

# DRAFT OF A DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION ON THE CHURCH

## CHAPTER I

### THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH MILITANT

#### *1. Prologue: The Plan of God the Father.*

After the human race had, through the sin of the first parent, Adam, wretchedly fallen from the state of original justice, the eternal Father of the only-begotten Son, in the utterly free and secret plan of his wisdom, determined to redeem it through the death of his incarnate Son and to bring it into his Kingdom.<sup>1</sup> Thus, when the fullness of time had come,<sup>2</sup> he sent his Son, who, by offering himself through the Holy Spirit as a spotless victim to God,<sup>3</sup> would cleanse a people acceptable to himself.<sup>4</sup> For it pleased the Father that the redeemed, especially in the new and eternal covenant, would not stand before him to be sanctified simply as individuals, unrelated and unconnected, but rather that, called from among the many, they should constitute a new chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, the new Israel,<sup>5</sup> under one Head, Jesus Christ, by whose power all would together be not only redeemed, but, by perpetuating the saving work of Christ, redeemers.<sup>6</sup>

#### *2. The Son's Fulfilment of the Father's Plan.*

When, therefore, the only Son of God, born of a woman, dwelt among us,<sup>7</sup> constituted as the new Adam, head of the whole human race, he obeyed his Father's will.<sup>8</sup> He discharged for us the tasks of Teacher,<sup>9</sup> Priest,<sup>10</sup> and King,<sup>11</sup> and in many ways he sanctifies and wisely governs the People of God<sup>12</sup> towards salvation, not only by himself but also by overseers chosen by himself. For he appointed such overseers among his people and endowed them with the offices of preacher, priest and king, to be exercised under Peter, saying, "All power has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Going therefore teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world" (Mt 28:18-20); and, "Going into the whole world, preach the Gospel to every creature. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned" (Mk 16:15-16).

This new people of God, therefore, which the Apostle Paul called the Israel of God,<sup>13</sup> does not advance like a disorderly mob, but like a disciplined army nourished by spiritual food and drinking from the spiritual rock that follows them;<sup>14</sup> victoriously opposing the gates of hell<sup>15</sup> and the snares of the devil, one and unique in spirit and in love, it will endure till the end of the world in unity of faith, in the communion of the sacraments, and in apostolicity of government.

#### *3. The Nature of the Israel of God as Expressed in the Word "Church" and in Various Figures.*

Just as Moses called the Israel according to the flesh,<sup>16</sup> which wandered about in the desert, "the Church of God",<sup>17</sup> so also did Christ proclaim the Israel of God, which marches forward in this world in pursuit of the lasting city that is to come,<sup>18</sup> to be "the Church;" indeed he

declared it to be his Church,<sup>19</sup> not only because he acquired her by his own blood,<sup>20</sup> but also because he carefully endowed her with the means necessary for its purpose and built her upon Peter<sup>21</sup> and upon his successors, in whom Peter would live on with his perpetual authority.

In order more clearly and more definitely to reveal the character and nature of his Church, Christ, either by himself or through the Apostles, represented her in various images and called her by various names by which her social and mystical aspects are particularly described. Thus what is proclaimed to be God's kingdom,<sup>22</sup> house,<sup>23</sup> and temple<sup>24</sup> is also declared to be a flock or a sheepfold,<sup>25</sup> the Bride of Christ,<sup>26</sup> the pillar and ground of truth.<sup>27</sup>

#### *4. The Figure of the Body of Christ.*

But of all the figures, because it more clearly expresses the social element along with the mystical, the principal one is the figure of the body which, at Christ's inspiration,<sup>28</sup> Paul used: "And he is the Head of the Body of the Church" (Col 1:18); "which is his Body and the fulness of him who fills all in all" (Eph 1:23). For all those who have entered the Church through baptism<sup>29</sup> and have put on Christ in the communion of the saints,<sup>30</sup> since they share in the one eucharistic bread, are made perfect<sup>31</sup> in the unity of the one Body: "Because there is one bread, we, though many, are one body, for we all share in the one bread" (1 Cor 10:17).

