Celibacy and the Gregorian Reform

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CELIBACY AND THE GREGORIAN REFORM

by

Raymond M. Rademacher

A Thesis
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Included in the Gregorian Reform of the eleventh century was the clerical discipline of celibacy. Even though celibacy was not a new discipline at that time, Pope Gregory VII vigorously enforced the canons on celibacy. In a matter of such intimacy there was bound to be opposition to the enforcement of these canons. Tradition offered ample support to both parties of the conflict. The long standing tradition of married clergy served as a strong support to those who opposed the Gregorian enforcement. However, the traditional canons in favor of celibacy gave impetus to the reformers of the eleventh century.

Pope Gregory VII did not have to legislate a new discipline but rather carry out the existing canons. The long standing neglect of the canons provided a custom that caused strong opposition to the Gregorian reform movement. The main thrust of the eleventh century reform was of course freedom of the church from the dominance of the state. In seeking a way out of the investiture conflict, the pope vigorously pursued a course of clerical reform that included mandatory clerical celibacy.
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Rev. Raymond M. Rademacher
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CHAPTER ONE

CELIBACY IN THE FATHERS

The struggle in the eleventh century to establish celibacy as a universal and mandatory discipline for clerics in the western church had its beginnings in the early church, even though in only a skeletal form. The progress of the evolution of this discipline is an important part in the understanding of the total picture of the conflicts that rocked the western church during the Hildebrandian reform.

The eleventh century councils and papal reformers which demanded conjugal celibacy consistently maintained that their position was rooted in the past traditions of the Fathers of the church. However, those who advocated normalization of married life for clerics also looked to the Fathers and sacred scripture for justification of their arguments.

Unfortunately, little research is available in English to give us a complete picture of the early church's attitude on celibacy.1 In English there is Peter Harkx's small work which has been translated from the original Dutch.2 There are, however, some studies

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1In French we have Roger Gryson's Les Origines de celibat Ecclesiastique du Premier au Septieme SIECLE, (Gemblous, 1970)

of a general nature\(^3\) that give us some insights into the Fathers' view of celibacy. Recent studies on the Fathers have opened new directions in understanding the meaning of celibacy according to these early church writers. Even a superficial perusal of the early eras of church history shows an evolutionary development of virginity and conjugal celibacy.

What is meant by celibacy during the first few centuries of our era? In the early church, celibacy generally meant that one refrained from sexual activity with one's wife. Most celibate clerics composed only a small minority of the clergy. It was during the fourth and fifth centuries that clerical celibacy became recognized as a higher calling when council after council and several popes proposed celibacy among clergy as an ideal.\(^4\) It was in the twelfth century that celibacy finally took on the meaning we reserve for it today when celibacy means a virginal discipline. In this work celibacy will generally have its early meaning of separation of man and wife—namely, conjugal celibacy.

\(^3\)Quasten, Johannes, Patrology, (Westminster, Md., 1951- )

\(^4\)See Chapter II of this thesis, pp. 46-72
Sacred Scripture

Whenever any of the Fathers used Sacred Scripture as a source for the justification of celibacy they generally referred to the following verses: Matthew 19:12; 1 Cor 7:8, 25-35; and Rev 14:1-5. Those Fathers who opposed mandatory celibacy generally referred to 1 Tim 3:2-5; 1 Tim 3:12; Tit 1:5-8; 1 Cor 9:5; and 1 Cor 7:9-11. Both groups refer to the Old Testament priests' custom of separating from their wives during their time of temple service, but no texts were cited. Because many of the supporters and opponents of mandatory celibacy in all centuries referred to one or more of these texts, some explanation of these is in order. What follows is a general exegesis accepted by most scholars today. The following three verses follow the divorce pericope. It is not clear whether these texts are part of the above pericope or are separate from it. "His disciples said to him, 'If that is the case between

5 Only Methodius of Olympus (c. 310) makes a direct reference to this text in his epistle Symposium in which ten virgins speak in dialogue form about the state of virginity.


8 Matthew 19:2-9 contains the prohibitions of remarriage. Christ abrogates the Hebrew privilege of divorce and remarriage in favor of the permanency of the marriage bond.

9 "That" refers to Christ insisting on one man and one wife for life. Peter was taken aback by this ideal proposed by Christ.
man and wife, it is better not to marry.' He said, 'Not every one can accept this teaching, only those to whom it is given to do so.' Some men are incapable of sexual activity from birth; some have been deliberately made so; and some there are who have freely renounced sex for the sake of God’s reign. Let him accept this teaching who can."¹⁰

Nearly all non-Catholic Scripture scholars¹¹ today accept this last verse as part of the divorce-remarriage pericope. If one accepts that position there is no reference here to virginal celibacy but only to second marriages in the case of a divorce. According to these scholars¹² Matt 19:12 refers to the commonly accepted teaching of Christ that the ideal marriage among Christians is one man-one wife for life and that renunciation of sexual activity after divorce is done so for the sake of the coming Kingdom of God. Scriptural exegetes believe that Christ holds this ideal of marriage in view of

¹⁰ Matt 19:10-12.

¹¹ I have not found any non-Catholic Biblical scholar who maintains that this verse is a celibacy citation. Generally Catholic exegetes at least until the late 1960’s held the view that Matt 19:12 referred to celibacy and not to remarriage. Some Catholic Biblical scholars hold the same views as the non-Catholic exegete in this matter. One example a Catholic exegete holding the same view as the non-Catholics is Father Quesnell, a Jesuit Biblical scholar, formerly a professor of New Testament at Marquette University. The above information comes by way of Fr. Jon Taylor, professor of Sacred Scripture at St. Patrick Seminary, Menlo Park, California.

¹² Again according to Fr. Jon Taylor nearly all accepted exegetes of the Protestant background see this verse this way.
the total realization of the Kingdom of God.

Since this statement is peculiar to Matthew and since it comes in his fifth book, the Book of the Coming Kingdom, one might also associate this text with the current belief of the immediacy of the parousia.  

There are some Roman Catholic scholars who hold a different view about these texts. The New American Bible in an explanatory note states: "This verse (19:12) is proper to Matthew. While there is no consensus on its meaning, some exegetes understand it to refer to voluntary and perpetual celibacy for members of the Christian community who wish to dedicate themselves completely to the Kingdom of God – Mt 13, 44ff; 19, 29."  

A small minority of exegetes considers this text as a renunciation pericope rather than part of the previous marriage pericope; but even so there is no direct connection made to obligatory celibacy for the clergy. Much more research has to be done on the renunciation pericopes of Matthew and Luke before any legitimate connection of celibacy to them can be made.

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13 Thess I and II.

14 NAB, ed. cit. p28.

15 See E. Schillebeeck, Celibacy, (New York, 1968), pp. 75-105. Schillebeeck tries to make a case for eunuchia (renunciation) for the clergy from these texts. It seems to me to be an extension of the text and an argument from a custom (celibacy) now established in the church to a rationale for its beginning. Hereafter noted as Celibacy.
Actually very few of the Fathers used this text as a source for proposing celibacy, and nowhere in the tradition of the church has there ever been agreement by exegetes as to the real meaning of these texts. This lack of consensus of meaning affected the arguments of both parties to the celibacy dispute of the eleventh century. On their part, opponents of mandatory celibacy were to use this lack of conciseness as a support of their views. Do not legislate obligations for ministry where Christ did not make such difficult demands was the summation of their arguments. For their part, the proponents of mandatory celibacy looked to these texts as support of the ascetical demands which they thought to be necessary for all clergy in major orders.

There is one consensus among present exegetes, however; Christ clearly did not mandate obligatory celibacy for clergy, for no matter how one views these texts, there is no reference at all to clerical discipline. Even Schillebeeckx states, "In the synoptic gospels celibacy is not presented as an abstract ideal, nor as a requirement imposed from without, not even as a desideratum."  

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16 Jerome, Tertullian, and Augustine are examples of the few. St. Augustine praises virginity and conjugal continence but always insists that those who marry do well to because this grace (virginity or continence) is not given to all. St. Augustine sees this Matthew verse as part of a virginity pericope.

17 Schillebeeckx, *Celibacy*, p. 25.
St. Paul and Pastoral Epistles

In St. Paul's works there are two passages often cited in support of celibacy: I Cor 7:7-8 and I Cor 9:5. In I Cor 7:7, St. Paul addressed married couples whom he advised to practice self control for a time by mutual consent for the purpose of devoting themselves to prayer, but then again to return to each other. After pointing out the obligation husband and wife have toward each other, St. Paul makes notice of his "freedom." I Cor 7:7 reads, "Given my preference, I should like you to be as I am. Still, each of us has his own gift from God, one this another that."

In verses eight and nine, St. Paul addressed those not married or widows and told them to stay the way they are, even as he himself is remaining in his present state. It is not clear what St. Paul's state is, except that he is not living with a wife; but whether he ever was married or not is unclear.

To those not married and to widows I have this to say: It would be well if they remain as they are, even as I do myself; but if they cannot exercise self control, they should marry. It is better to marry than to be on fire.

What was the state of St. Paul? Was he a widower or separated from his living spouse? Was he never married? If we knew, we might be able to interpret his writing. One of the church Fathers, Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-c. 211) says:
Even Paul did not hesitate in one letter to address his consort. The only reason why he did not take her about with him was that it would have been an inconvenience for his ministry.\(^\text{18}\)

Clement of Alexandria does not specify which letter of St. Paul he means. One aspect of Paul's life is quite evident; he was for the status quo as we read in I Cor 7:25-26:

With respect to virgins, I have not received any commandment from the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who is trustworthy, thanks to the Lord's mercy. It is this: In the present time of stress it seems good to me for a person to continue as he is.

Furthermore, there is no question that while writing to the Corinthians, St. Paul was deeply affected by his belief in the immediacy of the parousia, and this belief accounts in part for his espousal of the status quo. There seems to be no justification in these verses of St. Paul to suggest that celibacy is better than marriage, but rather that the parousia is all important.

In I Cor 7:29-31, St. Paul says:

I tell you, brothers, the time is short. From now on those with wives should live as though they had none; those who weep should live as though they were not weeping, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing; buyers should conduct themselves as though they owned nothing, and those who make use of the world as though they were not using it, for the world as we know it is passing away.\(^\text{19}\)


\(^{19}\)In I Cor 7:38, St. Paul writes that even, in this short time, to marry a virgin is fitting, but to remain unmarried is more fitting, because of the present stress (immediacy of the parousia.)
Schillebeeckx states:

The pagan religious and cultural motive of "nearness to God" was to be modified eschatologically by Paul into the motive of the coming parousia of the Lord (I Cor 7:29.) This eschatological motive re-echoes Luke's in "equal to angels" (20:35-36,) in the "sons of the resurrection" (Lk. 20:36,) and in the fact that there will be no marriage in the final kingdom of God (Mt. 22:30ff.)

St. Paul obviously reserved for himself the right to marry even if he had been married before. He stated in I Cor 9:5: do we not have the right to marry a believing woman like the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Paul maintained that every preacher of the gospel had the right to marry a believer. But he himself had decided not to marry so that he would be more free in his travels. There is nothing stated in I Cor 7:32-38 that would contradict the assumption of Clement of Alexandria that Paul was married previous to his conversion. In fact, I Cor 9:5 seems to indicate that Paul was married prior to his conversion and that he was still free to marry a believer.

It becomes evident that many interpretations are possible to these Pauline texts, and it is no wonder that different sides of the celibacy debate could use the same texts.

Certainly nothing is as clear in the Scripture about the discipline of married clergy as the Pastoral Epistles. In both the Epistle to Timo-

20Schillebeeckx, Celibacy, p. 55.
21See I Cor 7:12-16 (Pauline Privilege.)
thy and Titus, qualifications for the ministry are outlined. I Tim 3:2-5:

A bishop must be irreproachable, married only once, of even temper, self controlled, modest, and hospitable. He should be a good teacher. He must not be addicted to drink. He ought not to be contentious but, rather, gentle, a man of peace. Nor can he be someone who loves money. He must be a good manager of his own household, keeping his children under control without sacrificing his dignity; for if a man does not know how to manage his own house, how can he take care of the church of God?

Obviously a good marriage is a solid test as to the fittingness of a candidate for the office of bishop; and, furthermore, a bishop could be married only once. There is no indication that the bishop was required to be married, but the status of his household helped one to know if he would be a good administrator.

The rule for deacons is given in I Tim 3:12: "Deacons may be married but once and must be good managers of their children and their households." As for the bishops, a well-ordered household was a good qualification for the ministry of the deacon.

Titus 1:6 has the following: As I instructed you, a presbyter must be irreproachable, married only once, the father of children who are believers and are known not to be wild and insubordinate.²² It is not important whether the Pastoral Epistles, I Timothy and Titus, were directly produced by Paul or came about fifty or more years lat-

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²²NAB. This text is very similar to I Tim 3:2-5 and according to NAB the term presbyter and bishop (I Tim) are the same (see footnote to Titus 1:5-9.) I, however, question that conclusion since it may well be that the Epistle to Timothy was written in the second century and may reflect the concept of bishop expressed by St. Ignatius of Antioch (see footnote to I Tim 5:14-25.) We may already be talking about the threefold ministry.
ter, because St. Paul's influence and the spirit of the apostolic church is present in these letters. Not only did the proponents of married clergy cite these verses again and again as support but also maintained that these verses stated Paul's real meaning in I Corinthians. It is quite clear that the apostolic church saw no necessary or even desirable relationship between clerical ministry and celibacy in any form.

Before leaving Sacred Scripture as sources of rationalization for different viewpoints regarding the discipline of celibacy, something should be said of the Old Testament priests' custom of separating from their wives during the time of temple duty and also about Revelation 14:1-5.

There is no direct reference of separation during temple duty any place in the Old Testament. Leviticus 21:1-15 calls for purity among the priests at the temple, but gives no command to be conjugally celibate for that duration. Ezekiel 44:1-31 also forbids any contamination but says nothing about marital sexuality except that priests must marry virgins of the Jewish faith. The custom of conjugal celibacy for priests during temple duty may have arisen to offset the sexual abuses of many high places of the neighboring gentiles. Why the Jewish priests accepted cultic purity as part of temple duty has as far as I can determine not been studied at any great length.

In the Book of Revelation 14:1-5 we find reference made to the companions of the Lamb who were pure and without flaw.

These are men who have never been defiled by immorality with women. They are pure and follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They have been ransomed as the first fruit of mankind for God and the Lamb. On their lips no deceit has been found; they are indeed without flaw.
Many translations use the word virgin instead of pure; however, in the context the meaning is any person who has not committed fornication or adultery. No reference is made here to abstinence from legitimate sexual activity. Methodius of Olympus (d. ca. 311) refers indirectly to this text in praise of virginity but makes no connection to ministry.24

Schillebeeckx sums up the attitude toward married clergy in apostolic times:

The image of the church official in apostolic times is thus that of a married, mature man, who as a father, gives an example of good family government, and along with all these qualities of leadership has been chosen to be "deacon," "priest," "bishop," or other functionary within the church. There is no indication of any rejection of woman or of sexuality in connection with the priesthood. Church life and family life (in broad sense of the word) are carried on in the same "profane" environment; that of the Christian home with wide open doors.25

It is no small wonder then that during the first eleven centuries the conflict between mandatory conjugal celibacy and the right to marry would erupt again and again. The writers of the scriptures did not take sides in this conflict because the conflict had not yet arisen. The history of celibacy during the first eleven centuries shows that the lack of clear scriptural or clear apostolic tradition data made enforcement of the canons much more difficult.

23 See the footnote to verse 4, NAB.
24 Methodius PG 18, 82.
25 E. Schillebeeckx, Celibacy, p. 21.
Early Church Fathers

During the times of the persecutions in the early history of the church, the resurrection and the after life were constantly and vividly preached as the core of personal faith and solace among the Christians. The original witnesses to Christ one by one joyfully gave up their life in martyrdom in the belief of future glory and reunion in Jesus. Their faith and legacies became the source of inspiration and direction for the second generation Christian community. The missionary work of Paul to the gentiles was now carried on by the gentile converts of the apostle. New structures for operating the Christian community gradually took form.

In Asia Minor, Ignatius of Antioch (c.35-c.105) and Polycarp of Smyrna (c.69-c.155) who were intimately aware of the Johnnine and Pauline traditions not only through John's and Paul's writing but also perhaps through personal contact with one of these Apostles, reflect an attitude toward celibacy and marriage at the turn of the first century. Ignatius wrote to Polycarp (c.100):

Tell my sisters to love the Lord and to be content with their husbands in flesh and in spirit. In like manner also charge my brothers in the name of Jesus Christ to love their wives as the Lord loves the Church. If any one is able to abide in chastity to the honor of the flesh of the Lord, let him so abide without boasting. If he boast, he is lost; and if it be known beyond the bishop, he is polluted. It becometh men and women, too, when

26 Chastity here means conjugal celibacy.
they marry, to unite themselves with consent of the bishop, that the marriage may be after the Lord and not after concupiscence.

St. Ignatius here addressed married people and reflected Paul's voluntary and temporary continence within marriage (I Cor 7:5.) It would indeed be hard to keep secret an unmarried state.

Athenogoras of Athens (d.c.185) wrote his Embassy (c.177) to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. In this letter he defended Christian behavior against accusations of cannibalism and sexual immorality, both of which were against the Emperor's Stoic principles. Athenagoras stated: there are many to be found among us, both men and women, who remain unmarried their whole life long in the hope of becoming more closely united with God. There is no direct or even indirect relation of this statement to clerical celibacy, rather he reaffirmed that Christianity itself can be a sufficient motive for a life of virginal celibacy or at least a post-baptismal celibacy. It may be presumed that among these celibates there were members of the clergy.

The apologists of the second and third century took the message of Christ into the world of the philosophers and emperors. Justin the Martyr (c.100-c.165) insisted that there was nothing inordinate about the Christian way of life. There were no demands made that a good Stoic could not accept and Christians accepted whatever good previous philosophers had said.

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28Athenogoras of Athens, Embassy, as found in Peter Harkx, The Fathers on Celibacy, (DePere, Wisc., 1968) pp. 11-12. PG 6, 965.
29St. Justin the Martyr, First Apology Treasury of Early Civilization, p. 326.
Minucius Felix (d. 4c.220) wrote in his Octavius a refutation of several accusations, including one of incest, that were leveled against the Christians.

We, on the other hand, show our modesty not only outwardly but inwardly; we willingly cleave to one marriage-tie; in the desire to have children, we have only one wife or else none.... Our language is pure, our body even more so, and most of us practice perpetual virginity without boasting of it.30

Minucius maintained that the Christian members of the community were in clear conscience and agreed with the best of Stoic principles. He also attested to the practice of perpetual virginity as practiced by many Christians in that community. In view of the accusations brought to Minucius Felix, he may have exaggerated the number of virgins to make his case more convincing. For him celibacy and clerical ministry were not necessarily related, but rather celibacy (virginity) was worthy in itself.

Tertullian (c.160-c.220) was a Carthaginian, married, a first-class Latinist, lawyer, and later in life a leader of a group of Montanists. 31 He held views admittedly rigoristic which may have influenced later proponents of clerical celibacy. In his early Christian career, he espoused the orthodox teachings of the church but at the same time showed an extremist, even if not heretical view of sexuality as is apparent in his

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31 Montanists were a group of rigorists who believed in the immediate Second Coming, imposed rigorous fasts, denied the church had power to forgive sins, and even forbade remarriage to widows or widowers.
De Cultu Feminarum (On the Decorum of Women) in which he condemned contemporary women's fashions as immodest. In addition his De Exhortationis Castitatis (An Exhortation to Chastity) describes marriage as a legitimate debauchery. But in the same work he shows virginity to be directed toward God and not necessarily a reaction against sexuality.

For how many men and women in the ranks of the church confess themselves in loyalty to God; they have restored the honor of their flesh and they have already proclaimed themselves children of the future age by killing in themselves the power of desire and all that has no place in paradise.32

We do not know how much or how soon the Montanist philosophy affected Tertullian, but he finally "converted" to the schismatic group in c.207, shortly after the death of the Phrygian, Montanus. Even as rigorous as the Montanists were, Tertullian was not completely satisfied and set himself up as a leader of an even more rigorist group of Montanists.33

The rigorist groups of the last second and early third centuries caused tensions within the Christian community. However, they did force attention of the Fathers on the Christian and sexuality. Clement of Alexandria (c.150-c.215) defended normal sexual life for the clergy and at the same time defended virginal celibacy. "Both are thus holy in the Lord, the one as spouse, the other as virgin."34

32 Tertullian, An Exhortation to Chastity, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.12. PL 2, 930.

33 Jaroslav Pelikan in his Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600), (Chicago, 1971) Vol I states on page 101 . . . he Tertullian.

34 Clement of Alexandria, Stromateis, III, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.15. PG 8, 1189.
For Clement there was no conflict between marriage and ministry. He continued:

But he (Paul) says: "The unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord but the married man is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please his wife" (I Cor 7:32ff.). What can this mean? Is it then not permitted to those who wish to please their wives according to God's will to give thanks to God? Is the married man not permitted to be concerned about the affairs of God in addition to his marriage? Not at all. But, just as she who is not married is anxious about the affairs of the Lord so that she may be holy in body and spirit, so too is she who is married in the Lord anxious about the interests of her husband and those of God, so that she may be holy in body and spirit.  

For Clement, there is no inequality between marriage and celibacy, rather both forms can be followed as a way of life in the clerical ministry. In his comment on I Cor 7:9, Clement wrote, "It is of second marriage, the apostle says, if you burn, marry."  

Origen (c.185-c.254), undoubtedly the most brilliant of the early Fathers, was not free from extremist views. Although in many ways a pioneer in the spiritual life and a source for many of the rules of monasticism, he took some of the Scriptures extremely literally and had himself castrated for the Kingdom. Origen even questioned whether prayer is allowed in marital bed chambers.

It is a question whether it is a holy and pure thing to intercede with God in the place where sexual intercourse occurs—"I do not mean unlawful intercourse but that which is allowed by the apostolic word, "by way of permission, not of commandment."  

35Clement of Alexandria, Stromateis, III, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p. 15. PG 8, 1189.  
36Clement of Alexandria, Miscellanies, op. cit., p. 42.  
37Origen, On Prayer, as found in Alexandrian Christianity, p. 325.
Origen also defended conjugal celibacy in his work *Against Celsus* in "Certain ones among the Christians, from a desire of excelling in chastity and in order to worship God in greater purity, refrain even from such physical pleasures as are in accord with the law."

During the third century the Christian church reacted to extremist views of sexuality; on one hand the Fathers condemned Saturnius (d. c.140) who held: "marriage and generation are from Satan," 39 and on the other hand they condemned the Nicolaitans who taught that: "fornication is a matter of indifference." 40 Nor would this be the last time that the Nicolaitans were to be condemned, because in the tenth century many of the reformers referred to the married clergy as Nicolaitans and then consigned them to the recesses of hell.

The Gnosticism of which Saturnius (d. c.140), Marcion (c. c.160), Valentinus (d. c.170), and Basilides (d. c.150) were the chief leaders generally held matter to be evil and salvation was in knowledge (gnosis); all that distracted from gnosis was condemned. Gnostics held that every person was to give himself entirely to gnosis; therefore some of them rejected sexuality as unrelated to gnosis. Christian leaders saw a dualism that threatened their teaching that the total person (body, soul, and spirit) is redeemed. Asceticism for the sake of self control was practiced by some non-Christians who were in no way Gnostic.

40 Robert M. Grant, *Gnosticism*, p. 43.
Schillebeeckx states:

In the early church, there was a conflict between the Christian and the pagan ideals of celibacy— that is between celibacy as charism and celibacy as an ascetic achievement. The Church Fathers seldom mention celibacy without warning against self-willed pride in the ascetic achievement of self-control which was what celibacy was for the non-Christians.41

St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage (d.258), called by some the African Pope, wrote to Bishop Antonianus of Numidia in about the year 251 that forgiving adulterers should not diminish the motivation for virginity and continence.

Do not suppose, dearest brother, that for the future either the courage of the brethren will be lessened or that martyrdom will fail, because repentance is made easier for the lapsed and because a hope of peace is offered to the penitent. Indeed, the strength of the faithful will remain unshaken and the integrity of those who fear and love God with their whole heart will continue firm and strong. We allow a time of penance even to adulterers, and peace is given them. Even so, virginity does not on that account fail in the church, nor does the noble resolve of continence weaken because of the sins of others. The church flourishes, crowned as it is with so many virgins; and chastity and modesty retain their noble attraction. The vigor of continence, then, is not broken down by making penance and pardon easier for the adulterer.42

It is not clear if Cyprian included conjugal celibacy in this reference or not, and furthermore, he provided us no ministerial motivation for virginity.

During the first three centuries there seemed to be no necessary connection between celibacy and the ecclesiastical office of deacon, priest, or bishop. But, in the fourth century there evolved a direct

41Schillebeeckx, Celibacy, p.54.
connection between celibacy and clerical ministry. However, there were precedents in pre-Christian times for continence. Schillebeeckx states:

Now it is a fact that in pre-Christian and pagan times continence and religious observance were linked together in certain instances, and that this connection was also up to a point explicitly motivated.43

Thus, the early Christian could look to non-Christian people around him for examples of continence for office holders. The Jewish priests of the Old Testament were not allowed to live in marital relations during the time they were on duty at the temple. Several proponents of conjugal celibacy were to use this as a sufficient reason for celibacy among the Christian clergy. But in the final analysis there was no essentially Christian reason for linking celibacy with the ecclesiastical office in the first several centuries of the Christian era.

Late Church Fathers

After the Edict of Milan and the cessation of the persecutions, the Christian church came out of the underground. Because of the persecutions of the Emperors Decius (c.249-c.251), Valerian (c.253-c.260), and Diocletian (c.284-c.305), the first job of the unoppressed church was organization. Structures such as dioceses were instituted and many new bishoprics were established for the civitates.44 Opportunists also entered the church in search of leadership positions since the threat of persecutions had been lifted. As the Church spread herself

43 Schillebeeckx, Celibacy, p. 51.
44 See Council of Constantinople 381, Canon 2.
more freely, councils and synods became a necessary part of church government and clerical discipline was emphasized. The power base of the empire shifted eastward and clerical discipline in the East and West soon began to be at variance.

Eastern Church Fathers

Athanasius (326-373), the famous deacon of the Council of Nicea (325) bishop of Alexandria, and Greek theologian wrote that many bishops were living normal married lives while some were practicing continence in marriage. In Egypt during the late fourth century continence in marriage became more widespread among the bishops. Synesius (c.370-413), bishop of Ptolemais (402-413), philosopher and envoy to the court of Constantinople for the church of Alexandria (399-402), continued to live with his wife in full marital relationship, and justified his status in a letter to his fellow bishops.

For as far as I am concerned, God, the law, and holy imposition of hands of Theophilus have given me my wife. Well, I declare and testify to all that I shall decidedly not live separated from her nor live with her stealthily as an adulterer. For the former would show me completely lacking in loyalty to my duty, while the second is in conflict with normal course of events. But I desire and pray for as many healthy offspring as possible.

However, Ephiphanius (c.315-403), bishop of Salamis (367-403), monk and founder of a monastery (c.335) demanded continence (conjugal celibacy) for subdeacons and all higher orders. Ephiphanius never abandoned his active interest in the monastery and the pursuit of a rigid

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ascetical life. We have no record of how successful he was in his demands for conjugal celibacy; his extensive travels may have prevented him from enforcing his position. He stated in his work Panarion:

The crown and, so to speak, the mother of all of these ranks is the holy priesthood. For this office one chooses chiefly virgins or otherwise monastics. Or, should there be no one among the monastics suitable for this office, a person should be selected from among those who lead continent lives or who are widowers of a first marriage. It is not permitted to receive any one into the priesthood who has married a second time, even though he lives in continence or is a widower. This holds good for the order of bishop, priest, deacon, and subdeacon. 47

Ephiphanius claimed that his position on clerical celibacy was of apostolic origin and gave this rationale:

The matter is thus that after Christ's coming on earth, the sacred divine law does not admit (to the ministry) those who after a first marriage and the death of their wives, have contracted a second marriage. The reason for this lies in the considerable dignity of the priesthood. The holy church of God keeps this rule sternly and with the utmost care. Moreover, she does not admit to the office of deacon, priest, bishop, or subdeacon any one—even though he has been married only once—one who continues to live a normal married life; she does, however, allow widowers or those who live in continence. This occurs chiefly in places where the laws of the church are scrupulously observed. But, you will undoubtedly ask me: In some places, priests, deacons, and subdeacons have had children nonetheless. This, however, is not in accordance with the rule but proceeds from the remissness of the people who take advantage of the opportunity and on account of the great number (of the faithful), whereas it is impossible to find sufficient ministers. 48

It seems that Ephiphanius' position was unique in the East.

47 Ephiphanius, Panarion, as found in Harkx, Fathers, pp. 68-69. PG 42, 824.

48 Ephiphanius, Panarion as found in Harkx, Fathers, pp. 69-70. PG 41, 102ff.
Socrates (c.380-450) wrote in his *Ecclesiastical History*:

In the East, all practice continence voluntarily, including the bishops, without the compulsion of a law which dictates that they must live so. For many of them have had children of legal marriage during the time of their episcopate.49

It seems that the eastern clergy were following the advice of St. Paul who called for a temporary and a voluntary continence as a means of deeper consciousness in prayer.

St. John Chrysostom (c.347-407), archbishop of Constantinople, theologian, and scriptural exegete, made the following observation on celibacy during one of his homilies on I Timothy:

"He (the apostle) makes thus (man with one wife) not in order to state a law according to which (admission to the clergy) would be permissible only under this condition50 but to prevent a lack of moderation . . . . But some say that it is required that he should be married.51

St. John Chrysostom maintained that spiritual excellence is of primary importance in choosing clergymen. Marital or non-marital status is not a qualification.52

The Eastern Fathers as a whole never saw virginity or conjugal celibacy as obligatory. Methodius of Olympus (d.#c.311), a bishop in Lycia and an early opponent of Origen, wrote in his work *Symposium* 49

50 There are some who insisted that only married men could be ordained. See Harkx, *Fathers*, p.24.


52 See Anne Fremantle, *Treasury of Early Christianity*, p.114-115, as found in St. John’s *On the Priesthood*.

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52 See Anne Fremantle, *Treasury of Early Christianity*, p.114-115, as found in St. John’s *On the Priesthood*. 

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that "... yet no matter how elevated the virgin state, it is not obligatory."^53

Eusebius (c.263-c.339), church historian, theologian, and scholar, wrote in his Ecclesiastical History that Dionysius, bishop of Corinth (c.170) forbade Pinynis, bishop of Knosse, to demand celibacy. When discussing an attempt to introduce conjugal celibacy Eusebius also stated in his work, Demonstratio Evangelica:

The work of the Scripture says that the bishop must be a once married man. But those who are ordained and occupy themselves with the service of God ought henceforth to refrain from intercourse with their wives. But the word of Scripture allows, even proclaims to all with emphasis, that those who do not consider themselves worthy for the cult must hold marriage in honor and keep married life untainted: for God will judge the immoral and adulterous.\footnote{Methodius, Symposium, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.67. PG 18, 32.}

One problem more acute in the East than in the West was the custom in some localities of admitting to office those who had been married twice \footnote{Harkx, Fathers, p. 66.} \footnote{Eusebius, Demonstratio Evangelica, as found in Harkx, Fathers, pp. 66-67. PG 22,81.} \footnote{Married twice means even those widowers who remarry and also those single men who marry a widow.} The church of Macedonia had bishops who were married twice and Pope Innocent I (pope 401-417) condemned that custom:

I have heard that those who have married a widow have not only become clerics but have been promoted to the highest rank of the priesthood (bishop); everyone knows that this is contrary to the precepts of the law. No exceptions on the basis of another law can be made to this rule supported by divine authority, and this includes the custom which exists among you.
The (divergent) rule has, as you yourself say, its origin in ignorance (of the rule); or, to put it more discreetly, is contrary to apostolic tradition and complete insight. You must know that we absolutely refuse to tolerate this in any church of East or West.\footnote{Pope Innocent, Epistle 17 to Bishops of Macedonia, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.63. PL 20, 527ff.}

Not all agreed with Pope Innocent I. Theodore of Mopsuestia (c.350-c.427), theologian, renowned exegete and bishop of Mopsuestia (392-c.427) stated in his \textit{Commentary on I Timothy} his opposition to Pope Innocent I on successive marriages as an impediment to ordination.

\begin{quote}
It is ridiculous that the majority should cling to this interpretation; if a respectable man marries a second time, he is not admitted to the ranks of the clergy; yet if a person has been married only once, but misbehaves himself (with another woman) it is debated (whether he may be admitted) even though Paul expressly allows a second marriage, while all cohabitation outside marriage is adultery. . . .\footnote{Theodore of Mopsuestia, \textit{Commentary on I Timothy}, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.64. PG 66, 937ff.}
\end{quote}

Theodoretus of Cyrrhus (c.398-458), an apologist, monk and bishop of Cyrrhus, gave the same interpretation in his \textit{Commentary of I Timothy}. Furthermore, in one of his letters he maintained that bishops who were successively married were in good standing in Palestine, Antioch, and Berola.\footnote{Harkx, Fathers, p.64. PG 83, 1305.}

The Council of Trullo (692) established a uniform discipline in the East: bishops had to be continent (conjugally celibate) or never married; other clergy had to be married before ordination; and second marriages are not allowed and those clerics who had a successive wife

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[7]{Pope Innocent, Epistle 17 to Bishops of Macedonia, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.63. PL 20, 527ff.}
\footnotetext[8]{Theodore of Mopsuestia, \textit{Commentary on I Timothy}, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.64. PG 66, 937ff.}
\footnotetext[9]{Harkx, Fathers, p.64. PG 83, 1305.}
\end{footnotes}
were either to separate or be dismissed. The Fathers in the East established no customs of obligatory celibacy, but rather constantly protected all the options.  

Fathers in the West

The western church went in a different direction on celibacy during the fourth and fifth centuries. While the east opposed all obligations of conjugal celibacy during these two centuries, the western church began to insist on conjugal celibacy through the writing of Jerome, Siricius, Innocent, Ambrose, Augustine, Leo I and finally Pope Gregory I.

How much influence persons such as Jovinian (d. #c. 405), who denied the virginity of Mary, and Vigilantius (d. #c. 400), who condemned virginity and the Encratites, had on these late western fathers is not known. However, over a period of about two hundred and twenty years from Ambrose to Gregory I there was a constant movement toward conjugal celibacy in the West.

St. Ambrose interprets I Timothy 3:2-5 in a new way when he insists that "married but one time" really means conjugal celibacy: 

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60 This council of Trullo will be discussed in chapter two.

61 Jovinian was an Italian ascetic who warned against the dangers of ascetism and claimed one same reward for all people in heaven. He was excommunicated in Rome (390). Jerome, Siricius, and Augustine wrote against Jovianus.

62 Encratites were a group of abstainers, one group of which was founded by Tatian, a disciple of Justin the Martyr. They held marriage similar to adultery. See Encratites in Westminster Dictionary p. 296.
The apostle is a teacher of virtue, . . . who prescribes that (the office-bearer) must be married only once; not in order to exclude the unmarried—for that would exceed the obligation of this rule—but so that he (the office-bearer) should preserve the grace of his baptism through conjugal purity.

This interpretation is quite extreme and contrary to the other commentaries on I Timothy; it is surprising that this opinion was not contested.

St. Ambrose made his position on conjugal celibacy quite clear:
"You know that the office must be kept pure and spotless and may not be tainted by marital intercourse," Not all the clergy in his territory followed Ambrose's advice, but maintained that their conduct followed the ancient customs. Ambrose observed:

... in some of the more isolated regions, those who nonetheless exercise the office of deacon or even of the priesthood, have fathered children; and they defend this behavior as based upon an ancient custom, since the sacrifice is offered only once in so many days.

Ambrose's influence was widely felt among those proposing conjugal celibacy in the century following.

St. Jerome condemned bishops who insisted that candidates to the deaconate be married before ordination.

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63 St. Ambrose, Letter 63 to Church at Vercelle, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.25. PL 16, 1205.

64 St. Ambrose, On Offices of Clerics, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.37. PL 16, 97ff.

65 St. Ambrose, On Offices of Clerics, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.37. PL 16, 97ff.
They say that he (Vigilantius) has bishops as accomplices in his crime, if, that is, one can call them bishops, who refuse to ordain deacons unless they first marry. They think that no unmarried person is capable of chastity; they even hold up their own holy lives as an example, they who think the worst of everyone. They refuse to administer the sacrament of Christ unless they see that the wives of their clergy are pregnant and unless they see children crowding their mothers' arms.

St. Jerome allowed married men to be ordained but insisted on conjugal celibacy, yet he preferred unmarried men for the ranks of the clergy. He suggested as motivation for virginal or conjugal celibacy that Christ and Mary were virgins. This is one of the first references for celibacy based upon the celibate Christ.

Christ and Mary, both virgins, have laid the basis of virginity for both sexes. It is for this reason that bishops, priests, and deacons were chosen from the ranks of men who have never been married, or who are widowers, or who at least after their ordination live lives of perpetual continence.

St. Augustine (354-430) supported continence when he wrote to his fellow bishops:

Therefore, we, who are called shepherds, must break unchastity by continence .... It is impossible that impure shepherds ... should make those under them chaste, since the flock is of necessity like to the shepherd.

St. Augustine also wrote a work entitled Holy Virginity wherein he proposed virginity as superior to marriage, but said nothing about obligatory celibacy.

67St. Jerome, Letter 48 to Pammachins, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.38. PL 22, 510.
68St. Augustine, To My Brothers of the Desert. (Sermon 42) as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.85. PL 40, 1316.
Siricius (c.334-399), pope (384-399), strong, authoritarian, and promoter of independant papal power, probably did more than any person to promote conjugal celibacy as a discipline in the western church. With Siricius a new era arrived characterized by the development of new disciplines for the clergy. He issued the first of the papal decretals which in succeeding pontificates would play a major role in enforcing conjugal celibacy.

Pope Siricius wrote to Himerius, archbishop of Tarragona, in 385 asking all clergy to practice conjugal celibacy, notwithstanding the customs found among the priests of the Old Testament.

We have heard that there are several priests of Christ as well as levites (deacons) who, long after their ordination, have begotten children both by their own wives and as a result of unlawful cohabitation; and that they defend their crime by quoting the Old Testament where it is written that priests and levites are allowed to beget children . . . . Why, then, had the priests in the year of their service to dwell far from their houses in the temple? For this reason, that they might not even have the opportunity to cohabit with their wives, so that with an untroubled conscience they might be able to offer up a sacrifice pleasing to God. Outside the period of their service, relations with wives were permitted only on account of the succession, since according to the law only members of the tribe of Lebi were admitted to the service of God. . . . We bind all priests and levites through the imperishable law that from the day of our ordination we pledge our spirit and our body in the service of sobriety and chastity, if at least we wish to be pleasing to God in all respects in the sacrifices which we offer daily.

The motivation for conjugal celibacy given by Pope Siricius is clearly cultic purity. His letters to various bishops tried to build up a valid church law from what previously was only a local custom.


70 Siricius, To Himerius, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.39. PL 13, 1198ff.
No reference is made to the New Testament teachings despite the claim that this rule comes from ancient traditions. Yet the Old Testament custom allowed priests normal marital relationship when not on temple duty, and not all clergy—surely not deacons— at Siricius' time offered sacrifices. Furthermore, daily worship service for all priests during this time was not at all common. Was Siricius referring to the new canon of the Council of Elvira (c.314)? Was he merely stating as law a custom of some localities in which conjugal celibacy was practiced? We do not know what Siricius meant by the "ancient imperishable law."

Siricius was not satisfied in stating the regulation, but also gave practical guidelines for its implementation.

