

Bacchiocchi's #94 / Others Speak Up

PART ONE OF THREE

— PART ONE —

BACCHIOCCHI'S END-TIME ISSUE #94

In Bacchiocchi's latest newsletter (#94), he makes several interesting comments:

First, he quotes letters from Adventist readers who praise him because he openly questions our historic beliefs. One letter is from a layman in California.

"Please do not apologize for areas of your ministry that create controversy. Many of us welcome a challenge in our thinking and are not afraid of potential future change . . . Please do not be concerned with those who ask you not to turn on the light. Some may be made uncomfortable and wake up from the brightness therein . . . Carlos Martinez, Long Beach, CA."—#94, p. 2.

Another is from a **Michigan Conference evangelist, who says he deeply values Bacchiocchi's divergent views of the 1260-year prophecy and wants him to continue presenting doctrinal alternatives.**

"Dear Brother Sam: I cannot tell you how much my wife, Lisa, and myself appreciate your newsletters. I especially appreciated the series on Islam, [and] its comparisons with the papacy and the 1260 years. I do wish that you would share the results of your findings. Some of us have been thinking along the same line and wish that we could have serious studies done by conservative scholars who strengthen our faith. Thank you again for the studies . . . My travels this year will take me to the Kiev, Ukraine. Y.H. Ted Struntz, Speaker, Director Prophecy Lectures, Michigan Conference Evangelist."—#94, p. 3.

As you can see, there are those who, like Bacchiocchi, like open doctrinal presentations of variant confusion. They think that believers gain from having their thinking confused.

Immediately after quoting Struntz' letter, Bacchiocchi mourns that he will no longer be able to continue his "fresh investigations" until the General Con-

ference has granted him approval to do so.

"I am eager to meet the expectations of thinking Adventists like Pastor Struntz, but I have been made forcefully aware that any fresh investigation of the time prophecies of Daniel and Revelation stirs up bitter and divisive controversies. Out of pastoral concerns I have decided to suspend these studies until the General Conference appoints a commission to conduct such an investigation. At that time, if requested, I will be glad to resume my research."—#94, p. 3.

In a third letter, which he quotes, **a church member writes that Bacchiocchi's newsletters encourage him to continue questioning the church's beliefs.**

"I have concluded that if you can question our traditional interpretations in the spirit of true Adventism, then surely, I can stick to the church and do the same. Your research has helped a great deal toward dealing with the truths related to 1844. Much thanks to you.' Name withheld by request."

Commenting on that letter, Bacchiocchi says:

"It is heartwarming to see how some of the recent newsletters that have troubled some concerned fellow believers, have brought reassurance and encouragement to others. **I wish that a way could be found to encourage a fresh investigation of our prophetic interpretations without alarming those who are committed to preserve traditional positions.**"—#94, p. 3.

Bacchiocchi wishes that a way could be found to introduce error, without arousing opposition.

Trying to forget the pain of not being able to flood the church with error as quickly as he had planned, two pages later, Bacchiocchi returns to his glorious victory of earlier years, when, as **he claims, he succeeded in convincing the Vatican that it had forgotten that, centuries earlier, it had changed the Sabbath to Sunday!** "Surprisingly," he says, they accepted this startling new discovery, that he made and published his doctoral thesis.

"The Lord has granted me a unique opportunity [back in the 1970s] to enter, study, research, and publish my dissertation, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, at the prestigious Pontifical Gregorian University, in Rome, Italy—which is the leading [and oldest] Jesuit university, founded by Ignatius of Loyola in 1541. The dissertation compelling [sic., compellingly] shows the continuity of the Sabbath and the role of the Papacy in changing the Sabbath to Sunday.

Reply to Bacchiocchi's August 2002 Attack—Part 1-7 [WM-1120-1126] (#86-87)

Reply to Bacchiocchi's #90-92 Attack—Part 1-3 [WM-1127-1129]

Bacchiocchi's #94 / Others Speak Up—Part 1-3 [WM-1130-1132]

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“Surprisingly the dissertation was published with the official *imprimatur*—approval—of the Catholic Church. Pope Paul VI awarded me a gold medal for earning the academic distinction of *summa cum laude*. I view the gold medal, not as a personal triumph, but as the triumph of truth.”—#94, p. 3.

According to his preposterous claim, digging into dusty Catholic archives, Bacchiocchi showed church leaders that, long centuries ago, the Catholic Church really had changed the Sabbath to Sunday, as their predecessors had earlier claimed.

“The reason my dissertation was published with the official Catholic *imprimatur*—approval—is simply because my research shows the correctness of the historical Catholic claim to have been responsible for changing the Sabbath to Sunday. Chapter 6 [of *From Sabbath to Sunday*] discusses the theological, social, and liturgical [sic., liturgical] measures used by the papacy to lead Christians away from Sabbathkeeping into Sundaykeeping.”—#94, p. 5.

At this point, Bacchiocchi makes the startling claim that, in the years since his own graduation from the Gregoriana in the 1970s, the Vatican has abandoned its claim to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday!

“The reason *From Sabbath to Sunday* has now become controversial among Catholics, is because of the recent Catholic Church attempts to make Sunday observance no longer her own ecclesiastical institution, but a Biblical ordinance, rooted in the Sabbath commandment itself.”—#94, p. 5.

Such a string of reasoning is utterly astounding! The truth is that, century after century, Rome has triumphantly claimed the change of the Sabbath to Sunday as its own work. Indeed, its claim to authority over the Bible is founded on Archbishop Gaspar del Fosso’s speech on January 18, 1562, which convinced the Council of Trent to declare Church Tradition greater than the statements of Scripture (see *Beyond Pitcairn*, pp. 133-135). It was that point, and that point alone, which gave Rome the power to oppose the newly emerging Protestantism so successfully: Protestants only had the Bible; *but they, the priests, had Tradition* (even though it was nothing more than a confused babel of contradicting opinions and edicts) as the higher authority.

Yet Bacchiocchi now claims that the Vatican knew nothing about the doctrinal foundation of its own church (the Catholic change of the Sabbath; that Bacchiocchi kindly gave it back to them; and that, more recently, that foundation has once again been abandoned by the Church).

“And let it be remembered, **it is the boast of Rome that she never changes.**”—*Great Controversy*, 581.

