Refutation of the Errors of Teresa Louise Stanfill Benns

These errors appeared on Benns website www.betrayedcatholics.com from 2007 to 2009.
Table of Contents

Oremus.................................................................................................................................4
Introduction.............................................................................................................................5
Summary ................................................................................................................................6
Modernism..............................................................................................................................7
Heresies.................................................................................................................................9
The Church Can Exist Without a Pope................................................................................9
The Pope Is Subject to All Canon Law................................................................................10
The Laity May Judge the Fitness of the Pope Prior to His Priestly Ordination...............11
The Natural Law Teaches a Man Must Be Fit For Ordination to Accept the Papacy...12
Dogmatic Errors...................................................................................................................13
There Is No Visible Church...............................................................................................13
The Hierarchy Has Disappeared.........................................................................................15
Hierarchy.............................................................................................................................17
Canonical Errors................................................................................................................19
Only those In Major Orders May Possess Jurisdiction.....................................................19
Minor Clerics Are Not Part of the Hierarchy................................................................20
Post Election Papal Heresy Is Proof of Pre-Election Heresy..........................................21
The Scrutiny Cannot Be Omitted from the Ordination of the Pope..............................23
Cardinals Are the Only Ones Who Can Be Elected Pope..............................................24
Laymen Cannot Be Elected Pope.....................................................................................26
The Laity Cannot Elect a Pope.........................................................................................27
Cardinals Must Be Priests..................................................................................................28
An Elector Can Retract His Vote......................................................................................28
Historical Errors And Omissions.......................................................................................29
John XX................................................................................................................................29
The Western Schism...........................................................................................................29
Necessity of Canonical Fitness.........................................................................................29
Self-Contradiction................................................................................................................30
Lay Pope Elect.....................................................................................................................30
Errors Contradicting Church Dogma................................................................................32
Factual Errors......................................................................................................................32
Benns Admits to Perjury.....................................................................................................32
The Thuc Bishops Never Mentioned a Papal Election after 1981.................................34
Biography of David Bawden.............................................................................................34
Teresa Benns Never Returned to Traditionalists.............................................................35
Tran Van Khoat..................................................................................................................36
You KNOW Everything in Cults of Catholicism Is True.................................................37
Pius XII Demanded Fitness For Ordination For Acceptance of the Papacy..............37
From Statement to Law to Natural Law...........................................................................38
Bawden Unduly Influenced Benns ...................................................................................39
Jumbled Quotes..................................................................................................................40
Quartus Supra......................................................................................................................41
Extraordinary Mission......................................................................................................41
Errors in The Book.............................................................................................................42
Some Quotes From Benns in The Book..........................................................................43
Disclaimer.................................................................................................................................................43
Benns Doesn't Need to Refute Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century?...............................................................................................................................................44
A Demand For Restitution...............................................................................................................................44

This was originally prepared in 2009. Many of the URLs will be invalid, as they lead to an older Bennsian website, that was removed when challenged for the libelous and slanderous material it contained. Those wishing to verify the accuracy can use Internet Archive to seek the original pages.

Oremus

Before beginning this project of refuting the heresies and errors of Teresa Benns, I would like to ask all who read this to stop and pray for all involved in this sad affair. Many of their names you will never know this side of eternity, but prayers we all need.

Come Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.

\[V/\text{Send for Thy spirit}\]
\[R/\text{and they shall be created.}\]
\[V/\text{Let us pray. O God who didst instruct the lights of Thy faithful with the light of the Holy Ghost, grant us in the same light to be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ our Lord.}\]
\[R/\text{Amen.}\]

We also ask all to make a Holy Hour for all of us involved in this matter. Without prayer we become beasts, according to many of the Saints. Just as we need air, water and food to live, we need prayer, meditation and contemplation for our soul to live. Remove these and the soul dies by losing sanctifying grace. And there is no loss worse than that of sanctifying grace.

Lord, all hearts are in Thy hands: Thou canst bend as Thou wilt the most stubborn, and soften the most obdurate Do that honor this day to the Precious Blood, the merits, the sacred wounds, the Holy Name, and loving Heart of Thy beloved Son, of granting the conversion of Teresa Benns
Introduction

Jesus said: And you shall know the truth: and the truth shall make you free. ¹ The whole point here is to seek the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. We are not concerned with anything but truth. And let us not say with Pilate: What is truth? ² We must compare the statements of Teresa Louise Stanfill Benns with the truths of the Divine and Catholic Faith. Nothing else really matters. This presentation will be limited to the published writings of Teresa Benns, especially those published at her website, Betrayed Catholics.

Canon Law insists (Canon 2200) that when something is said that appears to contradict the faith, malice is to be presumed in the external forum until it is PROVEN otherwise. ³ This presumption of law operates here. It is only necessary to prove that Teresa Benns’ statements contradict the Divine and Catholic Faith. She cannot expect more from those who oppose her than she expects from herself. However the principle is: Roma locuta est, causa finita est. which was inspired by Saint Augustine. Rome has spoken, the case is closed.

Teresa was recently asked this question by Patrick Henry ⁴: Q. 6 Were David Bawden and all those who attempted his election as a pope truly good Catholics in good standing at the time of their election?

She answered: A. I, Teresa Benns, believed that I was a Catholic in good standing at the time of the election, but now realize that this was not the case. ⁵

In other words Teresa Benns admits that she is not a Catholic in good standing. On this the case could be closed, but since she refuses to close her case against Pope Michael, which is based upon grievous errors, it is necessary to attempt to address these errors. Based upon this admission, shouldn’t Teresa refrain from all publication until she remedies this most serious problem and returns to the Catholic Church?

We demand that Teresa remove her calumnious, libelous, slanderous and heretical website from the Internet as the Natural Law demands of her. Further We demand she prepare a letter of retraction for publication on the main page of the website, then transfer ownership to Ourself, as Pope Michael. Otherwise Teresa Benns gives Us no choice but to pursue further action in this matter, included but not limited to, the publication of this document.

Pope Michael

June 24, 2008, Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, Martyr for the Truth

Note these webpages have been removed from Benns website, when requested.

¹ John 8:32
² John 18:32
³ http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/
⁴ http://www.jmjsite.com/page370.html
⁵ http://www.jmjsite.com/page370.html All material in boxes is from Teresa Benns
Summary

David Bawden first met Teresa Benns by mail and telephone in the fall of 1983 through his mother. Immediately Benns adopted both as mentors, asking their advice on serious matters, both personal and religious. After her distressing encounter with Martin Gwynne and John Daly in late 1984 and early 1985, Benns asked Bawden to help her to understand Canon Law. Bawden simply provided canonical information to study and gave advice on books to study from her library, as well as numerous copies from his own library. Their relationship grew into the promotion of a Papal Election, when Bawden became convinced in September of 1987. This resulted in a compilation of articles by Benns and Bawden to promote said election in 1988 entitled Upon This Rock. In April 1989 both realized that only a book could address all of the heresies and errors being put against the Catholic Church by Traditionalists and others, Will the Catholic Survive the Twentieth Century? was born. It went to the printer on December 12, 1989 and was officially published on January 25, 1990, calling for a Papal Election. Both collaborated on Election Update, which addressed details of the election, as well as questions arising after the book.

Benns wrote a glowing biography for Bawden before the election as part of the material available to all electors and potential electors at the place of election. The election was completed on the morning of July 16, 1990, after much opposition from various heretics. Then the Papacy of Pope Michael began with the assistance of the Catholics involved in the election. Benns retained Pope Michael as an advisor and mentor.

On March 31, 2004 Bart Ruijs of Dutch Catholic Television interviewed Pope Michael, Teresa Benns and Clara Bawden. Concerning the election of Pope Michael, he asked Benns: How sure are you of this truth? She replied: Absolutely, one hundred percent, with no doubts.

A history of Benns' rejection of the Catholic Faith and subsequent attacks on Pope Michael would be lengthy. A short summary will suffice. On November 30, 2006 Benns sent Pope Michael and some others an article, Necessity of Canonical Fitness in the Ordination of a Lay Pope, which contained erroneous and heretical statements. On March 30, 2007 Pope Michael condemned these statements in person to Teresa Benns, who in turned replied that it was only part 1 and then read her March 7, 2007 letter of withdrawal. After Pope Michael declared Benns' excommunication for heresy on May 8, Benns pulled down her website and proceeded to attack Pope Michael. Some of the quotes below are from this revision of the website, some from the next revision. In 2008 Pope Michael notified Benns' and her web host that her website contained libelous and slanderous material, and it disappeared completely. It was rebuilt and soon new libel and slander appeared, until Pope Michael again contacted Benns and her web host on the matter. This was after the posting of a calumnious piece, Cults of Catholicism. Since June of 2009 and the third revision of Benns' website, little has been said about Pope

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6 It would be impossible to give a complete history of the Papal Election history here or of writing the book.
7 http://popemichael.vaticaninexile.com/?p=264
8 Cults of Catholicism appears on Benns' website without any reference to Pope Michael. IT is about half as long as the original.
Michael on her website. Her website was revised again, since then. The material addressed below comes from all four revisions of the website, as well as articles Benns has posted there or elsewhere.

This piece was prepared between the second and third revisions, but has been amplified as of July, 2012, to consider updated material and new publications from Benns. As stated elsewhere, it is impossible to consider everything Benns has said. With this in mind, let us proceed.

Modernism

Pope Saint Pius X says in Pascendi: *But since the Modernists employ a very subtle artifice, namely, to present their doctrines without order and systematic arrangement into one whole, scattered and disjointed one from another, so as to appear to be in doubt and uncertainty, while they are in reality firm and steadfast, it will be of advantage Venerable Brethren, to bring their teachings together here into one group, and to point out the connection between them, and thus to pass to an examination of the sources of the error, and to prescribe remedies for averting the evil. Because of the confused manner of Benns’ presentations, we shall follow Saint Pius X’s example: Venerable Brethren, to bring their teachings together here into one group, and to point out the connection between them, and thus to pass to an examination of the sources of the errors, and to prescribe remedies for averting the evil. Here we must contrast Benns’ teachings from various sources and times and determine if there is a connection, agreement or disagreement. To enable us to separate commentary from Benns’ teachings, Benns’ teachings will be boxed.* It should be noted that links to various websites are provided in the footnotes. This is in no way an endorsement of these websites, which often contain errors. These are provided to so readers can verify the accuracy of the statements made here. It should be noted, that the owners of these websites may modify them in response to this paper, should it be published.

Now I am 100 percent certain, after over seven months of study, that at the very least, Bawden was suspect of heresy immediately prior to his acceptance of the election.  

Notice Teresa that she is not certain that Pope Michael was a heretic prior to election. With this in mind, everything she wrote prior to this date, April 15, 2007, must be considered as insufficient to prove heresy, because it was not sufficient to convince Teresa herself! This applies to the basis of her website. The above statement is confirmed in the statement below from Dogmatic Errors:

Ten pages later, on page 453, he makes another ambiguous statement concerning "automatic enrollment" of a lay pope in the ranks of the clergy (see Pre-

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9 April 17, 2006 letter of Benns to three people. This letter is considered published, because Teresa should have reasonably presumed it would be circulated to others.

10 Notations will be made in the footnotes of information prepared prior to April 17, 2006 and this statement. These webpages are derived from a notebook presented to Pope Michael on March 30, 2006 by Teresa Benns.
election heresy), which in retrospect seemingly contradicts the previous statement on vocation. When all these statements are considered together with his later 2006-2007 pronouncements, there can be no doubt concerning his (then occult) intention and pre-election duplicity.  

Notice the omission of the word *heresy*. If Benns had been convinced of heresy, when she wrote this before March 30, 2007, then she would have used the term *heresy*. Therefore we must conclude that Benns was not convinced of heresy at this time and dismiss all of the arguments from this time period as *inconclusive*, since she rejects them as such herself.

11 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html) Note this is pre-April 17 and actually confirms the April 17, 2006 statement!
Heresies

A schismatic is one who believes everything the Church teaches, but will not submit to the authority of its head—the Holy Father. Thus says the Baltimore Catechism number 4, page 296, question 323. This was where Teresa Benns was in November of 2006, after being admonished for an act of disobedience from the previous spring. The catechism continues: Such persons do not long remain only schismatics; for once they rise up against the authority of the Church, they soon reject some of its doctrines and thus become heretics; and indeed, since the Vatican Council (in 1870), all schismatics are heretics.

On November 30, 2006, Teresa Benns sent two people a copy of Necessity of Canonical Fitness in the Ordination of a Lay Pope after discussing it with three others, knowing full well a sixth would also read it. On page 41 of Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? Benns and Bawden wrote: The external forum is those things which are done in a manner so as to become public. It must be remembered that an action in the presence of only six people is considered public and in the external forum. The external forum is the forum of visible actions. What follows is derived from this first piece, and were duly condemned on March 30, 2007 and again on May 8, 2007.

