

DON BOSCO

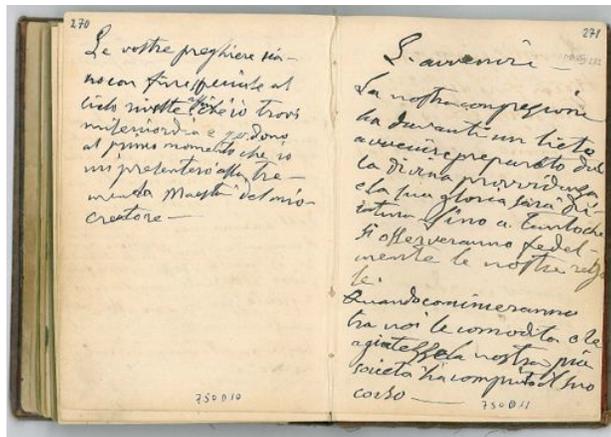
HIS PLACE IN HISTORY

Edited by John Roche, SDB at the Institute of Salesian Spirituality in Berkeley

DON BOSCO STUDY

GUIDE

APRIL/MAY 2012



APOLOGETICS AND CATHOLIC FAITH

As you read this, the Easter Season is well into its second week and the flurry of Easter festivities, liturgies, and all the details marking this wonderful time of year are subsiding enough to get back on track with the rest of life. Fr. Joe Boenzi quoted St. Jeanne Frances de Chantal in his homily for Saturday within the Octave of Easter reminding us that we should all “Think of God whenever you are doing the things of God.” This wonderful advice is well taken after the busy-ness of these days. Let it be said that it is just that busy-ness which has delayed this issue of the Don Bosco Study Guide. That being said, let’s introduce the work of Fr. Arthur Lenti whose research is the

content of this issue.

Apologetics is a topic that is receiving much attention in these days. In the past ten to fifteen years, a growing interest in the art of discourse of Catholic Apologetics has been on the rise. This has given rise to new faces on the Catholic scene such as Scott Hahn, Tim Staples, and Tim Ray. Most of these men had a background of zealous evangelical ministry, which evolved with their conversion to Catholicism into a studied, intense defense of a faith they once fought with great passion. Their honed abilities for quoting scriptures as Evangelists transpired into a passionate learning of Church Doctrine and memorization of

the Catholic Catechism. Today, many of these apologists are known for this precision of knowledge and their fierce application of that knowledge to promote Catholic faith and defend it from the attacks of this Post-modern and secular culture.

Many conservative groups of Catholics have spontaneously adopted St. John Bosco as their patron. Many of these persons have used Don Bosco’s so-called prophetic dreams as verification for their particular brand of Catholicism. While Don Bosco was certainly an apologist of the highest order, we learn from Fr. Arthur that this work was never to be understood as the leader of a splinter group. It is

(Continued on page 2, column 2)

IN THIS ISSUE

- Page 2: Gentleness, Not Judgment Page 2: A Catholic Encyclopedia Definition
- Page 3: DON BOSCO’S CONCEPT OF THE CHURCH IN HIS ANTI-WALDENSIAN APOLOGETIC
- Page 4: G.K. Chesterton, Catholic Apologist; Page 5: Tolkien & Lewis as Apologists
- Page 16: Apologetics & the College Student; Page 17: Islam, Christianity, & Tolerance
- Page 22: Using the Study Guide; Page 23: Information regarding 7 volumes on Don Bosco



New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia Definition

(More information is available online at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01618a.htm>)

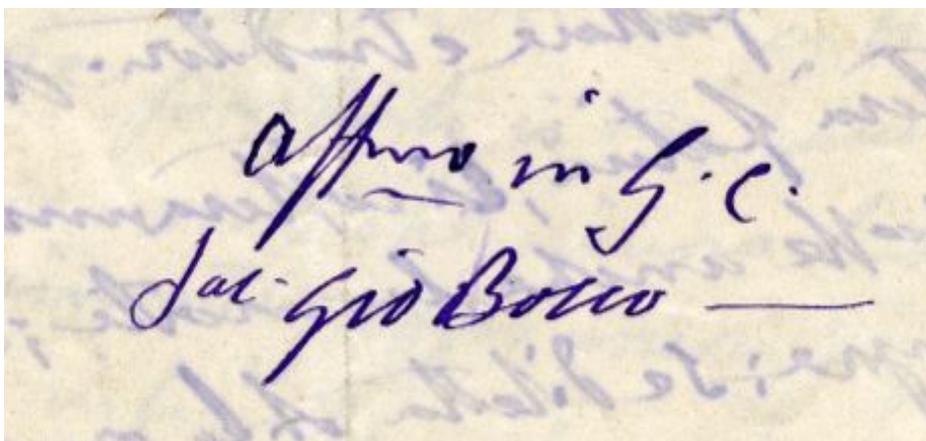
Definition:

A theological science, which has for its purpose the explanation, and defense of the Christian religion.

Apologetics means, broadly speaking, a form of apology. The term is derived from the Latin adjective, *apologeticus*, which, in turn has its origin in the Greek adjective, *apologetikos*, the substantive being *apologia*, "apology", "defense". As an equivalent of the plural form, the variant, "Apologetic", is now and then found in recent writings, suggested probably by the corresponding French and German words, which are always in the singular. But the plural form, "Apologetics", is far more common and will doubtless prevail, being in harmony with other words similarly formed, as ethics, statistics, homiletics. In defining apologetics as a form of apology, we understand the latter word in its primary sense, as a verbal defense against a verbal attack, a disproving of a false accusation, or a justification of an action or line of conduct wrongly made the object of censure. Such, for example, is the *Apology* of Socrates, such the *Apologia* of John Henry Newman. This is the only sense attaching to the term as used by the ancient Greeks and Romans, or by the French and Germans of the present day.

Quite different is the meaning now conveyed by our English word, "apology", namely, an

(Continued on page 3, column 1)



GENTLENESS, NOT JUDGMENT, BRINGS ABOUT CONVERSION

good advice, then, to be careful when anyone decides their special calling is to apologetics. The purpose of such work is to defend faith without seeking to judge or divide. If division is the result of honest efforts for defending the truth as handed down in Catholic Tradition, this should always be the unwanted result and not the desired end.

A word of caution: Fear is not an affective tool of catechesis or evangelization. Apologetics is not about the rhetoric of fear and guilt but about clarifying terms and beliefs for their fullest appreciation and accessibility. Perhaps we can take a page out of the history of St. Francis de Sales in this regard. We know that it was his loving and untiring effort to return faith to the region of the Chablis near his hometown of Thoren. His painstaking efforts entailed personal communication and the copying of hundreds of hand-written sermons and lessons. His motivation was love and the burning desire to save people from error. Because of this great gentleness and love, he and

his cousin completely won over the region. This conversion is what launched the career of a giant evangelist of Catholic faith. Because his heart was more concerned about sharing the love of God with others, rather than being right, his efforts moved many countless hearts and set into motion a ministry of hearts speaking to hearts.

I have had my own run-ins with well-intentioned apologists who seemed more interested in being right than they were in the wholeness and holiness of others. The Salesian mantra for any effort in catechesis and evangelization must be "Live Jesus!" If we can, by our efforts, bring a heart to the Heart of Christ, how beautiful that is and how much more appropriate than winning points in God's Trivial Pursuit.

Let us turn now to the heroic work of Don Bosco in his efforts to combat the errors and wholesale attack of the Waldenses in his time and place.



explanation of an action acknowledged to be open to blame. The same idea is expressed almost exclusively by the verb, "apologize", and generally by the adjective, "apologetic". For this reason, the adoption of the word, "Apologetics", in the sense of a scientific vindication of the Christian religion is not altogether a happy one. Some scholars prefer such terms as "Christian Evidences", the "Defense of the Christian Religion". "Apologetics" and "Apology" are not altogether interchangeable terms. The latter is the generic term, the former the specific. Any kind of accusation, whether personal, social, political, or religious, may call forth a corresponding apology. It is only apologies of the Christian religion that fall within the scope of apologetics. Nor is it all such. There is scarcely a dogma, scarcely a ritual or disciplinary institution of the Church that has not been subjected to hostile criticism, and hence, as occasion required, been vindicated by proper apologetics. But besides these forms of apology, there are the answers that have been called forth by attacks of various kinds upon the credentials of the Christian religion, apologies written to vindicate now this, now that ground of the Christian, Catholic faith, that has been called in question or held up to disbelief and ridicule.

Now it is out of such apologies for the foundations of Christian belief that the science of apologetics has taken form. Apologetics is the Christian Apology *par excellence*, combining in one well-rounded system the arguments and considerations of permanent value that have found expression in the various single apologies. The latter, being answers to specific attacks, were necessarily conditioned by the

(Continued on page 4, column 3)



Don Bosco's dream of the Church and the two pillars.

DON BOSCO'S DEFENSE OF THE CHURCH IN HIS ANTI-WALDENSIAN APOLOGETIC

1. NOTE ON DON BOSCO'S HISTORY OF THE CHURCH AND ITS APOLOGETIC

Storia ecclesiastica ad uso delle scuole utile per ogni ceto di persone dedicata all'onorat.mo signore F. Ervé de la Croix provinciale dei Fratelli d[etti] i[gnorantelli] d[elle] s[cuole] c[ristiane] compilata dal sacerdote B. G. (Torino: tipografia Speirani e Ferrero, 1845), 398 p. [Further editions 1848, 1870, 1871 (completely revised), 1879, 1888].

[Desramaut, DB en son temps, p. 204ff.]

(1) Genesis and Publication

The idea of writing a history of the Church may have occurred to Don Bosco at the Convitto, when he was engaged in catechizing his young people on Sundays, and would naturally turn to the Bible

and Church history [for story and moral lessons]. For, Don Bosco's catechesis was always historical rather than dogmatic.

For this purpose he began to look for books in this genre that were suitable for children. [See Preface of the *Storia ecclesiastica* (1845), p. 7] He found books of that sort in the field of Bible history (to which he would promptly devote himself, but he met with disappointment in the field of Church history. Some Church histories were too voluminous. Others left the field of Church history proper and digressed endlessly into secular history. Others expounded without restraint and with exaggerated polemical rhetoric only on what the Church had done. Yet others translated from a foreign language... seemed to be ashamed to speak of the popes and of the great events that were the glory of Catholicism.

With the encouragement of persons in authority (so he

(Continued on page 4, columns

claimed) he had himself undertaken to “compile” a précis of Church history suitable for the young.

The spare time he enjoyed as chaplain of a little hospital still under construction enabled him to complete the project between 1844 and 1845. The manuscript was entrusted to the printers the Christian Brothers in Turin in 1844. That same year Count Collegno placed the municipal schools of Turin under the Christian Brothers’ direction. They received the royal *Exequatur*, a true juridical recognition. Don Bosco’s dedication of the book to

(Continued on page 5)

him speaks of an existing good relationship, but perhaps also of pragmatic aims on Don Bosco’s part. He sought to insert his book into the school distribution system. Three years later (1848) a second revised edition became necessary.

(2) Sources Contents and Structure of the History of the Church.

In question-and answer style, the History is divided into 6 epochs, with a preliminary section (*Nozioni Preliminary*) or preamble. The second question of the Preamble defines the Church.

