

Study for the Month of December 2013

The Papacy Series-Part X

Nathaniel Fajardo

Whole Gospel Ministries

PO Box 1764 Loma Linda, CA 92354

Tel (951) 685-1956 (leave a message) email: natfajardo777@yahoo.com

Web: www.wholegospelministries.org

It's Time to Wake Up!

It is now with even greater concern for all Christian brethren, particularly Seventh-day Adventists that I humbly plead that all individually study what God through His angel Gabriel carefully revealed to Daniel, and then to John the chain of events and chronology of world and church history through prophecy. Both were shown in vision what were to take place particularly in the last days—our very day and age---so that none need to speculate and certainly can never plead deception to be an excuse! They were shown in vision, specifically the career of the beast and Antichrist of prophecy, from the infliction of its deadly wound in 1798 to its progressive healing since then and its activities during the closing hours of probation starting 1844 and onward with the surprising enabling by the (apostate) Protestant churches themselves as “the image of the beast” that will soon be formed in America, the beast with lamb-like horns. John wrote: “*And I saw one of his heads as it were woundeth to death [in 1798]; and his deadly wound was healed: **and all the world wondered after the beast.***” Revelation 13: 3.

How swiftly this specific prophecy is unfolding before our very eyes and ears and yet alarmingly and strangely, it seems that a large, if not larger part of God's remnant church aren't moving, living, and planning correspondingly, demonstrating the conviction that the days of peace, prosperity, and religious freedom to worship God according to the dictates of the Holy Spirit upon their conscience—still protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution---are soon to disappear forever! The prophesied time of the fiery yet necessary ordeal of the final sifting of the remnant church that eternally separates the gold from the dross, the wheat from the tares is knocking at our doors, as it were. That fearful, short yet intense time which the inspired pen also describes as a time of mass defections as did most of Christ's disciples forsake Him at His darkest hours (Peter, the alleged “first pope” even denied knowing Him on the evening of Christ's farce trial. Note the following (all emphasis mine):

“As the storm approaches, *a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified* [not merely justified] through *obedience* to the truth [of the third angel's message], abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit [even while they profess faith in the third angel's message], they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, *they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side.* Men of talent and pleasing address [popular speakers, ministers, theologians, etc], who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith [see Matthew 10], these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers [civil and religious] against them. “- E. G. White, “*The Great Controversy* (1911 ed.), pp. 608-9:

“Many are holding the truth only with the tips of their fingers. They have had great light and many privileges [including far advanced knowledge of health reform, dress reform, worldly entertainment, etc.]. Like Capernaum [see Luke 10:15, 12-14] they have been exalted to heaven *in this respect. In the time of test and trial that is approaching, they will become apostates*, unless they put away their pride and self-confidence, unless they have an entire transformation of character.” – E.G. White, Letter 5, November, 1833/See also 3SM 414-5.

It is becoming increasingly difficult not to conclude that it may our generation that will see the fullest fulfillment of the prophecies of Revelation 13: 1-18, which, naturally and contextually should extend to Revelation 14: 1-6; so observed James White himself.

HEADLINE:Pope Francis Named Time’s Person of the Year!

Source: <http://news.yahoo.com/pope-francis-named-time-39-person-132543199> Yahoo News dated 12/11/2013:

