



The *Declaratio* of Benedict XVI
Not an abdication, but a declaratory *decisio* on
crime, schism, usurpation and impeded see

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Introduction and summaries
(Andrea Cionci)

The present study is the result of the most thorough investigation ever produced on the resignation of Benedict XVI: 4 years of work, 1000 articles, 1300 podcasts, 150 lectures, a volume ("*Ratzinger's Code*" ed. Byoblu 2022) sold in 23,000 copies, with 5 translations, winner of 2 journalistic awards. Canonists, jurists, latinists, theologians, historians of the Church and also ordinary readers who contributed by offering documents, testimonies and valuable insights have participated in this work.

Chapters:

- 1) Reconstruction of the facts
- 2) Reconstruction of the Latin text pronounced by Benedict XVI and most truthful translation
- 3) Legal interpretation of the original text
- 4) Theological interpretation of the gesture made by Benedict XVI.

In these pages it is shown how the *Declaratio* of Benedict XVI dated 11 February 2013 was released, at that time, by Vatican sources in an artfully manipulated way, both in the original Latin and in its translations, in order to be given out to the people as the pope's real abdication act.

In reality it was quite different: a *declaratory judgement*, that is a criminal decree¹ that the Pontiff issues for major crimes against faith, such as are heresy, apostasy and schism. The decree of the pope is unappealable and the crimes judged by the *judgement* are *excommunication latae sententiae* to those *who committed them*. The verb through which punishments are imposed is *declaro*, which can be translated as a statement, a public declaration of what already belongs to the order of things and that is simply recognized.

With this decision, the Holy Father Benedict XVI did not renounce, but only "declared to renounce" the *ministerium* of bishop of Rome because of a misdeed committed during his election by a handful of cardinals. The misdeed consisted of an unscrupulous electoral maneuver witnessed by several authoritative sources that not only reveals an open violation of articles 78 to 81 of chapter VI of the constitution *Universi Dominici Gregis*, but that it was aimed at a very specific and subversive purpose.

The electoral maneuver led to card. Ratzinger the votes of his opponents in the Saint Gallen Group, making his pontificate begin with a *de facto* minority.

This "political" weakness allowed the enemies of Benedict XVI, inside and outside the Church, to wear him out in time with obstructionist and opposite strategy, preventing more and more the regular exercise of *the Petrine munus*, that is, the government of the Church. This subversive action led the pope progressively to the limits of both political and psychophysical forces to the point that, in February 2013, after an unclear "night incident" suffered in March 2012, during the apostolic² trip to Mexico-Cuba, an episode he narrated as linked to insomnia and the drugs he was taking, Benedict XVI had to come up with an emergency plan to get out of the way, without leaving the Apostolic See legally in the hands of his persecutors.

The declaration of renouncing the *ministerium*, by Benedict XVI namely the judgment on his being without power to govern, was therefore a *decision motivated* by the misdeed committed when he was elected by a handful of cardinals. Or the idea of electing a pope in political minority so that one day he would be forced to resign. However, the decision of pope Benedict in February 2013 was not to abdicate, but was exclusively aimed at leaving the see of the bishop of Rome simply empty, clear, free, (not legally vacant) so that it could be immediately occupied by usurping enemies.

A "strategic retreat" to allow the enemies to take over power; thus illegally, condemning themselves to nullity and final expulsion with the consequent purification of the Catholic Church.

The declaration of renunciation to the *ministerium* made by Benedict XVI, maliciously misunderstood - this too had been foreseen by its author - would have given the start to a conclave, obviously abusive, for the election of a "new" Supreme Pontiff, or an antipope.

Thus, Benedict would have been dethroned, deprived of the practical ministry, that is, of those "works and words" of which he himself speaks in the *Declaratio* and therefore he would become totally impeded, as per *cann. 412 and 335*.

(In fact, as specified in the *Declaratio*, and as it happens for an impeded pope, he would continue to exercise the *Petrine munus purely in a contemplative way*, that is "suffering and praying").

On the other hand, his opponents would have elected an antipope, deprived of any right over the Catholic Church as enshrined in the combined provisions of the articles n.76 and 77 of the Constitution *Universi Dominici Gregis* (UDG).

