

Defending the Faith

Was Peter the First Pope?

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Dear Dr. Smith:

A friend has provided me a copy of the August 7, 1998 issue of The Sword of the Lord, which contains an article, "Was Peter the First Pope?" by Dr. Herbert Booth Smith.

As a Catholic layman, I d like to point out the extremely serious errors and omissions in this article.

In Part I of the article, Dr. Smith asks, "Was Peter Ever in Rome?"

He states that Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea did not write his Church History until 310 , and "This is a good way from the days under discussion)Not till AD 176 does a doubtful testimony appear. Not till the first quarter of the third century do we find any evidence that the thing was believed, and then only in connection with many admitted falsehoods)The great historian Schaff says that the claim cannot be traced earlier than Jerome in the fourth century."

So when does he maintain the earliest evidence exists of St. Peter s presence in Rome? 310? 176? Or with St. Jerome, who was ordained in 378 and died in 420? Quite a range there.

Surely Dr. Smith knows that Bishop Eusebius quotes from documents written in 232, 211, 200, 198, and 170, which all specifically mention St. Peter in Rome.

Of course, there are numerous other sources, as well. Here are some of the many early historical citations:

Lactantius, The Deaths of the Persecutors 2:5, AD **318**, "When Nero was already reigning, **Peter came to Rome**, where, in virtue of the performance of certain miracles which he worked . . . he converted many to righteousness and established a firm and steadfast temple to God. When this fact was reported to Nero . . . he sprang to the task of tearing down the heavenly temple and of destroying righteousness. It was he that first persecuted the servants of God. **Peter he fixed to a cross**, and Paul he slew."

Bishop Peter of Alexandria, Penance, Canon 9, AD **306**, "Peter, the first chosen of the apostles, having been apprehended often and thrown into prison and treated with ignominy, at last **was crucified in Rome**."

Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, The Chronicle, AD **303**, "[In the second] year of the two hundredth and fifth Olympiad [AD 42]: The Apostle Peter, after he has established the church in Antioch, **is sent to Rome**, where he remains as a bishop of that city, preaching the gospel for twenty-five years."

The Poem Against the Marcionites, AD **267**, "In this chair in which he himself had sat, **Peter in mighty Rome** commanded Linus, the first elected, to sit down."

St. Cyprian, Epistle 52, A. D. **251**, described Rome as "The place of **Peter**."

Orien, Third Commentary on Genesis, AD **232**, quoted by Bishop Eusebius in Church History, "Peter)at last, **having come to Rome**, he was crucified head-downwards; for he had requested that he might suffer this way."

The Little Labyrinth, AD **211**, quoted by Bishop Eusebius in Church History 5:28:3, "Victor . . . was the thirteenth bishop of Rome from Peter."

Tertullian, Against Marcion 4, 5:1, AD **210**, "Let us see what milk the Corinthians drained from Paul; against what standard the Galatians were measured for correction; what the Philippians, Thessalonians, and Ephesians read; what even the nearby **Romans sound forth, to whom both Peter**

and Paul bequeathed the gospel and even sealed it with their blood."

Tertullian, Demurrer Against the Heretics 36 and 32:2, **AD 200**, "But if you are near Italy, you have **Rome**, where authority is at hand for us too. What a happy church that is, on which the apostles poured out their whole doctrine with their blood; **where Peter had a passion like that of the Lord**, where Paul was crowned with the death of John [the Baptist, by being beheaded])[T]his is the way in which the apostolic churches transmit their lists: like the church of the Smyrneans, which records that Polycarp was placed there by John, like **the church of the Romans, where Clement was ordained by Peter.**"

Clement of Alexandria, Sketches, **AD 200**, quoted by Bishop Eusebius in Church History 6, 14:1, "The circumstances which occasioned . . . [the writing] of Mark were these: **When Peter preached the Word publicly at Rome** and declared the gospel by the Spirit, many who were present requested that Mark, who had been a long time his follower and who remembered his sayings; should write down what had been proclaimed."

Caius, Disputation with Proclus, **AD 198**, quoted by Bishop Eusebius in Church History 2:25:5, "It is recorded that Paul was beheaded in **Rome itself, and Peter, likewise**, was crucified, during the reign [of the Emperor Nero]. The account is confirmed by the names of Peter and Paul over the cemeteries there, which remain to the present time. And it is confirmed also by a stalwart man of the Church, Caius by name, who lived in the time of Zephyrinus, Bishop of Rome. This Caius, in a written disputation with Proclus, the leader of the sect of Cataphrygians, says this of the places in which the remains of the aforementioned apostles were deposited: I can point out the trophies of the apostles. For if you are willing to go to the Vatican or to the Ostian Way, you will find the trophies of those who founded this Church."

St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, Against Heresies 3:3:1, 3:3:2, and 3:3:3, **AD 189**, "Matthew also issued among the Hebrews a written Gospel in their own language, while **Peter and Paul were evangelizing in Rome** and laying the foundation of the Church.

"But since it would be too long to enumerate in such a volume as **this the succession of all the churches**, we shall confound all those who, in whatever manner, whether through self-satisfaction or vainglory, or through blindness and wicked opinion, assemble other than where it is proper, by **pointing out here the successions of the bishops of the greatest and most ancient church known to all, founded and organized at Rome by**

the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul, that church which has the tradition and the faith which comes down to us after having been announced to men by the apostles. With that church, because of its superior origin, all the churches must agree, that is, all the faithful in the whole world, and it is in her that the faithful everywhere have maintained the apostolic tradition.