Since—as your Eminence informs us—there are some who regret that they have erred through ignorance, we are of the opinion that mercy must not be denied them on the condition that they remain in the office which they now fulfill for as long as they live; but they must take care to live henceforth in continence. But those who take refuge in the excuse of an unlawful privilege which according to them is granted them by the old law (the Old Testament) must know that by the authority of the Apostolic See they are expelled from every ecclesiastical office which they have used unworthily, and may never more have anything to do with the exalted mysteries of which they have deprived themselves by their lust for immoral desires. Since existing examples render us all the more alive to the necessity for drawing up precautionary measures for the future (we decree that) every bishop, priest, and deacon caught infringing this rule in the future must very well realize that we now exclude him from any possibility of grace; for it is necessary to excise with a knife those wounds which no longer respond to milder means of healing.71

71Siricius, To Himerius, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.40. PL 13, 1138ff.
Pope Siricius left little to chance or interpretation as he spelled out the discipline, and the Synod of Rome of 386 confirmed his decretals on celibacy. After this synod Siricius wrote to the church in Africa and set forth the requirements of conjugal celibacy for all deacons, priests, and bishops.

Moreover, we urge—what is just and chaste and pure—that priests and levites (deacons) should not cohabit with their wives. . . . If, in the recklessness of his fleshly desires, anyone should transgress the spirit of his law, he must know that he is to regard himself as banished from our community.72

Other popes were to continue the policy of Siricius, even though some of them modified certain aspects of the rule. Pope Innocent I (pope 401-417), strongly favored the role of the bishop of Rome as the leader in sacramental discipline and doctrinal disputes. He wrote to Bishop Exuperius of Toulouse and to all the bishops of Calabria, and to Bishop Victricius of Rouen, and in each letter he communicated the regulations of his predecessor but took into account the possibility of ignorance of Siricius' discipline. In his letter to Exuperius, Innocent wrote:

You ask what must be done with those who—having been appointed to the office of deacon or priest—appear to continue their normal married life or to have begotten children. With regard to these the practice of the divine laws is clear and the unambiguous exhortations of Pope Siricius of blessed memory are sufficiently well-known: anyone holding such office who continues to live a normal married life, must be deprived of every ecclesiastical function and may not be permitted to exercise a work of service which may be fulfilled only in a state of continence. If some

72Siricius, Letter 5 to Bishops of Africa, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.41. PL 13, 1159ff.
appear ignorant of this rule of church life and discipline, which was promulgated by Siricius in the various provinces, their ignorance will not be held against them, provided that they live henceforth in continence. They may retain the dignity which they possess, but may not be permitted to a higher rank. 73

Innocent I knew that not all clergy are aware of Siricius' decree, but nevertheless demanded that all accept the discipline and start to practice it immediately, however, with no penalties for the ignorant. Innocent I calls this law a divine law but provides no reference for its revelation.

Pope Leo I (pope 440-461), a strong proponent of universal primacy of the Roman bishop and called by some the "first pope," also continued the rule of Siricius and furthermore added two more elements: first, he included the subdeacons in the discipline and second, the wife need not be sent away although continence was still required.

For while those who are not members of the clergy are free to enter into marriage and to produce children, physical cohabitation can no longer be permitted even to subdeacons, as an example of the purity of complete continence. 74

Despite Leo I's efforts to include subdeacons in the general legislation not all the successors did so.

Instead of separation, Leo I insisted upon a spiritual relationship for married clergy (subdeacons and higher orders.)

The law of conjugal abstinence is the same for servants of the altar (deacons and subdeacons) as for priests and bishops; so long as they remained laymen or lectors they were permitted to marry and to produce children.

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73 Innocent I, Letter 6 to Bishop Exuperius, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.42. PL 20, 496.

74 Leo I, Letter 167 to Rusticus of Narbonne, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.43. PL 54, 672.
But when they have attained the above mentioned of­
ices, that which was hitherto permissable for them
is henceforth forbidden. Therefore, so that a spir­
itual bond may grow from the physical marriage, they
may not send their spouses away and must live as
though they had none (cf. I Cor 7:29), whereby the
love of the married couple remains intact and the
conjugal acts cease.  

The impracticality of this last directive was at first not too
obvious, for even Pope Gregory (pope 590-604) laid down a similar rule
when he exhorted bishops to ask their priests to live in continence:
" . . . but they (bishops) must add, as the highest juridical power
has laid down, that they must not abandon their wives, whom they must
guide in chastity."  

Such a relationship was filled with dangers either through a
continued sexual relationship or through the sort of inhuman rela-
tionship described in the Dialogues in which Pope Gregory (c.540-
604) approvingly cites the life of a bishop in Nursia:

. . . who from the time of his ordination loved his
wife as a sister, but was on his guard against her
as against an enemy; he never allowed her close to
him and under no condition did her permit her to ap-
proach him; he had radically put an end to any fa-
miliarity between them. . . . lest he should incur
the slightest fault on her account he also refused
to allow her to perform the necessary services for
him.  

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75Leo I, Letter 167 to Rusticus of Narbonne, as found in Harkx,
Fathers, p.43. PL 54, 672.

76Gregory I, Letter 60 to Roman Bishops, as found in Harkx,
Fathers, p.45. PL 77, 997.

77Gregory I, Dialogues, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.46.
PL 77, 336ff.
Gregory I continued his account of this bishop's life and related that on his death-bed when she touched him to see if he was still alive, (the bishop) exclaimed: "Depart from me, woman, the passion is not yet quenched." Such a story has some exaggerations, no doubt, but the important thing is that Gregory I approved the spirit of this story. Later council and synods would abolish this kind of relationship and demand total separation.

Second marriages also presented problems and difference of opinion for the western Fathers. Could a person married the second time be allowed in the clerical ministry?

Jerome felt that under certain circumstances it was permissible but Ambrose remained convinced in his refusal of ordination for those married the second time. Jerome, although an avid supporter of the virgin state, stated that marriages before baptism do not count, thus a person could marry again after baptism and still be eligible for the episcopacy. In a letter to Oceanus, Jerome confessed:

I am amazed that you bring up this one example: the whole world is full of ordinations of this sort and I am not talking now of priests or members of the lower orders; I am thinking of bishops who if I were to mention them one by one would form such a large company that it would surpass the numbers of the Synod of Rimini.

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78 Gregory I, Dialogues, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.57. PL 77, 336ff.
80 Harkx, Fathers, p.25.
81 Jerome, Letter 69 to Oceanus, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p.27. PL 22, 653ff.
Celibacy and Monasticism

The monastic movement which began in the church in the fourth and fifth centuries maintained virginal celibacy as one of its chief disciplines. In the monasteries celibacy is an obvious advantage for community living. There are other reasons as well but that would entail a lengthy study outside the scope of this paper since the struggle for conjugal celibacy during the eleventh century centered upon the diocesan clergy. It is sufficient to note that throughout the years 400-1100 A.D. monastic celibacy was always the rule.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have tried to show the attitude of the Fathers of the Church regarding conjugal and virginal celibacy. In the eastern church the custom that gradually evolved was to be married before ordination and to lead a regular married life afterward.

St. Cyril, even though not specifically mentioning clerical celibacy, nevertheless demonstrated the nearly universal attitude regarding marriage and celibacy in the east.

While you maintain perfect chastity, do not be puffed up in vain conceit against those who walk a humbler path in matrimony. As the apostle says, "Let marriage be held in honor, and let the marriage bed be undefiled." And you who keep your chastity: were you not born of those who had married? Because you have a possession of gold do not on that account hold silver in contempt. Let those also be of good cheer who are married and use their marriage properly; who enter marriage lawfully, and not out of wantonness and unbounded license; who in the assemblies bring clean bodies as well as clean garments into church; who have embarked upon matrimonial es-

82 Married persons also joined the monastery but gave up their wives and became conjugal celibates.
tate for the procreation of children, and not for the sake of indulgence. . . . And those who are once married—let them not hold in contempt those who have accommodated themselves to a second marriage. Continence is a good and wonderful thing; but still, it is permissible to enter upon a second marriage, lest the weak might fall into fornication. 83

In the west, the tendency of the later Fathers was to promote conjugal celibacy. It is clear in the era of the Fathers, that both married and conjugally celibate clerics enjoyed support from at least some of the Fathers.

83 St. Cyril, Catechetical Lectures, as found in Jurgens, Faith of Early Fathers, p.351 (no.818c+818d)
CHAPTER II
CELIBACY IN THE COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH

In the eleventh century the reformers for the clergy often cited the canons of synods or councils as the basis of their demands for celibacy. However the proponents of married clergy also cited councilial canons and tradition as support for their insistence on the freedom to lead normal married lives. The papal decrees and celibacy canons of the councils of the church from the year 314 A. D. to 1100 A. D. give us an overview of the discipline of clerical celibacy or the lack of it. Such a wide panoramic view will help us to understand more clearly the conflicts of the eleventh-century reform and to appreciate the divergent opinions. It is certain that no proponent or opponent of celibacy in the eleventh century had the benefit of all this material. Yet, by examining it, we can have a background of knowledge which will help us understand the feelings and tradition that was part of the celibacy conflict.

PART I
COUNCILIAR AND PAPAL LEGISLATION
FROM THE FOURTH TO THE SIXTH CENTURIES

Most of the celibacy disciplinary canons were promulgated during the fourth to sixth centuries and what came later often repeated these canons. We should note that only the western church set up precedents for conjugal celibacy. During the same
time, the eastern church carried on the spirit and letter of the council of Nicaea which allowed married clergy.

COUNCILS OF THE EASTERN CHURCH
DURING THE FOURTH TO SIXTH CENTURIES

The Emperor Constantine called most of the eastern bishops together at Nicaea in 325 A. D. so that law and order could be established in the church and empire by reconciling various ecclesiastical parties. The council had several purposes, one of which was to work out a closer relationship between the church and the empire; another was to reconcile the various christological opinions. For our purposes the council is famous for two items: first, it refused to mandate conjugal celibacy; second, it did prohibit the subintroducta.¹

The records of the Council of Nicaea (325) are lost and our knowledge comes from other sources, especially church historians, notably Theodoret (c.393-c.458)² (fifth century). At Nicaea one or more bishops attempted to mandate conjugal celibacy. It has been suggested³ that Ossius of Corduba (fourth century), a court

¹The subintroducta was a woman who under vows of chastity came to live with a member of the clergy who was conjugally celibate or unmarried. He was to protect her and help her in the fulfillment of her vow. Problems would readily arise and therefore the western and eastern councils repeatedly legislated against the practice.

²See Jurgens, Faith, p.282

³See Harkx, Fathers, p.19
theologian to Constantine, familiar with the canons of conjugal celibacy from the Council of Elvira (c.305), may have tried to get the council fathers to mandate conjugal celibacy for all bishops, priests, and deacons. Whoever may have been responsible for its inclusion on the agenda may never be known, but the proposal was defeated.

Its defeat came in fact through the efforts of St. Paphnutius (fourth century), a bishop of a city in Upper Thebais in Egypt who spoke out against the proposal for the following reasons:

(a) marriage is in itself something good and irreproachable; the proposed measure might suggest that there was something reprehensible, or at least imperfect, attached to marriage which would render it irreconcilable with a position of authority in the church;

(b) the acceptance of this law would place too heavy a burden upon the clergy; the majority were, after all, married and were called to office without any suggestion that this would have such far reaching consequences in the future;

(c) the virtue of the priests' wives (abandoned to their fate) would be endangered; what is to become of these women for whom married life is suddenly declared forbidden territory; would they not be tempted to seek elsewhere what they could no longer find in their own homes.⁴

We know little about St. Paphnutius other than that he was unmarried from youth and had suffered persecution. His old age and his sanctity were strong supports in his efforts to convince the other fathers.

Generally this story has been accepted by church historians. It is rather surprising that Gregory VII condemned this story at the Synod of Rome in 1079, since prior to the eleventh century no serious attempts were made to discredit this story. In the year 1075 Bemald of Constance did contest the authenticity of the story in a discussion with Alboin, a strong defender of clerical marriage. However, Pius IV, in 1564, readily admitted its authenticity in a letter to the German princes who asked for permission to have clerical marriages.

The Council of Nicaea did forbid unmarried and married clergy to house with themselves subintroducta mulier. This canon was used by countless bishops, popes, councils, and reformers for centuries to come in legislating against unchaste clergy, and evey by some to forbid clerical marriages. This canon three may have been directed

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7Lea, Celibacy, p.36

8Lea, Celibacy, p.36

9See footnote 1 of Chapter II
against the *agapetae*\(^\text{10}\) which despite Cyprian's (c.200-258) condemnation still persisted in several localities. The real issue to which the council addressed itself was the unchaste conduct of the clergy and not whether clergy should be married or not.

Prior to the Council of Nicaea, several councils in the early fourth century proposed conjugal celibacy for deacons. The Council of Ancyra (c.314) enacted a special canon which allowed under certain conditions both marriage or celibacy. Canon 10 of the council stated:

> If deacons, at the time of their appointment /election/, declare that they must marry, and that they cannot lead a celibate life, and if accordingly they marry, they may continue in their ministry, because the bishop /at the time of their institution/ gave them leave to marry; but if at the time of their election they have not spoken, and have agreed in taking holy orders to lead a celibate life, and if later they marry, they shall lose their deaconate.\(^\text{11}\)

However, this decree did not separate ministry and marriage for all but only for those who had not declared their intention to marry. The Council of Ancyra concerned itself with only deacons and what the practice was for priests is not too clear. It would seem from later canons that priests were not allowed to get married after ordination.

The Synod of Neocaesarea (c.320) explicitly stated that "a priest who marries must be relieved of his function. If he is guilty of

\(^{10}\) *Agapetae* were women in a spiritual marriage with men. See *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F. L. Cross (London 1971) p.24 and 1300

\(^{11}\) Hefele, *Councils I*, 210
unchastity or adultery he must be excommunicated and having been relegated to the lay state--do penance. The canon stated that marriage after ordination is valid and cannot be annulled but marriage is not in keeping with the duties of the priesthood. However, for sins against chastity, the priest was relegated to the lay state and put into the class of public sinners, and only after penance was he reinstated into the community of the church. No member of the clergy could be put into the ranks of the public sinners unless he had been laicized first. Marriage, even though forbidden after the order of deaconate, was not considered sinful by this Synod. Many of the same bishops who were at the Council of Angyra were present at Neocaesaria.

The Synod of Gangra (362) gave support to married clergy when it condemned Eustathius (c.200-377), a semi-Arian bishop of Sebaste in Pontus, a strong supporter of monasticism, and a despiser of marriage. The Synod of 15 bishops drew up several canons which supported married clerics. Canon 4: "If anyone thinks that it is not permissible to participate in the liturgical celebration of a married priest, let him be condemned." Canon 10: "If anyone who lives a virgin life for the Lord's sake thinks himself better than those who are married, let him be condemned." 12

12 Synod of Neocaesaris, c.1: as found in Harkx, Fathers pp.8-9; PL 67, 54

13 Synod of Gangra, canons 4 and 10, as found in Harkx, Fathers pp. 67-68; PL 67, 58
Other important synods of the fourth century did not mention celibacy at all, notably the Synod of Sardica (c.346) at which about 80 bishops of East and West legislated on clerical discipline.

Some clerics such as lectors and cantors were allowed to marry. The ecumenical Council of Chaledon (451) in Canon 14 stated:

> Seeing that in some regions lectors and cantors are allowed to marry, the Holy Synod decrees that they are not permitted to marry a woman who is a heretic. ... the right to marry is, however, recognized. ^ 1

Many of the lectors and cantors were still in the early and middle years of their teens and therefore the council offered them sound advice on the option to choose marriage. Generally, however, those in the deaconate, male and female, and the nuns and monks were not allowed to marry, even those nuns and monks not in holy orders. The consecration of the nun and monk was a special classification and any rejection of their vows was punished by dismissal and even at times excommunication.

Canon 15 of the Council of Chalcedon stated the following regarding deaconesses:

> No one is to be ordained a deaconess before the fortieth year and then only those with greatest poise and balance. But if one having received the imposition of the hands and while in the

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14 Council of Chalcedon, canon 14, as found in Harkx, Fathers p. 65; PL 67, 90 and 174
ministry marries, and thereby casts aspersion on the grace of God, she is to be excommunicated as well as the spouse.\textsuperscript{15}

The same council legislated the following regarding nuns and monks in canon 16:

Both the consecrated nun and monk are not allowed to marry, regardless of any other laws. If they do marry, they are to be excommunicated. We declare, however, that the bishops with jurisdiction show mercy and kindness.\textsuperscript{16}

This Council of Chalcedon was one of the most heavily attended councils held in the early church. There were approximately 600 bishops in attendance. This council set an important precedent for the local bishops who now could ease the law of excommunication for monks who married. It was within the bishops' jurisdiction to be compassionate and therefore not press the full penalties of the law. Although this council was always accepted by the eastern and western churches, Hildebrand in the eleventh century insisted that local ordinaries enforce the law, and did not allow the option each bishop had by law.

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Mansi, Joannes Dominicus (ed.) Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio} (Graz, 1960), VII col. 377, hereafter \textit{Mansi, Concilia}. Canon 15: "Biaconissam non ordinendam esse ante annum quadragesimum et hanc cum summo libramini. Si vere susciptiens manus impositionem et aliquantum temporis in ministerio permanens semetipsam tradit nuptiis, gratiae Dei contumeliam faciens, anathematizetur hujusmodi cum eo qui eidem copulatur."

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Mansi, Concilia}, VIII cols. 377-78, Canon 16: "Virginemque se Domino Deo consecravit, similiter et monacham, non licere nupit, alia jure contraher. Quod si hoc inventi fuerit perpetrantes excommunicentur. Confitentibus autem decrevimus, ut habeat auctoritatem ejusdem loci episcopus misericordiam eis humanitatemque largiri."
In the Eastern church during the fourth through the sixth centuries, both conjugal celibacy and married clergy were supported. But the question of the digami was more confusing because of different customs in various localities. Pope Innocent I (pope, 401-417) rejected claims of the church in Macedonia which admitted to office those married twice. Yet at the same time Theodore of Mopsuestia (died c.428) claimed apostolic support for a second marriage.

Marriages after the major orders of subdeaconate, deaconate, or priesthood were outlawed by Emperor Justinian in 530 when he issued an edict which declared children born of such marriages were illegitimate and were not to inherit anything. Wives of such marriages likewise were not allowed to inherit the property which then was automatically given to the church. Furthermore in 535 Justinian decreed that no person who lived with a concubine or a divorced woman and/or married the second time could be ordained to the deaconate or priesthood. Deacons or subdeacons who got married the second time were to

17 Digami were clergy who had married the second time either after death of first wife, or after baptism when the first was divorced. Both marriages took place before ordination to the deaconate or priesthood, but one marriage may have taken place after a person was a cleric such as a lector or cantor.

18 Harkx, Fathers p. 63; PL 20, 527f

19 Harkx, Fathers p. 64; PG 66, 937ff

20 Lea, Celibacy pp. 64-65
be degraded and lose all clerical privileges. In the same year the
Emperor Justinian declared that bishops must be conjugally celibate. Justinian was convinced that state and church could work in harmony and therefore felt justified in his legislation. Government sanctions had a positive effect in the East of stabilizing the clerical discipline which in essence was that there could be marriage before ordination and normal marriage relationship continued after ordination but there could be no marriage after ordination for those in major orders; but bishops had to be conjugally celibate or unmarried.

Councils of the Western Church
During the Fourth through Sixth Centuries

During the fourth through the sixth centuries, the Western church went in a different direction than the Eastern church and went very far toward establishing a conjugally celibate clergy. The canons of the various councils from Elvira (c. 305) in Spain to Toledo (589) for the most part promoted conjugal celibacy. To be sure there was always some variance between practice and the recommendations of the canons as can be seen by the frequent repetition of the conjugal celibacy canons at the councils and aynods. Part of this variance can be explained by the acceptance of the earlier traditions for the married clergy; and part can be explained by the ignorance of the canons among the clergy, some of whom were separated by great distances from the centers of learning and their diocesan sees.

\footnote{Lea, Celibacy p.64}

\footnote{See for example Innocent I, PL 20, 527f}
A review of the councils and synods during the fourth through the sixth centuries will help us understand the movement towards conjugal celibacy in the Western church at this time. The Council of Elvira (c. 305) was composed of 19 bishops and 26 priests and held near the city of Granada at Illiberis, Spain. The council drew up 81 canons on disciplinary matters of which the thirty-third is directly related to conjugal celibacy. It stated:

It has pleased the assembly absolutely to forbid bishops, priests, and deacons, or all clerics appointed to office to have sex relations with their wives and to produce children; anyone who does so nonetheless is excluded from the dignity of the clergy.\(^\text{23}\)

Other decrees of this council are quite rigorous and, therefore, this canon is in the same spirit as the other rigoristic laws. We have little information about the history of the church of Spain prior to this council and therefore any thorough evaluation of the council is nearly impossible; in fact we are not even sure of the dates of this council which may have taken place at any time from 300 to 324. Laization seems to be the punishment for continued normal marital relations.

The Synod of Arles (c. 314) likewise decreed a canon similar to the one of Elvira. Canon 6:

Moreover, we recommend to our brothers—what is right, chaste, and honourable—that priests and levites should not cohabit with their spouses, since they are preoccupied with

\(^{23}\)Council of Elvira, c. 33, as found in Harkx, *Fathers* p. 16
their daily work of service. Anyone who acts against this decree must be deprived of his clerical office.24

The reason given here for connecting celibacy and ministry is cultic purity.25 This is one of the first references made to cultic purity which we shall discuss later in this chapter. One suspects the genuineness of this canon since daily service was not general at this time.

The Synod of Rome on January 6, 386, laid down similar regulations governing the continence of married clergy in higher orders. These decrees were communicated by Pope Siricius (pope, 386-401) to the church in Africa. "Moreover, we urge—what is just and chaste and pure—that priests and deacons should not cohabit with their wives..."26 The church of Africa adopted the legislation of Pope Siricius at the Council of Carthage (c. 390) in its Canon 2 even though no mention of his letter was made. Another Synod of Carthage in 401 restated the same prohibition but expressly excluded those below deacons: "The other lower clerici are not bound to this continence."27 Subdeacons, however, were added to the list of those forbidden normal marital relations by the Synod of Carthage in 419:

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24 Synod of Arles, canon 6, as found in Harkx, Fathers p. 17; there is some doubt about the authenticity of this canon.


26 Siricius, Letter to Church of Africa, as found in Harkx, Fathers p. 41; PL 13, 1159ff

27 Synod of Carthage, canon 4, as found in Harkx, Fathers, p. 47; PL 84, 209
Since there have been rumors of the immoderacy of some members of the clergy—even though they be only lectors—with respect to their wives, it is desirable—as has also been laid down by various councils—that subdeacons who are involved in the holy work of service, and also deacons, priests, and bishops, should live lives of continence with regard to their own spouses according to their own rules so that they appear to be unmarried. If they do not do this they will be dismissed from their ecclesiastical office. The other clerici must not be obliged to observe this rule unless they have reached the age of maturity.

This same synod in imitation of Pope Siricius stated that this law had come from the apostles: "We, too, must preserve what the apostles taught and what the early church practiced." This statement goes no further and gives no evidence of Apostolic practice other than the reference to St. Paul (I Cor. 7:29). I am at a loss to know fully what Pope Siricius had in mind when he claimed apostolic practice. I can only conjecture that Pope Siricius felt quite strongly that conjugal celibacy was really for the good of the church and encouraged clergy to follow his convictions. It is also quite obvious that not all shared his convictions, yet his synodal letter would become the most quoted source in support of clerical celibacy.

Not all councils followed Pope Siricius' legislation; some were content to keep married clergy from promotion. In Gaul as early as 401

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28 Synod of Carthage as found in Harkx, Fathers pp. 47-48; PL 67, 191

29 Synod of Carthage as found in Harkx, Fathers p. 47; PL 56, 864f
the Council of Turin, mindful of Siricius' monitions, legislated in Canon 8 against promotion, but not for dismissal of any cleric who begot children. "No one who has been ordained irregularly, or who has begotten children while discharging the ministry of the church, may be promoted to any higher grade."\(^{30}\)

Pope Innocent (pope, 400-417) reiterated the decrees of Pope Siricius. The mitigation of the regulation of Siricius is evident, since excommunication is no longer demanded nor is dismissal from office, and other councils adopted this attitude.

The Synod of Orange (441) adopted a similar approach in Canon 24 for deacons or priests. This Synod of Orange was held under the Metropolitan of Arles, St. Hilary of Arles, and was attended by sixteen bishops. Canon 24 legislated:

> As regards those who have already been ordained and who continue their normal married life, the sentiments of the Council of Turin must be followed, where it is recommended that they should not be admitted to higher functions.\(^{31}\)

The same Council of Orange also legislated conjugal celibacy for deacons. Canon 22 stated: "Married men shall not henceforth be ordained deacons unless they have previously vowed chastity."\(^{32}\)

Nothing is said at this council about priests, but we can assume that priests were expected to do at least this much. The Council

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\(^{30}\)Hefele, Councils, II 427

\(^{31}\)Council of Orange, canon 24, as found in Harkx, Fathers p. 49; PL 84, 257

\(^{32}\)Hefele, Councils, III 163
of Tours of 461, however, added that even with no promotion, married clergy (priests) must suspend offering of the sacrifice and ministering to people. In Canon 2 of Tours the fathers of the church are cited as the source of the authority:

The ancient rule, that priests and Levites who continue in the state of marriage are to be excluded from communion, shall be softened to this extent, that such clerics shall no longer be eligible to a higher grade, and shall not be permitted to offer the holy sacrifice or to assist as Levites. The communion, however, is to be given to them.33

The same council also passed several other canons relating to celibacy which seem to support Canon 2. Canon 1:

Priests and Levites are exhorted to perpetual chastity, because they may at any moment by summoned to the discharge of a sacred function (sacrifice, baptism, etc.)

Canon 3: Clerics must have no intercourse with strange women on penalty of exclusion from the communion.

Canon 4: Clerics who venture to marry must not marry widows. Whoever does so must have the lowest place in clerical service.34

The feeling of this council seems to have been that married clergy who continue to live the marital state could remain clerics but could not offer the sacraments. Cultic purity seems to be the reason for conjugal celibacy in these canons.

In Spain in the Council of Toledo (400) those who lived as man and wife prior to the obligation of conjugal celibacy were disallowed

33 Hefele, Councils, IV 10
34 Hefele, Councils p. 10
any promotions. The Council of Toledo (400) which was held under
Archbishop Patromus along with 18 other bishops stated in Canon 1:

"Those deacons or priests who, before the law
of celibacy was published by the Lusitanian
bishops, have had intercourse with their wives,
shall not be promoted to higher posts." 35

As late as 529 the Council of Orleans stated in Canon 9:

"Any cleric who has children by a concubine, or
who after the wife died had publicly taken a
concubine /common law marriage/, shall observe
the following by our order: they, like the
clerics ordained in ignorance of the discipline
of conjugal celibacy, shall not be removed but
shall not be promoted to higher grades of
office." 36

It is not clear whether continued marital relations were allowed,
but it would seem that such a life style was frowned upon.

Dismissal from Office

Several councils during these three centuries openly demanded
immediate dismissal from office for any cleric who did not practice
conjugal celibacy. Following the guidelines laid down by Pope Siricius,
the Synod of Orange (441), in Canon 23, also called for dismissal
of deacons who were not conjugally celibate. 37

35 Hefele, Councils, II 419

36 Mansi, Concilia, TX col. 13, canon 9: "De his qui ex concubinis
filios habent, et uxores legitimos habuerint, aut defunctis uxoribus
sibi concubinos publice crediderint sociandas, id observandum esse
censuimus, ut sicut eos, qui jam sunt clerici per ignorantiam ordinati,
non removamus--ita stiumus ne ulterior ordinentur."

37 Hefele, Councils, III 163
The Synod of Arles (443) enacted a similar law in Canon 44:

If a married cleric /deacon/ lives as man and wife,
he shall be dismissed from office.\(^{38}\)

I assume that what applied to the office of deaconate also applied to higher offices.

The call for dismissal for failure to observe conjugal celibacy was demanded in the sixth-century councils as well, especially in those held in Gaul. The Council of Orleans IV (545) clearly reiterated the demand for dismissal in Canon 17:

Priests and deacons should not share a common bed or room with their wives lest suspicions be aroused and their vows be stained by casual pleasure. But if they do so, they are to be degraded from their office.\(^{39}\)

The Council of Arles VII (524) also concurred in calling for dismissal in its Canon 4:

Any cleric from locality or in any order /subdeacon and up/ who presumes to return again to the marriage bed any time after his ordination shall be deposed from office according to the canons of the fathers. He shall only be allowed to participate in the Eucharist as a non cleric.\(^{40}\)

\(^{38}\) Synod of Arles, canon 44, from C. Munier, see Concilia Galliae (a 314-a 506) (Turnhout 1963) hereafter referred to as Munier, Galliae, p. 123: "Si quis autem in postero accepta benedictione levitica cum uxore sua incontinens inventur, ab officio abiciatur." Benedictiones levites generally meant the deaconate.

\(^{39}\) Council of Orleans, canon 17, in Mansi, Concilia, IX col. 115: "Ut sacerdotes, sive diaconi, cum conjugalibus suis non habeant communem lectum et cellulam ne propter suscipionem carnalis confortii religio maculetur. Quod qui fecerint, juxta priscos canones, ab officio regradentur."

\(^{40}\) Council of Arles VII, canon 4, in Mansi, Concilia, IX col 129: "Si quis clericus, post acceptam benedictionem cujuslibet loci vel ordinis, ad conjugalem torum jam sibi illicitum denua redire praesumpserit, usque in diem vitae ab honore accepti ordinis sicut habent anti quorum patrum canones, ab officio deponatur, eI tantum modo communione concessa."
Separation from the marriage bed was also decreed in Canon I of the Council of Lyon (583):

It shall be law that any married cleric who comes to the order of deacon or priesthood not only must separate from the marriage bed but also refrain from daily contact. And if, God forbid, a child is born because of the intimate familiarities, the cleric shall be deprived from office.\(^{41}\)

None of these councils say anything about the rights of the wife who was presumed to have agreed to the new situation of to have nothing to say. These canons speak only of the male obligations to conjugal celibacy. The tradition of the times did not accord wives equal rights, and even in the eleventh century Pope Gregory VII would show no concern for the dismissed female spouses.

Subdeacons were included in the discipline by very few councils, one of which (Auxerre, 578) stated so explicitly:

It is not permitted after ordination for a priest to sleep in the same bed with his wife nor to have any kind of sexual activity. The same is said for the deacon and subdeacon.\(^{42}\)

\(^{41}\)Council of Lyon, canon 1, in Mansi, Concilia, IX col. 941: "Placuit etiam, ut si quicumque uxoribus juncti ad diaconatus, aut presbyteratus ordinem quoquomodo pervenerint non solum lecto, sed etiam frequentatione quotidianum debeant de uxoribus sui sequestrari. Quod si, quod Deus avertat, leo eorum familiaris contubernio post acceptam benedictionem infans natus parverit, ab officii gradu priventur."

\(^{42}\)Council of Auxerre, canon 21, in Mansi, Concilia, IX col. 914: "Non licet presbytero, post acceptam benedictionem, in uno lecto cum presbytera sua dormire, nec in peccato carnali misceri, nec diacono aut subdiacono."
However, this Synod of Auxerre was only a diocesan synod, composed of one bishop, seven abbots, thirty-four priests, and three deacons; and its influence may not have been widespread. Whether dismissal is included or not in this canon is not clear.

The Council of Orléans III (538) called for dismissal of any unmarried cleric who protesting the discipline of celibacy for clerics nevertheless married after ordination. Canon 7 stated:

If he was ordained without any vows and protesting the discipline of conjugal celibacy, and then married, he is to be deposed but not excommunicated. ⁴³

The tension in the life of a conjugal celibate was recognized in a letter of Bishops Lupus of Troyes and Euphonius of Antun to Bishop Talasius of Angers (c. 479) when they wrote:

It would be better if conjugal celibacy could be achieved—to prevent the begetting of children by those whom we have accepted as married [to the office]. But in this case it would be better not to accept married men than to wrangle about the subject afterwards in all possible manners; for it is better to prevent every occasion for dispute, so that anyone who does not wish his priests to carry on a normal married life would do better not to appoint married men to the service of the altar. ⁴⁴

One can detect a note of defeatism here; apparently the struggle for celibacy was not east for married men. These bishops leave us the

⁴³ Council of Orléans III (538), canon 7, in Mansi, Concilia, IX col. 13: "Quod si invitus vel reclamans fuerit ordinatus, ab officio quidem deponatus sed non communione pellatur."

⁴⁴ Lupus of Troyes and Euphonius of Antun to Talasius of Angers, as found in Harkx, Fathers, pp. 50-51; PL 58, 66
impression that some other bishops allowed normal marital relations for married clergy.

The Council of Toledo (527) outlined a procedure to be followed by those unmarried in the pursuit of ordination while at the same time respecting the natural desire to marry. Canon 1 stated:

Those, predestined from childhood by their parents to enter the ministry, must immediately after receiving tonsure of the office of lector, be lodged in a house belonging to the church where they must be trained under the bishop's supervision. When they have reached the age of eighteen the priest [supervisor] must ask them whether they wish to marry. If by the grace of God, they choose chastity and take the vow to preserve this chastity, they must, as candidates for the narrow path, be brought under the sweet yoke of the Lord and accept the office of subdeacon in their twentieth year; if they have attained the age of twenty-five without fault or punishment, they must, subject to the approval of the bishop, be promoted to the deaconate. They must remain under supervision so that they do not, contrary to their vow, contract a marriage, or live in concubinage; should they do so they must be regarded as blasphemers and banished from the church community. But to those who, in reply to the bishop's question, state that they wish to marry, the permission granted by the apostle Paul may not be refused. If later having reached years of maturity, and being married, they take the vow of chastity with mutual approval, they must be admitted to the higher ordinations.

The Vow of Celibacy

In the fifth and sixth centuries the vow of conjugal celibacy was required in many places before ordination. The Council of Orange

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45Synod of Toledo, canon 1, as found in Harkx, Fathers pp. 54-55
of 441 stated in Canon 21:

No married cleric is to be ordained a deacon unless he first promises to be a conjugal celibate.

Similarly the Second Synod of Arles (443) decreed in Canon 2:

It is assumed that no married cleric shall be ordained a priest unless he first makes the promise of celibacy.

The promise of conjugal celibacy as a condition for ordination was required also by the Synod of Epaa (517) and likewise by the Synod of Arles (502) which stated in Canon 16:

If a young married man wants to be ordained, his wife must give consent and be given proper housing. After this has been accomplished, the man may be ordained if he promises conjugal celibacy.

This is one of the very few councils to require the wife's consent as a condition for ordination.

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46 Council of Orange, canon 21, in Munier, Galliae p. 84: "Sedit praeterea ut deinceps non ordinentur diacones conjugati nisi qui prius conversionis proposito professio fuerint castitatem."

47 Second Synod of Arles, canon 2, in Munier, Galliae p. 114: "Assumi aliquem ad sacerdotium non posse in conjugali vinculo constitutum, nisi fuerit praemissa conversionis."

48 Harkx, Fathers p. 56

49 Synod of Arles, canon 16, in Mansi, Concilia, VIII col. 327: "Sane si conjugati juvenes consenserint ordinari, et uxorum voluntas ita requirenda est, ut sequestrato mansionibus cubiculo, religione praemissa, posteaquam pariter conversi fuerint, ordinentur."
Second Marriages

The councils also legislated discipline regarding second marriage for the cleric. As in the East the Western church generally forbade the ordaining of men who had entered more than one marriage. The reason for this seems quite vague and only few references are made. Human fraility is cited as one reason for the second marriage and according to St. Paul (I Cor. 7) the cleric is to spend most of his time for the Lord. The Timothy and Titus epistles are cited as reasons because therein the bishop is to be a man of only one wife. Even though this is not directly related to celibacy, nevertheless this legislation affected many clerics' marital life. The Synod of Arles (443) stated in Canon 45:

Those who have married twice or married a widow are not to be promoted to orders beyond the sub-deaconate. If, perchance, they are ordained, they are to be removed from the ecclesiastical office.50

The Council of Angers (453) stated in Canon 11:

Only men of one wife, or those not married, are to be ordained deacons and priests.51

50 Synod of Arles, canon 45, in Munier, Galliae p. 123: "De his quos clericatui alligari ipsa vitae gratia sugcesserit, si forte internupta et duplicata matrimonia inciderunt non ultra subdiaconatum ecclesiasticas capiant dignitates: quod si facti forsitan sunt, ab ecclesiastico removeantur officio."

51 Council of Angers (453) canon 11, in Munier, Galliae p. 138: "Nonnisi unius uxoris viri lidemque virginibus copulati diaconi vel presbyteri ordinentur."
Other councils, Tours (461), Orange (441), Arles (524), and Braga (564) similarly legislate against ordaining men who had married a second time and whose wives were married previously, even if they were now widows. The *Apostolic Constitutions* compiled about 380 by the Arian or Appolinarian Psuedo-Clement also decreed against ordination of a man who was married twice, or had married a widow, or was divorced. However, in Canon 17 of these *Constitutions* only marriages after baptism counted.

### Relationship to Women

More directly related to celibacy were the decrees of the councils and popes pertaining to clerical relationship with women outside of marriage. As the Council of Nicaea in the East had legislated against the *subintroducta* woman, so too other councils in the West legislated similar decrees. The Synod of Arles (443) decreed in Canon 3:

> If any cleric, deacon, and above has in his dwelling a woman other than an aunt, mother, sister, daughter, niece, or wife who professes

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52 Council of Tours, canon 4
53 Council of Orange (441); see Harkx, *Fathers* p. 33
54 Harkx, *Fathers* p. 34
55 Harkx, *Fathers* p. 34
56 Munier, *Galliae* p. 171
57 Harkx, *Fathers* p. 29
conjugal celibacy, he is to considered as an outsider to the community of the church. If he persists in his conduct, he must be punished.

The Council of Tours (461) called these women the helpers of the devils:

So that no one will fall prey to the devil we decree for the sake of special protection that clerics should have no familiarity with strange women lest suspicions be aroused by gossiping people. For such frequent unbecoming associations are a support to the devil who like a roaring lion goes about seeking the ruin of the servants of God. Therefore, if any cleric continues to maintain such illicit familiarity even after the prohibition of the bishop, he is to be considered an outsider.

There is a difference between the subintroducta and extranea women. The former were usually women under vows of celibacy, while the latter were usually house servants or slaves. For this paper no distinction is really necessary because the councils saw both situations as dangerous to conjugal celibacy.

The Council of Agde (506) which was held in Southern France with thirty-five bishops under Archbishop Caesarius of Arles stated in Canon 10:

58 Synod of Arles, canon 3, in Munier, Galliae p. 37: "Ut si quis etiam de religioso proposito, et disciplinis monasterialibus eruditis, ad clericale munus accedat, in primis ejus vita praeterea acta temporibus inquiratur, so nullo gravi facinore probatur infectus, si secundam non habuit fortissim uxorem, nec a marito relictan fortitus estenditur."