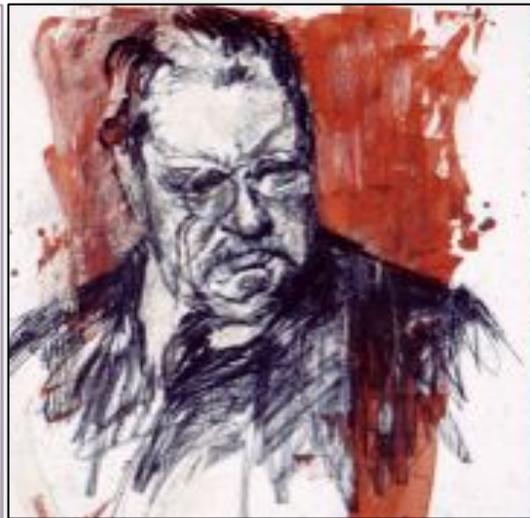
[The Church] is the congregation of all those who



occasions that called them forth. They were personal, controversial, partial vindications of the Christian position. In them the refutation of specific charges was the prominent element. Apologetics, on the other hand, is the comprehensive, scientific vindication of the grounds of Christian, Catholic belief, in which the calm, impersonal presentation of underlying principles is of paramount importance, the refutation of objections being added by way of corollary. It addresses itself not to the hostile opponent for the purpose of refutation, but rather to the inquiring mind by way of information. Its aim is to give a scientific presentation of the claims which Christ's revealed religion has on the assent of every rational mind; it seeks to lead the inquirer after truth to recognize, first, the reasonableness and trustworthiness of the Christian revelation as realized in the Catholic Church, and secondly, the corresponding obligation of accepting it. While not compelling faith — for the certitude it offers is not absolute, but moral — it shows that the credentials of the Christian religion amply suffice to vindicate the act of faith as a rational act, and to discredit the estrangement of the sceptic and unbeliever as unwarranted and culpable. Its last word is the answer to the question: Why should I be a Catholic? Apologetics thus leads up to Catholic faith, to the acceptance of the Catholic Church as the

(Continued on page 6, columns 3)

“In answer to the historical query of why it [the Gospel Story] was accepted, and is accepted, I answer for millions of others in my reply: because it fits the lock; because it is like life. It is one among many stories; only it happens to be a true story. It is one among many philosophies; only it happens to be the truth.”



G.K. Chesterton, Catholic Apologist

Many scholars are rediscovering G.K. Chesterton’s fictional sleuth, the Fr. Brown detective of the *Father Brown Mysteries* series. These highly popular detective yarns have the power to pull the reader into the quirky world and mind of Fr. Brown. Yet Fr. Brown is more akin to another fictional character, *Hercule Poirot*, another eccentric detective character penned by Agatha Christie, than he would be compared to the investigating monk in *The Name of the Rose*, by Umberto Eco. The secret of Fr. Brown is his fascination with reason and intellect in its ability to decipher truth from error, distinguish illusion from reality. While the reader and other characters are busy unraveling the clues to solve the particular mystery hanging over a particular story, Fr. Brown seems to be almost oblivious to the same details and more involved in relational concerns than what appears to be the salient facts. His genius is the big picture weaving together the facts and the relationships revealing an obvious solution every time. The reader and the characters often decide that what Fr. Brown does is mysterious and other-worldly, while, in reality, Fr. Brown knows how to read and decipher the big picture—in a word, he is an apologist on the first order!

profess the faith and the doctrine of Jesus Christ and who are governed by a supreme Head who is the Vicar of Christ on earth. The Church is some times referred to as Greek or Latin or Gallican or Indian, but it is always the same Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church that is meant.¹

This definition of the Church as a congregation bonded by faith in Christ and his teaching and by submission to the pope sets parameters. In Don Bosco's thinking the Church has an inner and an outer aspect, both clearly delineated. He has no concept of membership in a spiritual Church embracing dissidents and people of good will. The only people who belong to the Church are Christians who are governed by the pope. Bishops (or "legitimate shepherds") are not in evidence. The first edition of the *Storia ecclesiastica* (1845) features a few scattered engravings gradually eliminated in successive editions. The largest and most important of these Images is found on the page facing the frontispiece. It comprises two fields, The upper field contains the insignia of the papacy, tiara, triple cross, etc. The lower field shows a tableau of figures: Christ handing the keys of the kingdom to Peter (Mt 16:19). The Church whose story is told in this work is the Church of the popes of Rome, the list of whom (254 of them in uninterrupted succession, from St. Peter to Gregory XVI) is given as an Appendix.

In compiling the History Don Bosco kept things simple. He used only those authors who were orthodox in the ultramontane sense of the term and were suitable for young readers. He took the brief History of the Church by the Jesuit Jean-Nicolas Loriquet, as a guide. Its concise presentation, dialogue

format, organization in large epochs, and a conservatively Roman and counter-revolutionary outlook must have appealed to Don Bosco.² Loriquet's work was brief. So Don Bosco took further material from another anonymous History of the Church recently published in Turin.¹ The division here was by centuries, each century being allotted two chapters: One devoted to a survey of "the popes," the second to "other information on the Church."

With such models before him, Don Bosco constructed his History (1) in six epochs (preceded by a preliminary general section, (2) in dialogue form, (3) with emphasis on the popes.

He tells us, however, that he has read more widely, but that he has used only such material as was suitable for simple Italian-speaking young people. He has omitted or merely mentioned what seemed of purely secular (*profani*) or social (*civili*) value, dry or of scarce interest. On the other hand, he has retained and narrated in greater detail "tender and moving" passages apt not only to instruct the mind but also to educate the heart.³

With these criteria to guide him, as he himself states in the title page, using Loriquet's little work as his principal source and inspiration and drawing on other works for additional passages and episodes, Don Bosco compiled his History from existing texts. His work consisted in selecting, stitching together—and editing for easier comprehension by the young.

An example of editing from Loriquet's text will suffice. Describing the apostolic community Loriquet had written: "The throng of new believers had, as Scripture phrases it, but one heart and one soul." Don Bosco wrote instead: "All

those new faithful were so completely united that, as Holy Scripture phrases it, they formed one heart and one soul."⁴

Don Bosco enriched his History with "tender and moving episodes." The story of the martyrdom of St. Blaise, culled from Bérault-Bercastel's History, is a good example. To this story Don Bosco added two miracles performed by the saint while he was being led to his death. One of them was the miracle of the fishbone.

A mother came forward all in tears and placed her only child at the saint's feet. The child was choking to death with a fishbone stuck in his throat. St. Blaise, moved with compassion at seeing the child in such a pitiable condition, offered a brief prayer, and immediately the child was cured.⁵

The other miracle was altogether extraordinary. Thrown to drown in the sea, St. Blaise made the sign of the cross and walked peacefully on the waves. There he sat and invited the infidels to come to him over the water. Some tried and were drowned. The saint was finally beheaded (315 A. D.).⁶

Another episode, also drawn from Bérault-Bercastel, seems designed to play on the emotions of impressionable young people. In answer to the question, To what atrocities were some fanatical Jews driven?, it told of the gruesome torture of young St. Werner, martyred by Jews in Trier in 1287 during Holy Week.⁷

3. The Waldenses in the History of the Church

In his History of the Church

(Continued on page 6, columns

(both in 1845 and 1848 editions) Don Bosco described and dismissed the Waldenses somewhat cavalierly:

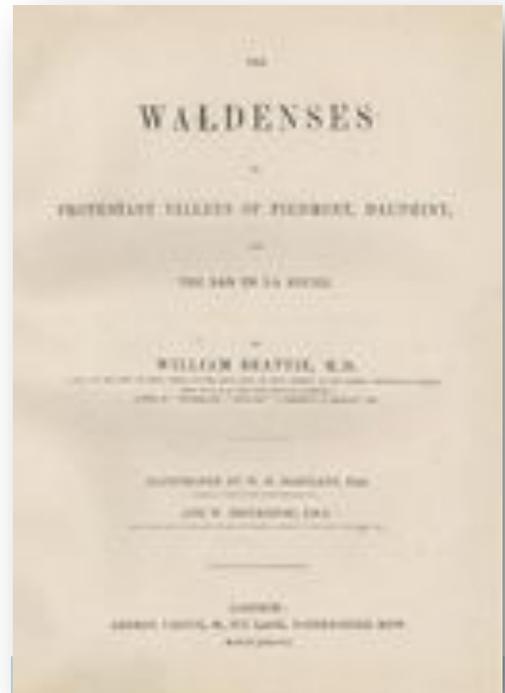
The Waldenses began with Peter Waldo, a merchant of Lyons. Overtaken by fright at the sudden death of a companion of his at a banquet, he encouraged his other friends to embrace voluntary poverty, and he himself began to preach from Holy Scripture of which he was totally ignorant.

He condemned the veneration of sacred images, auricular Confession, Extreme Unction, indulgences, the doctrine of Purgatory. When he received threats in his own country, he did not desist. On the contrary, with a number of vagabond friends he moved to Savoy, and thence to the Valley of Lucerna [Luserna] near Pinerolo where people called them Barbets [Little Uncles]. Their errors were repeatedly refuted, but they held on to them with stubborn pride. They were condemned

at the Eleventh Ecumenical Council, Lateran III, held in 1179 under the presidency of [Pope] Alexander III, with the participation of over 300 bishops from all parts of the Catholic World. However those restless spirits continued to foment discord wherever they went. They were condemned again in various councils, and were finally severely punished by the Emperor and by the kings of France and Aragon. Subsequently the Waldenses joined the Protestants, thus forming one sect with them.⁸

It appears therefore that in Don Bosco's view the Waldenses were nothing but a heretical sect, born out of the stubborn stupidity of another age. In matters of religion, Peter Waldo, their founder, and his early followers were pretentious ignoramuses that had been solemnly condemned by the Church, that is, the archbishop of Lyons, the pope, and an

(Continued on page 7, columns 1&2)



divinely authorized organ for preserving and rendering efficacious the saving truths revealed by Christ. This is the great fundamental dogma on which all other dogmas rest. Hence apologetics also goes by the name of "fundamental theology". Apologetics is generally viewed as one branch of dogmatic science, the other and chief branch being dogmatic theology proper. It is well to note, however, that in point of view and method also they are quite distinct. Dogmatic theology, like moral theology, addresses itself primarily to those who are already Catholic. It presupposes faith. Apologetics, on the other hand, in theory at least, simply leads up to faith. The former begins where the latter ends. Apologetics is pre-eminently a positive, historical discipline, whereas dogmatic theology is rather philosophic and deductive, using as its premises data of divine and ecclesiastical authority — the contents of revelation and their interpretation by the Church. It is only in exploring and in treating dogmatically the

(Continued on page 7, column 3)

J.R.R. Tolkien & C.S. Lewis Take on the Mantle of Christian Apologetics.

Two of the most beloved authors of the twentieth century were deeply influenced by G.K. Chesterton. Both Oxford scholars of literature and liturgy, C.S. Lewis and his



classmate J.R.R. Tolkien would awaken in the world a love for the literature of mythology and epic. Tolkien explored eternal truths of creation, sin, and salvation in his writing even before his boyhood friend, "Jack" Lewis converted to Christianity. Lewis also explored the realms of mythology and used it for Christian Apologetics. Both authors

deplored direct analyses and strict assignment of meanings for their analogies and metaphors, but both men impacted the world with their Christian teachings and apologetics. *The Eternal Man*, by Chesterton, so changed Lewis that he became a Christian and his work has become the stuff of classic apologetics and theology.

ecumenical council. They were rebels and they were deservedly punished for being fomenters of discord in society, Their doctrines closely resembled those of the reformers with whom they had foolishly made common cause.

4. Explicit and Underlying Theses in the History of the Church

Essentially the History had a didactic purpose and was designed to impart moral and religious lessons.

