

or capuche that characterized the order's habit and provides its name is a tribute to the Camaldolese monks who gave Matteo refuge in his early days.) Significantly, in theology the Capuchins abandoned the proto-nominalist thought of Scotus and returned to the more classical scholasticism of Bonaventure.

Among the new orders, the one that would eventually be most among the most significant in numbers and influence was the "Company of Jesus" or *Societas Jesu* founded by Eneko (Spanish ñigo) López de Loyola. Having begun his adult life as a soldier, Ignatius (to give him his adopted Latin name) retained his feudal and military mentality even after his religious conversion. He explicitly thought of his society as a kind of militant order, (*militia Christi*) fighting a spiritual battle under "the standard of the cross."²⁴ The order would eventually be notable for its role in active opposition to Protestantism. But its roots lie in a fervor for a fervent missionary activity stemming from the sort of personal conversion to the crucified Christ, and inspiration to follow and imitate him, that typified the spirit of Catholic reform.

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT AND THE "COUNTER-REFORMATION"

As we have mentioned, there were calls for a general church council to address the question of reform in the church even before Luther's appearance. The Fifth Lateran Council was an abortive attempt at such a council. Once the Reformation had broken out in force, the urgency of a council was even more apparent. Luther called for a general council in 1518; the Diet of Nuremberg demanded one in 1523; and the Emperor Charles V energetically pursued the goal for many years. However, for various reasons, including the opposition of Pope Clement VII and of Francis I of France, the council was not called until 1542. It did not begin until 1545, in the city of Trent in northern Italy (chosen because of its proximity to Germany). The council lasted for eighteen years, with many interruptions. By the time the council met, positions had hardened. Although the council was ostensibly for the purpose of reforming the church, reviewing its theology, and reconciling the now separate communions, the Protestants generally refused to attend (with the exception of one session in 1552). For this reason the council, largely under the influence of "hard line" Roman theology, did not settle the theological and pastoral controversies or reconcile the disputing parties, but rather defined and legislated the Catholic position alone, frequently in conscious opposition to the positions of the Reformers.

In this sense Trent can be seen as the symbolic beginning of the Catholic "Counter-Reformation" as a negative and aggressive response to Protestantism. At the same time, the council was also a continuation and strengthening of the Catholic Reformation that had begun already prior to the Protestant

controversy. Trent embodied the Catholic position in opposition to the Protestant Reformation, but not in opposition to reformation itself. On the contrary, the Council of Trent explicitly took up "the business of reform" (*de reformationis negotio*) and issued decrees entitled "On Reformation."²⁵

THE DOCTRINE OF TRENT ON SALVATION. The Roman Catholic response to the Reformers' doctrines concentrated on the question of justification, insisting on the need for human meritorious works, not in place of Christ's grace, but as its appropriation and realization in us. It therefore united two subjects that for the Lutherans had to remain doctrinally separate: justification and sanctification. The Council of Trent's "Decree on Justification" adopts the schema of Aristotelian "causes" that we have already seen in the Scholastics. The "final" cause of justification, i.e., its goal, is the glory of God and Christ, and our eternal life. Its "efficient" cause is God, who gratuitously forgives and sanctifies us. Its "meritorious" cause is Christ, who "by his most holy passion on the wood of the cross merited justification for us and gave satisfaction to God the Father for us." The "instrumental" cause is the sacrament of baptism. And the sole "formal" cause (what actually constitutes the state of being justified) is "God's justice, not insofar as God is just in God's self, but insofar as God makes us just." That is, justification is not merely "imputed" to us: we are made just by receiving in ourselves a new life in the Spirit (DS 1529). (The council thus rejected not only the Lutheran formulation of justification "by faith alone," but also the compromise position of a "double justification" that had been adopted by Catholic and Lutheran representatives at the conference of Ratisbon [Regensburg] in 1541.)

The Council agrees with the Reformers that "no one can be just, unless the merits of the passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ are communicated to [a person]. But this happens because, "by the merit of that same most holy passion, through the Holy Spirit, the love of God is diffused in the hearts of those who are justified, and inheres in them" (DS 1530; cf. 1561). Hence, since Christ is the head of the body of which the faithful are members, they are able, by God's gift, to cooperate with grace, to perform good works so as to satisfy God's law and merit eternal life (DS 1546, 1559).²⁶

Hence Trent essentially repeats the medieval doctrine of the cross, without going into detail concerning specific theological questions except those directly concerned with the refutation of the Reformers' supposed errors. Christ's passion "satisfies" God on our behalf and merits salvation; but we must collaborate with the grace freely given us.