The Church Can Exist Without a Pope

Obviously I no longer believe that a true pope can be elected in the present circumstances, seeing that no certainly valid members of the hierarchy currently are available. At that time, however, I fervently believed that the Church could not exist without a Pope and that in light of the defection of the Cardinals, even the laity could elect a layman as Pope.

Teresa wrote in Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century?

Catechism of the Council of Trent, (McHugh and Callan, p. 104)

-- "It is the unanimous teaching of the Fathers that this visible head is necessary to establish and preserve unity in the Church."

Reverend J.C. Fenton writes in his Sacred Theology: "The Council of Trent identified the unanimous teaching of the fathers with the interpretation of the Church itself (Vatican Council-Ed.), as the standard for the correct explanation of Holy Scripture." (p. 135.)

12 This shall be abbreviated as Necessity of Canonical Fitness hereafter. Quotes are normally from the original rough draft, not the current web presentation which is nearly the same. This is pre April 17, 2006
13 Note well that this particular chapter was written by Bawden. In these footnotes the book will be referenced as well as the principle author. It should be noted Teresa Benns edited the entire book. If she changed something Bawden wrote, it will also be noted.
15 Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? page 267. This section was written by Benns.
Let us consider this as well:

Unam Sanctam, Boniface VIII, 1294-1303: "...we declare, say, define, and proclaim to every human creature, that they, by necessity for salvation, are entirely subject to the Roman Pontiff." (DZ 469.)

Let us consider the rights of the laity:

The laity have rights, as well. These rights are detailed under Canon 682, which reads: "The laity has the right to receive from the clergy, the spiritual goods and especially the necessary means of salvation, according to the rules of ecclesiastical discipline." 17

From the two statements, Benns holds to be infallible can we not reason that the laity have a right to have a Pope to be obedient to? Since being obedient to the Pope is necessary of salvation, the clergy are required to give us a Pope. One can also reason that to have no Pope renders salvation at best very difficult.

The Pope Is Subject to All Canon Law

Before continuing it should be noted that Canon Law contains things from the Natural Law, Divine Law and Ecclesiastical Law. In the case of the Natural and Divine Laws, the Church cannot make a change and all are bound, including the Pope. 18 However, the Ecclesiastical Law is subject to change, such as the fast laws of the Church.

Teresa Benns wrote in Necessity of Canonical Fitness: *The Roman Pontiff is never above the rules, although he can introduce new legislation, abolish merely ecclesiastical laws and issue binding decrees of his own. To disregard Canon Law would be to inspire contempt for the law itself as well as Church teaching.* 19

Teresa is stating that in the main the Pope is bound by Canon Law and implying that he may be judged should he violate the law.

Van Noort’s Dogmatic Theology, Christ’s Church, page 282, refutes this statement as Gallican: *The pope is not bound by customs or ecclesiastical laws laid down in any way whatsoever. Thus the third article of the ‘Declaration of the Gallican Clergy’ was rightly condemned: “The use of the apostolic power must be restrained by the canons, for they have been founded by the Spirit of God and consecrated by the reverence of the entire world. ...”* (DZ 1325) Pope Benedict XIV states: *The Roman Pontiff is above canon law, but any bishop is inferior to that law, and consequently can’t modify it.* 20

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16 Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? Page 265
17 Will the catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? Page 205
18 The matter of judging the Pope, when he violates either law will be discussed separately.
19 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/lay_pope.html Note this is pre April 17, 2006
20 Magnae Nobis, June 29, 1748, paragraph 9. Many more quotes also confirm this doctrine.
Oh yes; Bawden the antipope claims the authority to change Canon Law as he chooses, even though these laws are derived from Divine and natural law, past infallible pronouncements, various papal laws and teachings, ecumenical councils, Church practice and other venerable sources.  

Teresa Benns further asserts that all Canon Law is Divine Law. Implicit in this assertion is that the Pope is therefore bound by such laws. This is an implicit conclusion from Teresa’s writing between November 30, 2006 and the present. This statement is at least erroneous, but is intimately related to her heresy, put forward here.

One of the most commonly misunderstood aspects of the primacy of the Roman Pontiff has been the infallible nature of those decrees issued for strictly disciplinary versus purely doctrinal reasons. Owing to the inroads made by Gallicanism and Modernism, many Traditionalists hold today that one can be condemned as a heretic, schismatic or apostate for violating a dogma of faith and morals, but cannot be certainly condemned for violating a disciplinary decree.

The Laity May Judge the Fitness of the Pope Prior to His Priestly Ordination

If the laity possessed the right to act as papal electors under the laws of devolution applied to religious chapters — an act requiring much greater deliberation and far greater responsibility — then certainly they have the same right to testify to the fitness of a man to be ordained a priest, since this is the completion of the election as defined by Pope Pius XII. To say otherwise is to call the papal election itself into question. In fact the Church accords them this privilege in the very Rite of Sacred Ordination itself, called the scrutiny, in which members of the laity are required to expose any unfitness in the candidate.

Note this is from the original of Necessity of Canonical Fitness, in which Teresa specifically mentions four people, herself, her husband and two others. She omits several who have been members of the Church longer than her husband.

Canon 1556 of the Code of Canon Law states: *The Primatial See can be judged by no one.* And many others from Councils to Popes to theologians can be brought forward to prove that no human authority of any kind can in any way judge the Pope. And in *Election Update, Rights of the Universal Church to Vote* (1990): *Papal*

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23 This is especially true since three of the electors and the spouse of another elector have been in closest contact with the present Pope for the past 20-25 years. Few others know him at all. (Note this is Benns’ footnote in the original sent on November 30, 2006) Note this is pre April 17, 2006
24 The footnote above is from the original of Teresa Benns, but is not in the revision published on her website. [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/lay_pope.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/lay_pope.html) Note this is pre April 17, 2006
jurisdiction comes from God to the one the Church designates. Although we may elect the Pope we cannot exercise any power over him, or bind him in any way as the Pope has no superior on earth.  

In reply to the assertion that this proposition is heretical Benns writes: Bawden and his followers have been quick to point to this author as a heretic for stating that a layman elected Pope must be subject to examination by a valid and licit bishop before being ordained and consecrated, (provided this ordination/consecration takes place within a year of election and the layman elected is fit for the priesthood. Following the natural law, Pope Pius XII taught that a layman not fit for ordination may not accept the papacy.)

A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid:

The Natural Law Teaches a Man Must Be Fit For Ordination to Accept the Papacy

In her presentation for the Feast of Corpus Christi, 2008, Teresa Benns states: Following the natural law, Pope Pius XII taught that a layman not fit for ordination may not accept the papacy. ... This speaks directly to the observance of the natural law concerning fitness and the absolute necessity that apostolic succession be safeguarded.

Before proceeding, let us look at another page: The Church has explicitly willed that all priests must be fit for ordination. The natural law and Canon Law demands it. And the Church will not supply for those things required by the natural law, as we will see below.

The Old Testament requirements for admittance to the Jewish priesthood are sufficiently well known that no one need question whether they arise from the natural law.

The calling of men to the ministry is something that Christ Himself said and did and is a prerequisite required by both the Divine and natural law for tonsure; for certainly Christ called and tested his Apostles.

Saint Augustine says: Thy law is written in the hearts of men, which iniquity itself cannot erase. The natural law dates from the creation of the rational creature. It does

25 Emphasis Ours
26 Bawden was the editor of Election Update. The principle part of this article was written by Benns with several substantial additions as Bawden, which is why it is credit to The Staff in the original. Benns edited all copy for Election Update prior to publication as well as Bawden.
27 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/FeastCorpusChristi08.html
28 Titus 3:10
29 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/FeastCorpusChristi08.html
30 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/caseclosed.html
31 I-II Q94 A6
not vary according to time, but remains unchangeable. 32 Anything, therefore, of the Natural Law, must have bound from the time of Creation itself. Therefore Cain knew it was wrong to kill Abel, because the Natural Law tells us murder is wrong. However, the qualifications for Pope cannot be part of the Natural Law, because the Papacy has not existed from the time of creation, but from the time of Jesus Christ. The same can be said of the qualifications for priesthood, since the New Testament priesthood was instituted by Christ and the Old Testament by God through Moses. Such a claim is actually heretical, and therefore adds to Teresa’s heresies.

It is interesting to note that Benns chastises Kenneth Mock for stating that a Papal Election in these circumstances is governed by the Natural Law.

Dogmatic Errors

These are errors more or less related to a doctrine of the Divine and Catholic Faith, yet not condemned as formally heretical. Note some of these are condemned as related to the heresies above.

There Is No Visible Church

Teresa Benns makes her Profession of Faith:

I firmly believe, based on what is presented on this site that we are living in the time described by St. Francis de Sales and Henry Cardinal Manning as the Church’s time in the desert, when, for an indefinite period the Church will be hidden in the desert, temporarily deprived of Her visibility. 32

Describing Catecomb Catholics Benns writes: “Their fervent hope is that one day they may return to the visible Church they knew and loved, to experience the joys of community worship once again. Until then they wish only to be allowed the freedom to worship their God in private and to do what they can to survive spiritually.”

Let us consider the visibility of the Church. Father Van Noort says: “That the Church is visible follows necessarily from the fact that it is a real society, for there can be no genuine society in the world of men unless it be visible.” 34 And further: “All the promises which Christ made to His Church refer to a visible Church. Note, lastly, that to

32 The Decretals as quoted by Saint Thomas Aquinas, I-II, Q94 A5
33 http://betrayedcatholics.com/wpcms/articles/a-catholics-course-of-study/introduction/the-profession-of-faith/
34 Dogmatic Theology: Christ's Church, page 12
insist on the Church's being visible is not to claim that all its elements are immediately apparent to the senses.” 35 Fr. Coppens SJ says: “But the theory of an invisible Church is untenable. For how could we obey the command of Christ to 'Hear the Church,' is the Church were not made manifest to us? Such is not the provision that Christ has made for the perpetuity of His religion; this theory is against the whole current of Apostolic Tradition. … St. Chrysostom writes: 'It is an easier thing for the Sun to be quenched than for the Church to be invisible.'” 36

Monsignor Capel, Domestic Prelate under Leo XIII, connected indefectibility with the visibility of the Church. In Vol. I of his The Faith of Catholics, Msgr. Capel wrote: "If the Church ... be always visible, it is plain that it cannot fail; for if it failed, it would cease to be visible, as it would cease to be." (p. 199.) 37

Now during the time of Antichrist, the Church will be hidden in lurking places as Henry Edward Cardinal Manning said, but it will rise from the ashes with the election of a Pope.

Page 68 of Surviving the Great Apostasy: As St. Francis de Sales teaches: "The Church shall never be in the desert, thus hidden, [not visible] until...the time of Antichrist. She shall be seen to flee thither and be seen thence to come forth," (The Catholic Controversy).

Let us look at Saint Francis de Sales actual quote: Saint Francis de Sales, The Catholic Controversy, pages 63-4: 38 How then do they dare to transfer the Scripture to an interpretation so foreign to the intention of the author, and so contrary to its own circumstances, refusing to look at so many other holy words which prove and certify, loudly and clearly, that the church shall never be in the desert thus hidden until that extremity, and for that short time; that she will be seen to flee thither and be seen thence to come forth?

We must also place this in context of his other statements on the subject. Saint Francis de Sales, The Catholic Controversy, page 62: The ancients had wisely said that to distinguish correctly the different times referred to in the Scriptures is a good rule for interpreting them aright; for lack of which distinction the Jews continually err, attributing to the first coming of the Messias what is properly said of the second: and the adversaries of the Church err yet more grossly, when they would make the Church such from the time of Saint Gregory to this age as it is to be in the time of antichrist. They wrest to this sense that which is written in the Apocalypse (12:6), that “the woman fled into solitude;” and draw consequences that the Church has been hidden and secret, trembling in the tyranny of the Pope, this thousand years, until she has come forward in Luther and his adherents. But who sees not that all this passage refers to the end of the world, and the persecution of antichrist, the time three years and a half being expressly determined therein; and in Daniel also (12:7)? And he who would by some

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35 Dogmatic Theology: Christ's Church, page 13
36 A Systematic Study of the Catholic Religion, page 71
37 Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? page 287 by Benns.
38 This is the quote Benns has scrambled in her new book.
gloss extend this time which the Scripture has limited would openly contradict Our Lord, Who says (Matthew 24:22) that “for the sake of the elect those days shall be shortened.” How then do they dare to transfer this Scripture to an interpretation so foreign to the intention of the author, and so contrary to its own circumstances, refusing to look at so many other holy words which prove and certify, loudly and clearly, that the Church (page 64) shall never be in the desert thus hidden until that extremity, and for that short time; that she will be seen to flee thither and be seen thence to come forth? (Emphasis mine)

Note Benns is extending the time in the desert.