Is Bacchiocchi trying to convince Seventh-day Adventists that they can ignore the grave warnings of *Great Controversy*, chapter 35, and need no

longer fear that Rome may try to reinstate Sunday laws and renew their persecutions of the past? It surely appears that way. Read the chapter again (563-581). Read every word! It warns of just such impostures as Bacchiocchi is handing us now. Those warnings will be fulfilled. On nearly every page, the chapter warns of the deceitful manner in which **Rome will deceive Protestants and the world, and attain its objective: to regain power through the exaltation of the false sabbath which is founded on its authority alone.**

It is pure fiction to claim that the modern papacy has forgotten its past, that it has changed, or that it has repudiated the Sun Day as the mark of its authority over those who worship on that common working day!

It is the fact that the Sabbath is Biblical and Sunday sacredness is man-made that gives Rome its power.

“Papists themselves publicly confessed the divine authority of the Sabbath and the human origin of the institution by which it had been supplanted.”—*Great Controversy*, 577.

The Vatican is using Bacchiocchi as a willing accomplice to help deceive the nations as to its soon-coming objectives.

“The ‘man of sin’ will continue until the second advent. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8. **To the very close of time he will carry forward the work of deception.**”—*Great Controversy*, 579.

Here are statements from the book which Bacchiocchi repeatedly tries to undermine as unreliable—which reveal that objective!

“It is **the spirit of the papacy**—the spirit of conformity to worldly customs, **the veneration for human traditions above the commandments of God**—that is permeating the Protestant churches and leading them on to do the same work of Sunday exaltation which the papacy has done before them.”—*Great Controversy*, 573.

“Protestants are . . . **opening the door for the papacy to regain in Protestant America the supremacy** which she has lost in the Old World. And that which gives greater significance to this movement is the fact that **the principal object contemplated is the enforcement of Sunday observance—a custom which originated with Rome, and which she claims as the sign of her authority.**”—*Great Controversy*, 573.

“These records of the past clearly reveal **the enmity of Rome toward the true Sabbath and its defenders, and the means which she employs to honor the institution of her creating.** The Word of God teaches that these scenes are to be repeated as Roman Catholics and Protestants shall unite for the exaltation of the Sunday.”—*Great Controversy*, 578.

“This prophecy [of Revelation 13] will be fulfilled when the United States shall enforce **Sunday observance, which Rome claims as the special ac-**

knowledge of her supremacy. But in this homage to the papacy the United States will not be alone."—*Great Controversy*, 579.

"In both the Old and the New World, **the papacy will receive homage in the honor paid to the Sunday institution, that rests solely upon the authority of the Roman Church.**"—*Great Controversy*, 579.

"Marvelous in her shrewdness and cunning is the Roman Church. She can read what is to be. She bides her time, seeing that **the Protestant churches are paying her homage in their acceptance of the false sabbath** and that they are preparing to enforce it by the very means which she herself employed in bygone days. Those who reject the light of truth will yet seek the aid of this self-styled infallible power to exalt **an institution that originated with her.**"—*Great Controversy*, 580.

"Protestants little know what they are doing when they propose to accept the aid of Rome in **the work of Sunday exaltation.** While they are bent upon the accomplishment of their purpose, **Rome is aiming to re-establish her power, to recover her lost supremacy.**"—*Great Controversy*, 581.

"**Stealthily and unsuspectedly** she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike."—*Great Controversy*, 581.

— PART TWO —

WHEN BACCHIOCCHI COMES TO YOUR CHURCH

Bacchiocchi repeatedly urges his newsletter readers to have him come to their area, so he can regale them with marvelous tales of his victories at the Vatican.

"With the help of 100 PowerPoint slides, I am now able to take the audience in a visual way through my pilgrimage of faith. People can see the Gregorian University, the Vatican, the archives, some of the documents which I found, my major professor who has suffered greatly for his helpfulness to me, the Pope himself and the gold medal he awarded me. This testimony has gripped capacity crowds everywhere around the world, and I would be glad to share it."—#94, p. 5.

Bacchiocchi's thesis was essentially about how the Catholic Church originated Sunday observance. He claims that he made this startling discovery by searching old, long forgotten records in the Vatican Library. **What would the Vatican have done without Bacchiocchi? They wouldn't know Sunday sacredness in the Christian church originated with themselves!**

But, he says, his major professor (Vincenzo Monachino, S.J.) has "suffered" at the hands of Vatican leaders, because he agreed with Bacchiocchi's position, that the Catholic Church originated Sundaykeeping!

Bacchiocchi portrays Monachino and himself as martyrs for the cause (oddly enough, the Catholic cause).

Bacchiocchi not only turns early Catholic Church history on its head (as we discovered in our previous tract studies); we now find him turning modern Catholic Church history upside down!

Bacchiocchi is desperately trying to get his message to the widest number of Adventists, through the web and through lectures to our churches throughout the world field. His message is that, contrary to the Council of Trent and *Great Controversy*, chapter 35, Rome's supremacy is no longer based on Sunday sacredness; so we no longer need to fear a final Sunday law crisis.

In view of all this, do you want Bacchiocchi to come to your church? Read this email which came to me a few days ago:

Dear sdaefend [one of our websites]: **I have taken a class by Sam Bacch. I held his Pope's Medal in my hand.** I never for an instant thought that he was anything but a real SDA after writing *From Sabbath to Sunday*. I was not much of a strict Adventist during those Andrews' years, but I did respect him.

Later after giving my heart back to the Lord in the mid-90s, **we had him at our church for a speaking engagement.** Somehow, because of Pennsylvania Conference rules regarding money, I was told that his airfare was not paid for by the Conference as had been expected long before. We had no budget for his flight from Michigan to Pennsylvania.

Well, did we find out how indignant he was about it! He embarrassed our whole church, and our visitors from our pulpit, complaining that he couldn't believe that we hadn't paid for his flight out.

We hastily took up a freewill offering that Sabbath afternoon. My wife and I gave \$20. We were on a very tight budget. We collected \$200, which he readily accepted.

Another unusual thing was that his lectures were supposed to be on certain topics of Sabbath to Sunday. **He spoke 3 times, each very long. But he never spoke about his subject; only himself!** It must have been over 9 hours total.

He had premade [preprinted] flyers, discussing what the topics of the lectures would be about, sent way ahead of time. Then, **during his lectures, he simply teased us about what was in his books. Then he bragged on and on about his travels and famous people he met.**

Saturday night, after an exhaustingly long lecture, he opened up tables in our gymnasium and sold many books. People were coming out with lots of them for about \$15 apiece, if I remember right.

Most of us felt really let down over all, but he was an SDA VIP or celebrity. I was so glad that some-

one where I worked, who I had invited, didn't make it. There was simply no meat in his talks.

