

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION to *AGAINST*

The title of a “new” *Confession*<sup>1</sup> by Luther, which appeared in the spring of 1530, contained an unusually specific phrase: “composed for the upcoming diet,” referring to the Diet of Augsburg, mandated for June 1530 by Emperor Charles V. This was the gathering at which the German princes, principalities, and imperial cities would have to explain and defend the changes in religious teaching and observances occurring within their spheres of jurisdiction, a gathering that could decide on *either* the recognition *or* the continued condemnation of the reformers. A document, penned by the most popular German author of the time, specifically aimed at influencing the participants of the upcoming diet, necessitated swift, clear, and compelling action by defenders of the Catholic side. This pamphlet, *Against Martin Luther's Confession, newly composed for the Diet of Augsburg in Seventeen Articles, Interpreted Succinctly and in a Christian Manner* (hereafter, *Against*) was the result.

This pamphlet draws together an intriguingly diverse number of major players and circumstances that had converged by the end of the first decade of the “Age of Religious Rupture” (the German designation for the Reformation, “Zeitalter der religioesen Spaltung”): political leaders such as: Emperor Charles V; Electors Albrecht and Joachim; Protestant and Catholic theologians such as Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, Wimpina, and Redorffer; other reformers such as the Anabaptists; and not least, the intense war of words supported and carried on by the nascent German printing industry.<sup>2</sup>

The pamphlet also deals with both the theological and political maneuverings around the Diet of Augsburg as well as the diet's results. For both Luther's *Confession* and the Catholics' *Against* would serve as drafts for two of the crucial ensuing documents: the Lutheran *Confessio Augustana* or *Augsburg Confession* (a foundational statement of belief for the Lutheran Church) and the Catholic *Confutatio Augustana* or refutation of the Augsburg Confession.<sup>3</sup> As such, the

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<sup>1</sup> Adopting the language of Wimpina's *Against Martin Luther's Confession, newly composed for the Diet of Augsburg in Seventeen Articles, Interpreted Succinctly and in a Christian Manner*, the designation “Confession” will be used to refer to the Schwabach Articles.

<sup>2</sup> For an detailed study of the role of printing in Luther's life and the whole Reformation see Andrew Pettegree, *Brand Luther, 1517, Printing, and the Making of the Reformation* (New York: Penguin Books, 2015).

<sup>3</sup> See Vinzenz Pfnür, “Confutation,” *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation* (1996) 1:408-10.

introduction to this pamphlet requires attention to its political background in addition to its theological content.

### ***Against* as Detailed Response to Luther's *Confession***

*Against* is a Catholic reaction to a supposed Luther-authored *Confession*. That publication, however, was actually the Schwabach Articles, which had been composed in the autumn of 1529 (but not published) to satisfy the Lutheran reformers' two-fold need for an articulation of a common belief. Although the title ascribed authorship to Luther, he did not claim it as his, stating that he had "merely helped" to draft it.<sup>4</sup>

Because *Against* is integrally linked to its "target" (i.e., the *Confession*) by responding precisely and in turn to each of its seventeen points, the Lutheran document dictates both the Catholic document's structure and its content. Therefore, this introduction must also address the *Confession* in some detail, and so the translation of the Catholics' pamphlet prefaces each of its seventeen articles with a brief paraphrase of those points, drawn from a modern translation of the Schwabach Articles.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Political and Theological Situation of the *Confession***

The Schwabach Articles were necessitated *theologically* by the threat to Wittenberg posed by Zwingli and his Swiss followers, especially by their differing interpretations of the Lord's Supper, as well as by the on-going dispute with the Catholic Church. It was necessitated *politically* by the possibility of imperial armed action against the fragmented reformed German political territories and factions. There was urgency in the matter, since Charles had mandated that a diet meet in June 1530 at which the German princes and imperial cities would have to explain and defend the changes in religious teaching and observances occurring within their spheres of jurisdiction.

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<sup>4</sup> "Vorbemerkung," *Flugschriften gegen die Reformation (1525-1530)*, ed. Adolf Laube and Ulman Weiss (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000) 1:1247.

<sup>5</sup> Translated by William R. Russell in *Sources and Contents of the Book of Concord* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2001), 83-87.

In response to Charles' insistence at the April 1529 Diet of Speyer that the princely and municipal adherents of Luther's reform comply with the Edict of Worms of 1521 (prohibiting Lutheran teaching and reform throughout the Holy Roman Empire), the princes supporting the reform drew up a declaration of faith (Latin, *protestatio*). A move by Landgrave Philip of Hesse—a long with the court of electoral Saxony and the cities of Ulm, Strassburg, and Nuremberg—to form a defensive alliance against the emperor was opposed by Luther and Melanchthon, unless such a federation's members would agree on a common confession of faith, one that would address above all the conflict between Zwingli's and Luther's interpretations of the Lord's Supper.

After Elector John of Saxony (John the Steadfast) and Margrave George of Brandenburg-Ansbach had supported this position, in October 1529 a set of 17 articles, drafted in late summer by Wittenberg theologians, was presented to representatives of the proposed confederation. This document was the Schwabach Articles. It became foundational for further Lutheran efforts at articulations of their belief, serving the Wittenbergers in the discussion with Zwingli and the Swiss Cantons at the Colloquy of Marburg in October 1-4, 1529.<sup>6</sup> They were also used in the ongoing need for a united front, when in late winter 1530 the emperor called for the imperial estates to gather in Augsburg in late spring to explain the changes they were making in their churches. Elector John commissioned his theologians to draft an answer for that diet. The Torgau Articles, drawing also on the two former drafts, was the result.<sup>7</sup> All three of these efforts would then serve Melanchthon in his preparation of the *Augsburg Confession*, which would in turn serve as the foundational definition of Lutheranism. Because Melanchthon's aim in Wittenberg's presentation to the diet was to address the *catholicity* of the reformers' teachings as well as the abuses of the Catholic Church, Luther's typical polemical tone is largely absent.

### **The Origin of *Against***

Just as the *Confession* is linked to the Lutherans' preparation for the Diet of Augsburg, its Catholic response is as well, and is just as theologically and politically intertwined. Although

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<sup>6</sup> "The Marburg Articles," translated by William R. Russell, in *Sources and Contents of the Book of Concord*, pp. 88-92.

<sup>7</sup> Translated by William R. Russell, in *Sources and Contents of the Book of Concord*, pp. 93-104.

ostensibly addressed to one of the most powerful and influential of the Catholic princes, Elector Joachim I Nestor of Brandenburg, the document was clearly commissioned by him. It was crafted swiftly by a quartet of Joachim's seasoned and talented theologians, who had all been deeply involved in the struggle with Luther's ideas from their very beginning.<sup>8</sup> Published in early summer 1530, it caught the public's attention, as had the *Confession*, and it also was quickly reprinted.