THE CATECHISM OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT (THE ROMAN CATECHISM). Following the example of Luther and other reformers, the Council of Trent called for the

publication of a catechism for instructing the laity in doctrine. It was directed to pastors, as a compendium of the faith to be used in teaching. The parts of the *Catechism* most directly relevant to the doctrine of salvation are those concerned with the sections of the creed on the death of Christ and its meaning: Article IV, "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried" and Article V, "He descended into Hell, the third day He rose again from the dead." Other relevant sections are found in the treatments of the eucharist, baptism, and penance. Each phrase of the creed is analyzed and expanded dogmatically.

The *Catechism* stresses the importance of teaching about Christ's passion, in order that "the faithful 'being moved by the remembrance of so great a benefit' may turn themselves entirely to the contemplation of the goodness and love of God towards us."²⁷ Analyzing the word "suffered," the *Catechism* stresses that the "lower part" of Christ's soul really underwent pain. Moreover, even though his divine nature remained impassible and immortal, the entire human soul of Christ experienced a sorrow just as bitter as if it were not conjoined hypostatically to the divinity. Concerning the mode of Christ's death, it repeats the traditional idea of reversal of Adam's sin: "The fact that He suffered death precisely on the wood of the cross must also be attributed to the counsel of God, [which decreed it] so that life should return by the way whence death had arisen; and so that the serpent who had triumphed over our first parents by the wood (of a tree) was vanquished by Christ on the wood of the cross."²⁸ Although one might find in the Fathers many other reasons for the suitability of the cross, "it is enough for the faithful to believe that this kind of death was chosen by the Savior because it appeared better adapted and more appropriate to the redemption of the human race; for there certainly could be none more ignominious (*turpius*) and humiliating (*indignius*). Not only among the Gentiles was the punishment of the cross held accursed and full of shame and infamy, but even in the Law of Moses the man is called accursed that 'hangs on a tree.'²⁹

Salvation through the cross is affirmed to be the very foundation of the faith, and should be presented to the people frequently.³⁰ But it is also a great mystery. "Indeed, if there is anything that presents difficulty to the human mind and understanding, assuredly the mystery of the cross beyond all doubt must be considered the most difficult of all; so much so that only with great difficulty can we grasp the fact that our salvation depends on the cross itself, and on Him who for us was nailed thereon."³¹

The pastor should also explain, the *Catechism* says, that Jesus really died, and that he took his death upon himself freely. "It was unique to Christ the Lord to have died when He Himself decreed to die, and that his death was brought

about not so much by external powers as by his own will. Not only His death, but also its time and place, were ordained by Him."³²

Having stressed the importance of teaching the historical facts of Christ's death and burial, the *Catechism* devotes special sections to the meaning of the passion and the benefits of meditating on it. The thought of Christ's death should excite our love and gratitude.

[When we meditate on the sufferings and all the torments of the Redeemer], nothing is better calculated to stir our souls than the thought that He endured them voluntarily. For if anyone were to endure all kinds of suffering for our sake, not because he chose them but simply because he could not escape them, we should not consider this a very great favor to us; but were he to endure death freely, and for our sake only, having had it in his power to avoid it, this indeed would be a benefit so overwhelming as to deprive even the most grateful heart, not only of the power of returning but even of feeling due thanks. From this we may form an idea of the supreme and intense love (*charitas*) of Jesus Christ towards us, and we can perceive his divine and immeasurable merit.³³

Among the "Useful Considerations on the Passion" are the dignity of the one who suffered and the reasons for his suffering.

The reasons for the passion are also to be explained, that thus the greatness and intensity of the divine love towards us may the more fully appear. Should anyone inquire why the Son of God underwent His most bitter Passion, he will find that besides the guilt inherited from our first parents the principal causes were the vices and sins which humans have perpetrated from the beginning of the world to the present day and those which will be committed to the end of time. In His Passion and death the Son of God, our Savior, intended to atone for (*redimeret*) and blot out (*deleteret*) the sins of all ages, to offer for them to his Father a full and abundant satisfaction. Besides, to increase the dignity of this mystery, Christ not only suffered for sinners, but even for those who were the very authors and ministers of all the torments He endured. Of this the Apostle reminds us in these words addressed to the Hebrews: Think diligently upon him that endured such opposition from sinners against himself; that you be not wearied, fainting in your minds. [Heb. 12:3] We should judge that all those who fall frequently into sin are above all involved in this guilt. For, since our sins moved Christ