59 Council of Tours, canon 3, in Munier Galliae p. 145: "Et quia nullum diabolo locum dari oportet, hac praecipue custodiendum decretimus, ut nullam clericis cum extraneis feminis habeant familiaritatem, ne illum male loquendi vel sentiendi hominibus aditum tribuant: quia frequenter per hanc indecentem occasionem contingit ut diabolus qui insidiat sicut leo in cubile suo de ruina servorum Dei insulat. Si quis vero clericus post interdictum episcopi usi illicitcis familiaritatatis extranearum feminarum voluerit inhaerere a communione habeatur alienus."
We command that no cleric seek the consolation or become too familiar with "strange" women so that the honor of ordination may be protected. Furthermore, neither should strange women come to his house, nor should he have the freedom to frequent those women, but rather the cleric should concern himself with women such as his mother, sister, daughter, niece, so that he remain above all suspicions.60

The Council of Tours II (567) spelled out even more clearly which women are not allowed. Canon 10 stated:

No cleric, bishop, priest, deacon or subdeacon shall presume to have in his house for household chores a widow or his own maid. Any woman is considered to be an outside woman who is not a mother, sister, or daughter. If any bishop, priest, deacon, or subdeacon, has presumed to dishonor himself in this way, he shall, according to the statute of the fathers and our statute, too, be excommunicated.61

60Council of Agde, canon 10, in Munier, Galliae p. 199: "Id etiam ad custodiendam vitam et famam speciali ordinatione praecipimus, ut nullus clericorum extraneae mulierii qualibet consolatione aut familiaritate jungatur. Et non solum in domum illius extranea mulier non accedat, sed nec ipse frequentandi ad extraneam mulierem habeat postestatem, sed cum matre tantum, sorore, filia, et nepte, si habuerit aut voluerit; vivendi liberam habeat postestatem, de quibus nominibus nefas est alid, quam natura constituit, suspicari."

61Council of Tours, canon 10, in Mansi, Concilia, IX col. 794: "Nullus ergo clericorum, non episcopus, non presbyter, non diaconus, non subdiaconus, quasi sanctimoniae, aut viduam, vel ancillam propriam, pro conservatione rerum in domo sua stabilire praesumat; quae et ipsa extranea est, dum non est mater, aut soror, aut filia: Si quis episcopus, aut presbyter, seu diaconus, aut subdiaconus, de hac re statua patrum, vel nostra, temerare praesumpserit, excommunicetur."
The same Council of Tours even forbad bishops to have the female servants of the bishop's wife near lest the other clergy be tempted.

Canon 12 stated:

The bishop must regard his wife as his sister; wherever he may be, he must always be surrounded by his clergy and his dwelling must be separate from that of his wife, so that the members of the clergy who serve the bishop do not come into contact with the household servants of the bishop's wife.  

Canon 13 of the same council decreed that unmarried bishops be protected:

No retinue of an unmarried bishop should contain women. For as the Apostle states: man is saved through the faithfulness of his wife, and the wife through the faithfulness of the husband. If proper custody is not provided, misery and defamation will follow. Therefore, the clerics of the bishop's household ought to guard him and eject strange women who may come to the living quarters.

Similarly the Council of Macon (581), which was summoned by the King Guthrum of the Danes and attended by twenty-one bishops, forbad women to enter the bishop's house unless other male clerics

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62 Council of Tours, canon 12, as found in Barkx, Fathers p. 58

63 Council of Tours, canon 13, in Mansi, Concilia, IX col. 795: "Episcopam non habentem nullam sequatur turba mulierum, licet salvetur vir per mulierem fidelem, wicit mulier per virum fidelem, ut apostolus ait. Nam ubi talis custodia necessaria non est, quid necesse est, ut miseria prosequatur, unde pammae consurgat. Habeant ministri ecclesiae, utique clerici qui episcopo serviumt, et eum custodier debent, licentiam extraneas mulieres do frequentia cohabitionis ejicere."
were present. Canon 3 stated:

No woman may enter a bishop's chamber unless two priests or two deacons are present.64

Woman servants whether slave or free could not live in the same building with clerics according to the Council of Arles (502). In its Canon 11 it stated:

We demand that female servants /slaves/ and free servants be removed from the cell, or the cloister, or the building in which the cleric lives.65

As is clear from the repetitious decrees of the councils, the clergy did not universally observe these disciplines.

A few councils even forbad clergy to attend marriage festivities.

The Council of Arles (502) stated in Canon 39:

Priests, deacons, and subdeacons who by law already are not allowed to marry, must even avoid marriage festivities, dances, and recreation where spicy songs are sung and lewd dancing takes place. This is commanded lest they who are bearers of the sacred mysteries become tainted by the filth of these festivities.66

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64 Hefele, Councils, IV 403

65 Council of Arles, canon 11, in Mansi, Concilia, VIII col. 327: "Ancillas vel libertas a cellario vel a secreto ministerio, et ab eadem mansione, in qua clericus manet, placuit removeri."

66 Council of Arles, canon 39, in Mansi, Concilia, VIII col. 331: "Presbyteri diacones, subdiacones, vel deinceps, quibus ducendi uxores licentia non est, etiam alienarium nuptiarum evitent convivia, nec his coetibus admisceantur ubi amatoria cantantur et turpia, aut obscaeni motus corporum choris et saltibus efferuntur: ne auditus et abtutus sacris mysteriiis deputati turpium spectaculorum atque verborum contagione polluantur."
Similarly the Council of Auxerre (578) stated in Canon 24:

It is forbidden for abbots and monks to attend weddings.\(^\text{67}\)

From the evidence presented it is clear that during these centuries some councils and synods moved toward conjugal celibacy, it is also evident that not all localities followed the same policies and furthermore the repetition of canons in the same locality indicates that conjugal celibacy never was fully practical among the clerics of that locality. It should also be noted that there were many, many more councils and synods that did not advocate celibacy but remained silent. Many of the councils that address themselves to celibacy were clustered together geographically in southern France. It is quite obvious that the Eastern church and the Western church went in different directions.

Papal Decrees of the Fourth to Sixth Centuries

The councils were not the only means by which clerical discipline was legislated; various popes also legislated celibacy disciplines during this time. We have already seen the action of Popes Siricius and Innocent. During the fifth and sixth centuries Popes Gelasius, Leo, and Gregory promoted conjugal celibacy among the clerics. Leo I (pope, 440-461), a strong promoter of papal power even over eastern provinces, included subdeacons in the conjugal celibacy discipline when he wrote:

\[^{67}\text{Council of Auxerre, canon 24, in Mansi, Concilia, IX col. 914: "Non licet abbati, nec monachio, ad nuptias ambulare."}\]
For while those who are not members of the clergy and free to enter into marriage and produce children, physical co-habitation can no longer be permitted even to sub-deacons as an example of the purity of complete continence.®®

Contrary to most of the councils, Leo I commanded that clergy not send away their wives while at the same time he insisted on continence.69

Gelasius (pope, 492-496), a native of Africa and a strong advocate of Roman (papal) primacy, may have had some influence in the composition of the Decretum Gelasianum (early sixth century).

The Decretum stated in Canon 2:

Before anyone is received into the clerical order, even including monks, the bishops should first look into his past life so that no scandal such as having a second wife, or having divorced his wife, be found.70

Regarding women at the altar, the same document stated in Canon 26:

We have heard with alarm that some clerics have shown so much disrespect for the things of God that they have pressed into service at the altar women who as slaves are not even competent to serve.71

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®®Leo I, Letter to Anastasius, as found in Harkx, Fathers p. 43: PL 54, 672

69Leo I, Letter to Rusticus of Narbonne, as found in Harkx, Fathers p. 43; PL 54, 1204

70Decretum Gelasianum, in Munier, Galliae p.37: "Ut si quis etiam de religioso proposito, et disciplinis monasterialibus eruditis, ad clericale munus accedat, in primis ejus vita praeteritis acta temporibus inquiratur, si nullo gravi facinore probatur infectus, si secundam non habuit fortissis uxorem, nec a marito relictam fortitus estenditur."

71Decretum Gelasianum, in Munier, Galliae p. 44: "Nihilo minus impatienter audivimus, tantum divinarum rerum subsisse despectum, ut foeminae sacris altaribus ministrare ferantur, et cuncta, quae non nisi virous famulatui deputata sunt, sexum, cui non competit, exhibere."
Gregory (pope, 590-604) in a letter to the Bishop of Cantania included subdeacons under the rule of conjugal celibacy because despite Leo I's mandate subdeacons still lived normal married lives.

We hear from many sources that you continue to cling to the ancient custom that subdeacons are permitted married intercourse. By the servant of God, the servant of our see, it is forbidden on the authority of our predecessor that anyone should venture this henceforth and this is to be accomplished in the manner: before ordination those who are already married must choose between two possibilities: either they must live lives of continence in marriage or else they must renounce the office altogether.72

Pope Gregory I readily admitted the ancient custom of subdeacons living normal married lives. It was precisely this ancient custom that the opponents of the eleventh-century celibacy reform movement were to cite as a source for their arguments. The same pope also followed Leo I's example by insisting that priests should not send their wives away but live in continence: "... But they /bishops/ must add, as the highest juridical power has laid down, that they must not abandon their wives, whom they must guide in chastity."73

72 Pope Gregory I, Letter to Bishop Leo Catenia, in Harkx, Fathers p. 45; PL 77, 710f

73 Pope Gregory I, Letter to Roman Bishops, in Harkx, Fathers p. 45; PL 77, 997

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Pope Gregory I even demanded some trial periods before ordination to test oneself if he could live out the vow of celibacy: "...It must be noted whether a future member of the clergy has lived chastity for several years." Pope Gregory I cautioned fellow bishops not to live in houses where women also dwell.

In a few councils bishops were penalized for ordaining clerics who refused to take the vow of celibacy. The Council of Orange (538) stated in Canon 7:

> But the bishop who ordains a cleric who objects to the vow of conjugal celibacy, shall do penance for a year and not presume to say mass.

The Council of Orleans (541) voted to excommunicate a bishop who showed contempt for suspension incurred by ordaining to the deaconate a cleric married twice. Generally, little was said to the bishop who did not enforce the canons of conjugal celibacy. However, Pope Gregory VII would have a precedent in punishing the bishops who refused to carry out his reform movement.

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76 Council of Orange, canon 7, in Mansi, *Concilia* IX col. 13: "Episcopus autem, qui invitum aut reclamantem praesumpserit ordinare, annuali poenitentiae subditus missas facere non praesumat."

77 Council of Orleans IV (541), canon 10, in Mansi, *Concilia* IX col. 18
Motivation

Very rarely did a council or synod give reasons for its legislation, however, the Council of Tours (461) stated some reasons for demanding conjugal celibacy. Canon 1 stated:

According to the Apostolic teaching, chastity is to be preserved by all the faithful, so that those who have wives are to live as though they have none. How much more important is this teaching for the priests who pray and serve at the altar in behalf of all the faithful. The clerics are to serve with chastity of heart as well as of the body. Thus, according to the authority of the Apostle Paul those who are of the flesh, cannot please God; however, you are not of the flesh, but of the spirit. Again says that we are to be clean of heart, but that nothing is clean for the wicked and their minds and consciences are polluted.

If, therefore, the laity is commanded to abstain so that they can pray, how much more ought priests and deacons who are to be ready every moment for prayer to God, to be urged to live in all cleanliness and chastity so that at any time they may offer sacrifice or baptise. Who will believe those whose conscience and mind has been contaminated by carnal concubiscence?

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78Council of Tours, canon 1, in Münier, Galliae p. 143: "Si enim universis fidelibus, secundum apostolicam doctrinam, castias custodienda indicitur, ut qui habent uxores ita sint quasi non habentes, quanta magis sacerdotes Dei ac levitae divino mancipati altario custodire debent ut non solum cordis verum etiam corporis puritatem servantes, pro plebe supplicaturi preces suas ad divinum introire mereantur additum; quia secundum auctoritatem Apostoli: qui in carne sunt, Deo placere non possunt, vos autem non estis in carne sed in spiritu; et iterum: omnia munda mundis, coquinatis autem et infidelibus nihil est mundum, sed polluta est eorum et mens et conscientia. Cum ergo laico abstinentia imperetur ut possit orationi vacans audiri, quanto magis sacerdotes vel levitae, qui omni momento parati Deo esse debent, in omni munditia et puritate securi, ne aut sacrificium offerre aut baptizare, si id temporis necessitas poposcerit, cogantur. Qui si contaminati fuerint carnali concupiscientia, qua mente excusabunt, quo pudore usurpabunt, qua conscientia, quo merito exaudiri se credent?"
The gist of the reasons given is cultic purity. St. Paul was speaking only of temporary continence and only if the couple agreed; he did not mean that couples could not please God (Ephesians 5). Nowhere in St. Paul does one find any contamination associated with marital love. Nor did St. Paul claim that one could only pray when continent, for he also says whatever one does one should do it for the honor and glory of God and it becomes a prayer.

The Council of Agle of 506, attended by thirty-five bishops, also presented some motivation for conjugal celibacy.

But the ancient authority of sacred law, which has been guarded from the beginning, states that priests are to be chosen by lot to live in the temple for a year, so that they, offering the sacred oblations, could assume to the divine mysteries in purity and cleanliness. Nor were they permitted to offer sacrifices if they were having marital relations with their wives. For it is written: Be holy because your Lord God is holy. Indeed because no other tribe except Levi had any priests, there were some relaxations needed.

But how much more ought priests and deacons from the day of ordination serve in chastity, to whom the priesthood and ministry is given without succession. These receive the ministry not because of blood relationship as among the Levites but because of baptism and for the purpose of offering divine sacrifices. For if Paul wrote to the Corinthians, abstain for a while so that you can concentrate on prayer, and this was meant for the laity, how much more ought priests who are to give their lives to prayer and offering sacrifice to abstain always from their spouses. He who is contaminated by carnal concupiscence, usurps the sacrifices he offers, and who will believe his teaching, as the saying goes: be pure in all things. But nothing is pure when it belongs to the defiled and infidel.

Yet perhaps someone put a value to this because it is written: he should be of one wife. He said this not to remain permanently in sexual activity but because of future incontinence.
Furthermore he saw himself no less the full man and even went on to say: I would have all be as I-am. And openly declaring he said: "He who is of the flesh cannot please God. You then are not of the flesh but of the spirit." To say that Paul meant persons had to be married is clearly taking the sentence out of context.\footnote{Council of Agde (506), in Munier, Galliae pp. 198-99: "Est enim uetus admodum sacrae legis auctoritas jam inde ab initio custodita, quod in templo anno uicis suae habitare praecipi sunt sacerdotes, ut servientes sacrificium fas sit admitti qui exercent cum uxore carnale consortium, quia scriptum est: Sancti estote, quoniam ego sanctus sum Dominus Deus uester. Quibus utique propter sobolis successionem propteruae uxorius usus fuerat relaxatus, quia ex alia tribu ad sacerdotium nullus fuerat praecipius accedere.

Quanto magis hi sacerdotes uel leuitae pudicitiam ex die ordinationis suae servare debent, quibus uel sacerdotium uel ministerium sine successione est, nec praeterit dies qua uel a sacrificiis diuinis aut a baptismatis officio uacent. Nam si Paulus ad Corinthios scribit dicens: Abstineite uos ad tempus, ut uacetis oratione, et hoc utique laicos praecipi, multo magis sacerdotes, quibus et orandi et sacrificandi iuge officium est, semper debebunt ab huissiodi consortio abstinere. Qui si contaminatus fuerit carnali concupiscentia, quo pudore uel sacrificare usurpabit, aut qua conscientia quoe merito exaudiri se credit, cum dictum sit: Omnia mundum mundis, coinquinatis autem et infidelibus nihil mundum.

Sed fortasse hoc aliquid licere credit, quia scriptum est: Vnus uxoris uiurum. Non permanentem in concupiscentia generandi dixit, sed propter incontinentiam futuram. Neque enim integros corpore non admisit, qui ait: Vellem autem omnes sic esse sicut et ego; et apertius declarat dicens: Qui autem in carne sunt, Deo placere non possunt. Vos autem iam non estis in carne sed in spiritu. Et habentem filios non generantem dixit: ea plane dispar et diuisa sententia est."}
The reference here to cultic purity follows the reasons for conjugal celibacy laid down by the Council of Tours about forty years earlier. There is a close resemblance to actual texts and the proximity of the Tours and Agde might suggest that the reasons of the Council of Tours might have been used in part for the Council of Agde.

**Practice of the Clergy**

**During the Fourth to Sixth Centuries**

The council decrees give evidence that at least some of the married clergy continued normal relations in their lives. The reasons given for conjugal celibacy from the Council of Agde as above even tells us that married clergy justified their continual married relations by the custom of the Old Testament and especially by the Pastoral Epistles. It is significant that during these centuries, when in some areas heavy emphasis was laid on conjugal celibacy, those opposed to such continence resorted to the ancient traditions. Not all popes followed the push for conjugal celibacy as manifested by Popes Siricius, Innocent, Leo, Gelasius, and Gregory. Pelagius II (pope, 579-590) granted permission to elevate a widower who had remarried (by a common law marriage) to the deaconate. The same pope realized that he was acting contrary to the law but justified his action.

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80 Lea, Celibacy p. 94. This cleric of Florence had had several children by his second "wife" or "concubine". According to the law no cleric of a second wife or concubine was to be ordained.

81 Lea, Celibacy p. 94. Lea maintains that Pelagius justified his action because of the laxity of the age. I cannot find any great degeneracy in these matters at this time. Many clerics were holding on to the tradition that had allowed second marriages. Holding on to tradition is not degeneracy. Perhaps clerics saw no real reason for not following previous customs. Even St. Jerome had allowed clerics of second marriages to be ordained.
Pope Pelagius I (pope, 556-561) refused to consecrate a bishop elected by the Syracusans because the church property might go to the wife and children. After waiting a year and assured that no conversion of property would take place, he allowed the consecration. There may have been other reasons, too, for his action but this reason is the only one explicitly mentioned by Pelagius I. There is no indication that the bishop had to give up his wife and children, which he would have had to do even by eastern standards.\(^{82}\)

During this period canonical legislation for conjugal celibacy was promulgated, but there was no universal practice of conjugal celibacy. Often enforcement of canons depended upon the bishops and sometimes upon the laity who accepted the clergy provided they were good priests. Finally not all councils and synods took up the issue; perhaps some areas had no need for such legislation, but other areas did not bother to become involved and continued the ancient traditions which in the East had become universal.

PART II

COUNCILS AND PAPAL DECREES BETWEEN 600-1000 A.D.

During these centuries the main thrust of the church was conversion of the Frankish, Spanish, Anglo-Saxon, and Slavic peoples. The converts from these cultures were not aware of the

\(^{82}\)Lea, *Celibacy* p. 45
council canons of the fourth and fifth centuries, and found the celibacy canons once understood quite difficult to observe. The trend among most synods and councils of the seventh and eighth centuries was either to avoid the celibacy issue or lighten the canonical requirements. The attitude of these centuries seemed to be that the ideal may be conjugal celibacy but that this cannot be forced upon all.

Eastern Church

During the latter part of the seventh century the church of the East adopted a discipline on celibacy that would remain in force even to this day. In 691 the Emperor Justinian II summoned a council in Constantinople, in the great banquet hall (Trullo—hence called the Trullan Synod) for the purpose of completing the word of the fifth and sixth Ecumenical Councils (553 and 680). Therefore, the name Quinisext is given to this council. However, Rome was not represented at this Eastern Synod of 691 and Sergius I (pope, 687-701) a Syrian by birth, refused to accept the decrees of this council. The most serious obstacle to Pope Sergius I was the canon giving equal status with the pope to the patriarch of Constantinople; but the pope also objected to the canons on priests continuing in normal marriage relations. Two hundred and thirteen bishops gathered for this council and forty-three of these bishops had been at the Sixth Ecumenical Council (680). Justinian II, the emperor, tried to enforce all the canons upon the whole church,
but he was not successful in his efforts to convince Pope Sergius I to accept the whole council. Succeeding popes accepted portions of the council decrees but to what extent the Western church accepted this council is enveloped in controversy and mystery. Despite the vacillation of the Western church, the East has accepted this council as a valid one and its decrees became canon law for the Eastern church. 83

The whole question about marriage and ministry was settled once and for all by canons of this council. Legislation regarding second marriages was established in Canon 3 which stated:

(a) Anyone who has married for the second time and has not mended his ways before January, 691, is dismissed from office.

(b) Anyone who regularizes his position retains his office of priest or deacon, but is not allowed to exercise his function.

(c) Priests, deacons, and subdeacons, who have married a widow or else contracted a /first/ marriage after their ordination, may after doing penance, exercise their function but may not be promoted; in addition their marriage must be dissolved.

(d) In the future /from 691 on/ no one may become a bishop or even a simple cleric who has contracted a second marriage.


84 "Mended his ways": sent away his wife.
Marriage after ordination was to be dissolved for subdeacons and higher orders. Canon 6 stated it this way:

As is stated in the apostolic canons, among those in clerical orders only lectors and cantors can get married. We also agree with that so that no subdeacon, deacon, or priest after ordination may contract marriage. But if one dares to do so, he shall be deposed. But if one wishes to be married before subdeacon, deacon, or priest, he may do so.  

Those who today view the subdeaconate as a prerequisite for the deaconate might find the preceding canon quite difficult; but we must remember that each of these orders at that time could be a lifetime office.

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85 The woman of suspect morals included one divorced, a prostitute, a female slave, or an actress.

86 Council of Trullo (Quinesext), canon 3 in Harkx, Fathers pp. 72-75.

87 Council of Trullo (Quinesext), canon 6, in Mansi, Concilia XI col. 943: "Quonian in Apostolicis canonibus dictum est, eorum qui non ducta uxore in clerum promoventur, solos lectorum et cantores uxorem posse ducere et nos hoc servantes decernimus, ut deinceps nulli penitus hypodiacono, vel diacono, vel presbytero post sui ordinationem contrabere liceat. Si autem fuerit hoc ausus facere, deponatur. Si quis autem eorum, qui in clerum accedunt, velit legi matrimonii mulierii conjungi antequam hypodiacononu, vel diaconos, vel presbyter ordinetur, hoc faciat."
The Eastern church specifically varied from the Western church in the area of conjugal celibacy. Canon 13 stated:

In the church of Rome those who wish to receive the deaconate or priesthood promise to have no further relations with their wives. So far as we are concerned we abide by the Apostolic rules and allow continuance of normal married life. Anyone who wishes to dissolve such unions must be dismissed, and the clergyman who abandons his wife on the pretext of a religious motive must be excommunicated. It is agreed, however, that subdeacons, deacons, and priests must refrain from conjugal intercourse during the period when they are exercising their sacred functions, for the Council of Carthage has laid down that anyone who performs service in the sanctuary, must be pure.\(^{88}\)

It is not quite clear what is fully meant by sanctuary service unless the Sunday liturgy is intended. Also, Canon 48 made the bishop send his wife to a monastery, which action seems contrary to the explicit forbidding of sending the wife away for the purpose of religion.

The council does not mention subdeacons as part of the Western church’s list as bound by conjugal celibacy, even though generally the subdeacons in the West were bound by the same rules as deacons and priests. But more important is the last part of this canon which gives cultic purity as the reason for abstinence during the time of clerical duty. This last admonition was not adopted in practice in years to come since Eastern clergy continued normal marital relations without reference to sacred functions.

\(^{88}\)Council of Trullo, canon 13, in Harkx, Fathers p. 73
Canon 48 of the same council ordered wives of bishops to live out their lives in convents which are at some distance from the bishop's residence. The bishops, however, had to continue material support even for those who became deaconesses.\(^8^9\)

The Council of Nicaea II (787) repeated the obligations of conjugal or virginal celibacy for the bishops when in Canon 18 women were forbidden to live in houses of the bishop: "Women are forbidden to enter episcopal houses or monasteries of men."\(^9^0\) The council later elaborated further:

Women who live in episcopal houses or male monasteries are the cause of scandal. If, therefore, any cleric is caught having a woman or female slave in the episcopal house or male monastery for the purpose of personal service, he is punished. Furthermore, if any cleric comes across a woman outside the city where the bishop or prefect of the monastery wish to travel, she is not to offer her services at any time but remain secluded until the bishop has left so all occasion of scandal is avoided.\(^9^1\)

\(^8^9\)Council of Trullo (Quinesext), canon 48, in Harkx, Fathers p. 73

\(^9^0\)Council of Nicaea II, canon 18, in Mansi, Concilia, XIII col. 747: "Non opportet foeminas vitam degere in aedibus episcopalibus, vel in monasteriis virorum." The wife of the bishop was also included in this canon.

\(^9^1\)Council of Nicaea II, in Mansi, Concilia, XIII col. 754: "Mulieres autem in episcopis vel monasteriis versari, est omnis offensionis causa. Si quis ergo ancillam vel liberam in episcopio possidere deprehensus fuerit, vel in monasterio ad ministerium aliquod abendum, puniatur: sin autem perseverat, deponatur. Si vero etiam in suburbanis mulieres este contigerit, et voluerit episcopus vel monasterii praefectus illuc iter facere, praesente episcopo vel monasterio raefecto mulier eo tempore nullo modo ministerium obeat, sed alio in loco seorrum versetur, donec recesserit episcopus, aut hejumenus, ut omnis reprehensionis occasio vitetur."
As far as the East is concerned these canons sum up the discipline on clerical celibacy. Other references in the East would come from individuals rather than councils, since the last accepted ecumenical council for the East is Nicaea II (787). Some references to this issue were made during the split between Eastern and Western churches in 861-879, but nothing was added to these canons.

The Western Church and Celibacy, 600-1000

During these centuries the church in the West underwent vast changes especially through the efforts of the Carolingian Emperors. Generally the decrees of the previous centuries (fourth to sixth) were less enforced or even modified. Marriage among the rural clergy was generally accepted, and conjugal celibacy was encouraged among the cathedral chapters.

Conjugal Celibacy

There were several councils during these centuries that called for conjugal celibacy. The Council of Toledo (655) stated in Canon 10 that punishment for breaching the vow of conjugal celibacy was to be inflicted upon the offspring too:

Therefore, any bishop, priest, deacon, or subdeacon who begets a child either from concubinage or from marriage breaking the
vow of conjugal celibacy shall be condemned according to the canons. Furthermore, his child born of such corruption shall not receive any inheritance and remain a slave in the service of the church. In addition these clerics shall do penance for life.

Boniface, the Apostle to the Germans, attempted to establish conjugal celibacy in his missionary territory. Lea gives an account of the efforts of Boniface in his *History of Sacerdotal Celibacy* (pp. 100-106). The attitude of the popes at that time seemed less punitive and seemed to accept the marriage conditions while gradually promoting the ideal—conjugal celibacy.

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92Hefele, *Councils* (IV 473) gives a different translation: "Since the incontinence of the clergy continues, we ordain: If a cleric, from a bishop down to a subdeacon, begets children in abominable union with a maid or a free woman, the parents are to be punished according to the canons; but the children cannot inherit from the parents, and are forever slaves of the church at which the father serves." Hefele makes no reference to marriage unless "free woman" relation is taken to be a marriage. Further, the child is a slave at the church which his father serves is also confusing, for according to the canons, the father could not serve the church until the penance was completed and furthermore, he was to be dismissed from office. Finally, married clergy continued to live marital lives (if one accepts the canon as referring to marriage) as is evident from the first phrase of the canon.

93Council of Toledo, canon 10, in Mansi, *Concilia XI* col. 655: "Ideoque quilibet ab episcopo, usque ad subdiaconum deinceps, vel ex ancillae, vel ex ingenuae destestando connubio in honore constituti filios procreaverint; illi quidem ex quibus geniti probabuntur, canonica censura deminentur, proles autem, tali nata pollutione, non solum parentum haereditatem nusquam accipiat, sed etiam in servitutem ejus ecclesiae, de cuius sacerdotes vel ministri ignominia nati sunt jure perenni manebunt."
The Council of Worms (868), a provincial council, stated in Canon 9:

We decree that bishops, priests, deacons, and subdeacons abstain from their wives and not beget children; and should they act contrary to this decree, they must be punished by dismissal from the clerical state.\(^4\)

One element in this canon is the inclusion of bishops, a fact that presupposes that married bishops were still living with their spouses.

Penitential books during these centuries list disciplines regarding conjugal celibacy. A. M. Stickler in an article, "Le Celibat en Occident au Moyen Age" cites several penitential books as a source of celibacy discipline.

From the **Burgundy Penitential** he quotes:

If any cleric in major orders has a wife and after the vow of celibacy has relations with her he commits adultery; and if a deacon, he shall do penance for 5 years, two of these by fasting on bread and water. If he is a priest, then it will be 7 years of penance, three of which by fasting on bread and water.\(^5\)

From the **Bobbio Penitential** he quotes:

If any cleric in major orders has a wife, and after the vow of conjugal celibacy has relations with her, he commits adultery. The

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\(^4\)Council of Worms, canon 9, in *Mansi Concilia*, XV col. 600: "Placuit ut episcopi, presbyteri, diaconi, subdiaconi, abstineant se a conjugibus, et non generunt filios. Quod si hoc decretum violaverint, ab honore clericatus pellantur."

\(^5\)Stickler, as found in *Sacerdoce et Celibat*, ed. Joseph Coppens (Gembloux, 1971) p. 381: "Si quis clericus vel superior gradus, qui uxorem habuit, et post honorem iterum eam cognoverit, sciat se adulterium commississe. Clericus quatuor, diaconus sex, sacerdos septem, episcopus duodecim, singuli in pane et aqua iuxta ordinem suum."
cleric shall do penance, each according to his office; a subdeacon four years, a deacon six years; a priest seven years, and a bishop twelve years. Each shall do penance on bread and water for the length appropriate to his grade of office.\textsuperscript{96}

From the \textit{Hubertine Penitential} he quotes number thirteen:

If any cleric leaves his wife and then is ordained and after that has relations with her, he commits adultery and shall be deprived from his office and do penance for the rest of his life. But in compassion, if after seven years of good behavior, he may receive communion.\textsuperscript{97}

In Ireland the majority of clergy were monks, yet marriage among the clergy prompted the Council of Ireland (700) to state in Canon 11:

Clerics are to abstain from their wives as the Council of Africa maintained in Chapter 37.\textsuperscript{98}

Lectors and cantors of Ireland, even though clerics, did not come under this prohibition.

\textsuperscript{96}Stickler, \textit{Le Celibat} p. 381: "Si quis clericus vel superior gradus, qui uxorem habuit, et post honorem iterum eas cognoverit, sciat se adulterium commisisse. Clericus quatuor, diaconus sex, sacerdos septem, episcopus duodecim, singuli in pane et aqua iuxta ordinem suum."

\textsuperscript{97}Stickler, \textit{Le Celibat} p. 381: "Si quis clericus uxorem propriam reliquerit et gradum honoris excepserit posteaque iterum eam agnoverit, sciat se adulterium perpetrasse, honore suo privetur et diebus vitae suae poenitentiat, et pro humanitatis causa, si bene egerit, post annos VII communionem percipiat."

\textsuperscript{98}Council of Ireland, canon 11, in Mansi, \textit{Concilia}, XII col. 330: "Qui clerici ab uxoribus abstinere debeant, ex concilio Africano, capitulo 37 ita continetur."
Adrian I (pope, 772-795) a strong proponent of papal power, issued the following Canon 6 regarding conjugal celibacy:

The priest must not throw out his wife from his support and protection but live with her in conjugal celibacy. 99

In England Edgar in 967 stated in rule 31:

If a priest or monk or deacon has a legitimate wife before he is ordained, then deserts her and receives orders, but afterwards takes her back again, he must do penance required of a murderer and publicly express his sorrow. 100

Conjugal celibacy was decreed but not always enforced during these centuries and only a few councils made decreed on that discipline. As we shall see later, the practice of conjugal celibacy was by no means universal; in fact at times during the eighth and ninth century this discipline was quite rare among the rural clergy.

No Marriage After Ordination

Another aspect of clerical celibacy, for which laws were decreed, was that after ordination to major orders the cleric was not allowed to marry and if he did he was degraded and sometimes also excommunicated. The Council of Reims (617) stated in Canon 12:

99Mansi, Concilia, XII col. 859: "Ut presbyter uxorem suam a gubernatione sua non objiciat, sed caste regat."

100Mansi, Concilia, XVIII/A col. 521: "Si presbyter vel monachus vel diaconus legitimam uxorem habet, antequam consecratus sit eam deserat et ordines recipiat, et postea propter concubitum illam saepe recipiat, jejunet quilibet eorum tamquam pro homicidio, et valde lugeat." These were a series of laws promulgated by Edgar who also was the primary legislator.
Priests or deacons may not presume to marry for any reason and if they do so they will be excommunicated.101

In 752 Pope Stephen II forbade monks to marry: "But if the monks leave the monastery and get married they are to be excommunicated. However, we decree that mercy and compassion be shown to those who confess their guilt."102 Pope Stephen II asked bishops to show compassion on these former monks and restore them to the communion of the church. It is most likely that these married monks were also laicized.

Pope Adrian I (773) wrote to Charles the Great and stated: "Marriage is forbidden to all clerics except to lectors."103

Pope Gregory III wrote to Pepin in 741 and decreed: "Clerics can be married before ordination but only lectors and cantors can get married after becoming a lector or cantor."104

101 Council of Reims, canon 12, in Mansi, Concilia, XI, col. 620: "Presbyterii, vel diaconi, se nulla ratione nubere praesumant. Quod si praesumserint, ab ecclesia seque questiantur."

102 Stephen II, in Mansi, Concilia, XII, col. 752: "Quod si hoc inventi fuerint peretrantes excommunicentur. Confidentibus autem decretimus, ut nabeat auctoritatem misericordiamque largiri."

103 Pope Adrian I, in Mansi, Concilia, XI, col. 859: "Quod lectoribus tantum liceat matrimonium contrahere."

104 Pope Gregory III, Letter to Pepin, in Mansi, Concilia, XII, col. 332: "Qui clerici uxores ducere possint. . . .innuptis autem, qui ad clerum provecti sunt, praecipimus, ut si voluerint uxores accipiant, sed lectores cantores que tantummodo."
In 824 Pope Eugene II stated in Canon 2 of a series of disciplinary canons to the church at Rome:

> We decree that any cleric, subdeacon, or higher who marries or keeps a concubine shall lose his office and benefice.

Nicholas I (pope, 858-867) declared:

> Clerics who remain unmarried until they are subdeacons may not get married. No one except lectors and cantors is permitted to marry a wife.

The Council of Mainz (888) held during the papal reign of Stephen I, stated in its nineteenth capitulary:

> A priest who marries shall be deposed from his order. But if he fornicates, or commits adultery, he ought to be punished even more and reduced to the penitential status.

Apparently a priest who married might still remain a cleric, but not so the priest fornicator.

The Synod of Autun (952) also decreed against clerics of higher orders marrying:

> This generally meant a common law marriage where no formal legality was given, yet generally accepted as a valid marriage.

> Pope Eugene II, in Mansi, Concilia, XIV, col. 417: "Praecipimus observavi, ut qui in ordini subdiaconatus, aut supra, uxorem duxerit, aut concubinas habuerint, officio ecclesiastico et beneficio careant."

> Mansi, Concilia, XV, col. 442: "De clericis-clericus, qui ordines ecclesiasticos usque ad subdiaconum caste vixit, uxorem ducere non potest. Nullus enim licentia, exceptis illis, quibus ecclesiastica regula uxorem habere permettetur."

> Mansi, Concilia, XVIII/A, col. 69: "Presbyter, si uxorem acceperit, ab ordine deponatur. Si vero fornicatus fuerit, aut adulterium perpetravit, amplius pelli debet, et ad poenitentiam redigi."
If any bishop, priest, deacon, or subdeacon takes a wife, he must be deposed from his office as the Council of Carthage has held.\textsuperscript{109}

King Edmund of England in 944 stated in his ecclesiastical laws, chapter 1, part 1:

In the first place those who are chosen for sacred orders ought to teach the people of God an inspired way of life and ought to live chastely according to their orders.\textsuperscript{110}

Bishop Atto of Vercelli in the tenth century spoke of no marriage for deacons:

Likewise the bishop is to be concerned about the quality of the person before he ordains him a deacon. No bishop is to ordain anyone a deacon unless that person has promised to live chastely.\textsuperscript{111}

Writing to all the leaders of Europe, Leo VII (pope, 936-939) condemned marriages of priests and urged that they be deprived of their benefices.\textsuperscript{112} It is evident from the prohibitions that in some areas priests were still taking wives.

\textsuperscript{109}Mansi, \textit{Concilia}, XVIII/A, col. 437: "Si quis Episcoporum, presbyterorum, diaconorum, subdiaconorumque, uxorem accepit, a sibi injuncto officio deponendus est, sicut in concilio Carthagensi tenetur."

\textsuperscript{110}Mansi, \textit{Concilia}, XVIII/A, col. 401: "In primis est ut sanctis ordinibus electi, qui plebem Dei docere debent lumen vitae castitatem teneant secundum ordinem suum." (Marriage was ruled out except for cantors and lectors.)

\textsuperscript{111}Mansi, \textit{Concilia}, XIX, col. 25: "Item qualem Episcopus diaconem faciat a praesenti die episcopis omnibus dicatur, ut nullum facere diaconem praesumant, nisi qui se caste victurum promiserit."

\textsuperscript{112}Lea, \textit{Celibacy} p. 118
Second Marriages

It was generally accepted during these centuries that priests, deacons, or bishops once ordained could not marry, and equally accepted was the prohibition of second marriages before ordination to the major orders. The Council of Toledo IV (671) stated in Canon 49:

Clerics who marry a widow, divorcée, or a woman who is no longer a virgin, without first consulting the bishop, must be separated from them by their own bishop.113

It would seem from the construction of this canon that the cleric was allowed to marry a virgin, but that conclusion may not be valid given the other canons of other councils of Toledo. The canon does seem to indicate a possible exception if the bishop agrees.

Pope Adrian I in 773 stated in Canon 14:

No bigamist114 or concubinist shall be ordained.115

The Council of Rome of 743 held in Canon 11:

Those who have been married twice shall not be ordained.116

The Councils of Palatro (925) and Engelheim (948) legislated against second marriages and threatened excommunication to offenders.

113Mansi, Concilia, XI, col. 63: "Clerici qui sine consultu Episcopi sui aut viduam, vel repudiatam, vel metricem in conjugio acceperint, separari eos a proprio episcopo oportebit."

114A bigamist could be a person who married a widow.

115Mansi, Concilia, XIII, col. 859: "Ne bigamus, vel concubiam habeus, ordinetur."

116Mansi, Concilia, XII, col. 384
Alfred (849-899), king of England, wrote Wulfinus a letter containing a series of laws which were read in the vernacular to the people. Statute 8 stated:

The holy synod [Nicaea] decreed that those who married a widow or a divorcee, or entered a second marriage shall not assume any sacred order or be consecrated a priest. Rather we should follow the advice of St. Paul in his Epistle [Timothy] that those who are picked for orders be persons of one spouse.\textsuperscript{117}

The laws of Northumbria (968) on priests stated the following:

Law 35: If a priest deserts his concubine\textsuperscript{118} and marries another, he is excommunicated.\textsuperscript{119}

Law 36: If any cleric leaves his lawful wife, and unlawfully marries another, he cannot expect God's mercy unless some compensation be made.\textsuperscript{120}

From these last decrees, one can justifiably maintain that in England marriage was accepted among the rural parish clergy and conjugal celibacy was rare among these clerics.

\textsuperscript{117}Mansi, Concilia, XVIII/A, col. 700: "Constitutum etiam fuit in eadem synodo, ut is qui viduam duxerat, aut repudiatam, aut ad secundas nuptias transierat, ad sacrum ordinem nonquam postea assumere, nec consecrareetur in sacerdotem: sed in qui castae unius uxoris maritus fuerat, ad castum ordinem eligendus soret, juxta it quod apostolus Paulus in Epistola sua scriptum tradidit."

\textsuperscript{118}A concubine was generally a common law wife.

\textsuperscript{119}Mansi, Concilia, XIX, col. 69: "Si presbyter concubinam deserat et aliam accipiat, anathema sit."