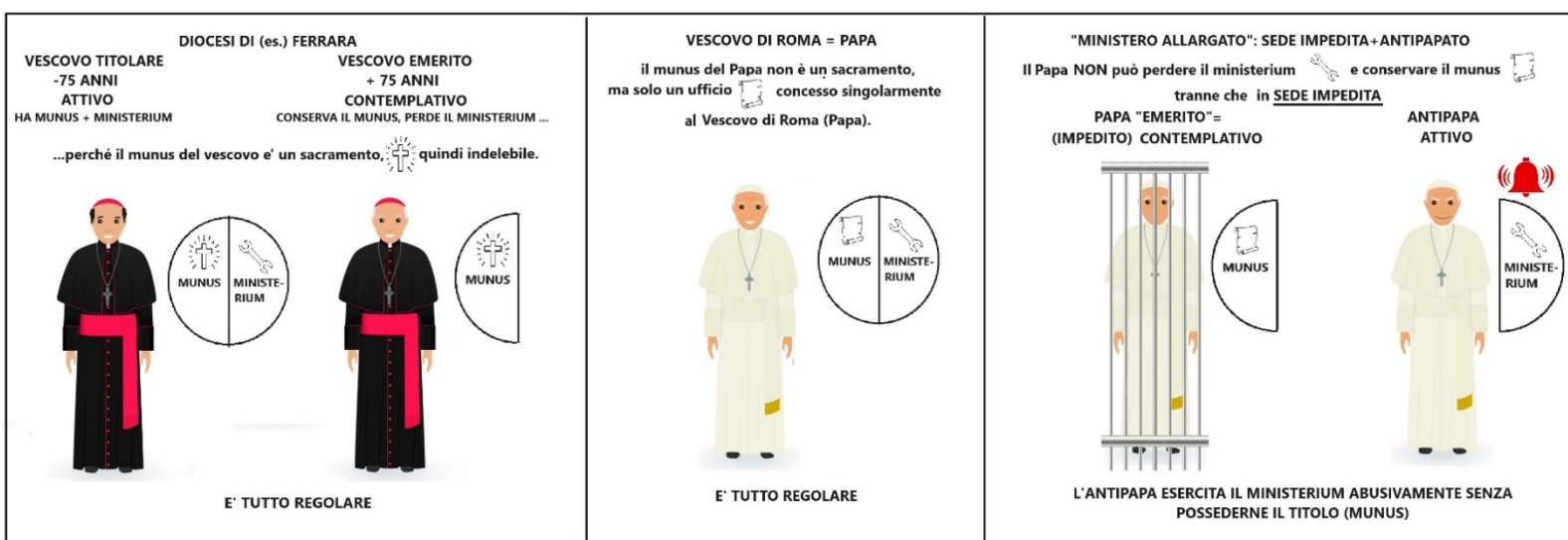
¹ See *Normae de delictis Congregationi pro doctrina fidei reservatis*, **Art. 26** It is the right of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in whatever state and degree of the proceedings, to refer directly to the decision of the Supreme Pontiff, regarding the dismissal or deposition from the clerical state, together with the dispensation from the law of celibacy, the cases of particular gravity referred to in Articles 2-6, when it is manifestly established that the crime has been committed, after the offender has been given the faculty to defend himself.

²See https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/articolo_blog/blog/andrea-cionci/39237579/benedetto-xvi-sonnifero-di-troppo-lettera-originale.html and https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/articolo_blog/blog/andrea-cionci/39362057/i-tre-incidenti-di-benedetto-xvi-e-il-falso-dello-zucchetto.html

In this way, Benedict XVI would have produced a kind of "extended ministry" as he himself called it: that is, a form of service to the Church, in order to reach its purification, with an impeded pope (relegated to a contemplative role) and an active usurper, the antipope, reigning for some time.³

Hence the brilliant and euphemistic self-definition of "pope emeritus". As it happens for the bishop who retires and becomes emeritus, also Benedict XVI would have lost the *ministerium* while holding the *munus*, but this, for the pope, whose *munus* is not a sacrament but an office, can occur only in case of impeded see. "pope emeritus" is therefore just a euphemism for "impeded pope".⁴

SPIEGAZIONE DEL TITOLO DI "PAPA EMERITO"



At the very end of the *Declaratio*, pope Benedict entrusts the Church to his Supreme Pastor, Jesus Christ and invokes Mary amphibologically so that she "is close" (*assistat*) to the cardinals: both to those who are unfaithful, so that the *Virgin* can implore divine forgiveness for their crime, and to faithful who, in the future, will work to restore legality, electing his new true successor.