#### *5. Explanation of the Figure of the Body.*

By the very fact that she is a body, the Church is seen by the eyes, something suggested by other images as well. It is, moreover, a structure of many members, not, of course, all equal,<sup>32</sup> since some members are subordinate to others and since there are in the Church clergy and laity, superiors and subjects, teachers and pupils, and different states too, over all of which Christ the Head is superior in position, perfection and power.

In this structured body of members, besides the connection deriving from social, juridical, and ministerial bonds, there is also another connection that is completed by the growth,<sup>33</sup> the acts,<sup>34</sup> and sufferings<sup>35</sup> of the members. Indeed, it is that very conformity of nature and of life which the Lord illustrated when he compared himself to a vine and us to branches: "I am the vine and you the branches; whoever remains in me and I in him bears fruit, for without me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5).

As Christ is the Body's Head, so also the Holy Spirit, dwelling in the Head and in the members,<sup>36</sup> is its Soul. Since the Spirit is one, he establishes and maintains the whole Body in unity;<sup>37</sup> and to all the members, in accordance with the measure of Christ's giving,<sup>38</sup> he distributes grace and gifts and confers charisms.<sup>39</sup> For this reason, the Church is said to be in Christ Jesus one person, a mystical person, of course: "For you are all one [person] in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28).

In the body, however, not all members flourish in holiness, for within it there are sick members, who, though without grace and charity, are joined to Christ the Head at least by the virtue of faith.<sup>40</sup> The sins of such members do indeed offend the Church but they do no injury to her essential holiness; for the Church is holy principally because, as Christ's Bride, since she has been established in holiness,<sup>41</sup> she gives birth unto holiness to her members, she is never without members outstanding in holiness,<sup>42</sup> and, furthermore, she not only curbs the sins of her members but also by her ministry restores her sick members to their original and, at times, to a richer holiness. For the Church is a devoted Mother, who not only conceives her members by the

preaching of the word and gives them birth in baptism, but also feeds them with the food of saving truth and of the sacraments and every day unites them more closely to the divine life.

*6. The Church Society is the Mystical Body of Christ.*

Since the Holy Spirit bestows on the Church, in the various offices and ministries, many charisms corresponding to her social character and to her divine mission, so that those who are endowed with them may, as God's helpers,<sup>43</sup> work along with him to build up the Body of Christ,<sup>44</sup> it is false to say that the hierarchical Church, the Church of law, really differs from the charismatic Church, or the so-called Church of love. For that reason, the Church society and the Mystical Body of Christ are not two realities, but only one, which presents both a human and a divine aspect, and which, therefore, by no slight analogy, is compared to the mystery of the Incarnate Word.<sup>45</sup>

For as in the Incarnate Word the human nature served as a living instrument of his divine nature for our and the whole world's salvation, and continues so to serve in heaven, so the Church society is equipped with the charisms of preacher, priest and king so that she might serve the Spirit of Christ in the building up of Christ's Body; for these charisms, no less than others given by the Spirit, are to be exercised as a service and ministry of truth and love, so that the salvation gained by Christ as well as all the benefits that derive from it might be spread to all men and to all ages.<sup>46</sup>

*7. The Catholic Roman Church is the Mystical Body of Christ.*

The holy Synod teaches and solemnly professes, therefore, that there is only a single true Church of Jesus Christ, that Church which in the Creed we proclaim to be one, holy, catholic and apostolic,<sup>47</sup> the Church which the Savior acquired for himself on the cross<sup>48</sup> and joined to himself as body to head and as bride to bridegroom, the Church which, after his resurrection, he handed over to be governed to St. Peter and his successors, the Roman Pontiffs.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, only the Catholic Roman is rightly called the Church.<sup>50</sup>

## NOTES

1. See Col 1:13.
2. See Gal 4:4.
3. See Hb 9:14.
4. See Tit 2:14.
5. See 1 Pet 2:9 and Gal 6:16.
6. See Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 7,2; Pius XII, Enc. *Mystici Corporis*, AAS, 35 (1943), 221.
7. See Gal 4:4.

