1989), p.13.

already been said) than those who occupy the place [of the apostles]. For if one should presume to do otherwise, let it be considered invalid and void, nor shall it ever be considered among the sacraments of the Church.²⁹

²⁹ Letter III §21 to the bishops established throughout Campania and Tuscia, ed. Hinscius, p.242.

Let's also listen to what was established in council concerning this matter in the time of the blessed Pope Silvester³⁰ in Rome:

In this time, he says, on 19 June, when the aforementioned great council was gathered in Nicea, the aforementioned pope by canonical summons and with the counsel of the emperor Constantine gathered at Rome two hundred and seventy-seven bishops and once again condemned Calixtus, Arius, and Sabellius, and decreed that no one should receive the priest Arius, if he came to his senses, unless the bishop of this place should reconcile him and confirm him with sacred chrism through the imposition of his episcopal hand in the grace of the Holy Spirit, which cannot be given by the heretics.³¹

What could have been said more clearly and more plainly? And in fact, this sacrament is not repeated, is it? But here are still more examples, in order that the view, which is denied by many people, may become clearer and more certain. Therefore let Pope Siricius³² speak:

On the first side of your page (letter?), you indicated that many people who have been baptized hasten from the impious Arians to the catholic faith and that certain of our brothers want to baptize them again. This is not permitted, since the Apostles forbids it and the canons speak against it. Furthermore, the general decrees prohibit it which were sent to the provinces by my predecessor Liberius³³

³⁰ Sylvester, best known as the pope at the time of Constantine's "conversion" and as recipient of the Donation of Constantine, ruled the Roman Church from 1 January 314 until 31 December 335.

³¹ Gesta Silvestri, c.1, ed. Hinschius, p.449.

³² Siricius reigned as pope from 384 to 399.

³³ Liberius ruled as pope from 352 until 366 but was sent into exile in 355 by the emperor Constantius

of venerable memory after the end of the council of Arimensis (post cassatum Arimense consilium). These [heretics] along with the Novatians and other heretics we join to the assembly of catholics by the imposition of the bishop's hand through the invocation of the seven-fold Spirit. The entire East and West also observes this.³⁴

because of his refusal to agree to the Arian heresy. In his place, he ordained the priest Felix who reigned from 355 until 365 when he was martyred by Constantius for having declared him a heretic. Cf. The Book of Pontiffs, pp.28-29.

³⁴ Ep.7 to Himerius, c.1, ed. Hinschius, p.520.

Let us also see what Leo I³⁵ says, who strengthened with his constancy and fortitude the faith that was already going to perish. No one shall dare, I think, contradict his opinion.

*Those about whom you have written are not unaware that they have been baptized, but they profess that they do not know of what faith the men are who baptized them. Whence, because they have received the form of baptism in some way, they should not be baptized but should be joined to the catholics through the imposition of hands by virtue of the Holy Spirit which they could not have received from the heretics.*³⁶

Likewise, he says elsewhere:

*For those who have received baptism from the heretics, although they were not baptized before, should nonetheless be confirmed with the invocation of the Holy Spirit alone through the imposition of hands, because they received only the form of baptism without the strength (*virtus*) of the Holy Spirit. We also preach that this rule should be observed in all churches so that the baptismal font, once entered, is not violated by any repetition, since the Apostle says: "One God, one faith, one baptism." (Eph.4:5) His ablution should not be defiled by any repetition; rather, as we have said, only the sanctification of the Holy Spirit should be invoked, so that he seeks from catholic priests what no one receives from the heretics.*³⁷

In the council of Laodicaea it is also written:

³⁵ Leo I reigned from 440 until 461, and was one of the most articulate spokesman for the importance and power of the bishop of Rome within the universal Church. Living through the doctrinal controversies surrounding the Council of Chalcedon (451), he became known as a defender of Chalcedonian orthodoxy, especially through his Tome, an extended doctrinal letter which he wrote for the Council of Chalcedon. Cf. his life in The Book of Pontiffs, pp.37-38.

³⁶ Letter 167 to Rusticus, bishop of Narbonne, ed. Hinschius, p.617.

³⁷ Letter 159 to Nicetas, bishop of Aquileia, c.7.

On those who are converted from the heretics, i.e. Novatians or Fotians, whether they are baptized or catechumens, let them not be received before they anathematize all heresies and especially that one in which they were held, and then, when at last these people, who were called faithful among [among the heretics] are imbued with the symbol of our faith and anointed with the sacred chrism, they may thus communicate with the sacred ministers.³⁸

We could give still more authorities concerning this issue but these, in my opinion, are sufficient.