Those following this site at all will be aware of the fact that I have gone to great lengths to correct any errors I have made in the past, making my corrections as public, and even more so, than my support of a papal election, since the Internet did not even exist yet in 1989. No one understood the primary message of the 1990 book: that without a Pope, Traditionalist priests and bishops cannot function, and the Church exists in name only, having lost its visibility. 39

This comes from a section entitled Why Should We Believe You? After reading the above we should already be convinced that we cannot believe Teresa L. Benns. Teresa Benns was challenged by registered letter in the summer of 2008 to refute Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? No such refutation has been forthcoming. It should follow the manner of this presentation, quoting the offending statement and then refuting it. Therefore Teresa has not gone to great lengths to correct the errors. In fact, she should write and publish a book Refuting Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? 40 Until this appears, we must presume she has not completed her job.

The Hierarchy Has Disappeared

The voters did all that they could do; the rest was left to God and valid clergy, if found at a later date. 41

But at the time of election, it seemed only a remote possibility that true bishops would ever be found who could ordain and consecrate Bawden. Also, everyone took Bawden’s word for the fact that he was qualified and assumed he would continue to pursue all the necessary seminary studies. 42

This is especially true considering the physical absence of the hierarchy today, since they are unable to ordain and consecrate such a pope-elect within the one year-time period mentioned in the old law. 43

39 http://betrayedcatholics.com/wpcms/articles/a-catholics-course-of-study/introduction/why-should-we-believe-you/
40 Publication is much easier today. It would take little effort to publish a book and not much money. She has the time, since she is semi-retired and she certainly has sufficient money, for it could be done for a less than a hundred dollars.
41 Emphasis mine
42 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/qualify_can.html
43 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/071005.html
This is similar to her teaching in *Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century?* on page 309: *Today, the successors of the Apostles have fled for fear of the Jews, and all that remains is the laity.*

Teresa also wrote the following: *Already, we have determined that the Church, as She was constituted by Christ Himself, must necessarily last until the consummation, and; that as St. Thomas says, the Church cannot be said to exist without the Pope as Her supreme Head.*

So which is it? Has the hierarchy failed, or does it still exist. As of 2012 she believes it doesn't:

*Impossibility excuses for such an election, because without valid and licit bishops, there are none who can be elected according to the laws and teachings of the Church. We live in the time predicted by the ancient Fathers, St. Francis de Sales, and others when the Church, for a time, would disappear. Only God can resolve this situation, when and in whatever manner He chooses.*

And yet she writes otherwise only a few years ago:

*Teresa writes: Once the hierarchy is restored, if only one small group could begin and others model their own efforts on the pilot group, great progress could be made in a short period of time.*

*Page 14 of *Surviving the Great Apostasy: The one thing Christ was most insistent upon — the perpetual existence of a visible head for the Church for Her very existence — Traditionalists can easily accept as "unseen." The Sacraments and external rituals, which can only legitimately proceed from those in communion with a true Pope, they must see and receive. They have been exiled to the desert as the Israelites of old, and whether God Himself miraculously sends them manna or not, they will have it! Clearly this is not Divine Faith. And equally clearly Traditionalists have no intention of making the sacrifices that fidelity to Divine Faith commands.*

And yet there is no discussion of how this can happen without first restoring the Papacy.

*Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches: In the first way, three sacraments are necessary for salvation. Two of them are necessary to the individual; Baptism, simply and absolutely; Penance, in the case of mortal sin committed after Baptism; while the sacrament of order is necessary to the Church, since "where there is no governor the people shall fall" (Proverbs 11:14) (Summa III Q 64 A4)*

*All the holy Fathers agree that after the death of antichrist the whole world will be converted, and although some of them assert that the world will last but a few days after his death, while others say a few months, some authorities insist that it will continue to exist many years after. St. Catherine of Sienna, St. Vincent Ferrer, St. Francis of*
Paula, and a number of other saints have predicted this ultimate universal conversion. Saint John Eudes, page 319, The Admirable Heart of Mary.

Hierarchy

On November 22, 2006 Teresa Benns said of four lay people: We are all that is left of the hierarchy, per Abbo and Hannon's definition in our first book. 47 She is referring to: Addis and Arnold offer us a surprising observation concerning the meaning of the term "hierarchy." After observing that the hierarchy ordinarily means the organization of ranks and orders in the Christian Church, they write: "In a wide and loose sense, when the whole Catholic Church is considered as existing in the midst of heretics, schismatics, and the heathen, even the laity may be considered as forming a portion of the hierarchy. With this agrees the expression of St. Peter calling the general body of Christians in the countries to which he is sending his epistle "a kingly priesthood" and a "holy nation." (p. 409.) (This identical quote can also be found in the volume A Cabinet of Catholic Information, p. 131, under Catholic Church History.) 48

From We Are the Church by Theresa Benns 49 in 1982 (Sangre de Cristo Newsnotes.) And Professor Amann in his book "The Church of the Early Centuries" (Sands & Co., 15 King St., Convent Garden, London) tells us "...the laity were...vitaly concerned in all the affairs of the Church. It was they who by election appointed the clergy...They were consulted as to measures to be taken. Their votes were asked in important circumstances." So there is even a precedent for lay involvement and consultation. Had Vatican II consulted the laity, we would still have the Latin Mass.

Bawden wrote several things as well on the hierarchy in the book. Page 157: The other Key is the Key of Jurisdiction, which is central to the constitution of the hierarchy. Page 162: To become a member of the Ecclesia Docens, you must be validly appointed bishop or validly elected Pope. Page 196, quoting from MacAuliff, Sacramental Theology: That ordinary jurisdiction is not granted, follows from the fact that no man receives a parish by his ordination.

While the Church considers sub-deacons to be in major orders, they are not yet part of the hierarchy. 50

As demonstrated after the next box of quotes, clergy are all considered part of the hierarchy from the moment they are tonsured. The Pope, as head of the hierarchy, therefore would logically be considered a cleric.

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47 I believe Teresa simply misremembered and did not bother to verify wishing to get on to other matters in the lengthy letter. This is the letter of fraternal correction mentioned elsewhere. This letter is public in that six people are parties to it. However, it was presented to Pope Michael in such a way as to be intended to be kept private, and therefore will not be published.

48 Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? Pages 321-2

49 This misspelling is from the original article.

50 Does Bawden place Pope St. Pius X outside the Church for teaching the Gallicanist heresy? http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/071005.html
As reported elsewhere on this site, Bawden publicly stated in writing in 1990 that, where a papal election is concerned, "Although the numbers [of who were actually lay popes] may not be accurate, we know that possession or lack of Holy Orders makes no real difference," (Will the Catholic Church Survive..., pg. 402). But if the numbers were definitely not accurate, how could anyone obtain certainty in this matter? In this same work, he also stated that "cardinals would have been any cleric appointed by the pope" since they were never required to be in major orders. Christ Himself has taught that no man is a member of the hierarchy without being in major orders; that is, possessing both Orders and jurisdiction — as reflected in Can. 108.


All of the above come from the same page on her website.

Canon 108: Those who have been assigned to the divine ministry at least by first tonsure, are called clerics. They are not all of the same grade, for they form a sacred hierarchy in which some are subordinate to others. By divine institution, the sacred hierarchy of orders consists of bishops, priests and ministers; the hierarchy of jurisdiction consists of the Supreme Pontificate and the subordinate episcopate. By institution of the Church other degrees have been added.  

Canon 38, paragraph 3 of the Oriental Code of Canon Law states: The ecclesiastical hierarchy of orders is composed by Divine institution of bishops, priests and ministers. The hierarchy of jurisdiction is composed of the Supreme Pontificate and the subordinate episcopate; by ecclesiastical institution also other degrees have been added.

All of Teresa’s statements are erroneous. However, she has reversed her position from the broad one held from 1982 until November of 2006, which at least has some basis in fact, to a far more restrictive one as stated more recently. Also she ignores the separation between jurisdiction and orders, which Canon 108 dogmatically states.

Pope Pius XII states: By virtue of God’s Will, the faithful are divided into two classes; the clergy and laity. By virtue of the same Will is established the twofold sacred hierarchy, namely, of orders and jurisdiction. Besides-as has also been divinely established—the power of orders (through which the ecclesiastical hierarchy is composed of Bishops, priests, and ministers) comes from receiving the Sacrament of Holy Orders. But the power of jurisdiction, which is conferred upon the Supreme Pontiff directly by divine rights, flows to the Bishops by the same right, but only through the Successors of Saint Peter, to whom not only the simple faithful, but even all the Bishops must be constantly subject, and to whom they must be bound by obedience with the bond of unity.

Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches that the power of jurisdiction is superior to that of orders and should direct Holy Orders. He also teaches that while Holy Orders is

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51 Supreme Pontificate is another term for Pope, Bishop of Rome.
52 Ad Sinarum gentem, Feast of the Most Holy Rosary, October 7, 1954, paragraph 12
53 II-II Q39 A3: I answer that, Spiritual power is twofold, the one sacramental, the other a power of jurisdiction. The sacramental power is one that is conferred by some kind of consecration. Now all the consecrations of the Church are immovable so long as the consecrated thing remains: as appears even in inanimate things, since an altar, once consecrated, is not consecrated again unless it has been broken up.
permanent, jurisdiction is not and is lost by schismatics and therefore also by heretics and apostates. Also he teaches that those who do not have jurisdiction may not lawfully exercise their orders, although they proceed validly, but not in a manner pleasing to God. Thirdly, likewise, with a firm faith I believe that the Church, guardian and mistress of the revealed word, was instituted proximately and directly by the true and historical Christ Himself, while he sojourned among us, and that the same was built upon Peter, the chief of the apostolic hierarchy, and his successors until the end of time. Oath Against the Errors of Modernism (DZ 2145)

Canonical Errors

These are errors against the proper interpretation of Canon Law or even Canon Law itself. These should be judged in light of Teresa’s own assertion that all of Canon Law is Divine Law. Therefore to err in this way on her part is more serious than for even a canonist in a matter of merely Ecclesiastical Law. This is also applied to Papal Elections, which are not governed by canon Law, but by special laws. However, their interpretation follows the ordinary norms of Canon Law.

Only those In Major Orders May Possess Jurisdiction

Christ Himself has taught that no man is a member of the hierarchy without being in major orders; that is, possessing both Orders and jurisdiction — as reflected in Can.108. 54

Canon 108 states: Those who have been assigned to the divine ministry at least by first tonsure, are called clerics. They are not all of the same grade, for they form a sacred hierarchy in which some are subordinate to others. By divine institution, the sacred hierarchy of orders consists of bishops, priests and ministers; the hierarchy of jurisdiction consists of the Supreme Pontificate and the subordinate episcopate. By institution of the Church other degrees have been added. 55 Canon 118: Only clerics can obtain the power of either orders or ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and ecclesiastical benefices and pensions.

Rev. Kearney in his Principles of Delegation on pages 34-5 reports: Pope Gregory (590-604) is known to have committed to Antoninus, a subdeacon, extensive power over certain cases, reserving to himself only the most arduous matters. And again the same Pontiff wrote to the subdeacon Peter, “We have deemed it quite necessary that

Consequently such a power as this remains, as to its essence, in the man who has received it by consecration, as long as he lives, even if he fall into schism or heresy: and this is proved from the fact that if he come back to the Church, he is not consecrated anew. Since, however, the lower power ought not to exercise its act, except in so far as it is moved by the higher power, as may be seen also in the physical order, it follows that such persons lose the use of their power, so that it is not lawful for them to use it. Yet if they use it, this power has its effect in sacramental acts, because therein man acts only as God’s instrument, so that sacramental effects are not precluded on account of any fault whatever in the person who confers the sacrament.

54 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html Note this is pre April 17, 2006
55 Supreme Pontificate is another term for Pope, Bishop of Rome.
we commit to one and the same person all power, so that where we cannot be present, our authority may be represented by one whom we have designated. Wherefore, to Peter, a subdeacon of our See, we have, by the grace of God, committed our care over the province of Sicily. ... We cannot be hesitant concerning the acts of one to whom we are known to have entrusted the entire heritage of the church.” And on page 121: Sanchez, maintained that if a baptized male should invalidly be elected Pope, the Church could supply jurisdiction so that all his jurisdictional acts, that do not presuppose the power of orders, would be valid, since divine law requires no more than that the subject of ecclesiastical jurisdiction be a baptized male. Note well that any baptized male can validly receive jurisdiction. There is no requirement even to be a cleric, although the delegation to a layman is extraordinary.