the Lord to undergo the death of the cross, most certainly those who wallow in sin and iniquity again crucify the Son of God within themselves, as far as in them lies, and make a mockery of Him. This guilt seems more enormous in us than it was in the Jews, since according to the testimony of the same Apostle: If they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory [1 Cor. 2:8]; while we, on the contrary, professing to know Him, yet denying Him by our actions, seem in some way to lay violent hands on him.³⁴

At the same time, it must be stressed that "Christ Was Delivered Over To Death By The Father And By Himself," as the sign of God's love for us. The cross shows how much we should trust in "the boundless mercy and goodness of God," for "He that spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how hath he not also, with him, given us all things? [Rom. 8:32]"³⁵

Particular attention is given to the extent of Christ's suffering in the passion: The pastor should next teach how great was the bitterness of the passion. If we bear in mind that his sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground at the anticipation of the tortments and agony which He was about to endure, anyone will easily perceive that His sorrows could not be greater. For if the very idea of impending evils was so bitter, as the sweat of blood shows that it was, what are we to think their actual endurance must have been?

That Christ our Lord suffered the most excruciating tortments of both mind and body is certain. In the first place, there was no part of His body that did not experience the most agonizing torture. His hands and feet were fastened with nails to the cross; His head was pierced with thorns and smitten with a reed; His face was befouled with spittle and buffeted with blows; His whole body was covered with lashes. Furthermore people of all ranks and conditions were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ [Ps. 2:2]. Gentiles and Jews were the instigators, the authors, the ministers of His Passion: Judas betrayed Him, Peter denied Him, all the rest deserted Him. And while He hangs from the cross are we not at a loss which to deplore, His agony, or His ignominy, or both? Surely no death more shameful, none more cruel, could have been devised than this. It was the punishment usually reserved for the most guilty and atrocious malefactors, a death whose slowness aggravated the exquisite pain and torture. His agony was increased by the very constitution and frame of the body of Jesus Christ. Formed by the power of the Holy Spirit, it was more perfect and better organized than the

bodies of others can be, and was therefore endowed with a superior susceptibility and a keener sense of all the torments which it endured.

And as to His interior anguish of soul, no one can doubt that this too was extreme in Christ; for those among the Saints who had to endure tortments and tortures were not without consolation from above, which enabled them not only to bear their sufferings patiently, but in many instances, to feel, in the very midst of them, filled with interior joy, as the Apostle says: "I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh, for his body, which is the church" [Col. 1:24] and in another place: "I am filled with comfort, I exceedingly abound with joy in all our tribulations" [2 Cor. 7:4]. But Christ our Lord permitted no admixture of sweetness to temper the bitter chalice of his passion that he drank. He permitted His human nature to feel as acutely every species of torment as if He were only human, and not also God.³⁶

The "fruits" of Christ's passion are four. First, "the Passion of our Lord was our deliverance from sin." Second, "He has rescued us from the tyranny of the devil." Third, "He discharged the punishment due to our sins. And since no sacrifice more pleasing and acceptable could have been offered to God, He reconciled us to the Father, appeased Him and made Him favorable to us [*semperque nobis placatum et propitium reddidit*]." Finally, "by taking away our sins He opened to us heaven, which was closed by the common sin of humankind." The *Catechism* repeats the belief that even the just had to await Christ's resurrection before the "gates of heaven" were opened to them. "For those who were prohibited to return into their native country before the death of the high-priest signified that no one, however just and holy may have been his life, could gain admission into the celestial country until the eternal high-priest, Christ Jesus, had died, and by His death immediately opened heaven for those who, purified by the Sacraments and gifted with faith, hope, and charity, become partakers of His Passion."³⁷

The next section expands on the dogmatic understanding of the passion as a satisfaction, a sacrifice, a redemption, and an example to us:

