

Objection 6: Vatican I's definitions of the perpetuity of the Papal Office contradict the claims of Sedevacantists.

Extract taken with the author's permission from:

[The Sedevacantist Delusion: Why Vatican II's Clash with Sedevacantism Supports Eastern Orthodoxy](#)

- by John C. Pontrello (August 2015)

The First Vatican Council:

Part II: The Papacy of Desire: Summary

(Pages 150-154)

Note: The use of "Dimond" in the following text refers to Frederick "Michael" and Robert "Peter" Dimond, the Dimond brothers running the MHFM today.

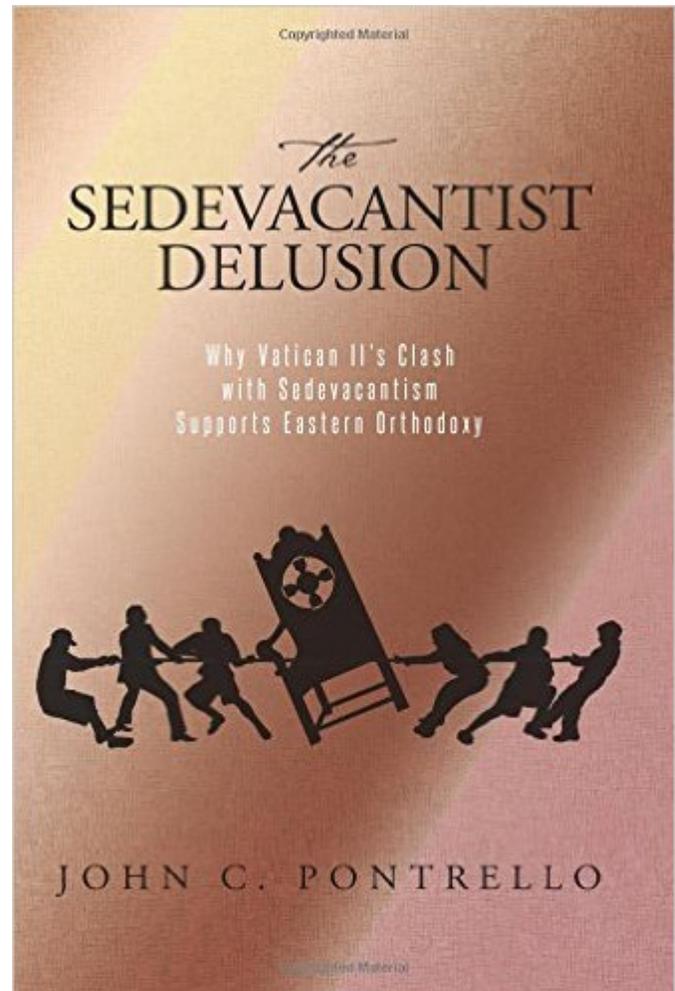
Non-Sedevacantists claim "*Vatican I's definitions of the perpetuity of the Papal Office contradict the claims of Sedevacantists.*" [\(243\)](#)

My position is agreement with this objection; Vatican I does contradict Sedevacantism. Although Dimond addresses only three specific passages from the First Vatican Council in his defense of the Sedevacantists, we began this chapter with an overview of *Pastor Aeternus* – The First Dogmatic Constitution of the Church of Christ;

A cursory reading of the *Pastor Aeternus* reveals the following noteworthy points:

The purpose of the Church is the permanent duration of the work of redemption.

- The papacy is the foundation of the Church.
- The papacy's principal function is unity.
- The papacy's foundation is Rome.
- Rome identifies the Vicar of Christ.
- Roman Pontiffs realize unity of the Church
- Visible unity is permanent.
- Unity with the Holy See identifies the hierarchy and the faithful.
- Unity with the Roman Pontiff is compulsory
- The Holy See cannot fail or defect.



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The above points are interconnected and flow harmoniously together. The Sedevacantists attempt to divide them in such a way that their symbolic relationship is dissolved; leaving gaps in what should be the Church's permanent attributes and properties that always identify it as being the true Church of Christ.

One of the most important duties of the faithful is to maintain unity with the Holy See. The faithful will know who the Vicar of Christ is by his occupancy of the Roman See, not the orthodoxy of his teaching because the Holy See cannot fail, defect, or deceive them.

Following an overview of the dogmatic constitution, we explored the story of "Dimond's ark". In this story Dimond paints a picture of God as *the deceiver* who essentially punishes the faithful for obeying one of his Church's most important precepts. Paradoxically, instead of providing the faithful with the ark (i.e. Church) to avoid the chastisement, as in the story of Noe, God takes away the Church and leaves them with Dimond. The moral of the story is that the Catholic faithful should not be in communion with the Holy See because God used it to set a deadly trap in order to test them.