“(Reuters) – Time Magazine named Pope Francis its Person of the Year on Wednesday, crediting him with *shifting the message of the Catholic Church while capturing the imagination of millions of people* who had become disillusioned with the Vatican. “This is the third time the magazine has chosen a pope as its Person of the Year. Time gave that honor to Pope John Paul II in 1994 and to Pope John XXIII in 1963. “Pope Francis beat out former U.S. National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden and gay rights activist Edith Windsor for the award. Other finalists included Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and U.S. Senator Ted Cruz from Texas. “*What makes this Pope so important is **the speed** with which he has catapulted the imaginations of millions who had given up on hoping for the Church at all,*” Time said in its story. “**In a matter of months, Francis has elevated the healing mission of the church---the church as servant and comforter of hurting people in an often harsh world---above the doctrinal police work so important to his recent predecessors.**”“Vatican spokesman Father Federico Lombardi said Pope Francis was *not speaking fame*. ‘It is a positive sign that one of the most prestigious recognitions of the international media has been given to *a person who proclaims to the world spiritual, religious and moral values and speaks out forcefully in favor of peace and greater justice,*’ Lombardi said in a statement. ‘If this attracts men and women and gives them hope, the Pope is happy. If this choice of ‘Person of the Year’ means that *many* have understood this message, even implicitly, he is certainly glad.”“In September the Argentine pontiff gave a ground-breaking and frank interview in which he said *the Vatican must shake off and obsession with teachings on abortion, contraception, and homosexuality and become more merciful.* And on a plane ride from Brazil, Pope Francis said that he was not in a position to judge homosexuals who are of good will and in search of God, *marking a break from his predecessor, Benedict, who said that homosexuality is and internal disorder.* “His style is also characterized by a *public move to frugality.* Pope Francis has shunned the traditional Mercedes [Benz] previous popes drove for a 1984 Renault 4 economy car with 300, 000 km. (186, 000 miles). As a cardinal in Buenos Aires, he travelled by subway.

COMMENTARY: Let’s take a closer look at the claim: “*The healing mission of the Catholic Church---the church as servant and comforter of hurting people in an often harsh world---above the doctrinal police work so important to his recent predecessors.*” What shameful, glaring ignorance of both the Scriptures and true world and church history! Since when was the Roman Catholic Church on a “healing mission”? Since when

was the Roman Catholic Church “a servant and comforter of hurting people in an often harsh world?” Here’s a short review of her real career that should make any rational being cringe with the previous statements made:

“In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed on the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire Church. *Paganism had given way to the Papacy.* The dragon [imperial Rome] had given to the beast [the Roman Catholic Church] ‘his power, and his seat, and great authority.’ Revelation 13: 2. And now began the **1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. Daniel 7: 25; Revelation 13: 5-7.** (See Appendix). Christians were forced to choose either to yield or to wear away their lives in dungeons or suffer death by the rack, the fagot or the headman’s ax. Now were fulfilled the words of Jesus; ‘Ye shall be betrayed by both friends, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be out to death. And ye shall be betrayed both parents, and brethren and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for My name’s sake.’ Luke 21:16,17. Persecution opened and some of you shall be hated by all men for My name’s sake.” Luke 21; 17, 17. Persecution opened upon the faithful with greater fury than ever before, and the world became a vast battlefield. For hundreds of years the [true] church of Christ found refuge in seclusion and obscurity. Thus says the prophet: ‘The woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her a thousand two hundred and threescore days.’ Rev. 12:6 [1 prophetic day is equal to 1 year of 360 days, Num. 13: 34; Eze. 4:6]. *The accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. As her power increased, the darkness deepened. Faith was transferred from Christ, the true foundation, to the pope of Rome.* Instead of trusting to the Son of God for forgiveness of sins and for eternal salvation, the people looked to the pope, and to the priests and prelates to whom he delegated authority. They were taught that the pope was their earthly mediator and that none could approach God except through him; and further, that he stood in the place of God to them and was therefore to be implicitly obeyed. A deviation from his requirements was sufficient cause for the severest punishment to be visited upon the bodies and souls of the offenders. Thus the minds of the people were turned away from God to fallible, erring, and cruel men, nay, more, to the prince of darkness himself, who exercised his power through them. *Sin was disguised in the garb of sanctity.* [That’s why Paul also styles him as “the man of sin”; see 2 Thess. 2: 3-11]. When the Scriptures are suppressed, and man comes to regard himself as supreme, we need look only for *fraud, deception, and debasing iniquity.* With the elevation of human laws and traditions was manifest the corruptions that ever results from setting aside the law of God. Those were days of peril for the [true] church of Christ. The faithful standard-bearers were few indeed. Though the truth was not left without witnesses, yet at times it seemed that error and superstition would wholly prevail, and true religion would be banished from the earth. The gospel was lost sight of, but the forms of religion were multiplied, and the people were burdened with rigorous exactions. They were taught not only to look to the pope as their mediator, but to trust to works of their own to atone for sin. Long pilgrimages, acts of penance, the worship of relics, the erection of churches, shrines, and altars, the payment of large sums to the church---these and many similar were enjoined to appease the wrath of God or to secure His favor; as if God were like men, to be angered at trifles, or pacified by gifts or acts of penance!”- E.G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 54, 55 (1911 ed.)