Let us do a little math: Bacchiocchi says he has 100 slides that he presents. The three lectures total nine hours in length. According to that, you would have to look at each Vatican slide over five minutes while the professor initiated you into Catholic lore.

I will not print the name or address of the church member who gave his name and address for the above email, lest Bacchiocchi take reprisals on him. People tell me he can be very mean.

The afternoon I received the above note, a friend from Chicago phoned about our ongoing efforts to translate some of our books into Spanish. In the course of our conversation I mentioned the remarkable email I had just received.

The caller responded with a casual chuckle and said, "That is no surprise. Bacchiocchi is like that. He gets angry a lot when he doesn't get his own way."

Apparently, the experience in Pennsylvania is not at all unusual. Are you sure you still want to invite Bacchiocchi to spend nine hours bragging on himself and his books, and getting all the money he can out of your little group?

— PART THREE —

WHEN BACCHIOCCHI IS CORRECTED

You will recall that, in his recent newsletters, Bacchiocchi has been claiming that all Christians kept Sunday by the second century A.D., when, in fact (as I documented earlier), ancient records reveal that only at Alexandria and Rome did a majority of Christians keep Sunday sacred prior to the fifth century—a full hundred years after the time of Constantine's Sunday law.

Well, **in a statement made at some earlier time, Bacchiocchi put forth another preposterous claim, and it is this: Prior to the time of Constantine, no Christians—not even apostate ones—thought to link Sunday sacredness with the day of Christ's resurrection!** However, ancient records prove Bacchiocchi to be in error on that point also.

But what happens when someone tries to correct this man who considers himself a doctoral specialist in early church history?

The following article, sent to me by a friend who took it off a website, *was written by a non-Adventist physician who tried to do just that: correct Samuele Bacchiocchi. The web article was entitled, "Samuele Bacchiocchi Turns Nasty When Confronted by the*

Truth." As you will see, the author of this article is actually ridiculing the entire Adventist denomination for having such an ignorant "church historian" who cannot admit even the slightest error:

Samuele Bacchiocchi Turns Nasty When Confronted by the Truth

Recently, Prof. Samuele Bacchiocchi, a respected scholar of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, contacted me by e-mail and attacked me with personal insults after I had supplied him with certain facts and evidence which he could not refute.

I would like to present the details of this disgusting display of character by the professor for the readers of my website to see. I offered him the opportunity to refute my evidence, and to apologize for the insults, but it would appear that he is not going to apologize, and is not able to defend his church's failed position.

In his response to *Dies Domini*, the encyclical letter of His Holiness Pope John Paul II on the keeping of the Lord's Day, Bacchiocchi claimed:

Moreover . . . "The first day of the week, in the writings of the New Testament, is never called '**Day of the Resurrection.**' **This is a term which made its appearance later.**" **Its usage first appears in the fourth century.**"

When I discussed this with him, he confirmed not only that he believed this, but that he considered this to mean that **the very linking of the 1st/8th day of the week, Sunday, with the concept of the Resurrection of Jesus, was a fourth century phenomenon and did not exist prior to the fourth century, i.e. the year 300 AD.**

In other words, **Bacchiocchi claims that no Christians prior to 300 AD linked Sunday, as a day of the week, with the event of the resurrection.**

I claim that this is a very poorly researched statement and can easily be disproven. Here are several quotations from early Christian writers that refute this claim:

Ignatius of Antioch, A.D. 107:

"Let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's Day as a festival, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all the days of the week."—*Epistle to the Magnesians, chp 9. Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1, pg. 62-63.*

Here it is clear that **Ignatius, long before 300 AD, calls a specific day of the week "resurrection day."** **How can Bacchiocchi miss this?**

The Epistle of Barnabas, A.D. 70-120:

"Wherefore we Christians keep the eighth day for joy, on which also Jesus arose from the dead and when he appeared ascended into heaven."—

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PART TWO OF THREE

Continued from the preceding tract in this series

The Epistle of Barnabas, section 15, A.D. 100, Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1, pg. 147.

[The writer of this article places the letter of Pseudo-Barnabas variously at "A.D. 70-120" and "A.D. 100." The date is probably about A.D. 120.]

Here we see **the author of this epistle** (probably not the Barnabas from the Bible, but nonetheless an early Christian writer) **linking** the 8th day of the week, **the day after the Sabbath** in the weekly cycle, every week, **with the resurrection** of Jesus.

Justin Martyr, 150 AD:

"But Sunday is the day on which we hold our common assembly, because it is the first day of the week and Jesus our saviour on the same day rose from the dead."—*First apology of Justin, Ch 68.*

Here we see **Justin clearly linking the concept of the resurrection to a specific day of the week [Sunday]**—not just an Easter Sunday once a year, but clearly a weekly event.

What was Bacchiocchi's response to this evidence against him?

If there was a rational explanation that Bacchiocchi could supply to show my error, one would expect that he supply it, especially since he was the one who initiated the e-mail discussion by mailing me. On the other hand, **when someone is cornered with evidence that he/she cannot cope with or admit to be true, they often become aggressive and unpleasant.**

Which is exactly what Bacchiocchi did do. He informed me that I should take up activities on my own intellectual level, and he suggested gardening as an option. He did not do so politely either.

I have nothing against gardening, but since I am a medical doctor, I doubt I am intellectually so far beneath the almighty Professor that I could not comprehend the quotes I was providing, or any evidence or argument he could provide to show me where I was wrong. I hardly think that his was a Christian response. **I expect a Christian response to be to show a fellow Christian where his errors are, not to be silenced and told one is on the intellectual level of a gardener.**

I have on several occasions tried to ask the professor for both an apology and for a defense of his claim in the light of this evidence. Not once has Bacchiocchi been courteous or civil; not once has he apologised for his pretty sickening behaviour, and not once has he been able to provide a response to these quotations from the Church Fathers, which I think any reader will

agree proves him wrong.

My response is to interpret this from a psychological viewpoint - if you wound an animal and corner it, it will attack you. **I think that Bacchiocchi was faced with evidence that destroyed his argument, and he could not respond, and attacked with personal insults instead.** He has not yet found the courage to apologize or admit error. This is a natural human characteristic: never admit your error. I hope that by publishing a truthful account of this matter, the professor might be encouraged to submit an apology and rectify the impression he has created by supplying evidence to refute or explain the evidence I provided. At least it will shed some light on the true nature of Adventist scholarship for the readers of my website, and alert them to the fact that Adventist leaders will say anything, true or false, to make their unscriptural position seem valid.