The intense interconnections between actors and circumstances referred to above are quite apparent in this document. Elector Joachim was the brother of none other than Elector Prince-Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz, whose arrangement with Rome for Johann Tetzel's extravagant preaching of the St. Peter's indulgence had sparked Luther's posting of his Ninety-Five Theses. Not surprisingly, Joachim became a fierce defender of Roman Catholic orthodoxy. But he was also a patron of learning, having founded in 1506 the Viadrina University of Frankfurt-on-the-Oder, the first principle university of the Margraviate of Brandenburg. And he had recruited as its first rector the prominent Dominican theologian Konrad Wimpina. This was the same Wimpina who had then drafted the Dominicans' response to Luther's Ninety-Five Theses and which Johann Tetzel, Wimpina's doctoral student, had delivered at the Frankfurt Dominicans' convocation in January 1518!<sup>9</sup>

The speedy refutation of the *Confession* was also dictated theologically and politically by the need to advise all participants in the upcoming diet, but especially to warn Elector Joachim (who would be voting for or against the Lutheran position) not to be misled by Lutheran attempts to appear unthreatening by seeming to still be "Catholic."<sup>10</sup>

### **The Tenor of *Against***

In keeping both with the Lutheran *Confession's* interest in the possibility of compromise and with Wimpina's usual, moderate mode of argumentation, *Against* is itself refreshingly non-polemical in tone. Nevertheless, the contentious topics were still discernible, lurking beneath the

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. notes 2-5 in the translation of Wimpina's pamphlet for information on *Against's* four authors.

<sup>9</sup> Tetzel continued to engage Luther in print, as documented in another work available in the Pitts Theology Library's holdings: *Johann Tetzel's Rebuttal Against Luther's Sermon on Indulgences and Grace*, translation and introduction by Dewey Weiss Kramer (Atlanta: Pitts Theology Library, 2012).

<sup>10</sup> *Flugschriften gegen die Reformation (1525-1530)*, 1246.

surface in both works. The Lutheran *Confession* achieved a conciliatory tone by omitting important ideas that the reformers proclaimed elsewhere but including ideas that had been looked upon favorably by “the other side” (as Luther refers to his Catholic opponent in Article V). Wimpina and his team recognized the dangers posed by the *Confession*—its reluctance to be too critical of traditional beliefs and its apparent affirmation of Catholic truths—and responded by rejecting *any* positive evaluation of the new teaching. The Elector Joachim shared these sentiments and so formed his commission. The lengthy introduction of the *Against* articulates the main reason for dismissing the positive aspects of the *Confession*: the man Martin Luther himself. His actions and words and their consequences showed him to be an arch-heretic and provoker of unrest that must discourage anyone from taking anything he said seriously. Nonetheless, Joachim’s theologians addressed the *Confession*’s points skillfully, revealing the dangers to the old faith within seemingly positive statements.

The publicity surrounding Luther’s *Confession* as well as the Catholics’ refutation itself caused Luther to publish a refutation of the refutation with a short, sharp “Vorrede” or preface in which he also clarified the circumstances of his supposed Confession. This publication, too, was reprinted often.<sup>11</sup>

In considering a few examples of the skillful argumentation found in this commentary on the Lutheran *Confession*, the following table of contents will prove helpful.

## Table of Contents

This brief table of contents of the Lutheran *Confession* and of the Catholic *Against* notes their agreement/disagreement and the new points in *Against*. The numbers refer to the number of scriptural proof texts employed by *Confession* and *Against*.

<u>Article</u>	<u>(Dis)Agree</u>	<u>Against’s Emendations</u>	<u>Scriptural Texts</u>
I Paraphrase of Creed, Trinity	agree		2-0
II Creed: Son, past heresies	agree		3-0
III Jesus, His salvific suffering	agree		2-0
IV Original sin, Christ’s redemptive suffering	some agreement		2-4
V Belief in Christ, sole path to salvation	some agreement	Works are necessary	3-10
VI Faith is gift, impossible for man alone	partial agreement	Faith empowered by love	0-2
VII Faith via preached Gospel, “no other path”	partial agreement	Faith poured out in baptism	0-1

<sup>11</sup> WA a30 III, p. 18.

VIII	Baptism and Eucharist	agree, disagree	There are seven sacraments	0-0
IX	Baptism as sacrament	agree		4-1
X	Eucharist, truly Christ's Body and Blood	agree	Christ wholly present in each species	1-0
XI	Confession valuable, not to be compelled	agree on value	Church has authority to compel	0-5
XII	Nature of Church	some agreement	Much expanded	1-6
XIII	Last Judgment submission thereto	agree		0-2
XIV	Legitimacy of political authority	agree	The same holds for church authority	2-6
XV	Condemns Mass, monasticism, celibacy as works; Christ alone is the way	disagree	Extensive scriptural defense of same	1-6
XVI	Abolish Mass; distribute Eucharist under both species	disagree	Mass exists till Christ comes; Christ wholly present in each species	0-1
XVII	Liturgies must be based on the Word; must not cause unrest	disagree	New liturgies disturb communal peace	0-1

### ***Against's* Tactics: Biblical Proof Texts**

A glance at this table shows a surprisingly high degree of agreement in the beliefs articulated in *Confession* and *Against*, a situation that could exercise a dangerous influence on the diet's Catholic participants. It was this realization that had prompted Elector Joachim's speedy rejoinder. Perhaps even more importantly, the table also reveals the primary method employed by the Catholic authors of *Against*: extensive scriptural proof texts, thereby employing the power of Luther's own *sola scriptura* to confront and oppose his innovations.

This extensive use of scripture as a critical tool by the *Against* theologians also highlights a major point of contention between the Catholic Church and the reformers: the nature/question of authority. Both Catholics and reformers were vitally concerned with the authority for religious truth necessary for salvation. The Catholic Church held that scripture *and* tradition (the guidance by the Holy Spirit expressed and exercised by the church as custodian of oral and written scripture) were the necessary way. Luther, on the contrary, discovered this truth solely in the written scripture, *sola scriptura*, and in the belief in Jesus Christ proclaimed and expressed through that scripture. Thus, his declaration that belief in Christ is the "sole path" to salvation, and there is "no other path" to faith except through the preached scripture (gospel). These concerns appear overtly in Articles V, VI, VII, and beneath the surface elsewhere.

### **Liturgy as Problem**

But already in the earliest years of the reform, questions of liturgical practice (linked with the validity of "works") became increasingly divisive. And the table of contents also reveals such

dissentation with its citation numbers. Agreement is greatest on *doctrinal* matters, while disagreement occurs more in *liturgical/ecclesial* practices. This observation is related to Emperor Charles' mandate for the Diet of Augsburg: that the German political authorities explain and defend the changes in church practice effected in their spheres of jurisdiction.<sup>12</sup> Accordingly, the following commentary on the argumentational method of *Against* will focus on those two areas: 1) *Against's* use of biblical proof texts and 2) *Against's* assertion of tradition as authoritative.

