To all men of goodwill, the Church of Liège who firmly holds to the truth of the faith and the catholic unity.

i. In amazement and sorrow I exclaim with Isaiah, who cried out in a moment of exaltation: "Just as the winds from Africa, so, too, comes the burden of the deserted sea from the desert, from the horrible land. A harsh vision has been announced to me. He who does not believe, acts without faith; and he who destroys, lays waste." [Is.21:1-2] Whoever did not previously understand through reading what the "deserted sea" was, now understands by seeing what is meant by the deserted sea - not only Babylonia but also the world and the Church. For although the world and the Church abound with peoples just as the sea abounds with waves, they are nevertheless rightly called the deserted sea because the world seems bereft of the governance of wise princes, while the Church laments that she has been forsaken by the sound counsel of its leaders. Was there greater confusion long ago in Babylon than there is today in the Church? In Babylon the tongues of the nations were cast into disorder; in the Church, the tongues and minds of the faithful are divided. Peter says in his letter: "the Church which is gathered in Babylon, greets you."[I Peter 5:13] I used to think, therefore, that Peter wished to indicate Rome by Babylon, since Rome at that time was mixed up in idolatry and every kind of uncleanness. But now my suffering interprets this line for me, when it says that Peter, in saying that the Church was gathered in Babylon, foresaw with a prophetic spirit the confusion of dissension which today cleaves the Church asunder. For although the Church is in the Babylon of the world, she should be gathered together through fraternal unanimity.

The meaning of the "winds from Africa" we learn more from suffering than by reading. "From the horrible land," namely from the Church of Rome, "a harsh vision has been announced to me;" thence the whirlwind comes from Africa like a storm. For the bishop of Rome, the father of all churches, sends a letter against us to Robert, count of Flanders, the exemplar of which is the following:

Paschal, bishop and servant of the servants of God, to his beloved son Robert, count of Flanders, greetings and the apostolic blessing. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who works the efficacy of His strength in you, since you, having returned from Jerusalem in Syria, strive to go to the Jerusalem in heaven with acts of just knighthood (militia). This is the mark of the proper knight, that he immediately attack the enemy of his king. We therefore give thanks to your prudence that you carried out our command in the diocese of Cambrai. We order the same thing with regard to the excommunicated pseudo-clerics of Liège. For it is right that those who have separated themselves from the catholic Church, be separated from the
benefits of the Church. Nor should you attack Henry, head of the heretics, and his supporters with your forces in this region alone, but everywhere you are able. Indeed, you can offer no sacrifice dearer to God than if you fight against him who has raised himself up against God; who tries to take away the kingship of the Church of God, who has established the idol of Simon in a holy place, who has been expelled from the house of the Church with the judgment of the Holy Spirit by the princes of God, the holy apostles and their vicars. We enjoin this upon you and your knights for the remission of sins and the friendship of the apostolic see, so that by these labors and triumphs you may achieve with God's help the heavenly Jerusalem. Issued in Albano on January 23.

ii. Because of this letter, whose loins are not filled with pain? Because of this, the shadows have left me senseless not so much because of my horror at the danger as the abhorrent novelty of the affair: that such a lamentable letter could have been written by a mother against her daughters, even if they were sinning. In the judgment of Solomon, the greatness of the mother's piety was expressed when, with Solomon deciding that the infant over whom the women were contending be divided by the sword, the mother preferred that her son live under another woman's care than be divided by the judge's sword. Isaiah says: "Babylon, my beloved, has turned for me into a marvel."[Is.21:4] But I say: "Rome, my beloved mother, has been turned for me into a marvel." For what is more remarkable, nay what is more miserable? Long ago David saw an angel of the Lord standing with his sword extended over Jerusalem. Now we, daughters of the Roman Church -- behold, we see the bishop of Rome, who is an angel of the Lord, standing with his sword extended over the Church.[cf. II Reg. 24:17] David prayed lest his people be killed; our angel, by offering Robert the sword, prays that we be killed. Where does our angel acquire this sword? When Jesus orders his disciples to buy themselves a sword after selling their tunics, the disciples say: "Behold, Lord, here are two swords"; and Jesus replies: "It is enough."[Lk.22:36, 38] As we gather from the sayings of the Fathers, one is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Concerning it, Jesus says: "I have not come to bring peace but the sword"[Mt.10:34]; and the prophet: "Accursed be he who keeps his sword back from blood."[Jer.48:10] Jesus wields this sword more against the carnal dispositions than against the attacks of the world. There is also another spiritual sword with which the crown of martyrdom is purchased when the vices of the flesh have been mortified. Therefore since the apostles have only two swords from the Lord, whence does the Pope acquire this third sword which he offers to Robert, his arms-bearer, [to use] against us? Perhaps the Pope has had recourse to the prophet Ezechiel so that, after seizing a third sword, he hastens to the right and left, cutting down the good and the bad.[cf. Ez.21:16] Indeed, God says to the prophet Ezechiel that "the sword be doubled and the sword of the killers be made threefold."[Ez.21:14] In my opinion, the prophet will not give the third sword to the Pope. For the prophet -- in representing the two swords of the Gospel by means of the two uses of the one sword -- doubles the sword which is to be given to the Pope; for he says: "The sword, the sword has been sharpened and polished; sharpened so that it may fell its victims, polished so that it may
gleam." [Ez.9:10] It has been sharpened because, as Jerome says, "whoever strikes the wicked because they are wicked, and bears the sword in order to kill the worst of men, is a minister of the Lord";⁷ the sword has been polished so that the Word of God may be preached sincerely. The prophet arms the killers with a threefold sword because, as Paul says, "it is not without reason that the judge bears a sword."[Rom. 13:14] This is the sword of tremendous killing which renders me senseless along with Ezechiel. Who does not pine away in his heart that the Pope, who was anointed to bring life, is girded against us with the third sword of the killers! O would that God, once placated, may say even now to the angel who strikes: "That is enough; now restrain your hand." [II Reg.24:16]