People who wish to contact me can do so via e-mail at adventism@theotokos.co.za

That concludes the above unsigned web article.

— PART FOUR —

"THE BACCHIOCCHI AGENDA"

It was while preparing the previous tract set (*Reply to Bacchiocchi's #90-92 Attack—Part 1-3 [WM-1127-1129]*), that I discovered Bacchiocchi's remarkable undercutting of our entire Sabbath message. However, someone else had earlier encountered the same deceptive tactic.

Last week, a friend sent me a web article, written by a non-Adventist named Brian Hoeck.

Hoeck's position is that Bacchiocchi is pretending to be a faithful Adventist, promoting the seventh-day Sabbath when, in reality, he is a Jesuit spy promoting universal Sunday worship!

Apparently, Hoeck, who is no friend of Adventists, is a defender of the Bible Sabbath. For that reason, he is offended at what Bacchiocchi is trying to do.

Here is the article:

From Sabbath to Sunday, The Bacchiocchi Agenda: Which "Sabbath" Does He Truly Support?

From Sabbath to Sunday, Divine Rest for Human Restlessness, The Sabbath in the New Testament, The Sabbath Under Crossfire: these are some of the many books authored by Samuele Bacchiocchi, the purported Seventh Day Adventist scholar, which have received great accolades from many "Church of God" organiza-

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tions for their apparent defense of the seventh-day Sabbath. **A deeper examination of his books though actually reveals his ecumenical concern—not concern for the Scriptural Sabbath, but for a Sabbath—be it the last or the first day of the week.**

The following quote is from Bacchiocchi, as posted on his website:

“I grew up as a Seventh-day Adventist in Rome, Italy, a stone-throw from the Vatican wall in the days when considerable hostility existed against religious minorities . . .

“These painful experiences instilled within me the desire to know more about which is God’s Holy Day and how should it be observed by Christians today. As a teenager I would have never imagined that the Lord would one day make it possible for me to **research and publish my dissertation at the most prestigious Jesuit University in the world, the Pontifical Gregorian University, founded by Ignatius Loyola himself, over 450 years ago.**

“The idea of attending the Gregoriana was suggested to me by a **beloved Catholic priest, Father Ravasio**, whom I came to know in Ethiopia where I was serving as a missionary . . .

“Truly I can say that though I was accepted as a ‘Separated Brother,’ I was treated as a real Christian brother. I treasure **the pleasant memories of the five years I spent at the Gregoriana. The professor who directed my dissertation, Father Vincenzo Monachino, S.J., is brilliant, godly and open minded.** At first he was reluctant to allow me to investigate the origin of Sundaykeeping, because **he had worked on the same subject for the previous two years with a Jesuit priest, C.S. Mosna, who also wrote his dissertation on the history of Sunday during the first four centuries (*Storia della Domenica* [History of Sunday]).** When he noticed my keen interest **he graciously approved my proposal and spent many hours with me reexamining the Biblical and historical data. It takes a great scholar to be willing to reconsider one’s conclusions. Prof. Monachino was such a scholar whom I will respect for the rest of my life.**

“My dissertation, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, was first published in 1977 by the Pontifical Gregorian University Press with the official Catholic *imprimatur* (approval). Since then it has been reprinted 13 times in English and has been translated in a dozen of languages. **The French translation was done by two Belgian Benedictine monks as a labor of love and published by a Catholic press in Paris.**”

The above information is quite similar to that which Bacchiocchi included in the book itself, on page 5.

“Since Dr. Bacchiocchi seems intent on pushing his books based upon the fact that he has an *imprimatur* on one of them [*From Sabbath to Sunday*], it is important to know what **the word imprimatur means.** Simply stated, it means **that there is**

nothing in the book that is contrary to the teaching of the [Catholic] Church.”—*Ed Faulk, Usenet Catholic Newsgroup message, December 15, 1997.*

Merriam Webster’s dictionary defines *imprimatur* as follows:

“**im*pri*ma*tur** (noun) [New Latin, let it be printed, from *imprimere* to print, from Latin, to imprint, impress] First appeared 1640. (1a) a license to print or publish, esp. by Roman Catholic episcopal authority; (b) **approval of a publication under circumstances of official censorship**; (2a) Sanction, approval. (b) imprint; (c) a mark of approval or distinction.”

One must ask himself, **if this book truly proves and advocates the Seventh Day Sabbath, why would it receive this Catholic *imprimatur*, and yet further, why would Sundaykeeping monks translate his work “as a labor of love” if it disproved or went against what they stand for?** Recall the hatred that the Catholic Church has had for the Seventh Day Sabbath throughout history.

Let us further examine this book:

“How can **the pressing problem of the secularization of the Lord’s day** be resolved?”—*Samuele Bacchiocchi, From Sabbath to Sunday, back cover.*

How can the “secularization” of a secular day (Sunday) be seen as a “pressing problem” that needs be “resolved”—especially by a professing Seventh Day Sabbath observer?

“Should **Sunday** be viewed as the hour of worship rather than the holy day of rest to the Lord?”—*Ibid., p. 303.*

Should it [Sunday] be viewed by anyone, especially one who claims to be a 7th day Sabbatarian, as either one of these?

“**To find the answer to these questions,** Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi spent five years at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, examining the most ancient available documents. The results of this investigation are presented in *From Sabbath to Sunday.*”—*Ibid., back cover.*

Notice carefully the reason for this book: “To find the answer to these questions . . .” Which questions? One of them is “How can the pressing problem of the secularization of the Lord’s day be resolved?”

This fact of seeking a Sabbath basis for Sunday as being the purpose for his research and writing of *From Sabbath to Sunday* is bore out further in the following quote:

“**To accomplish a sound theological reappraisal of Sunday,** it is necessary to investigate its Biblical basis and its historical genesis. On the other hand, the many studies on this topic, though excellent, have not given a fully satisfactory answer because of the lack of consideration of some of those factors which in the Church of the first centuries contributed to the concrete genesis and development of a day of worship different than the Jewish Sab-

bath.”

“On account of this, the new work of Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi is to be welcomed . . .

“We gladly mention that the thesis that Bacchiocchi defends regarding the birth-place of Sunday worship: for him this arose not in the primitive Church of Jerusalem, well-known for its profound attachment to the Jewish religious traditions, but rather in the Church of Rome . . .

“The event of Christ’s resurrection on that day, had naturally significant importance . . .