### ***Against's* Use of Biblical Proof Texts**

The first three articles of *Confession* require no defense by the authors of *Against*, since Luther simply paraphrases articles of the Athanasian Creed<sup>13</sup> and cites five non-problematic biblical texts needing no commentary by the Catholics. If one excludes these five texts, the remaining ratio of biblical citations in *Confession* and *Against* is 13 to 45.<sup>14</sup> Clearly these theologians realize the importance of showing both their recognition of scripture as authority for discerning the true way to salvation as well as demonstrating the church's knowledge of and ability to use scripture.

### **Examples**

Article V (belief in Christ as sole path) is a good example of their skillful use of scripture and one that shows the most extreme concentration of proof texts of any of the articles: against Luther's three texts, it marshals ten. This is necessary, because it brings up the volatile major disagreement on the role of human works *and* faith against Luther's *sola fide*—"belief in the Son of God" as the "sole path" to righteousness. Similar statements are found in Luther's Articles VII ("no other path" to faith except the "preached Gospel") and XV ("Christ alone is the way").

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<sup>12</sup> In fact, it was the divergence in liturgical practices/beliefs that occasioned the emperor's call for the Diet of Augsburg and even threatened to disrupt the whole gathering: cf. "Die Confutatio der Confessio Augustana vom 3. August 1530", *Corpus Catholicorum: Werke Katholischer Schriftsteller im Zeitalter der Glaubenspatung*, Vol 33, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Erwin Iserloh, (Muenster Westfalen: Aschendorffsche Buchdruckerei, 1982); on the Corpus Christi procession opening the diet, pp 12-13.

<sup>13</sup> See note 9 in *Against* regarding the Athanasian Creed.

<sup>14</sup> Or 13 to 39. Since Article XIV applies the six citations used in Article XII to Article XIV, without actually restating them.

The piling up of passages is itself impressive and calculated to overwhelm the reader with “proofs.” It also allows the authors to “re-quote” Luther’s striking “*sola*” declarations with a whole series of equally striking “*alone*” formulations: “. . . it follows that there is *not only* the *one single* way to redemption from sin and death . . .” and “*no* passage of scripture extols faith *alone* in such a way that it *alone* is salvific.” [italics added]

A further effective use of scripture in Article V is its citation of the same scriptural passage cited by Luther in his *Confession*: Romans 10:10 and John 3:15-16. Luther’s quotation of Roman 10:10 concentrates attention on “belief” as the way to salvation, while Wimpina stresses “heart” and/or “love.” The Catholic piece then continues with John 3:15-16, amending *Confession*’s reliance on 3:16 and “belief” to God’s “love.” This emphasis on “love”—God’s for humankind and humans’ for each other—is an ongoing strain, serving to stress love both as a basic teaching of Christ and also serving as a unifying device for demonstrating the Catholic Church’s reliance on the authority of scripture for church regulations and practices.

The focus on love continues in Article VI (faith is poured out in baptism, formed and adorned with divine love) but is also referred to in Articles IX, X (Eucharist: divine love in the sacrament increases and nourishes faith), and XII (ceremonies are signs of Christian love and faith), concluding with Paul’s praise of love in 1 Corinthians 13:13.

The citing of identical biblical texts can “prove” slightly divergent beliefs or practices, but it serves a more crucial defensive purpose as well. It might well be intended by the authors of *Against* to question the validity or the wisdom of relying solely on scripture, on “the preached Gospel” as the guide to salvation. Their references to Luther’s “misleading” use of 1 Timothy to make his points in Article XV (condemnation of mass, monasticism, etc.) and elsewhere are further instances of such subtle undermining of the reformers’ agenda.

### **Authority**

Crucial to the Catholic position was a cogent presentation of tradition (beliefs developed, maintained, and observed by oral tradition, practices, church fathers, councils, etc.) as an equally authoritative guide for humankind’s path to salvation. The absence in both tracts of any overt reference to the papacy—as the most volatile symbol of tradition—was a wise move for both

parties.<sup>15</sup> But *Against* mounts an ongoing defense, sometimes merely suggested, elsewhere heavily proof texted. Luther has offered them an opening with his reliance on the Athanasian Creed, tacit recognition of the existence and validity of the authority of church fathers and councils.<sup>16</sup> Already in Article II, while agreeing with Luther's Article II, they observe that the Athanasian Creed's condemnation and abolition of Christological heresies was the work of basic elements of tradition, having "all been condemned and extinguished through God's help and the judgment of church fathers in many councils."

A second subtle defense appears in Article IV (on original sin). The authors agree with Luther on its nature as "a real sin" that condemns all persons to death. But where the *Confession* presents Christ's suffering alone (anticipating Article V's "sole path," VII's "no other path," and XV's "Christ alone") as the means of our restoration, *Against* amends that statement by enclosing it in the context of a sacrament: Christ "through his bitter suffering, at work in the sacrament of holy baptism, washes away all sins." "Sacrament" implies the practice and authority of the institutional church. Further, *Against* implies a corrected interpretation of Luther's own scriptural proof texts (Psalm 51:7 and Roman 5:6-11).

### **The Problem of the Secular Realm**

As mentioned above (p. 5), the degree of disagreement increases as the articles touch less upon strictly theological issues and turn to questions of ecclesial/liturgical and political matters, for it was precisely the intense interconnection between the spiritual and the secular realms that continued to fuel the course of the Reformation. Article XI (on coerced confession), XV (mass, monasticism, celibacy as works), XVI (liturgical practice), and XIV (legitimacy of political realm) demonstrate such argumentation. Article XIV (submission to political authority) argues convincingly for the legitimacy of the church's claim for authority in spiritual and secular realms by simply affirming and quoting Luther's own assertion of the legitimate and necessary role of the political authority in Christian life. For support they refer the reader back to the copious proof texts of Article XII (on one holy church and that article's ratio of 1-6). They also stress the need for order by reiterating 1 Corinthians 14:40: "so that everything proceeds in good and

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<sup>15</sup> Melancthon's conciliating influence is clearly evident in such omissions in *Confession*.

<sup>16</sup> Glen S. Sunshine, *A Brief Introduction to the Reformation* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2017), 29.

decent order,” which also echoes Luther’s definition of the true church in *Confession* as: “where the Gospel is preached and the sacrament rightly used,” and with which text the authors conclude their whole work in Article XVII: “All things among you should be maintained decently and in order.”