The pastor should teach that all these inestimable and divine blessings flow to us from the Passion of Christ. First, indeed, because it was a full and satisfaction, complete in every respect, which Jesus Christ in an admirable manner made to God the Father for our sins. The price which He paid for our ransom was not only adequate and equal to our debts, but far exceeded them. Again, it [the passion of Christ] was a sacrifice most acceptable to God, for when offered by His Son on the

altar of the cross, it entirely appeased the wrath and indignation of the Father. This word [sacrifice] the Apostle uses when he says: Christ has loved us, and has delivered himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odour of sweetness [Eph. 5:2]. Furthermore, it was a redemption, of which the Prince of the Apostles says: You were not redeemed with corruptible things as gold or silver, from your vain conversation of the tradition of your fathers: but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled [1 Pet. 1:18-19]; while the Apostle teaches: Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. [Gal. 3:13]³⁸

In its section on penance, the *Catechism* expands on the notion of "satisfaction." The "satisfaction" offered to God by Christ on the cross was full and complete, and no created being could offer a satisfaction that could free us of the debt of our sins. At the same time it affirms the need for a different kind of "satisfaction" that is associated with the sacrament of penance. Penitential acts of satisfaction depend entirely on our reconciliation with God through Christ; without this, no human actions can have any value before God. However, having been reconciled, we are obliged to make acts of "satisfaction" or penance for our sins—although the *Catechism* leaves way for various theories of the exact nature of such "satisfaction."³⁹

The passion of Christ, however, is not merely satisfaction to God for our sins, but is also an example for us:

Besides these incomparable blessings, we have also received another of the highest importance; namely, that in this one Passion we have the most illustrious example of every virtue. For He so displayed patience, humility, extreme charity, meekness, obedience and unshaken firmness of soul, not only in suffering for the sake of righteousness, but also in meeting death, that we may truly say on the day of His Passion alone, our Savior offered, in His own Person, a living exemplification of all the moral precepts inculcated during the entire time of His public ministry.⁴⁰

The section concludes with an "Admonition" that stresses the need to interiorize and live what the doctrines express. "Would that these mysteries were always vividly present to our minds, and that we learned to suffer, die, and be buried together with our Lord; so that from henceforth, having cast aside all stain of sin, and rising with Him to newness of life, we may at length, through His grace and mercy, be found worthy to be made partakers of the celestial kingdom and glory."⁴¹

In the explanation of the next article of the creed, "He descended into hell, the third day he rose again from the dead," the *Catechism* emphasizes the glory of Christ's victory. "Hell," it explains, includes several regions: not only the "bottomless pit" of Gehenna, but also the cleansing fire of purgatory (whose reality should be emphasized by the pastor, the text stresses), and the peaceful and painless abode of the just who died before the coming of Christ. It was to liberate these, as well as to proclaim his power that Christ "descended into hell" with his divine majesty. The *Catechism* takes the opportunity of meditation on the descent into hell to stress the universality of the efficacy of Christ's redemption. "... not only the just who were born after the coming of our Lord, but also those who preceded Him from the days of Adam, or who shall be born until the end of time, obtain their salvation through the benefit of His Passion."⁴² Finally, the resurrection is to be understood also as a manifestation of Christ's divine nature:

By the word Resurrection, however, we are not merely to understand that Christ was raised from the dead, which happened to many others, but that He rose by His own power and virtue, a singular prerogative peculiar to Him alone... This divine power, having never been separated, either from His body in the grave, or from His soul in hell, there existed a divine force both within the body, by which it could be again united to the soul, and within the soul, by which it could again return to the body. Thus He was able by His own power to return to life and rise from the dead.⁴³

The resurrection of Christ was necessary in order to manifest God's justice, to confirm our faith and hope, and to complete the mystery of our salvation. "By His death Christ liberated us from sin; by His Resurrection, He restored to us the most important of those privileges which we had forfeited by sin. Hence these words of the Apostle: 'He was delivered up for our sins, and rose again for our justification' [Rom. 4:25]. That nothing, therefore, should be wanting to the work of our salvation, it was necessary that as He died, He should also rise again."⁴⁴

The resurrection of Christ is the "efficient cause" of our eventual resurrection at the end of time, and is also a model for our moral regeneration in the present:

From the Resurrection of Christ, therefore, we should draw two lessons: first, that after we have washed away the stains of sin, we should begin to lead a new life, distinguished by integrity, innocence, holiness, modesty, justice, beneficence and humility; second, that we should so persevere in that newness of life as never more, with the

divine assistance, to stray from the paths of virtue on which we have once entered. . . . For as His death not only furnishes us with an example, but also supplies us with strength to die to sin, so also His Resurrection invigorates us to attain righteousness, so that thenceforward serving God in piety and holiness, we may walk in the newness of life to which we have risen. Our Lord accomplished this especially by His resurrection, so that we, having first died with Him to sin and to this world, should rise also with Him to a new manner and order (*disciplinam*) of life.⁴⁵