“The strict scientific orientation of the work does not prevent the author from revealing **his profound religious and ecumenic concern**. Conscious that the history of salvation knows not fractures but continuity, **he [Bacchiocchi] finds in the rediscovery of the religious values of the Biblical Sabbath, a help to restore to the Lord’s Day its ancient sacred character**. This is in reality the exhortation that already in the fourth century the bishops addressed to the believers, namely to spend Sunday not in outings or watching shows, but rather **to sanctify it by assisting at the eucharistic celebration** and by doing acts of mercy (St. Ambrose, Exam. III, 1, 1). Rome, June 29th, 1977, Vincenzo Monachino, S.J., Chairman of Church History Department, Pontifical Gregorian University.”—*From Sabbath to Sunday*, pp. 7-8.

The above statement was by the “brilliant, godly and open-minded” Jesuit which directed Bacchiocchi’s study and writing of this subject.

Some more on this, from Samuele himself:

“**Many well-meaning Christians view Sunday observance as the hour of worship rather than as the holy day of the Lord**. Having fulfilled their worship obligations, many will in good conscience spend the rest of their Sunday time engaged either in making money or in seeking pleasure.”—*Ibid.*, p. 10.

“**Some people, concerned by this widespread profanation of the Lord’s day, are urging for a civil legislation that would outlaw all activities not compatible with the spirit of Sunday**. To make such legislation agreeable even to non-Christians, sometimes appeal is made to the pressing need of preserving natural resources. **One day of total rest for man and machines would help safeguard both our power resources and the precarious environment**. Social or ecological needs, however, while they may encourage resting on Sunday, can hardly induce a worshipful attitude.”—*Ibid.*, p. 10.

As noted above, **Bacchiocchi is one of these very people who are “concerned by this widespread profanation of the Lord’s day.”** He therefore makes these very appeals himself in his book, *Divine Rest for Human Restlessness*, chapter VI, part IV, *The Sabbath as Service to our Habitat*, pp. 204-214 (ecological appeal), and chapter VII *Good News of Divine Rest for Human Restlessness*, pp. 217-226 (social appeal).

“**Might not more hopeful results be expected from educating our Christian communities to understand both the Biblical meaning and experience of God’s ‘holy day’?**”—*From Sabbath to Sunday*, p. 11.

Is this not exactly what the Jesuit Vincenzo Monachino (quoted above) stated was Bacchiocchi’s purpose for this investigation? To provide understanding for how to keep Sunday from being “profaned” by looking into the Scriptural Sabbath, recall: “He [Bacchiocchi] finds in the rediscovery of the religious values of the Biblical Sabbath, a help to restore to the Lord’s Day its ancient sacred character.”

“In introducing our study we posed several vital questions: **What are the Biblical and historical reasons for Sunday-keeping? Can Sunday be regarded as the legitimate replacement of the Sabbath? Can the fourth commandment be rightly invoked to enjoin Sunday observance? Should Sunday be viewed as the hour of worship rather than the holy day of rest to the Lord?** We stated at the outset that to answer these questions, and thereby to formulate valid theological criteria needed to help **solve the pressing problem of the widespread profanation of Sunday**, it is indispensable to ascertain both the Biblical basis and the historical genesis of this festivity.”—*Ibid.*, p. 303.

“Our study has shown (we hope persuasively) that the adoption of Sunday observance in place of the Sabbath did not occur in the primitive Church of Jerusalem by virtue of the authority of Christ or of the Apostles, but rather took place several decades later, seemingly in the Church of Rome, solicited by external circumstances.”—*Ibid.*, p. 309.

“On what ground then can Sunday rest be defended? Mosna finds a ‘fundamental reason’ in the fact that **the Church ‘influenced Constantine’s decision to make Sunday a day of rest for the whole empire, and this undoubtedly in order to give to the Lord’s day a preeminent place above the other days.’** Therefore, Mosna argues that **the Church ‘can claim the honor of having granted man a pause to his work every seven days.’** This explanation harmonizes well with the traditional claim that Sunday observance ‘is purely a creation of the Catholic Church.’ But **if Sunday rest is an ecclesiastical-imperial institution, how can it be enjoined upon Christians as a divine precept?** What valid ground can this provide to enable theologians to reassess the meaning and function of the Lord’s day for Christians today? One can hardly hope to cope with the widespread profanation of the Lord’s day, merely by invoking ecclesiastical authority without providing an adequate theological rationale.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 312-313.

Samuele continues as such:

“**Should we then conclude that Sunday is to be regarded as the hour of worship rather than**

the holy day of rest to the Lord? Apparently it is toward this direction that some Christian churches are moving.”—*Ibid.*, p. 313.

“To say the least, **this interpretation not only reduces the obligation of the Lord’s day to the attendance of a church service**, but it even advocates the possibility of anticipating it in order to accommodate the social and recreational priorities of modern Christians. Does this view of the Lord’s day as the hour of worship reflect correctly the Biblical teaching of the sanctification of the Sabbath, accomplished by renouncing the utilitarian use of its time? Hardly so.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 315-316.

“Does this proposal contribute to solving or to compounding the problems associated with Sunday observance in our time? Does not this provide Christians with a rational justification for spending most of their Sunday time in either making money or in seeking pleasure? **Is this what Sunday observance is all about? To divorce worship from rest, regarding the latter as non-essential to Sunday observance**, it means to misunderstand the meaning of **the Biblical commandment which ordains the consecration not of a weekly hour of worship but of a whole day of interruption of work out of respect for God**. Undoubtedly for some Christians the reduction of Sunday observance to an hour of worship is unacceptable, but our study has shown that both the historical genesis and the theological basis of Sunday observance offer little help to encourage the consecration of the total Sunday time to the Lord.”—*Ibid.*, p. 317.

“Is there a way out of this predicament? The proposal which we are about to submit may at first appear radical to some, but if it were accepted by Christians at large it could indeed revitalize both the worship and the real content of the Lord’s day. Since our study has shown that Sunday observance lacks the Biblical authority and the theological basis necessary to justify the total consecration of its time to the Lord, **we believe that such an objective can be more readily achieved by educating our Christian communities to understand the Biblical and apostolic meaning and obligation of the seventh-day Sabbath**.”—*Ibid.*, p. 318.

Please note that he is not suggesting that all “Christians” begin to keep the seventh-day Sabbath, but rather, that they get educated as to the meaning and obligation of it and apply it to Sunday.