"The blessed apostles [Peter and Paul], having founded and built up the church [of Rome], **they handed over the office of the episcopate to Linus**. Paul makes mention of this Linus in the letter to Timothy. **To him succeeded Anacletus, and after him, in the third place from the apostles, Clement was chosen for the episcopate**. He had seen the blessed apostles and was acquainted with them. It might be said that he still heard the echoes of the preaching of the apostles and had their traditions before his eyes. And not only he, for there were many still remaining who had been instructed by the apostles. In the time of Clement, no small dissension having arisen among the brethren in Corinth, the Church in Rome sent a very strong letter to the Corinthians, exhorting them to peace and renewing their faith . . . To this Clement, Evaristus succeeded . . . and now, in the twelfth place after the apostles, the lot of the episcopate [of Rome] has fallen to Eleutherus. In this order, and by the teaching of the apostles handed down in the Church, the preaching of the truth has come down to us."

St. Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, Letter to Pope Soter, **AD 170**, quoted by Bishop Eusebius in Church History 2:25:8, "You have also, by your very admonition, brought together the planting that was **made by Peter and Paul at Rome** and at Corinth; for both of them alike planted in our Corinth and taught us; and both alike, teaching similarly in Italy, suffered martyrdom at the same time."

St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, while being brought to Rome for martyrdom, wrote Letter to the Romans 4:3, **AD 110**, "I issue you no commands, like Peter and Paul: they were Apostles, while I am but a captive."

Pope Clement (fourth Bishop of Rome), First Epistle to the Corinthians, Chapter 5, **AD 96**, "But not to dwell upon ancient examples, let us come to the most recent spiritual heroes. Let us take the noble examples furnished in our own generation. Through envy and jealousy, the greatest and most righteous pillars [of the Church] have been persecuted and put to death. Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. **Peter**, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labours, and when **he had finally suffered martyrdom**, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to

envy, **Paul** also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching both in the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience."

There are more historical records to show that St. Peter was Bishop of Rome until he was martyred about 67. If you'd like additional citations, I'd be glad to provide them. The evidence is clear and uncontradicted.

Dr. Smith indirectly acknowledges this by saying that some (unnamed) historians think it is possible that another Peter and Paul, rather than the apostles, were martyred in Rome.

Really? Please let me know what records exist to suggest this hypothesis.

Protestant scholar J. N. D. Kelly in the Oxford Dictionary of Popes says, "It seems certain that Peter spent his closing years in Rome)To early writers like Clement of Rome (c.95), Ignatius of Antioch (c. 107), and Irenaeus (c.180), **it was common knowledge that he worked and died in Rome.**"

Even anti-Catholic apologist James White of Alpha Omega Ministries, in a June 1995 debate with Joe Gallegos, conceded, "According to the Papal claims, Peter was the Bishop of Rome until his death. **There is plenty of evidence of this from the writings of early fathers**, but surprisingly little from the Biblical text itself."

Actually, there is Biblical evidence.

In St. Peter's 1st Epistle 5:12-14, he writes, "By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand. **The church that is at Babylon**, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son. Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen."

It is well established that **Babylon is a code name for Rome**. It is used in this way in the Revelation to St. John (The Apocalypse) six times:

Revelation 14:8, "And there followed another angel, saying, **Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city**, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

Revelation 16:19, "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and **great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.**"

Revelation 17:4-6, "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, **BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.** And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration."

Revelation 18:1-3, "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, **Babylon the great is fallen**, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies."

Revelation 18:10-11, "Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, **that great city Babylon, that mighty city!** for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:"

Revelation 18:21-22, "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall **that great city Babylon be thrown down**, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;"

As you may know, some anti-Catholics like to associate the city/state of Rome with the Catholic Church. Of course, this is not Biblically sound. But they can't have it both ways. If Babylon refers to Rome, then St. Peter was indeed writing from Rome.

Dr. Smith is correct in saying that, as Bishop of Rome, St. Peter "must have been absent most of the time from his divinely appointed seat and office."

As the Vicar of Christ, St. Peter had a universal responsibility. Like Pope John Paul II, who has visited 117 countries and traveled the equivalent of nearly 28 times the circumference of the earth, St. Peter undoubtedly traveled frequently throughout the known world.

In the Founding of Christendom, Dr. Warren H. Carroll has pieced together data from secular and religious sources to indicate the probability that St. Peter came to Rome in 42 but was expelled in 49 by an edict of Claudius against the Jews. St. Peter returned to Rome from 54 to 57 and again from 62 to 67, when he was martyred.

In Part II of his article, Dr. Smith asked, "Was Peter Ever Constituted Pope by Christ?"

The Gospel of St. Matthew 16:17-19 says, "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, **That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;** and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And **I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven:** and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Dr. Smith accurately points out that the differences in the Greek words "petros" and "petra" are because, like Spanish and French, Koine Greek has masculine and feminine words. Petros is the masculine form of the feminine Greek noun petra. The words mean exactly the same.

To his credit, Dr. Smith does not claim that petra means "large rock" and petros means "pebble" or "small stone." The Greek word for pebble or small stone is "lithos," which is used in the Gospel of St. Matthew 4:3, the Gospel of St. John 10:31, and in St. Peter's 1st Epistle 2:5.

In addition, in St. Matthew 16:18, the Greek demonstrative pronoun "taute" is used, which means, "this very." And when used with the Greek work "kai," the pronoun refers back to the preceding noun, absolutely referring to St. Peter.

And as you know, Jesus spoke Aramaic, which, like English, does not have masculine and feminine words. Peter and rock are the same word: **Kepha**.

Many Protestant theologians agree.

D. A. Carson, Professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Seminary and author of the Expositor's Bible Commentary, says, "and most probably kepha was used in both clauses (**you are kepha and on this kepha**), since the word was used both for a name

and for a rock."

This fits in exactly with what immediately follows. Jesus gives St. Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven and says "whatsoever **thou** shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever **thou** shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Later in the Gospel of St. Matthew at 18:15-19, Jesus gives the power of binding and loosing (legislative power) to the other apostles, but only St. Peter has the keys to the kingdom of heaven.