HEADLINE: “Gabriel Byrne on Pope Francis: ‘He’s a Figurehead’

12/6/2013 <http://gma.yahoo.com/blogs/abc-blogs/gabriel-byrne-pope-francis-39-39-figurehead-39-11>.

“Irish actor Gabriel Byrne, who has been openly critical of the Catholic church in the past, is sounding off about Pope Francis. ‘Like Barack Obama, a bit like Tony Blair, he’s a figurehead, a CEO, a man who does the bidding of the masters who hide behind him, Byrne said of the new pope in an hour-long conversation on the “Michael Des Barres Show.” The ‘In Treatment’ star said Pope Francis may have set a different tone by *doing ‘Christ-like things,’* such as bathing the feet of prisoners and embracing a severely deformed man, but the actor believes *not much within the Catholic Church will change.* “Can one change an institution? I feel the answer is no,’ Byrne said. ‘He can initiate certain reforms in the Vatican . . . but unless he radically alters the policies of the Catholic Church there won’t be a change.’ “In 2010, Byrne made headlines when he revealed that he had been molested, first, as an altar boy at a Christian Brothers School in Ireland and later, as a seminary student. Byrne told an Irish TV Show that he didn’t feel the impact of the sexual abuse immediately. ‘But I suppose when I think about my later life and how I had difficulties with certain issues, there is the real possibility that they could have been attributable to that,’ said the actor, who has battled alcoholism.”

COMMENT: Pedophilia is only one of the gross crimes being committed by the Roman Catholic clergy for so long now and is barely coming to the surface showing how effective and tight control they have on the traditional news media services. See our past issues.

HEADLINE: “Pope Francis Blesses Man With Disfigured Face Displaying Healing Power of Love.”

Source: Huff Post Religion, December 9, 2013. See http://huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/21/pope-francis-disfigured-man_n_4317822.html

“While many spiritual leaders preach the importance of compassion, Pope Francis all yet another example of what it really looks like to live a compassionate and caring life. Just weeks after a photo of him *kissing a man with a rare skin disorder* moved many to tears, another picture was taken showing the pope *embracing a man* with a severely disfigured face. The pope spoke to him and blessed him after his general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on Wednesday, November 20. At the end of each general audience, the pope usually dedicates some time to *greeting the sick* and disabled people that come to meet him. Vinicio Riva, the man with *neurofibromatosis*, told the media that he ‘felt only love,’ as the Pope embraced him. The Pope encouraged all people to take care of the needy in a tweet earlier this week.”

COMMENT: The Papacy claims to be the *visible human head* of the Church, the Vicegerent of Christ—not the Holy Spirit, and further claims to be “God himself on earth.” This is one of the most blasphemous fundamental doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. But when Christ was on earth, performing His merciful miraculous works and preaching of the true Gospel as prophesied of Him in the Old Testament, the Biblical record is that He *literally healed the sick, terminally ill, resurrected the dead, and cast out demons from those possessed*—not merely “kissing” or “embracing” them as “demonstrating what it looks like to live a compassionate and caring life”! The New Testament has some 40 recorded miracles of Christ, ranging from cleansing lepers (Matt. 8:2; Mark 1: 40; Luke 5: 12), to raising Lazarus, dead for four days, back to life (John

11:43), etc. In fact the apostle John wrote: (Referring to doubting Thomas): “And many other signs (*miracles*, margin) truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name.” John 20: 20, 31. Then again: “And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that *even the world itself* could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.” John 21: 25.

HEADLINE: “Pope Francis Is Not Liberal Or Conservative: He is Prophetic.”