With a rhetorical flourish, Article VIII (number of sacraments) dispenses with *all* proof texts, because the seven sacraments have been “so clearly and exhaustively supported by holy scripture” as to make further discussion absurd. Article XI on compelled confession is a major defense of ecclesial authority, and though also rich in scriptural proof texts, it calls out as prime witness Luther’s esteemed Augustine.

As stated earlier, both Luther’s *Confession* and Wimpina’s and his associates’ *Against* maintain a tone of moderation, lapsing into the polemical mode in just a few instances. *Against* does so in its description of Luther in the long introductory address to Prince Elector Joachim and the reference to his teachings as “entirely Wycliffian” in Article XV. Luther resorts to inflammatory language only in Article XV, where he calls the doctrines related to celibacy, food restrictions, and monastic life “works of the devil,” and in Article XVI, where he refers to the Mass as an “abomination.” There is even a hint of humor now and then, as in *Against*’s reply to *Confession*’s observation in Article XII (on the nature of the one church) that true believers—such as the reformers claim to be—are being persecuted for their beliefs: “. . . they should know that the devil also has his martyrs.” The work’s concluding remark—“And with that everyone may rightfully let matters rest, etc.”—might well call forth from its readers a hearty “Amen” of agreement.

**EPILOGUE: A Curious Reappearance of *Against Martin Luther’s Confession, newly composed for the Diet of Augsburg in Seventeen Articles, Interpreted Succinctly and in a Christian Manner***

Of course, no one “let matters rest.” The struggle between Catholic Church and Protestants, documented in succinct form in *Against*, continued for the next 500 years, and the concerns, of both sides that were expressed in this same document reappeared in the mid-nineteenth century.

Dr. Karl August Wildenhahn (1805-1868)<sup>17</sup> was a Lutheran pastor who also wrote numerous novels focused on the persons and events of the immediate Reformation era, among them *The Augsburg Diet: A History in Life Pictures*.<sup>18</sup> For this work, Wildenhahn incorporated the *Against* text, as a record of Catholic maneuverings before the diet. Entitling the chapter “A Meeting of Romish Divines,” he set Wimpina, Mensing, Redorffer, and Elgersma in Elector Joachim’s princely quarters and let them engage among themselves, presenting the seventeen articles, often almost *verbatim*, in lively dramatic form. Wildenhahn is present as omniscient Lutheran observer. Catholic outcries of amazement at Luther’s heretical actions and ideas interact with the authorial Lutheran’s equal amazement at the blindness of the reformer’s Old Church opponents. This observer then concludes the chapter by judging the exchange an example of the foolish difficulties the Roman Catholic Church had caused the reformers.

But the history of *Against* goes on, as part of another sort of Lutheran “reformation.” In 1880 John Gottlieb Morris (1803-1895)<sup>19</sup> published his translation of Wildenhahn’s *History*, a time in which the Lutheran Church in America was involved in an internal struggle between liberals, who sought to align their church with mainstream American Protestantism, and traditionalist German immigrants, who wanted to retain old customs and language. This reminder of the sixteenth century struggle between new and old thinking was perhaps seen by Morris as warning and encouragement to his contemporaries, and his translation thus as a contribution to the influential role he played in the evolution of the Lutheran Church in America.

Nor was this the end of *Against*’s presence. For starting around 2013, Morris’s translation with its dramatized “Meeting with Popish Divines” has become available as a reprint by several international companies.<sup>20</sup> While Morris’ purpose in making it available probably shared in the still prevalent nineteenth and early twentieth century polemical relationship between Catholic and Protestant, its most recent reappearance promises to further the progress toward a new understanding and appreciation of both sides of the Reformation and thus toward reconciliation

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<sup>17</sup> Karl August Wildenhahn (1805-1868) earned the Ph.D. in theology from the University of Leipzig, worked with Ludwig Tieck in Dresden, and was pastor, school inspector, and author of popular stories and novels.

<sup>18</sup> Easton, PA: M. J. Riegel; Philadelphia: J. Fred’k Smith, 1882.

<sup>19</sup> John Gottlieb Morris (1803-1895), Lutheran minister who played an influential role in the evolution of the Lutheran church in America. He was also an early American entomologist, one of the first to study butterflies and moths.

<sup>20</sup> I obtained an attractive and inexpensive copy from: Facsimile Publisher, 12 Pragai Market, Ashok Vihar, Ph-2, Delhi- 110052, India. (email: books@facsimilepublisher.com).

and unity.<sup>21</sup> Such has been the impetus and success of Pitts Theology Library’s mission for over twenty years.

And so, to close with a paraphrase from St. Paul and *Against*: “May all things among us be maintained with love and in order.”

## THANKS

The publication of this translation of *Against Martin Luther’s Confession, composed for the Diet of Augsburg in 17 Articles*, is yet another instance of Emory University’s Pitts Theology Library’s thirty-year mission of offering to a wide audience of scholars, students, clergy, as well as interested laity a way toward deeper understanding of the complexity of situations, ideas, actions, and players that was the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. From its inception, the Kessler Reformation Collection aimed at foundational representatives of all sides of the conflict, Roman Catholic as well as Lutheran and other Protestant groups. In doing so, it is a pioneer in today’s situation of increased scholarly and ecumenical attention to the Catholic role in the movement initiated by Luther.

As a cradle Catholic scholar of German language and literature, who through her encounter with Luther in literature and music has become a life-long enthusiast of and advocate of the reformer, I am most thankful for having had the chance to participate in a small way in the Pitts Library’s ecumenical mission. The person most responsible for this and to whom I am deeply grateful is M. Patrick Graham, formerly director of the Pitts Theology Library, and for me mentor, talented editor, and friend.

Dr. Graham got me started on translation projects. But without the generous willingness of Professor Kurt K. Hendel, Bernard, Fischer, Westberg Distinguished Ministry Professor of Reformation History at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, to read, comment on, and correct my translation drafts, this project would have been less successful. I am pleased that “my” pamphlet is appearing in the same collection as his.

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<sup>21</sup> As an example, with specific focus on the Diet of Augsburg, see the interesting article by Graham Glover in *The Jagged Word* (<https://thejaggedword.com/about/graham-glover/>): “Roman Catholics Should Reconsider the Augsburg Confession,” suggesting—along with others such as Ratzinger (Pope Benedict) and Cardinal Walter Kasper—that the Confession “has the ability for our two communions to find common theological ground.”

Finally, an enthusiastic thank-you to my long-time friend, “native speaker” advisor, and meticulous proofreader, Dr. Margarete H. Tigges, Neuroscientist at the Yerkes Primate Center of Emory University. Margarete and I have spent many hours together, mulling over words, phrases, and ideas, both in this and former translations. And of course, Dr. Victor A. Kramer, Professor Emeritus of American Literature, remains, as always, the firm foundation of all my endeavors.