The *Declaratio*, therefore, is not at all a badly written abdication, with formal and legal errors, but an absolutely perfect declaratory judgement, both from the Latin language and the legal point of view. In fact it described and judged an initial misdeed that would produce in time (*ingravescente aetate*) an unbearable situation.

³See https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/articolo_blog/blog/andrea-cionci/29878827/monsignor-gaenswein-codice-ratzinger-papa-legittimo-papa-emerito.html

⁴See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svts77Yr5A4>

In his "*decision*", Benedict XVI was therefore at the same time accuser, advocate and judge and, in these roles, he made this declaration for the salvation and the very survival of the Church (*Ecclesiae vita*).

pope Benedict illustrated a "criminal sequence": first the electoral maneuver which is functional to the takeover of power, that is the misdeed (*commisum*); then the completely impeded see, emptied of power, which coincides with the usurpation and the convocation of the schismatic conclave.

The *Declaratio* was written by the German pope in a brilliant way, with a very wise use of Latin and canon law, to kick off the operation. He knew that the enemies could easily falsify it, with few adjustments, to make it look like a renunciation in order to get what they wanted, that is to get him out of the way.

It is a logical-rational prediction of a plan that was already in place, which only needed to find its fulfillment. Since no one would have judged it, Benedict would also judge its outcomes since they are all related to that *commisum*-misdemeanor.

Benedict XVI then gave room to the action of Logos (hence of the Holy Spirit) in the faithful Christians and men of good will. This would produce the progressive understanding of the document and its denunciation to the competent authorities, ie the cardinals (art. 3 UDG) and/or the competent ecclesiastical forum, as it is read in the Rights and Duties of the Faithful (can. 208-223).

In the eight years of his life at the Vatican, pope Benedict could never provide an explicit explanation of the *Declaratio* exactly because he was there, but he⁵ helped us understand it by sending out numerous inputs through letters, books and interviews, using the so called broad mental restriction (the "Ratzinger code"), a method of communication prescribed, in cases of emergency, by moral theology, not to lie and to communicate the truth only to those who "have ears to understand".

It is also documented that pope Benedict, before his resignation, had left under the seal of the papal secrecy some written documentation, in this case the acts of the investigation entrusted to the Herranz Commission which was ordered by him to investigate Vatileaks and other matters⁶.

Plausibly, Benedict XVI therefore left documents that could give us a definitive explanation of his gesture. Remember that these acts will have to be opened only in case of a judicial proceeding.

On 6 June 2024, Andrea Cionci filed a 100-page pamphlet with the Vatican City State Court, duly⁷ registered. The opening of the trial or the intervention of the pre-2013 appointment cardinals already requested by those who write with a first petition, sent to the Secretariat of State with 11,500 signatures, on 8 November 2023.

Below, we publish the correct translation of the *Declaratio*, (elaborated by prof. Corrias and cosigned by prof. Funari) that will be analyzed with the maximum completeness of linguistic and legal references in chapter 2.

"Dear Brothers,

I have convoked you to this Consistory, not only for the three canonizations, but also to communicate to you a decision of great importance for the life of the Church. After having repeatedly examined my conscience before God, I have come to the certainty that my strengths, due to an advanced age, are no

⁵See https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/articolo_blog/blog/andrea-cionci/37670369/-restrizione-mentale-larga-la-chiave-teologico-morale-del-codice-ratzinger.html

⁶See. <https://www.romasette.it/archivio/ricevuti-dal-papa-i-cardinali-della-commissione-dindagine-sulla-fuga-di-notizie/>

⁷See. https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/articolo_blog/blog/andrea-cionci/39590955/dimissioni-nulle-di-benedetto-xvi-istanza-al-tribunale-vaticano.html

longer suited to an adequate exercise of the Petrine ministry. I am well aware that this ministry, due to its essential spiritual nature, must be carried out not only with words and deeds, but no less with prayer and suffering. However, in today's world, subject to so many rapid changes and shaken by questions of deep relevance for the life of faith, in order to govern the barque of Saint Peter and proclaim the Gospel, both strength of mind and body are necessary, strength which in the last few months, has deteriorated in me to the extent that I have had to recognize my incapacity to adequately fulfill the ministry entrusted to me. For this reason, and well aware of the seriousness of this act, with full freedom I declare that I renounce **to my detriment** the ministry of Bishop of Rome, Successor of Saint Peter, **because of the misdeed of a handful of cardinals** on 19 April 2005, in such a way, that as from 28 February 2013, at 20:00 hours, the See of Rome, the See of Saint Peter, **will remain empty** and a Conclave to elect the new Supreme Pontiff will have to be convoked by those whose competence it is.