This role as the chief steward or prime minister of the Church can be understood from the Prophecy of Isaiah 22:20-22:

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and **I will commit thy government into his hand**: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And **the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder**; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open."

In addition, Jesus confers the power of Chief Shepherd on St. Peter in the Gospel of St. John 21:15-17:

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, **Feed my lambs**. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, **Feed my sheep**. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, **Feed my sheep**."

This special role can be understood from the following two verses:

2nd Book of Samuel 5:2. "Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD said to thee, **Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel**."

The Prophecy of Ezekiel 34:23. "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; **he shall feed them, and he shall be their**

shepherd."

Likewise, in the Gospel of St. Luke 22:31-32, Jesus confers on St. Peter the responsibility to strengthen his fellow apostles, who are the first bishops of the Church:

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, **strengthen thy brethren.**"

Note that "have you (humas)" and "sift you (siniasai)" are plural, meaning all of the apostles, while "prayed for thee (sou)," "that thy (sou) faith," and "thou (su) art converted," are singular, meaning St. Peter alone will "strengthen thy (sou) brethren."

The authority of St. Peter in the early Church is clearly recorded in the Bible.

After the resurrection, St. Peter was the first apostle to enter the empty tomb (St. Luke 24:12) and the first apostle to whom the risen Lord appeared (Luke 24:34 and 1 Corinthians 15:5). St. Peter presided over the selection of Matthias as a replacement for Judas (Acts of the Apostles 1:15-26). He was the first to proclaim the gospel of the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 2:14) and proclaimed the Church's faith before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:8-12).

He is the first to work a public miracle (Acts 3:1-12) and the sick were brought into the street so that his shadow might fall upon them (Acts 5:15).

St. Peter exercised Church discipline on Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5: 1-5). He opened the Church to Gentiles by having Cornelius and his family baptized without undergoing circumcision (Acts 10:1-48).

Dr. Smith strangely claims that the authority of the Pope "goes back to the time of the Nicene Creed" in 325. The Nicene Creed says, in part, "We believe in one holy Catholic and apostolic Church," but contains nothing about the papacy. Perhaps Dr. Smith means the Council of Nicaea. In any case, there is no question the Bishop of Rome exercised primacy in the Catholic Church from the 1st Century onward.

Some examples:

Pope Clement (88-97) wrote to the Church in Corinth in the year 96 to tell them to make changes in their attitudes and practices. The Early Church On-Line Encyclopedia (Ecole) Initiative, a cooperative effort on the part of Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant scholars across the Internet to establish links of early Church history, says "This letter is important because it

indicates that the author was acting as the head of the Christian Church and that it was centered in Rome."

Pope Victor (189-199) ordered Easter to be celebrated throughout the world on Sunday, rather than on the 14th Nisan, whichever day of the week it happened to fall. All of the churches adopted Easter Sunday except those in Asia Minor. Pope Victor then excommunicated all the bishops in Asia Minor. While the Pope eventually relented in the excommunication, no one ever suggested that he did not have the authority.

Pope Calixtus (217-222) overruled those bishops who excommunicated for life all apostates, adulterers, and murderers, regardless of their repentance. The Pope decreed that all sinners with contrition could be absolved and received back into the Catholic Church.

After Pope Cornelius (251-253) was elected, he was faced with an antipope, Novatian, who promptly went about trying to consecrate bishops throughout the world who would be loyal to him. Naturally, this created tremendous uncertainty and confusion wherever Novatian tried to create false bishops over the heads of the legitimate bishops. This unequivocally shows the power of the Pope as the recognized leader of the worldwide Catholic Church.

Pope Stephen (254-257) removed certain bishops in Africa for heresy. Later he overruled a synod of African bishops which wanted to rebaptize lapsed Catholics returning to the faith. The Pope made it very clear he was in charge and eventually prevailed in this matter.

Pope Dionysius (260-268) reprimanded Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria for misstatements on the Trinity. The Bishop then followed the Pope's guidance.

Pope Sylvester (314-335) did not attend the First Council of Arles (314), thinking it unbecoming for him to leave Rome. Following Arles, the bishops there commended him for not leaving the spot "where the Apostles daily sit in judgement." He repeated this example at Nicaea, which his successors followed in the councils of Sardica (343), Rimini (359), and the Eastern ecumenical councils. At Nicaea, Pope Sylvester sent two priests as his legates, who helped preside over the sessions and who were the first to sign the canons.

Pope Julius (337-352) decided that Athanasius, rather than Pistus, should be the Bishop of Alexandria. At the same time, he read the riot act to the Arians in Alexandria.

Because Pope Liberius (352-366) stood firm against Arianism, Emperor Constantius had him kidnapped and replaced with an antipope, Felix, who no one accepted. In captivity, the Pope was tortured until he signed a semi-Arian document, which, of course, was not valid. This episode clearly showed the vital role of the Pope in determining Catholic doctrine. The Pope returned to Rome and continued his fight for orthodoxy. He eventually succeeded in seeing many Arians come back to the Catholic Church.

Dr. Smith is correct that "pope" means "father" and was used by many bishops before the title was reserved for the successor of St. Peter. With or without the title, the Bishop of Rome exercised worldwide primacy just as Pope John Paul II does today.

I am astonished that Dr. Smith would claim that St. Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo from 395 to 430, "taught what the majority of Protestants today believe viz., that the foundation on which our Lord proposed to erect His church was not Peter himself, but on his great confession of the deity of the Lord."