Source: Huffpost Religion, Dec. 9, 2013. See http://huffingtonpost.com/tom-krattenmaker/pope-francis-prophetic-_b_4414410.html

“(RNS). It’s one thing to say kind words about gay people and atheists while admonishing those who would bury them with stones. It’s one thing to walk humbly and call the Catholic Church to compassion for the poor. It’s one thing to kiss a horribly disfigured man from whom most people would run in disgust. “But apparently, it’s quite another to start calling out growing economic inequality and naïve faith in capitalism. By doing just that in his recent *encyclical*, Pope Francis has touched a third rail in conservative American politics. So begins the backlash. “Yet in the new round of skirmishing around Francis and his supposedly ‘liberal’ views, U.S. political pundits and news media wags—both progressive and conservative—are missing the point about the pope and what he’s up to. *Their mistake? They see his words and deeds through the lens of American politics and ideology. What Francis is doing is prophetic, not political, and we should recognize that he’s playing, to his credit, in a whole different arena. “Many American conservatives can come to regard the Catholic hierarchy as their cultural war ally. This pope is becoming something of a head-scratcher—and headache—for them now that he has spoken out against trickle-down economics and the fetishizing of free markets.*

“Too liberal, Sarah Palin said, while promising, uncharacteristically, to look into it further. Too political, Fox News’ Stuart Varney charged, claiming Francis has crossed the line. Too Marxist, Rush Limbaugh concluded: ‘Somebody has either written this for him or gotten to him.’ ‘You might have heard of some of the liberal cackling in response to all this conservative hand-wringing. *Progressive news media figures* who could always be counted on to criticize, not applaud, the Catholic Church *are sounding positively gleeful* about the pope’s pronouncements and, more precisely, the conservative reaction.

‘When Palin calls the Pope too liberal, he’s probably doing something right,’ wrote Allen Clifton on the Forward Progressives website. ‘A progressive Pope is Driving the Wingnuts Batty,’ declared a headline at the progressive Daily Kos. “Allow the progressive a moment to enjoy their adversaries’ discomfort. But before they can start claiming Pope Francis as the standard bearer for the progressive movement, they ought to remind themselves of a few less enjoyable realities.

“As observed by pundit E.J. Dionne---*a liberal-leaning Catholic and unabashed Francis admirer*---the pope is no liberal on abortion. Nor, despite his tone change on the matter of same-sex couples, has Francis come out in favor of gay marriage or

ordination of women, or contraception. [The leaders and theologians of the SDA church should take a very serious look at these]. The day could come when progressive activists are no longer swooning over Francis but lamenting his ‘conservative’ views on these and other liberal causes. *“Which one suspects, will be of little concern to new face of the worldwide Catholic Church.* To state what should be obvious, Francis is not a player in American politics. He’s not even American, for God’s sake. Growing up and pursuing his vocation in Argentina has no doubt had a profound effect on him. *“Even more important, the pope is not a politician, a media loudmouth or an activist. He is a religious figure, wholly dedicated to representing the Gospel of Jesus Christ as he understands it to a world caught up in a thousand other things.* “As conservative Catholic George Weigel writes, ‘Pope Francis is a revolutionary. The revolution he proposes, however, is not a matter of economic or political prescription, but a revolution in the self-understanding of the [Roman] Catholic Church.

“Prophetic is probably the best word for the role the pope is playing---not in the sense of predicting the future, but standing outside of business and politics as usual and speaking hard and inconvenient moral truths.’ “Has someone gotten to the Pope, as [Rush] Limbaugh suggests? Yes, actually. Jesus Christ apparently has. [This is what inevitably happens to all who are supposed to be experts and religious scholars, as the scribes and Pharisees of Christ’s time were, but are ignorant, either inadvertently or by choice of true Biblical prophecy]. So when a media figure such as Varney blasts Francis for ‘wanting to influence my politics,’ one has to ask who’s really bringing in politics to the discussion about Pope Francis. We’ll probably find the answer not in the Vatican but in the mirror.”

NOTE: Author Tom Krattenmaker is a Portland-based writer specializing in religion in public life and a member of USA TODAY’S Board of Contributors. He is author of the new book, “The Evangelicals You Don’t Know”). A version of this story originally appeared in USA Today.

COMMENT: The Papacy is way too many steps ahead of the feuding political parties of America, leading them on unawares like sheep to the slaughter. The Democrats, Republicans, and Tea Partiers; the liberals and the conservatives, will not realize it until it is too late to escape the snare. By keeping them busy guessing what his next public statements (orchestrated and stage-managed, of course) and apparently on-the-spur public commentaries on current sensitive issues of the day, and steps he may take that may publicly favor or weaken their pet political agendas, he is keeping them at bay from uniting by busily sniping at each other—until the right moment arrives—which will be given him. That’s what is Biblically prophetic.

