

ROBERT BELLARMINE 1542-1621

Twenty years after Peter Canisius, Robert Bellarmine represents the second wave of Jesuits of the Catholic Reformation. Pope Julius III's papal bull of 1550 had defined the Jesuits' purpose as the defense and propagation of the faith. Bellarmine's career amply demonstrated the response to this injunction. Entrusted with directing theological schools as emissary and adviser of popes, he was named a cardinal in 1599. True to the Jesuits' formative mission, he was a particularly effective defender of papal authority, serving as theologian to Popes Clement VIII and Paul V. He took a special interest in the reform of the hierarchy of the Church itself, particularly episcopal appointments, which at the time were often decided on temporal rather than spiritual grounds. He addressed the process of appointment, regulations for residency, and decisions concerning transfer from one see to another.

His writings, especially the *De Controversiis*, published in 1586, 1588 and 1593, are model codifications of arguments against the positions of Protestant preachers. In contrast to much of the polemical and incendiary literature and broadsides of his time, his approach stresses a reasoned analysis of both the positive and negative positions of the

