

slayed and began to lecture on theology. Since that time, he has become very well known through the richness and grace by which God has built His church through him. The church may well bless the day he was born and Geneva the day he arrived here.

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*Jeanne de Jussie, Calvinist Germs
or the Beginning of Heresy in Geneva*

Born of a noble family whose lands lay within the territory controlled by Geneva, Jeanne de Jussie entered the city's Convent of the Poor Clares, also known as the Second Order of Saint Francis. During the crucial years preceding Calvin's arrival, she apparently served as the convent's official writer. Later, after the sisters moved from Geneva to Annecy, she became abbess. Her account, while obviously biased, has importance due to her participation in many of the events described. The work appears to have been largely written in 1535, shortly after her departure from Geneva. It was completed by 1546, but was not published until 1611, at Chambéry in France.

SOURCE: Jeanne de Jussie, *Le lewin du calvinisme ou commencement de l'hérésie de Genève*, edited by Ad.-C. Grivel (Geneva: Fick, 1865), translation by Raymond A. Mentzer, Jr., pp. 35-36; 17-18; 70-72; 94; 99-100; 106-7; 116-18; 152-55; 203-8.

THE IMPACT OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION
ON THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS AT GENEVA

At Geneva where heresy was implanted and held sway, no member of the Church remained unless he discarded his habit. Otherwise, they were pursued and expelled from their own land. And, they suffered greatly. You could easily call these times the era of the persecution of the holy Church. It is very

true that the prelates and clergymen of these times did not properly maintain their vows and state. Rather, they dissolutely squandered the property of the Church and took women in lust and adultery. Nearly all of the people were infected with this abominable and detestable sinfulness. Thus, the sinfulness of the world abounded in all sorts of people who incited the ire of God to impose his divine punishment. This He did by means of these false and disloyal satellites of the Devil, masquerading in the form of human beings. The good monks and nuns were persecuted and they partook of the secret judgment of God along with the guilty. But, most assuredly, this was for their own salvation and the multiplication of merit with God.

Many good and devout monasteries were ruined and destroyed, but in spite of this, their residents were not perverted. Rather, they retired to the world, each where he could, in order to continue their holy vocation. Even at Berne, many Dominican nuns returned to their parents and served as chamber maids in order not to renounce their state. Others married. Within the Carthusian Order, the Augustinians, the monks of Saint Bernard, Saint Francis and Saint Dominic, and among all the orders of the world, there were perverted members, except for the nuns of Saint Clare of the reform *Beatae Collettae*. It happens that none have been perverted or inconstant, save a single one who entered religious life not through the good door of right intention, but through a feigned and evil hypocrisy.

THE BERNESE ARMY ENTERS GENEVA WITH NINETEEN CANNON PIECES, 16 OCTOBER 1530

On Monday around noon, the army entered Geneva. They brought nineteen large artillery pieces, some of which they placed in the Saint Gervais quarter and the remainder in the Plainpalais quarter near a small church called the Oratoire. The soldiers of the Canton of Berne were lodged in the rue de la Rivière and the rue de la Corratte as far as the Arve bridge. Six companies, all Lutherans, were lodged in the convent of Saint Dominic. The monks were forced to abandon the convent and retire to the city. The church remained closed and no harm was done, except that they burned and broke the statues which were outside and the beautiful ones which were within the convent in the area where the monks preached. Two hundred horses were kept in the cemetery and cloister and they left nothing to eat. A great quantity of men were lodged in the Augustinian convent of Notre Dame de Grace and one hundred and twenty in the convent of Saint Francis. As at the Dominican convent, all the provisions were consumed. Thirty-six horses were kept at the convent of Saint Clare. The soldiers were a heavy expense. They gave all the fodder to their horses, had provisions taken to their friends who were lodged in the city, and burned all of the supplies of wood. The poor sisters gave the soldiers all that they had in order to maintain them and to prevent them from going and stealing from the poor people.

THE LAST VISIT OF THE BISHOP, PIERRE de la BAUME, TO GENEVA, JULY 1533

After this homicide,* these accursed Lutherans did not cease to torment and molest the churches. They sought only to pillage, beat, massacre and kill, so much so that churchmen dared not show themselves unless they were well-armed beneath their long robes. Thus, that which Our Lord said to the Apostles in the twenty-second chapter of Saint Luke came to pass: He who has no sword, sell his coat and buy one.

If the Lords of the Church had not been courageous and magnanimous during these times, these ravaging wolves would have exterminated our holy Church. But God will not permit their accursed enterprise to have its effect.

On the first day of July, the Lord Bishop of Geneva (who had not been in the city for five years) came here to remedy the adversities. The Christians felt a great joy and consolation and the heretics a great contrition, because they knew he brought them no good, but meant to molest them as much as he could.