It is significant that the *Catechism* attributes to the resurrection a certain "causality" with regard to salvation, although the separation of its effects from those of Christ's death also serves to reinforce the notion that salvation itself is by means of "satisfaction" and "sacrifice." And of course we may see a response to Lutheran ideas—or at least the Catholic perception of them—in the emphasis on the need for a truly regenerated life, which is made possible not only by Christ's death, but also as an effect of his resurrection.⁴⁶ The *Catechism* does not explicitly take up the controverted point of human freedom, but in the section on creation simply states that God gave humanity free will,⁴⁷ and takes for granted in its discussions of repentance and grace the teaching of Trent that this freedom is not completely destroyed by the fall, nor is it overwhelmed by the reception of an irresistible grace.⁴⁸

The section of the *Catechism* that deals with the eucharist emphasizes that the sacrifice of the mass is one and the same sacrifice that was offered once for all times on the cross in a bloody manner by Christ.⁴⁹ Moreover, the mass is not merely a sacrifice of praise, or a bare commemoration of the sacrifice of the cross; being the very same sacrifice as that of the cross, but in sacramental mode, it is also an offering of propitiation, by which God is appeased and is made favorable to us (*quod Deus nobis placatus et propitius redditur*). The overflowing benefits of the bloody sacrifice reach us through our celebration of this unbloody sacrifice. "God is so pleased by the sweet odor of this sacrifice (*huius . . . victimae odore*) that God forgives our sins and grants us the grace of penitence. Moreover, the church joins itself to the sacrifice of Christ: we "immolate" and offer the sacrificial victim who once offered himself on the cross.⁵⁰

ROBERT BELLARME. As we have seen, Tridentine Catholic theology represented little change in soteriological theory from the teachings of the Middle Ages. However, we can see a strong emphasis on the notions of "satisfaction" and sacrifice, especially in the Roman Catechism. In the Catechism of Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621) we see an even further strengthening of these concepts

in an attempt to accommodate to the popular mentality doctrines that are stated abstractly in the Roman Catechism. In his short catechism, written in Italian and meant to be memorized, Bellarmine gives only passing attention to soteriological doctrine. In the context of the "fourth article" of the creed, the student's answer is: "I believe that Jesus Christ, to buy back (*ricomprare*) the world with his most precious blood, suffered under Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea, having been flogged, crowned with thorns, and placed upon the cross, on which he died. . . ."⁵¹

The longer version of the *Dottrina Cristiana* contains not only an explicit reference to the "satisfaction" theory, but an explanation of its principle of "honor" in terms of aristocratic society. The teaching is put in the form of a dialogue:

Student: Why did Christ, being innocent, allow himself to be unjustly crucified and killed?

Teacher: For many reasons: but the first is to satisfy (*soddisfar*) God for our sins. For you must know that an offense is measured by the dignity of the one who is offended; and, conversely, satisfaction is measured by the dignity of the one who satisfies. So, for example, if a servant were to strike a prince, it would be considered the gravest offense, because of the greatness of the prince; but if the prince were to strike the servant, it would be a small matter (*cosa di poco momento*) because of the low condition (*virtù*) of the servant. If the servant doffs his hat to the prince, it means little; but if the prince were to doff his hat to the servant, it would be a great honor, according to the rule already stated. Now, because the first man, and with him all of us, have offended God, whose dignity is infinite, the offense given requires infinite satisfaction. And since there was no human nor angel of such dignity, the Son of God came. As God, he is of infinite dignity, and having taking mortal flesh, in this flesh he submitted himself to death on the cross, for the honor of God. And thus by his suffering he satisfied completely for our sins.

Student: What is the other reason why Christ wished to suffer such a bitter death?

