

Confession 34 **Arnaud Faure de Montailou**

Confession of Arnaud Faure of Montailou

The year of the Lord 1321, the 4th of April, Arnaud Faure of Montailou, coming spontaneously to the Reverend Father in Christ Jacques, by the grace of God bishop of Pamiers, having taken an oath on the holy Gospels of God to tell the truth in the matter of heresy as much concerning himself, as warned, as concerning others living and dead as witness, appearing judicially at the château des Allemans, my lord the bishop being assisted by Brother Gaillard of Pomiès, substitute for my lord the inquisitor of Carcassonne, in the presence of the religious persons Brother Arnaud du Carla, O.P. of the convent of Pamiers, David, monk of Fontfroide and of myself Guillaume Peyre-Barthe, notary of my lord the bishop, said, avowed and deposed as follows:

About 16 or 17 years ago, I do not otherwise recall the time, I think in the month of May, I do not recall the exact day, I was coming at dusk from the woods near my house, and when I got to the house, my wife Alazaïs told me that her brother Guillaume Guilabert was gravely ill, at the point of death and she asked me come see him at once and reconcile with him. This happened when there had been a disagreement between myself, his father Jean Guilabert and Guillaume Guilabert, the brother of my wife, because he did not wish to pay me the dowry for my wife. Because of what my wife told me and because of her prayers, I went after dinner to Jean Guilabert's house, in which Guillaume lay sick. When I was there, I found the sick boy had just lost his ability to speak. I reconciled with him and we mutually pardoned each other for the ill that each had done to the other.

Then, a moment later, as I was about to return to my house, my wife Alazaïs and Alamande, my mother-in-law (the wife of Jean Guilabert), who were near the fire, told me not to leave, because Guillaume Belot, my friend, was about to arrive and bring one of the good men, who would receive the sick Guillaume Guilabert into his faith and his sect, to save his soul and absolve him of all his sins.

And I, believing that this good man (that is to say, the heretic) who was going to come with Guillaume Belot, would save the soul of the sick boy and absolve all his sins, remained there to wait for Guillaume Belot and the heretic. I shared this heretical belief for two months and then I repented of it.

While we were exchanging these words between myself, Alazaïs and Alamande, there were also several others present, Guillaume Authié, Guillaume fort, Sibille, the wife of this latter, Exclarmonde, their daughter, the wife of Raimond Clergue of Montailou, who had come to look for her mother, and who was probably about 14 years old, and lived there, and Guillemetter, the wife of Jean Clémens of Gebetz, in the diocese of Alet.

We were there for just a moment, when Alamande and Alazaïs, seeing that Guillaume, the sick boy, was losing his speech, were greatly astonished that Guillaume Belot and the heretic were taking so long to come. They told me to get Guillaume Authié to leave the granary and see if they were coming. We were in the granary and at once three men arrived from the side called the Bac. It was around midnight. These

three men came up to me and Guillaume. I only recognized Guillaume Belot and Bernard Benet. Guillaume and I went to them and asked them "Who is it?" Guillaume Belot replied that they were friends. Guillaume Authie and I said, "Welcome!" and Guillaume Belot greeted us. I went ahead of them and, entering into the house, said to the people who were awaiting Guillaume Belot and the heretic that they had arrived, and Guillaume Belot, Bernard Benet and Guillaume Authié entered at once into the house. Bernard Benet entered just into the second door of the house and did not go into the foyer (foganha) where the sick boy lay.

And even when they had entered into the house I did not recognize the heretic, who was wearing a brown rain cape and had a hood on his head and a felt hat over his hood. The heretic approached the sick boy in bed, as well as Guillaume Belot, and the heretic said that he could do nothing, because the sick boy had already lost his power of speech. Guillaume Belot said, on the contrary, he could easily receive him. I myself do not understand the reason which the said Guillaume gave to the heretic, so that he could receive the sick boy, because he was standing a bit far away from me.

The heretic then, who was standing at the foot of the bed of the sick boy, uncovered his head and I recognized that he was Prades Tavernier, whom I knew before and of whom I knew the general opinion was that he was a heretic and commonly held to be such. Bending his knees many times, and holding a book in his hand towards the sick boy, he hereticated him and received him into his faith and his sect, in my presence and in the presence of Guillaume Belot, Guillaume Authié, Guillaume Fort, Alazaïs, my wife, Alamande, my mother-in-law, Guillemette, the wife of Jean Clémens of Gebetz, Sibille, the wife of Guillaume Fort and Esclarmonde, the wife of Raimond Clergue.

-Did you adore this heretic? -No.

-Did you see anyone else adore the heretic? -No.

Entering into the house, when Guillaume Belot and the heretic arrived, Guillaume Belot told us that they were coming to do "only good" and nothing bad; he told us not to be afraid, but to wait and to see what they were going to do, because they wished to save the soul of the sick boy and give him remission of all sins (as I believed.)