We begin part II by exposing Dimond's argumentative fallacy in answering an objection that was not made. The reader was again cautioned about falling for Dimond's repeated attempts to disguise Sedevacantism's theory of the defection of the Church as a routine papal interregnum.

The first passage Dimond addressed from the dogmatic constitution is a declaration that "the Papacy is the Perpetual Principle and Visible Foundation of Unity." Because Dimond and the Sedevacantists do not possess the papacy, they must attempt to rework (divide and omit) its key components in order to claim portions of it. In this example Dimond attempted to separate the "Office of the Papacy" (presumably he means the primacy) from Rome, where it is permanently bound. However, because the sacred and apostolic primacy functions through an interdependent system comprised of the Apostle Peter, the Roman See, and the Roman Pontiff, these components cannot be divided without frustrating the end for which they exist – unity of the Church. Dimond is missing each of the aforementioned components to the papacy and teaches a new doctrine I have appropriately titled the "Papacy of Desire.

Dimond's Papacy of Desire is essentially a heretical ecclesiology that errs in two ways. First it attempts to divide the constituent components of the papacy in order to claim some portion of its powers and purpose. One example is ascribing the Church's visible unity to the primacy but omitting how the primacy must be exercised by a human successor to Peter. Second, the papacy of desire teaches that the Holy See need not exist materially, only spiritually. Thus membership in and unity of the Church are attained merely by one's desire to be united to what is essentially an invisible Church.

The third principal Sedevacantist heresy was identified: Papacy of Desire is sufficient for membership in the visible unity of the Church. Papacy of Desire is the logical sequence to Sedevacantists thesis, which is essentially a theory of the defection of the Church. Because the Sedevacantists are forbidden to admit the fact, they concocted a new ecclesiology remarkably similar to Protestantism's invisible Church theory.

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Examples of why Dimond's papacy of desire ends in schism are the Old Catholic Church, which was a recent forerunner to today's Sedevacantists, and Eastern Orthodox conversions to Dimond's ark. Both examples illustrate why ascribing unity of the Church to someone or something other than the Roman Pontiff ends in schism.

The second passage Dimond addresses from the dogmatic constitution *Pastor Aeternus* states that "the sacred and apostolic primacy will endure in perpetuity." Again Dimond attempts to divide the components of the papacy in order to claim some portion of its powers. However, as explained in the first passage, the primacy can do nothing in and of itself; it must be exercised by the human successor of Peter.

The third passage Dimond addresses from the dogmatic constitution *Pastor Aeternus* states that "by the institution of Christ the Lord, Peter will have perpetual successors in the primacy over the universal Church and that the Roman Pontiffs are the successors to Peter in the same primacy." Dimond's interpretation of this canon is that Peter will have sporadic successors who share in his perpetual primacy. However, this cannot be so, as the Church's permanent mark of unity is embodied in the Vicar of Christ. Therefore the correct interpretation must be that perpetual successors and perpetual primacy are both correct. "Perpetual successors" is understood to mean a continuous, uninterrupted succession of popes. The Sedevacantists' string of six consecutive antipopes ruling the Roman See violates this canon.

Lastly I presented some criticisms of the papal system. First, there is no basis for connecting Peter's primacy to the Roman See by the institution of Christ in scripture or in the dogmatic constitution's account of the institution. The institution of the primacy was complete in the Gospel of John. ⁽²⁴⁴⁾ According to the dogmatic constitution, Christ chose a man *without a see* as vicar. Furthermore Peter did not receive a see because of having received the primacy. Therefore Peter's successors should be anyone who receives what Christ instituted – no more, no less. All that Christ instituted – an appointment of universal jurisdiction and a visible head of his Church – is all that should be legitimately claimed by papal succession, for Peter purportedly held these two powers before he founded a see. Furthermore the primacy should belong to a see only insofar as the see is presided over by the Vicar of Christ.

Another criticism is the constitution's reversal in the mode of transmission of the primacy. The dogmatic constitution teaches that Christ conferred the primacy directly on Peter, and it condemns an opinion that *the primacy was conferred on the Church, which in turn transmitted it to Peter as the Church's minister.* ⁽²⁴⁵⁾ However, subsequent to Peter, the Church reversed this process by transferring the primacy to Rome, which then transmitted the primacy to Roman Pontiffs. I shared my opinion as to the real reason for this reversal as being the best way for the Roman Church to claim the primacy in perpetuity, for if the primacy was to be conferred hand to hand, it could potentially wind up anywhere in the world – other than Rome.

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Finally, Dimond cited Cardinal Ratzinger's writings that under-mind the papacy. The former cardinal's writings show him to have been honest in his assessment of the historical relationship between Rome and the Eastern Orthodox Church.

End notes:

[243](#): Dimond, *"The Truth about What Really Happened to the Catholic Church after Vatican II"*, p. 314

[244](#): John 21: 15-17

[245](#): Denzinger, *The sources of Catholic Dogma*, 1822