I do not speak against the Lord's anointed, but I grieve at our lot. Yet if the Lord's anointed had not entered a cave to purge his stomach after coming to the sheep folds, David would not have cut off the edge of his cloak.[I Reg. 24:4-5] If there is some David who finds this anointed of the Lord asleep and all those with him asleep, he should not raise his hand against the Lord's anointed, but should take only his spear and his canteen of water, which lies at the head of the sleeping man. I show to all this spear of his, which he raised against us; I offer this canteen of water, which is at the head of him who sleeps, for all to taste, so that all may know how insipid is the authority of this law of his by which he extends the sword of laymen over the necks of clerics. And if, with the reverence of the apostolic office preserved, one might be permitted to say it, [the Pope] himself seems to have fallen asleep. All of his counselors must have been asleep along with him at the moment when he gathered the destroyer of God's churches to himself.

Paul commanded that the word of the bishop be sound and without reproach.[Tit. 2:8] We therefore do not weaken or reproach the word of the bishop of bishops. Rather, since the Pope should not deviate from the Apostle, we humbly inquire point by point whether these words of the Pope are, with regard to the gravity of apostolic authority, completely sound and beyond reproach.

iii. Behold, like a father he sends "greetings to his beloved son" and promises "the blessing of the apostles." Yet, it seems to many people that he does not tell him about those works for which he can promise a greeting and blessing from God. He blesses God who "works in him" this "efficacy of his strength," because he attacks and destroys the Church of God, and he promises him entry into the heavenly Jerusalem for doing so. Whether he directed his beloved son down the right path, let the Father Himself see together with us.

To use the words of Augustine briefly summarized:² Just as God, who said, "I am the God

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⁷ Jerome, Commentarius in Ezechielem, bk.III, c.9.

² Enchiridion de fide, spe et caritate, c.100, 101.
who makes peace and creates evil,"[Is.45:6,7] disposes other things with sweetness, He also
disposes these things in order that He may bring about the good of peace through good men, but
create the evil of war through evil men. For by using men's minds on the basis of their wills and
merits, He imposes worthy deeds on the worthy in order to repay worthy men with fitting
rewards -- good to the good for good, evil to the evil for evil. Who has ever persecuted the
people of God, who the Church of God, without punishment? Whenever the sons of Israel
sinned, God aroused their enemies who destroyed those who were sinning. God chastised those
whom He loved and condemned those who were, in their vice, such people that He inflicted evils
upon evil people through them. God says through the prophet: "I will summon my servant
Nebuchadnezzar from the north, for he will carry out my every wish." What was His wish, if not to destroy
those who were sinning? As the reward for such service, God converts this servant of his into an
ox. To David, who was sinning, God says: "Behold, I shall bring evil upon you from your own house."[III
Reg.21:21] When his father had been put to flight, Absalon invaded Jerusalem and carried out
this evil. Did he merit the heavenly Jerusalem for this? Through Isaiah God says: "Woe unto
Assur, he is the rod and the staff of my rage, my indignation is in his hand; I shall send him against the false race,
and against the people of my rage I shall command him to carry off booty and seize the spoils etc."[Is.10:4,5]
Why does God threaten: "Woe unto Assur," who has done the evils which he has done at God's
command? God says: "Woe unto the world, it is necessary that scandals come from scandals; nevertheless, woe
unto him, because through whom the scandal comes." [Mt.18:7] Jerome explains this passage thus:
"Although it is, in fact, necessary that scandals come, nevertheless woe unto that man, who does what necessarily
happens in the world by his own vice so that it happens on his account." Need I say more? Behold "the
works of just knighthood" in which the father initiates the son, the Pope the knight of the
heavenly king, and through which [the son] can "strive for the heavenly Jerusalem," namely by
attacking the Church of God.

iv. "We give thanks," he says, "to your prudence, because you have carried out our command in the
diocese of Cambrai." Who can recall without sorrow of what kind and how great is the devastation
and woe of the Church of Cambrai? Of course, I, as a daughter of the Roman Church, consoled
the people of Cambrai out of sisterly affection. But hearing now that these evils were inflicted
upon them by order of the apostolic authority, I suffer all the more. For I fear for my mother,
lest there redound against her what God says through the mouth of Isaiah: "Woe unto those who
establish iniquitous laws and when writing, have written injustice so that they might oppress the poor in judgment
and do violence to the cause of the humble among my people; so that widows might be their booty and they might
seize orphans etc."[Is. 10:1,2] Such tremendous desolation of the Church, so much oppression of

3 Jerome, Commentarius in Mattheum, bk.III, c.18.
the poor and of widows, such great inhumanity in the rapine and pillaging and, what is worse than all of this, the indiscriminate killing of good and bad alike -- who would have believed that all these things and things still worse than these were done by order of the Pope, if he had not betrayed himself with his own mouth? I say nothing of the fact that the bishopric of Cambrai was divided in two by the judgment of the Roman Church. I shall say nothing of the fact that Walcher, who had been approved and previously ordained with the Pope's consent and authority was suddenly removed from orders and excommunicated, and another ordained in his place. Whether these things were done justly or not, depends on the judgment of God. We are not accusing the Lord's anointed, to whom belongs the care of all the churches. But since the Pope ascribes these evils to himself and applauds the destroyer of the Church by giving thanks, I do not know whether to marvel at or mourn them. Who can decide for whom it is more dangerous, the one who orders or the one who obeys; for whom it is more damning, the one who acts or the one who allows? Astonished by this new state of affairs, we ask: "Whence comes this new example, that the preacher of peace wages war upon the Church with his own mouth and another's hand?"