One may doubt it, however, when the blessed Augustine says: *Injury should not be done to any sacrament*, since elsewhere he himself says that those who come [to the Church] from the heretics are received into the Church through the imposition of the bishops' hands, lest perhaps they think that the Church has conferred nothing upon which they did not have outside the Church. He also defines what the imposition of hands is, saying: *What is the imposition of hands, if not a prayer over a person? Hence, if the prayer of this sacrament is repeated over a man, the imposition itself of hands is repeated: for the imposition of hands is nothing other than a prayer over a person.*³⁹ Therefore the prayer over a person shall not be repeated in those sacraments which are not allowed to be repeated.

We have said that certain sacraments are allowed to be repeated and others are not allowed; this has, moreover, been proven using authorities. It has also been said that people coming from the heretics should not be received unless it is through the imposition of hands. We have also stated that all sacraments outside the Church have the form, to be sure, but they do not

³⁸ Council of Laodicea, c.7 from the version of Dionysius Exiguus.

³⁹ On Baptism against the Donatists, III, c.16, § 21.

have the virtue [of the sacrament]. We have also said that no one is saved outside the Church. And we have said with regard to simoniacs that when they are consecrated, every blessing is turned for them into a curse. Regarding the children of heretics, if someone should ask why they perish, since they have been baptized, I respond: "Because they are not in the Church." And if he should reply: "What sin have they committed so that they are not in the Church?", I would say: "What sin have the children of pagans and Jews committed so that they did not merit being baptized?" Nonetheless, the Lord Himself says: *I know whom I have chosen.* (Jn.13:18) Furthermore, if the sons of excommunicates are baptized in the Church, their parents' excommunication does them no harm, *for the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father.* (Ez.18:20) After they come of age, however, in order that they may now be able to recognize their own sins, they cannot be judged immune from sin. If, in contrast, they were baptized outside the Church — and all those outside the Church are excommunicate - unless they are reconciled by the bishops of the Church before they depart this life, they seem to me to be in great danger.

13. With these issues thus resolved, we should now talk about those who, although they were not ordained simoniacally, were nonetheless ordained by simoniacs. For with regard to simoniacs, it is clear that they should in no way ever be received in their own orders. *For they have no part or share in the Word of God.* (Acts 8:21) It is the apostle who speaks. But you say: "Why then are heretics received in their orders, when simoniacs are not received [in theirs]? Are simoniacs any worse than Arians, Novatians, Donatists, Nestorians, and Eutichians? For we read that both bishops and priests from all these [heresies] were received and were not deprived of their

dignity." To this I respond: "Whether simoniacs are worse or not, I do not know; I do know, however, that it is a great crime to sell or buy the Holy Spirit. For if it is a great crime to sell or buy Christ, it is clearly a great sin to sell or buy the Holy Spirit, for the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are equal. Judas is the one who sells, the Jew is the one who buys. The Lord cast out both the seller and the buyer from the Temple.

Many things, of course, are done in the Church through dispensation because of the needs of the moment and the nature of the business, which clearly would not be done, if they were done according to the strict judgment of the canons. When the Lord spoke about the grain and the tares, He says: *Allow both to grow until the harvest.*(Mt.13:30)⁴⁰ Nonetheless, such dispensation as this should be exercised with great consideration. For some heretics did not in fact err in receiving their orders; it was rather another reason or doctrine which stood in the way of their faith. The heresy and sin of the simoniacs, in contrast, is their ordination itself. For if they are reconciled to their ordination which, as we said above, is nothing but a curse, to what else should they be reconciled if not to their heresy and to that curse which they have received? Therefore, let them not seek reconciliation, lest perchance they incur malediction. Let them seek the grace of the Holy Spirit, not to receive the episcopal dignity, but to wash away iniquity. Rightly then are simoniacs not received in their orders because they have sinned in their orders. The Arians, in contrast, erred and sinned not in the episcopal dignity but in their beliefs about the Trinity, and other heretics likewise, each in his own heresy. Only simoniacs sin in buying sacred orders. As a result, it is also right that they alone not be received through any ecclesiastical dispensation in the orders in which they sinned. Yet, we also read in many places in divine Scripture that other

⁴⁰ Cf. Bruno of Segni, Expositio in Mattheum, PL 165, col.190C.