The day after his arrival, the general procession was commanded and proclaimed. It took place solemnly and with great devotion. Afterwards, the bell was rung to assemble the General Council and the Bourgeois and Citizens assembled before the Church of Saint Pierre. When all the people were assembled, the Lord Bishop and Prelate with his nobility and the Lord Syndics, the Bishop took his place and each of the others silently followed according to rank. The Lord Bailiff of Dole (on behalf of his Lord Master) addressed the people in the manner of a wise and eloquent man. When he finished, the Lord Bishop of Geneva began to speak with a fine, clear voice and in language intelligible to everyone. He first asked if they accepted him as their Prince and Lord. They answered yes. Then, as Prelate, for the discharge of his duty and the salvation of their souls, he exhorted and admonished them devoutly. He urged them to have the fear of God in observing His commandments and obeying as good Christians the holy Church, the bride of Jesus Christ. He also urged them to live together in peace as good citizens, friends and neighbors. He said these things in so humble and devout a fashion that everyone wept and there was not any quarrel or tumult, for which God be praised.

On the fifth day of July, ten of the leaders of the heresy were taken prisoner. Among them was Monsieur de Thoran, a gentleman allied to these men of Geneva. As soon as he was notified, the Very High Lord Philip of Savoy, Count of the Genevois, dispatched a garrison and confiscated all the lands and domains of de Thoran. The Very Excellent Lord the Vicomte confiscated that which adjoined his domain. Thus, the poor perverted individual was deprived of all his property. And, after he was released, he retired to Berne with his allies.

*Editor's Note: Jeanne de Jussie here refers to the killing of Werli, a canon of the Cathedral, in May 1533.

These heretics greatly persecuted the Lord Bishop of Geneva. Several times they tried to slay him and even came to his house at night to assail him. The Bishop, perceiving this danger and his inability to remedy it, left Geneva and retired to his residence of the Tour de May. As a result, all of the Christians were grieved and the prisoners were released.

A SECULAR PRIEST RENOUNCES THE PRIESTHOOD IN ORDER TO MARRY, 1534

On the feast of Pentecost, Messire Louis Bernard, a secular priest who was a handsome man, an excellent cantor and one of the twelve chaplains of Saint Pierre, attended the sermon of the heretics. Afterwards, he cried out in a loud voice that he wished to join them. Within moments, he cast off his long robe and donned a Spanish cloak. Then, in great joy, all the members of this sect, men, women and children, welcomed him and paid tribute to him. After this, the preacher announced the marriage of Bernard and a young Lutheran widow. The following Tuesday, they were married. The Christians were greatly scandalized by this for he had benefices amounting to two hundred florins and more.

A DOMINICAN DISCARDS HIS HABIT, MARRIES AND PREACHES IN THE LUTHERAN MANNER, JULY 1534

On the last Sunday of July, after the bell was rung to assemble the people, a Dominican monk discarded the habit of his order before the multitude and straightaway ascended to the pulpit. Like someone in despair, he began to beg mercy of God and the world. He lamented, saying that in the past he had lived evilly and had greatly deceived the world by preaching pardons and praising the mass, the holy sacraments and the ceremonies of the Church. He now renounced them as vile and worthless objects. He then commenced to vilify the holy Church, the state of religious orders and virginity with words which cannot be written. After this, he preached a heretical sermon. And, following his sermon, he married a woman of ill repute, according to all accounts.

THE PROTESTANT BURIAL CEREMONY FOR AN APOTHECARY, SEPTEMBER 1534

The following Friday, a Lutheran apothecary died suddenly. His wife was a good Christian and when she saw him close to death, she performed her

duty of admonishing him to return to God and to confess. However, he would not listen to her. Thus, he asked and implored of her to have the accursed Farel come. She said that if he came, she would leave the house and would have nothing to do with such company. Thus, the apothecary died. In as much as he died in his error, his father who was a Christian had him cast from his house and carried to the cemetery of the Madeleine in order that his accomplices might do with him as they wished, because he himself would not recognize him as his son. His wife also took no more notice of him than of a dog. The heretics took him, buried him according to their custom and departed.

The small Christian children who had clearly seen how they had buried him said to one another: These people have not sprinkled holy water over their brother. Let us go and give him what he merits to refresh his soul. And, all together they went and pissed on his grave.

THE PREACHING OF FAREL AND VIRET AND THE RESULTING INSULTS TO THE SISTERS, APRIL 1535

In the month of April, the paltry preacher Guillaume Farel and Pierre Viret of Orbe took possession and residence at the convent of Saint Francis in the chamber of the Reverend Father Suffragan. Because they were near the convent of the Poor Sisters of Saint Clare, they made great trouble for them among their adherents, recommending this to their listeners from the pulpit. They said that the sisters were poor blind wanderers in the faith and that for their salvation they must be released from prison and everyone must stone them, because all of this is simply lewdness and hypocrisy. The sisters pretend that they preserve their virginity, something which God has never commanded because it is not possible to preserve it. And, they nourished these sanctimonious Franciscans with good partridges and fat capons in order to sleep with them at night. The Lords of the city must not suffer them, but should expel them from their convent and make all of them marry according to the commandment of God. On other occasions, they said that the sisters divided the city, that they prevented them from converting thy people, because they mocked all that they did, and that the city will never be united in faith until they are expelled from their convent. They said other wicked and dissolute things which one dares not write about the sisters and the monks, to such an extent that the heretics began to persecute the sisters by both words and works.

Because these accursed men occupied the galleries of the city to the right of the garden of the sisters and all day played with their harquebuses and sang shameful songs, the sisters could not enter their garden. They had only to see the sisters and they shouted to them in grossly shameful and injurious words. For this reason, the sisters dared not enter except in groups and with their faces covered. Finally, seeing that they would not respond and acknowledge them, the men began to throw stones in order to murder and wound them.