The first lesson is delivered in the very definition of Church history, the first question of the preamble. "Church history is simply the narration of those events that were either hostile or favorable to the Church from its founding to the present day." The Church therefore appears entangled in the fight between the Two Cities, of God and of Satan. Each of the six epochs that follow contains patterns of hostile attacks by the forces of evil and of eventual victory by the Church.

Don Bosco, however, does not fail to touch upon other aspects of the Church's life. The missionary activity of the Church, the civilizing, cultural contribution of monasteries and religious congregations, with particular mention of their work of charity, come in for praise. Nor is the contribution of lay people overlooked.

A theme recurring throughout the History is that just as God is the author of all good so and the devil is the author of all the evil that the Church encounters. Satan is the abettors of all the heretics and the persecutors.

God, however, is ultimately "in charge," and does

not leave them unpunished. Here Don Bosco seems to take delight in describing the ignominious deaths of heretics and persecutors—a doctrine of retribution that does honor neither to God nor to the Church. In this respect in answer to the final question of the History, "What then are we to learn from the history of the Church?" Don Bosco replies:

The history of the Church teaches us in the first place that most of those who have rebelled against the Church have drawn upon themselves even in this life the divine chastisements and came to a woeful and frightful end. In the second place it teaches us that only the Catholic religion is [the true Church] of Jesus Christ. The others take their name from their founders. [...] Therefore they are not in the Church of Christ, but in the Synagogue of the Antichrist. Moreover, the Catholic Church can trace the succession [of its popes] from Gregory XVI all the way back to St. Peter and to Jesus Christ. All of them by word and deed have always defended and professed the same truths that we have [from Christ] in the gospel.

Through the ages the Church has been attacked by sword and writings, but has always triumphed. Kingdoms, republics and empires have collapsed all about it and been swept away. It alone has stood firm and unshaken. [...] Guided by the hand of God, the Church will endure and continue to flourish for those who will come after us.¹⁰

2. Don Bosco's *La Chiesa Cattolica Apostolica Romana, or Avvisi*

[Giovanni Bosco] *La Chiesa Cattolica-Apostolica-Romana è la*

(Continued on page 8)



elements of natural religion, the sources of its authoritative data, that dogmatic theology comes in touch with apologetics.

As has been pointed out, the object of apologetics is to give a scientific answer to the question, *Why should I be Catholic?* Now this question involves two others, which are also fundamental. The one is: *Why should I be a Christian rather than an adherent of the Jewish religion, or the Mohammedan, or the Zoroastrian, or of some other religious system setting up a rival claim to be revealed?* The other, still more fundamental, question is: *Why should I profess any religion at all?* Thus the science of apologetics easily falls into three great divisions:

- First, the study of religion in general and the grounds of theistic belief;
- second, the study of revealed religion and the grounds of Christian belief;
- third, the study of the true Church of Christ and the grounds of Catholic belief.

In the first of these divisions, the apologist inquirers into the nature of religion, its universality, and man's natural capacity to acquire religious ideas. In connection with this the modern study of the religious philosophy of uncultured peoples has to be taken into consideration, and the various theories concerning the origin of religion present themselves for critical discussion. This leads to

(Continued on page 14)

sola vera Chiesa di Gesù Cristo. Avvisi ai cattolici. I nostri Pastori ci uniscono al Papa, il Papa ci unisce con Dio (Torino: Tipografia Speirani e Ferrero, 1850), 23 p., in *OE IV*, 121-143.

[Further slightly revised editions:]

In 1851 a revised and slightly enlarged edition was included as an appendix in the *Campanion of Youth*, with the title, *Fondamenti dell cattolica religione* (Foundation of the Catholic Religion). In 1853 the 1851 edition (practically unchanged) served as the introductory volume to the series, the *Catholic Readings*: [Giovanni Bosco] *Avvisi ai Cattolici. I nostri Pastori ci uniscono al Papa; il Papa ci unisce con Dio.* (Torino: Tipografia dir. da P. De-Agostoni, 1853), 25p., in *OE IV*, 165-193.

Don Bosco would later claim to have produced and circulated some 200,000 copies in two years (!?) [*MO-En* 403].

[Desramaut, *Don Bosco en son temps*, 306-310]

The Waldensian congregation claimed to be a pure and evangelical church, detached from anything Roman. It condemned many religious ideas and practices that Don Bosco held dear and inculcated on his young people.

The liberal revolution of 1848 marked the resurgence of the Waldenses in the Kingdom of Sardinia, a sign of which was Amedeo Bert's book [see above].

It is in this context that Don Bosco decided to take on the Waldenses, and he did so with criteria dictated by an (arguable) theology and by a (flawed) knowledge of the origins and of the historical evolution of the Church.

These criteria he extended to include all other "heretics," with the Jews, the Moslems, and occasionally also the unbelievers, thrown in.

Such apologetic endeavor of Don Bosco resulted in a number of works, the first two of which were the *Avvisi ai cattolici*, (Warnings to Catholics) first published in 1850, and the *Il Cattolico istruito nella sua religione* (The Catholic Instructed in His Religion) published in 1853 [see below].

Whereas in his *History of the Church* Don Bosco had summarily described and dismissed the Waldenses [cf. above], in *Avvisi* (1850) he began to engage them directly, for they were now free to carry on religious activity and to proselytize. He organized his tract in 6 short chapters styled in question-and answer format, in the manner of a brief catechism.

Chapter I: "Basic description of authentic religion." "By true religion is meant the worship of God practiced in the manner willed by God." It consists in believing the truths revealed by God and in keeping God's holy law." God revealed the true religion to Adam, to the Patriarchs, and to the Prophets who proved the truth of the revelation by miracles and prophecies, that is, predictions of the future.¹¹

Chapter II: "There is only one true religion." The various religions, of the "Moslems, the Protestants (that is Calvinists and Lutherans), and the Roman Catholic Church" cannot all be true. "The true religion is found only in the Roman Catholic Church, because it alone preserves God's revelation. It was founded by Jesus Christ, true God and true man. It was spread through the preaching of the Apostles and their successors down to our own

day. Finally, it alone possesses the characters of divinity," one, holy, catholic and apostolic.

Don Bosco gives an explanation of each of these terms along the traditional lines of the manuals. In conclusion, after explaining that "apostolic" means continuously holding the faith and the teaching of the Apostles, he writes:

This characteristic is truly reassuring for us Catholics, because our Church alone, starting with the present reigning Pius IX, from one pope to another goes all the way back to St. Peter, who was appointed prince of the Apostles and Head of the Church by Jesus Christ himself.¹²

Chapter III: "The Churches of the heretics lack the characters of divinity." The Churches of the Waldenses, of the Protestants and of other heretics cannot be the true Church. (1) "They are not one because they do not profess one faith and one doctrine, and do not have one and the same Head." [...] Soon after its founding the Protestant Church found itself divided into more than 200 sects. (2) "They are not holy, because they reject all or some of the sacraments, from which stems all genuine holiness, and because they profess doctrines contrary to the gospel. [...] No saint may be found among heretics, unbelievers and apostates, nor did anyone of them ever perform a miracle. On the contrary, the founders of the principal sects were guilty of vices and crimes." (3) They are not catholic because they are restricted geographically and they are of recent founding. (4) They are not apostolic because they do not profess the faith of the apostles, do not go back to the apostles, and are not united with the pope who is the successor of St.

Peter.

There is no difference between the doctrine of the Catholic Church of today and that taught by Jesus Christ and the Apostles.

This chapter closes with the question, “Can one be saved outside the Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church?” Don Bosco answers: “No. Outside this Church no one can be saved. [...] One who dies separated from the Roman, Catholic and Apostolic Church, the true Church of Jesus Christ, the sole possessor and interpreter of the true religion, inevitably goes to perdition.”¹³

Chapter IV: “The Church of Jesus Christ is not found in the Church of Heretics.” The Jews, the Moslems, the Waldenses, the Protestants, namely the Calvinists and Lutherans, and the like “do not have Christ’s true religion because they do not draw it from the Catholic Church, the sole repository and interpreter of the teaching of its divine Master.” The Jews committed the fatal error of rejecting Jesus Christ and his gospel. “To be saved they must accept Jesus as the Messiah. Receive Baptism, and keep the Commandments of God and of the Church.” After a note of personal blame for Mohammed, Waldo, Calvin and Luther, Don Bosco concludes: “These men were not sent by God. They performed no miracles, nor did they make any prophecy that was fulfilled. They spread their errors and superstitions through violence and debauchery. [Theirs is} a religion that opens the floodgates to every vice and disorders. [...] They are in the synagogue of Antichrist, that is, in a church opposed to that of Jesus Christ.”¹⁴

Chapter V: A Reply to Protestants. When Protestants claim to believe in Christ and his gospel,

and hence to be in the true Church, one should respond: “It isn’t so, since you don’t believe all that Jesus Christ teaches in the gospel. You reject many other teachings that Jesus commanded his apostles to preach. [...] You don’t believe in his Church or in the Roman Pontiff whom Jesus Christ appointed to govern his Church. By allowing free interpretation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, you open wide the gate to error. [...] Therefore, you are like branches cut away from the tree, like members of a body without a head, like sheep without a shepherd, like disciples without a teacher. Above all and most unfortunately you are separated from the very source of life, Jesus Christ.”

Don Bosco closes this chapter by stating that to be saved Protestants “must abjure their errors, join the Roman, Catholic, Apostolic Church from which they were once separated, and be reunited with the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the pope. Anyone who persists in living separated from him will be eternally lost.”¹⁵

Chapter VI: Protestants agree that Catholics are in the true Church. “We Catholics, instead, following the Church’s infallible teaching say that Protestants cannot be saved in their sect, and must therefore return to the Church of Jesus Christ.” Therefore the Protestant religion is false. After relating the conversion from Calvinism of Henry IV, king of France, Don Bosco makes three points to show the uniqueness of Catholicism. (1) The Catholic Church has suffered persecution through the ages by Jews, by pagans, by heretics and by bad Catholics, but it has always triumphed because it was founded by God. The Catholic Church never persecuted anybody. Such incidents as the war against the Albigenses and the massacre on St.

Bartholomew’s day were neither ordered nor approved by the Church. (2) No Catholic on the point of death ever wished to be converted to some other religion. On the other hand, the historical record shows that many non-Catholics at the point of death wished to abjure and die in the Holy Roman Catholic Church. (3) Likewise no Catholic ever left the Catholic Church in order to lead a more virtuous Christian life. Such apostasies occur as an escape to a more permissive religion.

Don Bosco closes the chapter by asking his readers to thank God for the fact that they are Catholics, and to pray for perseverance, and for the conversion of those that are separated from God’s Church. His final plea is, “Be on your guard against Protestants and bad Catholics.”¹⁶

The apologetic of the *Avvisi* is seriously flawed. It is based on ultramontane ecclesiological premises, common enough at mid-nineteenth century (and beyond), but in themselves invalid. Such were a simplistic view of Christian origins, an a-historical view of dogmatic teaching, apostolic succession practically restricted to the popes, total exclusion of non-Catholics from salvation, lumping together under the same “condemnation” Waldenses, Protestants (both Lutherans and Calvinists), Jews, Moslems, all heretics and unbelievers. Furthermore the style of this apologetic cannot be described as anything but crude.