Dear Brothers, I thank you most sincerely for all the love and work with which you have supported me in my ministry and I ask pardon for all my defects. And now, let us entrust the Holy Church to the care of Our Supreme Pastor, Our Lord Jesus Christ, and implore his holy Mother Mary, so that she may assist the Cardinal Fathers with her maternal solicitude, in electing a new Supreme Pontiff. With regard to myself, I wish to also devotedly serve the Holy Church of God in the future through a life dedicated to prayer”.

1) RECONSTRUCTION OF THE FACTS (by Andrea Cionci)

Where it is illustrated how pope Benedict never provided the translations of the Declaratio, but only an original in Latin and how the translations were artfully manipulated.

In the volume "Nothing but the truth" (Piemme 2023) published by Msgr. Georg Gänswein, p. 200 we read: "Benedict had *begun* in late January to draw up the draft of the text that he would read in the Consistory. His decision to write in Latin was obvious, since it has always been the language of official documents of the Catholic Church. The formula of the renunciation was finalized by the pope on 7th February. I personally took the sheet to Cardinal Bertone's apartment, where we read it together with Monsignor Giampiero Gloder, coordinator in the Secretariat of State for the final drafting of the pontifical texts. Small corrections were suggested as well as some legal clarifications, so that the final text was ready for Sunday 10th February, when translations into Italian, French, English, German, Spanish, Portuguese and Polish were also provided".⁸(Later the translation in Arabic was added).

In the interview aired on TV 2000 on 4th January 2023, Mgr. Georg Gänswein, while speaking of the Declaratio of pope Benedict XVI, states:⁹

"I said: «Holy Father, why in Latin?» - «This is the language of the Church, and I would like to do this, this and this. And then, they translate, and understand»".

In the volume "Ein Leben" by Peter Seewald, (Garzanti 2020) the authorized biography of His Holiness Benedict XVI, we read on p. 1159:

⁸See https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/articolo_blog/blog/andrea-cionci/38380528/declaratio-di-ratzinger-manipolata-avvocati-scrivono-a-parolin.html

⁹See. min 4.15 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QIqz3B1Cd10&t=421s>

"Under the seal of papal secrecy, an employee of the Secretariat of State was also informed he would have to verify the correctness of the declaratio of resignation in terms of content, form and language (in effect, He then slightly changed the style in some points)".

From these testimonies it emerges unequivocally that pope Benedict XVI had delivered his Declaratio written only in Latin and we learn that the Card. Tarcisio Bertone, then Secretary of State, provided, together with Mgr. Giampiero Gloder, to arrange the translations into the various languages, intervening on the text with not better specified changes of "style", "corrections" and "legal clarifications".

Now, in the Declaratio in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Polish, and Arabic, the two aspects of the papal figure mentioned, the *munus* and the *ministerium*, have been translated with the same word that stands for "service". Respectively ministry, ministry, ministerio, ministère, ministèrio, posługi, khedma.

A legitimate but questionable choice, since, as shown by the official translations of the apostolic constitution *Pastor bonus* (1988), at least in Italian, English, Spanish and German, there is a very precise word to describe the *munus*, mentioned respectively as "ufficio", "office", "oficio", "Amt".

However, there was a key piece missing which, according to our latest translation from the Latin of the original text only, overturns this statement by 180°.

As many recall, the Declaratio of 11th February 2013 by pope Benedict was published by the Vatican site with a misprint (hora 29.00) and two gross syntactic errors that were detected by Luciano Canfora on the Corriere della Sera: *ecclesiae vitae*¹⁰ e *ministerium* ... *commisum renuntiare*. These were then corrected immediately afterwards on the website with *ecclesiae vita e ministerio* ... *commissio renuntiare*.

The German philologist Wilfried Stroh, in Germany, and cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, some months later on L'Arena di Verona also criticized these errors¹¹.