Krattenmaker wrote: *“Prophetic is probably the best word for the role that the pope is playing---not in the sense of predicting the future, but standing outside of business and politics as usual and speaking hard and inconvenient moral truths.”*

Prophetic indeed! But exactly opposite of what Krattenmaker says—if only his eyes were even half-opened to the knowledge the real nature of the great controversy began in heaven and continued on earth; the plan of redemption prepared before the foundation of the world! If only he had taken a brief course or seminar on the two major prophetic books, Daniel and Revelation, and/or read the divinely summary of this controversy in the book *The Great Controversy* or Uriah Smith’s scholarly treatise, *Daniel and the Revelation*—what a difference it would have made on his understanding and position,

and that of countless others! The book *The Great Controversy* needs to be placed in as many hands in the quickest and most efficient way possible.

The pope “speaking hard and inconvenient moral truths”? What and whose definition of hard and inconvenient moral truths” is he referring to? It was firmly standing for and proclaiming the *real* hard and inconvenient moral truths of the Holy Scriptures that the truly righteous servants of God, beginning with Abel, the prophets of Old, the disciples of Christ in the New, the faithful Christians during the rule of the blood-thirsty Roman emperors, and the godly reformers and saints during the rule of the Papacy during the Dark Ages, gave their lives for. The papacy never has and never will “stand *outside of business and politics* as usual.” In fact, control of these distinct activities and pursuits of the human society have been major components of the secrets of its power and success in deceiving the whole world, particularly in the last days till the close of earth’s probation.

“The apostle Paul, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, foretold the *great apostasy* which would result in the establishment of the *papal power*. He declared that the day of Christ should not come, ‘except there come a falling away first, and that *man of sin* be revealed, the *son of perdition*; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.’ And furthermore, the apostle warns his brethren that the ‘*mystery of iniquity* doth already work.’ 2 Thessalonians 2: 3, 4, 7. Even at that early date he saw, creeping into the church, *errors that would prepare the way for the development of the papacy. Little by little, at first in stealth and silence, and then more openly as it increased in strength and gained control of the minds of men, ‘the mystery of iniquity’ carried forward its deceptive and blasphemous work. Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church.* The spirit of compromise [“politics is the art of compromise”] and conformity was restrained for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under paganism [pagan, imperial Rome, also referred to as “the dragon”]. But as persecution ceased, and Christianity entered the courts and palaces of the kings, she laid aside the humble simplicity of Christ and His apostles for the pomp and pride of pagan priests and rulers; and in the place of the requirements of God, she substituted human theories and traditions. The nominal conversion of [Roman emperor] Constantine, in the early part of the fourth century, caused great rejoicing; *and the world cloaked with a form of righteousness, walked into the church. Now the work of corruption steadily progressed. Paganism, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror.* Her spirit controlled the church. Her doctrines, ceremonies, and superstitions were incorporated into the faith and worship of the professed followers of Christ. *This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of the ‘man of sin’ foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God.* That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan’s power—a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will.” – *Great Controversy*, (1911) “An Era of Spiritual Darkness” chapter, pp. 49-50.

(2) “*Has someone gotten to the Pope, as Limbaugh suggests?* Krattenmaker answers his own question, ‘*Yes, actually. Jesus Christ apparently has.*’ Diligent students of the Bible, enlightened and led by the Holy Spirit, recognize this as inevitably happening to all who are schooled in the religious educational centers of the world and are supposed to experts of the Bible by their colleagues and admirers (and handlers)—as the scribes and Pharisees were similarly venerated by the Jewish nation in Christ’s time—but were woefully ignorant of true Bible prophecy and the teachings of the Holy Scriptures.