people besides the heresiarchs themselves were received in their orders. Indeed, the Council of Nicea received Cathars or Novatians through the imposition of hands and ordered their clerics to remain in their orders.⁴¹ Concerning this imposition of hands without which heretics are not received, we said enough above. The blessed Gregory, when writing to the Iberian bishops against the Nestorians, also says:

*Let those who are converted from the perverse error of the Nestorius confess this truth concerning the nativity of Christ before the holy gathering of your brotherhood, anathematizing Nestorius and his followers and all other heresies; let them also promise that they shall accept and venerate the venerable synods which the universal Church accepts, and may your sanctity receive them in this assembly without any doubt, with their orders preserved. For thus, when you reveal the secrets of their minds through your concern and teach them the right things which they should hold through true knowledge and through kindness you create no obstacle or difficulty for them regarding their own orders, you may save them from the mouth of the iniquitous enemy.*⁴²

There are many other [authorities] with which this could be proven, but these two examples concerning receiving heretics and not depriving them of their offices (honores) should suffice.

⁴¹ Council of Nicaea, c.8.

⁴² Register, XI, 67.

14. We have wandered far; now let us return to our subject and speak about those who have been ordained by simoniacs. Now then, those who are ordained by simoniacs, either know that they are simoniacs or think that they are catholics. If they know that they are simoniacs and allow themselves to be ordained by them, they deserve no indulgence such that they might be received with their own orders preserved. For those men are proven to be very ambitious who allow themselves to be consecrated for the sake of some office by men by whom they certainly should know that they are cursed. For who doubts that simoniacs are heretics? Therefore, who shall spare the man who allows himself to be ordained by someone whom he does not doubt is a heretic? But if he is thought to be catholic and associates with catholics in church, the saying should be valid (ratum) which says that God looks not at the [simoniacal bishop] but at the faith and devotion of the man who subjected himself to his [the simoniacal bishop's] hands as if to those of a catholic bishop for the sake of God. [God] also looks at the Church which offers its sons to Him with a simple heart and suspects no evil in such a consecration. For because it is within the Church, the Holy Spirit is, of course, present, and [it is the Holy Spirit] which makes the sacred orders even through a wicked man. It is the man who speaks, but the Holy Spirit which sanctifies. Furthermore, the faith of the one offering and receiving does all this. For we read that the Lord said to many people that it would be done to them according to their faith.⁴³ Hence, if those people were healed by their own faith, why are these men not made sacred by their faith? Truly nothing here is against the faith, but rather the whole of what is done is faithful. But if they acted boldly or against the faith, the Holy Spirit would have been rightly absent, for *the Holy Spirit of discipline shall flee what is false*. (Wis.1:5) We said above

⁴³ Cf. Mt.9:29.

concerning the simoniac that if, when he pretended he was catholic, he is consecrated by catholic bishops, their entire blessing is turned, for him, into a curse, because God attends not to the lips but to the heart. For it is not in [the catholic bishops'] heart to bless a simoniac. Hence, we can likewise say: "When a simoniac, pretending to be a catholic, blesses a catholic, although his blessing may be a curse, each curse upon himself is nevertheless turned into a blessing [for the other man]. For the Holy Spirit is present, which looks not at the fictions of the one speaking and consecrating but at the mind and devotion of the one receiving. If, however, something of this sort occurs outside the Church, this rationale should not support a man who is ordained outside the Church by a simoniac, even if he thinks that [the consecrator] is not a simoniac. For he is not offered by Mother Church nor is the devotion good of someone who would be ordained by anyone outside the Church.

It is clear, therefore, that with regard to those who are ordained within the Church without simony but by simoniacs (although they did not think they were simoniacs), their ordinations should be valid. Therefore, let the babblers be silent who say that ever since the time of the blessed Pope Leo the priesthood in the Church had already failed, because everyone was either a simoniac or ordained by simoniacs. Furthermore, it should be understood with regard to other heretics that if they have been ordained within the Church and are thought to be catholics as long as they are there, the sacraments which they perform should be valid.