“Sabbath observance in this cosmic age can well be for modern man the fitting expression of a cosmic faith . . . a faith that would treat the Lord’s Day as God’s holy day rather than as a holiday.”—*Ibid.*, p. 321.

Again, the Sabbath observance he is speaking of is NOT to occur on the seventh day, but rather on the “Lord’s Day” (i.e., Sunday).

The following are some “scholars’ ” comments on Samuele’s books. Please, **when you read their words, take notice that they are Catholics:**

“The warning has gone out, **Sunday is in trouble . . . In order to gain a much needed perspective** on this issue, a practical and worthwhile reading of *From Sabbath to Sunday* is needed.”—Thomas G. Simmons, Director, Catholic Divine Worship Apostolate, [book] review, *Modern Liturgy Magazine*.

“*Divine Rest for Human Restlessness* invites every reader to a penetrating and suggestive analysis of **the tradition and significance of Sabbath keeping**.”—Most Reverend Cardinal, Joseph L. Bernardin, Archbishop of Chicago.

Richard Nickels, of Giving and Sharing and the Bible Sabbath Association, gave the following review of Bacchiocchi’s *God’s Festivals in Scripture and History*:

“**More than one intelligent, well-educated Sabbath-keeper has mentioned to me that they think Samuele Bacchiocchi is a Jesuit.** They have presented no proof for this assertion, and as a result, I place such accusations in the category of malicious gossip . . . Nevertheless, there are a number of disturbing tendencies that have come to light with the publication of Bacchiocchi’s books on the Holy Days.

“(1) **He is more of a salesman than a scholar.** The shoddy work on his first book on the Holy Days is ample proof that he rushed to make a commercial deadline rather than carefully doing his research.

“(2) Time and again, **he says that the Bible alone doesn’t tell us much of how to keep the Holy Days, and thus he turns to church tradition.** Although he stops short of saying that church tradition is above the Bible, **by citing and supporting extra-Biblical customs, he elevates these traditions above the Bible.**

“(3) **He lauds and honors Catholic “fathers,”** even well-known enemies of the true faith, such as Origen, Jerome, and Augustine. He acts as if Patrick of Ireland, Columba, Vigilantius Leo, and heroes of the Sabbath-keeping Church of the East did not exist. **I care little what Catholic fathers said, but I would be interested in learning more of what Sabbath-keeping church leaders said** about the Holy Days.

“(4) **He liberally quotes from apocryphal sources, as authoritative guides,** that prescribe

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PART THREE OF THREE

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[dictate] our Christian practices of today, such as his support for a Passover vigil and *agape* feast.

“(5) **At times he seems to be purposely ambiguous, even contradictory.** He sometimes takes stands on several sides of the same issue and rarely speaks plainly.

[Nickels notes many such instances, such as the following, quoting Nickels: “On page 169, Bacchiocchi agrees with Alfred Edersheim, Josephus, and Philo, on the Sivan 6 date for Pentecost. Yet later on, on page 233, he agrees with a Sunday Pentecost. He was either in a hurry to publish his book or he purposely straddled the fence.”]

“(6) **He ignores plain Bible commands, or minimizes them, and instead concentrates on what men say about the Bible.**

“**What is the common denominator of these tendencies of Bacchiocchi? They are traits of the Jesuits! Jesuits believe and practice that the end justifies the means.** The Jesuit-led Council of Trent, the touchstone for Catholic success over Protestantism, upheld the Catholic dogma that tradition is above Scripture.

“**Jesuit techniques include** the eradication of all history about ‘heretics,’ the ascendancy of the Apocrypha and translations such as the Vulgate Bible, based on the corrupt Vaticanus and Sinaiticus texts, supported by Origen and Jerome. The Catholic Church in general, and Jesuits in particular, ignore plain Bible commands so as to uphold their anti-Biblical traditions.

“Rene Fulop-Miller says of the Jesuits, ‘In actual fact, the Jesuit casuists [reasoners about what is right or wrong] deal with two forms of permissible deception: that of ‘amphibology’ and that of *reservatio mentalis*. **‘Amphibology’ is nothing else than the employment of ambiguous terms calculated to mislead the questioner; ‘mental reservation’ consists in answering a question, not with a direct lie, but in such a way that the truth is partly suppressed,** certain words being formulated mentally but not expressed orally’ (cited in *Facts of Faith*, page 281 [by Christian Edwardson]).

“Dr. **Bacchiocchi is so steeped in the study of the Catholic Church early fathers that he cannot help himself from thinking like them.** Truly, you become what you read! . . . I am not accusing him of being a Jesuit. But, **I am warning others to reject Bacchiocchi’s Jesuit tendencies.** After thoughtful consideration, we will not continue to recommend

his books on the Holy Days. **We do, indeed, recommend books even if we do not agree with the author on every point. But the tone of Bacchiocchi’s books on the Holy Days is, in my opinion, Catholic rather than Biblical, and that is something that I will not support.**”—Richard Nickels, *Giving and Sharing newsletter*, review of *Samuele Bacchiocchi’s God’s Festivals in Scripture and History*.

From *Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*:

“**Jesuit** . . . (1) a member of the Roman Catholic Society of Jesus founded by St. Ignatius Loyola in 1534 and devoted to missionary and educational work; (2) one given to intrigue or equivocation.”

“**Intrigue** . . . (1) a secret scheme.”

“**Equivocate** . . . (1) to use equivocal language especially with intent to deceive; (2) to avoid committing oneself in what one says—synonym, see ‘lie.’ ”

“**Equivocal** . . . (1a) subject to two or more interpretations and usually used to mislead or confuse.”

J.I. Rodale, *The Synonym Finder*:

“**Equivocate** . . . double-talk . . . talk out of both sides of one’s mouth.”

William Lutz, *Double-Speak*:

“Double-speak is not a slip of the tongue, or language used out of ignorance, but is instead a very conscious use of language as a weapon or tool by those in power to achieve their ends at our expense.”—p. xii.

“Double-speak enables speaker and listener, writer and reader, to hold two opposing ideas in their minds at the same time and believe in both of them.”—p. 9.

“Andrews University, the Seventh-Day Adventist world headquarters where Samuele Bacchiocchi is a professor, has been so heavily infiltrated with ecumenical theologians that its yearbook has used illustrations of nuns, priests, and people giving the papal sign.”—John Osborne and Bob Trefz (*Independent Seventh-day Adventists*), *Jesuit Agenda for the Seventh-day Adventist Church*, video tape, 1992.