¹⁰See <https://corrieredelmezzogiorno.corriere.it/bari/notizie/cronaca/2013/12-febbraio-2013/accusativo-posto-dativocanfora-bacchetta-testo-ratzinger-2113963174383.shtml#:~:text=GLI%20ERRORI%20%2D%20Canfora%2C%20nell%27,esserci%20il%20dato%20commissio%20%BB>).

¹¹See <https://www.larena.it/argomenti/cultura/cultura/ravasi-rivela-errori-di-latino-nelle-dimissioni-di-ratzinger-1.3022979>



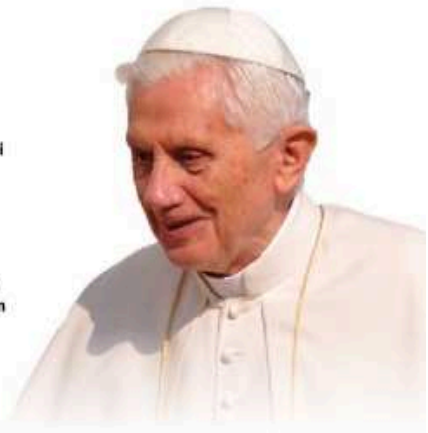
DECLARATIO

Fratres carissimi

Non solum propter res canonizationes ad hoc Consistorium vos convocavi, sed etiam ut vobis decisionem magni momenti pro Ecclesiae vitae communicem. Conscientia mea iterum atque iterum coram Deo explorata ad cognitionem certam perveni vires meas ingravescente aetate non iam aptas esse ad munus Petrinum aequè administrandum.

Bene conscius sum hoc munus secundum suam essentiam spiritualem non solum agendo et loquendo exsequi debere, sed non minus patièdo et orando. Attamen in mundo nostri temporis rapidis mutationibus subiecto et quaestionibus magni ponderis pro vita fidei perturbato ad navem Sancti Petri gubernandam et ad annuntiandum Evangelium etiam vigor quidam corporis et animae necessarius est, qui ultimis mensibus in me modo tali minuitur, ut incapacitatem meam ad ministerium mihi commissum bene administrandum agnoscere debeam. Quapropter bene conscius ponderis huius actus plena libertate declaro me ministerio Episcopi Romae, Successoris Sancti Petri, mihi per manus Cardinalium die 19 aprilis MMV commissum renuntiare ita ut a die 28 februarii MMXIII, hora 29, sedes Romae, sedes Sancti Petri vacet et Conclave ad eligendum novum Summum Pontificem ab his quibus competit convocandum esse.

Fratres carissimi, ex toto corde gratias ago vobis pro omni amore et labore, quo mecum pondus ministerii mei portastis et veniam peto pro omnibus defectibus meis. Nunc autem Sanctam Dei Ecclesiam curae Summi eius Pastoris, Domini nostri Iesu Christi confidimus sanctamque eius Matrem Mariam imploramus, ut patribus Cardinalibus in eligendo novo Summo Pontifice materna sua bonitate assistat. Quod ad me attinet etiam in futuro vita orationi dedicata Sanctae Ecclesiae Dei toto ex corde servire velim.



In reality, out of these three errors, Benedict XVI really pronounced only one, before the Consistory: "**commissum**". The other two were never read by him as you can clearly hear from the¹² integral¹³ audio. Therefore, since we do not have the original written text, the only text to be taken into account, according to the correct legal procedure, is the one that was read by the pope. In summary, the only error that Benedict XVI really pronounced is the *COMMISSUM*.

However, in the volume "Last conversations" of 2016, the "emeritus" pope answered to Peter Seewald, who asked him when and how he had written the text of the Declaratio.

"I could have written it in Italian, but there was a danger that I would make some mistakes".

P.Seewald-Benedict XVI "Last Conversations", ed.Garzanti, 2016, page 33
"When and who wrote the text with which you announced your resignation?"

"I did it myself. I am not able to recall exactly when I did it, but at most two weeks before".

"Why the choice of Latin?"

"Because such an important thing has to be done in Latin. Moreover, Latin is a language I know well enough to write something decent. I could have written it in Italian, but there was a danger that I would make some mistakes".