\textsuperscript{120}Mansi, Concilia, XIX, col. 70: "Si quis legitmam suam uxorem viventem dimittat, et aliam uxorem injuste, non habeat Dei misericordiam, nisi illus compenset."
Canons and Decrees Regarding Relationships 
With Women Other Than Spouses

Even though many clerics continued to live with their wives and even enjoyed implicit approval, no such approval was given to clerics who lived or associated intimatey with women not their lawful or common law wives. The Council of Braga (675) stated in Canon 5:

As is stated in the ancient canons in various rules and disciplines, that occasions for fornication be removed, we decree that these rules be enforced and therefore, no priest shall secretly have a woman living with him, except his mother; further, that not only shall strange women be outlawed, but also sisters or close relatives, so that all possible scandal be removed. He who transgresses this precept shall subject himself to six months of penance.

In Ireland, Lea states that great care was taken for monks lest women endanger their morals. He gathers the following information from an ancient Penitential, presumable Hibernian:

121 I do not wish to give the impression that all concubines were common law wives. Some clerics kept concubines but generally these clerics were held in ill-repute.

122 Mansi, Concilia, XI, col. 157: "Quamquam antiqua canonum institutio de hujusmodi praesumptione absolutas et multiplices disciplinas atque institiones ediderit, nos tamen brevitatis causa, omnen fornicandi occasionem cupientes auferre, id omnimo sanctius auctoritate tenedum, ut nullus sacerdotum, sive quisquis ille de clero absque honesto et competenti testimonio, excepta sola matre, cum quibuslibet foeminis secrete se praesumet adjungere; non solum cum extraneis mulieribus, sed nec sum ipsis etiam sororibus, vel propinquis: ne licentia sororum vel propinquarum mulierum quisquis ille solitus, familiarior habeatur ad perpetrandum scelus. Hujus ergo praecessionis transgressor, sex mensibus se noverit poenitentiae legibus subjacere."
A single passing emotion of lust for a woman, not expressed, is visited with seven day's penance, on a measured amount of bread and water. Innocent familiarity with a woman requires forty day's penance, but if a kiss passes between them it is lengthened to a year. Fornication forfeits the tonsure, but if it is not known it can be redeemed with three years of penance, after which the functions are restored. If a child is born, the penalty is nine years of penance, of which seven must be passed in exile, with subsequent resumption of functions being the same as for homicide. 

The Council of Germany (743) forbade clerics to have women living with them. In the same year the Council of Rome stated:

No one should presume to enter into an impious marriage with a wife of a priest, deaconess, nun, female monk, or a vowed woman.

In 748 Archbishop Egbert of York decreed:

It is forbidden by the great synod for a bishop, priest, deacon, or any cleric to keep in his house a woman who has dedicated her life to God.

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123 Lea, Celibacy, pp. 127-28
124 Mansi, Concilia, XII, col. 367 (Canon 7)
125 Mansi, Concilia, XII, col. 383: "Ut presbyteram, diaconnum, nonnam, aut monacham, vel etiam spiritualem commatrem nullus sibi praesumat nefario conjugio copulare."
126 Mansi, Concilia, XII, col. 415: "Interdict per omnia magna synodus non episcopo, non presbytero, non diacono nec alicui omnino qui in clerio est, licere subintroductam mulierem habere."
The Council of Frejus (791) stated in its fourth chapter:

> According to the canon of the venerable council of Nicaea, no cleric is allowed to have a vowed [subintroductam] woman in his own house nor is he allowed to dwell in their houses.\(^{127}\)

The Council of Frankfort (794) stated in Canon 40:

> All suspicion must be avoided for those [clerics] who are supervisors of young women [girls in early teens] who are in houses away from their parents.\(^{128}\)

In the ninth century there was an abundance of legislation on cleric-female relationships outside of marriage.\(^{129}\) Hincmar, archbishop of Reims (806-882), writing to his priests in 852 stated:

> Priests, deacons, and subdeacons and other clerics who do not have wives

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\(^{127}\) Mansi, *Concilia*, XIII, col. 846: "Ut juxta Nicaeni venerandi definitionem concilii, nullus patiatur subintroductas mulieres secum in domo propria habere, vel private cum eis sohabitantes conservari."


\(^{129}\) The following councils issued canons against suspicious female-cleric relationships: The Council of Paris VI, the Council of Aachen (836) canons 7 and 11, the Council of Mayenne (845) canon 36, the Constitutions of Charlemagne (814)—these were included in several councils—canon 15 and 24, the Council of Mainz (813) canon 49, the Council of Reims II (813) canon 22, the Council of Tours (813), the Council of Aachen (816) canon 39, the Council of Chalons-sur-Saone II (813), and the Council of Tessin (876).
are forbidden by our decree which follows the divine laws to have any woman in their houses except their mother, daughter, or sister; and furthermore they are commanded to flee all quarrels.  

It is presumed here that when he speaks of clerics without wives, he also includes those clerics who practiced conjugal celibacy, otherwise daughters would not be included in the last part of the legislation. Hincmar further stated:

If a priest is discovered in an unconventional relationship with a woman, he shall be deposed according to the decree of Pope Zosimus.  

The Synod of Bulles (858) went even so far as to forbid gossiping with women. Women were also forbidden to be near the altar when clerics were officiating. The Council of Nantes (898) stated in Canon three:

According to the authority of the canons it is forbidden that any woman come near the altar or even be seated in the sanctuary while the priest ministers at the altar.

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131 Mansi, Concilia, XV, col. 484: "Et si hoc modo presbyter convictus fuerit de inconvenienti cohabitatione cum feminis, deponatur, sicut Zosimus Papa decrevit." Pope Zosimus had confused the Sardican canons with those of Nicaea.

132 Mansi, Concilia, XVIII/A, col. 167: "Sed et hoc, secundum auctoritatem canonum, modis omnibus prohibendum, ut nulla foemina ad altare praesumat accedere, aut presbytero ministreare, aut infra canellos stare aut sedere."
The Council of Mainz (888) stated in chapter 10:

We forbid clerics to have any women in their houses. Even though the canons allow certain women into the houses of clerics, nevertheless we have heard of cases of incest resulting in children. Therefore, this synod decrees that no priest may permit any female in his house so that all occasions for suspicion be removed.  

This canon obviously went beyond the prescription of the Council of Nicaea.

Alfred the Great (849-899), king of Wessex from 871, wrote:

The bishops of Nicaea decreed unanimously that no bishop, nor priest who says Mass, nor deacon, nor anyone who is a cleric in good standing can have a woman in his house unless she is his mother, sister, aunt, or great aunt, and if he does so, he shall be deprived of his position and order.

Edgar of England (967) stated in a statute:

We exhort that no priest have intimate familiarities with women, but rather that he love his legitimate wife— the church.

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133 Mansi, Concilia, XVIII/A, col. 67: "Ut clericis interdictur, mulieres in domo sua habere, omnimodis decernimus. Quamvis enim sacri canones quasdam personas foeminarum simul cum clerici in una domo habitate permittant; tamen, quod multum delendum est, saepe audivimus, per illam concessionem plurima scelera esse sororibus concumbentes, filios ex eis generassent. Ed idcirco constituit haec sancta synodus, ut nulius presbyter ullam foeminam secum in domo pròpria permittat, quatenus occasio malae suspicionis vel facti iniqui penitus suferatur."

134 Mansi, Concilia, XVII/A, col. 698: "Decreverunt jam tum omnes unanimi cogitatione, ut neque episcopus, neque sacerdos missalis, neque diaconus, nec qui vere est canonicus, in domo sua secum haberet aliquam mulierem, nisi matrem vel sororem suam, amitam vel materteram suam: & qui aliter fecerit, ordine & gradu suo privaretur."

135 Mansi, Concilia, XVIII/A, col. 517: "Docemus etiam, ut nullus sacerdos mulierum consortium nimis amet, sed diligat legitimam suam uxorem, id est ecclesiæ suam."
Another statute of his stated:

If a priest or monk lives in a promiscuous concubinage or commits adultery, he shall do penance for ten years and regret his action forever.\(^\text{136}\)

The Council of Poitiers (999) stated in Canon 3:

Priests and deacons who have women in their houses will lose their grade of office.\(^\text{137}\)

Often these decrees presumed married life among clerics and in fact Edgar of England stated:

We exhort that concubinage among clergy cease and faithfulness in marriage be restores.\(^\text{138}\)

Monasteries

A few words about celibacy in monasteries during these centuries (600-1000) are helpful for our understanding of the total picture of the celibate and noncelibate traditions. In the early seventh century, monks of the St. Vitus community on Mt. Etna considered themselves free to get married without leaving the convent.\(^\text{139}\) Similarly, the Council of Paris felt obliged in 615 to forbid nuns to marry.\(^\text{140}\) Henry Charles Lea states that some monks became godparents for their own children.\(^\text{141}\)

\(^\text{136}\)Mansi, Concilia, XVIII/A, col. 521: "Si presbyter vel monachus concubitum lascivum exerceat, vel conjugium viole, jejunet X annos, et lugeat semper."

\(^\text{137}\)Mansi, Concilia, XIX, col. 268: "Ut presbyter et diaconus si feminas domi habent, gradum amittant."

\(^\text{138}\)Mansi, Concilia, XVIII/A, col. 515: "Docemus etiam ut cessant concubinatus et amuntur justa conjugia."

\(^\text{139}\)Lea, Celibacy, p. 88

\(^\text{140}\)Lea, Celibacy, p. 89

\(^\text{141}\)Lea, Celibacy, p. 88
The Council of Aachen (836) ordered reforms for certain monasteries where monks engaged in sexual intimacies with women. Reform movements in England under Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury (909-988), were aimed at the monasteries which were urged by the archbishop and King Edgar to live according to their rules or close down.142

Nevertheless, during these centuries celibacy was the rule of the monasteries rather than the exception. Corruption of the rules and vows of the monks was attacked in every century by either kings or ecclesiastical leaders. Unlike the discipline for secular clergy, the discipline of celibacy among the monks was consistently upheld, even though it was not always practiced.

Motivation for Conjugal Celibacy

Very little appears in the disciplinary literature about motivation for conjugal celibacy during the seventh through the tenth centuries. Two leaders, Alfred, king of Wessex, and Hincmar, archbishop of Reims, gave reasons for celibacy. Alfred (849-899) stated:

I say to you priests, I will not tolerate negligence in your ministry but I will tell you the truth about what constitutes your ministry. Christ, Himself, gives us the best example of Christian living that is pure and chaste. All, therefore, who

142 Lea, Celibacy, p. 135

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walk in His way must leave all worldly
things and even give up wives. For He,
Himself, said in the Gospel: he who does
not hate his wife, is unworthy to be my
disciple.¹⁴³

In addition Alfred tried to demonstrate the value of celibacy by way
of the words of the New Testament:

When you have solicitude for the church,
you cannot have total care for your family.
But you say that you can take care of your
wife, too. I say: But why then did the
holy men of old live their lives apart
from their women or wives in chastity to
gain the rewards of eternal life? To this
some priests say that Peter had a wife.
True indeed: but that was under the old
law, for Christ had not yet promulgated
the new law. Therefore, it was allowed
to Peter. As soon as he became an apostle
of Christ, he showed an example of chastity
and left his wife and worldly things.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³Mansi, Concilia, XVII/A, col. 697: "Dico vobis sacredotibus
ego ipsem et: Non feram negligentiam vestram in vestro ministerio
sed in veritate vobis annunciabo, quid de sacredotibus constitution
est. Christus ipse nobis exemptum praebuit Christianae institutionis,
puritate vitae, seu castitatis. Omnes igitur, qui in via sua secum
ambulaverint, mundana omnia reliquerant, ne uxores respicientes.
Unde ipsem et in quodam evangeliorum suorum ait: qui uxor quem non
odit, indignus est esse meus discipulus."

¹⁴⁴Mansi, Concilia, XVII/A, col. 698: "Considerate igitur
diana haec auditu. Cum enim habueritis ecclesiae vestrae solici-
tudinem, e contrario. . .adduct. . .quasi periculosum non esset,
sacerdotem vivere more conjugati. Sed dicetis eum habere posse carere
mulieribus servitiis. Respondeo. Quonam pacto vitam transegerunt
sancti olim viri absque foemina vel uxorae, qui in mercedem casti
sui animi vita nunc fruuntur sempiterna? Ad hoc dicent sacerdotes,
Petrum habuisse uxorem. Verum est: sub lege enim veteri, dum in
Christi adhuc non venisset clientelam, bene ei licuit: quamprimum
autem factus est discipulius Christi, qui castitatis exemptum praebui,
uxor tem dereliquit, & mundana omnia."
Alfred had these statutes read to all the people. He was apparently not familiar with St. Paul who maintained that Peter as well as the other apostles traveled with their wives after Pentecost. Furthermore, Christ had not said anyone should leave his wife for His sake, but that one should not love his wife more than Him. In the same regulation Alfred compares the priests of the Old Testament with the priests of the New Testament and suggests cultic purity as the motivation for conjugal celibacy.

In the old law it was allowed to take a chaste virgin as a wife and to raise children who would follow in the same order, because only the tribe of [Levi] could be members of the priestly class. But he was not allowed to take a second wife, a divorcée or a widow, but as we have already indicated only a pure virgin. But it was good enough for those times to enjoy a wife, for they did not celebrate the Mass, nor administer the body and blood of Christ, but offered bulls until Christ through his passion instituted this sacrament and originated the Mass.145

The history of the period shows us that the married clerics were not convinced by his reasoning because Dunstan (909-988) some sixty years later maintained that married priests still lived in full relationship with their wives.146


146 *Lea, Celibacy, pp. 132-134*
Hincmar, archbishop of Reims, (806-882) gave a number of reasons for the practice of conjugal celibacy. Hincmar quoted Christian emperors who stated that priests and deacons should not marry nor live with their wives: this argument is one of political authority. He cited the cultic purity arguments of Pope Siricius who compared the Old Testament priest with the New Testament priest. What was asked of the former should even more be practiced of the latter. Hincmar next cited St. Paul who tells us that it is beneficial at times and for a short time to abstain sexually that husband and wife may pray better; therefore married priests ought to do this on a permanent basis. Hincmar again uses cultic purity in maintaining that those who offer Mass should not cohabit with their wives. He condemned the Cynican Heresy, which maintained every person must procreate. Finally, Hincmar quoted the African canons on conjugal celibacy, which alluded to cultic purity as the motivation. These reasons not new in themselves, are repetitious of the reasons for celibacy previously mentioned.

147 If Old Testament priests stayed away from their wives while on temple duty, how much more ought New Testament priests stay away permanently because the Christian priest is called to worship God daily.

148 Cynica had maintained every one had an obligation to procreate and that celibacy was unnatural.

149 Mansi, *Concilia*, XV, col. 483
The Council of Metz (888) made a reference to Moses as a placator of God's wrath and suggested that priests should have no women in their houses. Canon 5 stated:

Priests are not to have any women in their houses. A priest, who like Moses ought to mitigate the wrath of God for his people, should be attentive to the written axiom: The greatest ruin of people can be the fault of the priest. Therefore, there shall be no women in their houses, not even a mother or sister. But they shall remove all occasion for the devil and lead an angelic life and serve the Lord God chastely in body and heart.150

It is not clear whether conjugal celibacy is included in this prohibition. Certainly the brothels and sexual intimacies between priests and women outside of marriage are clearly condemned.

Theodulf of Orléans (c. 750-821) argued for celibacy in the following way:

No priest can excuse himself because Paul said that on account of temptation to fornication everyone should have a wife. Clerics know that this is intended for the lay people or those not yet ordained a subdeacon. The canons allow in no way anyone to become a subdeacon unless he first promises to serve in perpetual chastity. The

150Mansi, Concilia, XVIII/A, col. 79: "Ut nullam in domo sua foeminem habeant sacerdotes. Sacerdotes, qui vice Mosis iram Domini super populum saevientem precibus suis debent mitigare, attendentes eitiam, ne illud fiat quod scriptum est: Maxima ruina populi in culpa sacerdotum fuit: nequequam in suo domo secum aliquam foeminam habeant, nec matrem, nec sororem: sed auferentes ommem occasionem satinae, angelicam vitam ducant, et Domino Deo casto corpore et mundo corde sin tenus serviant."
priests of the Jews are commanded to take wives because no other tribe provided for priests and therefore, wives were needed for the continuation of the priestly tribe. Now, however, anyone from all peoples who has been baptised is allowed to become a priest and, therefore, there is no necessity for marrying because succession comes not by way of the flesh but by following the rules laid down. Even the Jewish priest, not having a holy sacrifice as we have, spent a long time away from home and practiced celibacy while on duty at the temple. But now we [Christian priests] ought always to be on duty and, therefore, we ought always to be celibate. Furthermore, we do not handle sacrifices of bulls but the very immaculate body and blood of the Lord. In the same continence must deacons and subdeacons come to the altar because they are ministers in the handling of such a sacrament.  

151 Theodulf of Orleans, Capitulaire II del eveque, in Coppens Sacerdoce et celibat, p. 384. "Ne quis autem se excuset sacerdotum ex eo quod ait Paulus Apostolus, 'propter fornicationem autem unusquisque uxorem habeat' sciant his tantum esse dictum qui in laicali ordine constituti sunt, vel qui necdum ad subdiaconatum accesserunt. Nullo modo-enim ad subdiaconatum permittunt canones accedere nisi eos qui perpetum continetam castitatis promiserint se deinceps servare. Nam sacerdotes Judaeorum a Domino iussi sunt per Moysen ducere uxores et de nulla tribu nisi de Levi fiebant sacerdotes, ut progenies una custodieretur per successionem. Nunc autem de omnibus gentibus, sicut ad baptismum, sic ad sacerdotium permittuntur accedere, nullaque necessitas uxores ducere, qui non per carnis successionem, sed per morum imitationem in sacerdotio subrogantur. Ipsi tamen Judaeorum sacerdotes non habentes tam sanctum sacrificium, sicut nos habemus, tempore vicis suas longe erant a domo sua et a conjugali opere remoti juxta templum in continentia castitatis exucubabant donec tempus ministerii sui explerent. Nunc autem sicut semper ministrare debent, ita semper continentes esse oportet sacerdotes. Tractant enim, non victimas pecudum, sed ipsum immaculatum corpus et sanguinem Domini. Eiusdem continentiae et Diaconi et Subdiaconi et in Domino et ipsi in tractatione tanti sacramenti ministri accedunt altaris.
PART III
PRACTICE OF THE CLERGY
DURING THE SEVENTH TO TENTH CENTURIES

After the sixth century there was a substantial decrease in the practice of conjugal celibacy for several reasons. First, the discipline promoted by St. Jerome found much more opposition in the newly converted territories of Christendom. Second, the reasons for cultic purity were not as well appreciated in the Frankish and the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. Third, the lack of communication from Rome on the celibacy discipline prevented knowledge of these canons from reaching far off places.

What was the practice of the clergy during these centuries? Were the clerics aware to the disciplinary canons? Did the disciplinary canons have universal jurisdiction? Generally, the practice of the clergy was that the rural (secular) clergy were married and continued to live with their wives, while at the same time the monks were either conjugally celibate or non-married celibates.

Cathedral chapters and canons were on a whole conjugally celibate, even though in the tenth century many of them had begun to live married lives. Our knowledge of the practice comes from several sources, some of which are councils, papal decrees, and decrees of temporal leaders. When the council stated that priests ought to live in celibacy, we know that priests were not, otherwise there would be no need to tell them to get rid of their wives. The constant tradition during these centuries was a married clergy, as is evident.
from the opposition to the eleventh-century reform, since the supporters of married clergy cited the long traditions of non-celibate clergy.

The disciplinary canons were not known to all clergy in their own areas as is evident from some decrees of many councils. Furthermore, most of the councils that treated conjugal celibacy were either provincial or diocesan and not universal. Prior to 1123 no ecumenical council legislated conjugal celibacy for priests, deacons, or subdeacons.

Not all councils reflected the daily life of the clergy but often times they told us what certain bishops and abbots did not like about clerics. Many of the councils which I quoted tell us one important fact: the clergy continued to live with their wives throughout these centuries. Several councils even forbade bishops to impose celibacy on their clergy except monks. 152

The Council of Turin (401) allowed priests who continued normal marital relations and begot children to continue in the same order but not to be promoted. 153 The Synod of Orange (441) legislated an identical discipline. 154 A letter of Bishops Lupus and Euphronius

152Bunnik, R. S., "The Question of Married Priests," Cross Currents, 15 (Fall 1965) p. 417

153Mansi, Concilia, VIII, col. 58: "Hi autem qui contra interdictum sunt ordinati vel in ministerio filios generunt, ne ad maiores gradus ordinum permittentur synodi decrevit auctoritas."

154Harkx, Fathers p. 49
stated that married clerics continued to live with their wives despite any legislation. The Council of Orleáns (529) stated that no promotion was possible for the married clergy who begot children.

The Council of Toledo (653) showed that all ranks of clergy, and even some bishops, had no scruple in publicly maintaining relations with their wives and concubines. Even Boniface (680-754), the Apostle of the Germans, an archbishop at large, monk, missionary, and reformer, was not successful in enforcing conjugal celibacy upon a certain Bishop Clement who had two children while in office and who enjoyed the support of his people.

Pope St. Leo III (795-816) even allowed St. Swithun, a priest, to be married after his ordination for the sake of carrying on the Swithun family. In Italy, in 725, a charter was given to a priest, Romuald, and his wife by Bishop Talesperianus of Lucca. The couple were allowed to continue their marriage. Bishop Ratherius of Verona admitted that his priests continued to live with their wives.

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155 Harkx, Fathers, pp. 50-51
156 Mansi, Concilia, IX, col. 13: "De his qui ex concubinis filios habent, et uxores legitimos habuerint, aut defunctis uxorisibus sibi concubinos publice crediderint sociandas, id observandum esse censimus, ut sicut eos, qui jam sunt clerici per ignorantiam ordinati, non Removamus—ita stuius ne ulterius ordinentur."
157 Lea, Celibacy, p. 94
158 Lea, Celibacy, p. 131
159 Lea, Celibacy, p. 99
160 Lea, Celibacy, p. 116
The same bishop stated that if all his married clergy left, he would have only boys left and so he accepted married clergy and forbade them to have intercourse during the times suggested for laymen such as Advent and Lent.\textsuperscript{161}

St. Ulrich the tenth-century bishop of Augsburg, even took odds with Pope Agapitus II (pope, 946-955) for trying to enforce conjugal celibacy. He argued from the scriptures and expediency that marriage of clerics was far better than the crimes committed by those not married.

He pointed out how much more obnoxious to divine wrath were the promiscuous and nameless crimes indulged in by those who were foremost in advocating the reform than the chaste and single marriages of the clergy; and the violent distortion of the sacred tests, by those who sought authority to justify the canon, he not unhappily characterized as straining the breast of Scripture until it yielded blood in place of milk.\textsuperscript{162}

King Edgar of England (967) decreed:

\textit{We exhort that wives do not approach the altar while Mass is being celebrated.}\textsuperscript{163}

In the same decree, Edgar demanded that priests be faithful to their wives:

\textit{We exhort that concubinage cease and faithfulness in marriage be restored.}\textsuperscript{164}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{161}\textit{Lea, Celibacy, p. 118}
\item \textsuperscript{162}\textit{Lea, Celibacy, p. 119}
\item \textsuperscript{163}\textit{Mansi, Concilia, XVIII/A, col. 516: "Docemus etiam, ut nulla uxor altare appropinquet, quandom missa celebratur."}
\item \textsuperscript{164}\textit{Mansi, Concilia, XVIII/A, col. 515: "Docemus etiam ut cessant concubinatus et amentur justa conjugia."}
\end{itemize}
The Laws of Northumbria (968) stated in Law 35:

If a priest deserts his wife (concubine) and marries another, he is excommunicated.\(^{165}\)

Obviously conjugal celibacy was out of the question. Law 36 of the same code stated:

If any cleric leaves his legitimate living wife and unlawfully marries another, he cannot expect God's mercy unless some compensation is made.\(^{166}\)

These married priests had the sanction of the law and therefore implicitly if not explicitly the church recognized married clergy.

Conclusion

From the information gathered in this chapter it might appear that the pro-celibacy movement had little or no opposition and that the church continually legislated conjugal celibacy. However, that is far from the truth, because these canons and decrees represent only a very small minority of disciplinary canons issued during these seven centuries. Most of the councils did not even take up the issue of conjugal celibacy, and furthermore, the councils that addressed themselves to conjugal celibacy were often related in geography and time to each other. Finally, one should add that after 700 only Western councils discussed conjugal celibacy for the secular

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\(^{165}\)Mansi, Concilia, XIX, col. 69: "Si presbyter concubinam deserat et aliam accipiat, anathema sit."

\(^{166}\)Mansi, Concilia, XIX, col. 70: "Si quis legitnam suam uxorem viventem dimittat, et aliam uxorem injuste duxerit, non habeat Dei misericordiam, nisi illud compenset."
clergy. As far as papal decrees are concerned, there were very few of the popes who even considered the discipline of marriage among the clergy. Of the one hundred popes who reigned during these six centuries, less than ten per cent spoke out against married clergy.

However, even in the disciplinary decrees there is evidence that married clergy continued marital sexual life. Repetition of these canons in some areas tells us that not all clergy accepted the known and legislated canons.

If should be noted that some of these decrees were directed to the clergy who were monks and not to the secular clergy. Some of the decrees were addressed to the cathedral chapters and canons who, though not monks, had a common life.

Many of those who spoke out on the clerical discipline were themselves monks at one time or other. For example, Pope Gregory I, Boniface, Hincmar, and Dunstan were also monks at one time. What effect this background may have had on their attitudes is not part of this study, but I cannot help but feel that their monastic background influenced them.

In many areas of Europe the local customs of the married clergy were left alone. In other areas customs contrary to the canons were allowed to prosper and thus removed the obligations of the disciplinary decrees. It is no wonder that in the eleventh century, many married clergy rebelled when told that the discipline of conjugal celibacy was always in force—they knew that it had not been.
CHAPTER III

CELIBATE AND NON-CELIBATE CLERGY

OF THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

How deeply rooted the traditions of the celibate and non-celibate clergy were in the eleventh century is far more complicated than historians usually tell us. Up to the eleventh century there was tradition to support both disciplines. Generally, the councils that spoke of conjugal celibacy supported it, but at the same time many more councils ignored the issue and thereby gave an implicit approval to the married clergy who continued to practice the ministry. Mansi has cited about one hundred and fifty councils or synods between the years 1000 and 1070 A.D., and only a fraction of these councils and synods dealt specifically with clerical conduct. Of those few disciplinary councils, only a few touched upon conjugal celibacy. Victor III (pope, 1086-1087) stated that during the pontificate of Benedict VIII (1012-1024) clerics of all orders (bishops, priests, deacons, and sub-deacon) were openly and without shame living married lives.1 Victor thought they had had implicit approval for their conduct. There was general acceptance of a married clergy during most of the first half of the eleventh century.

1Victor III, as found in Lea, Celibacy, pp. 145-46.
In the second half of the eleventh century there came about a dramatic change which culminated in the early twelfth century in the decrees of the General Councils of the Lateran (1123 and 1139) where conjugal celibacy was made universal law for the Western church. Papal powers reached new heights of political as well as ecclesiastical influence at this time, as is evident from the numerous excommunications meted out to the bishops, princes, and even to Emperor Henry IV. This upsurge of papal power and control was, however, not entirely effective in clerical discipline, as the events of the later part of the eleventh century indicated. Yet, despite the lack of total effectiveness in clerical celibacy, at no other time in the history of the Christian church did such a dramatic change in clerical discipline come about.

Practice of the Clergy
During the Eleventh Century

The widespread practice of selecting bishops by the princes and the kings led to the corruption in the church because persons were appointed to the bishoprics who were close political associates of the kings and rulers or whose financial interests were of great help in filling the war chests of the rulers. The feudal wars and costs of provincial armies were a heavy drain upon the political leaders and every possible source of "taxation" was tapped. Such interweaving of clerical and political affairs would—of necessity—bring upon both parties whatever happened to one or the other. Church leaders who were, either by choice or by neces-
sity, involved in the political struggles often found themselves, again, either by design or by association, contributors to corruptive intrigues of the warring political factions.

The need of financial support for these political involvements and intrigues was a constant threat to any clerical independence. Lay investiture and simony often went hand in hand and brought pressure upon the clerics who joined in the simonical practices. Many abbots and bishops owed their jobs to the mercy of a prince, lord, or king and actively sought to perpetuate the jobs among their own children or close relatives. The ideal of St. Paul's freedom for the parousia was not uppermost in the mind of these office holders whose primary worry was to protect their clerical and political income.

Odericus Vitalis (d. 1143), in his Ecclesiastical History of England and Normandy, wrote that even abbeys secured special outside help from married clerics:

This abbot (Mainier of the abbey of St. Evroult) chose for his assistant in the management of the house Fulk de Guernanville, a clever and proper person to whom he committed the superintendence of the monastery. He was son of Fulk, dean of Evreux, and being full of zeal for his order, he diligently seconded his abbot in all things, besides inducing his father to enter the abbey and endow it with a great part of his patrimony. The dean was one of the pupils of Fulbert, bishop of Chartres, and held a knight's fee by inheritance from his father. According to the custom of that period, he had a noble partner, Orielde, who bore him numerous offspring. He had eight sons and two daughters: Warin, Christian, Ralph, William, Fulk, Fromont, Hubert, and Walte, surnamed Tyrel, Avise, and Adelaide.²

The fact that Fulk was married seems to merit no special attention here, and no mention is made of any vows of celibacy. This is all the more significant when one remembers that Odericus Vitalis was a monk and lived during the most intensive phase of the Gregorian reform.

At this time in the eleventh century in Normandy and England, the secular clergy considered marriage a valid part of their ministerial calling;

... the celibacy of the clergy was so little preserved that not only priests, but even bishops, used freely the beds of concubines and openly boasted of their numerous families of sons and daughters. This custom generally prevailed among the neophites who were baptized at the same time as Rollo, and who took possession of the unpopulated country not versed in letters but in arms. These priests of Danish origin, with very little learning, obtained possession of the parishes, and were always ready to take up arms to defend the lay fees by military service. At length, Bruno of Lorraine, bishop of Toul, was called to Rome and, by the providence of God, became pope under the name of Leo. While he was journeying to Rome, he heard the angels singing: "I know the thoughts that I think towards you saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil." This pope applied himself to do much good and rendered great services to those who were committed to his charge, both by his good deeds and his faithful teaching. He came into France in the year of our Lord 1049 and consecrated the church of St. Remigius at Reims, on the calends of October; and at the insistence of Abbot Hermar, transported the body of the saint with great ceremony to the place where it is now held in veneration. He then held a general council at Reims which resulted in one canon among so many for the good of the church prohibiting priests from carrying arms and having wives. From that time the fatal practice began gradually to decline. Priests have now readily ceased from bearing arms, but they are still reluctant to give up their concubines and observe celibacy. 3

3 Odericus, Ecclesiastical History, p.186.
Obviously, the lack of education among the feudal and manorial clergy resulted in little knowledge and understanding of the celibacy canons of previous centuries or of councils in other parts of Europe. Charles Lea gives the impression that clerics openly disobeyed the canons, but I find no justification for such a broad conclusion. I am sure some clerics did act openly contrary to the canons and there is some evidence for this observation, but Lea presumes too much knowledge in general on the part of the clergy.

Many clerics in leadership roles were found to be poorly educated since the intellectual qualifications were not considered as primary or even secondary assets for the office. Since the loyal friends of the political leaders were appointed to the ecclesiastical offices, loyalty was preferred to the knowledge of the traditions of the church, and often the appointees did not understand the full implications of counciliar and papal discipline.

In many cases the feudal appointees were men of bad character. Perhaps an extreme example is the life of Ódo, bishop of Bayeaux (1040-c.1096).

The king was exhausted by the numerous solicitations from so many quarters for the release of the bishop of Bayeaux: but at length he said: "I wonder that your penetration has not discovered the character of the man for whom you supplicate me. Are not you making petitions for a prelate who has long held religion in contempt, and who is the subtle promoter of fatal divisions? Have I not already incarcerated for many years this bishop who when he ought to have proved himself exemplary in the just government of England, became a most cruel oppressor of the people and destroyer of the convents of monks? In desiring the liberation of this seditious man, you are ill-advised and are bringing on yourselves a serious calamity. It is clear that my broth-
Odo is a man not to be trusted, ambitious, given to fleshly desires, and of enormous cruelty, and that he will never be converted from his whoredoms and ruinous follies. I satisfied myself of this on several occasions; and therefore I imprisoned not the bishop but the tyrannical earl. There is not a doubt that if he is released he will disturb the whole country and be the ruin of thousands. I say this not from hatred, as if I were his enemy, but as the father of my country watching for the welfare of a Christian people. It would indeed give me inexpressible and heartfelt joy to think that he could conduct himself with chastity and moderation, as it always becomes a priest and minister of God.⁴

Appointment to office depended not upon moral qualifications so much as upon loyalty to the power figures. Persons already morally corrupt could become candidates for these offices because of their allegiance and once in office their vices went even further unchecked. Clerical marriage was surely viewed as desirable by some when compared to the open vices of many of the clergy.

Feudal lords had been appointing and investing clerics for centuries. Prohibition of this procedure was emphatically proclaimed by the lenten synods of Pope Gregory (1075, 1078, 1080) and the decrees of the succeeding Popes Urban II, Paschal II, and Callitus II. It was not until 1122 that the question of investiture by laymen was finally settled by the Concordat of Worms.

Several examples of investiture show the general attitude of the contemporaries toward investiture and clerical marriage. In 989 Duke Richard II of Normandy filled the vacant see of Rouen with his son

⁴Odericus, Eddlesiastical History, p.198-317.
Robert who held the archbishopric until 1037. Archbishop Robert was openly married and had three sons, Richard, Ralph, and William to whom he gave vast properties. His contemporaries called him a good cleric and an honest man.

Robert, an eminent prelate, of most illustrious origin after governing happily, ended his days devoutly. He was son of Duke Richard the Elder by Gunnor and was 48 years archbishop of Rouen and count of Evereux, in the time of Robert, king of France, and his son Henry. During that period Agapete and Silvester, John and Benedict filled the see of Rome. Otto, Henry, and Conrad were emperors in lawful succession. Archbishop Robert was amply endowed with the goods of this world and took a deep interest in the secular affairs of his city, and he did not observe the continence which was becoming his order. For, in his character of count, he took a wife named Harleve by whom he had three sons, Richard, Ralph, and William to whom he bequeathed his county of Evereux and his other ample honours and possessions, according to the secular laws. But, as he advanced in years, he became sensible of his errors and repenting of them was struck with alarm at his many and great offences. He, therefore, distributed alms largely to the poor and began to rebuild from the foundations the cathedral church of Rouen, dedicated to the Holy Mother of God; and he completed a considerable part of the new erection.5

In the tenth and early eleventh centuries, even reformers often ignored the question of celibacy. Pope Sylvester (pope, 999-1003) exemplified this attitude. As archbishop of Ravenna he attempted to root out simony but said very little and did nothing regarding clerical marriages.6

Acceptance and even support for married clergy is evident, at least in some areas, as the medieval Handbook of Penances stated in number eighteen (c.1008-1012):

5Odericus, Ecclesiastical History, p. 160.
6Lea, Celibacy, p.125.
Has thou despised the Mass or the prayer or the offering of a married presbyter, so I say that thou wouldst not confess thy sins to him or receive from him the body and blood of the Lord for the reason that he seemed to thee to be a sinner? If thou hast, thou shalt do penance for one year in the appointed fast days.7

It is no wonder that some resisted the decrees of Gregory VII which ordered the faithful not to attend the Masses of married clergy.

Henry Charles Lea sums up the condition of the church in the early eleventh century:

Though ancient canons were still theoretically in force, they were practically obsolete everywhere. Legitimate marriage or promiscuous profligacy was almost universal, in some places unconcealed, in others covered with a thin veil of hypocrisy, according as the temper of the ruling prelate might be indulgent or severe. So far, therefore, Latin Christianity had gained but little in its struggle of six centuries with human nature.8

In Saxon and Danish England there were various kinds of disciplines for priests. Conjugal or virginal celibacy was demanded of regular clerics (monks) but the secular clergy were allowed to live as married men. The laws of Cnut for example, distinguish between monastic clerics who were to live celibate lives and regular clergy, non casto, who lived as married men.9 Dunstan (c.909-988), a great reformer of the tenth century, archbishop of Canterbury, and leader of monastic revival in England, usually picked monks for altar service but at the same time not completely disassociating himself from married clergy.10

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8Lea, Celibacy, p. 126. Lea seems bent on projecting his personal feelings in his work; his facts lend support to his exaggerated conclusions.
9Lea, Celibacy, pp.139-140.
10Lea, Celibacy, p.140.

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Mood of the People

In some areas, especially among the lower married clergy, finances were a real concern. Wages of the married clergy were not any higher than for the celibate clergy. Clergy with families then had to resort to various means of obtaining support and the laymen had to pay for the greater needs. Furthermore, most of these secular clergy were hardly educated and could not preach to the edification and inspiration of the faithful. Such service to people promoted a current of anticlericalism and discontent.

Despite the low moral standards of the clergy in many areas, vocations to the service of the church continued to come because the employment difficulties in the eleventh century helped many parents to promote one son to enter the priesthood. The external pressures naturally affected the development of clerics, many of whom had no choice of their own. The concommitant frustrations led many of these unwilling clerics to seek diversions not always in keeping with the moral laws. King Rufus' chaplain is an example of such corruption:

At this time a certain clerk name Ralph gained the confidence of William Rufus, and acquired pre-eminence over all the king's officers by his subtlety in prosecutions and handsome skill in flattery. This man was of an acute intellect and handsome person, a fluent speaker, fond of the pleasures of the table, and addicted to wine and lust; he was at the same time cruel and ambitious, prodigal to his own adherents, but most rapacious in his exactions from strangers. Sprung from poor and low parents, and rising to a level far beyond that to which his birth entitled him his arrogance was swelled by the losses he inflicted on others. He was the son of one Thurs-tan, an obscure priest of the diocese of Bayeux, and having been brought up from his earliest years among the vile parasites of the court, was better skilled in intrigues and subtleties than in sound learning.11

11Odericus, Ecclesiastical History, p.466.
The bad example given by the clergy did not help promote high moral standards among the lay people, who in turn put less pressure upon the clerics to follow the canonical disciplines.

The political control of the placement of bishops hindered any real demands for conjugal celibacy. Even though the canons demanded the acceptance by the cathedral chapter of any candidate for bishopric, once the prince or king had expressed his wish, the chapter usually consented. As stated above, the persons who showed active support to the king or paid the largest sum to the treasury in order to obtain high clerical positions were not prone to follow the ancient and neglected canons which demanded that they give up their wives. The greater problem was the custom of many such ecclesiastical leaders of indulging in sexual vices unrelated to marriage. Some openly had mistresses in addition to their wives; some divorced and married a second wife. Laymen who did the investing did not necessarily see much value in celibacy. The reform movement had, first of all, to divest the power of investiture from lay control if there were to be any conditions required of the candidates for bishoprics.

Reform Movements Prior to Gregory VII

In the reform movement of Gregory VII the conflicts of investiture, simony, and celibacy are often juxtaposed. Pope Gregory VII called upon the works of others who preceeded him when he organized his reform movement. One person who strongly influenced Gregory VII was Humbert of Silva Candida (d. 1061), a cardinal bishop, former archbishop of Sicily, and papal legate to Constantine IX and Patriarch
Michael Cerularius. Humbert’s mission against the simoniacs had very
great effect upon the Hildebrandian reform. In his extensive work,
Against Simoniacs, Humbert denied the validity of orders for anyone
who had used financial means in obtaining an ecclesiastical office.
In this he differed from Peter Damian (1007-1072) who consistently
maintained that re-ordination was not necessary. As we shall see la­
ter, Pope Gregory VII seemed to go so far as to maintain that non-cel­
ibrate clergy could not validly ordain or administer the sacraments.

