

Glatteries Not Included

One Man's Quest for a Second Reformation

By Anthony Sacramone

Dear Son of Satan:

I have before me a crude example of your handiwork, the excrescence of a crafty and subtle mind bent against all that is pure, holy and true. Would that I could confront you in person and be allowed the inestimable delight of pummeling that rat's face of yours until streams of black blood poured from your eye sockets. May the righteousness of heaven rain down on your wretched carcass until the sounds of your own screams and the stench of your fetid, dying flesh awaken within you true repentance.

Luther

Dear Mr. Luther:

I don't know to whom you thought you were corresponding, but please be aware that your letter has reached the marketing department of the Happy Clam Toy Company. I am returning your rather "bombastic" letter, with apologies to the intended recipient.

Sincerely,
Peter Julius
Director of Marketing

Petros, Crown Prince of Deceit:

Has Satan so hardened your heart against the truth that you reject a timely word, given in due season, that convicts you of your impiety and abominations? I, a blameless monk, locked in my cell day and night, am left to fight alone against the wicked impieties of such a shape-shifting prelate as yourself, whose vows of celibacy, obedience and poverty have only served to unbridle a lust for fame, fortune and blasphemy.

Luther

Dear Mr. Luther:

Look, I don't know who—or what—

you want, but I would appreciate it if you would direct these rather vile fulminations elsewhere. Apparently you are under the delusion that you are addressing a Catholic clergyman of some kind. While it has been some time since I have had need to resort to my catechism, I do believe respect for the dignity of church office is still in effect, despite the changes wrought by the Second Vatican Council. Perhaps you could check the address again—or better yet, your invective?

Sincerely,

Peter Julius

Idolatrous Tyrant!

Having made a stinking cesspool of a once-glorious realm, you nevertheless believe yourself to be worthy of an honor due a true vicar of God, rather than the contempt customarily bestowed on the wicked, impious, and deceitful.

You masquerade as a mediator of grace, a savior of souls, a conduit of light in a sin-befouled cosmos, but you are worse than a Turk, more vile than all the pharaohs of Egypt and deserving only of scorn.

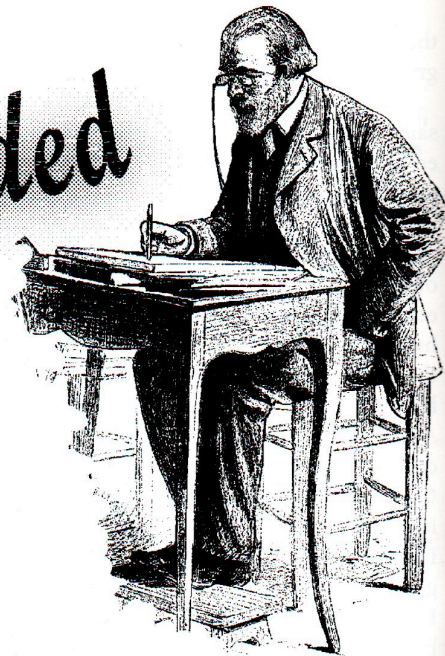
Step down from your chair, Petros, remove your thrice-blasphemous tiara, humble yourself as a fellow sinner saved by the sovereign heart-cleaving Word alone, and perhaps then the Almighty will prove merciful.

Luther

Mr. Luther:

I've tried reading between the lines of your megalomaniacal tirades, and I believe I see the problem, and it is on the face of your envelopes: The Vatican is headquartered in Italy, last time I looked, not Maryland.

If the successor to Peter is your intended mark, as he apparently is, please have someone with a better sense of geography aim your maledictions in the appropriate



direction. This is a toy company, you idiot! Toys! Choo-choo trains, model cars, dollies, games, *Star Wars*—get it?

Sincerely,
Peter Julius

Pestilent Hellbrand:

Do you now seek to deflect my blows with a majestic wave of your Magus' hand? Am I to believe you are no longer responsible for your own calumny, that you have been beguiled by your curia, that abyss of corruption, that stinkhole of liars, fornicators and cretins? Play the man! Repent on your knees or die there.

Luther

Luther:

Bearing the brunt of your venom for several weeks now has caused me to search with some diligence into the history of religious controversies, if just for my edification and possible amusement. I do see an interesting analogue to certain episodes of the 16th century religious schism, with which you are obviously obsessed.

I wish I could find the patience to play the role you have assigned to me and so help you resolve your inner conflicts—and win me some peace. But that requires a vocation I simply make no claim to. At least not yet.

Sincerely,
Peter Julius