¹²See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GX8aQ9XZxp0>

¹³See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcPYrsAbGrg>

Now, this exact sentence of his, after that these mistakes in the *Declaratio* had been discussed about three years earlier, seems really strange and provocative. Despite the "bad figure" made at the international level, pope Benedict, a great connoisseur of Latin, confirmed with conviction that he had not made any mistake in the *Declaratio*.

Hence, since the only one of the three "errors" that he had actually pronounced is the *commissum*, this means that **COMMISSUM IS NOT AN ERROR**.

Thanks to attorneys Costanza Settesoldi and Roberto Antonacci, we started to focus on the fact that the only text on which we can rely is the one delivered orally by Benedict XVI. Thus, a number of different proposals were developed to translate the phrase with the *commissum* in a way that could be entirely correct. The study group with the esteemed Latinists Gian Matteo Corrias (former editor of the works of Lorenzo Valla) and Rodolfo Funari (the greatest translator of Sallust) then arrived at the only dramatically possible translation that legitimately contemplates the *commissum*.

Meanwhile, let us see how the abusively corrected text with *commisso* = "entrusted" was translated by the Vatican site.

"Quapropter bene conscius ponderis huius actus plena libertate declaro me ministerio Episcopi Romae, Successoris Sancti Petri, mihi per manus Cardinalium die 19 aprilis MMV COMMISSO renuntiare ita ut a die 28 februarii MMXIII, hora 20, sedes Romae, sedes Sancti Petri vacet et Conclave ad eligendum novum Summum Pontificem ab his quibus competit convocandum esse".

"For this reason, and well aware of the seriousness of this act, with full freedom I declare that I renounce the ministry of Bishop of Rome, Successor of Saint Peter, ENTRUSTED (*commisso*) to me by the Cardinals on 19 April 2005, in such a way, that as from 28 February 2013, at 20:00 hours, the See of Rome, the See of Saint Peter, will be vacant and a Conclave to elect the new Supreme Pontiff will have to be convoked by those whose competence it is.

And here is the only possible version, according to Prof. Corrias, confirmed by Prof. Funari, in which the same text can be translated while keeping the *COMMISSUM* pronounced by Benedict XVI:

"Therefore well aware of the weight of this act I declare in full freedom to renounce **to my detriment** (*mihi*) the ministry of bishop of Rome, successor of St. Peter, **because of the misdeed** (for *commissum*) of **a handful** (*manus*) of Cardinals occurred on April 19th, 2005, to the extent that starting from February 28th, 2013, at the twentieth hour, the See of Rome, the See of St. Peter will be empty, and (I declare) that a conclave must be convoked for the election of a new Supreme Pontiff by those to whom it pertains. "*"

This is, then, the solution to one of history's greatest issue: in fact, *commissum*, in the accusative, also means "misdeed," and this unlocks the understanding of the entire *Declaratio*.

This simple declaration, passed off for 11 years as an abdication after being the subject - by Card. Tarcisio Bertone and Msgr. Giampiero Gloder - of unspecified "juridical clarifications" and "changes in style" (as witnessed by Peter Seewald and Mons. Georg Gänswein¹⁴) was actually the denunciation of a misdeed carried out by handful of cardinals on the day of the election of Card. Ratzinger to the papal throne.

The other Latin errors that appear in the *Declaratio*, despite the fact that the Secretariat of State at the

¹⁴See. https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/articolo_blog/blog/andrea-cionci/38380528/declaratio-di-ratzinger-manipolata-avvocati-scrivono-a-parolin.html

time had had time from Feb. 7th until the 10th to correct the text and prepare the translations, thus appear as clear elements of red herring, unrelated to the original text, inserted to divert public attention from the only inconsistency between the verbal and written text: the *commissum* pronounced orally and varied in the official writing as *commisso*.

All this also explains perfectly why in the translations into the various modern languages, *munus* and *ministerium* were homologated with the same word “Ministry,” and why in German *Munus-Amt* and *Ministerium-Dienst* were swapped places¹⁵, as to force Declaratio in the sense of a valid abdication..

And here's the “misdeed” pope Benedict is referring to: documented agreements, pacts and electoral plots during the 2005 conclave, in open violation of articles 78-81 UDG¹⁶ aimed at the instrumental election of a transitional pope who could be forced one day to resign.