The stones were thrown so strongly that many of the sisters were hit and, if God had not wrought it, they would have broken their heads open. The sisters were obliged to close the door and to go into the garden for no more than a few necessities. They could not cultivate, plow, pick herbs or do any of the other necessary things. Thus, they experienced a great scarcity of food.

THE PROTESTANTS ENTER THE CONVENT OF SAINT CLARE, 24 AUGUST 1535

On the feast of Saint Bartholomew the Apostle, great armed companies with all sorts of weapons came very peacefully and knocked at the great door of the convent. The poor monk inquired as to who they were and what they wanted. An accursed murderer feigned his words, pronouncing himself a friend of the order: Open for me without fear, for I am one of your friends and come for the consolation of the sisters.

With good intentions, the poor monk opened the door and immediately the entire multitude was inside. The poor monk remained paralyzed while they hurried through the convent to the rooms of the friars, breaking and destroying all that they found, statues, books, and breviaries. They did worse than they had done in any other church. Because the statues had been removed and hidden, they threatened to place the poor monk in manacles if he did not show them the statues. The poor friar, fearing them, opened the room where all were hidden. Like enraged wolves, they began to break these statues, especially a marvelously beautiful blessed crucifix and a statue of Our Lady, with large axes and hammers. They did not leave one statue intact.

Then, with a ladder, they mounted a large crucifix which was of marvelous beauty and pitiful to behold. Here they made a great effort and tumult with large axes, truncheons and all sorts of instruments. There were more than fifty men around it, but they could not damage it or take it down. As a result, they were greatly troubled.

The poor sisters, hearing this tumult, were saddened and filled with fear. They retired to the church and asked the aid and help of Our Lord. These iniquitous devils, after having vented their spite outside, went right to the *Tournoir* gate of the sisters. Pierre Vandelly and Baudichon, captain of this plague-ridden company, took to striking it with the large iron bars which they carried in order to break all the locks. With large axes, they demolished the *Tournoir* gate which was beautiful and strongly built of good walnut. The mother doorkeeper, seeing the fallen and scattered *Tournoir* gate, went to bar the door and propped her back against it to prevent opening it. However, one of them struck the door so strongly with his axe that it went through the door and he nearly put the axe into the back of the doorkeeper. However, God the Creator removed her miraculously and she left the gate-room with her companions. They closed the door of the room. It was double and strongly built. And, they closed another door which was after the first. All

were strong and well-constructed. They then ran into the church and, all united together, the healthy and the ill, they looked at one another huddled in the middle of the choir. They were prostrate on the ground with their faces covered awaiting, in pitiful sorrow and incomparable sighs, corporal death or the peril of their souls. And, they were without hope or human consolation. Meanwhile, the iniquitous men had soon broken the *Tournoir* gate and the three doors and gained entry. They scattered throughout the convent in large troops. There were more than one hundred and fifty of them, all frantic to engage in evil. They did not neglect the statues or the devotional benches in the dormitory, infirmary, or any other place within the convent. Upon coming to the choir where the poor sisters were, they began to hack the beautiful statues, before their eyes, causing the chips to fly down and strike the sisters. Upon viewing this, the poor brave sisters, commencing with the Mother Vicar, began to cry ceaselessly for mercy, together and in a loud voice. The cry was so loud and frightful that it was heard for a great distance. The entire convent resounded with the violence in which these iniquitous men were engaged. They were very much astonished and also shouted in a loud voice against the sisters, saying: By the great devil, be quiet. But the Mother Vicar responded: We will cry to our blessed God until we have His help and grace. But you who perform diabolical works, by whose authority do you perform such violence? Are not the Lord Syndics and Governors here? We beg of them reason and justice and ask that they tell us who moved you to torment us unreasonably. Many were dumbfounded by this, but others like ravaging wolves did not cease to devour all which they found to be devotional. They continued to hack the beautiful walnut benches and chairs of the sisters. Nor did they leave intact the lectern and the book which was on it. I believe that never has there been such great insolence, vituperation and profligacy. And, never was there such pitiful crying and lamentations as that of the poor sisters. Many of them fainted with anxiety and lost the power to speak.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE SISTERS OF SAINT CLARE FROM GENEVA, 30 AUGUST 1535

... the Mother Vicar went on her knees before the Syndics, saying: Lords, we have decided to leave in silence, without saying a word to anyone. Please give a strict command to everyone that none dare to speak to, touch or approach us, regardless of their status or position or their intention, in order to prevent the tumult which could result.

Certainly, Mother Vicar, answered the Syndic, you give very good counsel and it will be done accordingly. Have no doubts, for we will accompany you with the municipal guard which numbers about three hundred well-armed men. And, I myself am going to issue the prohibition. He then commanded upon pain of immediate decapitation with no allowance for mercy that no

one say a word, either good or bad, at the departure of the Poor Sisters of Saint Clare. Upon hearing this, the good creatures nearly fainted with pity and sorrow. And, many respectable people secretly left the city, not to return again, in order to preserve their holy Faith. They said to one another: Alas! The city of Geneva today loses all of its good and all of its light. It will not be good to remain there. The Syndic returned and gave them permission to leave. He wished them to leave the convent by the *Tournoir* gate which the heretics had destroyed, but the sisters could not look upon the insolence which they had performed around the church to all the remembrances of God, of His Mother, and of the saints. Thus, Mother Vicar said: Lords, permit us to leave by the gate of the Convent. They agreed to this. When all were assembled, the door was opened. Many of the sisters nearly fainted with fear, but Mother Vicar took courage and said: My sisters, make the sign of the cross and keep Our Lord in your hearts. Have good faith and loyalty.