Konrad Wimpina, Johannes Mensing, Wolfgang Redorffer, Rupert Elgersma:  
*Against Martin Luther's Confession, composed for the Diet of Augsburg in 17 Articles*

To the most illustrious, noble and high-born Prince and Lord, Lord Joachim, Margrave of Brandenburg,<sup>1</sup> Elector and Arch-Chamberlain of the Holy Roman Empire, in Stettin, Pomerania, Duke of the residents of Cassuben and of the Wends, Burggrave of Nuremberg and Prince of Rugen, we, Conrad Wimpina<sup>2</sup>, Johannes Mensing<sup>3</sup>, Wolfgang Redorffer<sup>4</sup>, Doctors of Philosophy, and Rupert Elgersma<sup>5</sup>, Licenciante, etc. offer to you our prayers to God together with our zealous and most diligent services, prepared above all as your most humble and obedient servants.

Most gracious Elector and Lord, it is not unreasonable to wonder how and for what reason Luther has now written a particular *Confession* of his erroneous beliefs presented in 17 articles, since only a short while earlier he had had a similar confession of his beliefs published.<sup>6</sup> In that *Confession* he boasted that he would persevere in those beliefs to his death. And yet in

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<sup>1</sup> Elector Joachim I. Nestor, [1499-1535], Prince-Elector of the Margraviate of Brandenburg [1499-1535], the fifth member of the House of Hohenzollern, brother of Prince-Archbishop-Elector Albrecht of Mainz, in whose diocese Johann Tetzel was so energetically preaching the St. Peter's indulgence, the action that caused Martin Luther to post his Ninety-five Theses. Joachim had helped his brother to get the dioceses of Magdeburg, of Halberstadt, and in 1514 the Prince-Archbishopric-Electorate of Mainz, which then provided the Hohenzollerns with two of the seven electoral votes in imperial elections.

Joachim was a vigorous adherent of Roman Catholic orthodoxy. He was also a patron of learning and established the Viadrina University of Frankfurt (Oder) in 1506, the first principal university of the Margraviate of Brandenburg. Joachim procured the notable theologian Konrad Wimpina as founding rector, the primary author of *Against*. As one further instance of the interconnections of the persons and ideas involved with this pamphlet, Johann Tetzel obtained his doctorate in 1518 from the Viadrina that Joachim had founded.

<sup>2</sup> Conrad Wimpina (c. 1465-1531), ordained 1500, doctorate in theology from University of Leipzig 1503, engaged by Elector Joachim in 1505 to play a major part in the founding of the University of Frankfurt on the Oder, served twenty-five years as its rector and dean of the theology faculty, setting the university's conservative and scholastic predilections in contrast to Europe's more advanced humanist circle, and strongly opposed by Wittenberg colleagues.

<sup>3</sup> Johannes Mensing (1477-1547), Dominican, matriculated at the University of Wittenberg in 1515, doctorate in theology in Frankfurt-on-the-Oder 1518, professor in Frankfurt 1529, advisor to Elector Joachim for theological and ecclesial affairs, author of numerous polemical tracts.

<sup>4</sup> Wolfgang Redorffer (1514-1559), Provost of Stendal, theological advisor to Elector Joachim, participant in the Diet of Augsburg and in the preparation of the *Confutatio* of August 3, 1530, author of numerous polemical tracts.

<sup>5</sup> Rupert Elgersma, Dominican theological advisor to Elector Joachim, participant in the Diet of Augsburg and in the drafting of the *Confutatio*.

<sup>6</sup>See note 8 below on the Schwabach Articles.

this most recent *Confession* he has omitted much of what he has earlier formulated and confessed. In addition, several hundred articles that are in part unchristian and heretical and in part inflammatory and misleading are found now and then in his previously published books. Yet in both the earlier one and in this second *Confession* he has referred to such things with hardly a word; in fact, he has passed over them in total silence. If he perhaps wanted to believe that by not repeating these things here, that they would be forgotten and thus no further guilt will be ascribed to him, he would be very mistaken. For as long as he gives cause with his writings and teachings for so much blasphemy, the plunder of spiritual property, the leading astray of many chaste hearts into sinful lust, the breaking of oaths and vows, rebellion, murder, along with many more diverse, unchristian actions, and even though he should now repent of and recant the same, as indeed in the way of all heretics he (apparently) would not do; or further, if the articles confessed here were blameless, as however they all are not, nonetheless so many evil deeds of which he has been the cause, the instigator, the originator, and the rabble-rouser, must not by rights remain unpunished. For this reason no one dare esteem or concern oneself very much with these articles of this, his newly reiterated *Confession*, since his earlier errors and public transgressions are far more important than all of these here and are intended, as they say, to surpass them.

And so as we then heard that these particular 17 articles of this reiterated and new *Confession* had been sent to Your Electoral Grace here in Augsburg in a form suggesting, perhaps, that everything contained therein is good, Christian and blameless, we are also certain without any doubt that, as a praise-worthy Christian elector, not only as a result of innate Christian virtue received and inherited from your highly praise-worthy grandparents and ancestors, but also [because you are]<sup>7</sup> highly enlightened, especially by solidly founded Christian teaching, and thus so firmly grounded, such teachings as well as similar unfounded articles cannot influence in the least, much less mislead Your Electoral Grace.

Because nonetheless these assertive arguments of Luther's have been regarded among some persons as quite good and correct, as though nothing of substance might be brought against them, we have summarized as briefly as possible a particular and a Christian meaning, as it is to be understood, in several articles, so that every devout Christian may now know how to

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<sup>7</sup> Words and phrases in brackets are the translator's additions.

understand them according to the law and ordinances of the universal Christian church, free from any danger or doubt.

We humbly implore that it might please your Electoral Grace to accept with your wonted benevolence this document, the result of our efforts and loyalty, written with the full extent of our abilities, diligence, and devotion, and dedicated to your Electoral Grace, submitted in all eager readiness to serve.

### **Article I**

Schwabach:<sup>8</sup>

*Article I quotes from the Athanasian Creed<sup>9</sup> regarding the Trinitarian nature of God, supported scripturally by John 1 and Matthew 28.*

It would have been completely unnecessary for Martin Luther to repeat so diligently and elegantly this confession in Article I, because everything, and far more than is summarized by him in this article, has been proclaimed, determined, and repeated often previously for many centuries and by many councils. Further, it is prayed, read, and sung far and wide daily in the Athanasian Creed at the office of Prime as well as in the Mass and at other times by priests as well as regularly by all devout Christians.

