

A Victory for Catholic Truth

Robert A. Sungenis, Ph.D.

On August 5, 2008, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops released the results of their national vote to revise page 131 of the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* that was published in 2006. The statement on page 131 simply states: **"Thus the covenant that God made with the Jewish people through Moses remains eternally valid for them."** Needless to say, a face value reading of this statement teaches that the Mosaic covenant was never revoked, and thus the Jewish people of today have their own covenant with God that is separate from the New Covenant in Jesus Christ. Scripture, Tradition and the Magisterium have flatly contradicted the catechism's assertion. The removal of these erroneous words is an unprecedented move by a conference of Catholic bishops. I am truly grateful for their courage and their openness to truth. The USCCB, by an act that I am sure was not easy for them to do, has shown us what can be done when we voice our objections to our pastors as Canon 212, 2-3 tells us is our duty to do.

"The Christian faithful are free to make known to the pastors of the Church their needs, especially spiritual ones, and their desires. According to the knowledge, competence and prestige which they possess, they have the right and even at times the duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church and to make their opinion known to the rest of the Christian faithful, without prejudice to the integrity of faith and morals, with reverence toward their pastors, and attentive to common advantage and the dignity of persons."

I would like to invite all of our CAI/BTF readers, and most especially the active supporters of this apostolate, to pause and reflect for a moment on the significance of this unprecedented action by the US bishops. As most of you know very well, it has been this apostolate that, from the very beginning, was the lightning rod for criticism and attack by the proponents and defenders of this now-discredited teaching of an "eternally valid" Mosaic covenant.

With very good reason, indeed, those who sought to justify or explain away the "eternally valid" formulation, saw in this apostolate a clear, persistent, and uncompromising voice raised in unambiguous opposition to the entire fiasco. Thanks in part to the support and unquenchable Catholic optimism of the supporters of this apostolate, no amount of error, distortion, intimidation, or theological "bomfoggery" (to borrow Chris Ferrara's incisive term) could stand in the way of the overwhelming weight of Scriptural, Patristic, and Magisterial witness: the covenant God made with the Jews through Moses most certainly **does not** remain "eternally valid," but is instead fulfilled, brought to completion, and perfected in the new and everlasting covenant in the blood of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Now, to be sure, there are reasons for continued vigilance on this matter. The accompanying comments of some USCCB employees (not bishops, of course) give us reason to wonder just who it might be that is responsible for repeatedly steering the catechism's teaching on the Mosaic covenant into theological quicksand through ambiguous and questionable formulations. (More on that in the accompanying piece to follow). But in the meantime, congratulations to all who have assisted in this great victory for Catholic truth, and may God truly bless and protect our bishops, who have so splendidly defended the truth of our Catholic faith.

August 18, 2008