Then, she took her sister, Sister Catherine, who, carrying a small cane in her hand, was the most ill and was as weak as she was wondrous. She had Sister Cecile, the nurse, support her. Thus, the first sisters left with great courage. After them came Mother Abbess who was extremely debilitated by old age, sorrow, and illness. A strong sister supported her beneath her arms. Then she took Sister Jeanne de Jussie by the hand and gave her to Mother Doorkeeper, Sister Guillaume de Villette, saying: Take her Sister Guillaume. I place your niece in your hands. My Mother Abbess and I have protected her until now. Protect her well and keep her safe for us.

At these words, the poor Mother Doorkeeper took her closely by the arm and said: Mother Vicar, be assured that I will protect her as carefully as myself and will not abandon her in life or in death. Sister Collette was given to Sister Françoise, the strongest of the company. Sister Guillaume de la Frasse was given to her good aunt Sister Jeannette. Consequently, they went very religiously, orderly and quietly, two by two, holding hands, with their faces covered. This was very good, because, with an air of apparent indifference, they left amid a great crowd and tumult of people. It was a pitiful thing to watch and to hear the groans and sobs which were uttered.

It was an admirable, miraculous and dignified moment, long to be remembered for divine praise and greater certainty of the benevolence and mercifulness of God who never deserts those who serve Him with a true heart and who trust in His benevolence, because the accursed heretics were so greatly changed, illuminated and moved to pity that they no longer desired the damnation of the sisters. Thus, they became their escorts and protected them from the other heretical enemies.

In their departure, the poor sisters did not have their parents or any friendly creature or comfort except God alone and a poor monk named Friar Nicolas des Arnaux who was still so ill that he could not support himself. Nevertheless, he gathered the courage to accompany the sisters and to watch over whatever might happen to them. It was very pitiful to see them alone among the enemies of God and the holy Faith and among those who prior to this had everywhere procured their damnation. The Syndic, seeing many who

had difficulty walking, had them led by strong men in order to aid and support them. They were flanked on the other side by the Syndic, the Lieutenant, Baptisard, and Pecollet who subtly watched over the sisters in order that no harm came to them, for he alone of all their company was secretly a good Christian. In front and on each side, there were three hundred well-armed archers, the guard of the Syndics. This was fortunate, because when the accursed children of the city, who had already been ordered to pillage and violate the sisters the following night, heard of their departure, they hastily assembled, some five hundred in number, and went to the rue Saint Antoine through which the sisters passed. They planned to pull away and detain the young sisters. Thus, they placed themselves in front of the sisters and one of them came up to the poor simple-hearted sister whom Mother Vicar was protecting in order that she did not separate from the group. He whispered in her ear: Sister Jacquemine, come here with me. I will treat you as my sister. Mother Vicar responded: Ha! Accursed boy, you are a liar. She cried: Lord Syndic, consider how badly you are obeyed. Move these young boys out of the way. With these words, she stopped firmly. The Syndic, seeing this band of accursed brats, was by the divine will greatly irritated. In a furious and horrible voice, he swore on the blood of Christ, saying: If there is a man who moves, he will be immediately decapitated without mercy on that very spot. He said to the archers: Noble companions, be fearless in the performance of your duty if there is need. Thus, by the divine will, they were scared and they moved away, withdrawing their fangs. From afar, they watched the sisters who continued walking, justifiably trembling with fear. When the sisters reached the Arve bridge which marked the end of the franchise of the city, everyone stopped. Some cried mockingly, as to Our Lord: Where is the great nobility to receive them? Where are the tents and canopies to protect them from the rain? Others derisively pretended to weep, saying: Alas Geneva, who will protect you? You are losing your light. Still others cried to God: The mice have left the nest and are going into the fields like poor strays. But the good people sobbed bitterly and even the Syndic, when he saw the departure, was moved to such pity that he sobbed loudly and wept bitterly as did his entire company. He took the sisters in order, put them on the bridge, took leave and said: Well, goodbye dear ladies, certainly your departure displeases me. And, he said to himself like another Caiphas: Ah! Geneva, at this moment you lose all goodness and light. When all were on the bridge, he clapped his hands, saying: It is all concluded. There is no further remedy and no further discussion.

The sisters were on the bridge all alone, not knowing where to turn. No one from the city dared to cross, because the land beyond the bridge belonged to the Lord of Savoy and they did not doubt that he might have men waiting in ambush to massacre them. Nonetheless, observing that many of the poor elderly and sick sisters could not proceed, the magistrates gave permission to six or eight persons from the city to conduct the sisters across the bridge. They did this voluntarily, as much out of pity as to see who would help and guide the sisters.