Against the attacks of the barbarians and enemies of God, the canons allow arms even to clerics for the defense of their city and Church. But we have never read that wars are waged against the Church by the canonical authority of the Scriptures. I ask what I do not know; I say what I know. Jesus preaches peace, the apostles peace, apostolic men peace; they accuse, entreat, and rebuke those who sin in all patience and with teaching. Paul commands that those who are disobedient be severely rebuked.[Tit.1:13] In what way the disobedient are severely rebuked, Jesus teaches: "If your brother sins against you, admonish him, the first time in private, the second time with two or three witnesses, the third time in the presence of the whole Church. If he will not listen to the Church, let him be as a foreigner or a tax farmer."[Mt.18:15-17] Concerning this passage, Augustine says: "When Jesus says: "If he will not listen to the Church, let him be as a foreigner or a tax farmer to you," it is graver than if one were wounded by a sword, consumed by flames, or reduced to chains. For at that point Jesus also added: "Amen, I say unto you: whatever you have bound on earth, shall also be bound in heaven," so that it might be understood how seriously someone may be punished who is left as if unpunished." If thus stands the argument of Truth as revealed by Augustine, who would place human vengeance above divine vengeance? Whoever persecutes the man whom God strikes and adds to the suffering caused by the wounds given him by God, let him observe what God calls down upon the man who bears our sufferings and iniquities in the person of the Lord as man: "Bear iniquity beyond their iniquity etc."[Ps.68:27-28]

If someone says on the Pope's behalf that the Church in which an excommunicate bishop

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4 A reference to the reestablishment of the diocese of Arras from lands previously pertaining to the diocese of Cambrai.

5 This passage has not been found in Augustine.
dwells should rightly be destroyed, let him hear an example in which case answers case and person answers person. In the time of Pope Gregory I, after the bishop of the city of Salonita had died, Gregory decreed that Honoratus [who had been elected by the people of Salonita] be ordained bishop in his place. A certain Maximus, however, invaded the bishopric of Salonita with the help of a military force and was consecrated by excommunicate bishops; and although he was excommunicated by Gregory, he nevertheless presumed to celebrate masses. Fighting against this man with no other weapons than those of a priest, Gregory did not ordain Honoratus in addition to [Maximus] nor did he send in a destroyer of the Church; rather he reproved him at length until, in the seventh year of his excommunication, he finally drew him to ask for forgiveness. He did not remove the man who had come to his senses from orders, nor did he reordain him; instead he completed what had been missing for the man once received into his grace, when the archepiscopal pallium was conferred. Therefore, since the case of Cambrai is similar to the case of Salonita, why does the judgment of the Roman Church use a dissimilar way of thinking in a similar case? Martin of Tours may be sufficient for the Pope as an example [showing] that he should refrain from the oppression of the innocent. At the instigation of Bishop Itachius, the emperor Maximus killed Bishop Priscillian, who had been condemned for heresy by Pope Damasus, and issued an edict that all of his followers everywhere were to be killed. As a result, Martin and other bishops deprived Itachius of the communion of the Church, calumniating him because on his accusation a man of whatever sort was killed. [Martin] negotiated with Maximus in order that the followers of Priscillian would not be killed, lest catholics also die with them. Martin would in no way have obtained what he was seeking, if he had not been in communion with Itachius at the time. If in some way an anathema was made on behalf of his brothers, he nevertheless withdrew the sword of the emperor from their necks. The man who condemned the accuser Itachius for the death of a heretic, would not praise this man at whose command so many are killed in the case of the people of Cambrai. Indeed how gravely would the man, who freed heretics from death at the risk of his own soul, bear the fact that innocent people are oppressed because of another's fault! We are comparing circumstance with circumstance, and opposing cases to cases. But afflicted by evils, the people of Cambrai cry out to lord Pope Paschal, just as the children of Israel, when afflicted, call out to Moses: "Let God see and judge; for you have made our smell fetid in the nostrils of Pharaoh, and you have offered him a sword so that he may kill us."[Ex.5:21]

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7 Sulpicius Severus, *Chronicon*, II, c.48-50.
v. "We command the same thing concerning the excommunicated pseudo-clerics of Liège. For it is right that whoever has separated himself from the catholic Church, be separated by catholic men from the benefits of the Church." Truly here, a distress like that of a woman giving birth has invaded me, because of which I am forced to exclaim that this pain of mine surpasses all the sufferings of a woman in labor. For I have borne sons, nursed them with the milk of the faith, made them strong with the bread of Truth, and advanced them into the strength of manhood. I felt myself blessed because I believed there to be nothing lacking in them which related to the comeliness of the body or the strength of the soul, as they flourished at the court of the king or in the Church of God. But what is blessed by all? Behold my mother, the holy Roman Church, wishes to brand them with the mark of excommunication and furthermore, has raised up over them the sword of killing! Because of these things, I am indeed tortured with maternal suffering. Yet they themselves are of age, they may speak for themselves.