3. The Catholic Instructed in His Religion (1853)

In 1851, after reading a book in defense of the Waldenses written by their minister in Turin (Amedeo Bert), Don Bosco began to compile a larger apologetic tract which was published serially in the *Catholic*

Readings during their first year of publication (1853)

Amedeo Bert's apologia of the Waldenses was entitled, *I Valdesi, ossia i Cristiani-Cattolici secondo la Chiesa primitiva abitanti le così dette Valli di Piemonte*. Cenni storici, per Amedeo Bert, "ministro del culto valdese e cappellano delle delegazioni protestanti a Torino" [The Waldenses, that is the Catholic Christians [living] in accordance with the early Church in the so-called Valleys of Piedmont, by Amedeo Bert, minister of Waldensian worship and chaplain to the Protestant communities in Turin] (Torino: Gianini e Fiore, 1849), xxxv-498 p.

As the title states, Bert, besides being pastor of the Waldensian community, also served as chaplain of the diplomatic delegation of Great Britain and Prussia in Turin,

Don Bosco's work written to refute Bert's claims was entitled, *Il Cattolico istruito nella sua religione. Trattenimenti di un padre di famiglia co' suoi figliuoli secondo i bisogni del tempo*, epilogati dal sac. Bosco Giovanni [The Catholic instructed in his/her religion. Conversations of a father with his children prompted by the needs of the times, digested by Fr. John Bosco] (Torino: Tipografia dir. da P. De-Agostoni, 1853), 111 p. + 340 p., in *OE IV*, 195-305 + 307-646.

It was a collection of tracts published in the *Catholic Readings* in six installments, all within 1853. They appear as follows: #1, 111 p. (March); then (with new, continuous pagination) #2, p. 1-48 (April 10); #3, p. 49-100 (May 25); #4, p. 101-164 (July 10); #5, p. 165-244 (July 25); #6, p. 245-340 (September 10).

(1) *I Valdesi* by Amedeo Bert (1849)

[Supposed History of the Waldenses According to Bert]

Bert saw the Waldenses, in their long and troubled history, as the victims of intolerance and persecution by popes and rulers, and as the object of prejudice and hatred on the part of the people.

Bert claims that the Waldensian movement had its origin in the times of Emperor Constantine, when the doctrine, worship and government of Christ's Church began to lose their original purity. At this time a group of enlightened Christians resisted this deviation from the gospel way of life. (Bert does not go so far as to claim, as others do, that the Waldenses originated in St. Paul's or in St. James' times.)

Throughout the first millennium the Waldenses and other groups living in the alpine valleys according to the gospel way of life refused to accept papal rule. Those evangelical Christians were neither fools nor liars. Even before Peter Waldo in the twelfth century the Waldenses had preserved the original Christian doctrine and worship. However the medieval popes and their inquisitors accused them of heresy and sorcery, whereas in its very simplicity their religion aimed solely at fostering a good moral life. In earlier times their schism from the Roman Church was moral and cultic rather than dogmatic.

They would have loved to live in peace in Southern France, in Bohemia and in Apulia. But the history of these groups in the Middle Ages is also the story of "the permanent derangement of the papacy." On the other hand, the Waldenses of the Piedmontese valleys suffered persecution at the

hand of both the Emperor and the local authorities, being regarded as rebels.

The Protestant reformation was an event that stirred up enthusiasm and rejoicing among the Waldenses. Faced with the ignorance and corruption of the clergy, the practice of selling indulgences and other abuses tolerated by the Holy See, Luther went back to the Christianity of the gospel and reminded us that "the pope is not infallible."

Unfortunately the Waldenses' making common cause with the reformation unleashed unceasing persecution against them by the inhabitants of the Piedmontese valleys. Hundreds of people were driven from their ancestral lands and were forced to flee for safety to Switzerland or to Germany.

The French Revolution, up to 1830, did little to improve the situation of the Waldenses. Only with the ascent of King Charles Albert in 1831 did gradual improvement come about. (King Charles Albert had been a pupil of [Waldensian] Minister Vaucher, professor in the Protestant academy of the canton.

Finally under a reformer pope and at the onset of a new political and social order in Italy, the king of Piedmont granted freedom and civil rights to the Waldenses on February 27, 1848—over the protests of some members of the hierarchy. It was indeed an act of grace but also one of justice, long overdue.

Bert adds that the rulers of the House of Savoy had persecuted the Waldenses only when abetted by the leaders of a false Catholicism.

Now that a new era of

freedom for the Waldenses has begun the Roman Catholic Church has nothing to fear. Their prayer is that Italy might one day be neither Waldensian nor Roman Catholic, but simply Christian.

[Beliefs of the Waldenses According to Bert]

While telling the supposed history of the Waldenses, Bert also explains their religious beliefs. They professed the pure Christian faith of the early Church.

Jesus had only preached the “dogma” [doctrine]; he gave an example of virtue, sacrifice and love; by his death “he restore the human family to its original freedom.”

For the first three centuries the faithful did not use special places of worship, did not acknowledge hierarchical orders, lived in independent communities bound only by the “sacred bonds of faith and charity.” Their bishops and other ministers did not possess either riches or temporal power. Christians gathered in assemblies only to read and to hear the Holy Scriptures explained in their own language, and to sing the praises of the Lord. The faithful kept as feast days only Sundays, a few fast days, and the more “solemn” events of the life of Jesus.

The Waldenses revered the Bible and believed the truths of the Apostles’ Creed and the teaching of the first four Councils. But they rejected all the innovations that troubled the Church then, and has troubled the Church since. They rejected therefore the primacy of Peter, the supreme authority of the pope, the power of bishops as it had gradually taken form, the priestly hierarchy, and hence all clerical power.

The Waldenses celebrated

Baptism and the Eucharist, but did not accept the five sacraments of Roman Catholicism as anti-apostolic and anti-scriptural. The rites, material symbols, and formulas of these sacraments were not only “strange, useless and blameworthy,” but downright “blasphemous.”

They rejected the doctrine of Purgatory and praying for the dead. They regarded the invocation of the saints as an “idolatrous” practice, contrary to the doctrine of the unique mediation of Jesus. They revered the Virgin Mary as holy, humble and full of grace, but of a grace that could not be shared.

They likewise rejected the veneration of the images of the saints and of their relics. They did not believe in pilgrimages, in holy water, in the sacredness of burial grounds, in the cross, in the blessing of palms, in sacred vessels, and in adornments of churches.

(2) Don Bosco’s Anti-Waldensian Tracts, *Il Cattolico Istrito*

With regard to both the structure and the nature of its apologetic, the *Catholic Instructed* (even more so than its predecessor, the *Warnings*) is patterned after the bristling apologetic of contemporary treatises, such as those of the learned Jesuit Giovanni Perrone, highly regarded by Don Bosco. In his treatise, *De vera religione adversus incredulos and heterodoxos* (On true religion, a treatise against unbelievers and heretics), Perrone develops twelve “traditional propositions” on the true church, leading to the conclusion: “*Vel nulla religio, vel sola religio catholica. Nullum datur medium; vel si medium datur, est medium incoherentiae*” (Either [one opts for] no religion at all, or [for] the Catholic religion alone. There is no middle ground,

except the middle ground of incoherence). The *Catholic Instructed* fully reveals Don Bosco’s merciless apologetic fervor.

It seems hardly fair to justify this embarrassing apologetic by supposing that it was addressed only to young people and to ignorant peasants and laborers.¹⁷

The first, untitled part of the *Catholic Instructed* is a defense of the true religion, consisting of conversations I-XIV: God exists; religion, i.e., honoring God, is a need of both individuals and of society; revelation from Adam to Christ is necessary, because natural religion is insufficient; the Bible is the vehicle of revelation and is true in every respect; the Bible is divine; the history of salvation is a story of prophecy and miracle, from Adam to David; from David to Christ the Messiah; Christ fulfills all prophecy; the Gospel, the most perfect of books, is the story of Christ; He is true God and true man; He rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, “another proof of his divinity”; the problem of Jewish unbelief.

The second, final and longer part, entitled, “The Church of Jesus Christ”, is complex.

Conversations I-XII are dedicated to proving that the Roman Catholic Church is the only and true Church of Jesus Christ—Its prodigious expansion show it to be divine; it is a society established for the preservation of the religion of Christ; it is founded on Peter; it is one; it is holy; it is apostolic because it goes back to the apostles, while others only go back to Luther, Calvin, Waldo, etc.; authority in the Church (hierarchy) was established by Christ and is expressed in ecumenical, national, provincial and diocesan Councils; Christ’s Church is visible, with a visible head, the

Pope, the Vicar of Christ.

From here on, the remaining 31 Conversations (some 300 pages) are entirely polemic and devoted to debunking other religions, chiefly the Waldenses and the Protestants.

Conversations XIII-XIX (there is no XVI) begin by disposing of Islam, (ridiculing Mohammed, the Koran and its doctrine) and of Greek orthodoxy (a schism in bad faith). The Waldenses then come under merciless attack in four conversations, which give an account of the origin of the sect, deplore the bad faith of its ministers, and disqualify them from the true Church of Christ.

The remaining Conversations XX-XLIII (the last three pamphlets) are an attack on the Protestants. One pamphlet (9 Conversations) dealt with Luther, Calvin and Theodore de Bèze, Henry VIII and Anglicanism, and the “preachers of the Reformation.”

The next pamphlet (5 Conversations) compared Protestant with Catholic doctrine. Whereas Catholic doctrine has never changed from apostolic times, Protestant doctrine merely repeats in various forms the old heresies. The last pamphlet (10 Conversations) deals with the inner contradictions of Protestantism, due especially to the principle of individual interpretation. In the last chapter “conversation” fiction is abandoned, and Don Bosco personally appeals to Protestant ministers to join the only ark of safety, the Church of Peter.

The flaws of such apologetic, common in Don Bosco’s times and milieu, were apparent: the total absence of a critical interpretation of Biblical and early Christian texts; ignorance of the history of the ancient world; the

constant confusion of primary and secondary cause; the denial of any value in non-Christian or non-Catholic religions, etc. The absence of critical spirit alone invalidated most apologetic argument. The refusal to recognize any value outside the Roman Catholic Church even called into question the good faith of the apologist.

13. Fourth Centenary of the Miracle of the Blessed Sacrament (June 10, 1853)

Notizie storiche intorno al miracolo del SS. Sacramento avvenuto in Torino il 6 giugno 1453, con un cenno sul quarto centenario del 1853 (Lecture Cattoliche 1:#6). Torino: P. De Agostini, 1853, 48p.

14. Contemporary Episodes Presented in Dialogue Form (August 10 and 25, 1853)

Fatti contemporanei esposti in forma di dialoghi (Lecture Cattoliche 1: #10 & 11). Torino: P. De Agostini, 1983, 48 p.

15. Debate between an Attorney and a Protestant Minister. A Play (December 25, 1853)

Una disputa tra un avvocato e un ministro protestante. Dramma (Lecture Cattoliche 1: #19). Torino: P. De Agostini, 1853, 68 p.

Desramaut, *Études* III, 42-47.

By these three “occasional” pamphlets Don Bosco carried forward his anti-Protestant crusade, in the spirit of the *Catholic Instructed*.

[13] The story about the *Miracle* was that some robbers had stolen a monstrance containing the consecrated host at Exilles (Susa), and had hidden it in a sack that their donkey was carrying as they made

their way to Turin. On reaching Turin, at the place where now rises the church of Corpus Christi, the donkey stopped and reared, the sack opened, the monstrance fell to the ground, while the consecrated host was elevated and remained suspended high above the ground until the bishop arrived. By this miracle (Don Bosco argued) God wished to give people a proof of the real presence, against the Waldenses who inhabited the alpine valleys and who denied, as they still do now, the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist—etc.