Teacher: To teach us, through his example, the virtue of long-suffering (*patienza*), of humility, and of obedience, and of charity, which are four virtues signified by the four extremities of the cross, since one cannot find greater long-suffering than to suffer unjustly such an ignominious death; nor greater humility, than for the Lord of all lords to be crucified between thieves; nor of greater obedience, than to wish to die, rather than not fulfill the command

of the Father; nor of greater love, than to give one's life, to save one's own enemies. And you must know that love is shown more by deeds than by words; and more by suffering (*patire*) than by doing. Hence Christ, who not only wished to bring us infinite benefits, but also to suffer and die for us, has shown that he loves us most fervently.⁵²

It is notable that the ideas of "honor," "dignity," and "satisfaction" are taken as nearly self-explanatory. Bellarmine lived in an age when gentlemen commonly demanded "satisfaction" for insults, and which saw the development of an impressive literature about points of honor.⁵³ (It is also interesting that Bellarmine, who was personally involved in the trial of Galileo and the condemnation of Giordano Bruno, explains the "descent into hell" in terms of a descent into caverns in the center of the earth, "as a king sometimes goes down to the prisons to visit them and pardon whom he pleases.")

Bellarmino also speaks of the cross later in the catechism, as the "remedy" for original sin:

Teacher: It has already been stated above that the remedy [for original sin] was the passion and death of Christ our Lord: because God willed that the one who wished to satisfy for the sin of Adam should be the one without sin; indeed, should be God and human, so that he would be infinitely acceptable to God, and should obey not in any easy matter, like the commandment given to Adam, but in a most difficult matter, like the horrible death on the cross. And this remedy is applied to us through holy Baptism, as we have said. However, God did not wish to give back to us immediately the seven gifts [given to Adam before the fall], but he gave us back the most important one, that is, God's grace, through which we are made just, friends and children of God, and heirs of paradise. The other gifts will be returned to us in even greater measure in the next life, if we behave well in this one.⁵⁴

Part 2: The Aesthetic Mediation: The Cross in Art and Music in the Crisis of the Renaissance⁵⁵

Response to Iconoclasm

TRENT ON THE QUESTION OF IMAGES

In its twenty-fifth session, in the year 1568, the Council of Trent explicitly took up the questions raised by Protestant iconoclasm. Significantly, it treats the question of images together with those of relics and of the veneration and in-

tercession of the saints. As we have seen, many of the Reformers' objections—as well as those of the humanists—were directed not so much against images themselves, as against the practices that accompanied them, which were frequently associated with cult images, relics, and places of pilgrimage. But the council also deals briefly with strict iconoclasm, dismissing it with an appeal to the Second Council of Nicaea and referring to that council's principal argument. However, even while defending the use of images, the council agreed with the reformers not only that abuses were possible in the use of art, but also that much of the art itself was "inappropriate" for sacred use because of its worldliness. The decree is short enough and significant enough to be quoted in its entirety:

Moreover [this Synod decrees] that images of Christ, of the Virgin mother of God, and of other saints, should be kept and preserved, especially in churches, and that they should be given due honor and veneration; not because it is believed that there is in them any divinity or power that makes them worthy of worship, nor because one should pray to them for anything, nor because one should have trust in images, as the pagans formerly did who placed their hope in idols; but because the honor that is given to them is referred to the originals (*prototypa*) that they represent: so, though the images that we kiss and take our hats off to and kneel before, we adore Christ, and we venerate the saints whom they picture—as the decrees of the councils establish, and especially those of the second Nicene Council against the opponents of images.

Bishops should diligently teach that through the recounting of the mysteries of our redemption, expressed in pictures and other representations, the people are educated and confirmed in the articles of faith that should be remembered and assiduously called to mind; moreover, that sacred images are very fruitful, not only because they recall to the people the benefits and gifts that have been granted them by Christ, but also because they bring before the eyes of the faithful the miracles performed by God through the saints, and their example, which is helpful to salvation (*salutaria exempla*); so that the faithful may give thanks to God for them, and may pattern their lives and habits according to the examples of the saints, and may be encouraged to adore and love God and practice piety.

If anyone should teach or hold anything contrary to these decrees, let that person be excommunicate. But if any abuses have been introduced into these holy and salvific practices, this Synod forcefully (*vehementer*) desires that they be totally abolished; hence no images