8. See Phil 2:8.

9. See Mt 23:8-10; Jn 13:13-14.

10. See Hb 4:14; 5:10; 9:11-14.

11. See Lk 23:3; Jn 18:37. On the threefold messianic role, see also Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, I,3 (PG 20, 68-73), and his *Demonstr. Evang.*, IV,15 (PG 22, 290-91); John Chrysostom, *In 2 Cor.*, Hom. 3,5 (PG 61, 411); *Fastid. Britt. De Vita Christi*, 1 (PL 50, 384); St. Thomas, *Ad Rom.*, Lect I, and *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 31, a. 2; *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, I, ch. 3, 7. To these can be added many pontifical documents of Leo XIII, St. Pius X, and Pius XII.

12. See 1 Pet 2:10.

13. See Gal 6:6.

14. See 1 Cor 10:3.

15. See Mt 16:18 and Eph 6:11.

16. See 1 Cor 10:18.

17. See Nb 20:4; Deut 23:2.

18. See Hb 13:14.

19. See Mt 16:18.

20. See Acts 20:28.

21. See Mt 16:18.

22. See Mt 16:19; see Leo XIII, Enc. *Satis cognitum*, ASS, 28 (1895-96), 724.

23. See 1 Tim 3:15; Mt. 16:18; see Leo XIII, l.c.

24. See 1 Cor 3:16; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21.

25. See Jn 10:16; 21:15-17; 1 Pt 5:2-3; Lk 12:32; Mt 26:31; see Leo XIII, l.c.

26. See Rev 21:9; 22:17; Eph 5:22-32. The preaching of Christ is described as spousal in Mt 9:15; Mk 2:19; Lk 5:34; Jn 3:29.

27. See 1 Tm 3:15.

28. See Acts 9:4; 22:7; 26:14; see Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c., p. 193.

29. See Jn 3:5.

30. See Gal 3:27.

31. See Jn 17:23.

32. See Rm 12:4-8; 1 Cor 12:1-31; Eph 4:11-16. see Leo XIII, Enc. *Sapientiae christianae*, ASS, 22 (1889-90), 392, and *Satis cognitum*, l.c., pp. 710 and 724f.; Pius XII, *Mystici corporis*, l.c., pp. 199-200.

33. See Eph 4:11-14.

34. See 1 Cor 12:18-30.

35. See 1 Cor 12:26, collated with Col 1:24; 2 Tm 2:10.

36. See Rm 8:11.

37. Leo XIII, Enc. *Divinum illud*, ASS, 29 (1896-97), 650; Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c., pp. 219-20; St. Thomas, *In Col.* I, lect. 5: "As a body is constituted as one reality by the unity of its soul, so is the Church by the unity of the Spirit."

38. See Eph 4:7.

39. See 1 Cor 12:4-11, collated with 1 Cor 12:28 and Eph 4:11-12.

40. See the Council of Trent, Session VI, *De iustificatione*, ch. 15 and canon. 28 (Dz. 808 and 838); Pius V, *Errores Baii*, prop. 63-64 (Dz. 1063-64); Chrysostom, *In Ep. ad Eph.*, ch. 6, hom. 22,4: "For many are united to Christ but without loving him" (PG 62, 161); Augustine, *Sermo* 349,2 (PL 39, 1530), teaches that even in the Body of Christ the love of a prostitute leads to hell; in his *De abstinentia*, ch. II, he compares the Church with the flesh lusting against the spirit, insofar as, because of the sickness in its members, it does not yet have peace: "Thus, why may we not admit that in spiritual people the Church is subject to Christ, but in those of the flesh it still lusts against Christ?... These lusts Christ heals in those who are his own, but he loves them in no one. Thus as long as the Church also has such members, it is not yet without spot or wrinkle" (PL 40, 366).