This is a perfect example of taking a statement out of context. Here is what St. Augustine actually wrote:

"Of this Church, **Peter, the Apostle, on account of the Primacy of his Apostleship**, bore a character which represented the whole Church. For as to what personally regards him, he was by nature but one man, by grace one Christian, by a more abundant grace, one, and that the First Apostle. But when there was said to him, I will give unto him the keys, He signified the whole Church, which, in this world is, by divers trials, as it were, by rains, rivers, and tempests, agitated, but falls not, because it was built upon a Rock, whence Peter derived his name. For a rock is not derived from Peter, but Peter from a Rock, as Christ is not derived from Christian, but Christian from Christ. For therefore does the Lord say, Upon this rock I will build my church, because Peter had said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Upon this Rock, therefore, which thou has confessed, I will build my Church. For Christ was the Rock; upon which Foundation, even Peter himself was built. For other foundation can no man lay but that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. **The Church therefore which is founded on Christ, received in Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven from Him**, that is, the power of binding and loosing sins." (T.iii.Tract.Cxxiv.in Joan.n, co.599)

St. Augustine also wrote, "Number the bishops from the **See of Peter** itself. And in that order of Fathers see who succeeded whom. This is the rock which the gates of hell do not prevail." (Psalmus contr. Partem Donati, str. 18)

In the same vein, St. Augustine wrote:

"For, if the order of succession of bishops is to be considered, how much more surely, truly, and safely do **we number them from Peter**, to whom as representing the whole Church, the Lord said, Upon this rock I will build my church and gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'" (Letters, Volume I [1-82])

And, "If the order of bishops succeeding to each other is to be considered, how much more securely, and really beneficially, do **we reckon from Peter himself**, to whom, bearing Figure of the Church, the Lord say, Upon this rock I will build my Church ." (T.ii.E.liii. Generos col. 91)

St. Augustine further wrote:

"The Catholic Church, there are many other things which most justly keep me in her bosom. The consent of peoples and nations keeps me in the Church; so does her authority, inaugurated by miracles, nourished by hope, enlarged by love, established by age. The succession of priests keeps me, **beginning from the very seat of the Apostle Peter, to whom the Lord, after His resurrection, gave it in charge to feed His sheep, down to the present episcopate**. And so, lastly, does the name itself of Catholic, which, not without reason, amid many heresies, the Church has thus retained; so that, though all heretics wish to be called Catholics, yet when a stranger asks where the Catholic Church meets, no heretic will venture to point to his own chapel or house. Such then in number and importance are the precious ties belonging to the Christian name which keep a believer in the Catholic Church, as it is right they should.... With you, where there is none of these things to attract or keep me.... No one shall move me from the faith which binds my mind with ties so many and so strong to the Christian religion.... For my part, I should not believe the gospel except as moved by the authority of the Catholic Church." (Cont. Epist. Manich. Fund. n. 5 p.269)

Finally, "**Peter was made the pastor of the Church**, as Moses was made the ruler of the Jewish people." (Cont. Faustum, lib.xxii. c 70)

For Dr. Smith to say that St. Augustine held the same views as Protestants regarding the papacy is horribly misleading. As bad as this deception is, it pales in comparison with what came next in Dr. Smith s article. He says:

"Let me now cite the judgment of Roman Catholic Bishop Strossmeyer (sic) to indicate that it is not merely prejudiced Protestants who hold the view

expressed in this article. He said that we he found no trace of the papacy on the days of the apostles, he expected to find it in the annuals of the church. But when he failed to discover any pope in the first four centuries, he came to the following conclusions) I conclude victoriously with history, with reason and with logic)that the bishops of Rome did not become sovereigns of the church (except) by confiscating one of the rights of the episcopacy ."

This is a well-known forgery.

It was allegedly a speech delivered by Bishop Joseph Georg Strossmayer of Diakovar at the First Vatican Council in 1870. According to the highly respected Catholic Encyclopedia of 1913, the actual author was a former Augustinian priest, Dr. Jose Agustin de Escudero.

Bishop Strossmayer s name was unjustly used because he did at the time oppose the promulgation of the dogma of papal infallibility. However, he certainly did not hold the views attributed to him in the forgery and later came to strongly support the infallibility of the Pope when speaking ex cathedra on faith or morals.

Dr. Smith s ignorance of Catholic history is matched by his unfamiliarity with the Bible.

He asks, "Since Peter was married and took his wife with him on his missionary tours, and according to tradition had at least one daughter (perhaps several children), where does the Roman church get the idea of the celibacy of the ordinary priest, to say nothing of the supreme bishop?"

Answer: St. Paul s 1st Epistle to the Corinthians 7:32-33, "But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife."

In fact, our Lord encouraged celibacy for those "able to receive it" in the Gospel of St. Mathew 19:10-12:

"His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."

Dr. Smith correctly states that St. Peter was married, as were a number of other popes,

bishops, and priests in the early church. Apparently, Dr. Smith does not know that celibacy is a discipline--not a doctrine--and applies only to the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church. In fact, priests (but not bishops) are able to be married in the Eastern Rite of the Catholic Church, including the Maronites, Melkites, Armenians, Coptics, and Chaldeans.

St. Peter's role in the Council of Jerusalem was questioned. Dr. Smith inquired why St. Peter "did not preside but was present only as a speaker and debater?"

The Acts of the Apostles 15:6-15 show that St. Peter was in charge:

"And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this

matter. And when there had been much disputing, **Peter rose up, and said unto them**, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

"**Then all the multitude kept silent** and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: **Simeon (Peter) hath declared** how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets;"

It is quite clear that St. Peter's declarations were considered to be the definitive word on this matter, just as the word of all popes speaking ex cathedra is the definitive word on any matter of faith and morals.

In reference to St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, in which St. Peter was rebuked for his conduct in separating himself from the Gentile converts, Dr. Smith asks, "Would not the pope be above refutation by an inferior colleague?"

Not at all.

First, Catholics have always held that a Pope can sin or commit errors in all sorts of matters, including personal conduct. He cannot err only when speaking in a binding manner to the entire Church on doctrinal matters of faith and morals.