When the heretication was finished, I left the house at once with Guillaume Authié and I saw that the heretic was seated on a bench near the fire. Remaining with him were Guillaume Fort, Guillaume Belot, Alazaïs my wife, Alamande my mother-in-law, Sibille, the wife of Guillaume Fort and Esclarmonde. I do not know what they did with the heretic.

-Have you confessed this anywhere else for justice or penance until now? -I did not believe I had sinned by this belief and these activities.

-Have you seen this heretic or any other anywhere else? -No.

-Have you given or sent anything to the heretic? -No.

-Have you eaten of the bread blessed by these heretics? -No.

-Have you made an agreement with these heretics that you would wish to be received by them if you were to become sick? -No, and no one has ever asked me.

-Why have you hidden this heretication for such a long time and why are you confessing it now? -After people started saying that Bernard Benet had left to go to Carcassonne to denounce this heretication, Raimond Clergue came to see Martin Guilabert (who told me about it later) and told him that Bernard Clergue, his brother, had

convinced this Bernard to go to Carcassonne to reveal this heretication and Raimond counseled Martin to give some sheep or something else to Bernard Benet, so that he would return and not reveal this heretication to the inquisitor of Carcassonne. Martine told him that he would not give anything at all to this Bernard, because he felt himself to be in good health (standing?), and he did not want to give the appearance of being tainted by giving anything to Bernard, but that he was happy for this Bernard to go and confess whatever he wanted to. Raimond told him then to talk to me, so that I could give something to Bernard, who was going to depose against me. Martin agreed, then came to my house and told me what Raimond Clergue had told him. I told him that I myself felt I was being attacked and that I wished to go to my lord the bishop of Pamiers to confess this heretication, since it could no longer be hidden and that I would not give anything to Bernard Benet not to denounce me, because I did not wish to be mocked for the fact that I might give something in order to hide the truth. And then I came to my lord the bishop, before Bernard Benet had come back from Carcassonne, and before the citation of my lord the inquisitor had come to me.

-Do you know anything else about other people who are culpable in the matter of heresy? -About ten years ago, I was passing in front of the house of Bernard Clergue, of Montailou and I heard him arguing with his now-dead mother Mengarde, because she would not do something that he had asked her to do. And then, among other things, Bernard said to her: "You old heretic, you will be burned!" And, as I heard it, she did not contradict him.

And he said nothing else pertinent, although diligently interrogated.

And since he seemed, in view of the accounts of the witnesses, to be telling the truth, he was released from the château des Allemans, and was given permission to remain in the Mas-Saint-Antonin and its boundaries, after having promised under oath that he would not depart its limits.

-Do you know or did you know that Pierre Azéma of Montailou had persuaded or seduced Bernard Benet of Montailou to come to my lord the bishop of Pamiers to retract the confession and deposition that he made concerning the heretication of Guillaume Guilabert before my lord the inquisitor of Carcassonne? -No, I did not know about, nor did I hear that he had done this on his instigation.

(The 7th of April, before the bishop, in the presence of Guillaume Audibert, Bernard de Centelles, David and Guillaume Peyre-Barthe). Recollecting more clearly, he said, under the oath he had taken:

Ten years ago, I was cited by my lord the inquisitor of Carcassonne as a leader of heresy, and after the citation, while I was in my threshing area with Bernard Clergue of Montailou, he said to me: "Have you been cited by my lord the inquisitor?" I told him yes. He told me to take careful note of what I would say, because it was very easy to be stupid and if I were to say anything, I should be careful not to say anything against anyone in his household. And when I went later to Carcassonne, I found this Bernard who had gotten his mother-in-law Guillemette Belot out of the dungeon of the Wall. Between the Wall and the bridge, he told me: "Guard well your idiotic words, because it is very easy to say stupid things." Because of what Bernard had said to me, when I was before my lord the inquisitor, and I was asked, after the oath, if I had seen any heretics, I said no, although I had had the intention of saying what I had said in my previous

confession, if Bernard Clergue had not said that. And now I regret having perjured myself.

And he said nothing more at this time.

(The 15th of April, in the episcopal chamber before the bishop and Brother Gaillard, in the presence of Guillaume Audibert, Bernard de Centelles, David, and Guillaume Peyre-Barthe.)

His confession was read to him intelligibly in the common tongue and he avowed:

I, Arnaud Faure, appearing judicially before you, Reverend Father in Christ, Jacques, by the grace of God bishop of Pamiers, abjure entirely all heresy that rises against the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Roman Church, and all beliefs of heretics, of any sect condemned by the Roman church, and especially of the sect which I followed, and all complicity, welcome, defense and frequenting of these heretics, under pain of punishment which is due in case of a relapse into the heresy here renounced judicially;

Item I swear and promise to pursue according to my power the heretics of any sect condemned by the Roman Church and especially the sect that I followed, and the believers, followers, welcomers and defenders of these heretics, and those that I know or believe to be in flight for reason of heresy, and to cause to be arrested and sent, according to my power, any heretic at all among them to my said lord bishop or to the inquisitors of the heretical deviation at all times and in any place that I learn of the existence of the above said or one amongst them;

Item I swear and promise to hold, guard and defend the Catholic faith which the Holy Roman Church preaches and observes;

Item I swear and promise to obey and defer to the order of the Church, to my lord the bishop and the inquisitors and to appear, on the day and days assigned, before them or their replacements, at all times and in whatever place that I receive the order or requisition on their part, by messenger or by letter or in some other way, to never flee not absent myself knowingly in a spirit of contumaciousness and to receive and accomplish according to my power the punishment and the penance that they may judge good to impose upon me. And to this effect I engage my person and all my goods.