41. See Eph 5:26-27.

42. See Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c., p. 201.

43. See 1 Cor 3:9.

44. See Eph 4:11-16.

45. See Leo XIII, *Satis cognitum*, l.c., p. 712.

46. See Pius IX, Epist. *La Chiesa di Dio*, ASS, 6 (1870), 267; Leo XIII, *Satis cognitum*, l.c., p. 710; Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c., p. 206-7; St. Thomas, *In Eph.* 4, lect. 4; *Quodlib.* VII, q. 6, a. 2, ad 5.

47. See *Symbolum Apostolicum* (Dz. 6-9), *Symbolum Nic.-Const.* (Dz. 86), collated with *Prof. Fidei Trid.* (Dz. 994 and 999).

48. See 1 Pt 2:9; Acts 20:28; Eph 2:15-16; and the hymn for Vespers on the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart.

49. On the identity of the Catholic Church and the Mystical Body, see Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c., p. 221ff; *Humani generis*, *AAS*, 42 (1950), 571. Pius XII is following in the footsteps of many of his predecessors.

50. The Church is Catholic Roman: see *Prof. Fidei Trid.* (Dz. 999); Vatican Council I, *De fide cath.* (Dz. 1782). The First Vatican Council deliberately said "Catholic apostolic Roman" and not "Roman Catholic," because the latter smacks of the doctrine of the three branches.

## CHAPTER II

### THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH MILITANT AND HER NECESSITY FOR SALVATION

#### *8. The Necessity of the Church for Salvation.*

The Holy Synod teaches, as God's Holy Church has always taught, that the Church is necessary for salvation<sup>1</sup> and that no one can be saved who, knowing that the Catholic Church was founded by God through Jesus Christ, nevertheless refuses to enter her or to persevere in her.<sup>2</sup> Just as no one can be saved except by receiving baptism--by which anyone who does not pose some obstacle to incorporation<sup>3</sup> becomes a member of the Church--or at least by desire for baptism,<sup>4</sup> so also no one can attain salvation unless he is a member of the Church or at least is ordered towards the Church by desire. But for anyone to attain to salvation, it is not enough that he be really a member of the Church or be by desire ordered towards it; it is also required that he die in the state of grace, joined to God by faith, hope, and charity.<sup>5</sup>

#### *9. Members in the Proper Sense.*

Although many real relations exist in the juridical<sup>6</sup> and sacramental order, and indeed can exist in the mystical order,<sup>7</sup> by which every baptized person is linked with the Church, still, according to the most ancient tradition, only they are called members of the Church in the true and proper sense in whom the Church, one and indivisible, indefectible and infallible, comes together in unity of faith, sacraments and government. They, therefore, are truly and properly to be said to be members of the Church who, washed in the bath of regeneration, professing the true Catholic faith, and acknowledging the authority of the Church,<sup>8</sup> are joined in its visible structure<sup>9</sup> to its Head, Christ, who rules it through his Vicar,<sup>10</sup> and have not been cut off from the structure of the Mystical Body because of very serious offences.<sup>11</sup> As for those ordered by desire towards the Church, these include not only catechumens,<sup>12</sup> who, moved by the Spirit, consciously and explicitly desire to enter the Church, but also those who, even if not knowing that the Catholic Church is the true and sole Church of Christ, still, by God's grace, implicitly and unknowingly desire the equivalent,<sup>13</sup> either because they sincerely will what Christ himself wills or because, though ignorant of Christ, they sincerely desire to fulfil the will of God their Creator. The gifts of heavenly grace will never be wanting to those who sincerely desire and ask to be renewed by the divine light.<sup>14</sup>