The above cited SDA minister, Bob Trefz, reportedly wrote a letter to a Church of God member which stated:

“I know Bacchiocchi. He is doing the very work that one would expect from a Jesuit. Of course he was trained at the highest Jesuit University in the world . . . Bacchiocchi is best friends with the leaders of the Lord’s Day Alliance—the premier organization pushing for a National Sunday Law. Bacchiocchi arranged for the Lord’s Day Alliance to come to

Andrews University where the SDA theological seminary is located. We believe he is pushing the Jesuit Agenda.”

Bacchiocchi actually had the head of the Lord’s Day Alliance, Dr. James P. Wesberry, write the foreword to his book, *Rest For Human Restlessness*.

This man, Samuele Bacchiocchi, is supported by many “Church of God” organizations and defended by (including against allegations that he is a Jesuit) Ron Dart of Christian Educational Ministries. You have just read the “fruits” of Bacchiocchi, whom Ron refers to as “one of the strongest advocates of sincere Sabbath observance in the world.” (*Understanding Deception, point 6, Ron Dart*). Do you agree with him? Just which “sabbath” is being advocated? email: [Brian Hoeck](mailto:Brian.Hoeck)

That concludes this lengthy article by a non-Adventist, who apparently is a faithful Sabbathkeeper. Hoeck is deeply upset with Bacchiocchi’s duplicity.

Since 1977, Bacchiocchi has been urging that everyone in the nation needs a weekly rest day. His promotion of Sunday as the ideal day is based, by his own statements, on the historical change by the papacy—and—on the Biblical evidences of the Sabbath.

Bacchiocchi thus takes what the Bible says about sanctifying the Bible Sabbath—and applies it to Sundaykeeping.

By doing this, he is preparing the way for a government-mandated National Sunday Law.

Significantly, that part of Bacchiocchi’s message, which attempts to apply Bible passages about Sabbath-keeping to Sunday worship, is almost identical with the Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II, which said almost exactly what Bacchiocchi said—plus taking that next step and calling on all nations to enact National Sunday Laws!

Because it expresses almost exactly the quotations you just read from Bacchiocchi’s writings, the remainder of this study consists of portions of our 16-page report on that Apostolic Letter (*Pope John Paul II Calls for National Sunday Laws [WM-843-846]*).

— PART FIVE —

JOHN PAUL II’S APOSTOLIC LETTER

On May 31, 1998, on the occasion of the Solemnity of Pentecost in St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, Pope John Paul II issued an Apostolic Letter, entitled *Dies Domini* [The Lord’s Day], after the two words which open the papal statement.

In this official decree from the Vatican, the pope declared that the nations should enact National Sunday Laws.

On pages 22 to 23 (sections 64 to 67), of the 37-page papal letter, will be found a call for secular governments to enact—and strictly enforce—laws which will guarantee that all their citizens will rest on Sundays, so church worship services can be

more easily attended. *Here is the heart of this very significant papal edict:*

AS WE PREPARE FOR THE THIRD MILLENNIUM, LET US RECALL TO MIND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SUN DAY. I WANT TO ENCOURAGE THE EFFORTS OF THE BISHOPS IN PROMOTING IT.

“The Lord’s Day—as **Sunday** was called from Apostolic times—**has always been accorded special attention in the history of the Church.**”—*Page 1, section 1.*

“**The fundamental importance of Sunday has been recognized through two thousand years of history and was emphatically restated by the Second Vatican Council.**”—*Page 2, section 3.*

“**The coming of the Third Millennium, which calls believers to reflect upon the course of history in the light of Christ, also invites them to rediscover with new intensity the meaning of Sunday: its ‘mystery,’ its celebration, its significance for Christian and human life.**”—*Page 2, section 3.*

“I note with pleasure that **in the years since the [Vatican II] Council this important theme [of strengthening Sunday sacredness] has prompted not only many interventions by you, dear Brother Bishops, as teachers of the faith, but also different pastoral strategies which—with the support of your clergy—you have developed either individually or jointly.** On the threshold of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, **it has been my wish to offer you this Apostolic Letter in order to support your pastoral efforts in this vital area.**”—*Page 2, section 3.*

“**I reflect with you on the meaning of Sunday and underline the reasons for living Sunday as truly ‘the Lord’s Day,’ also in the changing circumstances of our own times.**”—*Page 2, section 3.*

WE MUST RETURN TO THE PATTERNS OF THE PAST: SUNDAY ENFORCEMENT IS AGAIN NEEDED.

“**Until quite recently, it was easier in traditionally Christian countries to keep Sunday holy because it was an almost universal practice and because, even in the organization of civil society, Sunday rest was considered a fixed part of the work schedule.** Today, however, even in those countries which **give legal sanction** to the festive character of Sunday, changes in socioeconomic conditions have often led to the profound modifications of social behavior and hence of the character of Sunday. The custom of the ‘weekend’ has become more widespread, a weekly period of respite, spent perhaps far from home.”—*Page 2, section 4.*

“Given this array of new situations and the questions which they prompt, **it seems more necessary than ever to recover the deep doctrinal foundations underlying the Church’s precept, so that the abiding value of Sunday in the Christian life will be clear to all the faithful. In doing this, we follow in the footsteps of the age-old tradition of**

the Church, powerfully restated by the Second Vatican Council in its teaching that on Sunday, 'Christian believers should come together . . . [to receive the mass, etc.]'—*Page 3, section 6.*

KEEPING SUNDAY HOLY IS A MORAL DUTY.

"The duty to keep Sunday holy, especially by sharing in the Eucharist and by relaxing in a spirit of Christian joy and fraternity, is easily understood if we consider the many different aspects of this day **upon which the present Letter will focus our attention.**"—*Page 3, section 7.*

"I would strongly urge everyone to rediscover Sunday."—*Page 3, section 7.*

"The Sabbath precept, which in the first Covenant prepares for the Sunday of the new and eternal Covenant, **is therefore rooted in the depths of God's plan.** This is why, unlike many other precepts, **it is set** not within the context of strictly cultic stipulations but within the Decalogue, the 'ten words' **which represent the very pillars of the moral life** inscribed on the human heart. **In setting this commandment within the context of the basic structure of ethics, Israel and then the Church declare that they consider it not just a matter of community religious discipline but a defining and indelible expression of our relationship with God,** announced and expounded by biblical revelation. **This is the perspective within which Christians need to rediscover this precept today.**"—*Pages 5-6, section 13.*

"Wise pastoral intuition suggested to the Church the christianization of the notion of Sunday as 'the day of the sun,' which was the Roman name for the day and which is retained in some modern languages. This was in order to draw the faithful away from the seduction of cults which worshipped the sun, and to direct the celebration of the day to Christ."—*Page 10, section 27.*

"It is clear then why, even in our own difficult times, the identity of this day must be protected and above all must be lived in all its depth."—*Page 11, section 30.*

IN FORMER TIMES, SUNDAY OBSERVANCE WAS REQUIRED BY LAW. WE NEED TO RETURN TO THAT PRACTICE AS WE FACE INTO THE THIRD MILLENNIUM.