[14] The *Contemporary Episodes* were about the son of a coal vender, who preferred a life of poverty to a lucrative job in a “corrupt factory”. Of the seven dialogues, two were about avoiding bad books and bad companions; but five were against the Protestants. E. g.: In Dialogue 1, Minister B. (Bert?) is trying to get Giovanni to join his sect, “a religion the ministers of which live in households full of women and children, which has no leader, no sacraments, and lacks any divine character”; In Dialogue 5, a Protestant minister is at the bedside of a dying apostate who begs to be allowed to die a Catholic. “The minister orders an attendant to pull the pillow from under the dying man’s head. Then leaving him to choke and gasp, they leave the room locking all doors. They do not go back into the room until they are sure that the man has breathed his last” [p. 33f.].

[15] The *Debate*, a play in two acts which deals with a family situation, is a prolonged argument against Protestant proselytizing. They “offer money to induce Catholics to become Protestants, but once the apostasy has been perpetrated, they no longer care.” They are a “church of drunkards.”

“Luther himself in speaking of the Protestants of his day, had this to say: ‘Most of my followers live like Epicureans. [...] If one wished to meet a crowd of liars, usurers, wastrels, rebels, people in bad faith, one would only have to visit a town claiming to be evangelical’” [p. 19f]. Later he refers the reader to an earlier issue of the Catholic readings [1: #9] where “it has been amply demonstrated that Protestantism has retained nothing of the early Church; and that Protestants today profess only errors already condemned in earlier times” [p. 44].

Don Bosco’s “fanaticism” was motivated by his overpowering concern for the salvation of souls, a thing that is incomprehensible in our modern pluralist religious context. Don Bosco firmly believed that personal salvation was strictly connected with faith, understood as adherence to divinely revealed truths, “without which we would be eternally lost” [*Catholic Instructed I*, p. 23]. These truths are found only in the true Church (that is, the Roman Catholic Church). After Christ, it is impossible to be saved even in the Jewish religion, which was nonetheless authentic [cf. *Catholic Instructed I*, p. 60]. *A fortiori*, one cannot be saved in those religions which have abandoned the Catholic truth (the Protestant churches).

Don Bosco felt called to fight against the “beast” of religious error unleashed by the liberal laws. On May 31, 1853, he sent some numbers of the Catholic Readings to Cardinal Antonelli and wrote: “Your Eminence, the beast has come out of its lair, and there are no hunters with their weapons ready to shoot it down.”¹⁸

On the other hand, Don Bosco was personally sensitive to the plight of individual Protestants [cf. separate note], and was always ready

to talk. He writes to Canon (later Bishop) P. De Gaudenzi: “I have been many times insulted by the Protestants; but, by the Lord’s will, Protestants come to me on an almost daily basis, and in good faith, to ask for explanations of what they read in the *Catholic Readings*.”¹⁹

Endnotes

¹ Bosco, *Storia ecclesiastica* (1845), 14 in *OE I*, 172.

² Jean-Nicolas Loriguet, *Histoire ecclésiastique A. M. D. G.* Italian translation by an Anonymous (Turin: Marietti, 1844), 130 p. A. M. D. G. (*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*, to God’s Greater Glory) is part of the Jesuit device.

The Jesuit Father Loriguet (1767-1845) was a well known teacher and writer who published a number of books for young readers, including a *History of France for use by the Young* (1814 and 1816,...), (paralleled by Don Bosco’s *History of Italy* narrated to the Young (1856 and 1859...)) Both came under fire from the liberals in both country and Jesuitical and reactionary. [Desramaut, *DB en son temps*, 553-554]

³ *Storia della Chiesa dalla sua fondazione fino al pontificato di Gregorio XVI* (Turin: Marietti, 1943), viii+360 p.

⁴ Bosco, *Storia ecclesiastica* (1845), 9-10, Preface, in *OE I*, 167-168.

⁵ Bosco, *Storia ecclesiastica* (1845), 34. In *OE I*, 192; [Loriguet], *Storia ecclesiastica*, 13, in Desramaut, *DB en son temps*, 219, Note 118.

⁶ Bosco, *Storia*

ecclesiastica (1845), 110. In *OE I*, 268.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Bosco, *Storia ecclesiastica* (1845), 266-256, in *OE I*, 413414, from B’rault-Bercastel, Zugno’s Italian ed. [Desramaut, *DB en son temps*, 219, Note 123.

⁹ Bosco *Storia ecclesiastica* (1845), 227-228. The Waldenses were excommunicated by the Council of Verona (1184), which was not ecumenical.

¹⁰ Bosco, *Storia ecclesiastica* (1845), 587-588, in *OE I*, 545-546.

¹¹ Bosco, *Avvisi* (1851/1853), 9-10, in *OE IV*, 171-172.

¹² Bosco, *Avvisi* (1850/1853), 10-14, in *OE IV*, 172-176.

¹³ Bosco, *Avvisi* (1850/1873), 14-17, in *OE IV*, 176-179.

¹⁴ Bosco, *Avvisi* (1851/1853) 17-19, in *OE IV*, 179-181.

¹⁵ Bosco, *Avvisi* (1851/1853), 20-21, in *OE IV*, 182-183.

¹⁶ Bosco, *Avvisi* (1851/1853), 21-25, in *OE IV*, 183-187.

¹⁷ Stella, *DB I* (English), 268f., seems to think so.

¹⁸ Motto, *Ep I*, 197.

¹⁹ Letter of April 7, 1853 in Motto, *Ep I*, 194.

the examination of the grounds of theistic belief, including the important questions of

- the existence of a divine Personality, the Creator and Conserver of the world, exercising a special providence over man;
- man's freedom of will and his corresponding religious and moral responsibility in virtue of his dependence on God;
- the immortality of the human soul, and the future life with its attendant rewards and punishments.

Coupled with these questions is the refutation of monism, determinism, and other anti-theistic theories. Religious philosophy and apologetics here march hand in hand.

The second division, on revealed religion, is even more comprehensive. After treating the notion, possibility, and moral necessity of a divine revelation, and its discernibility through various internal and external criteria, the apologist proceeds to establish the *fact* of revelation. Three distinct, progressive stages of revelation are set forth: Primitive Revelation, Mosaic Revelation, and Christian Revelation. The chief sources on which he has to rely in establishing this triple fact of revelation are the Sacred Scriptures. But if he is logical, he must prescind from their inspiration and treat them provisionally as human historical documents. Here he must depend on the critical study of the Old and New Testaments by impartial scriptural scholars, and build on the accredited results of their researches touching the authenticity and trustworthiness of the sacred books purporting to be historical. It is only by anticipation that an argument for the fact of

primitive revelation can be based on the ground that it is taught in the inspired book of Genesis, and that it is implied in the supernatural state of our first parents. In the absence of anything like contemporary documents, the apologist has to lay chief stress on the high antecedent probability of primitive revelation, and show how a revelation of limited, but sufficient scope for primitive man is compatible with a very crude stage of material and culture, and hence is not discredited by the sound results of prehistoric archaeology. Closely connected with this question is the scientific study of the origin and antiquity of man, and the unity of the human species; and, as still larger subjects bearing on the historic value of the sacred Book of Origins, the compatibility with Scripture of the modern sciences of biology, astronomy, and geology. In like manner the apologist has to content himself with showing the fact of Mosaic revelation to be highly probable. The difficulty, in the present condition of Old Testament criticism, of recognizing more than a small portion of the Pentateuch as documentary evidence contemporary with Moses, makes it incumbent on the apologist to proceed with caution lest, in attempting to prove too much, he may bring into discredit what is decidedly tenable apart from dogmatic considerations. However, there is sufficient evidence allowed by all but the most radical critics to establish the fact that Moses was the providential instrument for delivering the Hebrew people from Egyptian bondage, and for teaching them a system of religious legislation that in lofty monotheism and ethical worth is far superior to the beliefs and customs of the surrounding nations, thus

affording a strong presumption in favor of its claim to be revealed. This presumption gains strength and clearness in the light of Messianic prophecy, which shines with ever increasing volume and brightness through the history of the Jewish religion till it illumines the personality of our Divine Lord. In the study of Mosaic revelation, biblical archaeology is of no small service to the apologist.

When the apologist comes to the subject of Christian revelation, he finds himself on much firmer ground. Starting with the generally recognized results of New Testament criticism, he is enabled to show that the synoptic Gospels, on the one hand, and the undisputed Epistles of St. Paul, on the other, offer two independent, yet mutually corroborative, masses of evidence concerning the person and work of Jesus. As this evidence embodies the unimpeachable testimony of thoroughly reliable eye-witnesses and their associates, it presents a portraiture of Jesus that is truly historical. After showing from the records that Jesus taught, now implicitly, now explicitly, that he was the long expected Messiah, the Son of God sent by His Heavenly Father to enlighten and save mankind, and to found the new kingdom of justice, Apologetics proceeds to set forth the grounds for believing in these claims:

- the surpassing beauty of His moral character, stamping Him as the unique, perfect man;
- the lofty excellence of His moral and religious teaching, which has no parallel elsewhere, and which answers the highest aspirations of the human soul;

- His miracles wrought during His public mission;
- the transcendent miracle of His resurrection, which He foretold as well;
- the wonderful regeneration of society through His undying personal influence.

Then, by way of supplementary proof, the apologist institutes an impartial comparison of Christianity with the various rival religious systems of the world — Brahminism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, Taoism, Mohammedanism — and shows how in the person of its founder, in its moral and religious ideal and influence, the Christian religion is immeasurably superior to all others, and alone has a claim to our assent as the absolute, divinely-revealed religion. Here, too, in the survey of Buddhism, the specious objection, not uncommon today, that Buddhist ideas and legends have contributed to the formation of the Gospels, calls for a summary refutation.

Beyond the fact of Christian revelation the Protestant apologist does not proceed. But the Catholic rightly insists that the scope of apologetics should not end here. Both the New Testament records and those of the sub-Apostolic age bear witness that Christianity was meant to be something more than a religious philosophy of life, more than a mere system of individual belief and practice, and that it cannot be separated historically from a concrete form of social organization. Hence Catholic apologetics adds, as a necessary sequel to the established fact of Christian revelation, the demonstration of the true Church of Christ and its identity with the Roman Catholic Church. From the records of the Apostles and



"ugh. dad. just summarize it in 140 characters or less."

their immediate successors is set forth the institution of the Church as a true, unequal society, endowed with the supreme authority of its Founder, and commissioned in His name to teach and sanctify mankind; possessing the essential features of visibility, indefectibility, and infallibility; characterized by the distinctive marks of unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity. These notes of the true Church of Christ are then applied as criteria to the various rival Christian denominations of the present day, with the result that they are found fully exemplified in the Roman Catholic Church alone. With the supplementary exposition of the primacy and infallibility of the Pope, and of the rule of faith, the work of apologetics is brought to its fitting close. It is true that some apologists see fit to treat also of inspiration and the analysis of the act of faith. But, strictly speaking, these are not apologetic subjects. While they may logically be included in the prolegomena of dogmatic theology, they rather belong, the one to the province of Scripture-study, the other to the tract of moral theology dealing with the theological virtues.

APOLOGETIC LITERATURE

The history of apologetic literature involves the survey of the varied attacks that have been made against the grounds of Christian, Catholic belief. It may be marked off into four great divisions.