Second, many popes have been rebuked by both members of the Church hierarchy and by laymen, including St. Francis of Assisi and St. Bernard of Clairvaux. In 1376, St. Catherine of Siena wrote to Pope Gregory XI that he should "be not a timorous child, but manly" in returning to Rome from Avignon.

And third, do you know of any pastor (Catholic or Protestant) who has ever escaped rebuke sometimes justifiably, sometimes not from someone in the parish for something he has done? Does this make him any less the pastor?

Next, Dr. Smith says St. Peter did not assume authority over the other apostles and instead "evidenced a spirit of genuine humility."

Apparently Dr. Smith is unfamiliar with the words of Jesus:

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, I for I am meek and lowly in heart:" (Gospel of St. Matthew 11:29)

"But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." (St. Matthew 23:11)

"And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." (Gospel of St. Mark 9:35)

"And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all." (St. Mark 10:44)

In the same vein, St. Peter wrote in his 1st Epistle 5:5-6, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

Accordingly, one of the well-known titles of the Pope is "Servant of the Servants of God."

In Part III of his article, Dr. Smith asks, "Are the Popes the Divinely Appointed Successors of Peter?" He wonders if St. Peter had "the power, by virtue of Christ's words, to transfer his preeminence if he had any to a successor?"

He absolutely did.

In the Gospel of St. Matthew 4:19, Jesus said, "Follow me, and I will make you **fishers of**

men." Likewise, in the Gospel of St. Mark 1:17, Jesus said, "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become **fishers of men.**"

In the Gospel of St. John 17:18, in a prayer to the Father, Jesus says, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even **so have I sent them** into the world." And in St. John 20:21, Jesus tells the apostles, "As my Father hath sent me, even **so I send you.**"

And in St. Matthew 28:20, Jesus promises, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Thus, Jesus tells his apostles that he will make them "fishers of men" and later sends them with the same authority he has. Since Jesus commissioned the apostles to be the first bishops of the Church, so the apostles received the power to consecrate other bishops. And Jesus intended his Church to go on in perpetuity "even unto the end of the world."

The first implementation of this was recorded in the Acts of the Apostles 1:15-26:

"And in those days **Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples**, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. **For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.** Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, *Aceldama*, that is to say, The field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: **and his bishoprick let another take.**

"Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, **must one be ordained** to be a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, **That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship**, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; **and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.**"

The ordination of men to be bishops and priests was through the laying on of hands as chronicled in Acts of the Apostles 6:3-7:

"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

"Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."

Likewise, Acts 13:1-3 shows the Sacrament of Holy Orders in the early Church:

"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, **the Holy Ghost said**, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

And when they had fasted and prayed, and **laid their hands on them**, they sent them away."

In AD 96, Pope Clement in his First Epistle to the Corinthians described apostolic succession:

"The Apostles received the gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ; and Jesus Christ was sent from God. Christ, therefore, is from God, and the Apostles are from Christ. Both of these orderly arrangements, then, are by God's will. Through countryside and city they preached; and **they appointed their earliest converts, testing them by the spirit, to be the bishops and deacons of future believers.** (Chapter 42)

"Our Apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife for the office of bishop. For this reason, therefore, having received perfect foreknowledge, they appointed those who have already been mentioned, and afterwards added the further provision that, **if they should die, other approved men should succeed to their ministry.**" (Chapter 44)

In the Letter to the Smyrnaeans, AD 110. St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, wrote, "You must all follow the bishop as Jesus Christ follows the Father, and the presbytery as you would the Apostles. Reverence the deacons as you would the command of God. Let no one do anything of concern to the Church without the bishop. Let that be considered a valid Eucharist which is celebrated by the bishop, or by one whom he appoints. Wherever the bishop appears, let the people be there; just as wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church."

In Memoirs of St. Hegesippus (AD 180), quoted in Bishop Eusebius Church History, "When I had come to Rome, I made a succession up to Anicetus (155-166), whose deacon was Eleutherus. And after Anicetus, Soter (166-175) succeeded; and after him Eleutherus (175-189). In each succession and in each city there is **a continuance of that which is proclaimed by the Law, the Prophets, and the Lord.**"

Dr. Smith wondered why the Bishop of Rome was given preeminence and not "to the bishop of Jerusalem or of Antioch, since those were the two great centers of the early Church?"

As indicated in the Gospel of St. Matthew 16:17-19, the Gospel of St. John 21:15-17, and the Gospel of St. Luke 2:31-32, Jesus designates St. Peter as head of the Church.

St. Peter ministered in Jerusalem, Judaea, and the districts stretching to Syria, before traveling to the Provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Asia. He founded the Church at Antioch and stayed there a couple of years. Before leaving Antioch, he appointed Evodrius as bishop to succeed him.

Had St. Peter stayed in Jerusalem or Antioch, the bishops of one of these Churches would have been his successor as Pope.

But Dr. Smith points to St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians 2:9, "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."

Anyone who thinks it is significant that St. Peter is listed second in this one verse knows little about the Bible.

In the New Testament, St. Peter's name appears **more times than all the other apostles combined**. He is listed 191 times (162 as Peter or Simon Peter, 23 as Simon, and 6 as Cephas). The rest of the apostles together come to a grand total of only 130. And St. Peter's name is **always listed first**, with the sole exception of Galatians 2:9, which is

the proverbial exception that proves the rule.

St. Peter is often mentioned as distinct among the apostles:

"And **Simon and they that were with him** followed after him."