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The Reformation Ordinance of 1536

In the Spring of 1536, both the Small Council, which had responsibility for routine matters, and the Council of Two Hundred decided to adopt the Reformation. Guillaume Farel urged that the measure also be approved by the General Council, the assembly of all Genevan citizens which met for annual elections and when very important matters affecting the entire community were to be decided. Thus, on Sunday, 21 May 1536, the Small Council and the Two Hundred had the citizens assemble in the cathedral. By unanimous decision, the community voted to live by the Word of God and to establish a school for their children.

SOURCE: *Les sources du droit du canton de Genève*, published by Emile Rivoire and Victor van Berchem, II, 312-313 in *Les sources du droit suisse*, XXIIe partie (Aarau: Sauerländer, 1927-35), translation by Raymond A. Mentzer, Jr.

RESOLUTION TO LIVE ACCORDING TO THE EVANGELICAL LAW

The General Council, 21 May 1536

The General Council in closed session

Pursuant to the resolution of the Small Council, the General Council was assembled by the sound of the bell and the trumpet as is customary. And by the motion of his Lordship Claude Savoye, first Syndic, the decree of the Small Council and of the Council of Two Hundred concerning the mode of living was proposed. And after this, by another motion, it was asked, that if there was anyone who could and would say something against the word and doctrine which is preached to us in this city, that he speak. The motion was, namely, if all wish to live according to the Gospel and the Word of God as has been preached and is preached to us since the abolition of the mass, without longing for or wishing any more masses, statues, idols or other papal abuses whatever they be. Upon which, without opposition and in agreement, it was

generally decreed, concluded with the raising of hands in the air, and promised and vowed to God that: We wish to live in this holy evangelical law and Word of God, as it is announced to us, wishing to renounce all masses and other ceremonies and papal abuses, statues and idols, and all to which these things may pertain, to live in union and obedience to justice.

THE SCHOOLS

The General Council, 21 May 1536

At this session was also proposed the provision concerning the schools, upon which it was resolved by a unanimous vote that the city endeavor to have a learned man to effect this and that he be paid enough so that he may nourish himself and instruct the poor without asking any fees of them, and also, that everyone be required to send his children to the school and have them learn. And, all the students and teachers are required to reside in the great school where the rector and his assistant instructors, *bacheliers*, will be.

The Ecclesiastical Ordinances of 1541

When John Calvin returned to Geneva in 1541, after three years of exile in Strasbourg, he insisted upon a formal, written organization for his church. The city's magistrates agreed to his request and the famous Ecclesiastical Ordinances were prepared under Calvin's personal supervision. Although modified several times by the Genevan councils, they remained the basic statement of the city's ecclesiastical polity. The ordinances are, in essence, an explanation of the four orders of Calvin's church: pastors, doctors or teachers, elders, and deacons. While some portions have the appearance of being incomplete and hastily composed, the ordinances quickly became an important model for other Calvinist churches as the movement spread beyond its Genevan base.

SOURCE: *Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs et Professeurs de Genève, au temps de Calvin*, I, 1546-1553, edited by Jean-François Bergier (Geneva: Droz, 1964), pp. 1-3 and 6-8, translation by Raymond A. Mentzer, Jr. Also available in an English translation, *The Register of the Company of Pastors of Geneva in the Time of Calvin*, edited and translated by Philip E. Hughes (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1966), pp. 35-38 and 40-44.

In the name of the Almighty God, we the Syndics, the Small and Great Council, assembled with our people at the sound of the trumpet and the great bell, in accordance with our ancient customs, having considered that it is a thing worthy of commendation above all else that the doctrine of the holy Gospel of Our Lord be properly preserved in its purity and the Christian Church duly maintained, that the young be faithfully instructed for the future, and the hospital maintained in good order for the sustenance of the poor. This cannot be accomplished unless there is a certain rule and manner of living by which each estate understands the duty of its office. For this reason, it has seemed advisable to us that the spiritual government such as Our Lord has demonstrated and instituted by His Word be written down in good form that it may be established and observed among us. Thus, we have ordained and established in our city and territory the observation and maintenance of the ecclesiastical polity which follows, since we see that it is taken from the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

First, there are four orders of offices which Our Lord has instituted for the government of His Church, namely: the pastors, secondly, the doctors, then the elders, otherwise called those delegated by the Seignery, and, fourthly, the deacons.

If, then, we wish to have the Church well ordered and maintain it in its entirety, we must observe this form of government.

CONCERNING THE DUTY OF THE PASTORS

With regard to the pastors, whom Scripture also sometimes calls supervisors, elders, and ministers, their office is to announce the Word of God for the purpose of instructing, admonishing, exhorting and reproof, both in public and in private, to administer the sacraments, and to exercise fraternal correction with the elders or delegates.

Now, lest there be confusion within the Church, none should enter into this office without a vocation, concerning which three things must be considered: first, the examination, which is the principal consideration; next,

to whom it appertains to institute the ministers; and thirdly, what ceremony or mode of action is best followed in inducting them into the office.

CONCERNING THE EXAMINATION OF THE PASTORS

The examination consists of two parts, the first of which concerns doctrine, namely whether he who is to be ordained possesses a good and sound knowledge of Scripture, and then, whether he is competent and capable of communicating it to the people in an edifying manner.

Moreover, in order to avoid all danger that he who is to be received might hold some erroneous belief, it will be best for him to affirm his reception of and adherence to the doctrine approved by the Church. To determine whether he is fit to teach, it will be necessary to proceed by way of interrogations and by hearing him privately discuss the doctrine of the Lord.