- The *first* division is the period from the beginning of Christianity to the downfall of the Roman Empire (A.D. 476). It is chiefly characterized by the twofold struggle of Christianity with Judaism and with paganism.
- The *second* division is coextensive with the Middle Ages, from A.D. 476 to the Reformation. In this period we find Christianity in conflict with the Mohammedan religion and philosophy.
- The *third* division takes in the period from the beginning of the Reformation to the rise of rationalism in England in the middle of the seventeenth century. It is the period of struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism.
- The *fourth* division embraces the period of rationalism, from the middle of the seventeenth century down to the present day. Here we find Christianity in conflict with Deism, Pantheism, Materialism, Agnosticism, and Naturalism.

First period

Apologies in answer to the opposition of Judaism

It lay in the nature of things that Christianity should meet with strong Jewish opposition. In dispensing with circumcision and other works of the law, Christianity had incurred the imputation of running counter to God's immutable will. Again, Christ's humble and obscure life, ending in the ignominious death on the cross, was the very opposite of what the Jews expected of their Messiah. Their judgment seemed to be confirmed by the fact that Christianity attracted but an insignificant portion of the Jewish people, and spread with greatest vigor among the despised Gentiles. To justify the claims of Christianity before the Jews, the early apologists had to give an answer to these difficulties. Of these apologies the most important is the "Dialogue with Trypho the Jew" composed by Justin Martyr about 155-160. He vindicates the new religion

against the objections of the learned Jew, arguing with great cogency that it is the perfection of the Old Law, and showing by an imposing array of Old Testament passages that the Hebrew prophets point to Jesus as the Messiah and the incarnate Son of God. He insists also that it is in Christianity that the destiny of the Hebrew religion to become the religion of the world is to find its realization, and hence it is the followers of Christ, and not the unbelieving Jews, that are the true children of Israel. By his elaborate argument from Messianic prophecy, Justin won the grateful recognition of later apologists. Similar apologies were composed by Tertullian, "Against the Jews" (*Adversus Jud os*, about 200), and by St. Cyprian, "Three Books of Evidences against the Jews" (about 250).

Apologies in answer to pagan opposition

Of far more serious moment to the early

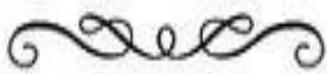


Christian Church was the bitter opposition it met from paganism. The polytheistic religion of the Roman Empire, venerated for its antiquity, was intertwined with every fiber of the body politic. Its providential influence was a matter of firm belief. It was associated with the highest culture, and had the sanction of the greatest poets and sages of Greece and Rome. Its splendid temples and stately ritual gave it a grace and dignity that captivated the popular imagination. On the other hand, Christian monotheism was an innovation. It made no imposing display of liturgy. Its disciples were, for the most part, persons of humble birth and station. Its sacred literature had little attraction for the fastidious reader accustomed to the elegant diction of the classic authors. And so the popular mind viewed it with misgivings, or despised it as an ignorant superstition. But opposition did not end here. The uncompromising attitude of the new religion towards pagan rites was decried as the greatest impiety. The Christians were branded as atheists, and as they held aloof from the public functions also, which were invariably associated with these false rites, they were accused of being enemies of the State. The Christian custom of worshipping in secret assembly seemed to add force to this charge, for secret societies were forbidden by Roman law. Nor were calumnies wanting. The popular imagination easily distorted the vaguely known Agape and Eucharistic Sacrifice into abominable rites marked by feasting on infant flesh and by indiscriminate lust. The outcome was that the people and authorities took alarm at the rapidly spreading Church and sought to repress it by force. To vindicate the Christian cause against these attacks of paganism, many apologies were written. Some, notably the "Apology" of Justin Martyr (150), the "Plea for the Christians", by Athenagoras (177), and the "Apologetic" of Tertullian (197), were addressed to emperors for the express purpose of securing for the Christians immunity from persecution. Others were composed to convince the pagans of the folly of polytheism and of the saving truth of Christianity. Such were: Tatian, "Discourse to the Greeks" (160), Theophilus, "Three Books

Apologetics & the College Student

Today, many young adults enter the university world ill equipped to defend their own faith. This is just one of the concerns of the US Bishops and their appraisal of where catechetical education has brought a few generations of the faithful in the last few years. If there is anything to be gained at all by generational studies, it is important to dissect this phenomena of un-informed faith in so many college students today. It is not for lack of interest that we come upon this scene. We are discovering whole groups of young adults devoid of sufficient training and interest in anything spiritual. Too often, the theologies operating in the young adult of today is more penned by Hollywood than by current theologies or philosophies. This is not a pronounced judgment on the young adult, but upon the generations, institutions, church communities, and social communities which have raised them into adult-hood. As faith articulation wanes in one sector, other reactionary groups are rising from within the same communities of young adults. Some are expressing their spiritual hunger with a quest to serve the world and the poor. Others are hankering for a theology and a liturgical world with definite answers and rituals proclaiming assurance and identity. All groups are showing signs of interest in apologetics. This hopeful sign needs direction and mediation. As youth ministers, we need to engage the young adult, help them with their questions, and equip them for a world beyond Hollywood.

to Autolychnus" (180), the "Epistle to Diognetus" (about 190), the "Octavius" of Minucius Felix (192), Origen, "True Discourse against Celsus" (248), Lactantius, *Institutes* (312), and St. Augustine, "City of God" (414-426). In these apologies the argument from Old Testament prophecy has a more prominent place than that from miracles. But the one on which most stress is laid is that of the transcendent excellence of Christianity. Though not clearly marked out, a twofold line of thought runs through this argument: Christianity is light, whereas paganism is darkness; Christianity is power, whereas paganism is weakness. Enlarging on these ideas, the apologists contrast the logical coherence of the religious tenets of Christianity, and its lofty ethical teaching, with the follies and inconsistencies of polytheism, the low ethical principles of its philosophers, and the indecencies of its mythology and of some of its rites. They likewise show that the Christian religion alone has the power to transform man from a slave of sin into a spiritual freeman. They compare what they once were as pagans with what they now are as Christians. They draw a telling contrast between the loose morality of pagan society and the exemplary lives of Christians, whose devotion to their religious principles is stronger than death itself.



Second period. Christianity in conflict with Mohammedan religion and philosophy

The one dangerous rival with which Christianity had to contend in the Middle Ages was the Mohammedan religion. Within a century of its birth, it had torn from Christendom some of its fairest lands, and extended like a huge crescent from Spain over Northern Africa, Egypt, Palestine, Arabia, Persia, and Syria, to the eastern part of Asia Minor. The danger, which this fanatic religion offered to Christian faith, in countries where the two religions came in contact, was not to be treated lightly. And so we find a series of apologies written to uphold the truth of Christianity in the face of Moslem errors. Perhaps the earliest was the "Discussion between a Saracen and a Christian" composed by St. John Damascene (about 750). In this apology he vindicates the dogma of the Incarnation against the rigid and fatalistic conception of God taught by Mohammed. He also demonstrates the superiority of the religion of Christ, pointing out the grave



defects in Mohammed's life and teaching, and showing the Koran to be in its best parts but a feeble imitation of the Sacred Scriptures. Peter the Venerable composed other apologies of a similar kind in the twelfth, and by Raymond of Martini in the thirteenth century. Hardly less dangerous to the Christian faith was the rationalistic philosophy of Islamism. The Arabian conquerors had learned from the Syrians the arts and sciences of the Greek world. They became especially proficient in medicine, mathematics, and philosophy, for the study of which they erected in every part of their domain schools and libraries. In the twelfth century Moorish Spain had nineteen colleges, and their renown attracted hundreds of Christian scholars from every part of Europe. Herein lay a grave menace to Christian orthodoxy, for the philosophy of Aristotle as taught in these schools had become thoroughly tintured with Arabian pantheism and rationalism. The peculiar tenet of the celebrated Moorish philosopher Averroes was much in vogue, namely: that philosophy and religion are two independent spheres of thought, so that what is true in the one may be false in the other. Again, it was commonly taught that faith is for the masses that cannot think for themselves, but philosophy is a higher form of knowledge, which noble minds should seek to acquire. Among the fundamental dogmas denied by the Arabian philosophers were creation, providence, and immortality.

Islam, Christianity, and Tolerance

Perhaps one of the biggest challenges for the present moment in history is finding ways to dialogue between faiths and peoples of very different traditions. Recently, an Islamic Scholar from Harvard University called upon the Islamic world to disconnect itself from the violence associated with radical fundamentalist groups claiming to murder and foment violence in the name of their God. It was interesting to witness the bravery of a scholar from the Islamic tradition who ventured out to build bridges between cultures and faiths. A series of interviews are offered from many different points of view on this effort to find common ground. For many very fascinating and balanced podcasts on a variety of current issues of faith, go to <http://www.airsla.org/speakfaith.asp#table>.

To vindicate Christianity against Mohammedan rationalism, St. Thomas composed (1261-64) his philosophical "Summa contra Gentiles", in four books. In this great apology the respective claims of reason and faith are carefully distinguished and harmonized, and a systematic demonstration of the grounds of faith is built up with arguments of reason and authority such as appealed directly to the minds of that day. In treating of God, providence, creation and the future life, St. Thomas refutes the chief errors of the Arabian, Jewish, and Greek philosophers, and shows that the genuine teaching of Aristotle confirms the great truths of religion. Three apologies composed in much the same spirit, but belonging to a later age, may be mentioned here. The one is the fine work of Louis Vivés, "De Veritate Fidei Christianæ Libri V" (about 1530). After treating the principles of natural theology, the Incarnation, and Redemption, he gives two dialogues, one between a Christian and a Jew, the other between a Christian and a Mohammedan, in which he shows the superiority of the Christian religion. Similar to this is the apology of the celebrated Dutch theologian Grotius, "De Veritate Religionis Christianæ" (1627). It is in six books. An able treatise on natural theology is followed by a demonstration of the truth of Christianity based on the life and miracles of Jesus, the holiness of His teaching, and the wonderful propagation of His religion. In proving the authenticity and trustworthiness of the Sacred Scriptures, Grotius appeals largely to internal evidence. The latter part of the work is devoted to a refutation of paganism, Judaism, and Mohammedanism. An apology

on somewhat similar lines is that of the Huguenot, Philip de Mornay, "De la vérité de la religion chrétienne" (1579). It is the first apology of note that was written in a modern tongue.

Third period. Catholicism in conflict with Protestantism

The outbreak of Protestantism in the beginning of the sixteenth century, and its rejection of many of the fundamental features of Catholicism, called forth a mass of controversial apologetic literature. It was not, of course, the first time that the principles of Catholic belief had been questioned with reference to Christian orthodoxy. In the early ages of the Church heretical sects, assuming the right to profess allegiance and fidelity to the spirit of Christ, had given occasion to St. Irenæus "On Heresies", Tertullian "On Prescription against Heretics," St. Vincent of Lérins, in his "Commonitory", to insist on unity with the Catholic Church, and, for the purpose of confuting the heretical errors of private interpretation, to appeal to an authoritative rule of faith. In like manner, the rise of heretical sects in the three centuries preceding the Reformation led to an accentuation of the fundamental principles of Catholicism, notably in Moneta's "Summa contra Catharos et Waldenses" (about 1225), and Torquemada's "Summa de Ecclesiâ" (1450). So to a far greater extent, in the outpouring from many sources of Protestant ideas, it became the duty of the hour to

defend the true nature of the Church of Christ, to vindicate its authority, its divinely authorized hierarchy under the primacy of the Pope, its visibility, unity, perpetuity, and infallibility, along with other doctrines and practices branded as superstitious.