(St. Mark 1:36)

"But **Peter and they that were with him** were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men who stood with him." (St. Luke 9:32)

"But **Peter, standing up with the eleven**, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words." (Acts of the Apostles 2:14)

"And when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto **Peter and to the rest of the apostles**, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts of the Apostles 2:37)

"Then **Peter and the other apostles** answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts of the Apostles 5:29)

"Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, **and Cephas?**" (St. Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians 9:5)

Dr. Smith thinks it strange that St. John, who lived during the pontificates of St. Peter, Pope Linus, Pope Anacletus, and Pope Clement but never mentioned their names. But there are **many things which Jesus said and did that are not mentioned by St. John (21:25)**. Furthermore, does Dr. Smith think it likely that every word written down by every apostle has been preserved to the present?

What is noteworthy is that, in Pope Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians in 96 AD, it is he who is writing as head of the Catholic Church, rather than an original apostle still living.

Somehow, Dr. Smith thinks it a big deal that the exact dates are not certain of the reign of the early Popes. Surely he must know that Biblical scholars do not agree on the dates that the gospels and epistles were written. Nevertheless, historians do know a lot about both Scripture and the Popes of the first few centuries.

At this point, apparently sensing that his arguments were weak, Dr. Smith started grasping at straws.

He says that some (unnamed) Catholic writer wrote that the Popes from about 750 AD to 901 AD "have fallen from all the virtues of their predecessors and have become apostates rather than apostles."

What does this have to do with "Was Peter the First Pope?" Even if this quotation were valid--which is doubtful--what difference could that make in regard to the origins of the papacy?

Do you suppose it would be too much trouble for Dr. Smith to tell us who this Catholic writer was in order to verify the statement? And while he is at it, perhaps Dr. Smith might mention the names of a couple of Popes who were "apostates rather than apostles" so that this too can be checked.

Almost all of the 265 Popes who have served during the last 2,000 years have been good and holy men, but there have been some unfortunate exceptions. Popes can and do commit sins, sometimes big time. They are protected, though, from teaching error on matters of faith and morals when officially speaking ex cathedra to the worldwide Catholic Church.

Thus, no Catholic would ever dispute that a few Popes "have fallen from virtues of their predecessors," but I challenge anyone to cite a single Pope from 750 AD to 901 AD--or from any other era--who taught apostasy.

This is the meaning of Jesus' words that "the gates of hell shall **not** prevail against" his Church (St. Matthew 16:18) and that "**I am with you always**, even unto the end of the world." (St. Matthew 28:20) He would not permit his Church to teach error.

Likewise in St. John 14:16, Jesus says, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that **he may abide with you for ever.**"

Also, in St. John 14:26, Jesus promises, "But the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, **he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.**"

Furthermore, in St. John 16:12-13, Jesus says, "I have yet many things to say unto you, you ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, **he will guide you into all truth**; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, shall he speak: and **he will shew you things to come.**"

There can be no question Jesus intended for his Church to always be guided in truth. But

keep in mind that papal infallibility does not equate to impeccability.

The power of the Pope to teach religious truth is comparable to power Jesus mentions of the scribes and Pharisees St. Matthew 23:1-3: "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Parisees sit in Moses seat (kathedras): **All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, observe and do;** but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not."

Dr. Smith again returns to the falsified statement from Bishop Strossmayer, this time referring to instances of multiple antipopes claiming to be the validly elected Pope. In every case, it was possible to determine who the "real" Pope was and who were the "pretenders to the throne."

Bishop Strossmayer was also falsely quoted as saying that "the popes have erred in their teaching." Of course, this quotation gives no specifics at all. What Popes? What teaching? When?

Dr. Smith penchant for avoiding the topic of his own article comes to a climax when he says an **(unnamed)** writer "tells **(no date)** of one Father **(no first name)** Hyppolyto, a Roman priest of **(no city)** South America, said to be a man of wide repute for eloquence and learning."

Of course, the total lack of the most basic of facts make it is impossible to investigate this story.

Anyway, Dr. Smith says this learned priest was unable to answer questions about purgatory, the intercession of saints, the confessional, and other issues.

So, according to this story, "the priest resolved to study the Bible for himself" but "the Council of Trent had laid down the rule that no priest should read the Scripture without the written consent of his bishop." Undaunted, he persisted until he received a Bible and "searched for confirmation" of the doctrines. Not finding any, he entered a Gospel mission hall, was converted to Protestantism, and became a Methodist minister.

That s the silliest thing I ever heard.

I guess Dr. Smith is unaware--how hard would it have been for him to find out?--that Holy Scripture has always been read out loud as part of every Catholic Mass.

Readings from the Scriptures in both the Old Testament and the New Testament are a part of all daily and Sunday Masses.

They always have, going back to the first century.

In 155 AD, St. Justin Martyr wrote to the pagan Emperor Antoninus Pius to explain what Catholics do at Mass. In part, he wrote, "On the day we call the day of the sun, all who dwell in the city or country gather in the same place. The memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the prophets are read, as much as time permits)"

One thousand, eight hundred, and forty three years later, the liturgy of the word is still a vital part of each daily and Sunday Mass. During a three-year cycle, the whole Bible is read aloud.

For example, on Sunday, September 26, 1998, the readings in all Catholic Churches were from the Prophecy of Daniel 3:31-42, the Prophecy of Amos 6:1-7, the Book of Psalms 146:7-10, St. Paul's 1st Epistle to Timothy 6:11-16, the Gospel of St. Luke 16:19-31, and either the Book of Psalms 118:49-50 or the 1st Epistle of St. John 3:16.