And on page 95: In the matter of the power of orders or ecclesiastical right, an entirely different disposition prevails. The Church may delegate not only the exercise of this power, but also the power itself, since this is entirely of ecclesiastical disposition. Thus, the very power that is attached to minor orders could be committed to the laity at the discretion of the Supreme Pontiff. And so even those powers reserved ordinarily to minor orders can be delegated by the Pope to a layman!

**Minor Clerics Are Not Part of the Hierarchy**

Christ Himself has taught that no man is a member of the hierarchy without being in major orders; that is, possessing both Orders and jurisdiction — as reflected in Can.108. 56

Now simple clerics do not possess jurisdiction, but only those who are members of the hierarchy, which is why it was logical to relate this statement to a Pope as bishop.  

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Canon 118: Only clerics can obtain the power of either orders or ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and ecclesiastical benefices and pensions.

Canon 108: Those who have been assigned to the divine ministry at least by first tonsure, are called clerics. They are not all of the same grade, for they form a sacred hierarchy in which some are subordinate to others. By divine institution, the sacred hierarchy of orders consists of bishops, priests and ministers; the hierarchy of jurisdiction consists of the Supreme Pontificate and the subordinate episcopate. By institution of the Church other degrees have been added. 58

Canon 38, paragraph 3 of the Oriental Code states: The ecclesiastical hierarchy of orders is composed by Divine institution of bishops, priests and ministers. The hierarchy of jurisdiction is composed of the Supreme Pontificate and the subordinate episcopate; by ecclesiastical institution also other degrees have been added.

56 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html) Note this is pre April 17, 2006
57 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/summary.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/summary.html) Note this is pre April 17, 2006
58 Supreme Pontificate is another term for Pope, Bishop of Rome.
Post Election Papal Heresy Is Proof of Pre-Election Heresy

But it must be remembered that he wrote before the infallible Bull of Pope Paul IV, Cum ex apostolatus officio was issued, which decrees that when a Pope publicly teaches heresy, this means he was a heretic pre-election and can be disposed of even by the civil power.  

Fr. Earl Lucian Pulvermacher, Antipope Pius XIII stated in May of 1998 prior to his usurpation of the Papacy: We can prove that John XXIII, Paul VI, John Paul I and John Paul II propagated heresy for all the faithful of the world to believe. The dogma of faith on infallibility tells us that God cannot let His true Vicar ever teach a heresy for all to believe. Hence, the conclusion has to be that, any time a man posing as a Pope proposes a doctrine that is heretical and says it is a teaching for all to believe, we know that he never became Pope at the attempted election.  

Teresa Benns relates on another page where they both got this presumption:

As Martin Gwynne observed in his work, Under the Laws of the Catholic Church the Papal See is Vacant, "The defection from the Church of a pope cannot happen, but it can appear to happen. And that is where Can. 188§4 and the teachings of St. Robert Bellarmine and other theologians [that a pope who is a manifest heretic loses all jurisdiction] play their part." He then notes that the infallible determination by the Vatican Council that the faith of Peter and his successor's can never fail confirms Cum ex and clarifies St. Bellarmine's teaching.

"This See of St. Peter remains ever free from all blemish of error, according to the Divine promise of the Lord, Our Savior, made to the prince of his disciples: 'I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and that thou being once converted confirm thy brethren,' (Luke 22:32)...This gift, then, of truth and never-failing faith was conferred by Heaven on Peter and his successors," (Vatican Council, Sess. IV, Chap. 1).

A note should be made on Martin Gwynne. Benns was with Martin Gwynne from mid 1984 until 1985, living at his compound in Australia with John Daly. She separated from Gwynne and Daly and rightfully accused them of running a cult. It is strange that she would use someone she despises as an authority to support her position:

"If those words, which are nowhere qualified, do not mean that a pope will not apostatize or fall into pertinacious heresy, words have lost their meaning," Gwynne commented. "...Since it is divinely revealed that the faith of a Pope will never fail, we can know with complete certainty that a pope who publicly and pertinaciously denies or doubts a definite truth of faith, was a heretic before his election and therefore never pope, even if direct evidence of his earlier heresy is lacking." In other words, the act of heresy itself tells us that it existed pre-election, even if it is not in evidence. That the

http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/doubtful_pope.html Note this is pre April 17, 2006
http://www.truecarpentry.netfirms.com/tcwwww/cathwww/electionnews1.htm
http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/cum_ex.html Note this is pre April 17, 2006
faith of St. Peter and his successors could never fail was always an article of Divine faith. It was clarified forever, however, when it was defined at the Vatican Council. All the controversies of previous ages then were resolved and all other papal pronouncements touching on infallibility must now be viewed in the light of the Vatican Council's definition.  

In her March 7, 2007 Letter of Withdrawal, presented to Pope Michael in the presence of three witnesses on March 30, 2007, Teresa Benns stated:

First, it was your decision to exclude any possibility of the Pope erring as a private person per the teaching of St. Robert Bellarmine. All heresy was to be considered as an indication of pre-election heresy.

This is absolutely false. David Bawden in the writing of Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? insisted on several things. One of these was proof that Angelo Roncalli committed heresy prior to his apparent election on October 28, 1958 as Pope John XXIII. In response to this Teresa Benns wrote the chapter The Beginning of Sorrows. In Upon This Rock, the 1988 pre-election series compiled by Benns and Bawden by themselves and others, Teresa relied heavily upon Martin Gwynne’s Under the Laws of the Catholic Church the Papal See Is Vacant. This is the first place this novel theory of post-election heresy proving pre-election heresy ever was presented.

The infallible Bull of Pope Paul IV, Cum Ex Apostolatus Officio, states nothing of the kind. Rather it states that if it ever appears that a man prior to his promotion to an office appears to be an apostate, heretic or schismatic, then his promotion is utterly null and void.

What follows is from Antipope Pius XIII’s original website. This is an article by Kenneth Mock, The Papal Situation. It also teaches the same doctrine as Gwynne, Pulvermacher and Benns.

This fact, that a pope cannot teach error, is guaranteed by the dogma of Papal Infallibility and is matter of faith for every Catholic. If, however, as was the situation in the early 1960's, a man believed to be pope was found to teach error via the official magisterium of the Church, the only possible conclusion that could be reached was that the man simply was not a pope. If he was not pope, the institution which he was continuing to preside over was not the Catholic Church. Once these facts were realized, anyone who remained in communion with him and continued to recognize him as the head of their Church, became a member of his new, non-Catholic religion.

Due to the wording of the dogma of Papal Infallibility, a true pope is protected from promulgating both heresy and error when he teaches officially. Heresy involves the denial or doubting of truths classified as dogmas -- truths divinely revealed and infallibly affirmed as such by Church authority. Truths other than dogmas have been officially and

62 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/cum_ex.html Note this is pre April 17, 2006
63 This is a departure from published works. However, this letter is public, in that it was given to four people and then emailed to at least two others, although it has never been published to Teresa Benns’ website.
infallibly defined by the Church, as well. Among these are truths classified as "certain." To deny or doubt one of these "certain" truths would place one in "error." This would involve, not an automatic excommunication, nor loss of membership in the Church, as would heresy, but would comprise a mortal sin against the faith and thereby loss of the supernatural virtue of faith. A true pope is prevented, by the divine assistance of the Holy Ghost, from ever teaching either heresy or error, since even one error of misinformation on one's soul would result in eternal damnation. Therefore, it was not necessary for a "pope" to officially proclaim heresy to the world.

This has been proven to be the case with John XXIII in his Encyclical "Pacem in Terris" of April 11, 1963. Once this error was recognized, every knowledgeable Catholic should have known that the man was not a pope and that all of his acts of "authority" were invalid.

One may ask why this is reproduced. Some claim that Kenneth Mock started the Papal Election effort. However, this is not true, because it predates him by over a decade. He did become involved in 1989 and made a trip to Europe in order to promote the effort to elect a Pope, carrying a box of books with him. Until discovering this article, there was no connection between Mock and Gwynne. Why did he rely on this theory from Pulvermacher, rather than the proposition Benns proved in the book, that Angelo Roncalli was a heretic prior to his apparent election? Under the true interpretation of Pope Paul IV’s Bull, Cum Ex Apostolatus Officio, this proves Roncalli could not be Pope. Pulvermacher at least continues on with an allegation of pre-election heresy in regard to Roncalli in his presentation on the subject. It should be noted that Pulvermacher also had access to the book.

The Scrutiny Cannot Be Omitted from the Ordination of the Pope

In Pre-Election heresy… Benns writes:

Bawden seems to believe that receiving the Minor Orders prior to Ordination can be easily avoided and he can issue himself a dispensation to proceed directly to Orders with impunity. He also has stated that a Pope can omit accidental rites of the ordination ceremony, referring to the scrutiny or the right of the faithful to object to priestly candidates on grounds of unfitness.

In Dogmatic Errors… she goes further:

Bawden denies the need for any examination prior to ordination of a lay pope, even the scrutiny contained in the Ordination ceremony itself. Yet we find in Can. 149: "Candidates elected…by any persons to an ecclesiastical office shall not be confirmed [in the case of a lay Pope this means before he accepts the election], admitted or instituted by a superior below the Roman Pontiff unless these persons have first been adjudged suitable by their respective Ordinary. The Ordinary thus has the right to

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65 That is Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century?
66 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/peheresy.html Note this is pre April 17, 2006

23
subject them to an examination, if either the law or the nature of the office requires it, or the Ordinary judges it opportune." 67

Actually this originates in Necessity of Canonical Fitness:

The scrutiny cannot be omitted from the sacred rite of ordination. 68

Ten laymen were elected to the Papacy and a host of clerics, who were not yet priests. All of these required ordination. And yet, not one historical precedent for the use of the scrutiny in their ordinations is even mentioned. One of the bases of how to proceed now and in the future is how the Church proceeded in the past, which is why a study of Church history is essential. And let us take a most obvious example, Pope Martin V. Although he had been a Local Ordinary, that is a Diocesan Bishop, he had only received the Order of Subdeacon. He never received priestly orders nor episcopal consecration. Unfortunately in these days this was an all too common abuse. Trent corrected this abuse. Therefore after his election he was ordained deacon, then priest and then bishop on three consecutive days. And yet there is no report of a scrutiny at his priestly ordination.

Another source is the official liturgical books of the Catholic Church. Several footnotes to the Papal Election decrees of both Pope Saint Pius X and Pope Pius XII make reference to the Caeremoniale Romanum. This book details many Papal ceremonies, including the ordination of a Pope, who does not possess the priesthood, and two methods for the consecration of the Pope as Bishop. In the ordination of the Pope to the priesthood, only the essential rites are performed and several accidental rites are specifically omitted, such as the scrutiny and the promise of obedience. How can the Pope make a promise of obedience to the ordaining Bishop, since he is the superior of said Bishop? Also to retain the scrutiny would be a Gallican proposition of judging the Pope, in this case the fitness of the Pope for ordination. Any such judgment must be completed prior before casting a vote for a man in a Papal Election.

Above Benns refers to the Pope’s Ordinary. A man by accepting election as Bishop of Rome becomes by that very fact Pope. And note the Pope immediately assumes the office of Bishop of Rome, which is the office of Ordinary of the diocese of Rome. Therefore the Pope is in essence his own ordinary as any Bishop of a diocese is. To say otherwise is to say that the Pope has a human superior, which is contrary to the doctrines of the Divine and Catholic Faith and therefore heretical.

Cardinals Are the Only Ones Who Can Be Elected Pope

Necessity of Canonical Fitness in the Ordination of a Lay Pope:

67 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html Note this is pre April 17, 2006
68 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/lay_pope.html Note this is pre April 17, 2006
This is true because he is the most qualified man available and the only man willing to provide the Church with a head; this was proven in the 1990 work cited above. In this case, the third provision of Can 19 would validate the election of a layman as an exception to the papal election law, which usually allows only the election of cardinals to the papacy. 69

Numerous sources prove that any Catholic man can be elected to the Papacy, provided he has the use of reason. Of course, in keeping with Cum Ex Apostolatus Officio, this rules out apostates, heretics and schismatics, while they remain outside of the Church. However, Benns still holds:

For many years I believed that a conflict of law (allowing only cardinals to elect a member of the hierarchy pope) could be resolved in favor of the common good to promote unity among the faithful, thus resolving the crisis in the Church. 70

Numerous sources, including Will the Catholic Survive the Twentieth Century?, Election Update in an article entitled Papabile, and even Necessity of Canonical Fitness in the Ordination of a Lay Pope on page 1 as quoted above prove this is not true. S. B. Smith, Elements of Ecclesiastical Law, page 233: Not merely cardinals, but others, even laymen are eligible to the Pontificate, though since the time of Urban VI, cardinals only have been elected. The Catholic Encyclopedia articles Conclave and Papal Elections report the same principle. 71

Let us return to 1987 and a letter from Teresa Benns to Bawden and several others including many copies, including, Lay People in the Church by Yves Congar, 1951: One other case could be adduced, though it goes beyond the limits of the lay state: it is generally held that a layman could be elected pope. (Underlining by Teresa) A one time this was forbidden (by Stephen II in 769); at other times lay men have in fact been chosen (Benedict VIII in 1012, John XIX in 1024). Nowadays it is generally agreed that the constitution “Vacante sede” has incorporated the possibility in canon law. (cf. Canons 109, 219). Therefore are several ways of explaining theologically how a layman, by the fact of his election and before any ordination, would have supreme jurisdiction and authority in the Church; these theoretical problems have their own interest, and this one is not very difficult to solve. In reply to the letter Teresa Benns sent to several people containing a copy from this book, I replied: It is certain, that the Pope so elected receives universal and complete jurisdiction over the universal Church from the moment he accepts election. Since the Pope must be a cleric, he shall probably become one by the mere act of accepting election. Teresa never contested this assertion, nor commented in any way. Therefore, under the principle stated on page 63 of Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? silence gives consent.