Humbert’s arguments in his work Against Simoniacs were twofold:
one theological, simoniacs were heretical and at no time validly or­
dained; the other political, the possessions and property of a bene­
fice belonged inseparably to the church. Both of these positions
radically affected the clerics of his time, since such conclusions
would bring about controversial changes in church structures. Since
the properties of the church were not to be divided or shared, mar­
rried clergy could in no way pass on benefices to their offspring.
Several councils, as we will see later, enjoined canons forbidding
children of clerics from inheriting property and some canons even
went so far as to make ecclesiastical slaves of the children of
clerics. It is quite obvious that the promulgation and the effec­
tive carrying out of the above discipline would severely curtail the
attractiveness of family life among the clerics.

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12 M.G.H.Libelli de Lite Imperatorum et Pontificum Saeculis
XI et XII, 1 (189) pp.95-253, hereafter MGH Lib de Lite.

One of the greatest reformers of the eleventh century prior to Gregory VII was Peter Damian (1007-1072), a monk, cardinal, archbishop of Ostia, and papal legate to Germany. Peter Damian represents a moderate opinion and voice during the reform movements of the eleventh century even though his language is cruel and severe. He disagreed with Cardinal Humbert and stated in his work, Liber Gratissimus that ordinations and sacraments of simonical clerics were valid. In his work Liber Gomorrhianus, Peter attacked clerical marriages and insisted on conjugal or virginal celibacy. Peter Damian consistently brought pressure upon the Popes Leo IX, Nicholas II, and Alexander II to root out simony and married clergy.

A Case Study: Milan

The clergy of Milan presented a special problem regarding celibacy because of the strong traditions, uniquely Ambrosian in both liturgy and in clerical disciplines. Henry Milman in his Latin Christianity states:

But the church of Milan possessed likewise—or boasted that it possessed—an unbroken tradition from St. Ambrose himself. They cited boldly, publicly, and without any charge that they had falsified the text—the very words of St. Ambrose, authorizing, if not the marriage of the clergy, the Greek usage, that priests married before their ordination should retain their wives. Heribert himself, the great Archbishop (1036-1038), was a married man; his wedlock had neither diminished his power nor barred his canonization. In assertion of his privilege they dauntlessly defied all superior authority and denied as to this as to their other precious rights all supremacy of the Pope.

14 MGH Lib de Lite, 1, pp.15-75.

15 PL, CXIV Liber II, Col 159-190.
Nor was it a privilege of which they availed themselves sparingly. By the accounts of friends and foes, the practice of marriage was all but universal among the Lombard clergy. They were publicly, legally, married with ring and dowry, as were the laity of Milan; and this, which was elsewhere esteemed a vice, became in Milan, by their bold assertion of its lawfulness, a heresy. 16

As I have stated above the people were easily aligned against the clergy, especially the wealthy married clergy. It did not take opponents of married clergy long to excite the populace who generally side with persons of rigid ascetical morals. Again, Milman states:

Still there were many of the austere clergy in Milan, as in other parts of Italy, who looked with what they esteemed righteous indignation at licentious and sensual privilege. Three persons bound themselves in a holy league of enmity against the married clergy: of these Anselm of Badagio was one; the second, Ariald, a man of humble birth and therefore more able to speak to the hearts of the rude populace; the third, Landulph a noble, remarkable for his eloquence. Landulph and Ariald began to preach in Milan to the populace of the city, and to the peasantry, the unlawfulness and licentiousness of a married clergy. Each party strove to implicate the other with the name of an odious heresy; the monastics branded the asserters of clerical marriage with the old name proverbial for sensuality, Nicolaitans; the Lombard Clergy affected to treat their adversaries as Paterines or Manicheans. This was no unmeaning phrase. During the rule of Heribert, one of those strange sects with many old Gnostic opinions had appeared at Monteforte. A certain Gerard was at their head: their doctrines contained much of mystic Gnosticism. They identified the Savior with the soul of man born into a corruptible state. The Holy Ghost was apparently the divine Intelligence (Nous) revealing itself to man. They were severe ascetics, condemned all union of the sexes, and said that if men would abstain from corruption, they would generate like bees, without conjunction. They denied the absolving power of the priesthood; they ascribed to an unseen influence which visited God's people. Their great tenet was that it was right to die in

16 Milman, Henry, Latin Christianity, London, 1867), 440-741; hereafter referred to as Milman Latin Christianity.
in torments so as to purify the soul; they rejoiced therefore, in martyrdom; if not so happy as to meet it before the approach of death, they were released by one of their own people. Heribert gratified their passion for martyrdom; he burned all except a few who shrunk from death on an immense pyre in Milan. The married clergy taunted their opponents with the name and tenets of this hated sect; they even lodged a formal accusation against them before the archbishop. Guido attempted to silence both parties by gentle admonitions, but without effect; at length the conflict broke out.17

The problem of celibacy reform was obviously an emotional one. Theological reasoning held little sway among extremists. Name calling and physical confrontations fanned the emotions.

During a great festival, for the translation of the relics of the martyr Nazarius, a priest was maddened by the unmeasured invectives of Ariald against his married brethren. Ariald had driven the singers and all the clergy out of the choir of the church; he caused a paper to be written which bound all the clergy under oath to maintain their chastity; he endeavoured to compel all ecclesiastics to sign this paper. The priest broke out into a violent harangue, and struck Ariald. This was the signal for a general tumult; the adherents of Ariald rushed through the streets, the bells rang, the populace gathered from all quarters. The populace are usually on the side of those who make the most austere show of religion; they were jealous of the wealth of the clergy: many of them, like the plebeians of Rome, were burdened with heavy debts, severely exacted no doubt by the clergy. The higher ecclesiastics were mostly patrician in birth and habits and faction. Everywhere they were insulted, assualted, beaten; their houses plundered; and they were forced by a summary process of divorce to abandon their wives. The nobles were overawed and dared not interpose. Nor were the clergy of the city alone exposed to this popular persecution. The preachers roved through the country and stirred up the peasantry against the priests and their concubines—they would give them no more respectful name.18

17Milman, Latin Christianity, pp.442-43.

18Milman, Latin Christianity, pp.443-444.
Once the confrontations broke out the proponents of celibacy sought out the blessings of the pope, and thereby, hoping to obtain the wrath of God upon the married clergy.

Ariald and Landulph went to Rome to obtain the sanction of the Pope, Stephen IX, for their proceedings. The Cardinal Dionysius, a Milanese by birth, attempted a cautious and timid opposition; he did not venture, except slightly and incidentally to enter on the grave question of the marriage of the clergy; but remonstrated against the violence of their adversaries, the stirring up the rabble with clubs, and spears, and swords, against the holy anointed priesthood. A legation was appointed by Pope Stephen consisting of Ariald, Anselm of Lucca, and Hildebrand. This first mission had no effect in allaying the strife; the dissension was growing fast into a civil war.

Guido at length took courage, and assembling a synod at Novara or rather at Fontaneto in the territory of Novara, asserted his full archepiscopal authority, and excommunicated the turbulent Ariald, Landulph, and their partisans; they treated the excommunication with contempt. Another legation arrived with the famous Peter Damiani, now compelled to be a cardinal, who with Anselm of Lucca was commissioned by the new Pope Nicolas to investigate the spiritual state of Milan. Peter Damiani was the austerest monk in Italy, a monk who, compelled to be a bishop, had striven with all his might to throw off the worldly and unholy burden. His horror at sexual indulgence was almost a madness.19

Milan obviously does not give an objective report of Peter Damiani. Nevertheless, once one takes into consideration the rather one-sided view of Milman one can still get a good feel for the conditions of Milan during 1030-1075. Milman goes on to show how persuasive Damian was despite his Roman allegiance:

19Milman, Latin Christianity, pp.444-45.
Yet the cardinal and his colleagues were received with all outward show of respect by the Archbishop and the clergy; but the pride of the Milanese of all the ranks was in secret skillfully excited; would they permit the church of St. Ambrose to be enslaved by that of Rome? The popular indignation was further aroused by the appearance of the Legate with Anselm of Lucca on his right hand, and the Archbishop of Milan on his left. Milan assembled at the ringing of the bells in all the churches and the summons on an enormous brazen trumpet which shrieked through the streets. The fickle populace were now as furious in defense of the clergy who seemed the champions of the liberties of the city as they had been in their persecution. The cry was loud that the church of St. Ambrose would never submit to the Roman pontiff. The life of Damiani was in danger but Damiani was not a man to quail before popular tumult; he mounted the pulpit; he asserted with firm and argumentative tone the supreme jurisdiction of Rome; he boldly appealed to their own archives to prove that Ambrose himself had applied to the Pope Siricius and that the Pope had sent his legates, a priest, a deacon, and a subdeacon to assist Ambrose in rooting out from his city that same Nicolaitan heresy, the marriage of the clergy, for which they now asserted the authority of Ambrose. Guido was grown older and more timid; the people saw him seated of his own accord on a stool at the feet of Damiani. The clergy, deserted by the bishops, deserted again by the populace who were over-awed by the eloquence and lofty bearing of the cardinal, had no recourse but humble submission. The archbishop reluctantly, it is said, took a solemn oath against simony and against the marriage of priests. The clergy were compelled to ascribe to the humiliating concession; every simoniac (and of simony every clergyman of Milan from the archbishop downwards was accused) was to submit to a penance of five or seven years in proportion to his guilt; but there were those who felt the pride of Milan humbled, Damiani's assuming precedence over the archbishop goaded them to frenzy. "O senseless Milanese, (writes the indignant historian who represents the feelings of this party) who has fascinated you? Yesterday you clamoured for the independent supremacy of your see, today you submit to this base subjection. If Rome is to be honoured for the apostle, Milan is not to be despised, who boasts her Ambrose." 20

Milman gives the impression that Peter Damian was some fanatic, whose feelings had stripped him of his reason.

At the great Council, however, at Rome (1050), which assigned the election of the popes to the cardinals, Guido sat as archbishop of Milan at the right hand of the Pope, a reward for his submission. He was attended by his suffragens, the Bishops of Brescia, Turin, Asti, Novara, Lodi, and Vercelli. Ariald assailed Guido as a favourer of simony and of concubinage; he was defended by his suffragans; the tempest of Pope Nicolas allayed the strife. Guido perhaps, hence, was again supposed to espouse the cause of the married clergy; he rose therefore, with them into high popularity. Though the council denounced both simony and concubinage in severe statutes, the Lombard bishops dared not publish them in their cities. Adrian of Brescia alone ventured to do this; he hardly escaped being torn to pieces by the rabble. In Cremona and Piacenza the people split into two parties—those who adhered to and those who refused communion with the married clergy.21

Whitney, in his Hildebrandian Essays, writes about Milan and shows the dependance of Milan upon the Emperor Henry III who appointed Guido to the archbishopric in 1045. Guido was not a reformer nor a strong leader as is evident when the married clergy appealed to him to settle the riots of Ariald and Landulph against the non-celibate clergy.

On a local feast-day, that of St. Nazarius (July 28), a riot broke out; and the clerics forced to choose between their livelihood and their wives, were made to sign a declaration to keep celibacy. Appeals, to the archbishop who took the whole matter lightly, to the bishops of the provinces who did nothing,

21Milman, Latin Christianity, pp.446-47.
left the sufferers helpless, and as yet the nobles took little interest in their cause. So the married clergy sent out a cry to Rome, probably to Victor II. This Pope, personally friendly, had the interests of the Empire at heart, and he pressed Guido to settle things by a provincial synod which met at Fontanetto (1075). Ariald and Landulf were summoned to appear; but they disregarded the summons and after three days of waiting for them were excommunicated. The results of this step reached into the reign of Stephen IX, who is said to have removed the ban. But the movement had now become a persecuted one by violence and injury. Guido had a difficult task which he feared to face, and in the autumn (1057) he sought refuge and possible help at the German court. So the agitation had now swept into a larger field. 22

After Landulph there came to the archbishopric of Milan, Herlembald (1065-1085), a brother of Landulph, who sided with the Patarines and ruthlessly waged war against the people who seized the property of the married clergy as they were degraded. Herlembald had been maltreated by the proponents of married clerics on Pentecost in 1066.

The whole of Milan was summoned to meet in the great church at Pentecost. Guido appealed to the people: "Let all who love St. Ambrose leave the church." Of seven thousand persons only twelve remained with Ariald and with Herlembald. They stood near the altar to protect or to be protected by it. The partisans of Guido rushed to the attack; the clergy selected Ariald, the laity Herlembald, for their victim. Ariald was dragged from the church sorely wounded; Herlembald escaped better. At night his followers rallied and rescued them both from their enemies. 23

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After Guido's resignation Godfrey was selected by the Emperor. During this time Herlembald set himself up as archbishop and imprisoned Guido.

But Herlembald, who now conducted himself not merely as secular tyrant but as a pope in Milan, refused to acknowledge Godfrey, expelled him from the city, and besieged him in Castiglione. Guido, not receiving his stipulated pension, annulled his resignation and resumed his state as archbishop. But he unwisely trusted himself to the faith of Herlembald; he was seized and shut up in a monastery till his death.²⁴

These are some examples of the controversies in Milan in the time preceding Pope Gregory VII. The civil war was waged not only over clerical marriages but also over property and political allegiance; the controversy continued even into the pontificate of Gregory VII. Peter Damian continuously sought to bring the clergy of Milan to his own way of thinking, but he really never saw the full fruit of his labors as death came to him in 1072. Dante had a special place for Damian.

But to Dante he (Damian) stands for something very different; in the Seventh Sphere, the special home of contemplative saints, he is supreme. He is the type of the contemplative life which comes nearest to God and is therefore most useful to man. If we take this as the centre of Damian's personality, all his activities and all his writings fall into their proper places. Instead of accidental denunciations of corruptions and evils, isolated comments of theological or clerical life, we have a coherent whole, a full expression of a well-ordered personality. If to most people he is merely an ascetic and a prophet of asceticism, he himself valued the ascetic life as a help

to contemplation and as necessary to ensure its perfection.  

Whatever one thinks of Dante's appreciation, Peter Damiani nevertheless, was a source of reform charism. Pope Gregory VII, as we shall see later, did not follow the example of Peter Damiani in all matters, even though both may have had similar goals.

Councils and Papal Decrees Prior to Gregory VII

Conflicts between ecclesiastical powers and government leaders, loss of ecclesiastical property, and moral decadence among many church leaders ignited a reforming conscience among large numbers of churchmen of the eleventh century. On a local level the monastic reforms of Cluny were gradually being felt and council after council again looked back into history for solutions to the contemporary problems. The general acceptance by the lay people of the monastic reforms spurred on reformers to push for a general reform. The modes and structures of the monastic reform became more and more the ideal of the reformers and monastic celibacy was considered essential to that reform movement. The chain of priories that arose out of Cluny, especially under the Abbot Odilo (994-1048) reached close to two thousand by the year 1100, and the effect of these abbeys upon the moral fibre

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26 Benefices had gradually become property of the state or provincial leaders who were able to protect the property. Lay investiture as well as the custom of owning any buildings built upon your property further supported lay control of ecclesiastical properties.

of the church is without question. At the same time other independent reform movements coincided with the Cluniac expansion. The abbots worked hard to free bishops of their dependence upon secular rulers.

As councils and synods were called during this century, abbots played a larger and larger role in the disciplines that came from these councils. Hugh, abbot of Cluny from 1049 to 1109, was a confidant of popes and kings, especially Henry III. Although, only a lukewarm ally of Gregory, he was nevertheless, present at Canossa in 1077 for Henry IV's absolution.

The major eleventh century councils opened with the Council of Poitiers (c. 1000) which, under King Robert III, Duke William IV of Aquitaine, Pope Sylvester, and five bishops and twelve abbots, was held on the Ides of January. The council of Poitiers, even though not legislating conjugal celibacy, did however, demand that clergy of major orders, except subdeacons, should not have a woman in their dwellings. Canon three stated:

No priest or deacon may keep a woman in his home, cell, or any secret place because of the danger of fornication. For if he wills to tempt himself, he should know that he is removed from all orders and may not celebrate the sacred mysteries with the rest of the people. Indeed, he eats and drinks unworthily and therefore, brings judgment on himself, as Blessed Gregory said: "No good work amounts to anything without chastity, and neither is chastity much good without good works."

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28 Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 268: "Ut nullus presbyter, neque diaconus, fæminam in sua domo teneat, neque in cellario, neque in secreto loco intromittat, propter fornicationem. Nam si facere tentaverit, sciat se omnem gradum perditurum, et cum alis hominibus sacram mysterium non celebraturum: quia qui manducat, et bibit indigne, judicium fibi manducat, et B. Gregorius: Nec opus bonum est aliquid sine castitate, nec castitas vero magna est sine bono opere."
Nothing was said of legitimate marriage and we may presume that the married clerics were allowed to keep their wives. This canon three is similar to canon three of the council of Nicaea I.

Pope Benedict VIII

The Council of Pavia (c.1015) took up the discipline of celibacy and Pope Benedict VIII (pope 1012-1024) in the preface of this council stated:

We all share in the honor accorded the church, but also in the dishonor. Whence we give thanks for the good but also become dejected by our sins. For some time we obeyed by the grace of God the canons and synodal regulations: we flourished as a church and did not deviate from the regulated way. But we have received the wrath of God by receding from the path of our masters: and we the followers of our teachers have erred by our mistakes. Furthermore, our excesses have hurt the church, and we have been hurt, degraded, overcome, and confused by our enemies; nor will there be any refuge or profound change unless we return first to the way. For it is written: "Blessed are the immaculate" and so it is in the law of the Lord. Furthermore, if you are blessed because you follow the way, then outside his way you are not blessed. God, however, chose the church as his spouse and does not want her stained or shameful; yet the hands of all are fighting the church.29

29Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 343: "Communis honor, communis dolor: quia unde per Dei gratiam erigimur, inde promerentibus peccatis nostris dejicimur. Quamdiu propitio Deo patrum nostrorum regulis & synodalibus obedientius informatis: florente ecclesia floruimus, in via positi non deviamus. Sed dum Deo irato a magistorum via recessimus: discipuli fa facti erroris, pecualiter erravimus. Obsulcata enim nostris excessibus ecclesia, merito obsulcamur, merito ab inimicis vincimur & confundimur: nec erit unquam a profundo imo refregendum, nifi prius ad viam fuerit revertendum. Sic enim legitus. Beati immaculati in via, id est in lege domini, si beati in via, non ergo beati extra viam. Deus quidem ecclesiam sibi sponsam elegit, non haventem maculam nec rugam: sed manus omnium contra eam."
Benedict then continued by attacking immoral clergy. He accused some clergy (rectors) of taking away possessions from the church and then cited their immoral behavior:

There are some of these very same clerics, if you really call them clerics, who belong to the church but live like the common folk and despite the laws excluding women for clerics, they nevertheless, procreate children through female slaves; then they obtain freedom for these female slaves and provide for them as for a legitimate mother of their children. They acquire ample rewards and benefits for these women and children from the church which rewards what they are not in any way to have as their own, much less for their illegitimate children. Furthermore, so that their children will not appear to be illegitimate they wish to seize their freedom and legitimacy, as the devil tried to become like God; and they send them off quite early as soldiers in the army to become part of the noble class.30

Benedict quoted the Council of Nicaea:

For the Synod of Nicaea approved by God and the fathers of the church declared that it was not permissible for a cleric to have any woman living with him unless she was his mother, sister, or a woman beyond any suspicion. But afterwards even the permission for a woman as mother or sister was removed because the women who came were not mothers or sisters. Pope Leo forbade subdeacons from living with their wives in a letter to Anastasius of Thessalonica. Leo wrote that what is forbidden to the subdeacon and not granted to the deacon and priest is all the more forbidden to the bishop. Paul in Corinthians asked even the lay people: "Abstain for a while that you

30Mansi, Concilia, XIII, col. 344: "Ipsi quoque clerici, qui sint de familia ecclesiae, si sunt decendi clerici, qui vivunt ut ethnici, cum sint ab omni muliere legibus exclusi, ex libris mulieribus filios procreant; ancillas ecclesiae hac sola fraude fugientes, ut matrem liberam fillii quasi liberi prosequantur. Amplae itaque praedia, ampla patrimonium, & quacumque bona possunt, de bonis ecclesiae; neque enim aliunde habent, infames patres infamibus fillis adquirunt. Et ut liberi non per rapinam apparent, vo- lint enim in terra rapere libertatem, ut diabolus in coelo voluit deitatem, in militiam eos mox faciunt transire nobilium."
may pray." And if lay people are asked to abstain from what is allowed so that they could pray better, how much more ought clerics for the whole time ab­s­tain from what is illicit since they are continual­ly to pray and offer sacrifice.31

Benedict asserted that these were not new laws:

Nor should the foolish murmur against us. . . . We are not making new laws; but we repeat the ancient, by custom, accepted and universal laws. Further­more, they are of ancient and divine law vintage and they have been safeguarded from the beginning.32

He then cited the Judaic law regarding abstinence for priests while on temple duty:

Even priests according to Mosaic law abstained from their wives the whole year they were on temple duty, so that they could fulfill their duties without becoming unclean and thus ful­fill the laws of cleanliness. If then these (priests) abstained for a time while they served the temple, why should not bishops, priests, deacons, and subdeacons, and all clerics abstain whole yoke is true sacrifice? Daily are we oc-

31Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 344: Nicaena enim synodus a 325. Magistro Deo, patribus instituta, nec licere quidem in una domo vult clericis habitare nisi cum matre aut sorore, aut cum eis per­sonis quae suspiciones effugiant. Cautius autem postea contra causam causa inventa, permansio etiam cum matre aut sorore cleri­cis tollitur: quia omnes qui cum matre mea veniunt, vel sorore, possunt esse non matres, possunt meae non omnes esse sorores. Carnale quidem connubium subdiconis in epistola ad Anastasium Tessalonisensem episcopum Leo papa interdictit. Ecce, ecce, si subdiacono negatur: diacono & presbytero non datur: multo minus utique episcopo concedetur. Paulus autem corintiiis, & utique laicis; absinete eos, ait, ad tempus ut orationi_vacetis. Et si laicis, ut exauditi mereantur, ad tempus est abstinentium a licitis: quo modo non multo magis omni tempore clericis est abstin­endum ab illicitis, quibus semper est pro commissis orandum & jugi­ter sacrificandum?"

32Mansi, Concilia SIX, col. 345: "Sacerdotes utique Mosaicae legis anno vicis suae habitabant in templo, toto illo anno domorum & uxorum abstinentes; ut nitidi sine ossensa, imaginatia implerent praecpta."
cupied by solemn Mass, frequent prayers, and the sacrament of baptism, and we do this not just for a year but continually.\textsuperscript{33}

Benedict continued to discuss the argument that priests of the Old Testament were allowed to cohabit because they had to beget children for future priests, but times were different now.

Now, however, the grace of God calls people from every nation, provided they are fit for the priesthood, and no longer is succession necessary with all its built in difficulties.\textsuperscript{34}

Appealing to previous popes, Benedict chided those who laughed at continence:

And if those who are enemies to sane continence laugh at bishops, priests, deacons, subdeacons, and other clerics who must abstain, let them read what Pope Leo wrote to Rusticus the bishop of Narbonne when he stated that the law of continence is the same for all ministers of the altar whether bishops, priests, or others. There are even admonitions of Siricius that are most evidently extant which demanded that the incontinent were to be deprived from

\textsuperscript{33}Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 345: "Neque murmurent contra nos idiotae, .... Non certe novas leges edimus: sed antiquas, sed usitatas, sed catholicas proferimus. Nimirum antiqua est divinae legis disciplina, & ab initio custodita. Si vero illi ad tempus abilinebant, qui ad tempus templo serviebant: cur episcopis, presbyteris, diaconibus subdiaconibus, & omnibus qui sunt in clero, jugiter non est abstinendum, quibus juge & verum est sacrificium? Quotidie enim aut in missarum mantis occupantur; neque per annum, sed per continuum serviunt."

\textsuperscript{34}Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 345: "Nunc autem, quia omnes dei gratia vocavit & vocat, & ex omni populo, si fit modo idoneus, pro movetur ad sacerdotum, non est sacerdotibus de generis successione hac conditione timendum."
their offices and all honors, and they could not return to the altar to which only the continent were to minister.35

He then, proceeded to explain that children born to clerics are illegitimate and have no protection of the law.

Sons are born of the laity with protection of the laws because the laws support the father and mother. Laws, however, do not support children of clerics because their fathers and mothers, unworthy as they are, are acting outside the laws. And therefore, parents who have nothing cannot pass on anything.36

After a lengthy explanation as to why children of clerics were to be slaves and not free men, Benedict VIII stated the following:

All sons and daughters of all clerics who belong to the church, no matter of whatever lineage, free or otherwise, of a wife or concubine, shall be a slave forever and ever and no one shall grant freedom retroactively, now or in the future, to their slave status.37

Benedict concluded his preface in the following manner:

Therefore by the authority of God, of the apostles Peter and Paul, of the gloriously reigning Emperor

35Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 346: "Quod si inimici sanae continentiae garriunt, episcopis, presbyteris, diaconibus, subdiaconibus, & non ceteris qui sunt in clero, abstinendum esse: legant aliquando Leonem papam ad Rusti, cum Narboneosem episcopom scribentem ita: legem continentiae eandem esse altaris omnibus ministris, quam episcopos & presbyteros constat esse impositam. Siricii quoque monita extant evidentissima, ut incontientes, in officiis talibus positi, omni honore priventur, nec ad tale admittantur ministerium, quod sola conteentia oportet implesti."

36Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 347: Filii ergo laicorum legibus nati, legibus et patrem sequentur & matrem. Filii autem clericorum ideo haec legitima leges non consentiunt, quia pater eorum et matrem, ut potest indigni, ea non habuerunt. Et quia ad parentes nihil habuerunt, nihil filliis reliquerunt."

37Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 351: "Omnes igitur filii et filiae omnium clericorum, quos de familia ecclesiae, de quacumque libera nati fuerint, vel axore, vel concubina, quia neutrum nec licet, nec licuit, nec licebit, servi suae erunt ecclesiae in saecula saecularum."
Henry II, and with approval of our brother bishops and priests, we remove any error or doubt and promulgate for generations to come this understanding of these laws: so that no one may repel these laws or cast doubt upon them in any future generation. So that this legislation we sanctioned may survive permanently and become universal in its application and adherence, the whole statement of our decree will be confirmed by our brother bishops.38

The canons of this Council of Pavia went on to confirm the statement of Benedict VIII and provide the curia with the power to punish according to the laws of Justinian. Canon one stated:

No cleric in any grade may presume to have a wife or concubine, nor may he dare to have a woman living in his house. But if he does so, then he is to be delivered to the curia of the city where he is a cleric and the rules of Justinian shall be followed. For he will remain by law tormented in the power of the curia which shall depose him and separate him from the church according to the law.39

The obligation to punish the unchaste cleric was put to civil authority who, according to the code of Justinian, must expel such a cleric; thus, both church and state punished the erring cleric.

Canon two of the Council of Pavia stated the rule regarding bishop-female relationships:

38Mansi, Concilia XIX, col.352: "Authore igitur Deo, & principibus nostris Petro & Paulo, florente gloriosissimo filio nostro H.Semper Augusto, approbantibus fratribus nostris, & omnibus consacerdotibus, hunc ita de mundo tollamus errorem, & ita hanc intelligens tuam omnibus saeculis, omni dubitate fugata, infundamus: ut nullis unquam temporibus haec pestis repullulet, nec unquam in talibus sine causa secura posteritas dubitet."

39Mansi, Concilia XIX, col.355: "Nullus in omni gradu ecclesiae uxorem vel concubinam habere praesumat, nec in una domo cum muliere audeat habitare. Quod si fecerit, servata Justiniani Augusti aequitate, curiae civitatis tradatur cujus est clericus. Jure etenim manebit miser in curia, quem ecclesiae regula depositum ejecit ab ecclesia."
The bishop may have no woman under his roof, nor have a woman as a bed partner. But if he has done so, he shall be deposed according to the ancient and contemporary law. The higher grade of clerical orders makes the case more serious. 40

Regarding the children of clerics this same council stated in canon three:

Sons of all clerics of whatever grade of orders, who are born from any relationship with women will be slaves to the church and any acquired property will also accrue to the church and finally there can be no separation from this enslaved bond. Furthermore, all who have acquired freedom through their own power or through the subscription of a free person must return to the church as her property.

Canon four of the same group of edicts as promulgated by the council and the king stated:

Whoever, therefore, attempted to free these children of clerics and has acted against the sentence of the church shall not be allowed to inscribe the notation of their freedom in the proper books and furthermore, their decree shall be

40 Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 355: "Episcopus cum nulla unquam muliere habeat tectum, cum nulla habeat tectum, cum nulla habeat lectum. Quod si fecerit, servato antequo et moderno ecclesiae judicio deponatur. Eritque tanto cafus gravior, quanto gradus altior."

41 Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 355: "Filii autem omnium clericorum, omniumque graduum servorum ecclesie, de quacumque muliere, quocumque modo sibi conjuncta fuerint nati, servi duae erunt ecclesiae, cum omnibus bonis ad quisit is: et quia fervi sunt, et erunt, nunquam de servitio ecclesiae exire debent. Et omnia quae ipsi per manus et per scriptiones alicujus liberi acquisierint, ecclesiae sicut sua propria reddimus. Et ut firmum post hac quod sancimus permaneat et in fines orbis terrae conservandum perveniat, totiushujus summa sentientiae hac nostri forma decreti, fratribus et coepiscopis confirmabitur."
invalid. Finally, those who attempt to change the sentence of servitude of the church shall be permanently exiled.\textsuperscript{42}

This council seems to have implemented in these canons the ideas of Benedict VIII. Its effect, despite the solemn conclusion and support of Benedict and signature of Henry II was not extensive, but nevertheless, it represents a voice in defense of conjugal celibacy at a time when few people even bothered to debate the discipline of celibacy in light of the widespread clerical marriages.

Northern Europe

In 1032, in the Isles, King Canute of England, Denmark, and Norway, in a series of regulations, asked his clergy to accept conjugal celibacy; law six stated:

Furthermore, we wish that people of any walk of life submit themselves to that law which pertains to them, and that especially ministers of God, bishops, abbots, monks, and nuns, canons, and virgins seek after justice and live in accordance with the laws day and night; also they should diligently intercede with Christ often and repeatedly in behalf of all the Christian people. In addition we ask and exhort all the ministers of God, and especially priests to obey God and to love chastity, and to beware of the wrath of God upon themselves and of the hot fires that burn in hell. They most diligently ought to know that they are not to have intercourse with a woman. And if anyone wishes to abstain and preserve chastity, he has the mercy of God and is worthy of earthly veneration according to the Danish law. Further-

\textsuperscript{42}Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 355: "Quicumque ergo post hac eos esse liberos judicaverit, et pro eis contra ecclesiam dederit sententiam, et hoc capitulum authoritate factae ecclesiae statutum nostrae ceperit, et in suis libris non scripsit, et secundum hoc capitulum filios clericorum de familia ecclesiae, proprios servos esse suae ecclesiae usu semper valituro non judicaverit, facultatum publicatione nudatus, perpetuo damnetur exilio."
more, any Christian whatsoever who avoids illegal intercourse judiciously out of fear of the Lord, observes justly the ecclesiastical laws. 43

It is not clear what is meant by this law, because the reference to intercourse could mean any intercourse conjugal or non-conjugal.

Prior to King Canute's regulations, the Council of Enham (1009) had stated in a chapter on the priesthood and celibacy:

We strongly demand that priests and bishops serve the Lord chastely and continently and abstain from sexual intercourse even in marriage so as to flee from the wrath of God. For if they will so serve the Lord, then they will enjoy the mercy of the omnipotent Lord now and in the future forever; for in that much they will have the honor among persons in this life and have the honors in the life to come. But if they (clerics) do not wish to observe these laws, they shall be immediately deprived of every honor. 44

43Mansi, Concilia XIX, cols. 557-58: "Et volumus ut cujuslibet ordinis viri diligenter se submittant singuli juri, quod ad eos pertinent, et praesertim Dei ministri, episcopi et abbatis, monachi et moniales; canonici et vestales ad rectum incipient, et regulariter vivant, et die ac noce; saepe et erebro Christum invocent, et pro omni populo Christiano diligenter intercedant. Et omnes Dei ministros rogamus, et docemus, et praesertim sacerdotes ut deo obediant, et castitatem ament, et caveant fibi ipsis ab ira Dei, et ab aestuante incendio, quod fuet in inferno. Diligentissime sciant, quod omnino non debeant coitus causa cum faemina communicare. Et si quis ab eo abstineretur et castitatem servaret velit, habeat Dei misericordiam, et quod terrenam venerationem sit jure Thani dignus. Et quilibet christianus ex timore Domini sui injustum coitum sedulo evitet, et leges ecclesiasticas juste observet."

The same Council of Enham stated in its second statute:

We ask and teach that all ministers and especially priests obey God and love celibacy and fear the anger of God. Most certainly they know that they ought not to have intercourse with their own wife, and what is worse, that one has two or more wives; and anyone who has divorced his wife whom he had married and then marries another cannot be said to be a Christian. And anyone who wishes to abstain and live chastely has the mercy of God and the veneration of this world and is the pride and joy of the Danes in this life as well as in the next life. But he who does not act in this manner loses the respect and dignity before God as well as before the world. But also we wish to ask fervently and to teach diligently all people that they love the one God with their heart and avoid earnestly whatever is pagan.\(^5\)

Another council was held at Bourges in 1031 by the bishops of Aquitaine legislated mandatory conjugal celibacy. Canon five stated:

No priest, deacon or subdeacon, may have a wife or concubine, as the rule of the canons prescribe; those who have them must leave them at the end of this council and may never come to them again. But those who do not wish to leave them shall cease to function in their proper grade or office but shall remain among the lectors and cantors. Likewise, we do not permit any cleric who

\(^5\)Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 299-300: "et omnes Dei ministros et in primis sacerdotes rogamus, et docemus, ut Deo obediant, et castitatem diligant et caveant sibi ipsis ab ira Dei. Certissime norint, quod non debeant habere ob aliquam coitus causam uxoris consortium, est pejus est, quod aliquis habeat duas vel plures; et quidam licet demiserit eam, quam muper habuit, ipsa vivente tamen aliam ducit, quod nullos christianos facere decet. Et quicumque ab hoc abstinere voluerit, et castitatem servare, habeat Dei misericordiam; et ad augendam mundi venerationem, sit aedium capitis Thani, et jure Thani dignus tam in vita quam in coe meterio, et si quis hoc facere nolit quod ordinem e jus decet privatur dignitate sua tam coram Deo, quam coram mundo."
ministers at the altar to have a wife or concubine. As stated above those (married) clerics may only read or sing in the choir, but may not at any time come to the altar as a minister.\(^{46}\)

The council fathers here maintained the distinction between service in choir and service at the altar.

Canon six of the same council enjoined the Bishop to ordain to the subdeaconate only clerics who promised celibacy, virginal or conjugal:

Bishops shall no longer ordain to the subdeaconate anyone unless he promises in the presence of the bishop and before the altar that he will not take a wife nor a concubine (common law wife). And if he already has one, he will soon renounce her.\(^{47}\)

What is significant about this canon are two customs that prevailed at that time: one, the bishop up to this time still ordained subdeacons without promise of celibacy; two, the newly ordained married cleric did not have to give up his wife immediately but rather make a promise to do so sometime in the future. There does not seem to be any indication how soon this was to be accomplished.

\(^{46}\)Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 503: "Ut presbyter, et diaconi, et subdiaconi, sicut lex canonum praecipit, neque uxores neque concubinas habeant; et qui eas modo havent, ita eas fine more peracto hoc concilio derelinquant ut munquam ulterius ad eas accedant; qui vero dereliquerere eas noluerint, a proprio gradu et officio cessant, et inter lectores et canores permaneant. Similiter nulli de clero permittimus deinceps uxorem neque concubinam habere. Supra-dicti autem in choro tantum intrent ad legendum et cantandum: ad altaris vero ministerium mutatens accumend."  

\(^{47}\)Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 503: "Ut episcopi nullum amplius ad subdiaconatus gradum ordinent, nisi in praesentia episcopi ante altare sedis Deo promittat, munquam se habiturum uxorinem neque concubinan: et si tunc eam habuerit, mox ei abrenunciet, quod lingua Francorum gurpire dicimus."
The same Council of Bourges also legislated what procedures were to be followed regarding children of clerics. Canon eight stated:

Sons of priests, deacons, or subdeacons, born within the priesthood, deaconate, or subdeaconate, shall no longer be accepted as candidates for the clergy; for this reason all such and all others who are born of illegitimate marriages are called bastards in the Sacred Scriptures and not able to inherit according to secular laws nor able to be a witness in any legal affairs. Any such person who is a minor cleric (below subdeacon) shall not be promoted to any major orders. But anyone in major orders whose ancestry is like the above shall remain in that situation and not be promoted any further.48

If, however, the priest had become laicized and then had procreated, the council in no way punished the child: "Children of clerics who were first laicized shall not be punished."49

The Synod of Pavia (1018) had decreed that children born to priests after ordination were to be slaves. Peter Damiani quoted a council of Rome that decreed that women who became wives to priests after ordination should be slaves to the Lateran Palace.

48Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 503: "Ut filii presbyterorum, sive diaconorum, sive subdiaconorum, in sacerdotio vel in diaconatu, vel subdiaconatu nati, nullo modo ulterius ad clericatum suscipiantur: quia tales et omnes alii qui non legitimo conjugio sint nati, semen malendictum in scripturis divinis appellantur, nec apud saeculares leges haereditari possunt, neque in testimonium suscipi. Et qui de talibus clericis nunc sunt, sacros ordines non accipiunt; sed in quocumque gradu nunc sunt, in eo tantum permanant, et ultra non promoveant."

49Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 503: "Quod filii clericorum censeri non debeant qui ex earum conjugio nascuntur postquam ad laicalem ordinem reversi sunt."
The same council ordered bishops throughout the world to punish wives of priests in a similar manner.\(^5\)

As in centuries past the councils and synods of the eleventh century repeated the prohibition of having women live in or even serve at the altars. A collection of decrees from Canterbury (c. 1030), stated in its sixth canon:

> Women may not come to the altar while the priest offers Mass but should stay in their own place; at that place the priest receives their oblations for the offering to God. Women are to be mindful that they are the weaker sex. Therefore, they are to respect with trembling the sacred things of the ministry; for even laymen ought to show reverence lest they undergo the punishment of Oza whom the Lord struck dead because he, though not a Levite, dared to touch the ark of the covenant.\(^5\)

Later in the same century the Council of Rouen (1072) repeated the prohibition of women for clerics in major orders. Canon fifteen stated:

> Concerning priests, deacons, and subdeacons who take for themselves women, the decrees of the Council of Luxeuil must be observed which stated that such a person may not rule any parish, mission, or have any benefices. Archdeacons ought to

\(^{50}\)Peter Damiani, Dissertation 2, 18, PL 145, 411: As recorded in Earl E. Sperry, *An Outline of the History of Clerical Celibacy in Western Europe to the Council of Trent* (Syracuse: N.Y., 1905, p22.

\(^{51}\)Mansi, *Concilia XIX*, col. 610: "Feminae, missam sacerdote celebrante, neque ad altare accedant, sed locis suis stent: ibi sacerdos earum oblationes Deo oblatturus accipiat. Memores enim esse debent feminae infirmitatis suae, et suxus imbecillitatis; et id circa sancta quaelibet in ministerio ecclesiae contingere pertimiscant; quia etiam laici viri pertimescere debent, ne Ozae poenam subeant, qui dum arcam Domini extra ordinationem contingere voluit, Domini percutiente interiit."
make sure that no one is permitted a concubine, a vowed woman, or a mistress, but that they live chastely and give good example of purity and holiness to their parishioners. Also only such persons should be picked to be deacons who know how to be good pastors and whose lives are without scandal and a living example to their subjects.52

An earlier Council of Rouen (1050) considered clerical discipline but did not demand celibacy.