HEADLINE: “Pope Francis Says He is No Marxist”

Source: Yahoo News 12/15/20. See <http://yahoo.com/pope-francis-syas-no-marxist-094958904.html>

Vatican City (AFP) – “Pope Francis says he knows a lot of ‘good’ Marxists but was no Communist himself, following criticism of his diatribes against unfettered capitalism from conservative commentators in the United States. ‘Marxist ideology is wrong. But in my life I have met a lot of Marxists who are good people, so I do not feel offended,’ Francis said in an interview with the Italian daily La Stampa published on Sunday. He said his condemnation of the *inequality caused by the current global economic system* were not to be intended to be an expert analysis and were only a reiteration of the social doctrine of the [Roman] Catholic Church. ‘That does not mean being a Marxist,’ he said. U.S. radio host Rush Limbaugh labelled as ‘pure Marxism’ a text published by the pope last month in which he warned that an unfair economic system ‘kills’ and warned that unregulated capitalism was ‘*a new tyranny*.’ The criticism of the pope who witnessed the effects of a devastating economic collapse first hand in his homeland Argentina, was repeated by the members of the Tea Party movement and the television channel Fox News. *Francis himself is a moderate and was fierce critic of the leftist-inspired Liberation Theology movement* in Latin America, although he has recently appeared to reconcile with its leaders.”

COMMENT: Christian Edwardson, in *Facts of Faith*, (1943), Southern Publishing Asso., Nashville, TN, p 261, wrote: “The doctrine of Pope Leo XIII is the doctrine of the Catholic Church, and it is taught in her schools in the U.S. One of their schoolbooks, ‘Manual of Christian Doctrine, by a Seminary Professor,’ printed by J.J. McVey, Philadelphia, 1915, and carrying the sanction of the Catholic Censor and the seal of the [Catholic] Church, has this to say concerning the ‘Relations of Church and State’:

“What name is given to the doctrine that the state has neither the right nor the duty to be united to the church to protect it? [Ans] ‘This doctrine is called *Liberalism*. It is founded principally on the fact that modern society rests on liberty of conscience and of worship, on liberty of speech and of the press.’ ‘Why is Liberalism to be condemned? [Ans]. ‘Because it denies all subordination of the state to the [Roman Catholic] church.’” –*New York Sun*, July 11, 1892; quoted in *Liberty*, 1907, No. 4, p. 10.

HEADLINE: “Pope Expounds on Capitalist Criticism”

Source: Yahoo News, Dec. 13: “In his first message for the Roman Catholic Church’s World Day of Peace, Pope Francis attacked mega salaries and gigantic bonuses, saying they were symptoms of an economy based on greed and inequality.” (See CNBC Videos, Dec. 12, 2013). Some of the highly-interesting comments posted, which are Biblically and historically accurate are as follows:

By Arnold: “Mrs. Karen Hudes, Senior member of the Council for the World Bank for 20 years, said the Jesuits and the Vatican are a core component for the corruption in the World Bank and 60% of the U. S. tax revenue goes to the Vatican. She was fired for uncovering corruption.”

By Sharon: “Greed and inequality? Have you ever been to Rome? The power and wealth of the Catholic Church is enormous. The Vatican is full of looted treasures, and the whole city is full of the most gaudy and ridiculously expensive churches that were built by other peoples’ blood and conquest. Even today the Catholic Church is one of the world’s most lucrative businesses....which I admire.”

By Aldoro: “The pope lives like a king among the world’s greatest treasures and wears gold clothes, eats off gold plates, in the finest, richest castle in the world...and he will criticize

capitalism that made the greatest middle class in the world and the most generous people to the most people (before 1913 when the progressives sold us off to megabankers via the federal reserve, and changed our Constitution with the 16th 17th amendment that gave the government all the power over us.”

Pope Francis calls for “Public Frugality? How about “Internal Frugality”?

Source: The Huff Post RELIGION, Dec. 9, 2013 EST/ Updated 12/09/13 EST
http://www.huffintonpost.com/2013/12/09/vatican-paintings-anja-grebe_n_4380487

“Take a look inside [the Vatican Museums] with these gorgeous images:

‘Raphael: Raphael Rooms. *The School of Athens*.

“One of the most famous paintings in the Raphael Rooms is the *School of Athens* representing *philosophy and science*, disciplines in which Raphael includes painting and architecture. It is in part an *homage* to some of the most important artists and scholars *active at the papal court at the opening of the sixteenth century*, most importantly the artist Bramante, to whom Bramante owed his recommendations to Julius II. The painting, whose sophisticated perspective opens up a deep vista in the small room, represents and idealized gathering of scholars and artists from the classical world, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance, and constitutes one of Raphael’s greatest achievements.” [Note: this period is part of the Dark Ages].