"We command the same thing concerning the excommunicated pseudo-clerics of Liège." "The treacherous balance is not good," says Wisdom.[Prov.20:23] Who compares our case to the case of the people of Cambrai so that we, too, may suffer what the people of Cambrai are suffering? In fact, we suffer with the people of Cambrai; but we feared no such thing ourselves. The people of Cambrai, because they placed cause upon cause, person upon person, placed a double-edged sword over their own heads. But we of Liège, why are we called excommunicate? Why is the sword extended over our head? What have we done against the canonical rule of the Church that is worthy of death or excommunication? All of us have been baptized in one spirit and into one body; God made us, who are of one custom, to dwell in His house. Paul admonishes us in the name of the Lord that there be no divisions among us; when was the Roman told that there were contentions between us? We know the same thing in Christ, we say the same thing. We do not say: "I am Paul's, I am Cephas', but I am Christ's."[I Cor. 1:12] And for this unanimity, we are called "excommunicated"? Just as Paul commanded, we obey and are subject to our prelates who look out for our souls. Against us who maintain the law of God, they object that we are transgressing their new traditions. But Jesus says to them: "Why do you violate the mandate of God on account of your traditions?"[Mt.15:3] God commands that we render unto Caesar the things of Caesar, and unto God the things of God. Peter and Paul march in step in this judgment: "Fear God, honor the king; servants be subject in all fear to your lords, not only to those who are good and modest, but also to those who are oppressive; for this is by grace."

"Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; he who resists power, resists the ordination of God."[Rom.13:1-2] If he enjoins this upon every soul, whom does he exempt from being subject to earthly power? Yet, because we honor the king, because we serve our lords not just in appearance but in the simplicity of our hearts, because of this we are called "excommunicated". But of course, we are simoniacs! Simoniacs we avoid insofar as we are able, and those whom we cannot avoid, we tolerate at the present time and place; for we
are sure that Jesus himself overturned the chairs of the sinners who were selling doves with a scourge made of ropes and upset the balance of the money-changers. We avoid simonia, I repeat. Nor do we avoid any less those who - concealing the sign of avarice with an honorable name - sell under the name of charity what they boast as giving for free and accept gifts with greater artifice under the name of offerings just as the Montanists did. O how we wonder as we suffer, why we are said to be excommunicated? When? By whom? And why have we been excommunicated? We know that we have not been excommunicated by our bishop, nor by our archbishop to whom our bishop is suffragan. But we also do not believe that we have been excommunicated by the Roman Pope, since we know that he is not unaware of what Nicodemus says: "Our law does not judge anyone, unless it has heard from him first."[Jn.7:15] God would not have condemned the people of Sodom, if He had not come down to see for Himself whether they had completed in deed the claim which had come to Him. Who would believe that the man who has heard nothing from us and to whom no bishop nor archbishop has complained about us, would have excommunicated us?

Upon a ladder reaching up to heaven Jacob saw angels ascending and descending. And Jesus says to his disciples: "Amen, amen I say to you; you will see the heavens open and angels of God ascending and descending over the Son of Man."[Jn.28:12; 1:51] This son of Man represents us, who are sons of man, i.e. Adam, in his own person. In the open heavens of the Church both good and evil enter. You, leaders of the Church, you who are the angels of God, should descend to us step-by-step; and we should ascend to you step-by-step. By however many steps we ascend to you, by so many should you descend to us. The first step for us is the bishop, the second the archbishop and through these we should ascend to the third step, i.e. to the Roman pontiff. You descend upon the son of Man when you descend to the humble through compassion. You ascend above the son of Man when you raise the humble up to heaven by your word and example.

vi. You say, I believe, that we are considered to be excommunicated because we support our bishop, who supports the party of his lord, the emperor. In this situation lie the beginnings of our sorrows, by virtue of this situation the claims of evil men grow stronger, because Satan, now freed and walking the earth, has already divided the kingship and the priesthood. Therefore since the devil comes to us in a great rage, we pray the "Our Father who art in heaven," particularly for this part, namely "lest He lead us into" this "temptation, but deliver us from the evil" of this temptation. While we were sleeping the enemy scattered tares in the field of the Church. We are waiting until the angels, the reapers of God, bind up the bundles of tares for burning. And for this we are said to be excommunicated? O how many bundles of wheat has the man uprooted who hastens to separate the wheat from the tares before it is time? Who can justly reproach a bishop who supports the side of his lord to whom he owes the fidelity sworn by oath? No one doubts that
perjury is a great sin. God alone swears an oath and is not sorry, because wisdom watches over the precepts of God's oath. But we, who often regret having sworn, are forbidden to swear oaths. If someone swears an oath, God commands that he render his oath to his lord. Nor is this fact unknown to those who, while dividing the kingship and the priesthood with a new schism and with new traditions (as it seems to some), promise that those who abjure their oaths to the king, may absolve themselves of the crime of perjury. They do not heed what Ezechiel says from the mouth of God about Sedechia, who swore a false oath to his lord, king Nebuchadnezzar: "He who breaks his oath, will he not be put to flight?"[Ez.17:15] Jerome explains this as follows: "From this we learn that faith should be preserved between enemies; and that account should be taken not of to whom, but of by whom you swore the oath. For that man was found to be the better by far who trusted you on account of the name of God and was deceived, than you who stirred up treacheries against your former friend, now enemy, on account of a moment of divine treason." Why do we labor at collecting examples of avoiding perjury? The third of the ten commandments which was issued from the heart and the mouth of God and written with His finger, is this: "Do not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain."[Ex.20:7] Since the first three of the Ten Commandments relate the worship of God, it seems to those who investigate these things diligently, that the rest of the commandments hang upon this third one. For when what God commands to be done is done, or what God forbids to be done, is not done, the action occurs or does not occur in order that the name of God, who commands and forbids, may not be taken in vain. Who takes the name of God more in vain than the man who violates what he swears in the name of God? God commands that I swear neither by the heavens nor by the earth nor by my own head, lest perchance I perjure myself.[Mt.5:34-36] If it is a crime to perjure oneself by a creation of God, how much more gravely does he sin, who swears a false oath by God the creator? Consider this carefully, all of you, that he who does not render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, in accordance with the decree of God, or dishonors the king against the Apostle's decree or, by swearing a false oath, takes in vain the name of God by which he swore his fidelity to the king, is guilty of lèse majesté (reus capitis). Behold, the reason why we are called "excommunicates." But why are we called "pseudo-clerics?" For, in living in accordance with the canons, we merit by our works to be called clerics. There is no one, no one I say, who, when speaking of God's lot, wished to exclude us from that lot. You have not nourished, O mother Church, men of such a kind that we are justly called "pseudo-clerics." But because you have not left us to our own will, we do not confound you, our mother. It is an amazing thing about lord Paschall that, if he has discovered reproofs for sale, he seems to have acquired the ones that he hurls so easily at us at a good price. Indeed, at one moment he gives us the name of "excommunicates", while at another he calls us "pseudo-clerics" because of his