Here is what the Fourth Session of the Council of Trent in April 1546 actually promulgated "concerning the edition, and the use, of the Sacred Books":

"(This Synod) ordains and decrees, that, henceforth, the sacred Scripture, and especially the said old and vulgate edition, **be printed in the most correct manner possible**; and that it shall not be lawful for any one to print, or cause to be printed, any books whatever, on sacred matters, without the name of the author; nor to sell them in future, or even to keep them, unless they shall have been first examined, and approved of, by the Ordinary; under pain of the anathema and fine imposed in a canon of the last Council of Lateran: and, if they be Regulars, besides this examination and approval, they shall be bound to obtain a license also from their own superiors, who shall have examined the books according to the form of their own statutes. As to those who lend, or circulate them in manuscript, without their having been first examined, and approved of, they shall be subjected to the same penalties as printers: and they who shall have them in their possession or shall read them, shall, unless they discover the authors, be themselves regarded as the authors. And the said approbation of books of this kind shall be given in writing; and for this end it shall appear authentically at the beginning of the book, whether the book be written, or printed; and all this, that is, both the approbation and the examination, shall be done gratis, that so **what ought to be approved, may be approved, and what ought to be condemned, may be condemned.**"

This means the bishop of each diocese must approve translations of the Bible to make sure they are OK. Considering the very bad translations that were floating around at the time,

this was a pretty good idea.

Please note, the Council of Trent did **not** say priests couldn't have a Bible without the permission of the Bishop, **nor** did it even say you could only have the Latin Vulgate. All it said that if you had a version that had not previously been approved, then the new translation should be examined by the bishop for his approval.

For anyone to state that a Catholic priest would not have access to a Bible is ludicrous.

By the way, what does this story have to do with "Was Peter the First Pope?"

Dr. Smith is unable to sustain his own article without trying to throw in totally extraneous (and erroneous) material. Since it is probably apparent to him that the facts about St. Peter and the papacy are not on his side, he brings up all this other stuff.

My letter is about the papacy, rather than purgatory, the intercession of the saints, and the sacrament of confession. But since Dr. Smith mentions them, let me take a quick moment to cite the apostolic teaching on these matters.

Purgatory, like the Holy Trinity, is not mentioned by name in Scripture, but this concept of final sanctification is revealed in St. Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians 3:13-15:

"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

This can be understood in connection with the words of Jesus in the Gospel of St. Matthew 5:25-26, "Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

Scripture has scores of places where the intercession of the saints is mentioned, such as the Revelation to St. John (The Apocalypse) 5:8, "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are **the prayers of saints.**"

Likewise, Revelation 8:3-4 says, "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with **the prayers of all saints** upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with **the prayers of the saints**, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."

Jesus specifically instituted the Sacrament of Confession (also called Reconciliation and Penance) in the Gospel of St. John 20:21-23, "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

For those who would like to read more on the papacy and the other matters mentioned in this letter, I d like to recommend the following valuable resources, from which I ve extracted information:

Jesus, Peter & the Keys, A Scriptural Handbook on the Papacy by Scott Butler, Norman Dahlgren, and David Hess, 1996, Queenship Publishing Company, Santa Barbara, California, available postpaid for \$13 at 1-800-647-4146

The Founding of Christendom by Warren H. Carroll, 1985, Christendom Press, Front Royal, Virginia

By What Authority? An Evangelical Discovers Catholic Tradition by Mark P. Shea, 1996, Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, Huntington, Indiana

The Oxford Dictionary of Popes by J. N. D. Kelly, 1986, Oxford University Press, Oxford, England

Church History by Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea on the Internet at <http://www.knight.org/advent/fathers/2501.htm>

The Complete List of Popes, with links to biographies of each Pope, on the Internet at <http://www.knight.org.advent/Popes/ppindx.htm>

The Papacy and Infallibility Apologetics Index Page on the Internet at <http://ic.net/~erasmus/ERASMUS4.HTM>

"The Pope," Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, on the Internet at <http://www.knight.org/advent/>

[cathen/12260a.htm](http://www.knight.org/advent/cathen/12260a.htm)

"St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles," Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, on the Internet at <http://www.knight.org/advent/cathen/11744a.htm>

"Infallibility," Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, on the Internet at <http://www.knight.org/advent/cathen/07790a.htm>

Papacy in the Corunum Apologetic Web Site on the Internet at <http://www.cin.org/users/jgallegos/papacy.htm>

"Pope Fiction" by Patrick Madrid and "Bam! Bam! The Pebbles Argument Goes Down" by Tim Staples, both in Envoy Magazine, March/April 1998, on the Internet at http://www.envoymagazine.com/envoy/samplearticles/mar_apr98.html

"Was Peter in Rome?," Catholic Answers, on the Internet at http://www.catholic.com/answers/tracts/p_inrome.htm

"Peter in Rome," Catholic Answers, on the Internet at http://www.catholic.com/answers/tracts/_p_rome.htm

"Peter and the Papacy," Catholic Answers, on the Internet at http://www.catholic.com/answers/tracts/peter_pa.htm

"Peter s Successors," Catholic Answers, on the Internet at http://www.catholic.com/answers/tracts/_p_succr.htm

"The Authority of the Pope (Part I)," Catholic Answers, on the Internet at http://www.catholic.com/answers/tracts/_author1.htm

Fathers of the Church, New Advent Catholic Supersite on the Internet at <http://www.knight.org/advent/fathers/>

Pope Clement's First Epistle to the Corinthians on the Internet at <http://wesley.nnc.edu/noncanon/fathers/ante-nic/clement/1clement.htm> and <http://ccel.wheaton.edu/fathers2/ANF-01/anf01-04.htm>

"Clement of Rome," the Ecole Glossary, University of Evansville, on the Internet at <http://cedar.evansville.edu/~ecoleweb/glossary/clmentr.htm>

"Augustine," University of Pennsylvania, on the Internet at <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/augustine.html>

"Joseph Georg Strossmayer," Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, on the Internet at <http://www.knight.org/advent/cathen/14316a.htm>

The Council of Trent Cannons and Decrees, Hanover College, on the Internet at <http://history.hanover.edu/early/trent.htm>

"Evodius," Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, on the Internet at <http://www.knight.org/advent/cathen/05653a.htm>