‘Michelangelo: Sistine Chapel, *The Last Judgment* (detail with Christ, the Virgin Mary and Saints)

“Michelangelo’s enormous painting unites some 300 persons around the central Christ figure, and *almost all are naked*. The work depicts the resurrection of the dead and their separation into the saved and the damned. While the saved souls ascend to heaven on Christ’s right-hand side, the side of the ‘just,’ the damned descend to hell on his left. The nude figures, particularly the saints, offended many of Michelangelo’s contemporaries. The stern theologians of the Council of Trent denounced the fresco and commissioned painter Daniele Da Volterra to paint vestments and *fig leaves* over some of the naked figures in 1565, a year after Michelangelo died. These alterations were *reversed* during the chapel’s restoration.

‘Pinturichio: Borgia Apartments. *Annunciation*

“The First Room Borgia Apartments, the Room of the Mysteries of Faith, is decorated with scenes of the life of the Virgin Mary. The Annunciation of the Birth of Christ is the first of the sequence. Pinturichio has painted the event, which according to the Gospel of St. Luke occurred in Mary’s house, in a *palatial* Renaissance-style interior closed off at the back by an architectural element resembling a triumphal arch. The Annunciation itself takes place in the foreground of the rigorously symmetrical fresco. Mary, wearing a *blue mantle*, kneels on the right and offers a humble gesture of greeting to the angel, who approaches her from the left holding a *lily*.

‘Giotto: Pinacoteca, *Stephaneschi Polyptych*

“The Stephaneschi Polyptych is one of the world’s oldest works in Pinacoteca. *It is closely tied to the history of the Vatican*. The Florentine painter Giotto de Bondone completed this richly gilded double-sided work between 1320 and 1330 for the high altar of St. Peter’s.....? The polyptych was commissioned by Cardinal Jacopo Caetani Stephaneschi (ca. 1270-1343), whom Giotto portrays at the feet of St. Peter’s throne holding a detailed model of the altar on which the donor himself can be seen. This likeness is regarded as one of the first realistic portraits in the history of painting.

Leonardo da Vinci: Pinacoteca: *St. Jerome*

“This panel of St. Jerome is one of Leonardo da Vinci’s more enigmatic works. It was painted around 1482, the year Leonardo moved from Florence to the ducal court of Milan. It is not known why the highly innovative picture was never finished. It maybe that the work failed to meet with the approval of a possible patron or Leonardo’s own perfectionism led him to abandon it. From a contemporary point of view, the work is fascinating precisely because of its sketch-like state, as this affords and insight into Leonardo’s painting method. The work was only identified in the early nineteenth century---by the painter Angelica Kaufmann—as the work of Leonardo. It was acquired by Pius IX for the Pinacoteca Vaticana in 1856.

Raphael: *St. Peter Healing a Lame Man*, Tapestry

“The healing of the lame man was St. Peter’s first miracle as an apostle. According to the Acts of the Apostles, St. Peter healed a crippled beggar by the door of the Temple with the simple words: ‘In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.’ (Acts 3: 6). Raphael sets the scene beneath the mighty twisted column of Solomon’s Temple in Jerusalem, whose form and decoration Pieter van Aelst has skillfully translated into tapestry. In the center column we see the act of healing taking place, with apostles St. Peter and St. John and the lame man. Raphael has chosen to depict the moment when St. Peter takes the beggar, who is sitting on the floor, by the hand and thereby effects the miracle.

Roman artist: Pio-Clementino Museum: *Laocoon*

“In early 1506 a large marble sculptural group was discovered in the Esquiline Vineyards. In his Natural History, the classical author Pliny the Elder (ca. 23-79 AD) describes the Laocoon as a work that is ‘to be preferred to all other works of painting and sculpture.’ This sculptural group, acquired by Julius II in 1506, was one of the earliest works to be exhibited in the Cortile Ottagono and it remains among the most famous of all antique sculptures. Thought to have been made after a Greek bronze original, the group depicts the gruesome death of the Trojan priest Laocoon after warning his fellow citizens of the deception involving the Trojan Horse. Artists such as Michelangelo admired the realistic depiction of the play of muscles, shown here at the point of their greatest exertion, and the convincing facial expressions and gestures of figures in the throes of death.