15. Now we must respond to those who claim that they are not simoniacs because they did not buy sacred orders, even though they did buy churches or parts of churches. Truly I wish that they would tell me if they came to sacred orders through that purchase or sale, or if they received

through that purchase the power to celebrate the sacred mysteries in the churches which they bought. If these things are in fact the case, they can hardly claim in their defense that they are not simoniacs. For a simoniac is someone who attempts to come to sacred orders through payment (per pretium). A simoniac is also the man who attempts to buy that power by which the gifts of the Holy Spirit are offered. The bishop who, before his election or consecration, has given or promised payment not for sacred orders (so he pretends) but for lands and vineyards, castles, and villages - if he decided to become a bishop in this way, he clearly intended to come to sacred orders by means of payment. For he did not do this in order that he might possess them solely like a layman but rather that he might at some point gain the episcopal dignity by means of them. In fact, after such an invasion, we see such men push to be able to come to sacred orders as quickly as possible with much greater insistence than those who are canonically elected. In this behavior, they reveal their intention most plainly and show what that purchase meant. Hence, whenever they come to consecration, the blessed Peter shall be there and he shall say to them in his usual way: *May your money be with you in perdition, because you thought that the gift of God is possessed through money.* (Acts 8:20-21) Yet if they should not come to consecration but do penance and lack that wicked intention, it can in fact be doubted and cannot be easily answered whether they should be put in charge of other churches. Nonetheless, it is appropriate to consider what the blessed Peter said to Simon: *Do penance, he says, for your iniquity and ask God if this thought of your heart may perchance be forgiven you.* (Acts 8:22) Indeed, if he had done penance, perhaps later he would have received *gratis* what he could not have for payment -- though only the remission of sin is meant in these words of the apostle.

What we have said about the entire episcopate, we also understand concerning individual

churches and their parts. For it is the same sin to fornicate with a rich person and a pauper. Indeed, if someone buys a church or a part of it, how much more readily would he buy the entire episcopate, if he could? For whoever buys a church, clearly buys that power concerning which Simon Magus said to the apostles: *Give me this power, that upon whomever I lay my hands, he shall receive the Holy Spirit.* (Acts 8:19) For before he bought the church, the man who bought it did not have free power (libera potestas) either to baptize or to sacrifice or to celebrate any of the other mysteries — and all of these are in fact gifts and operations of the Holy Spirit. He therefore buys that power, if in fact he buys the power to baptize or to sacrifice, since he clearly did not possess it in that church before he bought it. Indeed, just as it is impious to think that the Holy Spirit may be possessed for money, so it also impious to think that its gifts and operations ought to be given or exercised for a price. But you say: "I had this power even before I bought the church." Why did you buy it then? "Because I was not allowed to do these things before I bought it." Now I recognize your intention, and I see that it agrees completely (quam maxime) with the intention of Simon. You did in fact have the power, but you did not wish your power to be idle, for it gained you little or nothing unless you put it to work somewhere. You would never buy it, if you did not hope for some profit from it. This, then, is the intention of Simon; thus did he do — he wished to buy what he very much hoped he could sell. For he did not say: "Give me this power that I may have the Holy Spirit." What did he say? *Give me this power that, upon whomever I lay my hands, he shall receive the Holy Spirit.* Indeed, no hope for profit would have remained to him, if he alone had it and could not give it to others. And the same goes for you — if you alone have this power and have no place where you may exercise it for profit, what you have seems to you to be nothing. In what way, then, are you not a simoniac, if you are like

Simon in this great evil?

16. The following have been said about those who purchase churches after their ordinations. If they purchase the churches before their ordinations and come to orders through that purchase, they are clearly symoniacs, particularly those who attempt to come to sacred orders by buying a church. If, however, they desire to come, not to the orders themselves, but to the benefices of churches through payment - for we see many people like this who utterly despise being ordained after they purchase churches -- truly it seems right to call these people not so much symoniacs as thieves and robbers: *For he who does not enter by the door, is a thief and a robber.* (Jn.10:1) And he who enters through payment does not enter by the door, and therefore he is called a thief and a robber. But whether they are called by this name or by the other, they should in any case not possess the church: for the Lord casts out all who buy and sell from the temple.⁴⁴ In the great council of Chalcedon it was also established that if anyone should ordain any cleric as either the administrator (dispensator) or minister of a church for payment, let both the giver and the receiver be deposed and let those who consented [to this] be struck with anathema.⁴⁵ You see, therefore, that not only clerics, but also administrators, are cast out of the Church, if they should enter it through payment. Hence, in one and the same way, all those who buy or sell sacred orders and the churches themselves and their parts are cast out of the Church. Since the penalty is similar, why then is there argument over the name? For whether they are called symoniacs or not, the penalty is still the same. Let it suffice that we have said this much in response to that

⁴⁴ Cf. Mt.21:12.

⁴⁵ This is a paraphrase of canon 2 of the Council of Chalcedon.

question which we promised earlier to address. These words also are part of our praise of the blessed Leo, through whose constant admonition all of these things were for the most part corrected.