

oirs of her childhood in Restoration Turin, Baroness Olimpia Savio recalled how the “only point of contact allowed then between one class and the other” came on Sundays and holidays when the nobles and “those who were among the better sort in the city touched elbows” as they promenaded under the arcades near the royal palace.

Victor Emanuel I was no less generous in his treatment of the Roman Catholic Church, which he viewed as an essential ally that provided a theological justification for absolutism and promoted popular devotion to the Savoyard dynasty. Accordingly, the king allowed the Church to revive and re-endow its religious orders, while his concordat with the Vatican reinstituted ecclesiastical courts in the Kingdom of Sardinia. The Jesuits benefited, in particular, from the re-establishment of a monarchical order that gave them sweeping authority over social welfare policy, education and censorship. Since the great powers formally sanctioned the sale of ecclesiastical properties during the French occupation, the convents and monasteries did not regain their old prominence in Turin after 1814, but their diminished role was filled by thriving local parishes headed by the secular clergy, who came to dominate the religious life of the city.

These institutional changes coincided with the conscious revival of a traditional Catholic culture that treated the fall of Napoleon as a sign of divine intervention in human affairs and reaffirmed the essential tenets of religious faith in all areas of civic life and at official events. Thus, on May 20, 1814, a *Te Deum* was celebrated in the main cathedral of the city in honor of the returning king, whose procession stopped to venerate the Holy Shroud. For its part, the municipal government chose to celebrate the return of the Savoyard dynasty by building a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary on the site where the king had crossed the Po on his re-entry into the city. In recognition of the renewed solidarity of throne and altar in the Kingdom of Sardinia, Pope Pius VII made an official visit to Turin a year later where he and the king jointly celebrated a rare public display of the Shroud. At a more practical level, the greatly enhanced importance of the Catholic Church within the city found expression in the re-establishment of religious holidays banned by the French, the abandonment of the catechism imposed by Napoleon, and the strict observance of the sacraments. At the same time, religious orders and associations resumed their traditional role as dispensers of philanthropy and charitable services to the sick, elderly, orphans, and others in need.

The alliance of the Savoyard dynasty with the Catholic Church came, first and foremost, at the expense of the principal religious minorities,