"What began as a spontaneous practice later became a juridically sanctioned norm [i.e., National Sunday laws were enacted and enforced]. The Lord's Day has structured the history of the Church through two thousand years: how could we think that it will not continue to shape her future?"—*Page 11, section 30.*

"Given its many meanings and aspects, and its link to the very foundations of the faith, **the celebration of the Christian Sunday remains, on the threshold of the Third Millennium, an indispensable element of our Christian identity.**"—*Page 11, section 30.*

THE CHURCH MUST MAKE SURE IT IS REQUIRED TODAY, AS IN EARLIER TIMES.

"Even if in the earliest times it was not judged necessary to be prescriptive, the Church has not ceased to confirm this obligation of conscience [the urgency of requiring obedience to it], which rises from the inner need felt so strongly by Christians of the first centuries. **It was only later, faced with the half-heartedness or negligence of some, that the Church had to make explicit the duty to attend Sunday Mass; more often than not, this was done in the form of exhortation, but at times the Church had to resort to specific canonical precepts . . .** These decrees of local Councils led to a universal practice, the obligatory character of which was taken as something quite normal."—*Page 17, section 47.*

"The Code of Canon Law of 1917 for the first time gathered this tradition into a universal law. **The present Code reiterates this, saying that 'on Sundays and the other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to attend Mass.' This legislation has normally been understood as entailing a grave obligation:** This is the teaching of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and it is easy to understand why if we keep in mind how vital Sunday is for the Christian life."—*Page 17, section 47.*

"For several centuries, Christians observed Sunday simply as a day of worship, without being able to give it the specific meaning of the Sabbath rest. **Only in the fourth century did the civil law of the Roman Empire recognize the weekly recurrence, determining that on 'the day of the sun' the judges, the people of the cities and various trade corporations would not work. Christians rejoiced to see thus removed the obstacles which until then had sometimes made observance of the Lord's Day heroic [difficult]. They could now devote themselves to prayer in common without hinderance.**

"It would therefore be wrong to see in this legislation of the rhythm of the week a mere historical circumstance with no special significance for the Church and which she could simply set aside. Even after the fall of the Empire, the Councils did not cease to insist upon the arrangements regarding Sunday rest. In countries where Christians are in the minority and where the festive days of the calendar do not coincide with Sunday, it is still Sunday which remains the Lord's Day, the day on which the faithful come together for the Eucharistic assembly. But this involves real sacrifices. For Christians it is not normal that Sunday, the day of joyful celebration, should not be a day of rest, it is difficult for them to keep Sunday holy if they do not have enough free time.

EVEN NON-CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO OBSERVE THIS DAY OF REST.

"By contrast **the link between the Lord's Day**

and the day of rest in civil society has a meaning and importance which go beyond the distinctly Christian point of view. [The Sunday rest is needed by everyone.] **The alternation between work and rest, built into human nature, is willed by God Himself,** as appears in the creation story in the Book of Genesis (*cf.* 2:2-3; Ex. 20:8-11): rest is something "sacred," because it is man's way of withdrawing from the sometimes excessive demanding cycle of earthly tasks in order to review his awareness that everything is the work of God."—Page 22, section 65.

"Finally, it should not be forgotten that **even in our own day** work is very oppressive for many people, either because of miserable working conditions and long hours—especially in the poorer regions of the world—or because of the persistence in economically more developed societies of too many cases of injustice and exploitation of man by man. [Everyone needs to stop work once a week.] **When through the centuries, she has made laws concerning Sunday rest, the Church has had in mind above all the work of servants and workers,** certainly not because this work was any less worthy when compared to the spiritual requirements of Sunday observance, but rather because it needed **greater regulation to lighten its burden and thus enable everyone to keep the Lord's Day holy.** In this matter, my predecessor Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* spoke of **Sunday rest as a worker's right which the State must guarantee.**"—Page 23, section 66.

AS WE NEAR THE YEAR 2000, WE MUST WORK TO REINSTITUTE THIS ENFORCEMENT.

"Therefore, also **in the particular circumstances of our own time, Christians will naturally strive to ensure that civil legislation respects their duty to keep Sunday holy.** In any case, they are obliged in conscience to arrange their Sunday rest in a way which allows them to take part in the Eucharist, refraining from work and activities which are incompatible with the sanctification of the Lord's Day, with its characteristic joy and necessary rest for spirit and body."—Page 23, section 67.

"Dear Brothers and Sisters, **the imminence of the Jubilee invites us to a deeper spiritual and pastoral commitment. Indeed, this is its true purpose. In the Jubilee year, much will be done to give it the particular stamp demanded by the end of the second Millennium** and the beginning of the Third since the Incarnation of the Word of God. But this year and this special time will pass, as we look to other jubilees and other solemn events. As the weekly 'solemnity,' however, **Sunday will continue to shape the time of the Church's pilgrimage,** un-

til that Sunday which will know no evening."—Page 29, section 87.

AS WE LABOR TIRELESSLY, OUR EFFORTS WILL HELP ALL MANKIND.

"Therefore, **dear Brother Bishops and Priests, I urge you to work tirelessly** with the faithful to ensure that the value of this sacred day is understood and lived ever more deeply. **This will bear rich fruit in Christian communities, and will not fail to have a positive influence on civil society as a whole.**

"In coming to know the Church, which every Sunday joyfully celebrates the mystery from which she draws her life, may the men and women of the Third Millennium come to know the Risen Christ. And constantly renewed by the weekly commemoration of Easter, may Christ's disciples be ever more credible in proclaiming the Gospel of salvation and ever more effective in building the civilization of love.

"My blessing to you all!

"From the Vatican, on 31 May, the Solemnity of Pentecost, in the year 1998, the twentieth of my Pontificate."—Page 29, section 87.

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"In his letter, the pope goes on to say a violator should be 'punished as a heretic,' said McNally, who read an unofficial English translation of the letter on a Vatican Website."—*Detroit News, Tuesday, July 7, 1998 [emphasis ours].*