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8 Jerome, Commentarius in Ezechielem bk.V, c.17.
unstable mind. The heart of David, king and prophet, brought forth the good word; the heart of Paschal vomits vile reproach, just as old ladies and weaving women do. The apostle Peter teaches: "There are no lords amongst the clergy, but be made in the shape of a flock."[I Peter 5:3] The apostle Paul says to the delinquent Galatians: "My little children, to whom I again give birth in the Lord."[Gal.4:19] Therefore, let lord Paschal attend to these pious reminders rather than to the impious speakers of abuse. Lord Paschal advances a curse of excommunication against us; but above all else we fear what the Holy Spirit says through the mouth of the Psalmist: "Cursed be all those who depart from your commandments."[Ps.118:25] But the curse of excommunication, which Hildebrand, Odo, and this third fellow have indiscriminately issued because of a new tradition, we reject in every way. And to this day we venerate and hold to the earlier holy fathers who, amidst powers greater and lesser going seriously astray, concealed some things, corrected others, and tolerated others — with the Holy Spirit, not some whim, dictating [their action].

vii. Our lord bishop is in communion with his king and emperor, to whom he swore fidelity for the regalia which he received. Too much time has flowed by since this custom began; under this custom many saints and reverend bishops have migrated from the world, after rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's. But what does Ambrose say about Luke? "If Christ," he says, "did not have the image of Caesar, why did he pay the census? He did not pay on his own account, but rendered to the world what was of the world. And you, if you do not want to be liable to Caesar, do not wish to possess the things of the world; but if you do have wealth, you are liable to Caesar. Therefore if you wish to owe nothing to the terrestrial king, leave everything and follow Christ."9 Likewise, Augustine on John: "The apostle wanted kings to be served and wanted kings to be honored and said: "Revere the king." Refuse to say: "What does the king have to do with me?" What then do you and your possessions have to do with one another?" Possessions are possessed through the laws (iura) of kings; through the emperors and kings of the world, God has distributed human laws to the human race."10 Therefore, on account of the words of these and other holy fathers, bishops consider themselves obligated to kings and emperors for the regalia which they have received, lest the bishops slay them with their own sword, i.e.their benefices. Now then, if someone turns the pages of the Old and New Testaments and the histories with consideration of the Holy Spirit, he will find it clear that kings and emperors can be excommunicated either not at all or only with difficulty because of the etymology of the words and the judgment of excommunication. And even now the controversy is sub iudice. They can, in fact, be admonished, rebuked, and accused by revered and discrete men;

9 Ambrose, Expositio Evangelii Lucae bk. IX, c.35.

10 Augustine, In evangelium Iohannis tractatus bk.VI, cc.25-26.
but those whom Christ has established on earth as king of kings in His place, He left to His own judgment to be damned and saved. Behold the reason why we are called "excommunicates" - because we hold to the ancient fathers, both holy and moderate, and we imitate them insofar as we are able.

We hold to our bishop, archbishop, provincial and regional synods from ancient tradition; and whatever has been defined there from the holy writings, is not referred to Rome unless it regards more serious affairs concerning which an authority is not found in the holy writings. But we reject in every way those legates heading out from the side of the bishop of Rome and rushing here and there filling their pockets, just as the African councils in the times of Zosimus, Celestine, and Boniface have shown. For — that we may recognize them from their fruits — not the correction of morals, nor the emendation of life, but rather the killing of men and the depredation of churches are the results of their actions. Therefore, because we cling to the ancient rule and are not carried away by every doctrinal breeze, behold, this is why we are called "excommunicates."

viii. But why does lord Paschal call us "pseudo-clerics"? The pseudo-apostles whom Paul condemns in his letters were adulterating the word of God.[II Cor. 11:13] We do not adulterate but rather maintain the catholic faith by the grace of God and carry out the works of the catholic faith in God. We hold and revere the canonical rule from the tradition of the Fathers; we live, are judged, render satisfaction, and are absolved in accordance with it. We do not attend the councils of kings or emperors for this or that, because our superior powers hold such business in their hands, and they will handle it prudently [following] the footsteps of their predecessors. Why then does lord Paschal want us to give back what we have not stolen? Why does he want us to be called "pseudo-clerics" when we keep to the straight and narrow? Rather he should carefully consider with his counselors, once the spirit of presumption has been set aside, how the popes from Silvester to Hildebrand obtained the see of Rome; how many and what great and unheard of things have been perpetrated because of the ambitions of this see; and how they have been reformed by kings and emperors, and how pseudo-popes have been condemned and deposed. And in those cases the imperial virtue was worth more than the excommunication of Hildebrand, Odo and Paschal.