"How to Explain Purgatory to Protestants," by James Akin, Nazareth Resource Library, on the Internet at <http://www.cin.org/users/james/files/how2purg.htm>

"Purgatory," Catholic Answers, on the Internet at <http://www.catholic.com/answers/tracts/purgator.htm>

"The Existence of Purgatory," Catholic Answers, on the Internet, at http://www.catholic.com/answers/tracts/_purgatr.htm

"Praying to the Saints," by James Akin, Nazareth Resource Library, on the Internet at <http://www.cin.org/users/james/files/praying.htm>

"Praying to the Saints," Catholic Answers, on the

Internet at http://www.catholic.com/answers/tracts/_praysts.htm

"Forgiveness of Sins," Catholic Answers, on the Internet at <http://www.catholic.com/answers/tracts/forgive.htm>

"Confession," Catholic Answers, on the Internet at http://www.catholic.com/answers/tracts/_confssn.htm

In summary, Dr. Herbert Booth Smith's article, "Was Peter the First Pope," should be a severe embarrassment to all Protestants.

The article made statements without proof, utilized known forgeries, grossly misrepresented the views of St. Augustine and the Council of Trent, displayed a lack of knowledge of the Bible, and then deviated onto completely extraneous matters having nothing to do with his subject.

If it were to be graded, it would receive not just an "F" but very close to a zero. There were some valid facts and observations in his article but they were very few.

I believe the Sword of the Lord has the responsibility to inform its readers that the article by Dr. Smith contains major errors of fact and should **not** be relied on or disseminated. My request is based on the premise that the errors in this article were unknown to you at the time of publication and that you would not knowingly publish false information.

However, now that you know without doubt that Dr. Smith's article did not meet the standards of Sword of the Lord, I request that, if possible, my letter be printed in full.

If it is not possible to publish this letter in its entirety, I ask that you use your best journalistic and editorial skills in order to shorten it to the desired lengths, while preserving its meaning and supporting facts.

(In order to facilitate your use of this letter, a computer disk is attached, which contains the letter on Microsoft Word for Windows.)

I look forward to continuing to read future issues of Sword of the Lord.

Respectfully,

ART KELLY

P.S. If Sword of the Lord ever considers publishing any additional articles regarding Catholic doctrines, practices, or history, I would be willing to volunteer to check such articles prior to publication in order to let you know if they contain any gross distortions, omissions, or other mistakes that would be embarrassing if they appeared in print.

If you prefer to use a "fact checker" within your own organization, in addition to the references listed in the body of my letter, the following resources on the Catholic Church will be helpful:

Catholicism and Fundamentalism by Karl Keating, 1988, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, California

What Catholics Really Believe by Karl Keating, 1995, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, California

Pillar of Fire, Pillar of Truth by Catholic Answers on the Internet at <http://www.catholic.com/answers/other/pillar.htm>

Catholic Answers Home Page on the Internet, which contains an internal search engine, at <http://www.catholic.com/index.htm>

Nazareth Resource Library Home Page on the Internet at <http://www.cin.org/users/james/>

Nazareth Master Catechism containing integrated, hyperlinked texts of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (the new catechism), the Baltimore Catechism, the Catechism of St. Pius X, the Catechism of the Council of Trent, and the Catechetical Instructions of St. Thomas Aquinas

Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, which is being transcribed onto the Internet. As of October 12, 1998, 7,311 of 11,625 articles (62.9%) have been completed. Thus, if you search for a topic and do not find it, try again a few weeks later. The Home Page is at <http://www.knight.org/advent/cathen/>

The Building of Christendom by Warren H. Carroll,
1987, Christendom Press, Front Royal, Virginia

The Glory of Christendom by Warren H. Carroll,
1995, Christendom Press, Front Royal, Virginia

Biblical Evidence for Catholicism Main Index Page
on the Internet at [http://ic.net/~erasmus/RAZINDEX.
HTM](http://ic.net/~erasmus/RAZINDEX.HTM)

Catholic Biblical Apologetics on the Internet at [http://
www.cbn.org/apology/catholic/cabiapbk.htm](http://www.cbn.org/apology/catholic/cabiapbk.htm)

Catholic Insight Home Page on the Internet at [http://
www.gate.net/~catholic/index.htm](http://www.gate.net/~catholic/index.htm)

Catholic Q & A, EWTN, on the Internet at [http://
www.ewtn.com/EWTN/Experts/conference.htm](http://www.ewtn.com/EWTN/Experts/conference.htm)

Library Search, EWTN, on the Internet at [http://
www.ewtn.com/ewtn/library/search.asp](http://www.ewtn.com/ewtn/library/search.asp)

Two Thousand Years of Catholic Writings on the
Internet at [http://www.cs.cmu/People/spok/catholic/
writings.html](http://www.cs.cmu/People/spok/catholic/writings.html)

Encyclicals and Other Papal Documents, American
University, on the Internet at [http://listserv.american.
edu/catholi/church/papal/papal.html](http://listserv.american.edu/catholi/church/papal/papal.html)

Documents of Vatican II, on the Internet at [http://
www.rc.net/rcchurch/vatican2/index.html](http://www.rc.net/rcchurch/vatican2/index.html)

Of course, there are hundreds of other outstanding web sites with comprehensive information and thousands excellent books on various aspects of Catholicism. Anyone with access to the Internet or to a library which utilizes interlibrary loans can certainly learn about Catholic history and beliefs.

I realize that Dr. Herbert Booth Smith wrote his article before these resources were available.

Now that these modern means of research are easily accessible, there should be no reason for anyone to write or publish anything with false or misleading information about the Catholic Church.

If someone wished to disagree with Catholicism, let him or her do so honestly, rather than through distortions, misrepresentations, and imaginary histories.

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