The second part concerns his life, namely, whether he is of good morals and always conducts himself without reproach. The rule of procedure which will be observed is very amply demonstrated by Saint Paul.

TO WHOM IT APPERTAINS TO INSTITUTE THE PASTORS

First, the ministers elect he who is to be placed in the office, having made the choice known to the Seignery. He is then presented to the Council. And, if he is found worthy, the Council shall receive and welcome him in a manner which it deems expedient, giving him its approval in order to present him to the people in the act of preaching, so that he is received by common consent of the company of the faithful. If he was found to be unworthy and shown to be such by legitimate proof, it shall be necessary to proceed to a new election to select another.

As for the manner of inducting him, since the ceremonies of former times have been transformed into numerous superstitions due to the infirmity of the times, it will be enough that one of the ministers make a declaration explaining the office to which the candidate is being ordained, and then, that prayers and orisons be offered so that the Lord grant him the grace to execute his office.

Following his election, he is to be sworn in by the Seignery. There shall be a written form of the oath appropriate to that which is required of a minister, and the form employed is to be inserted.

Then, just as it is necessary to examine the ministers when one wishes to elect them, so also it is necessary to have proper discipline to maintain them in their duty.

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ESTABLISHMENT OF A DAY OF THE WEEK
FOR ASSEMBLING

First, in order that all the ministers maintain doctrinal purity and concord among themselves, it will be expedient that they meet together on one particular day of the week for a conference on the Scriptures. No one shall be exempt without a legitimate excuse. If anyone is negligent with respect to this, he is to be admonished.

As for those who preach in the dependent villages of the Seigneury, our city's ministers should exhort them to attend whenever they are able. Absence for an entire month, however, is to be treated as gross negligence, except in the case of illness or other legitimate hindrance

CONCERNING THE SECOND ORDER
WHICH WE HAVE CALLED THE DOCTORS

The proper office of the doctors is to instruct the faithful in sound doctrine so that the purity of the Gospel is not corrupted either by ignorance or by erroneous belief. However, as things are arranged today, we understand by this title the aids and instruments for preserving the doctrine of God and for insuring that the Church is not desolated through a scarcity of pastors and ministers. Thus, to use a more intelligible word, we shall call it the order of the schools. The degree nearest to the ministry and most closely associated with the government of the Church is the lectureship in theology which rightly includes both the Old and New Testament.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A "COLLÈGE"

However, since it is possible to profit from such lessons only if first instructed in languages and the humanities, and since also there is need to raise up the seed for the future so that the Church is not left a desert to our children, a *collège* must be established in order to instruct them and to prepare them for the ministry as well as for the civil government.

First of all, a place, suitable for giving lessons as well as for housing the children and others who will wish to profit, must be assigned. There should be a learned and knowledgeable man in charge of both the house and the lectures and he should also be able to instruct. He should be engaged and hired on the condition that he have under his charge lecturers both in languages and in logic, if possible. And, there should be assistants, *bacheliers*, to teach the small children. All of this we wish and order to be accomplished.

All those who will be there are subject to ecclesiastical discipline like the ministers.

There is to be no other school in the city for the small children, except that the girls shall have their own separate school as has been the case in the past.

No one is to be appointed unless he has been approved by the ministers, after first having notified the Seigneury, and then in turn he is to be presented to the Council with their recommendation, as a safeguard against abuses. Moreover, the examination should be conducted in the presence of two members of the Small Council.

CONCERNING THE THIRD ORDER WHICH IS THAT
OF THE ELDERS, WHO ARE SAID TO BE DELEGATED
OR DEPUTIZED BY THE SEIGNEURY TO THE CONSISTORY

Their office is to watch over the life of each person, to admonish amicably those whom they see to be at fault and leading a disorderly life, and when necessary to report them to the Company, which will be authorized to administer fraternal correction and to do so in association with the others.

As this church is now organized, it will be desirable to elect two from the Small Council, four from the Council of Sixty, and six from the Council of Two Hundred. They should be men of virtuous lives, honest, without reproach and beyond all suspicion, above all God-fearing and of good spiritual prudence. And, they should be elected in such a manner that there will be some of them in each quarter of the city, so that their eyes will be everywhere; all of which we wish to be done.

CONCERNING THE MANNER OF THEIR ELECTION

In a similar way, we have determined that the manner of their election shall be as follows: the Small Council shall consider the nomination of the most suitable and competent men who can be found, and, in order to accomplish this, it shall summon the ministers for the purpose of consulting with them. Then, they shall present those whom they have considered to the Council of Two Hundred which will approve them. If, after being approved, they find them worthy, they shall take a special oath whose form shall be established as is that for the ministers. And, at the end of a year after their election by the Council, they will present themselves to the Seigneury so that it may consider whether to retain or replace them, although it would not be expedient to replace them frequently without cause if they are discharging their duties faithfully.

THE FOURTH ORDER OF ECCLESIASTICAL GOVERNMENT,
NAMESLY THE DEACONS

There were always two kinds of deacons in the early Church. Some were delegated to receive, dispense and preserve the property of the poor, daily alms as well as possessions, revenues, and pensions. Others were to care for and remember the sick and administer the food for the poor, a custom which we still retain at present. And, in order to avoid confusion, since we have both *procureurs* and *hospitalliers*, one of the four *procureurs* of the hospital shall be the receiver of all its property. And, he shall be sufficiently paid in order to better exercise his office.

