


The Augsburg Confession of 1530

Article XXIII:

The Marriage of Priests

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- ❖ “Complaints about unchaste priests are common. Platina (Bartolomeo Sacchi; 1421-81) writes that it is for this reason that Pope Pius (II) is reported to have said that although there are reasons why marriage was taken away from priests, there are far more important reasons why it should be given back....”

A portrait of Pope Julius II, showing him with a long white beard, wearing a red papal hat and a red robe, set against a dark background with a gold halo.

Pope Julius II (1503 to 1513)

- Despite the clergy's sacred oath of celibacy, Julius reportedly had several mistresses and at least one illegitimate daughter (some sources indicate that he had two other daughters who died during their childhoods).
- In 1511, a council brought charges of lewd sexual acts against him, alleging that he was "a sodomite covered with shameful ulcers," according to Dr. Joe J. Payyapilly in "The Spirit of Holiness" (Xlibris Corporation, 2010).

Pope Alexander VI (1492 to 1503)



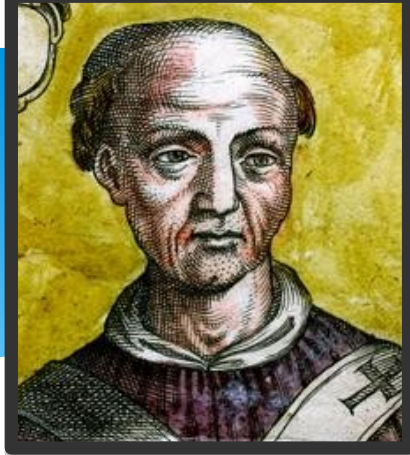
* Even though he was supposedly a celibate clergyman, Alexander VI romanced several mistresses, including Giulia Farnese (known as Julia the Beautiful), and fathered numerous illegitimate children with longtime mistress Vannozza dei Cattani (who was married at the time).

"The Last Judgment," (Macmillan, 2009).



Pope Benedict IX (1032 and 1048)

- Benedict IX obtained the title of pope by being the nephew of both Pope John XIX and Pope Benedict VIII. At 20 years old he developed a reputation as being "cruel and immoral." The Rise of the Medieval World, 500 – 1300" (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002).
- In his third book of dialogues, Pope Victor III wrote of Benedict IX's "rapes, murders and other unspeakable acts. His life as a pope so vile, so foul, so execrable, that I shudder to think of it," according to "The Spirit."
- Saint Peter Damian described him as "feasting on immorality" and "a demon from hell in the disguise of a priest," who sponsored orgies and routinely partook in bestiality. In his final act of corruption as pope, Benedict IX decided that he wanted to pursue marriage, so he sold his holy title to his godfather for 1,500 pounds of gold.



Pope John XII (955 to 964)

- Attaining the title of pope at age 18, John XII was quickly deemed lazy and childish.
- The "Patrologia Latina," a collection of the writings by church leaders, lists the charges made against John XII, including that he invoked demons, murdered and mutilated men, committed arson and gambled, according to "A History of the Church in the Middle Ages" (Psychology Press, 2002). The church leaders also claimed that he "turned the papal palace into a whorehouse" by committing adultery with numerous women, including two widows and his own niece, as well as his father's long-term girlfriend.
- His reign as pope ended in his late 20s when he died of a stroke while supposedly in bed with a married woman, according to "A History."

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❖ “... Since our priests wanted to avoid these open scandals, they married wives and taught that it was lawful for them to enter into marriage. First, because Paul says, “Because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife” and “It is better to marry than to be aflame with passion” (1 Corinthians 7:2, 9b)....”

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❖ “... Second, Christ says, “Not everyone can receive this saying” (Matthew 19:11), where He teaches that not everyone is able to lead a single life. God created human beings for procreation (Genesis 1:28).⁶ It is not within a person’s power, without God giving a unique gift, to change this creation....”

Matthew 19:10

† “The disciples said to Him, "If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry." Jesus replied, "Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it."