The Lord says in the Gospel: "If I have spoken wickedly, take a lesson from evil."[Jn.18:23] And the apostle Paul resisted Peter, prince of apostles, to his face. Therefore, when the mask of Roman ambition has been removed, why are the Roman bishops not reprimanded and corrected concerning their grave and manifest [crimes]? For anyone who does not want to be reprimanded and corrected, whether bishop or cleric, is false. But we, by the mercy of God, are obedient and correctable in accordance with the rule; we wish to avoid schism, simony, and
excommunication with Reason and the Holy Spirit speaking in all things. From the words of the blessed Augustine: "Kings and emperors have wanted none of the laws promulgated by heretics to be maintained in this world."\textsuperscript{11} Therefore, since we are not heretics and this is the right of kings and emperors, why does lord Paschal, content with the spiritual sword alone, send Robert, his arms-bearer, to devastate the lands and villages of the churches? These, if they should have been devastated [at all], ought to have been devastated by the edict of kings or emperors, who bear the sword not without reason.\textsuperscript{[Rom.13:4]} Behold, Satan has been released, greatly enraged.\textsuperscript{[Apoc. 20:7]} Let the strong hand of God scare him away [from us]! Do not take the fact that we are called "excommunicates" more seriously than is just. For, as we believe, the authority of the Romans themselves, at least, will remove us from [the state of] excommunication. Pope Hildebrand - who is the creator of this new schism and the first to raise the priestly lance against the diadem of the kingship - at first indiscriminately excommunicated those who favored Henry; but [later] after rebuking himself for his immoderation, he lifted the excommunication from those who stayed with the emperor because of a necessary and due subjection rather than because of a desire to do or counsel evil; and he wrote this as a decree.\textsuperscript{12}

ix. "Nor should you attack Henry, head of the heretics, and his supporters with your forces in this region alone, but everywhere you are able. Indeed, you can offer no sacrifice dearer to God than if you fight against him who has raised himself up against God; who tries to take away the kingship of the Church of God, who has established the idol of Simon in a holy place, who has been expelled from the house of the Church with the judgment of the Holy Spirit by the princes of God, the holy apostles and their vicars." When Alaric, king of the Goths, was on his way to capture Rome, he was warned by a certain servant of God that he should desist from these evils. To this he answered, "I do not go to Rome willingly; but a certain man, who tortures me daily, urged that I go to destroy Rome."\textsuperscript{13} As in this example, the Pope urges his arms-bearer to lay waste the entire kingdom, something which cannot occur without slaughter, blood, and the devastation of God's churches. In this respect even Alaric was milder since, when Rome was captured, he spared the churches of God and abstained from the slaughter of men. Now, with no exceptions made, Robert is sent by the Pope so that he is led not only against the people of Cambrai and us, the people of Liège, but is led to disperse everyone utterly. Who now will proclaim with Isaiah: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the man preaching and proclaiming peace, announcing what is good and preaching salvation?"\textsuperscript{[Is. 52:7]} To such an extent does God's zeal

\textsuperscript{11} Augustine, \textit{In evangelium Iohannis} c.1, Tract. VI, c.25.
\textsuperscript{12} Gregory VII, \textit{Registrum} V.14a.
\textsuperscript{13} Cassiodorus, \textit{Historia Tripartita}, bk.IX, c.9.
consume the man who should be the preacher of peace that he wields the sword of war even against his friends. For the zeal which Peter showed in cutting off the ear of Malchus, whose [name] means "king," is like that which the vicar of Peter now has in amputating the ear of "heretical king," whom he attacks in every way. [cf. Jn. 18:10] For when he calls [the king] "head of the heretics, a rebel against God, an invader of the ecclesiastical kingdom, an adorer of the idol of simony and a man excommunicated by the apostles and Popes," he adds blow upon blow and inflicts so many wounds on [the king's] soul that, if he was weak in his faith, he would lose hope. But whoever imitates Peter in wounding, should also imitate Peter in putting away the sword. For he who healed the ear of Malchus, can also heal the ear of "the heretical king." [Lk. 22:51] If the king, God forbid!, is such a man, then we both lament for ourselves and suffer along with our lord.

We are in no way speaking for our emperor. Rather we are saying that, although he might be such a man, we nevertheless allow him to govern us; because we merit by our sins that such a man rule over us. So be it, we are forced to concede to you that he is such a man as you say. But we ought not to repel him with arms taken up against him, but with prayers poured forth to God. Against Pharaoh, whose heart hardened against God, Moses brought forth frogs, mice, locusts, and hail. Nonetheless, he was unable to turn away these plagues unless he prayed with hands raised towards heaven. And Paul says: "I beg, first of all, that prayers be said for kings and for all who have been established at the height of authority." [I Tim. 2:1] The kings of that time, for whom Paul entreated Christians to pray, were neither catholics nor Christians. Baruch, too, writes from the mouth of Jeremiah to the Jews captured by the king of Babylon: "Pray for the life of king Nabuchadnezzar and Balthasar his son, that their days may be as the days of heaven over the earth, and that we may serve him for many days and find grace in their sight." [Bar. 1:11-12] Paul explains why one should pray for bad kings, namely "that we may live a tranquil life." [I Tim. 2:2] Would that it was characteristic of the pope to imitate the apostle, and the mark of a prophet to imitate the prophet. But because we merit it by our sins, the Pope, who even now should pray for the king although he is a sinner so that we may lead a calm and tranquil life, acts by waging war so that we may not lead a calm, quiet life.