### **Article II**

Schwabach:

*Article II continues reference to the creed, with focus on the Son. Only the Son of God became human. The article refutes various heresies concerning the nature of Christ.*

This article is even less necessary to repeat than the former one, for [the Incarnation of the Son of God] has now not been contested in the universal Christian church for centuries. The errors that were evident among the heretics named in the article and many other errors have all

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<sup>8</sup> The summary of each Schwabach article relies on the translation by William R. Russell in *Sources and Contexts of the Book of Concord*, edited by Robert Kolb and James A. Nestingen (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 83-87.

<sup>9</sup>The Athanasian Creed is a statement of belief focused on Trinitarian doctrine and Christology, used since the sixth century. It differs from the Nicene-Constantinopolitan and Apostles' Creeds in the inclusion of anathemas of those who disagree with it. It is considered part of Lutheran confessions in the *Book of Concord*.

been condemned and extinguished through God's help and the judgment of the church fathers in many councils. For Luther to repeat it at this time would not have been necessary.

### **Article III**

Schwabach:

*Article III continues reference to the creed, focusing on Jesus as true God and true man. It emphasizes the whole divine-human nature of Christ, plus his suffering as the effective means of our salvation.*

This article, like the one that the Christian church prays, and especially as understood in the form of the Creed, that the only begotten Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, crucified and died, etc. has also not been called into question. So its restatement now by Luther was unnecessary. The more profound meaning of these words [of the Creed] is more properly to be explained in academic terminology than in everyday speech.

It can be seen, however, why Luther has drawn these three above-proclaimed articles into his *Confession* and placed them at the beginning, for with them he intends to disguise his other numerous errors (which are also not included here) and would like to introduce the errors that follow as all the more plausible.

### **Article IV**

Schwabach:

*Original Sin is a real sin that condemns all persons and separates them from God, had not Christ intervened. His suffering made satisfaction for sin and destroyed it.*

Original Sin is a real, genuine sin and not merely a flaw or a weakness. Further, it is the kind of sin that condemns all persons descended from Adam and separates them from God eternally. This should be understood as applying only before baptism, for after baptism there is no condemnation for those who now live in Christ Jesus (Romans 8[:1]). This Christ, through his bitter suffering, at work in the sacrament of holy baptism, washes away all sins. To be sure, the inclination and the temptation to sin remain after baptism—called in Latin “*Fomes peccati*” and

by Paul “*Lex in membris*” [cf. Romans 7:23]—as a weakness to be dealt with by humankind. Psalm 52 [Vulgate; Hebrew and English versions, Psalm 53] and Romans 5 should be understood in this way.

### **Article V**

Schwabach:

*All persons are sinners and subject to sin, death, and the devil, totally unable of themselves to prepare themselves to obtain righteousness. The sole path thereto is belief in the Son of God. This belief is our righteousness.*

We admit that all human beings are sinners before baptism, and also those who commit mortal sin after baptism are sinners subject to sin, death, and the devil as well, as Luther acknowledges in this article. And that such sinners cannot free themselves therefrom by their own powers or their own works and become once again righteous or holy; indeed, they cannot even prepare themselves and are not fit for righteousness in and of themselves or able to begin everything by themselves. For we know as Paul says, that we are not capable on our own of doing anything good as though by our own intention. [2 Corinthians 3:5]

But that the sinner, through unceasing divine gracious help and mercy, which the almighty God denies to no one, as he says through John in Revelation [3:20], “I stand at the door and knock. If anyone lets me in, I will enter into him etc.,”<sup>10</sup> should not be able to prepare himself to receive further grace by means of which he might have good works and merit, neither Luther nor anyone else will prove, as written clearly in Proverbs 16[:9], “It is the task of the human being to prepare his soul,” and in Ecclesiasticus 2[:17], “Those who fear God will prepare their hearts and in the sight of his face will they sanctify their soul.”

From this it is evident that also the sinner, being protected by divine gracious help, may prepare himself for more grace and righteousness and ultimately for salvation, through good works by the power of that same divine help. This is clearly indicated by the text from Acts 10[:4] concerning Cornelius, to whom the angel spoke, “Your prayers and your alms have been remembered by God,” by which he has come to the full knowledge of Christ’s righteousness and ultimate salvation.

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<sup>10</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all biblical citations are my own translation from the German.

From this it follows that there is not only the one single way to righteousness and to redemption from sin and death: that one wholly without merit or works believes in the Son of God who has suffered for us, etc. While faith is necessary in all these matters, yet no passage of Scripture extols faith alone in such a way that it alone is salvific. Especially that faith that works through love (Galatians 5[:6]) is also the same faith that justifies, as Paul says in Romans 10[:10], “With the heart one believes, etc.” Further, then, that faith that does not act through love is of no use, as the same Paul proclaims in 1 Corinthians 13[:13]. To speak precisely regarding this, works are actually more accorded to love than to faith, for faith can indeed exist along with many flagrant sins, [but] without love, without merit. Further, John’s text that all those who believe in the Son shall not be lost but rather shall have eternal life [John 3:15] should be understood in this manner, as John himself explains where he says in 1 John 2[:4], “Whoever says that he believes in God and does not obey his commandment, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

## **Article VI**

Schwabach:

*Faith is not a human work nor possible to obtain by human power. It is God’s gift, given to and effected in us through Christ by the Holy Spirit, as a new, vital essence that always does good toward God (by praising, thanking, praying, preaching, and teaching) and toward neighbor (by loving, serving, helping, offering counsel, giving, and suffering all kinds of evil until death).*

We agree that faith is not a human work nor possible to obtain by our power. Rather, it is God’s work and gift that the Holy Spirit effects in us. However, it is poured out upon us along with other virtues in baptism, so that it accomplishes diverse good works as long as it is formed and adorned with divine love. However, where love is not present, then faith alone is unable to do good, meritorious works on its own, as St. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13[:13], where he ascribes good works above all to love. [“*And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.*”] For, as he says in Romans 13[:10], love is the highest and ultimate perfection of the law.

## **Article VII**

Schwabach:

*God has instituted the preaching office or spoken word (Gospel) through the Holy Spirit for obtaining such faith. There is no other path to obtain faith apart from the spoken word.*

We also confess that children are saved by means of faith, as it is poured into them through the Holy Spirit in baptism (for without faith no one can be pleasing to God, as found in Hebrews 11[:6]). Nonetheless, it is necessary for the baptized to be instructed in the matters and articles of faith, and to proclaim to them these same things. This does take place through the preaching office, yet by means of inner illumination, without which the preaching office would have little power. On the basis of this it was decided that both preaching and infused faith are without exception necessary for the salvation of the souls of those persons who have reached adulthood.