THE "PROCUREURS" OF THE HOSPITAL

The number of four *procureurs* remains as it has been. One shall be in charge of the income as has been stated, in order that the provisions are dispensed on a more regular and punctual basis and that those who wish to contribute some charitable gift are better assured that the property will not be used other than according to their intention. And, if the revenue is insufficient or if an unusual necessity should arise, the Seignery shall consider an adjustment according to the needs of the situation.

The election of both the *procureurs* and the *hospitalliers* shall be conducted as for the elders and the delegates to the Consistory. And, in electing them, the rule which Saint Paul sets down for deacons (I Timothy 3, Titus 1) shall be followed.

Concerning the office and authority of the *procureurs*, we confirm the articles which we have already prescribed for them, provided that in matters of urgency and where delay would be dangerous, especially when there is no great difficulty and no question of great expense, they should not be compelled to meet. Rather, one or two, in the absence of the others, may prescribe whatever will be reasonable.

CONCERNING THE HOSPITAL

It will be necessary to watch diligently that the communal hospital is well maintained. It is as much for the sick as for the elderly who cannot work, and, in addition, for widows, orphaned children and other poor persons. However, the latter are to be placed in a wing of the building apart and separate from the others.

The care of the poor who are dispersed throughout the city shall be realized there, according as the *procureurs* shall order it.

Beside the hospital for travellers which should be maintained, there should be some separate hospitality for those who are seen to be worthy of special charity. And for this purpose, there shall be a room designated for receiving those whom the *procureurs* shall recommend; and it shall be reserved for this use.

Besides all of this, there is the instruction that the families of the *hospitalliers* are managed honorably and according to God's commands, seeing that they have to govern a house dedicated to God.

The ministers and delegates or elders together with one of the Lord Syndics are, for their part, to take care to inquire whether there is any fault or deficiency of conduct, in order to beseech and admonish the Seignery to correct it. And, for this purpose, every three months several of their company together with the *procureurs* shall visit and inspect the hospital to determine whether everything is well regulated.

It will also be necessary both for the poor of the hospital and for those of the city who do not have the means to help themselves, that there be a physician and a surgeon employed by the city. While practicing in the city, they shall be charged with the care of the hospital and the visitation of other poor persons.

As for the plague hospital, it is to be completely separate, especially in the event that this city is visited by this scourge of God.

Moreover, in order to prevent begging which is contrary to proper polity, it will be necessary for the Seignery to appoint several of its officers and to station them at the exits of the churches to remove from these places those who might resist. And, if there are offenders or recalcitrant individuals, they are to bring them to one of the Lord Syndics. Similarly, at other times, the *dizainiers** are to watch that the prohibition against begging is properly observed.

*Editor's Note: The *dizainiers* were municipal officials in charge of the districts into which Geneva was divided.

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François de Bonivard,
On the Ecclesiastical Polity of Geneva

The second son of a noble family of Savoy, François de Bonivard (1493-1570) was selected for an ecclesiastical career. In 1514, he succeeded his uncle as the prior of the Benedictine monastery of Saint Victor in Geneva. Shortly thereafter, he was ordained and appointed a canon of the city's cathedral. Bonivard soon became embroiled in Geneva's dispute with Savoy and in 1530 was captured and imprisoned by the Duke of Savoy. When finally released in 1536, he returned to a newly reformed Geneva. Faced with the loss of the revenues of Saint Victor and the refusal of the magistrates to provide adequate compensation, Bonivard retired to Lausanne. Then in 1543, Geneva asked him to write its official history and he returned there permanently. He was never an enthusiastic follower of Calvin and on more than one occasion was called before the Consistory for immoral behavior. His literary production was substantial. In addition to the commissioned *Chronicles of Geneva*, he composed a number of treatises on such diverse topics as the degrees of nobility, language, the origin of sin, the different types of Reformations, and true and false miracles. His *Opinion and Estimate of the Old and New Polity of Geneva*, from which the following selection is taken, is an essay of this type.

SOURCE: François de Bonivard, *Advis et devis de l'ancienne et nouvelle police de Genève* (Geneva; Fick, 1865), pp. 153-158, translation by Raymond A. Mentzer, Jr.

You have first seen the civil polity during the time of the troubles.* However, there still was no ecclesiastical polity for censuring morals, even though there were many respectable men who desired it and who endeavored to establish it in Geneva as it was in the other evangelical cities of the land of the [Swiss] Leagues. But certain muddled individuals, fearing correction, did

*Editor's Note: Described by Bonivard in the first part of this book.