69 Emphasis Ours
71 Note this error was also refuted on March 30th by Pope Michael
Once the Pope accepts election, he immediately acquires full jurisdiction, even if he is still a layman. It is our opinion that this election automatically enrolls him in the clergy, as tonsure does for every other cleric.  

Actually Teresa wrote this statement. What Bawden wrote and sent for typesetting was: *Once the Pope accepts election, he becomes pope at once with full jurisdiction, even if he is still a layman. It is our opinion that this election immediately enrolls him in the clergy, as tonsure does for every other cleric.* Some may object that Teresa merely *edited* what I wrote and therefore is not responsible. So in interpreting this we must go to Teresa’s own opinion as expressed on her website:

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR** - T. Stanfill Benns is an award-winning journalist who has written for traditional Catholic and other publications for the past 25 years. A wife and mother of four, she has worked as a freelance writer and small-town reporter in Texas and Colorado since 1993. She also is the author of the self-published work, “Will the Catholic Church Survive the 20th Century?” released in 1990.

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**Laymen Cannot Be Elected Pope**

Even the Pope must obey Divine positive law. Had these laws been studied pre-election, it is most likely that a layman could not have been elected.

While certainly today I deny that a layman in our present situation can be elected pope, because this contradicts Catholic teaching, I do not deny the necessity of the papacy for the Church's existence, or the fact that laymen can participate in a papal election along with valid and licit clergy, (in an emergency situation only).

Teresa also wrote in *Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century?*, page 311:

Let us construct a syllogism here: (1) Pius XII teaches that a layman can be elected Pope; (2) The papacy is the highest honor and office one can receive in the Church; (3) Therefore, if one can receive such an honor validly, one can also cast the vote that conveys it, since an act of an elector is of a less important nature than any act of a true Pope.

What do we know of the position of the laity in the Church? Reverend Timothy Champoux observes this, concerning the lay position: "...this position (see definition) is opposed only to that of the clergy and is consonant with those states of a private nature." (p. 10.) Both Champoux and Reverend Francis Miaskiewicz write that in the

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72 *Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century?* page 453. Although Bawden wrote this chapter, this statement was rewritten by Benns.

73 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/about.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/about.html) Note this is pre April 17, 2006. Also this is confirmed in a letter from Benns to Bawden in January of 990.

74 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html) Note this is pre April 17, 2006

75 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dontreadthisbook.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dontreadthisbook.html)
past, the laity have received and exercised ecclesiastical jurisdiction directly from the Pope. Both canonists and Pius XII himself admit that a layman can be elected pope.

And on page 312 she wrote:

And since it is a matter of established fact that a layman could be elected pope and receive supreme jurisdiction from the moment of his acceptance, we will concern ourselves only with the validity of a lay election of a pope.

And on her website:

“It isn’t that a layman cannot be elected Pope; this has happened in the practice of the Church. It is that a layman cannot be elected (especially by the laity) when no canonical provision is made for the absence of hierarchy concerning how he is to govern the Church. This is especially true when there is no way to ordain or consecrate him within a reasonable amount of time.” 76

And yet in Surviving the Great Apostasy she writes:

Page 67: Currently Canon Law requires that a man elected Pope must at least be a cardinal; a learned priest and a member of the Church, (Can. 232).

Canon 232: The creation of Cardinals is reserved to the free choice of the Roman Pontiff. The men must be at least priests, and endowed with exceptional learning and piety. The Canon goes on to list the qualifications for Cardinal. It makes no mention of the qualifications for Pope. Pope Pius XII’s decree lists no qualifications for Pope, nor does Pope Saint Pius X’s.

The Laity Cannot Elect a Pope

Page 47 of Surviving the Great Apostasy: The laity cannot elect a pope.

It must be noted here that nowhere is it stated that the election of the pope was ever limited to the laity; all the laity ever had the right to do is to nominate a candidate to be approved by the clergy and elected by the cardinals or the clergy (bishops and priests) of Rome; the extent of the laity’s role in this bare nomination has been long disputed by various theologians and Catholic historians. So only the CLERGY, assisted to an unknown degree by the laity, ever presented these nominees to the cardinals or senior clergy for election. 77

76 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html Note this is pre April 17, 2006
It is a dogmatic fact that the Emperor Henry III appointed three successive Popes. The Catholic Encyclopedia: *The German Pope Damasus II died in 1048, and the Romans sent to ask Henry III, Conrad's successor, to let them have as the new pope either Halinard, Archbishop of Lyons, or Bruno. Both of them were favourably known to the Romans by what they had seen of them when they came to Rome on pilgrimage. Henry at once fixed upon Bruno, who did all he could to avoid the honour which his sovereign wished to impose upon him.*

The Catholic Encyclopedia under the article *Election of the Popes* states: Vigilius (540) and Pelagius I (553) were forced on the Church at imperial dictation. In the case of the latter there seems to have been no election: his title was validated solely through his recognition as bishop by clergy and people.

*Pageant of the Popes* by John Farrow, pages 41-2: Silverius was elected and installed but the staunch fact was not an obstacle sufficiently important to deter the schemes of the Empress Theodora. Acutely aware that she had been successfully opposed by one pope, she was not inexecrably determined to have a creature of her choice occupy the august station. Accompanying Agapitus to Constantinople had been the deacon Vigilius, the same whom Pope Boniface II had proclaimed his successor. That ill-received announcement had left a dangerous echo in his memory and the Empress found in him a willing and eager participator in her plans. He promised to give recognition to the heresy she favored, the Monophysite and to restore her ousted favorite to the honors of the Byzantines Patriarchate if she aided him to procure the tenancy of the Holy See. But what of the already elected Pope? The solution was simple and shameful. Justinian’s armies had, under the brilliant leadership of Belasarius, successfully driven back the Goths and were now occupying Rome. Theodora’s agents, with a display of forged letters, accused Pope Silverius of treasonably communicating with the Goths and by the commands of the Byzantine commander he was divested of the insignia of his exalted rank, thrust into rough garb of a monk, and exiled as a prisoner to an island where he soon perished. After an “election” conducted under the formidable and certainly not disinterested protection of Belisarius, Vigilius was finally enthroned, while at Constantinople Theodora enjoyed the stimulating tonic of triumph.

But her satisfaction was not destined for permanence. Vigilius, on his ascension to the papal rank, absolved himself of his promises to his benefactress and revealed that his policies were to be as orthodox as had been those of his predecessors. His pontificate, so irregularly gained, was never to bring him tranquility and, in 544, he entered upon a serious disagreement with Justinian.

What is the definition of doubt in Canon Law? Rev. Amleto Cicognani (“Canon Law”) tells us that the word doubt comes from the Latin root *du* meaning two. So a doubt of law or fact is withholding assent between two contradictory propositions — such a one was validly elected Pope, or he was not validly elected Pope. This amounts to a lack of certitude, and as Cicognani points out, the common good demands certitude concerning the validity of acts. (Here we again encounter Can. 21.) This is especially true since the valid election of a Pope constitutes a dogmatic fact.

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78 [http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09160c.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09160c.htm)
80
Saint Alphonsus states: *It doesn’t matter that in past centuries some pontiff has been elected by fraud: it suffices that he has been accepted after as Pope by all the Church, for this fact he has become true pontiff.* In looking at the last two Papal Election laws, nothing invalidates the election of a Pope. The only things that invalidates is the election of a notorious heretic as per *Cum Ex Apostolatus Officio.*

### Cardinals Must Be Priests

In assuming that a cardinal need NOT be a priest, Bawden blatantly ignores centuries of Canon Law and Church practice concerning the laws governing the validity of consecrated hosts as well as the clerical status of cardinals. 81

The 1917 Code is written on the implicit presumption that a Cardinal is a priest. The last Cardinal who was not a priest died in the late 1800’s. However, it is solely up to the Pope to determine the qualifications to be a Cardinal, as history aptly shows. Antipope John XXIII-II on April 15, 1962 declared that all Cardinals must be bishops, and proceeded to consecrate those who were not yet bishops.

### An Elector Can Retract His Vote

In obedience to Can. 1325, I hereby announce that my vote for David Bawden as "Pope" in the July 16, 1990 election was tendered without proper knowledge of the candidate's true intention and character and was therefore null and void. 82

Q. 16 Did Teresa Benns vote at the papal election for David Bawden? A. Yes, but in March, 2007, she unqualifiedly renounced that vote. 83

As a result of the above, I have grave doubts concerning the validity of [my vote in] the papal election July 16, 1990. I placed that vote believing that David Bawden knew what was necessary to qualify as a priest ready for ordination, and that if any additional requirements were discovered or deemed necessary by the Church, he would honor and observe them to the best of his ability. This has not been the case. Since in law presumption must yield to truth, I withdraw my allegiance to "Pope Michael." 84

The Western Schism began, when the Cardinals claimed they had been coerced into electing Pope Urban VI. So they withdrew and proceeded to another, supposedly free election. However, although did was start four decades of misery for the Church, which ended with the Council of Constance. One horrible result is that the ideas that resulted in Conciliarism and Gallicanism were born! That the action of the Cardinals is 80

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82 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/pope_mike.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/pope_mike.html)  Note this is the first thing produced after April 17, 2006
83 Patrick Henry asked Teresa Benns this question and her answer is reproduced above. [http://www.jmjsite.com/page370.html](http://www.jmjsite.com/page370.html)
84 December 27, 2006 *Letter of Withdrawal:* (Note this letter is considered *published*, because she did circulate it to three people, knowing full well they would circulate it further.)
invalid is proven by Pope Benedict XIV who says: *today it is evident that Urban VI, and his successors were legitimate Pontiffs*. Benzs claims Pope Benedict XV made a similar comment.

**Historical Errors And Omissions**

**John XX**

Unfortunately, John XX is considered an antipope and is nowhere found in the official lists of popes from various credible sources, although de Montor lists him as a true Pope. 85

There was a numerical confusion about the Johns for some time. The reference is to John XIX, which the official book of the Catholic Church, the *Annuario Pontificio* lists as a true Pope. The same book lists no John XX and has a footnote under John XXI to note the discrepancy, which has been resolved in different manners by different historians. It should be noted that this section of the book was *rushed* at Benzs’ insistence.

**The Western Schism**

For example, Pope Gregory XII was not determined to be the true Pope during the Western Schism (14th and early 15th century), until the 19th century despite the fact that a) He resided in Rome and b) by accepting his resignation as Pope, the Council of Constance implicitly recognized his legitimacy. 86

Pope Benedict XIV says: *today it is evident that Urban VI, and his successors were legitimate Pontiffs*. (Pope Benedict XIV reigned August 17, 1740 to May 3, 1758 in the eighteenth century)

**Self-Contradiction**

In several places Teresa Benzs has contradicted herself. First of all, it should be noted that Teresa’s current articles from November 30, 2006 until the present are in direct contradiction to what she personally wrote in *Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century?* She should reread her book and either refute her current position or the book, depending on what truly Catholic sources actually support. Honesty demands nothing less than this. Until such time, she should close down her websites and refuse to write publicly, for to leave an error uncorrected is to condone it, and this is the first duty of a Catholic author.

85 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/qualify_can.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/qualify_can.html)
But suppose a writer admits his errors, corrects them, and desires to repent by devoting a certain period of time to study. What must he study?

Asks Benns on page 13 of the book. It is certain that Teresa Benns has committed error, either in the book or on her website or in both places. Therefore she is duty bound to correct these errors and prove them. She expects no less from others; she should expect more from herself. However, her own current writings are found to be contradictory, when compared one to another, and sometimes even in the same article! This cannot be left unaddressed.