In the first heat of this gigantic controversy the writings on both sides were sharply polemic, abounding in personal recriminations. But towards the close of the century there developed a tendency to treat the controverted questions more in the manner of a calm, systematic apology. Two works belonging to this time are especially noteworthy. One is the "Disputationes de controversiis Christianæ Fidei" (1581-92), by Robert Bellarmine, a monumental work of vast erudition, rich in apologetic material. The other is the "Principiorum Fidei Doctrinalium Demonstratio" (1579), by Robert Stapleton, whom Döllinger pronounced to be the prince of controversialists. Though not so erudite, it is more profound than the work of Bellarmine. Another excellent work of this period is that of Martin Becan, "De Ecclesiâ Christi" (1633).

Fourth period. Christianity in conflict with Rationalism

**From the middle of the
seventeenth to the
nineteenth century**

Rationalism — the setting up of the human reason as the source and measure of all

knowable truth — is, of course, not confined to any one period of human history. It has existed from the earliest days of philosophy. But in Christian society it did not become a notable factor till the middle of the seventeenth century, when it asserted itself chiefly in the form of Deism. It was associated, and even to a large extent identified with the rapidly growing movement towards greater intellectual freedom which, stimulated by fruitful scientific inquiry, found itself seriously hampered by the narrow views of inspiration and of historic Bible-interpretation which then prevailed. The Bible had been set up as an infallible source of knowledge not only in matters of religion, but of history, chronology, and physical science. The result was a reaction against the very essentials of Christianity. Deism became the intellectual fashion of the day, leading in many cases to downright atheism. Starting with the principle that no religious doctrine is of value that cannot be proved by experience or by philosophical reflection, the Deists admitted the existence of a God external to the world, but denied every form of divine intervention, and accordingly rejected revelation, inspiration, miracles, and prophecy. Together with unbelievers of a still more pronounced type, they assailed the historic value of the Bible, decrying its miraculous narratives as fraud and superstition. The movement started in England, and in the eighteenth century spread to France and Germany. Its baneful influence was deep and far-reaching, for it found zealous exponents in some of the leading philosophers and men of letters — Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Voltaire, Rousseau, d'Alembert, Diderot,

Lessing, Herder, and others. But able apologists were not lacking to champion the Christian cause. England produced several that won lasting honor for their scholarly defense of fundamental Christian truths — Lardner, author of the "Credibility of the Gospel History", in twelve volumes (1741-55); Butler, likewise famous for his "Analogy of Religion Natural and Revealed to the Constitution of Nature" (1736); Campbell, who in his "Dissertation on Miracles" (1766) gave a masterly answer to Hume's arguments against miracles; and Paley, whose "Evidences of Christianity" (1794) and "Natural Theology" (1802) are among the classics of English theological literature. On the continent, the work of defense was carried on by such men as Bishop Huet, who published his "Démonstration Evangélique" in 1679; Leibnitz, whose "Théodicée" (1684), with its valuable introduction on the conformity of faith with reason, had a great influence for good; the Benedictine Abbot Gerbert, who gave a comprehensive Christian apology in his "Demonstratio Veræ Religionis Veræ que Ecclesiæ Contra Quasvis Falsas" (1760); and the Abbé Bergier, whose "Traité historique et dogmatique de la vraie religion", in twelve volumes (1780), showed ability and erudition.

The nineteenth century

In the last century the conflict of Christianity with rationalism was in part lightened and in part complicated by the marvelous development of scientific and historic inquiry. Lost languages, like the Egyptian and the Babylonian, were recovered, and thereby rich and valuable records of the past — many

of them unearthed by laborious and costly excavation — were made to tell their story. Much of this bore on the relations of the ancient Hebrew people with the surrounding nations and, while in some instances creating new difficulties, for the most part helped to corroborate the truth of the Bible history. Out of these researches have grown a number of valuable and interesting apologetic studies on Old Testament history: Schrader, "Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament" (London, 1872); Hengstenberg's "Egypt and the Books of Moses" (London, 1845); Harper, "The Bible and Modern Discoveries" (London, 1891); McCurdy, "History, Prophecy, and the Monuments" (London-New York, 1894-1900); Pinches, "The Old Testament in the Light of the Historic Records of Assyria and Babylonia" (London-New York, 1902); Abbé Gainet, "La bible sans la bible, ou l'histoire de l'ancien testament par les seuls témoignages profanes" (Bar-le-Duc, 1871); Vigouroux, "La bible et les découvertes modernes" (Paris, 1889). On the other hand, Biblical chronology, as then understood, and the literal historic interpretation of the Book of Genesis were thrown into confusion by the advancing sciences — astronomy, with its grand nebular hypothesis; biology, with its even more fruitful theory of evolution; geology, and prehistoric archaeology. Rationalists eagerly laid hold of these scientific data, and sought to turn them to the discredit of the Bible and likewise of the Christian religion. But able apologies were forthcoming to essay a conciliation of science and religion. Among them were: Dr. (afterwards Cardinal) Wiseman, "Twelve Lectures on the Connection between Science

and Revealed Religion" (London, 1847), which, though antiquated in parts, is still valuable reading; Reusch, "Nature and the Bible" (London, 1876). Others more modern and up to date are: Duilhé de Saint-Projet, "Apologie scientifique de la foi chrétienne" (Paris, 1885); Abbé Guibert, "In the beginning" (New York, 1904), one of the best Catholic treatises on the subject; and more recent still, A. de Lapparent, "Science et apologétique" (Paris, 1905). A more delicate form of scientific inquiry for Christian belief was the application of the principles of historic criticism to the books of Holy Scripture. Not a few Christian scholars looked with grave misgivings on the progress made in this legitimate department of human research, the results of which called for a reconstruction of many traditional views of Scripture. Rationalists found here a congenial field of study, which seemed to promise the undermining of Scripture-authority. Hence it was but natural that the encroachments of Biblical criticism on conservative theology should be disputed inch by inch. On the whole, the outcome of the long and spirited contest has been to the advantage of Christianity. It is true that the Pentateuch, so long attributed to Moses, is now held by the vast majority of non-Catholic, and by an increasing number of Catholic, scholars to be a compilation of four independent sources put together in final shape soon after the Captivity. But the antiquity of much of the contents of these sources has been firmly established, as well as the strong presumption that the kernel of the Pentateuchal legislation is of Mosaic institution. This has been shown by Kirkpatrick in his "Divine Library of the Old

Testament" (London-New York, 1901), by Driver in his "Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament" (New York, 1897), and by Abbé Lagrange, in his "Méthode historique de l'Ancien Testament" (Paris, 1903; tr. London, 1905). In the New Testament the results of Biblical criticism are still more assuring. The attempt of the Tübingen school to throw the Gospels far into the second century, and to see in most of the Epistles of St. Paul the work of a much later hand, has been absolutely discredited. The synoptic Gospels are now generally recognized, even by advanced critics, to belong to the years 65-85, resting on still earlier written and oral sources, and the Gospel of St. John is brought with certainty down to at least A.D. 110, that is, within a very few years of the death of St. John. The three Epistles of St. John are recognized as genuine, the pastoral letters being now the chief object of dispute. Closely connected with the theory of the Tübingen School, was the attempt of the rationalist Strauss to explain away the miraculous element in the Gospels as the mythical fancies of an age much later than that of Jesus. Strauss's views, embodied in his "Life of Jesus" (1835), were ably refuted, together with the false assertions and inductions of the Tübingen School by such Catholic scholars as Kuhn, Hug, Sepp, Döllinger, and by the Protestant critics, Ewald, Meyer, Wieseler, Tholuck, Luthardt, and others. The outcome of Strauss's "Life of Jesus," and of Renan's vain attempt to improve on it by giving it a legendary form (*Vie de Jésus*, 1863), has been a number of scholarly biographies of our blessed Lord: by Fouard, "Christ the Son of God" (New York, 1891); Didon, "Jesus

Christ" (New York, 1891); Edersheim, "Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah" (New York, 1896), and others.

Another field of study which grew up chiefly in the last century, and has had an influence in shaping the science of apologetics, is the study of religions. The study of the great religious systems of the pagan world, and their comparison with Christianity, furnished material for a number of specious arguments against the independent and supernatural origin of the Christian religion. So, too, the study of the origin of religion in the light of the religious philosophy of uncultured peoples has been exploited against Christian (theistic belief) on the unwarranted ground that Christianity is but a refinement, through a long process of evolution, of a crude primitive religion originating in ghost-worship. Among those who have distinguished themselves in this branch of apologetics are Döllinger, whose "Heidenthum und Judenthum" (1857), tr. "Gentile and Jew in the Court of the Temple" (London, 1865-67), is a mine of information on the comparative merits of revealed religion and the paganism of the Roman world; Abbé de Broglie, author of the suggestive volume, "Problèmes et conclusions de l'histoire des religions" (Paris, 1886); Hardwick, "Christ and other Masters" (London, 1875). Another factor in the growth of apologetics during the last century was the rise of numerous systems of philosophy that, in the teaching of such men as Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schelling, Comte, and Spencer, were openly or covertly in opposition to Christian belief. To counteract these systems, Pope Leo XIII revived

throughout the Catholic world the teaching of Thomistic philosophy. The many works written to vindicate Christian Theism against Pantheism, Materialism, Positivism, and Evolutionary Monism have been of great service to apologetics. Not all these philosophic apologies, indeed, are scholastic. They represent several modern schools of thought. France has furnished a number of able apologetic thinkers who lay chief stress on the subjective element in man, who point to the needs and aspirations of the soul, and to the corresponding fitness of Christianity, and of Christianity alone, to satisfy them. This line of thought has been worked out in various ways by the lately deceased Ollé-Laprune, author of "La certitude morale" (Paris, 1880), and "Le prix de la vie" (Paris, 1892); by Fonsegrive, "Le catholicisme et la vie de l'esprit" (Paris, 1899); and, in "L'action" (Paris, 1893), by Blondel, the founder of the so-called "Immanence School" the principles of which are embodied in the spiritual writings of Father Tyrrell, "Lex Orandi" (London, 1903), "Lex Credendi" (London, 1906). The continued opposition between Catholicism and Protestantism in the last century resulted in the production of a number of noteworthy apologetic writings: Möhler, "Symbolism", published in Germany in 1832, which has gone through many editions in English; Balmes, "Protestantism and Catholicity Compared in their Effects on the Civilization of Europe", a Spanish work published in English in 1840 (Baltimore); the works of the three illustrious English cardinals, Wiseman, Newman, and Manning, most of whose writings have a bearing on apologetics.

It is out of all these varied and extensive studies that apologetics has taken form. The vastness of the field makes it extremely difficult for any one writer to do it full justice. In fact a complete, comprehensive apology of uniform excellence still remains to be written.