not wish to consent to it, alleging in order to support their reasons that this would renew a papacy, giving such jurisdiction to the ministers as the Pope and the bishops formerly had. For these reasons, one could not set up the ecclesiastical authority and its Senate until after the death of Jean Philippe,** shepherd of the muddled individuals, because then the sheep were led astray. It was set up as follows: Of the four Syndics, one would always be Judge and Head of the Consistory with the assistance of certain laymen, some from the Small Council and others from the Council of Two Hundred, and the Preachers. They would be censors of morals before a case was referred to the temporal court for correction. Marital cases were handled in the same way. All was as in the court of the bishops previously. But in order that the ministers, notwithstanding their lay assistants, did not assume excessive authority, the aforementioned Consistorial Senate did not have the power to judge, with or without litigants. Thus, it could only admonish, if they were minor cases. It did not have the power to administer an oath. If there were important cases, they were referred to the Small Council for judgment on the following Monday, as the Consistory met on Thursday. They had jurisdiction to excommunicate, barring from Communion those who were obstinate in their sin. Whereas the papists, before receiving their sacrament, are compelled to confess their sins completely and orally to a priest, the members of the Consistory do not wait until one presents himself to them. They know each one has assigned to him by the public an area which is divided into various *dizaines****. They go, accompanied by the *dizainiers*, from house to house, asking all members of the household the reason of their faith. After this, if they sense that there is some fault, either in general or in particular, within the house, they admonish them to recognize their errors in order that they not receive the Sacrament unworthily. Such was the authority of the Consistory formerly; it recently received the authority to administer oaths.

The schools, for which provision has also been made within recent memory, are a part of the Church and spiritual assembly too. When the *Collège* of Lausanne was dissolved as the result of some difference that its faculty had with the magistrates of Berne, the majority of the Doctors withdrew to Geneva. Viewing this, the magistrates of Geneva, which without them already had many learned men, did not wish to receive the grace of God in vain. Rather, they set up a *collège* of very ample and magnificent appearance and very precious content. There are professors not only of the Holy Scriptures, but also of the literary languages and the liberal arts. Gold and silver are not spared to pay them such that they are content, notwithstanding the great charges which the magistrates have to fortify the city and provide other equipment to defend it in the event of war which they are always awaiting. In addition, to keep themselves always in the good grace of

**Editor's Note: Jean Philippe, a former magistrate of Geneva, was the leader of the "artichokes," a faction opposed to Guillaume Farel. In 1540, he was condemned and executed for having mortally wounded one of Farel's supporters.

***Editor's Note: Geneva was divided into *dizaines* for purposes of defense. The *dizainiers* were city officials in charge of these municipal districts.

God, their Sovereign Captain, they have endeavored and endeavor to clean and purge the city and its dependent jurisdiction of all filth and sordidness which they find displeasing to Him, as you will see by the edicts, laws and statutes which they have enacted and by their execution to the letter. Moreover, you must know that the magistrates of Geneva have not done as many others who have deprived the thief of his plunder, then have not rendered it to the robbed, but kept it for themselves. Knowing that the property of the Church appertains to such uses as we have heretofore mentioned, they have also applied it to the Ministers and Schools as we have stated above, which is for the service of truth. Next, it is applied to the service of charity, which is to nourish the poor, those unable to earn their living by the sweat of their brow as God commands; it also supports those who are strong and robust enough to nourish themselves but cannot feed their wives and children, because they have too great a number. Thus, aid is distributed to them in proportion to the burden which they have over and above that which they can support with their own hands. From the beginning of the abolition of papism, they took possession of the Convent of the Women of Saint Clare, chasing the sisters from it. Of it they made a hospital where are nourished not only the poor of the city, but those of all places from which their churches receive revenues. Transients have a free meal in the evening if they arrive here and breakfast the morning before they depart. The hospital has its own minister and its school-master and school-mistress for the boys and girls. The school-mistress teaches the girls to read and write and to sew, but instructs them principally in the knowledge of God, to love and fear Him. She has them make a declaration of their faith by question and answer, which is called the catechism. This is taught to the children from the moment they know how to speak in order to have them suckle the spiritual Christ with the corporal milk, so that there is no small child who does not render the reason of his faith as well as a Doctor of the Sorbonne renders his. Not only do the teachers of the hospital do this, but also the fathers and mothers of the entire city. When the boys have outgrown their childhood, they are placed in apprenticeship of the trade for which each of them is known to be suitable. The girls are also placed as maids here and there in order to earn their marriage dowry. And, if they cannot, the marriage dowry is provided from the revenue of the hospital. The hospital has its physician, its surgeon, and its apothecary. And, lest the *hospitallier* commit fraud, a Syndic and others, both from the Small Council and the Council of Two Hundred, are appointed as superintendents to whom he must render account. It is true that what remains of the property of the Church is employed for public uses, particularly for the fortification of the city and other defenses of war, which is only, after all, for the Church. Because, if the papal ecclesiastics wished to return to the thievery from which they were removed and they were not resisted, the poor would necessarily die of famine as previously. Thus the places where the affairs of piety govern have been delegated by good rules. There is the hospital where charity is exercised and close by the hospital, the *collège* where truth is taught.

Considering thus all the aforementioned things, do you know of any reason why Geneva ought not now call itself the true Church of God which has received and protected with all its power that which God first announced by His Prophets and later by His Son and the Apostles? Are they not other than formerly the Jews? I speak not of the papal Church, but still what primitive Church has been better reformed? And also, the Heavenly Father has certainly watched over Geneva, opposing all enterprises which have been raised against it, by means neither understood nor expected by men. Thus, as the pharaohs persecuted Him, so He had them plunge into the sea and drown. Let us persevere thus in His service and pray to Him that He give us assurance to persevere.