**Lay Pope Elect**

This proposition appears in the revised version of *Necessity of Canonical Fitness in the Ordination of a Lay Pope*. Let us go to the current edition of this article:

The method for electing a lay Pope was explained at length in *Will the Catholic Church Survive the 20th Century?* in 1990, although fitness for ordination was not considered in relation to a lay pope in this work. On another pages she states: Now a Pope who is not a deacon, priest or a bishop lacks such fullness of power insofar as he is bereft of orders and its perfection; a lay pope by definition is not yet a full-fledged member of the hierarchy. This is no minimizing of papal power but a simple statement of fact.

Teresa teaches on another page, *Errors Contradicting Church Dogma*:

“Universal jurisdiction is granted to a Pope not by the electors, but by Divine law, itself, (Canons 109 and 219). Under the ecclesiastical laws governing elections, Can. 158 says that those acting as proxies for voters who lost their right to vote have the power only to designate a candidate, and have no jurisdiction over the candidate elected. The voters did all that they could do; the rest was left to God and valid clergy, if found at a later date. While clerics often receive their canonical title in Major Orders, prior to their ordination, yet even up until the time they are ordained they may be declared unfit for Orders and hence determined to be lacking a true vocation. The laity believed that they called David Bawden to the exercise of universal (but only external) jurisdiction as a lay Pope and only potentially to the exercise of Holy Orders; nothing more. They did not have the power or expertise necessary to confirm his vocation, nor any realization prior to the act that he considered the election they posited as a confirmation of his vocation *ipso facto*.”

Benns is teaching in essence that a layman elected to the Papacy at any time in history is not fully Pope, until he is ordained to the priesthood and consecrated Bishop.

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87 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/lay_pope.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/lay_pope.html) Note this is pre April 17, 2006
89 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html) Note this is pre April 17, 2006
This is contradicted by Canon 219, which Benns rightly holds to be Divine Law: *The Roman Pontiff legitimately elected obtains, from the moment he accepts the election, the full power of supreme jurisdiction by divine right.* And Benns herself states in *Common Error and Apostolic Succession*, Teresa states: *In other words, a woman cannot be "somewhat" pregnant any more than a man without orders can be a "halfway" pope.*

So which is it? Is a lay man elected to the Papacy, Pope, half-pope or no pope at all?

Teresa also reports in the recent Corpus Christi posting to her website:

> He thunders that “the pope can be judged by no one,” ignoring that a man elected pope whose fitness was not certain would be only a pope-elect, so he could not accept until true clergy could adequately gauge his fitness for ordination and consecration as Popes Pius XI and Pius XII teach. This speaks directly to the natural law concerning fitness and the absolute necessity that apostolic succession be safeguarded.

In *Dogmatic Errors*, she goes further:

> Bawden denies the need for any examination prior to ordination of a lay pope, even the scrutiny contained in the Ordination ceremony itself. Yet we find in Can. 149: "Candidates elected...by any persons to an ecclesiastical office shall not be confirmed [in the case of a lay Pope this means before he accepts the election], admitted or instituted by a superior below the Roman Pontiff unless these persons have first been adjudged suitable by their respective Ordinary. The Ordinary thus has the right to subject them to an examination, if either the law or the nature of the office requires it, or the Ordinary judges it opportune."

When the Papacy is vacant, two connected Offices are vacant. The Papacy is vacant as is the Office of Bishop of Rome. The Bishop of Rome is Ordinary of the Diocese of Rome, just as the Bishop of Paris is Ordinary of the Diocese of Paris. When a man is elected Pope, he becomes simultaneously Bishop of Rome and therefore is Ordinary of the Diocese of Rome. As Pope, he is immediately superior to each and every Catholic without exception. To require him to be judged by anyone is an heretical denial of the doctrine: *The Primatial See can be judged by no one.* (Canon 1556)

> Election Update, Rights of the Universal Church to Vote: By deviation the election of a Pope has fallen to the Universal Church. Who, then, is the Universal Church and which members of her can vote? ... Offices are filled by the superior through appointment, and by inferiors through election. Normally elections consist of several people. although if only one elector remains, he still elects his superior. In both cases the jurisdiction connected with the office does NOT come from the electors but from God through the office holder's superiors. Papal jurisdiction comes from God to the one the Church designates. Although we may elect the Pope we cannot exercise any power over him, or bind him in any way as the Pope has no superior on earth.

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91 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com)
92 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html) Note this is pre April 17, 2006
93 Emphasis Ours
This article was written by Benns and then edited greatly by Bawden, then reedited by Benns prior to publication in *Election Update* in 1990.

Errors Contradicting Church Dogma

On this page Teresa Benns discusses tonsure. Let us look at the following quotes from this page:

(DZ 960; Canons 108-109; Can. 147. Here it must be noted that tonsure was often considered an *order* up until the 19th century.)

Also, to be tonsured one must be validly confirmed according to the Council of Trent, and Bawden's Confirmation by Lefebvre was doubtfully valid at best. Moreover the nature of first tonsure clearly indicates that it arises from the Ordinary's office as an act issuing from his *jurisdictional* faculties granted by the Pope (Rev. Augustine), not specifically the power of Orders, *since tonsure is not an order* (emphasis mine) but a ceremony or rite. Bawden knew this, since he stated in *Will the Catholic Church Survive…?* that vocation is a call from the local ordinary "with the jurisdiction to call men to the ministry."

Christ Himself has taught that no man is a member of the hierarchy without being in major orders; that is, possessing both Orders *and* jurisdiction — as reflected in Can.108.

Notice this page is *self-contradictory*, that is the statements do not even agree with each other. She begins by stating that tonsure was considered an order until the 19th century. Then she states tonsure is not an order. Then she concludes that Jesus decreed that no man is a member of the hierarchy without being in major orders;... If this is true, Canon 108, which states the contrary, would then be contrary to Jesus Christ! The Church has instituted tonsure, the minor orders and the first major order, the subdiaconate. Is Benns implying Jesus instituted the sub-diaconate and indeed limits jurisdiction to those in major orders? If so, the practice of the Church to the contrary is contrary to Christ, and to say this is at least a very dangerous error, if not outright heretical! Let us conclude by going to her Glossary on her current website:

The tonsure itself is not an ordination properly so called, nor a true order. It is rather a simple ascription of a person to the Divine service in such things as are common to all clerics. Historically the tonsure was not in use in the primitive Church during the age of persecution.

Factual Errors

It is impossible to cite each and every erroneous statement Teresa Benns has made.

94 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html Note this is pre April 17, 2006
95 http://betrayedcatholics.com/wpcms/glossary/
As I indicated in our “Open Letter” above, David Bawden has played Teresa Benns and me against each other for years. I was very angry when Teresa left David in March 2007 and I believed at that time that she was being spiteful and unfair. Before she left David, I had told him that I believed she had perjured herself at one time. When I explained what had happened he agreed that it was perjury. Based on what I told him, I thought that if it wasn’t perjury, he would tell me. Now he has published my statement to his website. 96

The above is from a letter written by Diane Hunt and published to Teresa Benns website. Let us now go to the story told me in 2005.

In any case I believe Benns was on the stand when a break was called, but she might not have been. The judge charged everyone not to discuss the case with anyone. Diane Hunt went to the bathroom where Teresa accosted her, holding the stall door open while Diane was urinating. Teresa was going on about some of the testimony and how upset it made her. Court resumed and Teresa was placed on the witness stand. Connie’s lawyer asked Teresa if she had discussed the case, during the break. She replied no. This shocked Diane Hunt, and indeed shocked me later when I heard it.

This was related to me a few months after the incident. Because the incident had no bearing on the case in which it occurred and the problem was being resolved, We believed it was imprudent to pursue the matter further.

Finally, there is the “perjury” matter. While it obviously was discussed with others (not me) before I left Bawden in 2007, it was not mentioned until after I left, when Bawden encouraged another follower to circulate information regarding the allegations. This from a man who would routinely reprimand people for not first going to the person himself, (the order of fraternal correction); but of course we all know now that the cult leader’s rules are only for his followers; they never apply to him or her.

Bawden is relying on second-hand information regarding his account of this incident and there are more errors in his story than facts. This can easily be proven and is something that could be used to my own advantage. Bawden knows that the person he originally received the information from has not always been truthful, and at the time was very angry with me. He also knows that there are extenuating circumstances in this case that cannot be revealed, circumstances that he contributed to by allowing his hatred for me to influence his cooperation with people who were working at that time to injure our family.

The particulars of this case, were the whole truth to be revealed, would implicate Bawden in at least cooperation in heresy and perversion of innocent third parties. And there is even question as to whether his cooperation by encouragement and support in

96http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/HuntsCorrectBawden.html
other matters resulted in the concealment of an actual crime, when revealing such information might have prevented it. Is this why he is focusing on this particular incident? Given the evidence of his hatred for me for years, testified to by other followers; also the material on his site, anything is possible. Did I lie under oath? No; I was emotionally distraught and terrified my grandchildrens’ faith was in danger. I was startled by a snarling, adversarial attorney and gave a knee-jerk reply. I corrected that reply in later in testimony, a fact Bawden fails to mention.  

We never mentioned that Benns corrected herself, because We were never told.

The Thuc Bishops Never Mentioned a Papal Election after 1981

Page 1 of Surviving the Great Apostasy: Originally those supporting Bp. Thuc suggested that in consecrating the Mexican bishops in 1981, the groundwork would be laid for a papal election. But no such election was ever mentioned following the consecrations.

In the November, 1983 issue of Sacred Heart Newslette, Fr. George Musey, a bishop consecrated by Frs. Moises Carmona and Aldopho Zamora, wrote an open letter to Marcel Lefebvre in which he discussed the possibility of holding a papal election. Also it has been asserted that Bishop Ngo-Dihn Thuc came to the United States for that very reason early in 1983. This matter was discussed at a priest's meeting in Louisiana in January of 1983 with all of the Thuc Bishops, except Guerard des Lauriers present.

Biography of David Bawden

Below find three letters where Bawden refers to a biography and “his biographer” after the 1990 election. Notice that the signature at the end of these letters is “Pope Michael,” so that all the communications received about the biography were sent AFTER the election.

After making this statement, she copies three letters of Pope Michael in regard to a biography and my request to her to write up a papal biography.

"This would mean nothing if Bawden had not strongly suspected, from 1987 on, that he was the one most likely to be elected, (1989 biography never publicly

97No source can be given for this, because it appeared in the original Cults of Catholicism, which was over 60 pages long. It has been republished, omitting all of the references to Pope Michael, that were in the original. This is from pages 36-7 of the original.
"David Bawden stated in a private document written in 1989 that he suspected he would be elected from 1987 on." 100

(This is prior to his release, in the early 1990s, of a 1989 document stating he had considered himself the only candidate qualified for election since 1987.) 101

Notice that the last statement prior to his release contradicts never publicly circulated in the first statement. Which is? Was it released or never publicly circulated? Since it is a biography, who wrote it in 1989? The only biography written was that by Teresa Benns in 1990, David Bawden as I Know Him. 102 She was commissioned to write a Papal Biography several times later on, but never did bother to write it. 103

Teresa Benns Never Returned to Traditionalists

Page 27 of Surviving the Great Apostasy: "If it were pointed out to the person in material heresy that no, in fact, what is held is untrue, and the correct teaching is the following..., they correct themselves accordingly because, all in all, they wish to be in accord with Catholic Teaching: They are mistaken on a given point. I myself have been in material heresy. When I attended the Traditional Mass at uncanonically erected chapels, I was of the firm belief that I was practicing Catholicism in a lawfully correct manner; I was doing my part as a Confirmed Catholic. I had never heard of the proposition, confirmed by the Council of Trent, and in all of the catechisms where the subject is broached, that for the valid absolution of sins, a priest must have jurisdiction or faculties, and not the power of Orders, alone.

When I learned that my belief in this matter was incorrect — and I distinguish this from having merely heard of those Traditionalist Catholics who desisted from such chapels, but being offered no explanation — I was out: immediately. I think my interest in all of this stems from the fact that I was there for as long as I was; and that I was so completely convinced as I was of the tenability of my beliefs, given the current situation in Catholicism since the false Vatican II council.