x. Since the words of the apostle and the prophet thus agree with one another, I humbly ask, as a daughter from my holy mother the Roman Church: whence did this authority come to the Pope, that in addition to the spiritual sword he may wield the other sword of killing against his subjects? I am not acting on the king's behalf, but on behalf of the mother of churches, for whose portion we, her daughters, fear. For if David did not merit building the temple of God because he was a man of blood, how will the high priest enter with the blood of Christ, which he offers for his own ignorance and that of his people, if even a drop of blood should have touched
his clothing? O would that he not simply wash his hands with Pilate, while saying: "I am cleansed of the blood of the innocents,"[Mt.27:24] but would also say with Peter: "Lord, wash not only my feet but my hands and head as well."[Jn.13:9] The Jews did not excuse their hands from the blood of Christ, whom they crucified at the third hour with their tongues, and at the sixth with the hands of the Romans. But the Pope in excusing himself says with Paul: "I am cleansed of the blood of all of you."[Acts 20:26] Which one of the Roman pontiffs in his decrees has ever authorized a Pope to use the sword of war against sinners? Gregory, the first Pope of his name, made manifest what all Popes before him thought about this issue and what all after him should think, when he wrote to the deacon Sabianus: "There is one thing which you may humbly suggest to our most serene lords, because, if I, their servant, had wanted to mix myself in the death of, for example, the Lombards, the Lombard race would have neither king nor dukes nor counts, and would be in a state of the greatest confusion. But because I fear God, I fear to involve myself in the death of any man."[14] Content with this example, all Popes from the time of Gregory I used only the spiritual sword until the last Gregory, i.e. Hildebrand, who first girded himself and, by his example, other bishops with the sword of war against the emperor. Whoever can rebuke the king, has understood better than we the words of Eliu, who in the book of Job says about God: "He calls the leaders impious" and "He makes the hypocrite reign because of the sins of the people."[Job 34:18] Expounding this, Gregory says: "No one who endures such a rector, should accuse the man whom he endures, for of course it was the sign of his own merit to be subject to the rule of a perverse rector. Therefore let him blame the fault of his own action rather than the injustice of the one governing. For it is written: "I shall give you kings in my rage." Why then are we displeased that they rule over us, they whose rule over us we receive because of the Lord's anger? So then the characters of those ruling are given in accordance with the merits of the subjects, so that often those who seem good, soon change when the rule has been achieved; just like Saul, whose heart changed with his office. Thus the actions of rulers are disposed because of the qualities of the subjects so that often the rector's true way of life goes astray because of the evil of the flock. But it is certain that in this way the merits of both rectors and congregations are connected with one another, so that often through the fault of the rectors, the life of the congregations becomes worse, and through the merit of the congregations the lives of the rectors are changed. But because rectors have God as their judge, the subjects should be very cautious not to judge boldly the lives of their rulers."[15] These words of Gregory work on our behalf, because you are depriving God of His right to judge; nor do you attend to what Amos the prophet says: "Woe unto you who desire the day of the Lord."[Amos 5:15] He desires the day of the Lord who judges unjustly or importunately or inappropriately concerning his subjects. We are not saying that our emperor is a hypocrite. But you, who take him for a hypocrite, amaze us because you do not attend to the reason for

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14 Gregory I, Ep. 4.

15 Gregory I, Moralia in Job bk.25, c.13, s.34.
which God makes a hypocrite reign. For if the cause of the sin ceases, the punishment for the sin will also cease.

xi. Why are we speaking about the fact that he says that "Henry has been excommunicated by holy and apostolic men at the judgment of the Holy Spirit?" He detests that man far too much whom he considers worthy of the name of neither king nor emperor. Who could distinguish the cause of the kingship from the cause of the priesthood? Unless the peace of God, which surpasses all the senses, joins the kingship and the priesthood in a single cornerstone of concord, the structure of the Church will shake upon its foundation of faith. Just as the cause and manner of ruling praise or accuse the power of the kingship, so the cause and manner of binding and loosing praise or accuse the priesthood. For Clement writes that Peter said: "You shall bind what it is fitting to bind, and loose what it is useful to be loosed;" and "It is fitting that the man who rules over others, act in the role of the doctor, and not be moved by bestial rage." Therefore, whoever should act as a doctor, let him also hear the counsel of wisdom, saying: "All political power is a short life. A longer illness troubles the doctor. A doctor cuts short a brief sickness. So, too, he is king today and tomorrow he will die."[Eccli. 10:11-12] Since the virtue of discretion is shown to the prelate by all of these passages, why do popes, succeeding each other one after another, rise up against the king as if in some hereditary war of excommunication — the king to whom they are ordered to be subject for the sake of the royal office? Whoever is excommunicated by the judgment of the Holy Spirit, certainly should be expelled from the house of God. But when someone is excommunicated through a prejudgment of either the person or the case, who would claim that that person has been excommunicated by the judgment of the Holy Spirit? You say with Gregory: "In whatever manner the pastor may bind, let the flock fear the pastor's fetters." But we, too, say with Gregory: "He who binds and looses his subjects because of his own wishes and not on the basis of their merits, deprives himself of the power of binding and loosing." You say: "In whatever manner he is excommunicated, if he is cut short by death, let him be damned." But Gregory authorized in both word and deed that the bishop of Rome can absolve someone who has been unjustly excommunicated. If the bishop of Rome can do this, who would deny that God can absolve [a person], if the bishop of Rome should have excommunicated him unjustly? For no one can be injured by another, unless he should be injured by himself first.

xii. "Indeed you can offer no sacrifice dearer to God," he says. How can it be that nothing is