(The 24th of July, in the episcopal chamber, before the bishop and Brother Gaillard, in the presence of Guillaume Audibert, canon of Limoges, Brother Arnaud du Carla, Jean Guilhard, monk of Fontfroide, and Guillaume Peyre-Barthe.) His above confessions were read intelligibly to him in the common tongue and he was asked if he wished to persist and persevere in them. He said yes. If he wanted to add or retract anything he said no. If he had received instructions from anyone or was suborned by anyone to depose thus he said no but he had spoken thus because it was the truth. If he wished to propose or allege anything in his defense, he said no, but he concluded and asked for sentence according to what he had done above.

After this, the 30th of July, the said Arnaud, appearing judicially in the episcopal chamber of Pamiers before my said lord bishop, in the presence of the discreet person master Bernard Faissier, official of Pamiers, of my lord Guillaume Audibert, canon of

Limoges, licensed in Law, of the discreet person master Bernard Gaubert, jurist, of the religious persons my lord Hugues du Breuil, sacrist of the church of Pamiers, Brother Jean Gailhard, monk of Fontfroide and of myself Guillaume Peyre-Barthe, notary of my said lord bishop, witnesses for this convocation. The preceding confessions he had made were read to him intelligibly in the common tongue and he was asked if they were true and if the things had actually happened in fact and reality as were reported therein. He said yes. Asked if he had confessed that which precedes under the influence of any other person or suborned by anyone, he said no, but that this was the truth. Asked if he wished to add or retract or propose anything for his defense, he said no, renounced and concluded and asked that sentence be given.

After this, the same year as above, Thursday the 30th of July, the said Arnaud Faure, appearing judicially in the said Chamber of the bishop's palace before my said lord bishop and the religious person Brother Jean de Beaune, O.P., inquisitor for heresy in the realm of France, commissioned by the Apostolic See, swore on the holy Gospels of God, physically touching them with his hand, to tell the pure and entire truth concerning and related to all facts touching the Catholic faith and the Inquisition, as much concerning himself as charged as concerning others both living and dead as witness. When the confessions he had made before my lord the bishop were read to him and repeated intelligibly and in the common tongue, he said and replied that he wished to hold them and persevere in them, he made them anew, ratified and approved them, saying that he wished to live and die by them, and add, retract or change nothing and she wished equally to hold the extract of his said confession which was read to him "in romancio" (the common tongue), this extract the tenor of which is inserted at greater length in the sentence brought against him.

Done in the presence of the venerable and discreet persons my lord Guillaume Audibert, canon of Limoges, Brothers Gaillard de Pomiès, prior, Arnaud du Carla, O.P., of the convent of Pamiers, Pierre d'Annoires, companion of my said lord inquisitor, and of us, Guillaume Peyre-Barthe, rector of the church of Vira in the diocese of Pamiers, and Menet de Robécourg, of the diocese of Toul, who have written and received that which precedes.

After this, the same year as above, the 2nd of August, Bataille de Penne, notary of my lord the bishop, came on the order of the said lords inquisitor and bishop to the tower of Pamiers of my said lord bishop, and there the said Bataille cited precisely and peremptorily the said Arnaud, who was detained there, to appear the same day before *tierce* in the cemetery Saint-Jean of Pamiers before them, there to hear sentence by reason of the above-mentioned facts avowed by him, and otherwise perform there what is appropriate, an assignation which the said Arnaud accepted of his own free will and spontaneously in the presence and witness of the rector of Génat, Jean Routinier, priest, of Jacques de Montsaly and of Pierre Rega, jailer of this tower.

On the day assigned above to the said Arnaud, he appeared in the cemetery of Sain-Jean-Martyr as he had been order by the said Bataille and there the said lords

bishop and inquisitor proceeded to pronounce the sentence on the said Arnaud in the following manner: "Let all know, etc." The said citation and also the sentence on this Arnaud were received by the said Bataille and he received them in his protocol because I, Guillaume Peyre-Barthe, notary commissioned by my lord the bishop in the facts touching the Catholic faith, was not able to be present because of the malady from which I am suffering. But I have transcribed them from the notes of the said Bataille and have written them and inserted them in the present book on the order of my said lord bishop.

And I, Rainaud Jabbaud, cleric of Toulouse, sworn in the matter of the Inquisition, have, on the order of my lord the bishop, faithfully corrected the said confessions against the original.

NOTES

Condemned to re-enter the dungeon of the Wall of Carcassonne, he was released on January 17, 1329. (*Hist. Inquisitionis*, p. 287, Doat XXVII, folio 148 recto.)