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❖ “... For it is clear, as many have confessed, that no good, honest, chaste life, no Christian, sincere, upright conduct has resulted from the attempt to lead a single life. Instead, a horrible, fearful unrest and torment of conscience has been felt by many until the end....”

1 Timothy 5:9-12

† “No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds. As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry. Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge.”

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❖ “... Therefore, those who are not able to lead a single life ought to marry. No human law, no vow, can destroy God’s commandment and ordinance. For these reasons the priests teach that it is lawful for them to marry wives. ...”

1 Corinthians 7:28

✚ “If you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this.”

1 Corinthians 7:35-38

† “I am saying this ..., not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord. If anyone ... feels he ought to marry, he should do as he wants. He is not sinning. They should get married. But the man who has settled the matter in his own mind, who is under no compulsion but has control over his own will, and who has made up his mind not to marry the virgin-- this man also does the right thing. So then, he who marries the virgin does right, but he who does not marry her does even better.”

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❖ “... It is clear that in the Ancient Church priests were married men. 11 For Paul says, “An overseer must be the husband of one wife” (1 Timothy 3:2)....”

1 Corinthians 7:1-3

✚ “Now for the matters you wrote about: It is good for a man not to marry. But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.”

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❖ “... Four hundred years ago in Germany, for the first time, priests were violently forced to lead a single life. They offered such resistance that when the Archbishop of Mainz was about to publish the pope’s decree about celibacy, he was almost killed in a riot by enraged priests. 13 This matter was handled so harshly that not only was marriage forbidden in the future, but existing marriages were torn apart, contrary to all laws, both divine and human. This was even contrary to canon law itself, as made by not only popes, but also by the most celebrated synods....”

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❖ “... Seeing that man’s nature is gradually growing weaker as the world grows older, it is good to be on guard to make sure no more vices work their way into Germany. Furthermore, God ordained marriage to be a help against human weakness....”

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❖ “... Canon law itself says that the old rigor ought to be relaxed now and then, in these latter times, because of human weakness. We wish this would also be done in this matter. We expect that at some point churches will lack pastors if marriage continues to be forbidden...”

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❖ “... While God’s commandment is in force, and the custom of the Church is well known, impure celibacy will cause many scandals, adulteries, and other crimes that deserve punishment from just rulers. In light of all this, it is incredibly cruel that the marriage of priests is forbidden....”

Hebrews 13:4

✚ “Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.”

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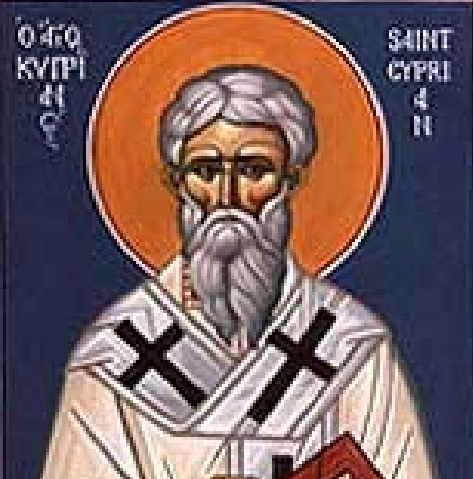
❖ “... God has commanded that marriage be honored. Marriage is most highly honored in the laws of all well-ordered commonwealths, even among the heathen. But now men, even priests, are cruelly put to death, contrary to the intent of canon law, for no other reason than that they are married....”

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❖ “... Paul, in 1 Timothy 4, says that a doctrine of demons forbids marriage (vv. 1–3). This is clearly seen by how laws against marriage are enforced with such penalties....”

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❖ “... Since no human law can destroy God’s command, neither can it be done by any vow. So Cyprian advises women who do not keep the promise they made to remain chaste, that they should marry....”



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❖ “... [Cyprian] says (Book I, Epistle XI), “If they are unwilling or unable to persevere, it is better for them to marry than to fall into the fire by their lusts. They should certainly give no offense to their brothers and sisters.”²⁶ And even canon law shows some leniency toward those who have taken vows before the proper age, as has been the case up to this point.”