The Council of Turin (1060) reflected the decrees of Pope Nicholas (1059) when it stated in canon six:

Furthermore, if any bishop, priest, deacon, or subdeacon with knowledge of the decree of Nicholas keeps any woman for sexual purposes, and does not cease from the ministry or benefice of the altar; or knowing the apostolic interdict he does not either send away his women or give up the ministry with the benefice immediately, he shall know that there is no restitution in the lowest grade of orders reserved for him.53

52 Mansi, Concilia XX, col. 38: "De sacerdotibus, et levitis, et subdiaconibus, qui feminas sibi usurpaverunt, concilium Luxoviense observetur, nec ecclesias per se, atque per suffraganeos regant, nec aliquid de beneficiis habeant. Archidiaconi qui eas regere debent, non permittantur aliquam havere nec concubinam, nec subintroductam mulierem nec pellicem: sed cast et juste vivant et exemplum castitatis et sanctimoniae subditis praebant. Operetet etiam ut tales decant eligantur, qui scient subditos redarguere et emendare, quorum vita non sit infamis, sed merito praeferratur subditis."

53 Mansi, Concilia XX, col. 927: "Praeterea si episcoporum, presbyterorum, diaconorum, aut subdiaconorum, post cognitum interdictum domini nostri papae Nicolai, mulieris cujuslibet carnali detentus copula, a ministerio et beneficio altaris non cessavit; sive delinceps cognoscens praelibatum apostolicae sedis interdictum, aut mulierem, aut ministerium ecclesiae cum beneficiio non statim deserverit, nullan restitutionis in pristino gradu veniam sibi reservasse cognoscat."
The Council of Gerona (1068), at which approximately one half of the signing prelates were abbots, issued several canons regarding celibacy. Canon six stated: "Clerical men who, as married lectors, are to remain permanently in the choir but not among the canons regular." Canon seven of the same council stated:

All these, subdeacon to priest, who marry wife or have a common law wife must leave the clerical order and lose all ecclesiastical benefits and remain with the laity. And if they disobey this order, they shall be punished as being unchaste.

Canon eight of the same council decreed:

 Those clerics who give up their arms and wives shall remain free and without any punishment. No one shall deprive them of anything nor harm them in any way; but they and their possessions shall be secure in peace and under the truce of God for all days.

The Council of Toulouse (1056) added its weight to the number of eleventh-century councils that promoted celibacy. Its canon seven decreed:

54Mansi, Concilia XX, col. 1071: "Clerici, si lectores fuerint et uxores duxerint, in lectoratu permaneant in choro; sed non in congregatione canonica."

55Mansi, Concilia XX, col. 1071: "A presbytero usque ad subdiaconum si uxorem duxerint, aut concubinam retinuerint, de clero exeant, et omne beneficium ecclesiasticum perdant, et cum laicis in ecclesia maneant. Quod si inobedientes fuerint, sententiam de incestis incurrant."

56Mansi, Concilia XX, col. 1071: "Illi autem qui arma et uxores dimiserint, securi et quieti, et sine ullo pavore permaneant. Nullus res eorum diripiat, nec eis aliquam injuriam faciat; sed ipsi et res eorum sint in pace et treuga Domini per omnes dies."
It is our wish that priests, deacons, and the rest of the clerics who hold ecclesiastical offices, should abstain in all circumstances from their wives or vowed women. But if they do not, they shall be deprived of their honor and office and excommunicated by their proper bishops.\footnote{Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 848: "Placuit quoque presbyteros, diaconos, et reliquos clericos, qui ecclesiasticos tenerint honores, abstinere omnimodis ab uxoribus, vel religuis mulieribus. Quod si non fecerint, honore simul et officio priventur, et a propriis episcopis excommunicentur."}

Archbishop Lanfranc (1005-1089), Italian born, scholar, prior of Bec (c.1045), reformer of ecclesiastical discipline in England, and archbishop of Canterbury wrote to Bishop Herfrastus (c.1070):

No one is to receive the deaconate unless he first lives a chaste life and takes the vow of conjugal celibacy for life, and if he does live a celibate life and freely promises to continue to do so for life, then not only can he be ordained a deacon but also he can serve his office as required by the gospels either in a synod or at a convocation of clergy.\footnote{Mansi, Concilia XX, col.28: "Diaconatus vero ordinem nunquam recepiat, nisi cast vivat, nisi de reliquo se caste vic-turum canonica attestatione promittat. Si vero coelibem vitam egeret, et acturum se omni tempore spondere voluerit: non quidem eum ad ordinem diaconatus iterum ordinabis, sed ipsum officium per textum sancti evangeli, vel in synodo, vel in multorum clericorum conventu."}

However, at this same time Lanfranc, in 1076 allowed married clerics to remain in office. Apparently, the Council of Enham, held (c.1009) in England by King Ethelred had not been successful in promoting celibacy among the married clergy and neither had King Canute years later. After Lanfranc’s pilgrimage to Rome, he was more successful in enforcing the canons of the Council of Enham.
The first pope of the eleventh century other than Benedict VIII (1012-1024), to promote conjugal celibacy was Leo IX (pope, 1049-1054). Following the advice of Peter Damiani Leo IX devoted himself to the uprooting of the corruptions of the church. Milan states:

The general concubinage, or rather marriage of the clergy, no less embarrassed the austere reformers. It was determined that the clergy of Rome should no longer live scattered about in private houses, but in colleges or separate dwellings, and so be submitted to rigid superintendence and discipline. Women convicted of unlawful intercourse with the clergy were to lose their freedom and become slaves attached to the Lateran palace. But these were not the worst vices of the clergy. The stern ascetic Peter Damiani, who now comes forward the unswerving model of monkhood, presented a book to the Pope, the title of which expressed in the coarsest form the unnatural vices widely prevalent among the monks as well as the secular clergy, a book which would shock a more sensitive age, but was received by the Pope as an honest and bold exposition of the morals of the times.59

The next pope to take up celibacy was Pope Nicholas II (pope, 1059-1061) and in his series of decrees he stated:

III. That either priests dismiss their wives, which they really cannot have without legitimate sanction, or lose their church with all their orders.

IV. That priests, deacons, and subdeacons, and all canons may not have wives. If they do, they are to be deposed and separated from the canonical status (protection of the canons.)60

59 Milman, Latin Christianity III, 371.
60 Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 876: Ut presbyteri conjugati aut uxores dimitant, neque cum eis sine testimonio legitimo habitent, aut Ecclesiam cum ordinibus suis anicient. IV. Ut presbyteri et diaconi et subdiaconi et omnes qui canonici sunt uxores non habeant. Et si duxerint, deponantur et a canonicorum consortio separatur.
To put some teeth into the previous canons, the Council of Rome (1059) under Pope Nicholas II (pope, 1058-1061), whose election reform decree in 1059 gave the cardinals a predominant role in electing new popes, attacked the married clergy by forbidding the laity to attend the services of non-celibate clerics. This Council of Rome (1059) stated:

No lay person should attend Mass celebrated by a priest whom he knows undoubtedly to be living with a woman whether in common law marriage or with vows. Furthermore, this synod states and decrees excommunication for any priest, deacon, or subdeacon who, contrary to the teaching regarding chastity of our saintly predecessor of happy memory Leo IX, has openly continued to live with a concubine or has not left his wife; and further, we decree by the omnipotent power of God and authority of the Apostles Peter and Paul and we mandate, all things notwithstanding, that such a (who disobeys the canons) shall not sing Mass, read the gospel or epistle, say Mass nor recite the divine office with those obedient to the sacred canons.61

The prohibition of lay people from attending Mass of a married cleric was a new penalty and, perhaps more than any other pressure, did more to break the stronghold of the married clergy upon the laity. One major source of income was now wiped out. Later

61Mansi, Concilia XIX, col.897-898. "Ut nullus missam aufrag presbyteri, quem scit concubinan indubitanter habere, aut subintroductam mulierem. Unde etiam ipsa sancta synodus hoc capitulum sub subdiaconorium, post constitutum beatae memoriae predecessoris nostri sanctissimi papae Leonis de Castitate clericorum, concubinam palam duxerit, vel ductam non reliquerit, ex parte omnipotentis Dei, auctoritate beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli praecipimus, et omnino nontradicus, ut missam non cantet neque evangelium vel epistolam ac missam legat, neque in presbyterio ad divina officia cum iis qui praefatae constitutioni obedientes fuerint maneant."
Gregory VII would go one step further and declare that attendance at Mass of married priests did not fulfill one's obligation of attending Sunday Mass.

In 1063, during the pontificate of Alexander II (pope, 1061-1073), another council of Rome decreed a similar prohibition and further cut into the married clerics' income. Chapter three stated:

Furthermore, and beyond these rules we command the following: No lay person should hear Mass of a priest whom he knows for sure is living a non-celibate life or even in the same house with a vowed woman. Whence this sacred synod excommunicates any priest or deacon who continues to act and live openly with a concubine or wife contrary to the decrees of the most saintly Leo and Nicholas. We command by the powers of God and the authority of Peter and Paul that no non-celibate cleric may say Mass or read the gospel or epistle. He is also forbidden to recite the divine office with the celibate clergy and finally may not receive income from the church. 62

The removal of income as a penalty is contained also in other councils, such as the Council of Turin (1060) which denied the fruits of a benefice to one living contrary to the canons. In canon six the council decreed:

62Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 1025: "Praeter haec autem praecipiendo mandamus, ut nullus missam audiat presbyter, quemsit concubinam indubitanter haber vel subintroductam mulierem. Unde sancto Synodus haec a capite sub excommunicatione statuit, dicens: quicumque sacerdos vel diaconus post constitutum beatae memoriae praedecessoris nostri sanctissimi papae Laonis vel Nicolae de castitate clericorum, concubinam duxerit palam, vel ductam non reliquerit, ex parte omnipotentis Dic, et auctoritate apostolorum Petri et Pauli praecipimus, et omnino interdicius ut non cantet missam, neque evangelium neque epistolam ad missam legat, neque in presbyterio ad divina offica cum his, qui praefatae constitutioni obedientes fuerint, maneat, neque partem ab ecclesia suscipiat."
And furthermore, if any bishop, priest, deacon, or subdeacon after knowing the content of the law of Nicholas still retains any woman for sexual purposes and refuses to cease ministering at the altar and in fact does not leave the ministry and benefice immediately, cannot even expect a place among the lowest grade of clerics.\textsuperscript{63}

Pope Alexander II in a letter (1065) removed all financial income from non-celibate priests:

If any bishop, priest, deacon receives a woman or retains one already accepted, he loses his proper office until proper satisfaction is made and furthermore he may not even sing in the choir nor be paid any allowance.\textsuperscript{64}

Previous canons had mentioned the duty of continence but had omitted the sanctions now imposed. The enforcement of the canons, including stronger sanctions, was the beginning of the change in the life of parish clergy.

\textsuperscript{63} Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 927: Praeteria si quis episcoporum, presbyterorum, diaconorum, aut subdiaconorum, post cognitum interdictum domini nostri Nicolai, mulieris cujuslibet carnali detentes capula a ministerio et beneficio altaris non cessavit; sive deincaps cognoscens praelibatum apostolicae sedis interdictum, aut mulierem, aut ministerium ecclesiae cum beneficio non statim deseruerit, nulam restitutionis in pristino gradu veniam sibi reservasse cognoscat."

\textsuperscript{64} Mansi, Concilia XIX, col. 977: "Si quis modo episcopus, presbyter, diaconus, feminam acceperit, vel acceptam retinuerit, proprio gradu decidat, usque ad satisfactionem, nec in choro psallentium maneat, nec aliquam portionem de rebus ecclesiasticis habeat."
Conclusion

Thus the stage was set for the reformation of Pope Gregory VII. There were sufficient decrees and laws on the books from which Pope Gregory could launch his program of uprooting clerical marriages. At the same time the traditions of centuries had implicitly supported the married clergy. The next fifty years (1073-1123) would see a movement against that tradition; papal authority would exert a strong hand in this movement. The church would be at war with itself as it tried to change direction. Already the battle lines had been set, when Pope Gregory VII, a Tuscan, a career statesman, and papal legate, began his pontificate.
CHAPTER IV
HILDEBRANDIAN REFORM

Hildebrand, the future Pope Gregory VII, had been in the papal household ever since the pontificate of Gregory VI (1045-1046): his tasks had been very important and some of them were quite controversial. He was well aware of political intrigue and ecclesiastical politics and this inside knowledge would serve him well when he ascended to the papacy in 1073. The Roman citizens put him into the papacy even before the cardinals could elect him and the emperor approve him. This method of selection of the pope was not in keeping with the papal election decrees of Nicholas II (1059). Because of this irregularity, many opponents charged that Hildebrand was not legally pope. However, for most contemporaries the irregularity was not a major concern since the cardinals and the emperor did fulfill their roles by election and approval.

Gregory VII had witnessed the papacy tossed about by rival political factions for many years and had participated in the struggle for independence from outside forces. When he assumed the papacy, Gregory used all the force he could muster to free the church from outside control. The low ebb of moral conduct among the clergy, especially among the bishops, would in a sense prove advantageous to Gregory, as he was then able to lump together simony, clerical marriages, and lay investiture in his struggles for freedom for the church. There was enough sinister
activity in all three of these areas that would arouse support for any reformation. Gregory knew his support and also knew the strengths and weaknesses of the political and ecclesiastical leaders of his time. By using the tactic of enforcing laws already on the books, Gregory could not be accused of being a novel legislator. His interpretations of the previously enacted laws were somewhat different than many if not most of his contemporaries.

Clashes between state and church were, of course, not new. The concept of freedom for the church was at times substantially enriched during the centuries before Gregory. We need but look to people like Ambrose of Milan, Pope Gelasius I, and Pope Nicholas I, to mention a few, who promoted ecclesiastical freedom. Pope Gelasius (pope, 492-496) declared to Emperor Anastasius I in 496:

> There are two things, most august emperor, by which this world is chiefly ruled: the sacred authority of the priesthood and the royal power. Of these two, the priests carry the greater weight because they will have to render account in the divine judgement even for the kings of men.¹

However, the church from 800 to Gregory's time had not only been controlled by lay officials, but also the theoretical justification for this control had grown to butress this centuries-old practice.

Tellenbach sums up the close and mutual inner working of the church and state in this period:

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The idea of the hierarchical preeminence of the king was the foundation of the royal theocracy of the middle ages. It laid on the king the responsibility to God for the right direction of the church, and on the church the duty of obedience; it Christianized the office of the ruler both in his own eyes and in those of his subjects, whether lay or clerical. The acquisition of this theocratic character by the kingship marks the first and most important epoch in the Christianization of the world.

It was because of this theocratic outlook that rulers of the Germanic states of the middle ages intervened in ecclesiastical matters even more than the Christian Roman emperors had done. They summoned councils and presided over them, founded churches, monasteries, and bishoprics, and issued orders on matters of clerical administration; but beside this, their decrees covered the whole field of the canon law, and many bishoprics and large abbacies were filled on their nominations.

Through this system, however, the church was not merely governed, but was also itself educated to the business of government. The chief offices were in the hands of bishops and abbots, who were able to exercise a considerable influence on secular politics, and thereby to some extent to realize clerical ideals; they could often influence the details of administration through their position at the head of local government, and even more through the fact that they were the owners of vast lordships to which extensive political rights were attached. The development of the church along such lines created a system which led to a mutual and far-reaching interpenetration of church and state, and helped forward the Christianization of the populations subject to both.²

²Tellenbach, Church, pp. 69-70
It is obvious that a separation of such close links would cause a traumatic upheaval for both state and church.

What impelled Gregory to forge this way with such vigor? Gregory was fully convinced that the corruption prevalent among the churchmen of his day could be traced directly to their appointment by laymen. Reform of the church was contingent on its freedom, and the church could be free as long as its chief pastors were political appointees. Tellenbach quotes a charter drawn up by Pope Gregory in 1085 for the bishopric of Maguelonne in southern France:

The whole body of the Church was endowed through the mercy of God and the blood of His only Son, our Savior, with His own eternal freedom; but through the cunning of evil men and the neglect of the pastors many churches have fallen into the hand of earthly rulers.\(^3\)

A French bishop wrote, about the year 1048, that the church must be superior to the state in questions of morality because she is the bride of Christ.

For if we are to compare the human bodies to the heavenly bodies, and we believe that there are earthly bodies which are spiritual, then the church is the bride of Christ and the bishops exercise their powers in the place of Christ. Yet these bishops are not the husbands of the church, but rather the one husband. The number is not important, but the unanimity is necessary.\(^4\)

\(^3\) Tellenbach, Church, p. 116

\(^4\) Author unknown, De Ordinendo Pontifice (Monumenta Germaniae historica /MGH/, Libelli de Lite), Vol. I, p. 9
Thus the marriage of an evil simoniac bishop to the church is an insult to Christ and, according to the reformers, there was no real marriage. In the same manner Gregory would attack married bishops, calling them unfaithful and adulterous.

According to Gregory, the position of the bishops of Rome was the key to reform, for Christ had placed the pope at the head of the bishops so that they might remain pure and undefiled. Yet there was no clear understanding yet how the pope was the head of the church.

Pope Gregory outlined his position in the *Dictatus papae* (March 1075):

1. that the Roman church was founded by God alone
2. that the Roman Pontiff alone is rightly to be called universal
3. that he alone can dispose or reinstate bishops
4. that his legate, even if of lower grade, takes precedence, in a council of all bishops and may render a sentence of deposition against them
5. that the pope may depose the absent...
9. that the pope is the only one whose feet are to be kissed by all princes...
11. that his title is unique in the world
12. that he may depose emperors
13. that he may transfer bishops, if necessary from one See to another...
16. that no synod may be called a general one without his order...
19. that he himself may be judged by no one...
21. that to his See the more important cases of every church should be submitted...
25. that without convening a synod he can depose and reinstate bishops
26. that he should not be considered as Catholic who is not in conformity with the Roman church
27. that the pope may absolve subjects of unjust men from their fealty.5


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A quick perusal of the above statements readily gives one a good outline of the mentality of Gregory VII and a rationale for the policies of his pontificate. His near complete control over the bishops was a new procedure in the church. Tellenbach states:

Nothing could be more marked than the different tone in which the papacy now asserted its rights, as compared with times past. In earlier days the papal claim to intervene in the ecclesiastical life of other dioceses had been cautiously phrased, and modified with explanations and ambiguities. Now the claim rang out categorically, in proud and dominating tones. In order to see the change we have only to compare the language of the Dictatus papae, the letters of Gregory VII or of the somewhat later lawbooks with the passages in the writings of Nicholas I or in pseudo-Isidore upon which they are founded. The Hildebrandine period, moreover, did not remain bound by tradition but, by extending and forcing the old laws, created entirely new ones. The old command that every Catholic church must be in harmony with Rome was no longer restricted to a matter of belief alone, but was made to include liturgical uses and external organization; the Mozarabic rite, for instance, was replaced by the Roman in Spain, and from this time bishoprics were only to be created and divided, or monasteries and other foundations reformed, with the pope's permission, whereas hitherto the king and the lay owners had had the chief voice in these matters. Similarly, in Gregory's time the principle of the devolution of ecclesiastical appointments to the pope was first asserted: when elections were contested the nomination to the vacant church was to fall to the pope. Where earlier Roman doctrine had merely asserted that bishops could only be deposed with the consent of the pope, Gregory VII laid down briefly and concisely that the pope or his legates could depose bishops without the cooperation of a synod, and in certain circumstances even without hearing the accused. Another ordinance which had a far-reaching effect was that which, contrary to existing custom, allowed clerical superiors to be accused by their subordinates if the latter secured papal consent. On the basis of the old law which
ordained that important matters were to be reported to Rome, the pope now felt himself justified in interfering in the life of individual churches and in exercising the function of the local dignitaries either in person or through legates. This is, in fact, the real meaning of the universal episcopacy claimed by the pope: the pope is bishop everywhere, the bishops are merely his representatives in their own particular dioceses.6

Not all bishops—surely not those who owed their position to imperial appointment—graciously accepted this new Roman posture as is obvious in what Liemar the archbishop of Bremen wrote to Bishop Hezilo of Hildesheim:

This dangerous man /Gregory/ wants to order the bishops about as if they were servants on his estates; and if they do not do all that he commands, they have to go to Rome or else they are suspended without legal process.7

In a quick perusal of the activities of Gregory VII one sees that Archbishop Liemar gives an accurate account of the pontificate. Perhaps no other pope meted out more suspensions and/or excommunications than Gregory. Nor was Gregory satisfied in suspending simonical bishops, but he also released the people and clergy of the diocese from obedience to such bishops. This release was not always successful, but it was a threat and a financial embarrassment to the bishop.

7Tellenbach, Church, p. 143
Celibacy as Part of the Reform Movement

Gregory was not a traditionalist. Tellenbach sums it up:

Gregory VII was not particularly notable for his faithfulness to tradition. He was at heart a revolutionary; little more than the modification and improvement of existing forms, could not really satisfy him. He desired a drastic change, and could be content with nothing short of the effective realization on earth of justice, of the "right order" and of "that which ought to be." The Lord hath not said, "I am tradition," he once wrote, but "I am the truth."8

Most revolutionaries appeal to the past in some form or other to give credence to their ideas. Yet is is often the way a person interprets tradition that makes one untraditional or even revolutionary. Pope Gregory VII picked out of the traditions those elements that supported his particular view of the church administration. He also was not opposed to condemning or maintaining as false views those traditional positions different from his own. Yet Gregory was surely able to find adequate support for his reform movements in the tradition of the Church.

How the Eastern church influenced his reform movements is hard to assess. Actually Gregory was so much occupies by his struggles in the Western church that he hardly had time to concern himself with the East. The schism of 1054 surely bothered him and reunion was one of his goals. I believe his plan was to reorganize the Western church

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8 Tellenbach, Church, p. 164
and, then from a base of power, seek reunion with the Eastern church. The different discipline in the Eastern church regarding celibacy never seriously provided strong opposition.

Clerical celibacy was an important part of his reform movement. Gregory believed that there could really be no reform unless there was a sweeping program that included all the problems of the time. How much influence the Cluniac monks had on Gregory in the area of celibacy is not easily determined. We know that in other areas, such as political independence, the Cluniac traditions varied with the thinking of Gregory. Gregory spent only a very short time, if any at all, in a Cluniac monastery.

From 1046, when he joined Gregory VI in exile into Germany, Hildebrand was involved in the reform movements of the popes. His involvement with the celibacy reform began as early as 1057 as he accompanies Anselm of Lucca (later Alexander II) to Milan where the Patarines and the Imperialists were at odds and causing a schism in the Milanese church. Pope Nicholas II made him the administrator of papal financial affairs which post he held for about thirteen years and during which time he came to know the political leaders of Europe even more intimately.

Investiture and simony and clerical marriages were for him related evils; all involved property. No reform movement would succeed unless the evils caused by investiture, simony, and clerical marriages were abolished. As stated above, Pope Gregory continued the reform movements started prior to his pontificate. On his acceptance of the papacy, Gregory lost no time in pushing reforms upon various countries.
In 1073 at the Council of Gerona, Spain, Gregory's papal legate, Amatus, proposed the discipline of celibacy. Canon one of this council stated:

In the first place we legislate for those who serve at the altar by administering the body and blood of the Lord, whether priests, deacons, or subdeacons, that they devote themselves to a more perfect way of life and that they in no way involve themselves with houses of prostitution. Furthermore, if any cleric/subdeacon and above/has openly married or taken a common law wife or concubine, he subjects his grade of order to danger, and should leave the clerical order and make satisfaction as far as the canons demand.⁹

Canon three stated:

Likewise we promulgate that no son of a priest, deacon, or subdeacon shall inherit the fathers benefices at the same church.¹⁰

Canon four of the same council stated:

Likewise sons of clerics shall not be promoted to higher grades but rather shall remain in the accepted orders unless their life precludes even that.¹¹

⁹Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 517: "Primitus enim constituit de his qui adsistunt altari, in ministrando Corpore & sanguine Dominico; videlicet sacerdotibus, levitis, sive subdiaconis, & qui in clero deputati excellentiiori devoverunt se vitae; & ut in nullo contubernio communicentur mulieribus. Si quis vero de caetero palam nupserit, vel concubinam duxerit, gradus sui & honoris periculo subjaceat, & a clero exeat, quoadusque canonice satisfaciat."

¹⁰Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 518: "Item promulgavit, ut nullus presbyterorum, diaconorum, subdiaconorum filius, in eadem ecclesia possideat paternos honores."

¹¹Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 518: "Item quod clericorum filii ad altiores gradua non promoveantur: in acceptis autem gradibus maneant, nisi vita illis obstiterit."
Canon five of this council stated:

And furthermore sons of clerics whether laymen or clerics may in no way obtain ecclesiastical benefices which their fathers had in behalf of a church. Those who are negligent in this matter shall be excommunicated.\(^{12}\)

In England in 1076, a council was held at Winton which, under the presidency of Lanfranc, outlined the prohibition of marriage of clerics and the form of profession of chastity. The decree read:

It is decreed that no canonical person in major orders or under religious profession may have a wife, but those priests whether in the cities or whether in the rural areas who have wives are not obliged to dismiss them. And those priests unmarried are forbidden to marry. Furthermore we caution bishops that they do not ordain any person a priest or deacon unless he first professes that he is not married.\(^{13}\)

The form of profession for the vow of chastity was as follows:

I, brother N., promise to God and all the saints chastity of body according to the decrees of the canons and I promise to serve according to the order given me and I make this promise in front of the jurisdictional lord bishop N.\(^{14}\)

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\(^{12}\)Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 518: "Item etiam filii clericorum, tam laici, quam clerici, nullo modo possideant ecclesiasticos honores, quos patres eorum pro beneficio Ecclesia habuerunt vel retinuerunt. Qui praetermiserit, excommunicetur."

\(^{13}\)Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 459: "Decretum est, ut nullus canonicus uxorem habeat: Sacerdorum vero in castellis, vel in vicis habitantium, habentes uxores, non cogantur ut dimittant: non habentes, interdicantur ut habeant. Et deinceps caveant episcopi, ut sacerdotes vel diaconos non praesumant ordinare, nisi prius profiteantur ut uxores non habeant."

\(^{14}\)Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 459: "Ego frater N. promitto Deo omnibusque sanetis ejus castitatem corporis mei secundum canonum decreta, & secundum ordinem mihi imponendum servare, domino praesul N. praesente."
This council allowed the married clerics to continue to live with their spouses but forbade ordinations to married clerics who wished to continue to be married. Thus this council of Winton acted contrary to the spirit of the reform of Pope Gregory VII. But it is significant that a year earlier at the Council of London (1075) nothing was said about celibacy even though the council did take up clerical discipline.

In 1074 at the first council of Rome held under Pope Gregory VII, the new pope began his efforts to enforce the celibacy canons. In chapter twelve of this council he stated:

The Old Testament is contained partly in the prophetic works and partly in the moral precepts, but with the coming of Christ it ceased in prophetic words and carnal observances because he is the end and fulfillment of the law and to this day the moral precepts remain and must be observed. Included are such laws as, for example, "love your neighbor as yourself," and other laws too. Therefore whoever promulgated adherence to the laws of carnal observance works against the spirit of the New Testament and without doubt makes Jews out of the Galatians as well as out of the Ebionites. Marriage was found among the Old Testament priests in observance of the law of the flesh; but it was conceded to these priests for the sake of physical succession, because no one from any other tribe could join the priesthood. But in our time one may join the priesthood from any group of people; therefore rightly is marriage forbidden to the priests of the New Testament because succession is not necessary. Thus anyone, at this time, who preaches a Judaic marriage for priests as did Sozomen and especially the Ebionites, is worthy of the inevitable anathemia which the same apostle inflicted upon the Judaizers who were attacking the Galatians: but even if an angel from heaven preached to you other than what we preach, anathema to him. Likewise, he added, now
I say again to you, if anyone will preach something other than you have received, anathema to him.  

In chapter thirteen of the same council Gregory VII continued to give his reasons for conjugal celibacy and defended his position against the opposition.

But it seems much too much that some excuse incontinence on the part of priests as a concession granted by the Apostle: each one should have his own wife; but they do not understand what they are saying, nor what they affirm for others; for if they understood, they would be impugning their own conscience. For Jerome attests that the Corinthians asked among other things

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15 Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 415: "Vetus restamentum partim in mysteriis, partim in moralibus praecptis, continentur, sed adveniente Christo cessavit in mysteriis & carnalibus observantiis, quia ipse est finis sive completio legis, in moralibus praecptis adhuc manet, quia semper est observandum: Diliges proximum tuum sicat teipsum, & reliqua. Quicumque ergo ex lege aliquam carnalem observantium novo quidem testamento adversam adhuc observandum esse dogmatizat, procul dubio cum Galatis, immo cum Ebionitis, judaizat. Conjugale autem opus sacerdotum inter carnalis legis observantium computatur: quibus unquam sacerdotibus hoc tantum in lege successionis causa legitur concessum, quia ex alia tribui nullus eo tempore pervenit ad sacerdotium. Nam nostro tempore ex quolibet genere sacerdotes eligere licet, quibus & merito interdicitur conjugale opus, cum non jam successores haequent necessarios. Quapropter quissacerdotibus licere cum Sozomeno, vel potius cum Ebione dogmatizat, non negligenter illud inevitabile anathema considerat, quo ipse apostolus specialiter Judaicarum observationum praedicatorum anathematizat, Galatas Judaizantes ita deterrens: Sed licet nos aut angelus de caelo evangelizet vobis, praeterquam quod evangelizamus vobis, anathema sit. Idem vero inculcans cubjungit: Nunc iterum dico vobis, si quis evangelizaverit praeter id quod accepistis, anathema sit."
whether intercourse is permitted to the Christian: and the Apostle wrote back: "You wrote to me asking whether it is good not to touch a woman: _/but I say/ for the sake of fornication each should have a wife, and each her own husband. Woman does not have complete possession of her body but the husband does; and similarly man does not have complete possession of his body but the wife does. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent for a time so that you can give yourself in prayer." And in this manner did Jerome explain his interpretation in a work against Jovian: The apostle did not say that each may have a wife because of fornication, otherwise he would loosen the reins of lust by this excuse so that as often as a wife died, so often would he have to marry others lest he fornicate. But rather each person should have his own wife really meant that one should stay with his own spouse he had before conversion. How good it was not to touch _a woman/_ is evident that after faith in Christ he will know her as a sister and not as a wife, unless perhaps fornication would result and then one is excused to live as husband and wife.

Here Gregory answered those who claim Paul supported married clergy.

Do not deprive each other except by mutual agreement and then for a time so that you may give yourself to prayer. I point out to you that what is good is not what prohibits prayer, is not what prevents one from receiving the body of Christ; as long as I fulfill the marriage contract, I do not fulfill continence. Likewise, the apostle commanded in another place that we always pray: but if we always pray, then we cannot fulfill the marriage vows, for as long as and as often as we have intercourse, we cannot pray.

Cultic purity entered into Gregory's argument.

Peter, the apostle, taught that Christians should respect and honor woman, the weaker sex, and cease sexual activity that their prayers may be unhindered. Some, therefore, ascribe to the apostle as favoring marriage
of priests whose daily office is not to pray but to celebrate the seven sacraments. This sounds strange since in most places and continually in Christian era continence is connected with prayer. Truly, if the apostle conceded intercourse to the priests, he would have acted contrary to his statement to Titus when he writes that priests should be sober, just, and continent. And it was not to the priests but to the laity and especially to those laity whom he fed not solid food but rather milk as to neophytes who were not fully instructed that the apostle was speaking...By the same reason it showed that he was speaking to the laity and not to the priests when he wrote concerning the living as husband and wife, that is only if they cannot remain continent, let them marry. "It is better to marry than to burn," which means it is better to be involved in a legitimate marriage than to fornicate. "And also are you saved by the wife? Do not seek a wife, but if you seek a wife/virgin/ you do not sin and if the virgin marries she does not sin." But this was in no way written to the priests or others bound by continence but only to those who could legitimately marry. Wherefore blessed Jerome in the above work said: If he says a virgin may marry and not sin, he was not referring to the virgin vowed to the Lord, for if these marry they will be damned because they made a vow previously. And if he/Paul/ makes this objection to widows, how much more will he prevail upon the virgins for whom marriage is not allowed and about whom he once said that virgins who marry after vows not only commit adultery but also incest.

Gregory does not give us the citation where Paul calls a virgin marriage incest.

Therefore, if these sayings of the Apostle do not allow intercourse to the non-married, then much more it is not allowed to the priests: also priests are especially consecrated to continence through the sacred imposition and the holy anointing of prelates. Besides this, the Apostle conceded marriage to widows or
widowers for the second time and in the privilege of the faith cases. For upon the death of the wife, one might marry another wife and allow widows to remarry. Therefore, no one openly understands this sentence as allowing conjugal relations for priests, when in the Epistle to Timothy and Titus, men of one wife were to be elected to the sacerdotal ministry: and neither does St. Jerome, even among heathens, allow second marriages for their priests in his work against Jovian. Furthermore, even from ancient time, monogamy was always held in honor as can be seen through the writings of Fortuna and therefore priests of the new law should not marry a second time or have a second wife.

Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 415-416: Quidam etiam videntur sibi nimium scholi, assententes incontinentiam sacerdotibus esse concessam in illo apostoli: Unusquisque suam uxorem habeat: qui autem non intelligunt quae loquuntur, neque quibus affirmant; aut, si intelligunt, suam ipsorum conscientiam impugnant. Nam attestante beato Hieronymo Corinthii inter caetera ab apostolo quae similiter etiam videntur, an nuper renatis in Christo carnalis copula licita esset: quibus ita rescriptis apostolus: De quibus autem scripssis mini, bonum est bominem mulierem non tangere: propter fornicationem aut unusquisque suam uxorem habeat, unaquaeque virum suum. Uxori vir debitum reddat, similiter autem & uxor viro. Mulier sui corporis potestatem non habeat, sed vir: similiter & vir sui corporis potestatem non habeat, sed mulier. Nolite fraudare invicem, nisi forte ex consensu ad tempus, ut vacetis orationi: quod ita exponit beatus Hieronymus in libro contra Jovinianum: Non dixit apostolus propter fornicationem ducat unusquisque uxorem, aliquin hac excusatione libidini frene laxasset, ut quodcumque uror moriatur, toties ducenda sit alia, ne fornicemur: sed unusquisque suam habeat: suam, inquit, habeat, sua utatur, quam habeat: antequam crederet: quam bonum erat non tangere, & post fidem Christi sororem tantum nosse, non conjugem, nisi fornicatio tantum excusabilem faceret. Nolite fraudere invicem, nisi forte ex consensu ad tempus, ut vacetis orationi. Oro te, quale illud bonum est, quod orare prohibet, quod corpus Christi accipere non permittit, quamdui enim impleo mariti officium, non impleo continentis. Jubet idem apostolus in alio locco, ut semper oramus: si semper oramus, nuriquam conjugio servium est, quandoquidem quotiescumque uror debitum reddo, orare non possum. Sic & Petrus apostolus docet Christianos ut infirmiori vasculo muliebri honorem tribuant, ab opere conjugalia cessantes, ne impediantur eorum orationes. Quis ergo sanae mentis praedictas apostoli sententias de exercendo
conjugali opere sacerdotibus adscribat, quorum quotidianum est officium non modo orare, sed & divina sacramenta contratare, praesertim cum in eodem loco etiam cuilibet Christiano tempore orationis injun-gatur continentia. Nempe si apostolus hic etiam sacerdotibus carnalem copulam concederet, profecto contrarius sibi esset, qui ad Titum scribens praecepit ut sacerdotes sobrii, justi sint, atque continentes. Et non hic sacerdotibus, sed laicis, & his non solidum cibum sed lacteum potum ministrat, ut puta neophytis, qui nondum sibi, necdum aliis sussicienter erant instructi...idem apostolus sacerdotale officium penitus intercludit. Eadem etiam ratione probatur ad laicos, non sacerdotes, spectare quidquid idem apostolus scribit de exercendo opere conjugali, ut illud: quod si se non continent, nubant. Melius est nubere, quam uri: id est, melius est legitimo marito misceri, quam fornicari. Et illud: Solutus es ab uxore? uli querere uxorem: si autem acceperis uxorem, non peccasti: & si nupserit virgo, non peccat. Hoc itaque nullo modo de sacerdotibus vel de aliis continenta-tiae dedicatis dicitur, sed de illis tantum qui legitime conjugar possunt. Unde beatus Hieronymus in libro supradicto: Si, inquit, nupserit virgo, non peccabit: non illa virgo quae semel Dei cultui dedicata: haram enim si qua nupserit, damnationem habebit, quia primam irritam fecit fidem. Si autem hoc de viduis dietum objecerit, quanto magis de virginibus praevalebit, cum etiam his non liceat, quibus aliquando licuit: virgines enim, quae post consecrationem nupserint, non tam adulteraesunt, quam incestae: Si ergo praedictae apostoli sententiae hujusruodi continentibus carnalem copulam non concedunt, quanto minus sacerdotibus; maxime cum illae simpliciter ad continentiam sint consecratae, illi autem ipsis continentibus sint praelati, & per venerandam manus impositionem, & per sacrosancti chrismatis unctionem. Praeterea idem apostolus ipsis quibus conjugale opus exercere concedit, eisdem etiam secundas nuptias inire licenter permittit. Solute enim ab uxor abiam ducere concedit, & viduae nubendi licentiam attribuit. Nullatenus ergo sacerdotes sub permissione carnalis copulae sententia comprehendit, quibus in episo-tola ad Timotheum & Titum bigamiam penitus prohibuit, cum jubeat tantum unius uxoris virum eligi ad sacerdotium: nam nec apud ethnicos bigamia licebat sacerdotibus beato Hieronymo asserente contra Jovininum. Legant, inquit, nostrates, antequam religio nostra fulgeret in mundo, unicubas semper habuisse inter matronas decus, per illas Fortunae muliebri sacra fieri solita, nullum sacer-dotum bigamum nullum flaminem bimaritum."
Pope Gregory went on to cite the heresy of the Nicolatians and tried to tie this heresy to the supporters of a married clergy. According to Gregory the common property of the Nicolatians included the wives: "...as is written: 'and they held all things in common among which Nicolaus numbered the wives.'"\(^{17}\)

Pope Gregory claimed and insisted that those references in St. Paul that allow marriage were only for lay people and not for clerics. He again stated his view quite positively: "It is thus quite clear that the previous sentences of St. Paul are meant not for priests but for laity."\(^{18}\) Gregory continued:

For by the same apostolic institution, perpetual silence is evidently imposed upon the defenders of clerical incontinence, and the laws and preaching of our apostolic fathers are corroborated in an unbreakable tradition; by all means these laws interdict the sacred orders of no one, unless the apostolic precepts are from within excluded from the very same sacred order.\(^{19}\)

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17 Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 417: "...Quia scriptum est: Et erant illis omnia communia, inter quae Nicolaus numeravit & conjugia."

18 Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 417: "Ut autem clarius eniteat apostolium in superioribus sententiis non sacerdotibus, sed laicis."

19 Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 417: "Nam in eadem apostolica institutione & defensoribus sacerdotalis incontinentiae perpetuum silentium evidenter imponitur, & praefata nostri apostolici statuta irresragabiliter corroborantur; quippe quae nulli sacrum officium interdicit, nisi quem & apostolica praecipit ab ipso sacro ordine secludunt."
After this Council of Rome of 1074, other synods and councils urged continence and adherence to Gregory's program of reform. In 1078 at the yearly council held in Rome, the fathers in canon eleven spoke out against bishops who did not follow through on the reform.