Teresa Benns was presented with the information on the necessity of jurisdiction in very early January of 1984 in a letter from David Bawden on this very subject. She departed from Daniel Jones after receiving this letter. 104 However, she participated in the

99 Http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html This is also reproduced in http://freepdfhosting.com/945c24fc6b.pdf on page 3.
100 Http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/qualify_can.html This is also reproduced in http://freepdfhosting.com/945c24fc6b.pdf on page 3.
101 Http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/peheresy.html This is also reproduced in http://freepdfhosting.com/945c24fc6b.pdf on page 3.
102 Http://popepeter.vaticaninexile.com/?p=264
103 Daniel Jones was ordained by Fr. Buswell, who had been appointed bishop by Antipope John XXIII. Jones was ordained in 1968 shortly before the introduction of the New Rite of Ordination.
Masses of Phillip Shelmerdine in 1984 while associated with N. Martin Gwynne. Gwynne’s reasoning is that a priest once reconciled with the Church by Profession of Faith and abjuration of heresy could function under Canon 2261, paragraph 2, if requested by the faithful. Gwynne proceeded to fly Shelmerdine literally around the world to provide the Mass and Sacraments. Under Canon 882, according to a statement by Saint Alphonsus, it was reasoned that since there are no priests available, we are considered in danger of death. Later on Teresa argued that there must be some exception to jurisdiction and then invoked this exception in order to receive the Sacraments at the hands of Peter Tran Van Khoat in 1989. In 2006 she requested Pope Michael to grant permission to the Faithful to approach the Orthodox for the Sacraments.

On May 28, 2006 Teresa wrote: Well we missed something, as you can see below. Now I know that it is stretching it to think that you could supply jurisdiction to these people to allow us to receive the Sacraments in a possibly limited way, but prior Popes have done this. And Journet says that these Sacraments are perfectly legitimate.

Tran Van Khoat

From David Bawden As I Know Him: We began writing the book after our mutual disappointing experience with Fr. Peter Khoat Van Tran in Port Arthur, Texas. David had journeyed to Texas to observe Fr. Khoat’s apostolate there and assist him in its promotion should Khoat’s credentials prove legitimate. Because Khoat had at least weighed the jurisdiction issue and worked out a way by which he seemed to retain it, he did not appear to fit into that category of priests who had disregarded it altogether. Moreover, he had set up a catechetical effort, which is much needed today. Unfortunately he vacillated between accepting JPII and sede vacante, and exhibited many signs in the seminars of doctrinal instability. When it finally came clear to David that the apostolate could not be used to promote the election and that Khoat was a heretic, he cut himself off from him even though it made him physically ill and put in him some considerable danger of losing his books and computer. Because we had failed miserably to convert Khoat and his followers to the election idea despite our feverish doctrinal disputations in favor of such a move, we decided that the widespread ignorance of the faithful demanded from us a reasoned, well thought out, well-researched explanation of the crisis in the Church from 1958 to the present, with the presentation of the election process as a solution to that crisis.

What Benns does not report were several telephone conversations in the 1980's where she just knew there had to be an exception in the matter of jurisdiction. This is what influenced David Bawden's thinking in 1988, because after the election effort began, Benns proposed that a priest who was working for an election would have some ability to help the faithful until the election could be convened.

\[105\] Shelmerdine was ordained in Rome in 1963 shortly after Antipope John XXIII issued the heretical Encyclical Pacem in Terris.
You KNOW Everything in Cults of Catholicism Is True

Bawden’s mother, who believed I neglected my duties to my family, came to visit one day. I was sitting at the kitchen table having a late lunch. She looked into the living room where my husband was watching TV and saw nothing on his TV tray. Pulling herself up to full stature and looking down her nose imperiously, she asked: “Have you fed your husband lunch?” After unclenching my jaw, I responded, “Yeah, an hour ago.” Releasing a girlish titter and demurring noticeably she then said, “Oh, I was only kidding.”

Although We have an opinion on whether this story is true, We cannot KNOW it is true. We were seven hundred miles away, when this incident took place. Therefore We are not an eye witness. All We have is the testimony of the two people involved, which is contradictory.

Everything said in the cult piece is true and you know it is true; we witness it here with our signatures.

The quote above comes from a notarized letter from Teresa and Larry Benns, Robert and Diane Hunt, dated June 11, 2009. It was written in reply to Our demand that Benns remove all of the calumnious, libelous and slanderous material about me from her website. She did pull the website down. From my knowledge, nothing new about me has gone up, although she is now posting to Facebook and elsewhere.

Pius XII Demanded Fitness For Ordination For Acceptance of the Papacy

The teaching of the Catholic Church on the hierarchy "If anyone says that in the Catholic Church a hierarchy has not been instituted by divine ordinance which consists of bishops, priests and ministers [deacons], let him be anathema," (The Council of Trent, DZ 966; Canons 108-109). Woywod-Smith, commenting on this canon state that by ministers is generally meant deacons. Canon 108 is implicitly referred to in Pope Pius XII's 1957 address to the Lay Congress, Six ans se sont. In this address, Pius XII reminds laymen that "A two-fold distinction must be taken into account when we speak of the hierarchical apostolate and the lay apostolate; first between Pope, bishops and priests on the one hand and layman on the other; second between those with the full power to consecrate and govern and the rest of the clergy. The first (the Pope, bishops and priests) belong to the clergy." His next words are: "Even if a layman were elected, he could accept the election only if he were fit for

106From the original Cults of Catholicism pages 16-7
ordination and willing to be ordained." The first sentence defines the Pope and clergy possessing both Orders and jurisdiction (delegated in the case of priests) as the hierarchy. Here Pope Pius adds the Pope to this list because he is trying to get the point across that in order to be a member of the hierarchy — to be Pope — one must eventually be at least a priest as defined by the Church. This is obvious in reading sentence three. Pope Pius was trying to dispel errors in his address that confused the role of the laity with that of the clergy, granting laymen powers that belonged only to the clergy. This wrong idea on the role of the laity that was then prevalent was the prelude to the V2 secularization of the Church. The entire focus of his address, then, was to make the necessary distinctions between the separate roles played in Catholic Action by both laity and clergy. 107

**Comments**: First of all Teresa deliberately omits to quote Canon 108: *Those who have been assigned to the divine ministry at least by first tonsure, are called clerics. They are not all of the same grade, for they form a sacred hierarchy in which some are subordinate to others. By divine institution, the sacred hierarchy of orders consists of bishops, priests and ministers; the hierarchy of jurisdiction consists of the Supreme Pontificate and the subordinate episcopate. By institution of the Church other degrees have been added.* 108

Pope Pius XII’s own quote refutes Teresa’ assertion that a layman elected to the Papacy does not become head of the hierarchy, since Pope Pius XII states: "A two-fold distinction must be taken into account when we speak of the hierarchical apostolate and the lay apostolate; first between Pope, bishops and priests on the one hand and layman on the other; second between those with the full power to consecrate and govern and the rest of the clergy. The first (the Pope, bishops and priests) belong to the clergy."

A better translation of Teresa’s key quote above, taken from the original French is: *If a layman were elected pope, he could accept the election only with the condition of being ready to receive ordination and willingness to receive ordination; the capacity to teach and govern, as well as the charism of infallibility, would be granted to him as of the moment of its acceptance, even before his ordination.* 109 In Teresa’s defense, she takes her translation from a reliable source and therefore should not be faulted for this. However, because of the substantial change in meaning, her case falls.

### From Statement to Law to Natural Law

Pope Pius XII made the statement: *If a layman were elected pope, he could accept the election only with the condition of being ready to receive ordination and willingness to receive ordination; the capacity to teach and govern, as well as the charism of infallibility, would be granted to him as of the moment of its acceptance, even before his ordination.* 110

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107 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dogerrors.html) Note this is pre April 17, 2006
108 Supreme Pontificate is another term for Pope, Bishop of Rome.
109 Si un laïc était élu pape, il ne pourrait accepter l’élection qu’à condition d’être apte à recevoir l’ordination et disposé à se faire ordonner; le pouvoir d’enseigner et de gouverner, ainsi que le charisme de l’infaillibilité, lui seraient accordés dès l’instant de son acceptation, même avant son ordination.
109 Si un laïc était élu pape, il ne pourrait accepter l’élection qu’à condition d’être apte à recevoir l’ordination et disposé à se faire ordonner; le pouvoir d’enseigner et de gouverner, ainsi que le charisme de l’infaillibilité, lui seraient accordés dès l’instant de son acceptation, même avant son ordination.
In *Necessity of Canonical Fitness in the Ordination of a Lay Pope*, Teresa Benns asserts that Pope Pius XII was *promulgating a law*. Since this was merely an address and Canon Law prescribes: *The laws issued by the Holy See are promulgated by being published in the official organ of the Holy See, the Acta Apostolicae Sedis, unless in a particular case another mode of promulgation is prescribed.* (Canon 9) If Pope Pius XII intended to promulgate this as a law, then he would have gone home and ordered it so printed, therefore Benns’ assertion does not hold. Since a *doubtful law is no law*, as Teresa Benns states on page 26 of *the book*, this *doubtful promulgation* must be dismissed. This is especially true, since Benns’ translation was faulty.

Then Teresa promotes this *doubtful law* to the Natural Law:

> (provided this ordination/consecration takes place within a year of election and the layman elected is fit for the priesthood. Following the natural law, Pope Pius XII taught that a layman not fit for ordination may not accept the papacy.)

Note there is no source given for this year. This is invention of Benns.

Let us go to Benns' current website where she has promoted a speech of a Pope to an infallible statement of doctrine:

> The French word for “ready [for ordination]” appears NOWHERE in Pope Pius XII’s infallible definition in “Six ans se sont.”

**Bawden Unduly Influenced Benns**

From *We Are the Church* by Theresa Benns in 1982 (*Sangre de Cristo Newsnotes.*)

> And Professor Amann in his book "The Church of the Early Centuries" (Sands & Co., 15 King St., Convent Garden, London) tells us "...the laity were...vitaly concerned in all the affairs of the Church. It was they who by election appointed the clergy...They were consulted as to measures to be taken. Their votes were asked in important circumstances." So there is even a precedent for lay involvement and consultation. Had Vatican II consulted the laity, we would still have the Latin Mass.

In *Please Don’t Read this Book* in the fall of 2007, Benns alleges:

110 Si un laïc était élu pape, il ne pourrait accepter l’élection qu’à condition d’être apte à recevoir l’ordination et disposé à se faire ordonner; le pouvoir d’enseigner et de gouverner, ainsi que le charisme de l’infaillibilité, lui seraient accordés dès l’instant de son acceptation, même avant son ordination.

111 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/lay_pope.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/lay_pope.html) paragraphs 3 and 4 Note this is pre April 17, 2006

112 [http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/FeastCorpusChristi08.html](http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/FeastCorpusChristi08.html)

113 Note this was apparently inspired by an email from Pope Michael to Benns, advising her she ought to reread her book, *Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century?*
His treatment of the history of lay elections in the Church, also Church law and practice concerning the appointment of laymen and mere clerics to ecclesiastical offices presented a picture of leniency toward laymen concerning clerical positions that did not exist. Based on these reports, I went on to ground my position for the participation of laymen in an election and the possible election of a layman.  

And yet the statement above was written prior to Benns and Bawden ever even meeting! In the same article Benns writes:

This makes more sense in light of the fact that I was unofficially "tutored" by Bawden in theology and Canon Law from 1985-1988, at his insistence. Had I prolonged my studies on my own, without being encumbered by the ball and chain of Bawden's prejudices and misinformation, the impossibility of conducting an election without valid hierarchy would have become painfully clear.

The actual fact is that Benns asked for Bawden’s help and advice. As can be seen from the many canonical errors Benns has made since separating from Bawden in November of 2006, one can readily see the need for such guidance!

One should also read The Priesthood of the Laity to understand her position on this matter. Page 327:

If we cannot deny the marks of the Church and the perpetuity of the papacy without becoming heretics; if we have consulted parallel passages of the Code and found nothing by agreement; if we have consulted the mind of the lawgiver concerning the role of the laity in Church affairs and encountered only praise and encouragement, where else can we look for confirmation.

It should be noted that Benns wrote all of Part III, Section II of the book with the exception of several of the objections in Countering Objections. This is the section that dealt mainly with the participation of laity in the Papal Election. Teresa also did the research and wrote the main part of the article in Election Update, Rights of the Universal Church to Vote. Bawden edited said article and added several important points. However, the main proposition that the election by the laity in these circumstances is legally a privilege was Benns’ own research and proposition.
Jumbled Quotes

In the quotes below the complete quote will be given. If possible Benns presentation shall be underlined. In some cases, her must be presented separate.

Quartus Supra

From Surviving the Great Apostasy, page 56: Pope Pius IX taught in Quartus Supra, paragraph 25, that "No power of electing bishops or other ministers of religion has ever been given to the people by either divine or ecclesiastical law."

Complete paragraph from Quartus Supra: 25. If you consider these measures with a mind free from the passions of faction, you will find them all sanctioned by the universal sense of the canons. Concerning the exclusion of the laity from the election of bishops, a clear distinction must be made, lest a doctrine at variance with the Catholic faith result. This distinction is between the right to elect bishops and the ability to give testimony as to their life and morals. The former claim must be credited to the wrong notions of Luther and Calvin, who even asserted that it was a matter of divine law that the bishops should be elected by the people; as everybody realizes, such false teaching has been and is still rejected by the Catholic Church. For no power of electing bishops or other ministers of religion has ever been given to the people by either divine or ecclesiastical law. What is omitted is that this particular case is an exception to the law, as Teresa demonstrated in Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century?