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18 Ibid., §5.
dearer to God than this sacrifice, I ask you, O my mother Church of Rome? For a sacrifice is not pleasing to God unless it is clean and without blemish, so that it also makes the one who offers it, clean and without stain. Therefore, in fact, the Law offered to God on Passover an unblemished lamb, just as those who offered it were also unblemished. How then can this sacrifice of waging war be so dear to God, since it cannot occur without the stain of crimes? For Malachi says: "If you offer to God an animal that is deaf, blind, or sluggish, is it not an evil thing?"[Mal.1:9] The Pope who pointed out this sacrifice of war to his son Robert, wished, I think, to return to the zeal of Phineas and wanted to do what Moses did, namely consecrate the hands of the Levites in the blood of their brethren.[Num.25:7,8] The sons of Aaron perished when they offered another fire;[Ex.32:29] would that this one perished who even now offers to God another fire and not that fire which Jesus came to send out over the earth and [still] wishes to burn.[Lk.12:49] How, I ask, is a sacrifice which does not seem to be clean and unblemished, dear to God? How will a sacrifice comprised of plundering the poor be pleasing to Him, Who hates [the practice] of rapine for sacrifice? [Is.61:8] Nor will God delight in a sacrifice made from the tears of widows and orphans, as Jesus, son of Sirach, says: "God will not despise the cries of the orphan and the widow. The tears of the widow roll down her jaw and from her jaw ascend to heaven, and the Lord will not delight in them."[Eccl.35:17-19] How will He who said: "Whom do I look after if not the poor little man, contrite in spirit and fearful of my words,"[Is.66:2] accept with thanks a sacrifice made from the devastations of the churches? By this calamity of apostolic war, how many have been oppressed, about whom God says: "Whoever touches you, touches the pupil of my eye."[Zach.2:8] I wonder if a sacrifice polluted by human blood will please Him who said: "From the hands of the beasts and from the hand of man, I will require the blood of man."[Gen.9:5] What we seek in running through the methods of giving sacrifice, Jesus sums up in the Gospel in just about three words: "Let every sacrifice be seasoned with fire, and every victim be seasoned with salt."[Mk.9:48] The conclusion could not be clearer: whoever sacrifices in a manner pleasing to God, sacrifices a sacrifice which is pleasing to God. If the person sacrificing is seasoned with the fire of the Holy Spirit, the victim of the person sacrificing will also be seasoned with the salt of wisdom. And penetrating more deeply to the intentions of the heart, Jesus adds: "Salt is good. But if the salt should have lost its flavor, in what will you season it? Keep the salt within you, and maintain the peace between you."[Mk.9:49] What could explain the tenor of this Gospel better than the consequences of the present situation and time? We cannot maintain the peace between us unless we have the salt within us. But we do not have the salt within us. Therefore, we do not have peace between us.

xiii. "We enjoin this upon you and your soldiers for the remission of sins and the friendship of the Apostolic See," he says, "in order that by these labors and triumphs you may reach the heavenly Jerusalem." Until now, we relied on the testimonies of the Gospels, the apostles, and the prophets; and
whatever was lacking, an abundant supply of examples increased. But here I do not know what to say; I do not see where to turn. For if I read through the library of both Laws, if I look through all the ancient expounders of the entire library, I find no example of this apostolic command. Pope Hildebrand alone imposed the final hand on the sacred canons, [Hildebrand] who, as we read, ordered the countess Mathilda to wage war against the emperor Henry for the remission of her sins. Whether or not he or others did this justly, we learn from no authority. We learn only this, that someone cannot bind or loose another person without discretion. For this, we know of an example from the Gospel. When Jesus Christ, acting wholly as a man without sin, was going to raise Lazarus from the dead and saw others crying for him, he trembled in spirit, he became disturbed and cried. Again he trembled within himself, he ordered the stone placed over the dead man to be removed, and with his eye raised towards heaven he prayed and shouted out in a loud voice: "Lazarus, come out." When he came forth, with hands and feet bound with graves clothes and his face bound with a handkerchief, Jesus told his disciples to release him. [Jn.11:38-43] Behold in Lazarus I see the sinner; in Jesus the preacher. As much emotion as Jesus showed in raising Lazarus, the preacher shows in raising the sinner. If the sinner, or the preacher in the place of the sinner, should have upset himself in doing penance, if he cried, if he shouted: "Come out confessing your sins," if he removed the stone from the hard heart of the sinner, finally at God's command [the priest] will loose the grave clothes of excommunication, remove from his face the wearying veil of penance and thereby allow him to leave a free man. On this Gregory says: "He who condemns the just man brings death to someone who is not dying. He who tries to loose the guilty from their punishment, attempts to revive someone who is not going to live. True is the absolution of the one presiding when it follows the judgment of the internal judge. Thus the disciples release Lazarus who was already alive, and whom Jesus had raised from the dead. For if they unbound a dead man, they would have displayed stench more than strength." These are the words of Gregory. You held to this custom of binding and loosing until now, and you commanded that we, too, should keep it, O holy mother Church of Rome. Whence then comes this new authority by which an exemption from punishment for past sins, as well as freedom from future ones, is offered to the guilty without confession or penance? How great is the window for doing evil that you have opened to men by this action!

May God free you, O mother, from every evil. May Jesus be your gate and your gate-keeper. No one among you will enter, unless the gatekeeper should open the door to him. May God, I say, free you and your bishop also from those who, as the prophet Micah says, "seduce the people of God, who bite with their teeth and preach peace; and if someone does not give them something to bite, they will sanctify war against him." [Mic.3:5]

19 Ibid., §5-6.