If any bishop allows fornication on the part of his priests or deacons or allows the crime of incest in his diocese because of bribery, whether in promises or in actual money, and if any bishop is found doing nothing in these matters, he is to be suspended from office.20

The Council of Poitiers in 1078 had two canons on the celibacy discipline. Its canon eight stated:

Sons of priests and others born of fornication shall not be promoted to sacred orders, unless they become monks or live in a community of canons regular. Furthermore they shall have no special privileges, but shall remain slaves unless granted freedom by their masters.21

Canon nine of the same council decreed:

No deacon, priest, or subdeacon may have a concubine; and neither may they have any other woman in their houses who may be a cause of suspicion. And if there be such

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20Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 510: "Si quis episcopus fornicationem presbyterorum, diaconorum, seu subdiaconorum, vel crimen incestus in sua parochia, precibus vel pretio interveniente, consensus, vel commissum sibique commertum auctoritate sui officii non impugnaverit, ab officio suspendatur."

21Mansi, Concilia, XX, cols. 498-99: "Ut filii presbyterorum & caeteri ex fornicatione nati ad sacros gradus non provehantur, nisi aut monachi fiant, aut in congregacione canonicà regulariter viventes. Praelationes vero nullatenus habeant, sed neque servi, nisi a dominis suis libertate donentur."
a priest or any person simonically ordained or persons knowingly attending Masses of such priests, they ought to be subjected to excommunication.\textsuperscript{22}

In 1080 at Lillebonne, a synod was held for the purpose of decreeing discipline for the church and state under the management of Duke William of Normandy. Canon three of this synod stated:

Let no priest, deacon, or subdeacon, nor any dean or canon have in his house a woman under any pretext: if any one shall be found to have relapsed into this sin, after having had the charge brought against him by the bishop's officials, let him clear himself in the episcopal court. But if one of his parishioners or liege lords before accused him, let there be an adjournment till he can refer to the bishop; and if he designs to clear himself, let him do it in the presence of some of his parishioners in the presence of the bishop's officers, who shall give their judgement on his defense. But if he cannot clear himself he shall forfeit his preferment for ever.\textsuperscript{23}

In 1085 at Quedlinburg, a synod was held to fortify resistance against the party loyal to Henry IV.\textsuperscript{24} "In the same synod perpetual continence according to the decrees of the holy fathers is demanded for priests, deacons, and subdeacons."\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{22}Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 499: "Ut nullus diaconus, presbyter, vel subdiaconus concubinam habeat; sed nec aliam faeminam, unde mala suspicio habeatur, in una domo secum teneant, & quicumque hujusmodi sacerdotes, sive per pecuniam ordinati, missam scierant audierint, excommunicationi subjacere debeant."

\textsuperscript{23}Odericus Vitales, Ecclesiastical History, p. 125

\textsuperscript{24}Henry's party were the archbishops and bishops who sided with him against Gregory.

\textsuperscript{25}Mansi, Concilia, XX, col. 608: "In eadem synodo presbyteris, diaconibus, subdiaconibus, perpetua juxta decreta sanctorum patrum indicta est continentia."
Pope Gregory VII obviously did not have a good exegetical understanding of the Paul's letters. He was convinced that clerical marriage was wrong and used every means he could find to maintain his persuasion. He was so convinced of his argumentation that any opposing person was regarded as opposing the scriptures or the sacred traditions. It is no wonder that in 1079 he squelched the story of St. Paphnutius (of Nicaea I) as a fabrication and also condemned Ulric of Imola's (c. 1060) work which used St. Paul's texts in support of clerical marriages. Pope Gregory VII borrowed from St. Jerome and St. Ambrose, both of whom supported conjugal celibacy. However, Gregory VII used only those writings of Jerome and Ambrose which were consistent with his own philosophy. Having been involved in the Milan controversaries, he also sought out Ambrose for his support and thus confronted the Milanese with one of their own as Peter Damian had done. For Gregory clerical marriage was an evil that had to be eliminated and he felt that the traditions and previous canons of the councils provided him justification. Gregory could not take on a reform movement of the whole clergy unless it included reform in the area of clerical marriages.

For a more detailed view of his personal philosophy let us look at his letters and see how he expressed his convictions to various ecclesiastical and temporal leaders. The connection of simony and clerical marriages is obvious in his writings.

Immediately upon his accession to the papal throne, on October 13, 1073, Gregory VII wrote Albert of Aquinas about the evils of simony and unchastity.

And furthermore, you can receive no greater commendation for your holy zeal and prudence than if you begin with due respect to erase the heresy of simony from your whole church and admonish and persuade your clergy to fight these evils and return from the filthy and shameful way of life to a pure life of chastity.  

A similar letter was sent to Bishop William of Pavia at the same time.

Several weeks later on November 15, 1073, in a letter to Archbishop Gebhard of Salzburg, the pope advised the archbishop to insist upon clerical celibacy.

You seem even to this day to be negligent and disobedient in promoting clerical celibacy among your clergy according to the canons of the Roman synod, at which you were present, at least that is the information we have received. We, admirers of you, are deeply grieved in this matter. Whence, by apostolic authority, we admonish you that you

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apply force as a good shepherd and that, with
the Roman church aiding you, push forward by
preaching without regard of any other pres-
sure to rid your clerics who are living shame-
ful lives.28

A year later on November 18, 1074, in a letter to the archbishop
of Cologne, the pope again brought pressure to the local church.

Besides, we now admonish your solicitude in
behalf of Peter, our common father and lord,
that you not only in your own diocese, but
also in all the parishes of the suffragan
dioeceses, demand priests, deacons, and sub-
deacons adhere to your admonitions and live
chastely. For your priestly fraternity knows
that the all of other virtues are meaningless
before God without chastity, as is chastity
without the other virtues.29

Continuing his pressure on bishops to enforce celibacy on the
local clergy, Pope Gregory threatened punishment to any bishop who

28Register, I, co, 50: "Sed est, unde fraternitatem tuam neg-
ligentiae merito argui putamus, quod de castitate clericorum, sicut
nobis relatum est, praecptis Romanae synodi, cui interfusi,
inobediens usque hodie vodearis. Qua in re tantum de te admirantis
gravius dolemus, quantum te illud sollicitius operari sperabamus.
Unde apostolica te auctoritate ammonemus, ut clericos tuos qui tur-
piter conversantur, pastorali rigore cohereas et quod Romana Ecclesia
te astante de immunditia clericorum statuit, neque gratiam neque odium
alicuis considerans constanti auctoritate in ecclesia tua predicando
exerceas."

29Register, II, 25, 157: "Preterea sollicitudinem tuam ex parte
beat Petri communis patris et domini instanter admonemus, ut non
solum in ecclesiae tuae diocesi sed etiam in omnibus suffraganeorum
tuorum paroehiis presbyteros diacones et subdiacones admonitionibus
tuis caste vivere facia, quoniam, ut fraternitas tua novit caeterae
virtutes apud Deum sine castitate nihil valent, sicut nec sine casteris
virtutibus castitas."
refused to carry out the canons. Writing to Archbishop Odo of Trier on October 16, 1074, the pope demanded an investigation of the bishop of Toul's handling of a monk. This same monk who had been refused a benefice by the bishop of Toul accused the bishop of simony and marriage.

This monk of Toul, said to be a clerk, came to us and complained that his lord, said to be bishop of Toul, was enraged against him and that he had been driven into exile and deprived of all his goods, and he prayed to be relieved from his distress by apostolic charity. We inquired carefully how this had happened to him, and he replied that he had demanded of the bishop a certain benefice which he claimed as lawfully belonging to the office of custos which he held. The bishop, angered by this demand, not only refused him the benefice but forbade him upon his obedience to perform any duties of his office. To this he replied that he owed the bishop no duty of obedience because he had sold archdeaconates, consecrations of churches, and even churches themselves, and had thus made himself guilty of the heresy of Simony. Further, he charged that the bishop had lived in open relations with a certain woman, by whom he had had a child, and report had it that he had joined himself to her by a solemn promise and by a marriage after the manner of laymen. Some said also that he had bought his way into episcopal office. When the bishop heard all this he spoke with this monk and also with others of the brethren about making amends as if he repented of the sins that had been brought to light, but finally broke out into a public display of anger against this man.30

It seems that the monk had a good case against the bishop and used it to his own advantage. One should notice here how simony and clerical marriage are joined as aspects of the same terrible evil.

Gregory VII personally attacked the bishops who refused to carry out his orders. In December 1074 he summoned Bishop Otto of Constance to appear at the Lenten Synod of Rome (1075). This letter is a very good example of how Gregory operated to get his program across: first, he forced the bishop to follow the papal directions; second, if that failed he ordered the bishop to Rome; third, if that too proved to no avail, then he released the people from allegiance to the bishop.

To you also, who preside over the numerous clergy and the widespread population of the church of Constance, it has, for the same reason, seemed good to us to send a special letter under our own seal. With this as your authority you can more safely and more boldly carry out our orders and expel from the Lord's holy place the heresy of Simony and the foul plague of carnal contagion. The apostolic authority of St. Paul is here of especial force, where, counting in fornicators and adulterers with other vicious persons, he gives this plain decision: "With such a one, no, not to eat."

Furthermore, the whole body of the Catholic Church consists of virgins or married persons or those holding themselves in restraint. Whoever, therefore, is outside those three classes is not to be counted among the sons of the Church or within the bounds of the Christian religion. Wherefore we also, if we should know for certain that even the lowest layman was involved in concubinage, would cut him off completely from the body and blood of the Lord until he should perform due penance. How then shall one be the distributor or server of the holy sacraments who cannot in any wise be partaker of them? Further, we are urged to this by the authority of the blessed Pope Leo I, who deprived subdeacons of the right to marry, a decree to which his successors in the Holy Roman Church, especially that famous doctor Gregory I, gave such force of law.
that henceforth the marriage bond has been completely forbidden to the three orders of priests, levites, and subdeacons.

But when we, on our pastoral forethought, sent word to you that these orders were to be carried out you, not setting your mind on the things that are above, but on the things that are upon the earth, loosed the reins of lust within the aforesaid orders so that, as we have heard, those who had taken concubines /mulierculis/ persisted in their crime, while those who had not yet done so had no fear of your prohibitions. Oh, what insolence! Oh, what audacity, that a bishop should despite the decrees of the Apostolic See, should uproot the precepts of the holy fathers—nay more, by orders from his high place and his priestly office should impose upon his subjects things contrary and repugnant to the Christian faith.

Wherefore, we command you to present yourself before us at the approaching synod in the first week of Lent to give answer according to canon law as well for this disobedience and contempt of the Apostolic See as for all the other offenses charged against you.31

Nothing happened to change what Otto was doing, so the pope wrote directly to the people of Constance and defended his own action.

We have sent to our brother, your Bishop Otto, letter of exhortation, in which we enjoined upon him by our apostolic authority and the obligation of our office that he should banish entirely the heresy of Simony from his church, should see to it that the chastity of the clergy was preached with energy and should insist upon its maintenance with episcopal watchfulness. For this duty so well laid down for us by evangelical and apostolic writings, by decrees

31Gregory VII, Correspondence, pp. 52-53 (Letter to Otto)
of recognized councils and by the teaching of famous scholars that we cannot cloak or neglect it without grave peril to our souls and injury to Christian people.

But, as we are informed, your bishop has not been led by reverence for St. Peter or respect for his own office to carry out our fatherly counsel. He has, so we understand, committed not only the sin of disobedience but also of rebellion in that he has openly permitted to his clergy actions contrary to our commands—nay, to the commands of St. Peter—allowing those who had concubines /muliercules/ to keep them, and those who had not to take them unlawfully and rashly. When we learned this we were greatly disturbed and wrote him a second letter expressing our anger and laying down still more sharply the same orders. We have summoned him also to a Roman synod, which is to be held in the first week of the coming Lent, to give an account of himself and to explain the grounds of his disobedience, if he has any rational ones, before the whole assembly.

We are sending you word of this, my beloved sons, out of regard for your welfare. It is perfectly evident, if he chooses to set himself in open opposition to St. Peter and the Holy Apostolic See, that a man who dishonors his father and mother cannot exact obedience from those who are loyal sons of their fathers and mothers. It is a shame that he who refuses to submit to a master should claim to be a master over pupils. Now, therefore, as we have said, we proclaim by our apostolic authority, to all adherents of God and St. Peter that if he shall persist in his obstinancy, you are to show him neither reverence nor obedience. Nor are you to have any fear that this may be a peril to your souls.32

32Gregory VII, Correspondence, pp. 53-54 (Letter to people of Constance)
At the same time, on December 7, 1074, Gregory forced Henry IV to carry out the promises he made to the pope regarding the rooting out of simony and clerical marriages.

Beloved son! Although you have not settled the case of the church of Milan in accordance with your repeated letters and promises, still we have heard with great satisfaction that you treated our legates kindly and graciously, have duly corrected certain church matters and have sent to us by the said legates becoming greetings and assurance of devoted service. Further we rejoice greatly that, as your mother, the august Emperess Agnes of pious memory, constantly assured us, and as the bishops, your legates, now confirm, you are determined to root out completely the heresy of Simony from your kingdom and to use every effort to cure the inveterate disease of clerical unchastity.

On January 11, 1075, Pope Gregory wrote Rudolf, duke of Swabia, and Berthold, duke of Carinthia, that very few bishops were obeying his orders.

But until the present time bishops, with very few exceptions have refused to obey them, have made no effort to prohibit or to punish these execrable practices, not reflecting that according to Scripture rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness /or disobedience/ is as idolatry.

Since, therefore, we are sure that the sacred offices are unworthily performed and the people led astray by those who despise the apostolic commands—nay, those

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33 Gregory VII, Correspondence, p. 55 (Letter to Henry IV)
of the Holy Spirit—and who encourage the sins of their subjects by criminal indulgence, it is very fitting that we, upon whom above all others rests the care of the Lord's flock, should keep watch against these evils by some other method. For it seems to us far better to reinforce the divine justice by new policies rather than allow the souls of men to perish by neglect of law.

Wherefore we now turn to you and to all in whose loyalty and devotion we have confidence, begging you and directing you by apostolic authority, no matter what bishops may say or not say, not to recognize those whom you shall prove to have been promoted or ordained simonically or to be under the charge of fornication. These orders you are to publish and urge at the king's court and elsewhere in assemblies of the kingdom, and you are to prevent such persons, to the best of your ability, even by force if that be necessary, from serving at the sacred mysteries.34

It is interesting to note that in these last two letters Pope Gregory referred to marriage by clergy as fornication; all sexual activity of clerics is lumped together.

King Sancho of Aragon also received a letter from the Pope (January 1075) in which he was asked to promote the canons which certain priests were disobeying.

And because such [those opposing Gregory] go contrary to the canons which are to be venerated for the orders of the priesthood, the good example and authority of the holy fathers on the opposite side is forgotten for posterity. But the holy and apostolic

34 Gregory VII, Letter to Rudolf, Correspondence, p. 63
See and good reason ought uphold the canons and never allow that anyone depart from the concordance of canonical tradition by means of one's own decrees and statutes.\textsuperscript{35}

Denying benefices to married clergy was also another tactic used by the pope as is seen in the letter to Bishop Sigehard of Guienne (March 23, 1075).

We have decreed that if any cleric who assists at the sacred altar whether as priest, deacon, or subdeacon, has a wife or common law wife /concubine/, unless these charges have been removed, or performed penance worthy of the sin, must desist of his own volition from administering at the sacred altars and no longer share in the benefice of any church or enjoy the fruits thereof.\textsuperscript{36}

In the same month, on March 29, 1075, Gregory wrote two letters demanding bishops to enforce celibacy. To Bishop Burkhard II of Halberstadt he wrote:

We believe, dearest Brother, that you are not ignorant of the ancient statutes of the Apostolic See regarding the chastity of clerics in orders which statutes have been

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Register, II, 50, 191: "Et quia venerandi canones ad sacerdotii gradum tales provehi contradicunt, procontrarium sanctis patribus in exemplum et auctoritatem posteris relinquatur. Solet enim sancta et apostolica sedes pleraque considerata ratione tolerare, sed numquam in suis decretis et constitutionibus a concordia canonicae traditionis discedere."}

\textsuperscript{36}\textit{Gregory VII, Register, II, 62, 217: "Decrevimus enim, quod, si quis eorum ordinum, qui sacris altariibus administrant, presbyter scilicet diaconus et subdiaconus, uxorem vel concubinam habeat, nisi illis omnino dismissis dignam penitentiam agant, sacris altariibus penitus administrare desistant nec aliquo ecclesiae beneficio ulterius potiantur sive potitis fruantur...."}
promulgated for a long time and widely by our efforts through letters and legates. And over a year ago our brother bishops came together in that geographical area and by my name imposed obedience upon you for the work at hand. Nor, furthermore, did we judge the letter on this matter to be superfluous as the apostle says: "Brother write to me not out of no reason but rather from necessity."37

Pope Gregory was not satisfied with inaction; he demanded a response. Previously many celibacy canons were just ignored on the local level; but Gregory would not be ignored.

To Archbishop Anno of Cologne on March 29, 1075, the pope insisted that the decrees were not of his own making but rather that they were laws of the ancients under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and therefore obedience to them is required.

On this account, beloved brother, I beg and counsel you upon your obedience with the more confidence and trust, and by authority of our common lord, St. Peter, I command you to apply yourself with more energy to preaching and enforcing the celibacy of the clergy according to the edicts of the fathers and the authority of the canons, together with all your subordinates, so that the service of pure and unspotted family may be offered to the bride of Christ who knows no spot or wrinkle. You, my brother, know that these orders are not of our invention but that we proclaim them as decrees

37Gregory VII, Register, II, 66, 221: "Non ignorare te, frater carissime, credimus de ordinum ecclesiasticorum castitate sancte sedis apostolice statuta antecessorum nostrorum et nostro deinceps studio per litteras et legatos longe lateque promulgata. Nam et anno precedent confratres nostri et episcopi in partes illas directi te convenerunt et nostro nomine huius tibi operis obedientiam studiosius inculcarunt. Sed neque propter eam has rursus de eadem re tibi litteras superfluum judicavi-mus apostolo dicente: 'Fratres, eadem vobis scribere mihi quidem non pigrum, vobis suturem necessarium.'"
of the ancient fathers, taught to them by
the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and in
pursuance of the duty of our office, lest
we incur the penalty of the slothful ser-
vant by hiding in silence the Lord's trea-
sure which is demanded again with interest.
It has even been and ever shall be the pro-
vince of this Holy Roman Church to provide
new edicts and new remedies against newly
increasing excesses, and these, sent forth
under the sanction of reason and authority,
no human being may lawfully declare to be
invalid. We are moved also by dread of
that curse proclaimed by Solomon. "Obedience is that without which one who
seems to be loyal is convicted of disloyalty."38

Gregory outlines the method Archbishop Anno was to use and even told
the archbishop what to say.

Now, for the more complete and efficient
execution of the order we have given, we
urge you to call a council of your fellow
bishops. Gather there as large an assembly
as possible, make a clear statement of the
canon law and the authority of the Apostolic
See as well as your own and that of the
assembled brethren. Expound at length, as
God shall give you knowledge, how great is
the virtue of chastity, how necessary it is
for all grades of the clergy and how fitting
for the chamberlains of the virgin bride-
groom and the virgin bride. Then declare
firmly that it shall no longer be permitted
them to carry on the functions which up to
the present time they have usurped to their
own destruction, but that it will be more
bearable for them completely to resign
their offices than to impose upon their
Savior a criminal and grievous servitude
and thus heap up wrath for themselves from
the very source which ought to bring them
a reward.39

38 Gregory VII, Letter to Anno, Correspondence, p. 72
39 Gregory VII, Letter to Anno, Correspondence, pp. 72-73
In July 1075, Gregory praised Henry IV for his efforts at reform.

Gregory...to King Henry, greetings....Among other praiseworthy actions, my beloved son, to which you are reported to have risen in your efforts at self-improvement, there are two that have specially commended you to your holy mother, the Roman Church: first, that you have valiantly withstood those guilty of Simony; and second, that you freely approve and strenuously desire to enforce, the chastity of the clergy as servants of God. For these reasons you have given us cause to expect of you still higher and better things with God's help. Wherefore we earnestly pray that you men hold fast by these, and we beseech our Lord God that he may deign to increase your zeal more and more.40

Later in the same letter Gregory cited the failure of the simoniac Bishop Hermann to appear at the Roman synod. Then he asked King Henry to regulate the affairs of the Church of Bamberg because Bishop Hermann had been excommunicated. At about the same time, on September 3, 1075, he wrote Siegfried, archbishop of Mainz to root out unchastity.

Gregory...to Siegfried, archbishop of Mainz, greeting...But, since we are aware that you are being dissuaded by many carnally-minded persons from working diligently and faithfully in the Lord's vineyard for the welfare of souls lest you suffer loss of fortune and incur the enmity of the powerful, we exhort and command you, in the name of Almighty God and by the authority of St. Peter, that you venture not to turn aside from the straight way through fear or favor of anyone or through any loss of earthly goods, but that, so far as the Holy Spirit may grant, you shall diligently inquire into everything and report to us immediately whatever you ascertain. We ought to regard it as a shameful thing that

40Gregory VII, Letter to Anno, Correspondence, p. 80
the soldiers of this world daily stand up to fight for their earthly prince and shrink not from deadly conflict, while we, who are called priests of God, will not fight for our king who created all things out of nothing, and who did not hesitate to suffer death for us and has promised us an eternal reward.

This also we enjoin upon you, my brother, that you make diligent inquiry into the Simoniac heresy and fornication of your clergy, as you have been instructed by the Apostolic See, and that whatever you find has been committed in the past you punish according to law and thoroughly root it out, and give strictest orders that it shall not occur in the future.\textsuperscript{41}

On September 27, 1076, Gregory warned King William of England not to be taken in by Juhellus, Bishop of Dol, who according to the pope committed sacrilege by publicly marrying and by practicing simony.

And not content with this infamy \textit{simony}, he heaped up iniquity upon iniquity and, as if he thought simony a matter of no account, he hastened to make himself also a Nicolaite. In the bishopric which he had thus wickedly assumed, he had the effrontery to introduce a wife, or rather a harlot, celebrating their nuptials publicly. By her he begot children, so that having prostituted his spirit to the corrupter of souls by a Simonical bargain, he devoted his body also to the Devil by foul and incestuous lust \textit{in contumeliam}. Thus, not a place was left in him for his Creator, which he had not completely sold out to the adversary by an inward and outward obligation. Nor did his evil doing stop here: he added to his atrocious deed and his infamous offense an appalling sacrilege. He bestowed in marriage the daughters of unlawful

\textsuperscript{41}Gregory VII, \textit{Letter to Siegfried}, \textit{Correspondence}, p. 83

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wedlock, giving them under the name of dowry estates and revenues of the Church, a most frightful crime.

Now, burdened with these iniquities, he is plotting to impose himself upon that church already torn in pieces and scattered abroad. Your Highness is aware that for these reasons he was pierced by the arrow of St. Peter, the Apostle, and condemned by a fatal anathema unless he should repent of his crime. Wherefore we have taken pains to give you this fatherly admonition and briefly to explain the case lest through ignorance you might give further aid to a criminal already plunged in darkness of his own, and thus make yourself a partner in his crimes. But do you now, in humble obedience to the warnings of the Apostolic See and of ourself, cast him away from you or else by mild persuasion induce him, if you can, to consider his own welfare and take refuge in penitential redemption. To encourage and help men of that sort who persist in evil doing is nothing less than to kindle the wrath of God against oneself.42

Gregory continued to pressure civil leaders to punish married clergy, as he had already asked Henry IV. To the Countess Adela of Flanders, he wrote on November 10, 1076:

It has come to our knowledge that some of your people are in doubt whether or not priests and Levites and other servants of the sacred altar, if they persist in unchastity, may lawfully celebrate the office of the Mass. To these we make answer, by authority of the holy fathers, that servants of the sacred altar continuing in unchastity may on no account celebrate Mass but are to be expelled from the choir until they shall give satisfactory evidence of repentance.

Wherefore, we enjoin upon you by our apostolic authority that you admit no one to the celebration

42Gregory VII, Letter to Dol, Correspondence, p. 108
of the holy mystery who persists in his criminal conduct [scelus], but that you bring in from whatever source you can men who will serve God in chastity. When those others have been completely removed from all church offices, pay no attention to the words of Archdeacon Hubert [of Terouanne] nor show favor to any utterances of his whatsoever, because, as I have heard, he has fallen into heresy through his wicked arguments and was publicly convicted by Hubert, legate of this Holy Roman See at Montreuil.\(^{43}\)

It is significant that Gregory urged her to replace married clergy with celibate ones.

Gregory wrote to Bishop Josfred of Paris on March 25, 1077, and gave him the responsibility of encouraging other bishops of France to push the reform.

On the other hand, we beg you and strongly urge upon you to send word to all your colleagues and fellow bishops throughout all France, by apostolic authority, that they are strictly to forbid all priests who refuse to give up the crime of fornication to perform the office of the holy altar; and do you yourself cease not to preach the same in every assembly. And if you find the bishops lax in this matter or that those who dare to usurp the name and function of holy orders unworthily on account of these crimes are rebellious, then in the name of St. Peter and by our apostolic authority do you prohibit every people from receiving their offices any further, so that, being put to confusion in this way, they may be compelled to reform their way of life and return to the purity of pious continence. Act, therefore, so that our holy and universal Mother Church

\(^{43}\)Gregory VII, *Letter to Countess Adela*, Correspondence, p. 110
may with God's help know you as a faithful
servant and fellow worker in our apostolic
care and may grant us to enjoy the fruits
or your priestly office at this present
and confidently to expect them in future
by God's mercy.\textsuperscript{44}

Gregory seems here to act contrary to Damian and act in accord with
the Donatist heresy which stated that priestly functions depended
upon personal integrity for validity.

Pope Gregory used every force available to push archbishops and
bishops to comply with the celibacy canons. He even compared the role
of the ecclesiastical leaders to Josuah who was obedient to the Lord's
commands and the walls of Jericho came down. In writing to Archbishop
Werner of Magdeburg on March 29, 1075, Gregory stated:

You see, dearest brother, what \textit{Josuah}\ received in the cause of the Lord by his
prompt obedience. Similarly we have
received a mandate from God for all the
Christian people that we must be vigilant
lest we allow our adversary by our silence
to build and fortify walls against the
truth as they did in Josuah's time. Where­
fore, by our fraternity and apostolic
authority we enforce and command, that you
instantly and vigorously, with a loud trum­
pet, preach and inculcate chastity for the
priesthood, until you bring down the walls
Jericho, that is, you remove and uproot
the works of defection and sordid carnal
corruption, as we read in prophet: "Today
I place you over the peoples and kingdoms,
so that you may bring ruin, destruction,
upheaval, and uprooting and also build and
plant." We do not propose decrees as if
they are our doing, but rather decrees that
we have received: from the holy fathers,
lest perhaps we incur the wrath of God by

\textsuperscript{44}Gregory VII, \textit{Letter to Josfred}, \textit{Correspondence}, p. 118

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our silence. Labor therefore "in season and out of season" that the house of the Lord which has been committed to you may be purified, and furthermore as long as you are obedient you will receive our graces and blessings and lay up a reward from the Lord to be yours for your work. 45

Gregory threatened and even carried out excommunication and suspension of bishops who refused to carry out his plans of reform. In the Roman Synod of the fall of 1078, canon twenty-eight stated:

Bishops who give consent in their parishes to /clerics/ who are married, or live in fornication or incest shall be suspended from their office. 46

45Gregory VII, Register, pp. 225-26: "Vides, karissime frater, quid fervens in divinis causis animus, quid prompta obedientia meruerit? Ad huius similitudinem facti nos, qui populum christianum instituendi magisterium suscipientis, mentem vigilanter intendere debemus, ne adversarie potestatis muros contra verum Josue rebellantes et erectos silentio nostro stare aut roborari patiamur. Quam ob rem fraternitati tue apostolica auctoritate injungimus atque precipimus, ut ad castitatem clericorum predicandam et studiosius inculeandam bucina sacerdotali vehementius et instantius instrepas, donec Iericho muros, id est deflectionis opera et sordide libidinis pollutions, dissipet et sub vertas, sicut ad prophetam: "Posui te hodie super gentes at super regna, ut evelias et destruas et disperdas et disippes et edifice et plantes." Non nostra decreta, quamquam licenter si opus esset, possemus vobis proponimus, sed a sanctis patribus statuta renovamus, ne nostro silentio servi pecuniam Dominican abscondentis sententiam incurramus. Elabora igitur, "insta oportune inportune," ut domus Dei tibi commissapurificetur, quantenus et a nobis de obedientia tua gratis merearis et tui laboris premium recepterus in Domini tui gaudium letus introducaris."

46Gregory VII, Register, p. 402: "Ut episcopi qui sensint fornicationem vel incestum in sua parroechiis, a scio officio suspensantur."
The same Council of Rome (1078) reiterated the above canon in a more detailed statement:

> Any bishop who, in his diocese, either allows priests, deacons, and subdeacons, who fornicate or who are guilty of incest to remain because of intervention of supplication or money, or refuses to remove from office those so found, shall be suspended from office.\(^47\)

Gregory even went so far as to insist that the representatives sent to Rome from various kings be celibate. In a letter to Harold Hein, king of Denmark, of October 15, 1079, Gregory wrote:

> We avidly desire that you send to us clerics who are prudent, and who are openly continent and of sound morals. They should also be versed clearly in the documents and decrees of the Apostolic See.\(^48\)

**Reordination**

It is very difficult to know exactly where Pope Gregory stood on this important issue. He seems to have favored Cardinal Humbert but did not follow the logical consequences and have all the simoniacs reordained. When Gregory VII forbade people to attend the Mass of married clergy he told them that the Mass does not count in fulfillment of their obligations. Did he really believe that the Mass was not valid or did he merely want people not to go to these priests? Gregory

\(^47\)Gregory VII, *Register*, pp. 405-406: "Si quis episcopus fornicationem presbyterorum dieconorum seu subdiaconorum vel crimen incestus in sua parroechia precibus vel pretio interveniente consenserit vel commissum sibi que compertum auctoritate sui officii non impugnaverit, ab officio suspendatur."

\(^48\)Gregory VII, *Register*, VII, 5, 465: "...cuperemus nimium certe de vestris aliquen prudentem clericum ad vos venire, qui et vestre gentis mores seu continentias sciret nobis pleniter intimare et apostolicae sedis documenta sive mandata plenius eruditus ad vos posset perferre."
nevertheless, forced many people to quit supporting the married clergy even though he had to suffer at the hands of King Henry IV and through the schism of the German bishops.

Gregory's attempts to play one ruler against another so that the pope could be independent was not as successful as he may have wished. Lea stated it this way:

In the tremendous struggle between the empire and the papacy, Gregory allied himself with all the disaffected princes of Germany and they were careful to justify their rebellions under the specious pretext of zeal for the Apostolic Church. They, of course, therefore, entered heartily into his measures for the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline, and professed the sternest indignation towards those whom he placed under the ban. Thus, after Henry, in 1076, he had caused his bishops to declare the degradation of Gregory, when the revolted princes held their assembly at Tribur, and in turn decreed the deposition of Henry, they used the utmost caution to exclude all who had communicated with Henry since his excommunication, together with those who had obtained preferment by simony, or who had joined in communion with married priests.49

Even though the schism brought a rift in the church, the anti-Pope Clement III did not condone licentiousness among the clergy any more than Gregory VII. Both agreed in principle, but differed in their methods. For example, although Clement III detested concubinage, he threatened with excommunication any layman who presumed a cleric guilty of scandalous conduct and then refused the sacraments of suspect priests who had no formal trial at his tribunal.50 Gregory encouraged laymen

49Lea, Celibacy, p. 194

50Lea, Celibacy, p. 195
to speak out and accuse clerics that were suspect.

Even Henry IV did not want to be party to any scandalous conduct:

At length Henry and his partisans appear to have felt it necessary to make some public declaration to relieve themselves from the odium of supporting and favouring a practice which was popularly regarded as a heresy and a scandal. When the papalists under their King Hermann, at the Easter of 1085 (April 20), convened a general assembly of their faction at Quedlinburg and again forbade all commerce with women to those in orders, the imperialists lost no time in putting themselves on the same record with their rivals. Three weeks later Henry gathered around him, at Mainz, all the princes and prelates who professed allegiance to him, for the purpose of securing the succession to his eldest son, Conrad, as King of Germany, and there, in that solemn diet marriage was formally prohibited to the priesthood.51

Conclusion and Summary

I have tried in this chapter to look at the role of celibacy reform in the Gregorian reform. There were four areas of special thrust on the part of Pope Gregory: one, he appealed to certain traditions of the past as the norm of the contemporary conduct; two, he used personal diplomacy, especially through letters to various diocesan heads to push his reforms; three, he secured the help of the state in rooting out resistance to his clerical reforms; four, he called councils and synods so that laws favoring his reform could be legislated.

51Lea, Celibacy, p. 285
The final consequences of his attempts at reform and the resistance to his promulgations will be taken up in the next chapter. Obviously, Gregory VII did not see the fruit of his labors; in fact he may seem to have died in exile as a failure. Nevertheless, Gregory VII, convinced of the necessity of change, applied his whole heart, soul, and mind to the task of reform. Even though he may have erred by excess in seeking out and punishing disobedient clergy, he certainly was convinced that he was doing the right thing. His last words sum up his personal feelings, "I have loved justice and hated iniquity."
CHAPTER V

RESISTANCE TO GREGORIAN REFORMS

The intertwining of the religious-political world in the eleventh century made it necessary that the reform movement be associated with politics. The resistance to Gregorian reforms had its roots in politics as well as in the traditional acceptance of married clergy. Distrust of the papacy was still prevalent because the chaos of the early eleventh century popes was not yet forgotten. The political involvement or previous popes dimmed the respect for the papacy among many leading clerics.

Therefore resistance to reform was natural, and any tactical blunders by the pope might strengthen the original opposition. Many of the temporal rulers vacillated in their support or nonsupport of the reform, depending on the political and ecclesiastical advantage they hoped to gain by their position.

Ambivalence of the Temporal Rulers

When Gregory VII tied celibacy reform to the investiture and simony questions, he was attacking the local church on several fronts at one time. When he strove for an independant position among the nations and principalities, he naturally made enemies. But even Gregory's most bitter opponent in the investiture conflict, Henry IV, did not dispute the reformers' attacks on clerical marriage. Lea puts it this way:
In the tremendous struggle between the empire and the papacy, Gregory allied himself with all the disaffected princes of Germany, and they were careful to justify their rebellions under the specious pretext of zeal for the apostolic Church. They of course, therefore, entered heartily into his measures for the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline, and professed the sternest indignation towards those whom he placed under the ban. Thus, after Henry, in 1076, had caused his bishops to declare the degradation of Gregory, when the revolted princes held their assembly at Tribur, and in turn decreed the deposition of Henry, they used the utmost caution to exclude all who had communicated with Henry since his excommunication, together with those who had obtained preferment by simony, or who had joined in communion with married priests. The connection, indeed, became so marked that the papalists throughout Germany were stigmatised by the name of Patarini—a term which had acquired so sinister a significance in the troubles of Milan. In this state of affairs it was natural that common enmities and common dangers should unite the persecuted clergy and the hunted sovereign. Yet it is a curious illustration of the influence which the denunciations of sacerdotal marriage had exercised over the public mind, that although Henry tacitly protected the simoniacal and married ecclesiastics, and although they rallied around him and afforded him unquestionable and invaluable aid, still he never ventured openly to defend them. Writers both then and since have attributed the measure of success with which he sustained the fluctuating contest, and the consequent sufferings of the unbending pope, to the efforts of the recalcitrant clergy who resisted the yoke imposed on them by Rome. Yet Henry had formally and absolutely pledged his assistance when Gregory commenced his efforts, and had repeated his promise in 1075; and from this position he never definitely withdrew. Even when the schismatic bishops of his party, at the Synod of Brixen, in 1080, pronounced sentence of deposition on Gregory, and filled the assumed vacancy with an anti-pope, the man whom they elected did not venture to dispute the principle of Gregory's reforms, although the Lombard
prelates at that very time were warmly defending their married and simoniacacl clergy.  

Most secular rulers saw the need for a spiritual revival among the clergy, but they were not all agreed on the methods employed by Gregory VII.

Clerical Resistance to Celibacy

Yet support for married clergy was at least implicitly available to the clergy during the eighth, ninth, and early tenth centuries since bishops, some of whom were openly married themselves, accepted married clergy. When the papal directives of Leo and Nicholas came out against married clergy, some clerics openly disputed the papal claims. One such bishop was Ulric, the bishop of Imola (c. 1060) in a short pamphlet entitled Letter on Clerical Celibacy (Epistola de continentia clericorum). Professor Delhaye writes:

Ulric appealed to the texts of St. Paul and to freer practices of the first several centuries, forgetting the power of the Church to initiate new laws.

But Ulric insisted that laws should not be made to bind people to a discipline not demanded in the early church, especially in the area

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1Lea, Celibacy, pp. 194-95

2Both St. Ulric (923-973) and another Ulric (858-867) have been considered at different times as the author. The New Catholic Encyclopedia assigns authorship of the pamphlet to Ulric of Imola and not to St. Ulric of Augsburg. "History of Celibacy", P. Delhaye, New Catholic Encyclopedia III, 372, hereafter cited as Delhaye, "History of Celibacy" NCE

3Delhaye, "History of Celibacy," NCE, III, 372
of the natural right to marriage which St. Paul had upheld as permissible to all.

The following excerpts from Ulric of Imola's work addressed to Pope Nicholas II give an insight into his thinking and most likely the thinking of some others, since this work was republished in a Norman edition.

When your decrees concerning celibacy of clerics arrived recently, O father and lord, I found them lacking in discretion and fear seized me with sorrow. Fear came to me because of this sentence of yours: "The decision of the shepherd whether just or unjust must be respected." I feared for those weak in understanding the sacred scriptures, who quickly obey the just decision, lest they openly are inflicted with the unjust decision, and oblige themselves with a burdensome and especially unbearable and collusive precept. I feel sadness and compassion, because I thought these decrees could lack sound reasoning as your head is laboring under great pressure. And what is even worse, you are more worthy of compassion from the whole church in that you are the supreme party and the whole church looks to you, yet do you deprive them of discretion when you wish to use force upon clerics whom you have demanded to follow the course of abstinence. And in the understanding of the majority of wise people is it not violent means when you demand adherence to your private decrees which are contrary to the gospel institution and words of the Holy Spirit? When, therefore, there are very many examples in both the Old and New Testament, I ask for your holy discretion, lest you commit evil by inserting only a few examples from so many. For the Lord instituted marriage for the priesthood in the Old Testament, and afterwards it is not stated that he destroyed it, but rather in the gospel it reads: "There are eunuchs who castrate themselves for the sake of the
Kingdom of heaven; but not all can accept his word. He who can do this, let him accept it." Wherefore, the apostle says: "Concerning virgins I have no precept from the Lord, but I give advice." Thus ever according to the statement of the Lord not all can accept this advice, yet many under the false pretenses of pleasing God by continency, commit more serious crimes, that is drive away the wives of the husbands and do not abhor homosexuality or beastiality. Lest the status of the church be shaken from this pestilence and become strong in overcoming this disease the Apostle said: "On account of fornication each person should have his own wife." Ulric of Imola, Letter on Clerical Celibacy, MGH, Libelli de lite, I, 255-56: hereafter cited as Ulric, Clerical Celibacy: "Cum tua, o pater et domine, decreta super clericorum continencia nuper mihi missa a discretionem invenirem aliena, timor me turbavit cum tristitia. Timor quidem propter hoc, quod dicitur: 'Pastoris sententia sive iusta sive injusta timenda est.' Timebam enim infirmis scripturæ auditoribus, qui vel iustæ vix obedientiæ sententiae, ne iniustam conculcantes libere, onerosa, immo importabilis pastoris praevia sculpture praeepti se obligaret. Tristitia vero vel compressio, dum cogitabam, qua ratione membri carere possent capitæ suo tam gravi morbo laborante. Quid enim gravius, quid tocius ecclesiæ compassionis dignius, quam te summae sedis pontificem, ad quem quid tocius ecclesiæ spectat examen, a sancta discretionem vel minima exorbitare? Non parum quippe ab hac deviasti, cum clerico, quos ad abstinencecm coniugii monere debueras, ad hanc imperiosa quádam violentiam cogere volebas. Nuncquidnam meritum communem omnium sapientiæ judicium haec non est violentis, cum contra evangilicam institutionem ac sancti Spiritus dictationem ad privata aliquid decreta cogitur exequenda? Cum ergo plurima veteris ac novi testamenti suppetant exempla, sanctam ut nosti discretionem docentia, tuae, rogo, ne grave sit paternitati vel paucæ ex pluribus huic paginae interseri. Dominus quidem in veteri lege sacerdoti coniugium constituit; quod illi postmodum interdixisse non legiitur; sed idem in evangelio loquitur: 'Sunt eunuchi, qui se castraverunt propter regnum caelorum; sed non omnes capiunt hoc verbum. Qui potest capere, capiat.' Quapropter apostolus quoque ait: 'De virginibus praeeptum Domini non habeo, consilium autem do.' Quo etiam iuxta praedictum Domini non omnes hoc consilium capere possé considerans, sed multos eiusdem consili consilii assentatores, hominibus non Deo pro falsa specie continentiae placere volentes, graviore videns committere: patrum suicum uxores subagitate, masculorum aut pecudum amplectus non abhorrere, ne morbi huia conspersione ad usque pestilentiam convalescente status nimirum labefactaretur ecclesiæ: 'Propter fornicationem,' dixit, ' unusquisque habeat suam uxorem.'