Extraordinary Mission

The theologian Msgr. G. Van Noort, following the common and constant teaching of the Church, writes: "The original Protestants...took refuge in an appeal to the theory of an 'extraordinary mission.' They maintained that God could at some time raise up a group of men by an extraordinary vocation and confer on them apostolic functions if current apostolic pastors should become viciously corrupt... It is clear, however, if any such extraordinary mission were ever to be granted by God, it would have to be proven by miracles, or other clearly divine trademarks [and this is the teaching of St. Francis de Sales in his The Catholic Controversy]. The plain truth is, however, that Christ's own promises completely rule out the possibility of any such extraordinary mission... Obviously a man does not become a genuine successor to the apostles merely by arrogating to himself the title of "bishop," or by carrying on in some fashion a function once performed by the apostles. Neither is it enough for a man merely to possess some one, individual power, say for example, the power of orders, [or the power of jurisdiction only]... What is required for GENUINE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION is that a man enjoy THE COMPLETE POWERS (i.e., ordinary powers, not extraordinary) of an apostle, [in this case, the Apostle Peter]. He must,

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117 Pope Pius IX, January 6, 1873

42
then, in addition to the power of orders, possess also the power of jurisdiction, [and vice versa].  

Let us look at the quote free from Benns' additions and emphasis: The original Protestants... took refuge in an appeal to the theory of an 'extraordinary mission.' They maintained that God could at some time raise up a group of men by an extraordinary vocation and confer on them apostolic functions if current apostolic pastors should become viciously corrupt.... It is clear, however, if any such extraordinary mission were ever to be granted by God, it would have to be proven by miracles, or other clearly divine trademarks. The plain truth is, however, that Christ's own promises completely rule out the possibility of any such extraordinary mission... Obviously a man does not become a genuine successor to the apostles merely by arrogating to himself the title of "bishop," or by carrying on in some fashion a function once performed by the apostles. Neither is it enough for a man merely to possess some one, individual power, say for example, the power of orders, ...What is required for genuine apostolic succession is that a man enjoy the complete powers of an apostle. He must, then, in addition to the power of orders, possess also the power of jurisdiction.

Van Noort is addressing the Protestant notion of extraordinary mission granted directly from God. This must be confirmed by miracles. However, although the mode of election is considered extraordinary, the Pope does not claim an extraordinary mission, but an ordinary mission from election as Pope. No one demanded miracles from Pope Martin V, whose election was also extraordinary. The Pope receives jurisdiction the moment he accepts election, which includes the right to receive Holy Orders should he not possess them, as two millennia of historical precedent aptly approve.

Errors in The Book

ABOUT THE AUTHOR - T. Stanfill Benns is an award-winning journalist who has written for traditional Catholic and other publications for the past 25 years. A wife and mother of four, she has worked as a freelance writer and small-town reporter in Texas and Colorado since 1993. She also is the author of the self-published work, “Will the Catholic Church Survive the 20th Century?” released in 1990.

This appeared on Benns' website from its inception in 2004 to promote Imposter Popes and Idol Altars until after August, 2007.

Since Bawden's public defection from the Church, I have become aware of several errors in the book he helped me write that appear in the sections he wrote. I probably was at fault for not checking out his work before going to print, but I had no reason to believe at that time that he had not fully investigated what he wrote. His treatment of the history of lay elections in the Church, also Church law and practice concerning the appointment of laymen and mere clerics to ecclesiastical offices

118 www.betrayedcatholics.com/apostilic_succ.html
119 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/about.html Note this is pre April 17, 2006
presented a picture of leniency toward laymen concerning clerical positions that did not exist. Based on these reports, I went on to ground my position for the participation of laymen in an election and the possible election of a layman.  

So where are the errors in Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? In fact, are there errors in this book?  

Page 402: In fact, de Montor lists John XX, 1024, as the first layman elected, although he listed three “nobles” as being elected prior to John XX. (It is quite probable that these men were members of a third order group prior to their election. Canon law now considers third order members as clerics.) Here Teresa performs another edit of David Bawden’s work, which renders it erroneous. Saint Francis was the first to institute a Third Order, and yet Benns claims that these men were Third Order members. Unfortunately this was either not sent to Kansas or was missed.  

Page 65: Denial of an article of faith is simple to understand. If I stated that I doubt Mary was immaculately conceived, then I have denied an article of faith. How can I deny that same article? I could say that it is possible that Our Lady was stained with original sin; or I could doubt it by saying that I am not sure that she was immaculately conceived. Both cases are doubts of an article of faith; and therefore, heresy. Can I make a statement which contradicts a logical conclusion which comes from Our Lady’s immaculate conception? Certainly I can. I could say that Our Lady deserved death. To say so implies that she possessed original sin, which is what brought death in the first place. Therefore, I am implicitly denying that Mary was conceived immaculately. By denying this, I am committing heresy. ... The word was, which is placed in bold, was omitted from the final copy Benns sent to the printers. Let us read what Teresa Benns says about this in 1999 in My Life as a Catholic:

Copy from David (Pope Michael) was edited, sometimes partially rewritten, then submitted for typesetting. (This is how the confusion came over the Immaculate Conception “error” Mrs. Benny noted. It was unclear because I didn’t understand what David had written originally owing to a misconception on my part and the need to shorten everything as much as possible.)

Some Quotes From Benns in The Book

Note well that Benns states that everything she wrote was correct, unless unduly influenced.

Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? page 302:

Anyone, therefore, who pretends this election can be delayed further, must certainly be either ignorant of these dangers, or working for the enemy.

Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century? page 326:

http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dontreadthisbook.html
We cannot deny the necessity of an election without denying: (1) apostolicity, (2) indefectibility, (3) perpetuity, and (4) the necessity of the papacy. Those who deny such a necessity deny the rock on which their faith was built, and; hence, the very structure of the Church which sprang from it.

Disclaimer

The author explicitly disavows any statement on this site which might unintentionally be opposed to the doctrines of the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church. All on this site is humbly submitted in advance to the future Roman Pontiff, canonically elected. The author swears to abide by his judgment concerning all that is written here.

Therefore let us conclude that Benns disavows much of what is on her site. If she does not, then she proves her evil will as required by Canon Law.

Another Look

Since Bawden's public defection from the Church, I have become aware of several errors in the book he helped me write that appear in the sections he wrote. I probably was at fault for not checking out his work before going to print, but I had no reason to believe at that time that he had not fully investigated what he wrote. His treatment of the history of lay elections in the Church, also Church law and practice concerning the appointment of laymen and mere clerics to ecclesiastical offices presented a picture of leniency toward laymen concerning clerical positions that did not exist. Based on these reports, I went on to ground my position for the participation of laymen in an election and the possible election of a layman.

Let us consider this statement closely. "I have become aware of several errors in the book he helped me write that appear in the sections he wrote." So the errors are mainly in the sections I wrote about the Papal Election. "Based on these reports, I went on to ground my position for the participation of laymen in an election and the possible election of a layman." We can presume that she considers what she wrote on the election of a layman she now considers erroneous. The balance of the book, she would consider as fine, unless she has noted differently as seen above. This would include the chapter The Necessity of the Papacy. We have seen above that she no longer considers a Pope necessary. This is why Benns is required by Divine Law to set the record straight, paragraph by paragraph, if necessary. She knows that the book is in circulation with hundreds of copies in private hands and three libraries. She is obliged to make a refutation to these people in as best a manner as possible, because the cat is out of the bag and cannot be put back. If she believes the book is flawed, she will refute.

122 http://www.betrayedcatholics.com/dontreadthisbook.html
123 http://www.worldcat.org/title/will-the-catholic-church-survive-the-twentieth-century/oclc/40847178&referer=brief_results
Benns Doesn't Need to Refute Will the Catholic Church Survive the Twentieth Century?

Benns devotes two articles to this proposition. Let us go to the more recent article:

Actual canon laws govern this process, laws that nowhere state that a point-by-point-refutation be given of the book in recommending it for condemnation. That would be something required by the Holy See, in way of an abjuration of errors by the author(s), and as we all know we have no true pope.

Logically, wouldn't Benns be required to prepare that refutation as part of her abjuration of heresy? She then quotes Canon Law, which as we know she holds to be infallible:

Can. 1397: “It is the duty of all the faithful — and especially of the clergy, of ecclesiastical dignitaries and of men of distinguished learning — to report to the local ordinaries or to the Holy See books which they consider pernicious…The denunciation of a book should not only give its title, but also, insofar as possible, the reasons why a book is thought to deserve condemnation.”

Does she have the letter ready for presentation to the hierarchy?

A Demand For Restitution

Can. 2355: “A person who inflicts injury upon another…by words or writing or in any other manner, or who damages his good reputation, may not only be forced…to make due satisfaction, and repair the damages done, but may in addition be punished with appropriate penalties and penances…”

This is a requirement of the Natural Law. Teresa Benns has damaged my reputation by her actions in many ways. She has done so in writing, through emails, telephone calls and letters. Take a look at the Wikipedia page about me. One can check the history and see the changes made by Benns. We have been informed by people, that she and her minions are making contact with people and talking about me and not too kindly. We have restricted our self here to those things published, leaving

aside those We know are circulating semi-privately. Therefore We demand Our rights under Canon Law, rights which We possess whether or not Our claim to the papacy is valid. It is a tenet of the Natural Law that a person has a right to their good name and Our right has been violated by the circulation of calumnies (lies) about Us. A few are noted above, but many more have been seen, such as 13 pages of the original Cults of Catholicism and many things on Benns' website from summer 2007 until summer of 2009. As these become apparent We are addressing them by presenting the truth of the case on Our own website http://pemichael.vaticaninexile.com where this is also posted.

The reason for presenting this material is that St. Michael's Squad asked for it. 131

Since he’s the one quoting this book all the time why isn’t HE refuting what SHE says — why can’t HE come up with all the research that supports HIS claim? Why is it up to her to refute it — is he trying to get her to do his work for him? Someone claiming to be pope should be the one able to defend books brought into question, so why isn’t he busy proving her wrong from past papal teaching and canon law? 132

Benns and her minions are on this Facebook page 133 as St. Michael's Squad. All are advised of their solemn duty to make restitution for each and eery calumny published here or elsewhere. This duty binds under pain of serious sin under the Natural Law.

With this We will close this presentation of some of the errors of Teresa Louise Stanfill Benns. We again ask for prayers for all involved, especially prayers that all will fulfill their duties to God and man.

We remain Michael, by the grace of God, Pope.
July 7, 2012
Feast of Saints Cyril and Methodius who evangelized Our Moravian ancestors.
Saint Cyril and Methodius pray for us.

In this dismal crises of the Church, there are some who have pretended that, while the Church exists without a pope, we need not put ourselves out trying to provide the Church with a head, since Christ Himself is the true head of the Church. This is the error espoused by Hus, Luther, and countless others. While we must, of course believe that Christ is the author of our holy Church, and guides Her from above, we cannot deny the necessity of a visible head and remain Catholic. The following is a partial list of the condemnations leveled against those who would dare deny the necessity of Christ's vicar on earth "until the consummation." 134

There can be no doubt that the papacy is necessary to salvation. Testimonials of greater weight cannot be said to exist. Although the Church at present may be without Her head, we cannot deduce from this fact that Our Lord wishes Her to remain in such a state. Indeed, He expressly did not so wish, since His Church has determined that His promise, that the gates of hell would not prevail against Her, must be understood to mean that Peter is to have perpetual successors. That Christ would be with Her..."unto the consummation," must be taken to mean that the papacy would endure until the end. 135

Some among the "traditionalists" insist, that because the covenant has been broken, that Antichrist might be revealed, we will never see the return of the Church; all will remain as it is until the Second Coming. But this is impossible. For a prefiguration of our own days, we must look to the Maccabees. Both Daniel and Zacharias' prophecies encompassed their times as well as ours. They, too, experienced an evil shepherd-king, who banished the Jewish sacrifice from the temples and set up his own idols. They, too, were slain, persecuted, and forced into hiding, for Antiochus pursued them mercilessly for failure to comply with his directives; and yet, the Maccabees rallied the remaining faithful Israelites, made of them an army, fought Antiochus' army, and in the end did defeat Antiochus. They championed the law, reestablished the sacrifice, and by so doing, won the honor and esteem of their own people, and even the Romans. They did not sit around idly awaiting the Messiah, or spend all their time on their knees. They fought for God and won. 136