The Roman artist, Pio-Clementino Museum: *Apollo Belvedere*

“The Apollo Belvedere is perhaps the most famous statue in the Vatican Museums and one of the best-known sculptures in the history of art. This figure of the antique god of the Muses and of war was discovered virtually undamaged at the end of the fifteenth century and put on display by Julius II in the Belvedere courtyard by 1508 at the latest. The larger-than-life-size statue depicts Apollo not as the art loving God of the Muses holding a lyre, but instead in a more martial pose. Disseminated in numerous reproductions, the sculpture has been regarded as *the epitome of classical beauty* ever since it was put on display in the Cortile Ottagono.

Etruscan goldsmith, Gregorian Etruscan Museum: *Large Golden Fibula*

“This large solid-gold fibula, used to fasten its owner’s robes at the shoulder, is *one of the most precious objects* in the Gregorian Etruscan Museum. It was found in the so-called Regolini-Galassi tomb in a previously undisturbed necropolis at Cerveteri in 1836. *Together with other richly decorated gold items that also found their way into the Vatican*, the clasp formed part of the ceremonial dress of the deceased, who must have been a member of the highest aristocracy or even the royal family.

Gian Lorenzo Bernini, St. Peter's Basilica, *St. Longinus*

“According to Christian legend [not the Bible], St. Longinus was the soldier who pierced the side of Christ on the cross with his spear (John 19:34). He is also identified with the Roman captain described in the Gospel of St. Mark as having acknowledged Christ's divinity after seeing him die. ‘Truly this man was the son of God!’ (Mark 15: 39). Longinus was the subject of great veneration as the first pagan convert in the Catholic Church. Bernini sculpted the colossal statue of the saint, one of his most famous creations, for the Longinus pier between 1628 and 1638. . St. Longinus stands in a contrapposto stance with widespread arms, symbolizing his readiness to embrace the [Roman Catholic] Christian faith. The emotion and excitement of the saint at the moment of recognizing God is revealed through his ecstatic, upward gaze and the agitated folds of his mantle, which are also examples of Bernini's mastery.

Pietro Perugino, Pinacoteca, Sala VII: *Madonna and Child with Saints*

“The ‘Madonna and Child with Saints’ is one of Pietro Perugino's most beautiful paintings. Especially stunning is the virtuoso rendering of the sumptuous fabrics. Each figure is given and individual, almost portrait-like expression. The artist proudly signed his masterpiece on the footrest underneath the Madonna. (Captions courtesy of “The Vatican: All the Paintings,” by Anja Grebe.” (end)

COMMENT: If the papacy would auction off these world's rarest and greatest treasures embellishing the Vatican, St. Peter's Basilica, its churches, and museums, that would certainly fetch untold billions of dollars and donate the money to untold millions who have been impoverished for centuries directly as a result of their doctrines, then there is reason to believe that his current photo ops of showing his “humility” is genuine.

But prophecy clearly tells us: “Have these persons forgotten the claim of infallibility put forth for 800 years by this haughty power? So far from being relinquished, this claim was affirmed in the nineteenth century with greater positiveness than ever before. As Rome asserts that the ‘church *never erred*,’ nor will it, according to the Scriptures, *ever err*’ (John L. Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, book 3, century 11, part 2, chapter 2, section 9, note 17), how can she renounce the principles which governed her course in past ages. The Papal Church will never relinquish her claim to infallibility. All that she has done in her persecution of those who reject her dogmas she holds to be right; and would she not repeat the same acts, should the opportunity be presented? Let the restraints now imposed by *secular governments* be removed and Rome be reinstated by her former power, and there would speedily be a revival of her tyranny and persecution.”

“A well-known writer [Josiah Strong, *Our Country*, ch. 5, pars. 2-4] speaks thus of the attitude of the papal hierarchy as regards freedom of conscience, and of the perils which especially threaten the United States from the success of her policy: ‘There are many who are disposed to attribute any fear of Roman Catholicism in the United States to bigotry or childishness. Such see nothing in the character and attitude of Romanism that is hostile to our free institutions, or find nothing portentous in its growth.’ - E.G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911 ed.), p. 564.

(To be continued next month)