### **Article VIII**

Schwabach:

*In addition to the spoken word, God has instituted external signs: baptism and Eucharist. God gives faith and the Holy Spirit to all who desire him also with these.*

We confess that there are not only two sacraments, baptism and Eucharist, as claimed in the article. Rather there are five others beneficial to Christians, through which God also gives faith and his Spirit to those who desire them. This is so clearly and exhaustively supported in Holy Scripture that re quoting it here would take much too long

### **Article IX**

Schwabach:

*Baptism consists of two parts, of water and the word. These are not mere water or pouring (as the blasphemers teach).<sup>11</sup> Rather together they are a holy, vital, powerful thing, as Paul says in Titus 3:5; Ephesians 5:26, and it should be extended to small children as well. [Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16]*

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<sup>11</sup> This refers to the Anabaptists' refusal to baptize children.

That the sacrament of holy baptism has been instituted by the Lord God to wash away all sin and to sanctify those who are baptized Paul clearly states in Titus 3[:5-6], “Through his mercy he has saved us, through the washing of the second birth and the renewal of the Holy Spirit, which he has poured out on us richly.” Therefore, baptism cannot be considered a mere empty sign, as the Jewish sacraments were, because it sanctifies inwardly those whom it touches outwardly.

### **Article X**

Schwabach:

*The Eucharist also consists of two parts: bread and wine. The true body and blood of Christ are truly present in the bread and wine according to the word of Christ: “this is my body, this is my blood” [Matthew 26:26] (as the other side admits). Christ’s words foster faith in those who desire the sacrament and do not act contrary to that faith.*

We confess that in the sacrament of the Eucharist, the body and blood of Christ, while before the consecration bread and wine are present, after the consecration we no longer claim that bread and wine continue to be there, but rather merely their appearance. Instead, in each species the true body and blood of Christ is present, moreover, the whole Christ, undivided and complete. This is due to the power of the words that Christ himself has spoken and instituted. And while belief in this sacrament must already exist before it is received, it becomes apparent how through the divine love expressed in it, faith is increased and nourished. Thus, it is then also called a sacrament of unity, incarnation, and love.

### **Article XI**

Schwabach:

*Private confession should not be compelled by laws. Confession is, however, comforting, salutary, and beneficial for troubled or erring consciences through its absolution. It is necessary only to confess those sins that trouble, not to enumerate all sins.*

We do not accept that private confession should not be compelled by laws, just as little as baptism. Because an unbaptized person does not belong to the church, therefore the church does

not yet have jurisdiction over them [pl. sic], as Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians 5[:9-13]. A baptized person, however, is now subject to Holy Church, [and] should thus also be disciplined by its gracious mother, and if necessary, directed by coercion. This is so, since confession has been commanded for all times from the beginning of the world, first of all in the natural law *confessio mentalis* (or interior confession) and in the time of the written law among the Jews *confessio caeremonialis* (or ceremonial confession) by divine commandment, which was, no doubt, more difficult than our confession. [Confession is therefore mandated by God,] since Christ has come not to undo the law but rather to affirm it [cf. Matthew 5:17], and he himself has said to his apostles, “Those whose sins you forgive, they shall be forgiven.” [John 20:23] In like manner in various other places confession has been proclaimed and set forth as a necessary practice. Further, John says in 1 John 2[sic; 1:9], “If we confess our sin, God [who] is faithful, forgives us our sin.” This is what all the holy church fathers understood as sacramental confession.

Thus the church has sufficient and well-founded cause to require such a comforting, salutary, and beneficial thing of unwilling persons who otherwise refuse to recognize their own good. The whole Christian church has, then, done and decreed this by way of the chapter *Omnis utriusque de poeni*,<sup>12</sup> which every Christian is obligated to obey, since Christ has said publicly, “Whoever does not listen to the church, let him be to you a Gentile and a tax-collector.” [Matthew 18:17]

That, however, each person need confess only some of the sins of which he knows himself guilty and others not, as he pleases, that the Christian church does not allow him. In fact, Augustine calls such a confession hypocrisy rather than a true confession. For there are many people, especially in these times, who have a tattered and torn conscience, indeed who tread it underfoot, whose conscience is untroubled by broken vows and oaths as well as by other far grosser sins. Although absolution does take away all sins, as Luther confesses, confession must also include all the sins that are known to the penitent.

## Article XII

Schwabach:

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<sup>12</sup>*Flugschriften gegen die Reformation (1525-1530)*, 1247, note 13; cf. Heinrich Denzinger and Adolf Schönmetzer, *Enchiridion Symbolorum de finitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* (33<sup>th</sup> edn; Barcelona: Herder, 1965) #150; cf. 1310-1328 regarding sacraments.

*There is one holy Christian church on earth until the end of the ages. It consists of believers of Jesus Christ who hold to and preach its beliefs and practices and are persecuted for doing so. The church exists wherever the Gospel and sacrament are rightly observed. It is not bound to specific places, times, persons, or pompous rituals.*

Our Christian faith declares that there is and remains one holy Christian church on earth, until the end of the world, since we pray: I believe in the universal holy church. And there is no doubt that this church consists of those who believe in Christ.

However, there is also one Christian authority in such a church, so that the church not exist in disorder. Paul shows this in Ephesians 4[:10], “that Christ, as he ascended into heaven, left behind him various persons, such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and theologians for the purpose of perfecting of the saints, of building up the body of Christ, etc.” And further in 1 Thessalonians 5[:12] he writes, “We implore you, brothers, respect those who are working among you and exercise authority in the Lord.” Further, he admonishes the Hebrews at chapter 13[:17], “Be obedient to your teachers and submissive to them, for they keep watch as those who shall bear responsibility for your souls, etc.” The assembly of such leaders and spiritual authorities, since it has authority in the churches to keep order and to instruct, are also often referred to as “the church,” of which Christ also reminds us, saying in Matthew 18[:17], “Tell it to the church.” Therefore, the church is named and recognized as far more than solely all believers in Christ.

From this it is clearly evident that those persons, as Luther confesses in this article, who hold to, believe, and teach his laws, articles, and matters presented above, can neither be “the church” nor be called “the church,” because they have withdrawn from and voluntarily strayed from the unity of the church and from obedience to its ordained leaders and spiritual authorities of the same jurisdiction and doctrine with these and many more other heretical articles.

And whether or not they are being persecuted and martyred in the world on account of such mad erring and disobedience, they should know that the devil also has his martyrs.

However, that the Christian church should not be governed by laws and regulations is clearly against the Holy Ghost and Paul in Acts 15 and 16, where he commanded to keep the teaching and precept of the apostles and elders in Jerusalem that were decided in the meeting. Therefore, the ceremonies established and ordered by these leaders of the church mentioned

above for the celebration of God's honor and for the attraction and increase of devotion of Christians can certainly not be considered as unnecessary opulence but rather as Christian adornment and a sign of Christian love and faith. Therefore, it can be also neither unsuitable nor unbeneficial to bind the ceremonies to particular places, times, persons, und gestures. As long as the church must exist on earth, during that time, it must exist and be maintained among persons and places as Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians 14[:40], "Everything among you should proceed in good order and decently."