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Ulric continued in his letter to cite I Timothy 3: 2, 5, 12 in which St. Paul laid down qualifications for the ministers. Next Ulric cited the Council of Nicaea I and the episode of Paphnutius in his support of married clergy. Then he proceeded to caution the use of Pope Gregory I:

There are some who use Saint Gregory as a supporter for their side /sectae/ but whose rashness I scorn and whose ignorance I weep over. For they are ignorant that the decree, dangerously close to being heretical, made by St. Gregory for the very worldly enjoyment of forgiveness was later removed by the same pope.\(^5\)

Ulric then suggested that since the decree of celibacy is contrary to New Testament, one need not follow it.

Therefore, your holiness' /power/ ceases to be a force, as you ought only to counsel people, that which is a private discipline which is absent from the Old and contrary to the New Testament.\(^6\)

Ulric accused Nicholas of altering the meaning of the scripture texts.

What can be found more contrary to the truth than this, when the very truth about celibacy /continency/ is the word not of one man but

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\(^5\)Ulric, Clerical Celibacy, p. 257: "Sunt vero aliqui, qui sanctum Gregorium suae sectae summunt adiutorium, quorum quidem temeritatem rideo, ignorantiam doleo. Ignorant etenim, quod periculosum huius heresis decretum a sancto Gregorio factum condigno penitentiae fructu postmodum ab eodem sit purgatum."

\(^6\)Ulric, Clerical Celibacy, p. 257: "Cesset ergo tua sanctitas cogere, quos tantum debet ammonere, ne privato, quod absit, praecepto tam veteri quam novo contrarius inveniarius testamento."
all men plainly, except for the number of professors of celibacy, as scripture says: "He who can take it, let him take it," which the instigators translate: He who cannot take it, will be punished by anathema.  

Ulric next quoted I Timothy 4 and applied it to the controversy:

For I see here a connection to the infidels about whom the apostle wrote to Timothy.

Some in later times will turn away from the faith and heed deceitful spirits and things taught by demons, and listen to plausible liars whose conscience are seared and who forbid marriage.

In 1079, Pope Gregory VII repudiated the story of Paphnutius' activity at Nicaea I and also the work of Ulric of Imola. In a Merseburg fragment entitled De caelibatu cleri, their support of Gregory VII appears. The author of the fragment is unknown and the manuscript we have is dated from the twelfth century. The first part of the manuscript cited the positive attitude of Jerome toward celibacy. Then the fragment takes up the Council of Nicaea I and the account of Paphnutius. The author pointed out that even St. Gregory declared

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7 Ulric, Clerical Celibacy, p. 258: "Quid autem veritati magis contrarium inveniri potest quam hoc, cum ipsa veritas de continentia loquens non unius hominis, sed omnium plane excepto numero professorum continentiae, dicit: *Qui potest capere, capiat, quod isti, nescio unde instigati, dicant: 'Qui non potest capere, feriatur anathemate.'"

8 Ulric, Clerical Celibacy, p. 259: "Nec enim infideles eos dicere dubitaverim, de quibus apostolus dixit ad Timotheum: In novissimis temporibus discendent quidam a fide, attendentes spiritibus erroris et doctrinis demoniorum, in ypocrisi loquentium mendatium et cauteriatam habentium (suam) conscientiam, prohibentium nubere."
that there were many lies in the work (The Tripartite History) of Cassiodorus (c. 475-c. 570) in which is contained the story of Paphnutius.

The authority of St. Gregory blocks off any gadfly in defending the Paphnutius story, as Gregory argues in his polemic works that there were many lies in this historical work. Those /supporters of the Paphnutius story/ if they accept the words of Paphnutius as certain and true, either can never provide the Nicaean synod with any shred of authority, or they have to change the decrees which we have cited. 9

The fragment next takes up the pamphlet of Ulric. At first it discredits the document by stating that the time of St. Ulric, there was no Pope Nicholas, confusing the Ulric of Imola with the St. Ulric of Autun who lived a century earlier.

But in the times of St. Ulric there was no pope by this name /Nicholas/, thus on the first page this condemned pamphlet contains a lie and the work which affirms that it was sent to Pope Nicholas by Ulric is easily negated. 10

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10De caelibatu cleri, p. 587: "Sed cum temporibus sancti Odalrici non fuerit papa huius nominis, epistolam hanc in prima fronte mendacii damnatam, eadem facilitate nagatur a presule /O dalrico/ missam, qua et afirmatur ad papam Nicolaum scriptam."
Then the author proceeds to attack the contents of the pamphlet.

Besides when in the same pamphlet there is imputed to learned Gregory I what is found not in his life, nor in his diary, nor even in any writing either by himself or by anybody else writing about Gregory I. The supporters of married clerics say that this law supports them and make it their business to assert this clearly but without offering authorship and witness to their statement except their own authority. 11

Apparently the supporters of Gregory's stand tried hard to seal off any opposition to the celibacy decree even to the extent of condemning previous documents of history. However, opposition continued to express itself.

A Gallic writer, name unknown, wrote a tract somewhere between 1075-1080 and defended marriage of priests.

Anyone, holding fast the faith of the Catholic Church and alien to the evil of hypocrisy, who has diligently investigated the authentic writings of the holy fathers, will find that marriages of priests were properly celebrated in a chaste and sincere manner, and not as the authors of new teachings have suggested in adulterous or fornicating manner. For if the decree of Nicaea, which is most generally interpreted that a bishop may not have a vowed woman, and all clerics are included here in this prohibition, also meant to include the wife who without doubt is an honest to goodness person, then the

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11 De caelibatu cleri, p. 587: "Preterea cum eadem epistola imponat doctori Gregorio, quod non in eius vita, non in eius regesto, non in scripto eius aliquo vel alicuius de eo invenitur, ipsi legem sibi dictantes, pro sui assertione negocii videntur ea finixisse, quorum nequeunt vel auctorem vel testem alium nisi se ipsos monstrare."
decrees of the Councils of Chalcedon, Carthage, and Toledo are repudiated, as well as the universal decrees of the learned men, Siricius, Leo, and Gregory I.12

The tract goes on to note that these councils had allowed marriage for lectors and cantors and furthermore the popes named had allowed lectors and even, in one case, subdeacons to continue to live with their wives. The author went on to say that some proponents of celibacy maintain that Nicaea did not mean all clerics but only canonical clerics.

Despite what the supporters of celibacy maintain, it is evident that in the Nicaean decrees that when clerics are mentioned, all clerics are meant. Therefore when the council decrees demand vowed women not to live with clerics not vowed celibacy are allowed legitimate marriage.13

Next the author cited Pope Nicholas I (pope 858-867) who allowed marriage among the clerics in Bulgaria as he wooed them to join the Western Church. The tract puts it this way:

12 Tractatus pro clericorum connubio, MGH, Libelli de lite, III, 588: "Quisquis catholice ecclesie fidem tenens, ab ypocrisie iniquitate alienus, autenticas sanctorum patrum scripturas diligenter investigaverit, inveniet legitime celebrata conubia clericorum casta esse et sincera, non, ut novi dogmatis ferunt auctores, adulterina vel fornicaria. Si enim sententia Niceni concilii, quae maxime ita interpretatur, ut presul introductam mulierem non habeat, que omni qui in clero est haberii in domo interdictur, uxor etiam, que procul dubio honesta persona est, intelligatur, repugnabit instituta conciliorum Calcedonensis, Cartaginensis atque Tolentanii, repugnabit universalia decreta doctorum, Siricii, Leonis, Gregorii." Hereafter cited as Tractatus pro clericorum connubio.

13 Tractatus pro clericorum connubio, p. 590: "Contra quod introducuntur auctores evidenter per cleri nomen in supra dictis sententiiis omnem clerum designantes. Interdictur igitur omni qui in clero est, id est omni clericco, mulier subintroducta et secundum statuta canorum ei, qui se continentie non voverit, concedatur legitime nupta."
We can name innumerable sons of clerics who were elevated by the ancient fathers to dignity of ecclesiastical honors and orders. We can also show contemporary bishops who are offspring of clerics, especially priests in territories of Italy, France, and Normandy, who were not only promoted to clerical offices by the same pope but done so we believe to satisfy these traditions as against those who want to throw out this widespread custom and contaminate the canons and make new ideas on the par with tradition. We refuse to believe these /radicals/ and to show assent to them as they are acting contrary to the holy fathers, and come under excommunication as the Apostle Paul says: "If any one preach to you anything other than I preach to you, let him be anathema."14

In another tract written either between 1075-1085 in Normandy or about 1102 in England an unknown author asks the question whether celibacy is of divine law or of human law. In the work entitled Whether It Is Permissible for Priests to Enter Marriage, one observes the usual questions asked and debates of past repeated.

I wish to know who first instituted that Christian priests should not enter marriage; God or man. For if it was God, then certainly this decree must be clung unto and observed with all veneration and reverence. But if it

14 Tractatus pro clericorum connubio, p. 595: "Possemus innumerabiles clericorum filios ab antquis patribus ecclesiasticorum ordinum et honorum dignitatis sublimatos adicer. Possemus et viventes adhuc episcopos de clericis, immo de presbyteris, in Italia, in Gallia, in Normannia ab ipso papa intronizari concessos aut et ordinatos ostendere, sed sufficere ista credimus propter evitandum prolixitatem adversus adulteratores canonom et adversus cogitatores novarum traditionum. Quibus nec credere nec adserere prebere prohibitione, immo excommunicatione, sicut apostolus Paulus dicit: Si quis alius evangeliaverit vobis preter quod ego evangelizo cobis, anathema sit."
was man and not God, and this tradition came forth from the heart of man, not from the mouth of God, then salvation is not acquired through that decree, even if observed, nor is salvation lost if it is not observed. For it is not in the power of man to save himself or damn anyone on his own merits, but that power belongs to God alone. But had God instituted it, it cannot be found written in the Old Testament nor in the gospels nor in the letters of the Apostles, in which places whatever God has pronounced is described as written. Therefore, this institution is of human tradition, not of God, nor of the apostles. Hence the apostle stated that the bishop should be of one wife. In no way did he institute that it is adultery if a bishop have a wife and church, as two wives, as certain ones claim. Thus, because celibacy does not have the authority of the sacred scriptures, it can easily be neglected as the saying goes. For the holy church is not the wife of the priest, nor the spouse, but Christ is, as John says: "He who has the bride is the groom."\(^{15}\)

\(^{15}\)An liceat sacerdotibus inire matrimonium. MGH, Libelli de lite, III, 645-46: "Scire velim, quis primus instituit, ne sacerdotes christiani inire deberent matrimonia, Deus an homo. Si enim Deus, eius certe sententia et tenenda et observanda est cum omni veneracione et reverentia. Si vero homo et non Deus, de corde hominis et non ex ore Dei talis egressa est traditio, ideoque nec per eam salus adquiritur, si observetur, nec amittitur, si non observetur. Non enim est hominis salvare vel perdere aliquem pro meritis, sed Dei proprium unius est. Sed quod Deus hoc instituerit, nec in veteri testamento nec in euangelio nec in apostolorum epistolis scriptum repperitur, in quibus quicquid Deus hominibus precepit inscribitur. Traditio igitur hominis est, non Dei, non apostolorum institutio. Quoniam et apostolus instituit, ut oportet episcopum esse unius uxoris virum. Quod minime instituisset, si adulterium esset, quod episcopus haberet simul et uxorem et ecclesiam, quasi duas uxorres, ut quidam asserunt. Quod quia de scripturis sanctis non habet auctoritatem, eadem facilitate contemptitur, qua dicitur. Sancta enim ecclesia non sacerdotis uxor, non sponsa, sed Christi est, sicut Ioannes dicit: Qui habet sponsam, sponsus est. Huius, inquam, sponsae ecclesiae sponsa est, et tamen huic sponsae licet in parte inire matrimonia ex apostolica traditione." Hereafter referred to as An liceat sacerdotibus.
The tract then proceeded to argue that if marriage of clerics was allowed by Paul, no one has the right to take it away. This is the basic argument employed by the eleventh-century opponents of mandatory celibacy. Those resisting Pope Gregory VII maintained that to shut off tradition of married clergy was acting against the teaching of the apostolic church in which the option of marriage by clergy was not only allowed but approved.

Thus by this compulsory law and by the passions of concupiscence they are forced either to fornicate or marry. And of the two, one is better than the other as we are taught by the apostolic authority which says: "It is better to marry than to burn." That which is better must certainly be allowed to be chosen and followed. He says that it is better to marry because it is worse to burn. Therefore because it is better to marry than to burn, it is allowable to the incontinent to marry and not allowable that they burn.\textsuperscript{16}

After quoting St. Augustine on the ends of marriage, the tract continued to argue against mandatory celibacy.

Thus one who forbids the command that the natural order should be conserved and orders it to be thrown out is acting against the eternal law and is acting in a sinful way. They sin who institute such a command /celibacy/ as mandatory by which the natural order is destroyed. For as it seems they believe at least that God takes sons of priests to build up the eternal city and

\textsuperscript{16}An liceat sacerdotibus, p. 646: "Hac itaque eos lege captivante, et carnis concupiscencia stimulante, aut fornicari coguntur aut nubere. Quorum quid melius sit, apostolica docemur auctoritate, qua dicitur: Melius nubere, quam uri. Quod melius est, id certe eligendum et tenendum est. Melius est, inquam, nubere, quia peius est uri. Quia igitur melius est nubere, quam uri, conveniens est incontinentibus, ut nubant, non, ut urantur."
restore the number of angels. For, if they believe that, then they would never institute such a law, because they knowingly and with great temerity strive to bring about such that the heavenly city is never perfected and the number of angels is never filled up again.\(^{17}\)

The tract also compare virginity with fecundity.

Nor would these virgins ever be virgins unless they were born. From the fecundity of the married couples arose the virginity of the celibates. Therefore fecundity is a great good from which holy virginity proceeds. Those who ought to be virgins and those who ought to marry are called to their way of life by God who plants that call in their hearts.\(^{18}\)

The tract concludes by stating that celibacy and marriage are personal calls of God. The main argument is that celibacy must remain optional and marriage must not be forbidden lest a call of God may be frustrated. Since there is no necessary connection in the Sacred Scriptures between the priesthood and celibacy, such a connection cannot be imposed upon the clerics.

\(^{17}\)An liceat sacerdotibus, p. 647: "Hoc, inquam, mandatum naturalem ordinem conservari vetat, perturbari iubet et ideo contra eternam legem fit et peccatum est. Peccant enim, qui mandatum tale instituunt, quo naturalis ordo destruitur. Nam etiam, ut videtur, minime credunt, quod de sacerdotum filiis assumat Deus ad edificandam supernam civitatem et ad restaurandum angelorum numerum. Si enim crederent, nunquam tale mandatum instituerent, quia scierent et nmia temeritate id efficere conarentur, ut supra civitas nunquam perficiatur, et angelorum numerus nunquam reparetur."

\(^{18}\)An liceat sacerdotibus, p. 647: "Nec ipsi etiam virgines essent virgines, quia nati non essent. Ex fecunditate enim illorum orta est istorum virginitas. Magnum igitur bonum est fecunditas, de qua sancta processit virginitas. Qui autem virgines esse debeant et qui nuptiarum fructum facientes, docet eos verbum, quod Deus seminat in cordibus illorum."
More resistance arose when sons of priests were excluded from the priesthood. Several treatises appeared during this time to defend their right to orders. In about the year 1080 an article appeared entitled Apologia pro filis sacerdotum et concubinarum. On January 15, 1078, Hugo, bishop of Diois, had excluded sons of priests from orders and it seems this decree sparked resistance in a certain prelate of Rouen who appears to be the author of this tract by stating his theme rather concisely.

An apology in behalf of sons of priests and concubines, who now certain persons judge cannot be admitted to sacred orders because they are not born of a legitimate marriage, even though they are holy and elected...they judge the sons of priests and concubines in such a manner that they without any discretion make them who are worthy and elected equal to the unworthy and reprobate. Whether they do rightly or wrongly, they themselves must see. But we see a difference on one hand for the good and elected and on the other for the unworthy and reprobate.19 There should be a different treatment for the good and worthy than for the unworthy; in lumping them together one damns unjustly the good.

The tract continues by asking the question whether marriage is legitimate.

19Apologia pro filis sacerdotum et concubinarum, MGH, Libelli de lite, III, 649: "Apologia pro filiis sacerdotum et concubinarum, quos nunc quidam indicant ad sacros ordines non debere admissi pro eo quod ex legitimo coniugio non sunt generati, etiam si sancti sint et electi...De filiis sacerdotum et concubinarum tantum hoc indicant, et sine discretione de sanctis electisque ac simul indignis et reprobis equelem ferunt sententiam. Quod utrum recte an perperam faciant, ipsi viderint. Nos autem aliter sentimus de sanctis et electis, aliter de indignis et reprobis." Hereafter cited as Apologia.
Carnal intercourse in marriage is either legitimate or not legitimate, and it is certainly legitimate as it has been instituted according to the law described above for the sake of mankind. But it is not legitimate, to go contrary to the above law even if it is according to the law of nature. From both of these marriages holy people are begotten, not only according to the laws of men but also according to the laws of nature. Therefore the origin of the human race is legitimate and good through the legitimate work and good¬ness of the founder.\textsuperscript{20}

The author then quoted Exechiel 18:20:

Only the one who sins shall die. The son shall not be charged with the guilt of his father, nor shall the father be charged with the guilt of his own son.\textsuperscript{21}

The author felt that sons should not be punished for the works of the father which in most cases were legitimate anyway. Furthermore, the sons had been regenerated by Christ in baptism and therefore holy.

But furthermore, since they are regenerated in Christ, they are given from heaven and with divine grace an equal freedom, because all are freed from every contagion of original sin equally. For the grace of

\textsuperscript{20}Apologia, p. 650: "Carnale quippe coniugium aliud legitimum, aliud non legitimum, et legitimum quidem est, quod secundum legem descripsum \textit{ab} hominibus institutum est. Non legitimum vero, quod fit contra legis descriptionem, etiam si fit secundum legem naturae. De hoc utroque coniugio generantur sancti, non tamen secundum leges hominum, sed secundum legem naturae. Legitima igitur et bona est origo humane conditionis propter legitimum opus et bonitatem conditoris."

\textsuperscript{21}Apologia, p. 651: "Anima enim quae peccaverit \textit{ipsa} morietur. Filius non portabit iniquitatem patris, et pater non portabit iniquitatem filii."
baptism is not given to those only who are born from legitimate marriage, but also to those who are born of an illegitimate marriage. To such, then, Christ gave the power to become sons of God, who were born not from blood nor from carnal desire, nor from the will of man but from God. If they are born of God, then they are not born according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit, not of the handmaid, nor of the concubine, but of the free woman, that is, what we call Jerusalem, which is the mother of all saints. Beware, therefore, those who refuse to give orders or show contempt to those regenerated in baptism lest they spurn and dishonor God more who is refused and spurned in them.22

The author insisted on the right of the baptised to the sacrament of Holy Orders, provided they were worthy in themselves.

Sacred orders, to be sure, do not belong to the powers of the flesh, but to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and thus it is just that in these doings no condition of the flesh be considered, but rather spiritual fittingness be considered, that not sons of the flesh be admitted, but sons of adoption, generated by the Spirit of God, because what is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is not flesh but spirit and this person must be admitted to the Sacred orders, which are given in the same spirit.

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22 Apologia, p. 651: "Sed et cum in Christo regenerantur, ex celesti et divina generatione equali libertate donantur, quia prodest ad percipiendam baptismi gratiam, quod ex legitimo coniugio nati sunt, nec /istis/ obest, quod de non legitimo procreati. Talibus etenim dedit Christus potestatem filios Dei fieri, qui non ex sanguinis neque ex voluntate carnis neque ex voluntate viri, sed ex Deo nati sunt. Si ex Deo nati sunt, non secundum carnem nati sunt, sed secundum spiritum, non de ancilla, nec de concubina, sed de libera, illa videlicet, que sursum est Jerusalem, que sanctorum omnium mater est. Caveant igitur, qui tales and ordinates recipere nolunt et contemnunt, ne Deum potius spernant vel inhonerent, qui in ipsis et recipitur et spernitur."
Who, then, is more familiar to the father than the son? Who more rightly participates in the divine benediction, than the one who participates in his divinity? Who more justly is admitted to the office of the Holy Spirit, than one who is born from the same spirit? Who is more holy to receive the consecration anointing of the Holy Spirit, than the one who is filled with the truth of the same seven-gifted Spirit? I dare honestly say that when one acts thus, God the Father is offended, the nature of God is dishonored, the Holy Spirit is shown contempt, and the sacramental grace is postponed.23

The tract continues by showing that the baptised are temples of the Holy Spirit and therefore certainly blessed. Refusal of orders to the temples of the Holy Spirit is really disrespectful of the grace of the Spirit. Finally the tract takes up the canonical prohibition of ordination to sons of priests.

But perhaps you might say: the law of the canons forbids that such persons are to be ordained. To that we respond: the apostle says: "If

23Apologia, pp. 651-52: "Ordines quippe sacri non pertinent ad officia carnis, sed ad mysteria Spiritus sancti, et ideo iustum est, ut in his exequendis nulla carnalis condicio pensetur, sed spiritualis ratio comparetur, ut non filii carnis admittantur, sed filii adoptionis ex Dei spiritu generati, quia quod natum est de carne, caro est, et quod natum est de spiritu, non caro, sed spiritus est, et hic merito ad sacros ordines, qui in eodem spiritu dantur, admittendus est. Sed quis familiarius accedat ad patrem quam filius? Quis rectius fiat particeps divine benedictionis, quam particeps sue divinitatis? Quis iustius admittatur ad officium sancti Spiritus, quam natus ex eodem Spiritu? Quis sanctius suscipiat typicam unctionem sancti Spiritus quam qui septiformis gratis eiusdem Spiritus veritate est repletus? Fiders ausim dicere, quia, dum sic agitur, Deus pater offenditur, natura Dei inhonoratur, Spiritus sanctus contemptus neglegitur, et gratie veritas typo suo ac figure postponitur."
you are lead by the Spirit, you are not under the law." Therefore, because such are lead by the Spirit of God, they are not lead according to the law of the canons, but they are forbidden to receive orders according to the canons not by the Holy Spirit who leads them.24 The gifts fruits of nature must not be held culpable in corrupt moral practices, because the fruits ought neither to be sown for the hand of the thief who sows them, nor on account is it not allowed from them food to eat for the rapist or adulterer had sown them and thus these words suffice. What has been said is well done, we are grateful and also we freely accept correction.25

In 1074 Pope Gregory VII decreed that lay people should not attend the Masses of married clergy. Soon after a tract appeared against those laity who brought shame to married priests. The author of this work, written shortly after the decree of 1074, seems to have been Sigbert, a monk of Gemblais. The early church had supported married clergy and condemned those who refused to attend services of married clergy.26 Furthermore the local bishops had traditional faculties to allow exceptions as legislated in canon sixteen of the Council of Chalcedon. The tract then attacks the decree of Gregory VII.

24There is a lacuna in the text.


26Synod of Gangra (362), canon 4
But if you ask, what is the value of the work by which he has struck against the very root: a law has been promulgated for the lay people by which the ignorant are persuaded to flee from the Masses of the married priests and flee from whatever sacred mysteries are performed by them and furthermore he /Gregory VII/ extended this throughout the empire. Thus now at the prescribed hours, when the holy mother church calls her sons to the sacrament of redemption by the solemn sign of invitation, the recitation of the office in the holy of holies is not any longer worthy and insults for the minister take its place—so they say: Lord be with you; how will we exchange bed and sleep for your Mass? And if there is anyone who thinks to come to the house of prayer at the suitable time, before being the laughed at and reviled, he is at last after getting out of bed warned by the apostolic authority to withdraw lest he sin against religion.  

Sigebert continued his attack on the legislation forbidding lay people to attend the Mass of married clergy by insinuating that such legislation encouraged unnatural conduct.

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27Sigebert, Apologia contra eos qui columniatur missas coniugatorum sacerdotum, MGH, Libelli de lите, XI, 439: "Si autem quaeris, talis fructus a qua radice pullulaverit: lex ad laicos promulgata, qua imperitis persuasum est coniugatorum sacerdotum missas et quae-cunque per eos implentur mysteria fugienda esse, in reipublicae nostrae ornatum istud adiecit. Denique statutis horis, cum sollemni invitationis signo ad redemptionis sacramentum filios suos mater invitat ecclesia, dictis prius in sancta sanctorum quas recitari indignum est contumeliiis ad ecclesiae ministrum conversi sic inquit: 'Tecum sit Dominus, quomodo nos talem lectum, talem somnum missa tua mutabimus?' Et si quis est, qui domum orationis eo tempore adire congruum existimat, prius irrisus et increpatus, tandem est auctoritate apostolica ammonitus, in lectum stratis versatis se recipiens, ne in religionem peccet." Hereafter cited as Sigebert, Apologia contra.
He invites priests to sleep not by that sleep which makes them whole, but by whatever effeminate means one can provide.\footnote{Sigebert, Apologia contra, p. 439: \textit{Somnum quo iam plenus est, qualicumque potest molliciei artificio reinvitat.}}

Sigebert continued by stating that certainly the Masses and sacraments performed by holy fathers of the church in past years were valid and useful for salvation. He then quoted St. Augustine to the effect that sacraments are truly the work of Christ and not totally dependent upon the minister.

In his work called \textit{Pastoralis}, Augustine says: Does God or man give the bishop grace? Without doubt God gives the grace. But God works through man. Man places the hand, God gives the grace; the priest puts forth his open right hand and God blesses with the able right hand: man does not perform except in the service in which it is credited to him; God gives to you for his own honor.\footnote{Sigebert, Apologia contra, p. 441: \textit{Et in libro qui Pastoralis inscriptur: Deus, inquit, an homo dat episcopalem gratiam? Sine doblo Deus. Sed tamen per hominem dat Deus. Homo imponit manus, Deus largitur gratiam: sacerdos imponit supplicem dexteram, et Deus benedicit potenti dextra: homo in ordine nihil operatur nisi solum servitium quod ei creditur; Deus ipsum honorem tibi largitur.}}

Sigebert stated that tradition had always accepted the sacraments and Masses of married clergy. He cited St. Jerome, St. Augustine, Gregory I, and others who gave assent to this tradition, and asserted that any change might merit the warning of the Apostle Paul.

\footnote{Sigebert, Apologia contra, p. 439: \textit{Somnum quo iam plenus est, qualicumque potest molliciei artificio reinvitat.}}

I fear very much the sentence of the Apostle Paul who stated that even if an angel from heaven preached other than I preach, anathema to him. 30

Opposition in Milan

In Milan the laity fluctuated in their support of the married clergy. During the preaching of Peter Damian, who exposed many of the abuses of the clerical disciplines, the laity fought against the married clergy. But when the reformers Humbert and Peter Damian appeared to represent an encroachment of Rome on their rights, then the laity supported the married priests against the reformers. The story of the reformation in Milan is a complicated one and really not part of this paper, except to state that the celibacy reforms were long and drawn out and Gregory VII did not see his whole mission completed.

Alboinus

From a cleric named Bernald, a monk, we learn about a certain priest Alboinus 31 who had opposed the papal decrees of 1074. In a treatise written about the year 1075 and entitled, About the Prohibition of Incontinence of Priests, Bernald who supported clerical celibacy attacked Alboinus. Alboinus had maintained that Gregory's

30 Sigebert, Apologia contra, p. 444: "Illam enim apostoli, quae angelum de coelo aliter evanangelizantem anathematizat valde timeo sententiam."

31 We know very little about Alboinus except that he was older than Bernald and an avid reader of Cicero. It seems certain that he never retracted his opposition to Gregory.
decree could not affect the marriages which already had taken place.

In the first part of the tract, Bernald argued that when Nicaea I spoke of no relationship with outside women it meant no marriage. He accused Alboinus of emphasizing only a small section of the council's activities, that is, the Paphnutius story.

When, as you recall, we were arguing about the decree of prohibition of incontinency among priests, which is also prohibited in the third chapter of the same council /Nicaea/, that clerics should not even dwell with female relatives unless very close, you held forth a certain chapter from the ecclesiastical history /called Tripartite/ which testifies that Paphnutius arose in the same council and pleaded for license for all priests in front of the whole synod, so that the /married clergy/ might sleep with their wives. But you have reckoned much less carefully with canon /three/ of the council of Nicaea.32

Bernald then proceeded to review history and cited the usual authorities for celibacy: Leo, Gelasius, Gregory, and others against Alboinus who had argued that there was never a universal law of celibacy.

32Bernald, De Incontinentia sacerdotium, MGH, Libelli de lite, II, 7: "Cum enim inter nos, ut recolis, de prohibenda sacerdotum incontinentia sermo conservetur, quae in tercio eiusdem concilii capitulo adeo prohibetur, ne saltam clerici debant habitare cum feminis nulla consanguinitate propinquis: tu quoddam alium capitulum ex ecclesiastica historiæ, quœ dicitur Tripartita, protulisti, quod quendam Pafnutium testatur in eodem concilio surrexitæ, et a cuncta synodo sacerdotibus, ut dormirent cum uxoribus suis, licentiam impetrassæ. Insuper etiam idem ipsum capitulum Niceni concilii minus considerate annumerasti."
Resistance Among the Laity

Pope Gregory VII wrote a letter to Josfred, bishop of Paris (March 25, 1077), asserting that some of the laity in northern France had resisted vigorously the papal decree forbidding attendance of Mass of married clergy.

It is also reported to us that the people of Cambar have burned a certain man because he had dared to say that priests guilty of simony or fornication have no right to celebrate Mass and that their services should not be accepted. This seems to us terrible in the extreme and, if the report is true, it should be punished with canonical severity. We call upon you, therefore, to inquire carefully into the truth of the matter. If you find that they committed such impious cruelty, you will at once exclude the authors and their accomplices from entrance into the church and from all participation in its service. Also make every effort to inform us by letter as to the exact facts as soon as you possibly can.  

Oftentimes confusion reigned among the laity as both supporters and non-supporters of the celibacy reform vied for their support. Milman narrates some instances of lay resistance and confusion. Even before Gregory's pontificate armed camps appeared in Milan wishing to destroy each other. These confrontations continued and there was much bloodshed during 1071-1075.

Before the death of Guido, Herlembald had set up a certain Atto, nominated by himself with the legate of Rome by his side, and without regard to the Church of Milan or their liege lord the Emperor. Atto was but a youth, just entered into holy orders. The people were furious, rose and attacked the archbishop's palace, tore him from his

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33 Gregory, Letter to Bishop Josfred, Correspondence, IV, p. 117

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refuge in an upper chamber, dragged him by the legs and arms into the church, and there compelled him to renounce his dignity. The Roman legate hardly escaped with his robes torn.

During this strife Milan had suffered two dreadful fires, which burned down some of the finest churches, as well as a large part of the city. These calamities goaded the factions to more relentless cruelty: as each party would attribute them to the direct wrath of God, so each would receive them as the summons to wreak vengeance on their adversaries, thus designated the foes of God as of themselves. Herlembald, now strong in the armed protection of the great Hildebrand (we have reached his pontificate), maintained his power; yet so vigorous and inflexible was the party called that of the married clergy, that it prolonged the contest on the whole during twenty years, and obtained at last a temporary triumph in the death of Herlembald.

This man at length fell in an insurrection: the standard of St. Peter was trampled in the dust. Liutprand, a priest of his faction, was mutilated, his ears and his nose cut off. His enemies would scarcely allow Herlembald decent burial. A solemn procession passed to the Ambrosian Church, with hymns of thanksgiving for the deliverance of the Church of Milan from her oppressor. Yet he, too, is placed as a martyr in the calendar of Christian saints. The canonization of these two religious demagogues, who, whatever may be thought of their spiritual objects, governed by popular insurrections and plunder, by carnage—which did not respect the most sacred persons—by exaction, and by every kind of persecution, closes this melancholy chapter in church history.34

34Milman, Latin Christianity, pp. 474-75
Resistance Among the Clergy

Milman also cites areas where the reform movement met much opposition.

It was not in Milan alone that the war raged against the married clergy; nor wholly in the Milanese that the married clergy were strong enough to maintain a long and obstinate resistance to the Hildebrandine yoke. In Monza, in Cremona, in Piacenza, in Pavia, in Padua, in Asti, fierce feuds, as fierce as the later conflicts of Guelfs and Ghibellines, disturbed the streets, not without bloodshed.35

Pope Gregory VII insisted that bishops carry out the decrees on celibacy. Some bishops did nothing; others did call local synods to impose the legislation and some of these met stormy opposition at their synods or councils. In October, 1074, Archbishop Siegfried of Mainz called, after some delay, a synod at Erfurt to comply with the papal decree on celibacy. Here he boldly demanded that wives of priests be sent away or the priests would lose their benefices. The priests, however, had no desire to make such a decree for their territory and after a day or two of attempting to get results a riot broke out and the synod dissolved without any accomplishments.36

In October 1075, after Pope Gregory had remonstrated Siegfried for his ineffectiveness, a synod was called at Mainz with the bishop of

35Milman, Latin Christianity, p. 475
36Lea, Celibacy, p. 188
Coire as papal delegate. Again a riot broke out and Siegfried dissolved the synod and told Rome to accomplish reform anyway it pleased.  

Otto the bishop of Constance sided with the married clergy in 1074, and, after several exchanges of correspondence, he was excommunicated by the pope in 1076. Later Otto was reinstated, but he finally joined the imperialists and continued to support the married priests.

At the Council of Paris of 1074, the clergy, including bishops, refused to obey the mandate of Gregory and insisted that the celibacy decree put too much burden on the married clergy. At the same council St. Gauthier, abbot of Pontoise, supported the papal claims but found himself in jail until his friends secured his release.

In 1075, Archbishop Lanfranc held an important synod for England and decreed laws against simony according to the wishes of Gregory, but nothing was done about celibacy. The Council of Winchester of 1076 allowed parish priests to retain their spouses but decreed that bishops should ordain only conjugally celibate or the unmarried who vowed celibacy.

In England the celibacy decrees were not promulgated until 1102 and then they were mitigated somewhat.

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37 Lea, Celibacy, p. 189
38 Lea, Celibacy, pp. 186-87
39 Lea, Celibacy, p. 211
40 Lea, Celibacy, p. 227
41 Lea, Celibacy, p. 227
It is quite obvious that Gregory met with resistance to his reform movements. The celibacy reform particularly cut deep into the lives of many clerics. The resistance of these decrees were based upon many different reasons. There was political resistance to the advancing power of the pope, and celibacy was viewed by some as an encroachment upon their rights. There was resistance from an emotional standpoint, especially in areas where married clergy enjoyed respect. Finally there was resistance based upon the traditions of a married clerical state.

The resistance to Hildebrand was very strong during his lifetime but he had set the wheels of change into motion and eventually the married clergy lost favor throughout the Western Church. The councils of 1123 and 1139 declared universally that priests were not to be married and henceforth only non-married men would be ordained.

Conclusion

In the information collected in the last two chapters one sees that the issue of celibacy reform was closely linked to the reform of the simonical practices. The political and ecclesiastical ambitions of Pope Gregory VII were intertwined in the whole reform movement.

Because of this complicated intertwining of various papal objectives, it is nearly impossible to state clearly the reasons for the opposition to celibacy reform. For example, the greatest
success of Pope Gregory in the area of celibacy reform was in Saxony where the clergy were politically aligned against the King and needed the support of the pope. Yet at the same time the rural clergy of England who were traditionally married held off attempts at change. Nevertheless, it seems that the tradition of married clergy played an important role in the opposition to celibacy reform.

The appeal to tradition is quite clear from the works of resistance I discussed in chapter five. The acceptance in previous centuries of clergy who were married, made changes that appealed to ancient traditions hard to accept.

Furthermore, when married clergy were called disgraceful names, the common people were in confusion since several married clergy were renowned for their miracles. Marino, who lived during the early part of the eleventh century and was openly married, achieved fame as a noted miracle-worker. At the same time, Rainbaldo, bishop of Fiesole, was married. He even established his children, some of whom were born during his pontificate, in various favorable jobs; at the same time he worked several miracles. Sanctity, a strong criterion of lay people for worthiness in the priesthood, was not an exclusive perogative of unmarried clergy.

The eleventh-century married clergy found themselves in keeping with the traditions of the previous generations. The resurrection of old canons did not move the married clergy very much; most often

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42 Lea, Celibacy, p. 145
43 Lea, Celibacy, p. 145
these clerics were unfamiliar with previous history since the extent of their knowledge was limited to the clerical practices of their fathers and grandfathers.

There were some bishops who looked upon the decrees of celibacy of Popes Nicholas, Alexander, and Gregory, as politically motivated, especially since these decrees were tied very closely to the investiture conflict. Even simonical bishops were often beholden to political leaders.

It is clear that among the masses of people, there was a gradually emerging preference for unmarried clergy. One of the reasons for this preference was the overt corruption among some of the married clergy. Was it really support for celibacy or a reaction against the corruption? There really is no clear indication available on the feelings of the people. I suppose the motivations of the people were mixed like the political and spiritual intertwining of the papal decrees.

Were there any new reasons given for the eleventh century celibacy decrees? The reasons given by Gregory were the same as given in previous centuries and these reasons were drawn primarily from consideration of cultic purity. The reform decrees were not based upon Sacred Scriptures so much as upon a reaction to the obvious corruption among the clergy. Part of that corruption was the second marriages, additional concubines, and unfaithfulness to the marriage contract. Such corruption among the preachers of sanctity of marriage was despised by the people and Gregory knew he had some automatic support to his celibacy decrees.
Gregory VII kept insisting that his decrees were in keeping with previous counciliar decrees. Even though Gregory VII looked to past support of the other councils in his reform movement, the real support came from the reaction to the contemporary corruption. But what many of the noble and upright married clergy detested was that Pope Gregory lumped them with the corrupt clergy.

Gregory VII was much more concerned about the contemporary problems and abuses than about tradition. Because he was reacting to the contemporary crises in the church the pope too cognizance only of that tradition favorable to his reform movement. When the opposition cited traditions contrary to his views, Gregory condemned those traditions. It seems quite obvious to me that Gregory was too emotionally involved in the contemporary corruption and in his zeal to uproot it at all costs to be really open and honest to the past. However, we must say in his defense that the scholarship which would make known past decisions had not yet fully begun.
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