should be permitted that represent false dogmas, nor any that give occasion to the uneducated for dangerous errors. And if there are sometimes stories and narrations of the holy Scriptures pictured and represented because they are useful for the instruction of the ignorant, the people should be taught that this does not mean that the divinity can be pictured, as though it could be seen with bodily eyes, or be represented with colors or forms. Every superstition in the invocation of the saints, in the veneration of relics, and in the use of holy images must be done away with; every sordid commerce must be eliminated; and every lasciviousness avoided. Hence images must not be painted nor adorned with scandalous sensual beauty (*venustate*), and the celebrations of the saints and pilgrimages to visit relics must not be abused as an excuse for feasting and drunkenness, as though luxury and lasciviousness were the way to honor the saints' days. Finally, let the bishops observe such diligence and care about this that nothing appear that is disordered or inappropriate and confusing, nothing that is profane or illicit; for holiness is fitting for the house of God. And so that these things be observed with greater fidelity, this sacred Synod decrees that no one is permitted to place or to cause to be placed any unusual (*ixsolitam*) image in any place or any church, even one not under the bishop's authority, except with the permission of the bishop. No new miracles are to be recognized, nor new relics accepted, unless they are recognized and approved by the same bishop; and when he is certain about them, having consulted with theologians and other pious persons, he should do what he judges right according to truth and piety. If there are doubts, or if there is a difficult case of abuse to eliminate, or if there occurs some grave question on these matters, let the bishop wait for the judgment of the Metropolitan and the provincial bishops in the provincial Council before resolving the controversy. However, nothing new or hitherto uncustomary in the church may be decided without consulting the Roman Pontiff.⁵⁶

It is notable that the decrees of Trent do not give any very specific guidelines for sacred art. On the one hand, the use of art is strongly affirmed. Indeed, highly ornamented churches would become typical of the Counter-Reformation. The bareness of Protestant places of worship was opposed by splendor in Catholic churches. The Jesuit Peter Canisius defended such ornamentation: "the innovators [i.e., the Protestants] accuse us of prodigality in the decoration of churches; they are like Judas reproving Mary Magdalene for pouring per-

fume on the head of Christ."⁵⁷ The buildings of the militant church on earth were to be the image of the triumphant church in heaven.

On the other hand, while the use of sacred art was strongly affirmed, its mode of execution was to be restricted. The tension between religion and the independent spirit of renaissance aesthetics could only be increased by the Council's reaffirmation of traditional images, the prohibition of "novelty," and the rejection in sacred art not only of "sensual beauty," but also of the presence of anything "profane" or "inappropriate" (terms that could be and sometimes were interpreted very widely). Of course, the desire to "purify" sacred art of secular and sensual elements was by no means new. We have seen it already in Savonarola, and Pope Paul IV ordered Daniele da Volterra to cover up of some of the nudes in Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel "Last Judgment" already in 1559, before Trent's decrees.⁵⁸ The Council therefore was simply reiterating and reinforcing a tendency to a certain "artistic puritanism" that had already arisen in reaction to the real or supposed paganism of Renaissance art. As Arnold Hauser remarks, perhaps the most important aspect of Trent's decree was the placing of judgments about art in the hands of bishops. This created the possibility of a complete subjection of sacred art to dogmatic concerns, with little concern for aesthetic values in themselves.⁵⁹ (As we shall see, El Greco would be affected by the enforcement of such priorities.)

Naturally, the implementation of the decrees of Trent on art of varied from place to place. For political reasons, the Kingdom of France did not officially "receive" the council's decrees until 1615. Even in Italy and Spain, where the council was quickly accepted, the reform of art was not the first concern of most bishops; they had other more pressing matters to attend to. As late as the beginning of the seventeenth century the Jesuit author Maselli complained about the "grave negligence" of those responsible for executing the Council's decrees on art.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, by the later part of the sixteenth century, after 1560 there was a perceptible reaction against "paganizing" or "worldly" tendencies in church art, at least in Italy and (perhaps especially) in Spain.

This reforming attitude took special aim at the portrayal of the nude in religious art. The saintly and influential archbishop Carlo Borromeo ordered the removal of paintings including nude figures wherever he found them in churches of his archdiocese of Milan. The Bishop of Ghent, Jacques Boonen, later bishop of Malines, had paintings burned and statues destroyed if he found them too lascivious. Numerous post-Tridentine ecclesiastical authors condemned the use of the nude in sacred painting.⁶¹

Not surprisingly, Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* came in for particular criticism. As we have mentioned, already before Trent there were complaints and repaintings. The influential humanist Pietro Aretino in a public letter of