Sources

In addition to the works already mentioned, the more general treatises on apologetics are as follows:

CATHOLIC WORKS. SCHANZ, A Christian Apology (New York, 1891) 3 vols. An improved edition of the original, *Apologie des Christentums*, was published in Freiburg (1895) and an augmented edition was in preparation in 1906. PICARD, Christianity or Agnosticism?, tr. from the French by MACLEOD (London, 1899); DEVIVIER, Christian Apologetics, edited and augmented by SASIA (San Jos, 1903) 2 vols.; ed. in one vol. by the Most Rev. S. G. Messmer, D.D. (New York, 1903); FRAYSSINOUS, A Defense of Christianity, tr. from the French by JONES (London, 1836); HETTINGER, Natural Religion (New York, 1890); Revealed Religion (New York, 1895), both being adaptations by H. S. BOWDEN of HETTINGER'S German *Apologie des Christentums* (Freiburg, 1895-98) 5 vols.; HETTINGER, *Fundamental-Theologie* (Freiburg, 1888); GUTBERLET, *Lehrbuch der Apologetik* (Münster, 1895) 3 vols.; SCHELL, *Apologie des Christentums* (Paderborn, 1902-5) 2 vols.; WEISS, *Apologie des Christentums vom Standpunkte der Sitte und Kultur* (Freiburg, 1888-9), 5 vols., French tr. *Apologie du christianisme au point de vue des mœurs et de la civilisation* (Paris, 1894); BOUGAUD, *Le christianisme et les temps présents* (Paris, 1891) 5 vols.; LABEYRIE, *La science de la foi* (La Chapelle-Montligeon, 1903); EGGER, *Encheiridion Theologi Dogmatic Generalis* (Brixen, 1893); OTTIGER, *Theologia Fundamentalis* (Freiburg, 1897); TANQUERY, *Synopsis Theologi Fundamentalis* (New York, 1896). Periodicals valuable for apologetic study are: The American Catholic Quarterly; American Ecclesiastical Review; New York Review; Catholic World; Dublin Review; Irish Ecclesiastical Record; Irish Theological

Quarterly; Month; Tablet; Revue Apologetique (Brussels); Revue pratique apologetique (Paris); Revue des questions scientifiques; Muson; La science catholique; Annales de philosophie chrétienne; Etudes religieuses; Revue Thomiste, Revue du clergé français; Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuse; Revue biblique; Theologische Quartalschrift (Tübingen); Stimmen aus Maria-Laach.

PROTESTANT WORKS. BRUCE, Apologetics (New York, 1892); FISHER, The Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief (New York, 1902); FAIRBAIRN, The Philosophy of the Christian Religion (New York, 1902); MAIR, Studies in the Christian Evidences (Edinburgh, 1894); LUTHARDT, The Fundamental Truths of Christianity (Edinburgh, 1882); SCHULTZ, Outlines of Christian Apologetics (New York, 1905); ROW, Christian Evidences Viewed in Relation to Modern Thought (London, 1888); IDEM, A Manual of Christian Evidences (New York, 1896); ILLINGWORTH, Reason and Revelation (New York, 1903). Many excellent apologetic treatises are to be found in the long series of Bampton Lectures, also in the Gifford, Hulsean, Baird, and Croal Lectures.

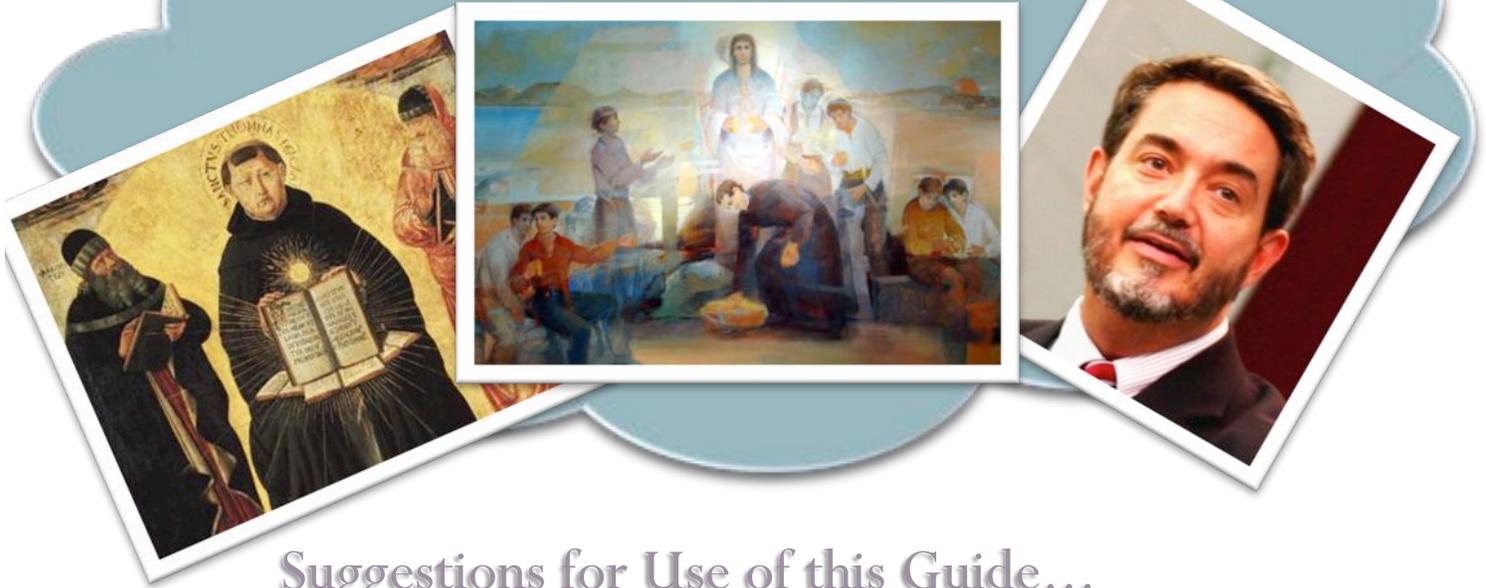
About this page

APA citation. Aiken, C.F. (1907). Apologetics. In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company. Retrieved April 14, 2012 from New Advent: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01618a.htm>

MLA citation. Aiken, Charles Francis. "Apologetics." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 1. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907. 14 Apr. 2012 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01618a.htm>>.

Transcription. This article was transcribed for New Advent by Douglas J. Potter. Dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ.

Ecclesiastical approbation. *Nihil Obstat*. March 1, 1907. Remy Lafort, S.T.D., Censor. *Imprimatur*. +John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York.



Suggestions for Use of this Guide...

Community Days

At a Community Meeting:

- Discuss some of the ideas and beliefs which are prevalent among young people today that are not really adhering to Catholic faith or good Christian moral thinking.
- Discuss ways to engage young people in the discussion of such erring ideologies and concepts without putting them on the defensive.
- Plan a round-robin debate/discussion with some young people.

With the Young

Many young people today, especially in the critical years of college education, are interested in philosophical, religious, and moral debate. They hunger to know what is true and what is false.

- Conduct a planned event for reasonable discussion and debate around a particular issue. For instance, “Pre-Marital Sexual Relations and Successful Relationships” might generate great discussion. Make the event an appealing social event with food and fun, but provide intelligent discussion and expert mentors for the gathering.

Cooperators

The Cooperators are often on the front-lines with parents struggling to raise their own children according to sound Catholic teaching and moral values. Perhaps you could organize some moments of formation for Christian parents.

- Skills for Media Literacy are important tools for any parent to assist them in training their children in the proper and appropriate use of media in its many forms.
- Challenge the parents to live more by example than merely by word. Refer to the work of Christian Smith and his studies of young people and faith today.

Colleagues

As the school year draws to a close in the next few months, there are various gatherings for staff, faculties, and ministry teams available for further training in Salesian Spirituality and Pedagogy. In June there is the *Salesian Education Seminar (SES)*. At the end of June the Center for Ministry Development will host the training for *Certification in Youth Ministry* at Don Bosco Hall in Berkeley and this will be continued the last weekend in July. In July, the *Salesian Leadership Institute for Ministry* will begin a two year path of formation in Salesian history, spirituality, and pedagogy. Encourage one another to participate in an of these opportunities for ongoing formation and spiritual enrichment. Contact Don Bosco Hall for more details.

Fr. Arthur Lenti, Unstoppable at 89 Years

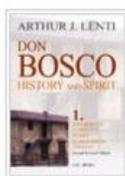
This issue features a whole chapter of Fr. Arthur Lenti's research into the writings and activities of Don Bosco as a Catholic Apologist for 19th Century Italy. Fr. Arthur analyzes the ecclesiology and church history coming from the pen of Don Bosco especially in response to the movement begun in Lyon but Peter Waldo. He readily admits that Don Bosco's approach was a somewhat vitriolic at first, even to the point of condemning persons and ideas attached to the Waldenses which were not really in error. However, as Don Bosco's tone softened, his defense of the truth and the teachings of the Catholic Church remained his focus. Like St. Francis de Sales before him, Don Bosco would persuade many away from error with the use of history and reason. For Don Bosco, these writings in the *Catholic Readings* were precisely preventive helping to steer the contemporary Catholics from confusing and misleading ideas.

Besides the 7 volume historical, critical work on Don Bosco as Founder and Builder, Fr. Arthur is busy at work on many projects, especially the English translation of the new Introduction to the *Memoirs of the Oratory*, Don Bosco's volume, written by Fr. Aldo Giraud, SDB, Salesian Scholar at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome.



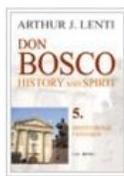
The 7 volume study of Don Bosco by Fr. Arthur Lenti is now published in Spanish and English. However, the only way at present to obtain the Spanish editions is by direct ordering and shipping from Spain. Here is the information: Editorial CCS
<http://www.editorialccs.com/>

DON BOSCO VOLUMES IN ENGLISH AVAILABLE FROM ROME, INDIA, OR NEW JERSEY. INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING RAISES THE US PRICES



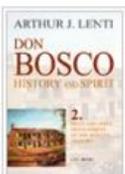
Don Bosco: History and Spirit. 1. John Bosco's Formative Years in Historical Context. Second Revised Edition
 27,00 € IVA incl.

Current price in Euros. In US Dollars: \$35.31
 At Salesiana Publishers in NJ: \$55.00



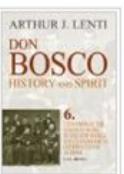
Don Bosco: History and Spirit. 5. Institutional Expansion
 21,15 € IVA incl.

Current price in Euros. In US Dollars: \$27.66
 At Salesiana Publishers in NJ: \$45.00



Don Bosco: History and Spirit. 2. Birth and Early Development of Don Bosco's Oratory
 13,50 € IVA incl.

Current price in Euros. In US Dollars: \$17.65
 At Salesiana Publishers in NJ: \$38.00



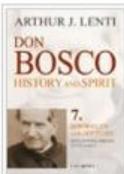
Don Bosco: History and Spirit. 6. Expansion of the Salesian Work in the New World and Ecclesiological Confrontation at Home
 21,15 € IVA incl.

Current price in Euros. In US Dollars: \$27.66
 At Salesiana Publishers in NJ: \$?



Don Bosco: History and Spirit. 3. Don Bosco Educator, Spiritual Master, Writer and Founder of the Salesian Society
 18,90 € IVA incl.

Current price in Euros. In US Dollars: \$24.71
 At Salesiana Publishers in NJ: \$45.00



Don Bosco: History and Spirit. 7. Don Bosco's Golden Years. With General Indexes of the Series
 27,00 € IVA incl.

Current price in Euros. In US Dollars: \$35.31
 At Salesiana Publishers in NJ: \$55.00



Don Bosco: History and Spirit. 4. Beginnings of the Salesian Society and Its Constitutions
 19,80 € IVA incl.

Current price in Euros. In US Dollars: \$25.89
 At Salesiana Publishers in NJ: \$45.00

Salesiana Publishers
 c/o SRM Distribution Services
 75 West Century Road, Suite 200
 Paramus, NJ 07652
 phone 201-986-0503
 fax 201-986-0504
 e-mail: srmdist@verizon.net

EDITRICE LAS
 Piazza dell'Ateneo Salesiano, 1 -
 00139 ROMA (Italia)
 Tel.: +39 06 87290626 - 06
 87290445 - Fax: +39 06 87290629
 E-mail: las@unisal.it