

Bulla contra errores Martini Lutheri et sequacium

*(Bull against the errors of
Martin Luther and his followers)*

issued June 15, 1520 by Pope Leo X



Arise, O Lord, and judge your own cause. Remember your reproaches to those who are filled with foolishness all through the day. Listen to our prayers, for a fox has invaded your vineyard...a wild boar from the forest seeks to destroy it and every wild beast feeds upon it.

Rise, Peter, and fulfill this pastoral office divinely entrusted to you as mentioned above. Give heed to the cause of the holy Roman Church, mother of all churches and teacher of the faith...Rise Paul, also. Let all this holy Church of God, I say, arise, and with the blessed apostles intercede with almighty God to purge the errors of His sheep, to banish all heresies from the lands of the faithful, and be pleased to maintain the peace and unity of His holy Church.

Their talkativeness, unsupported by the authority of the Scriptures...would not be valid unless they appeared to support their perverse doctrine even with divine testimonies however badly interpreted. From their sight fear of God has now passed. These errors have...been revived and recently propagated among the more frivolous and the illustrious German nation. Germans have always defended the Catholic Church (but no more).

Since we were placed in leadership by God's favor, we can under no circumstances tolerate or overlook this poison to the Christian religion. Some of these errors are to be addressed, as follows:

2. To say a baptized child still has sin is to call Paul and Jesus a liar
10. Sins are not forgiven to anyone, unless when the priest forgives them he believes they are forgiven...
21. Indulgences are necessary for public crimes, and are given only to the harsh and impatient.
24. Christians must be taught to cherish excommunications rather than to fear them.
33. That heretics be burned is against the will of the Spirit.
37. I admit, Purgatory cannot be proved from Sacred Scripture which is in the canon.
38. The souls in purgatory are not sure of their salvation, at least not all...
40. Souls freed from purgatory by work of the living aren't as happy as if they had made it out by themselves

We also command that Martin Luther stops from all preaching and steps down from the office of preacher...

1) What analogy does Pope Leo X use to describe Luther's infiltration? _____

2) Who does the pope call upon for help? _____

3) According to Leo, how does a person ensure that his sins are forgiven? _____

4) Under what circumstances does the pope believe indulgences are necessary? _____

5) Why do you suppose the pope admits that references to purgatory are not found in the Bible (point 37)? _____

6) Even though he admits that purgatory is not Biblical, what statements does Leo make about the place? _____

7) What is the final order, concerning Martin Luther? _____