1545 wrote that such nudity would not be inappropriate in a decorative loggia, but was out of place in the central chapel of Christianity. The Dominican Ambrogio Catarino echoed his sentiments: "I commend the art used in the matter, but I vehemently vituperate and detest the matter itself. For this nudity of limbs appears most indecent on altars and in the most important of God's chapels."⁶² Even Michelangelo's great champion Vasari seems to have been influenced by the post-Tridentine ecclesiastical opinion. In the first (pre-Trent) edition of his *Lives* (1550) he expresses disapproval of artists who have little personal faith and who in their paintings "excite dishonorable appetites and lascivious desires, so that the work is blamed for what is disreputable, while praise is accorded to its artistic excellence." However, he also notes that the use of beautiful figures, presumably like Michelangelo's nudes, can serve religion. But in the same passage in the second edition (published in 1568, after the Council of Trent and the censorship of the *Last Judgment*), he writes that he does not approve of "those figures in the churches that are painted practically nude, because in them one sees that the painter has not had the appropriate respect for the place."⁶³

Even artists sometimes took umbrage at "indecorous" paintings. For example, the sculptor Ammanati, who died 1589, in a letter to Academy of Florence invites artists to renounce nude figures that dangerously move the imagination. It was generally tacitly agreed that pagan fable would be a legitimate artistic domain for the portrayal of the adult nude, but that religious art should be free of this genre.⁶⁴

Although "Tradition" was accepted by Trent as a legitimate repository of revelation (in opposition to Luther's *sola Scriptura* principle), the concern for "right" doctrine led to suspicion of the uncritical acceptance of many traditions. In some places, as we have seen, miracle plays were forbidden because of the many noncanonical accretions that had been introduced from popular piety and devotion. Similarly, images were subject to censorship if they were thought to propagate "false doctrine," which could sometimes mean lack of fidelity to the scriptural sources, even if this was simply a matter of introducing subject matter not mentioned in the Scripture. (As we shall see, Veronese and El Greco, among others, were criticized on these grounds.)

The preferred Catholic art of the period generally tended to be affectively charged, but also naturalistic. Post-Tridentine writers about religious art appealed to medieval (especially Aristotelian/Thomistic) epistemology and psychology to justify these preferences. The Jesuit Louis Richeóme in his book *La Peinture Spirituelle* explains that the "species" of things, i.e., their "form" abstracted from matter, comes from things to the human mind through the senses. Hence the naturalistic portrayal of things, that is, their representation

as they appear to the senses, is associated with "truth." Moreover, since all things—world and senses and mind—are created by God, they all share to some extent in the divine essence, and there is a natural communion between them.⁶⁵ At the same time, religious art was meant to serve a spiritual purpose, and it was thought to do so best by its affective quality. As medieval psychology held, vision can create an emotional response. The emotions in turn affect the will, which is the instrument of personal transformation. Therefore religious images were directed at attracting the will. The emotion intended might vary; penitence might be inspired by a realistically gruesome picture of the passion, for example. But frequently spiritual attractiveness was taken to mean a "sweetness" that would appeal to unsophisticated emotions.

The post-Tridentine religious spirit was also critical of the introduction into sacred art of any element that did not directly serve a religious purpose. Comparing the religious art of the high Renaissance to that which arose after the Council of Trent, Émile Mâle writes:

[the sacred art of the Quattrocento] welcomed all of nature . . . The most touching beauties of this world were in correspondence with the beauties of the Gospel; everything breathed tenderness, love of the divine creation; the Virgin and Child were the most beautiful wonders of this universe that contained so many wonders. Now [after the Council of Trent], the religious art that the Church likes is a severe, concentrated art, where nothing is superfluous, where nothing enters in to distract the attention of the Christian meditating on the mysteries of salvation. Everything that does not serve this end must be banished, for it is the greatness of the Gospel that should move us, not the beauty of nature.⁶⁶

One effect of this move was a deepening of the separation between sacred and profane art. Previously, religious art had in a sense been "total": it was the primary sphere for art, and—especially in the early Renaissance—it served as a locus for many genres, including landscape, the nude, and portraiture. Now the latter are increasingly recognized as "secular" subjects, to be avoided in church art. At the same time, a secular market for art, even art with ostensibly religious subject matter, was developing. The works of Titian (Tiziano Vecello, 1488?—1576), for example, exemplify the transition to the "gallery" type image, as opposed to the painting intended to be incorporated into a church structure as an altarpiece.⁶⁷ As we have seen in speaking of Cranach and Dürer, the medium of print and new techniques for reproducing engravings also provided new contexts for religious art outside churches. This separation of the secular and sacred spheres of art allowed the adoption of strictly religious criteria for the latter.