This “misdeed” (*commissum*) that took place on the day of pope Ratzinger's election, we have some decidedly significant testimonies that piece together a coherent panorama on an electoral maneuver that occurred during that conclave. All the testimonies speak of agreements, vote swaps, pacts, unscrupulous political strategies on the part of some cardinals: this constitutes a blatant infraction especially of Article 81 of the *Universi Dominici Gregis* (UDG) that says:

“The Cardinal electors shall further abstain from any form of pact, agreement, promise or other commitment of any kind which could oblige them to give or deny their vote to a person or persons. If this were in fact done, even under oath, I decree that such a commitment shall be null and void and that no one shall be bound to observe it; and I hereby impose the penalty of excommunication *latae sententiae* upon those who violate this prohibition. It is not my intention however to forbid, during the period in which the See is vacant, the exchange of views concerning the election.”

On the nature of these agreements we have several accounts that reconstruct a coherent view.

First, it is necessary to mention the Authorized Biography of Card. Godfried Danneels written in 2015: it informs us that, before the 2005 conclave, “*Bergoglio earned the trust of many of the participants in the St. Gallen Group*” and that “*Jesuit Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio was a realistic alternative.*”

Bishop Gänswein in 2016 defined that election as the outcome of a “clash,” a “dramatic struggle” between the two key parties; the Salt of the Earth and the St. Gallen Group defined as that of the “dictatorship of relativism.”¹⁷

Then there is the diary of an unknown conclave cardinal reported on the magazin Limes nel 2009¹⁸ according to which, in the 2005 conclave, a stalemate had been created between the two main candidates, Ratzinger and Bergoglio, a situation that was unblocked on the fourth ballot by decanting about fifteen votes from the Argentine cardinal to the German theologian so that he was elected with the name Benedict XVI on April 19, 2005, although certainly not with a large majority.

2005	Ratzinger	Bergoglio					
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¹⁵See <https://www.marcotosatti.com/2022/02/03/cionci-amt-munus-e-dienst-ministerium-invertiti-nella-declaratio-in-tesco-italiano-english-deutsch/>

¹⁶See https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_22021996_universi-dominici-gregis.html

¹⁷See <https://www.romait.it/codice-ratzinger-cosa-pensa-realmente-papa-benedetto-xvi-dellantipapa-bergoglio.html>

¹⁸See <https://www.limesonline.com/da-non-perdere/cosi-eleggemmo-papa-ratzinger-14663310/>

VOT. I	47	10	9 Martini	6 Ruini	4 Sodano	3 Maradiaga	2 Tettamanzi
VOT. II	65	35			4 Sodano		2 Tettamanzi
VOT. III	72	40	1 Castrillon				
VOT. IV	84	26	1 Schoenborn	1 Biffi	1 Law		

Bergoglio states in his book *El Sucesor*¹⁹: *“In that conclave-the news is known-they used me. [...] It happened that I got **forty votes out of one hundred and fifteen** in the Sistine Chapel (3rd ballot also reported by Limes). They were enough to stop the candidacy of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, because, if they had continued to vote for me, he would not have been able to reach the two-thirds which are necessary to be elected pope [...] **The maneuver consisted of putting my name in, blocking Ratzinger's election, and then negotiating a different third candidate.** They then told me that they did not want a foreign pope [...] **it was a full-scale maneuver.** The idea was to block the election of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. They **were using** me, but behind them they were already thinking of proposing another cardinal. They could not agree on who yet, but they were already on the verge of pronouncing a name.”*

Very important, another testimony from 2015 by Father Silvano Fausti, a Jesuit, Rahnerian, friend and confessor of Card. Carlo Maria Martini, a prominent member of the St. Gallen Mafia.

Here is what Fausti explained, revealing confidences received from Martini²⁰: *“Ratzinger's resignation was already planned... At his election with Martini: because they were the two who had more votes. Martini had a little more... The maneuver was something like this: Martini for the progressives, Ratzinger for the conservatives, but they wanted to bring down both of them in order to set up a very creeping curia, which did not succeed. Since he discovered the trick, Martini went to Ratzinger in the evening, (he told me), and told him, “Will you accept tomorrow to become pope with my votes? And then I will give a speech.” And then he told me that he made a speech, he didn't talk about anything else I think; many cardinals blushed ... Martini said many blushed because he denounced the thing ... they were dirty maneuvers ... And then he had told him (to Ratzinger ed.), “Please accept, you who are in the Curia (he had been in the Curia 30 years I think), then you are intelligent and honest, if you can reform it good, if not you leave.” And the first gesture he made (Benedict XVI ed.): he went to L'Aquila, to place his stole, his pallium on the tomb of Celestine V, already from the beginning of the papacy. And then after ten years Martini told him that “it's really time, you know, because nothing can be done here”.*

In summary, most accounts (Dannels, Limes and Bergoglio) state that Ratzinger's competitor was Bergoglio.

