

Information taken from Kung's Can We Save the Catholic Church?

This book challenges the Catholic understanding of the papacy. It advocates a ministry of service by the bishop of Rome based on St Peter but repudiates the notion of the pope being the infallible head of the Church. It outlines how the papacy appeared long after Christ. Jesus did not found the papacy. Page 67 says that when Jesus said he built the Church on the rock that he did not mean the rock was Peter. Catholicism says he did. Page 68 states that there is no evidence that Peter was bishop of Rome and thus that the bishop of Rome, the pope, is really his successor. The episcopate didn't appear at Rome until about three decades after Peter's death. Also, Rome's claim to have been mother of all the Churches is false because the mother was actually Jerusalem. Stephen in the middle of the third century was the first to claim that Jesus made Peter the rock and Stephen should be obeyed as the rock and successor of Peter - page 69. Augustine of Hippo did not believe that Rome and its bishop should have jurisdiction over all the Churches - page 76. Page 77 says that the first real pope was actually Leo I who introduced and took the papal title pontifex maximus and claimed authority over all Christians. He relied on a forged letter which claimed that Peter made Clement his true successor and thus introduced the doctrine that the bishop of Rome must be head of the Church and successor of Peter. The letter claimed to be by Clement. The papacy then did not drop down from heaven. It was a man-made gradual and Machiavellian political "evolution."

Page ix - Kung sent Pope Francis a copy of the Spanish edition of the book. "Pope Francis responded in a personal, handwritten note thanking Kung for sending him the book and indicating his interest in reading it." Kung says on page xi that the pope "promises to read this book".

Page 235 - hints at Catholicism's irrational and anti-truth nature "there are hardly any significant Catholic intellectuals any more."

Page 237 - states that St Paul in the Bible prefers to forgive rather than to punish and exhorts his flocks rather than issuing prohibitions and condemnations.

It is true that Paul takes that approach but it is not true that he always did. He wanted heretics to be regarded as anathema accursed and to be avoided. Also, he did use force against a man in Corinth who was living in sin with his father's wife. The idea is that heresy and cohabitation are such heinous things that force is needed to deal with them. Kung does not mention this for he wants such "sins" overlooked in the name of inclusion and tolerance.

Page 247 - states that authoritarian systems such as the Kremlin and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union were destroyed mainly by implosion rather than opposing external forces. The people involved in such systems are the best at bringing them down. It warns that the same fate may await Catholicism

Page 275 - Through the Cluniac reforms, the Holy See got direct control over the monasteries and convents. The estates owned and the profits made could be used and sold by the Vatican in principle.

Page 276 - Since the time of Leo XIII, the Holy See is able to invest in the stock exchanges of London, Paris and Berlin.

- The financial entity that resulted from Leo's interest in money and profit became the hypocritically titled Institute for the Works of Religion. Pius XII was responsible for this cosmetic transformation. The year was 1942. It has simply being known as the Vatican Bank since. Only recently, did the Vatican create reforms for supervising it. Its profits of 2010, 5.5 million, went to the then Pope, Benedict XVI. Legally it is a private bank and is not subject to taxation. It is not publicly audited despite having private investors. Many of its 33,000 accounts are anonymous. The lack of supervision plus its policy of secrecy, has led to much corruption that erupted in some notorious financial scandals such as the Markinkus affair.

Page 283 - the profits from the dioceses and religious congregations of the world still accrue to the pope.

Page 284 - the Vatican has its own system of taxes and fees that was kept secret until recently. Everything is charged for including canonisations and annulments. Church financial statements never mention what comes in from Peter's Pence, from money and gifts directly donated to the Vatican or what income is made through the Vatican's financial investments.

Page 286 - In Germany the Catholic pays tax to the Catholic Church. If you leave the Church as a statutory body, you do not have to pay. The Vatican realised that people leaving this way did not always intend to leave the Church as a religion. It won a case where a person leaving the Church in the eyes of the law should be regarded as invalid unless the person communicated to their pastor that they really did not want to be Catholic any more and why. So to leave legally you have to leave properly. The Church recognised that such a person is "no longer a Catholic".

MY CONCLUSION is that the pope is the wealthiest man of all time. Even if he does not use the wealth or flaunt it, it is his. Only a hypocrite has money that is got by dubious means through a bank that lacks transparency. It is inappropriate for the state to collect money for the Church as in Germany. Also, the pope probably has read Kung's book and still pretends to be pope and is still enabling Catholicism in its preaching of untrue doctrine and false history. Following the pope is idolatry.