### **Article XIII**

Schwabach:

*On the last day Jesus Christ will judge all humankind, redeeming believers and condemning unbelievers and the godless to hell.*

This article is in itself not to be disputed, if it is understood in such manner that those believers who have done good will be judged for eternal bliss, as stated in John 5[:29], "Those who have done good will rise again on the Last Day to resurrection of life, etc." Further, Christ himself says, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' enters the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my father." [Matthew 7:21]

### **Article XIV**

Schwabach:

*Until the Lord comes in judgment on the Last Day and abolishes all political power and lordship, we should remain obedient to the secular authorities. A Christian, if called to political office, may serve therein without danger to his salvation.*

Everything that is declared in this article concerning secular authority and governance should be understood in regard to religious authorities and governance as well. Religious authority must of necessity be maintained within the church, no less than secular authority must be maintained so that everything proceeds in good and decent order. For this reason pastors and teachers, etc. [are necessary], as is set forth sufficiently in Article XII above and stated by Paul.

**Article XV**

Schwabach:

*Article XV condemns as doctrines of the devil priestly celibacy, abstinence from meat, and monasticism and its vows as works intended to gain salvation, whereas Christ alone is the only way.*

This article is entirely Wycliffian full of untruth and calumniation. For no one is able to document or prove effectively that marriage is forbidden to anyone [by the Catholic Church]. If, however, priests voluntarily through vows abstain from marriage, then the Christian church has legitimate grounds for forcing them to observe their vows, as also happens similarly with monastic persons and should rightly be the case.

Moreover, that priests and monastics should live chastely has been seriously maintained and has been taught us from the time of the apostles until today, for the apostles abstained [from relations with] their wives in accordance with Christian teaching in Matthew 19[:1-12]. Further, it has never been found that their disciples holding priestly office had wives, for we do know that the priests and Levites of the Old Testament did have to live holy and chastely and abstained from relations with their wives whenever they were to serve in their office, as found in Leviticus 6[:2] and attested in many other passages. And David was denied the priestly bread by Ahimelech until he had first abstained from women for three days. [1 Samuel 21:1-7] How much more suitably then should Christian priests keep themselves always chaste, who now are bound to serve not the shadow but the truth, as daily they are obligated to distribute the true Bread of Heaven, the chaste body of Jesus Christ, to receive it themselves and to give it to others. For Paul, too, advises married persons to abstain from marital relations for a while, for the sake of prayer. [1 Corinthians 7:5]

Although eating meat is, in itself, not a sin, and even if eating meat as such were to be considered a sin, it is not forbidden by the church. Since, however, Christians on their own do not follow the apostolic teaching on fasting as taught by Paul in 2 Corinthians 6[:5] and 2 Corinthians 11 [:23-27], the church, like a solicitous loving mother, had legitimate cause to require such fasting and to order abstinence from meat for several days for the sake of taming our insolent bodies. Thus, no one might truthfully charge that he is forbidden to eat meat except in such a manner [during the stipulated days].

Since monastic vows are often extant, praised, and recommended, both in the Old and now in the New Testament, and since the apostles have also demonstrated and implemented by their investiture of many virgins, who then can say that such monastic vows, abstinence from women, and eating meat should be satanic teaching (as Luther says)? And he wishes to prove this misleadingly [by referring to] St. Paul in 1 Timothy 4. Whereas Paul himself recommended virginity, moreover consecrated Teclah in Jonio<sup>13</sup> along with many others as monastic virgins [cf. 1 Corinthians 7:25-38]. Thus, such vows and abstinence are good and secure footpaths in Christ, who is the genuinely true way to grace and salvation. [*or*: Thus, such vows and abstinence are good and secure footpaths in Christ [and are] the genuinely true way to grace and salvation.]<sup>14</sup>

## Article XVI

Schwabach:

*The Mass must be abolished as an abomination, since it has been understood as a work for obtaining salvation for another person. The Eucharist should be distributed under both species, and should be given to everyone according to their faith and need.*

That the Mass, which up to this very day has been understood as being a sacrifice and good work and indeed is, should now be an abomination is Luther's malicious blasphemy, which he will never be able to prove, as many scholars have dared him to prove and [he] will also never be able to do so. For this reason, the holy Mass, which has been considered a sacrifice and good work for the living and the dead from the time of the apostles till now, as the writings of all holy church fathers attest, this Mass will continue to exist until Christ comes again, as Paul says, "*Mortem domini annuntiabitis, donec veniet.*" [1 Corinthians 11:26]<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> This reference is apparently to "Thekla in Iconium" from the Acts of Paul and Thecla, See Dennis R. MacDonald, "Acts of Thekla," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (1992) 6:443-44.

<sup>14</sup> The German text is ambiguous: *und sein solche gluepde und enthaltung guete uund gewise richtsteige in Christo, welche zuer gnaden und seligkayt der recht warhafftig weg ist.* Since the verb *ist* is singular, it suggests grammatically that *Christ* alone is the way to salvation. If so, then the authors are agreeing with Luther. But in this paragraph they are clearly defending *celibacy and abstinence* on the basis of Scripture as the right way to salvation, as "good and secure footpaths in Christ." Thus the context would suggest this alternate translation is more legitimate.

<sup>15</sup> ". . . you will proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

Further, it is unnecessary to demand that the most holy body of Christ should be distributed under two species to every believer. Actually, such a thing would be the source of great loss of faith and a cause of heresy, as though Christ should not be wholly present in one species, since he is, after all, particularly wholly present in each species. For the sake of the autonomy, effectiveness, or spiritual fruit [of this truth] it is called in Latin *essentiae & efficaciae*. Because of this and other reasons as well, further because of deceit and disrespect, the church in two councils, those of Constance and Basel, has decided and mandated the distribution under one species, as had been done in the church long before then. With this practice nothing at all detrimental happens to lay persons, particularly because from this practice their grace and merit in Christian obedience is renewed and increased.

### **Article XVII**

Schwabach:

*Ceremonies that oppose God's word should be abolished. Others may be used freely or not, avoiding unnecessary offence or disturbance of the general peace.*

There is no doubt that there must be ceremonies and divine services in the church. However, which ceremonies are opposed to God's word, as Luther states, has not yet been revealed. Whenever some who have this characteristic are pointed out, then this matter should be discussed.

However, that everyone should [be able to] make up new ceremonies every day according to his fickleness, wantonness, and instability would be opposed to communal peace and would cause great offence. Paul, too, is against [such actions], for he says, "All things among you should be maintained decently and in order." [1 Corinthians 14:40] <sup>16</sup>  
And with that everyone may rightfully let matters rest, etc. [!]

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<sup>16</sup> The authors like this passage, using it—with different wording—in Article XII.