We also learn that the two favored candidates, Ratzinger and Bergoglio, had come to an irredeemable, deadlocked head-to-head contest, with Bergoglio clearly outnumbered in votes.

So rather than having a third candidate elected with a large majority, the Italian and curia cardinal mentioned by Bergoglio and Fausti, the St. Gallen Group fell back on the man who, for them, was the “lesser evil.” In fact, Ratzinger, in addition to being quite old (78 years old), could have been easily worn down and forced to resign because he was a figure considered weak and manageable: weak because he would lack a majority; manageable in the media because he was little inclined to communication strategies; mild-mannered in character; a scholar, thus too elevated compared to the masses; coming from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, that is, the most invisible of functions in the

¹⁹See <https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2024/03/31/papa-francesco-nel-conclave-del-2005-i-cardinali-mi-usarono-per-provare-a-bloccare-lascesa-di-joseph-atzinger-al-soglio-pontificio/7497324/>

²⁰See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8fohQqCfj0&t=342s>

collective imagination. Moreover, for decades he had been portrayed to the public as a “sullen German theologian,” “Panzerkardinal,” “God's Rottweiler,” “German Shepherd,” etc.

In the impossibility of electing their own candidate, the Sangallists would have been comfortable electing Ratzinger instead of others: a conservative but fragile pope, to be worn down with obstructionist and oppositional strategies for a few years, to be destroyed in the media, so much so that he was forced to resign, only to have “the pope from the end of the earth,” Bergoglio, greeted with relief and enthusiasm with ample and well-prepared publicity batting.

In 2005, the time was not ripe: Bergoglio did not have yet the votes and he needed time to consolidate his position.

Bergoglio himself admits this in *El Sucesor*: “(Ratzinger) was the only one who could be pope at that time. After the revolution of John Paul II, who had been a dynamic Pontiff, very active, enterprising, traveling ...there was a need for a pope who maintained a healthy balance, a **transitional** pope. [...] If they had chosen someone like me, who causes so much trouble, I could not have done anything. At that time it would not have been possible.”

Ratzinger was, therefore, elected precisely in order to be deposed after a few years: this is the misdeed. In his *Declaratio*, (the only reliable version of the facts and already judged by the Pontiff), this malicious election is linked - *ita ut* - precisely to the purpose of making him leave the See empty, that is, to the emptying, over time, of the powers of the Holy See by forcing the pope to resign. After all, everyone is a witness to the political and media opposition that pope Benedict suffered during his pontificate: the refusal of “La Sapienza” University to host one of his *lectio magistralis*, the continuous scandals about pedophile priests rebounded by the media, the hostility of international politics, but there are also very obscure episodes to be thoroughly investigated, such as the alleged “night accident” suffered by pope Benedict during the apostolic trip to Mexico-Cuba in 2012.

In his last letter to Peter Seewald, he stated that at the center of his resignation there was insomnia, describing a domestic incident due - according to various doctors and specialists - to a drug-induced overdose. This sentence from the letter is telling: “*The next event abroad that awaited me was World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro (July 22-29, 2013). It was clear that under these circumstances, I could no longer manage it, but that a new pope would have to take over the task. This meant that I had to step down before Easter 2013.*”

Benedict had realized after that episode that if he had remained in charge he would not have lived long. By dying, however, enemies would have taken over the papacy through a legitimate conclave. Without an official pronouncement by Benedict XVI that would have schismed the enemies from the start, the Church would have been left defenseless. That is why Benedict decided to get out of the way, but without abdicating and “offering himself to his passion,” that is, to the impeded See. With his *Declaratio*, written in a manner purposely easy to forge, he triggered, on the morning of Feb. 11th, 2013, two processes. On the one hand, the possibility for the conspirators, to gain power and gradually manifest themselves as Gnostic apostates, scandalizing the People of God; on the other hand, the gradual understanding by a “salt of the earth” of the canonical situation and the final resolution of the antipapacy according to the rules of a rule of law.

