

Ye Olde Plum News

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PLUM AND SOME THEOLOGICAL ISSUES

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION

'Well, it started with you getting into an argument about the Claims to Apostolic Succession of the Church of Abyssinia.' 'About what?' 'Don't you remember the Church of Abyssinia?' 'I have never heard of the Church of Abyssinia.' 'Well, it's a sort of church they have out Abyssinia way and you and Joe Davenport got arguing about its claims to Apostolic Succession. He took one view, you took another... Angry passions rose.' (The Old Reliable, 1951)

Apostolic Succession is the teaching that bishops represent a direct, uninterrupted line of continuity from the Apostles of Jesus Christ. Bishops possess certain special powers handed down to them from the Apostles. The Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Old Catholic, Swedish Lutheran, and Anglican churches accept this doctrine and believe that the only valid ministry is based on bishops whose office has descended from the Apostles. (Britannica.com)

The claim of the Coptic/Ethiopic Orthodox Church to have bishops with apostolic succession has been questioned.

It was one night when we were all having supper at Romano's, and they had disagreed about the apostolic claims of the church of Abyssinia, which was odd because it was generally about politics that Stiffy disagreed with people. ... Dunstable maintained that those claims were perfectly justified, and your father said the church of Abyssinia was talking through its hat, and things got more and more heated, and finally Dunstable took up a bowl of fruit salad and was about to strike your father with it, when your father grabbed this turkey, which was on a side table with the other viands, and one blow laid him out as flat as a crêpe Suzette. ... But do you know what I find the strangest aspect of the whole affair? That either of them should ever have heard of the church of Abyssinia. You wouldn't have thought they would have recognized the church of Abyssinia if it had been served up to them on a plate with watercress round it. (A Pelican at Blandings, 1969)

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### SUPRALAPSARIANISM

*The task of composing a sermon which should practically make sense and yet not be above the heads of his rustic flock was always one that caused Augustine Mulliner to concentrate tensely. Soon he was lost in his labour and oblivious to everything but the problem of how to find a word of one syllable that meant Supralapsarianism.* (Gala Night, 1933)

*... his lordship finally appeared, descending the broad staircase with one hand glued to the arm of a worried-looking Bishop, with whom he was discussing Supralapsarianism.* (Money In the Bank, 1942)

Supralapsarianism is the doctrine that God dec-

reed both election and reprobation prior to creation and then allowed the fall of man as a means of carrying out his divine purposes. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

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TORQUEMADA, INQUISITION

My experience is that when Aunt Agatha wants you to do a thing you do it, or else you find yourself wondering why those fellows in the older days made such a fuss with the Spanish Inquisition. (Extricating Young Gussie, 1925)

You don't know what these blighters here are like. Most of them are chapel folk with a moral code that would have struck Torquemada as too rigid. (Much Obliged, Jeeves, 1971)

Tomás de Torquemada, (1420 - 1498), was grand inquisitor in Spain. His name has become synonymous with horror, religious bigotry, and cruel fanaticism. (Britannica.com)

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### EBIONITES

*'She was a tennis player,' said the Oldest Member, wincing. A devout golfer from the days of the gutty ball, his attitude towards exponents of the rival game had always resembled that of the early Christians towards the Ebionites.* (Up From The Depths, 1950)

The Ebionites was an ascetic sect of Jewish Christians, and may have arisen about the time of the destruction of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem (AD 70). The name came from the Hebrew *ebyonim*, or *ebionim* ('the poor') and it was not founded, as later writers stated, by a certain Ebion. (Britannica.com)

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COMMINATION SERVICE

The recital of divine threats against sinners in the Anglican Liturgy for Ash Wednesday. (Lexico.com)

Sam Shotter was let down by three old school pals, and had also been robbed by one of them. *After going through a brief commination service in which the names of Hash Todhunter, Claude Bates and Wiloughby Braddock were prominently featured, he decided to make a move.* (Sam the Sudden, 1925)

Mr. Baxter was dirty, after having fled through a window, and furious with Lord Emsworth who took this as another proof of his insanity. *Baxter met Lady Constance. She was standing in the doorway of her boudoir, and she eyed his dishevelled form with such open-mouthed astonishment that for an instant the ex-secretary came near to including her with the head of*

the family in the impromptu Commination Service which was taking place in his mind. (Summer Lightning, 1929)

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### ERASTIANISM

*She gave a sort of despairing gesture, like a vicar's daughter who has discovered Erastianism in the village.* (Laughing Gas 1936)

Doctrine that the state is superior to the church in ecclesiastical matters. It is named after the 16th-century Swiss Zwinglian theologian Thomas Erastus, who however never held such a doctrine. But, he opposed excommunication as unscriptural, advocating instead punishment by civil authorities. (Britannica.com)

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PROPER ORDER

'I've seen the light,' said the policeman, hitherto an atheist, 'and what I wanted to ask you, sir, was do I have to join the Infants' Bible Class or can I start singing in the choir right away?' (The Mating Season, 1949) Protestant dogmatics use the term **Ordo Salutis** to designate the consecutive steps of salvation.

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### TALMUD

*And if any young writer with a gift for being funny has got the idea that there is something undignified and anti-social about making people laugh, let him read this from the Talmud, a book which, one may remind him, was written in an age just as grim as this one.*

*'And Elija said unto Berokah, 'These two will also share in the world to come,' Berokah then asked them, 'What is your occupation?' They replied, 'We are merry-makers. When we see a person who is down-hearted, we cheer him up.' These two were among the very select few who would inherit the kingdom of Heaven.'* (Over Seventy, 1957)

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HIS OWN RELIGIOSITY

I'm an agnostic. My attitude has always been, we'll have to wait and see. (Day & Ring: P. G. Wodehouse In His Own Words, 2012.) His waiting ended on February 14, 1975.

P. G. and Ethel turned to the Church for important events in life. They married in an Episcopal church and he was cremated after a service in a Presbyterian church, both in New York. (Wikipedia)

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