#### *10. Union with Those Separated.*

With those who do not profess the true faith or unity of communion with the Roman Pontiff, but still desire it, even if unknowingly, kindly Mother Church knows herself to be linked on many counts; this is true in a singular way if the baptized exult in the Christian name and, although they do not believe with Catholic faith,<sup>15</sup> still lovingly believe in Christ as God and Savior, particularly if they excel in faith and devotion towards the Most Holy Eucharist and in love for the Mother of God. For, besides that common faith in Christ, there is also a share in the

same baptismal consecration, at least some communion in prayer, expiation, and spiritual benefits,<sup>16</sup> indeed some union in the Holy Spirit, who does not only work by his gifts and graces in the Mystical Body herself, but also acts by his power, not excluding sanctifying grace, outside that venerable Body so that the separated brethren may be incorporated into her in the manner established by Christ.<sup>17</sup> That this activity of the Spirit of Christ for the growth of the Mystical Body may achieve a fuller effect, the Church never ceases to pray that the separated brethren, showing themselves freely and spontaneously docile to the internal impulses of divine grace, may strive to leave that state in which they lack so many and such great heavenly gifts and aids for obtaining eternal salvation, gifts and aids which they alone may enjoy who are really members of the Church.<sup>18</sup> Let all the children of the Church, therefore, be mindful of their own privileged condition, which they must ascribe not to their own merits but to the special grace of Christ; and, if they do not correspond to this grace in thought, word and deed, not only will they not be saved, they will be the more severely judged.<sup>19</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For the teaching of the Fathers, Ignatius of Antioch, Origen, Cyprian, Jerome, Augustine, Fulgentius, see Tromp, *De Spiritu Christi Anima*, pp. 210-13. For the teaching of the Church, see the *Athanasian Creed* (Dz 40); Pelagius II, Letter *Dilectionis vestris* (Dz 247); Innocent III, *Profession of Faith for the Waldensians* (Dz 423); Boniface VIII, Bull *Unam sanctam* (Dz 468); Clement VI, Epist. *Super quibusdam* (Dz 570b); the Council of Florence, *Decree for the Jacobites* (Dz 714); the *Tridentine Profession of Faith* (Dz 1000); Benedict XIV, *Profession of Faith for the Maronites* (Dz 1473); Gregory XVI, Enc. *Mirari vos* (Dz 1613); Pius IX, Enc. *Quanto conficiamur maerore* (Dz 1677); *Syllabus*, n. 16-17 (Dz 1716-17); Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis* (AAS 35 [1943], pp. 242-43); *Humani generis* (Dz 2319); *Letter of the Holy Office to the Archbishop of Boston*, Aug. 8, 1949 (found in the Appendix to Fr. Tromp's third edition of *Mystici Corporis*).

<sup>2</sup> Letter of the Holy Office to the Archbishop of Boston.

<sup>3</sup> The obstacle may be posed both with regard to grace and with regard to the juridical effect; see CIC, can. 87. The obstacle to grace, for example, is had if an adult to be baptized does not want to abstain from mortal sin; there is an obstacle to membership, if an adult to be baptized lacks faith. In Church documents the limitation, "unless some obstacle is posed," is often presupposed. See the *Tridentine Profession of Faith* (D 996), where it is said that "sacraments confer grace," without any restriction, in opposition to the Canon on Sacraments in general (D 849). And a Sacrament is generally defined as "a sensible sign instituted by Christ which confers the grace it signifies," and no one requires the addition, "to those who place no obstacle."

<sup>4</sup> Council of Trent, Decree on Justification (D 796), collated with ch. 14, "on the lapsed" (D 807).

<sup>5</sup> Letter of the Holy Office to the Archbishop of Boston: "Nor should it be thought that just any desire to enter the Church suffices for a person to be saved. It is required that the desire by which someone is ordered towards the Church be informed by perfect charity, nor can the implicit desire have an effect if the person does not have supernatural faith (Hb 11:6; Council of Trent [D 801])."

<sup>6</sup> Every baptized person, in virtue of baptism, is subject to the laws of the Church. See Benedict XIV, Enc. *Singulari nobis*, #14; Leo XIII, Enc. *Annum sacrum* (ASS 31 [1898-99], p. 647); Pius XI, Enc. *Quas primas* (AAS 17 [1925], p. 601; D 2196; can. 12).

<sup>7</sup> See #10 on union in the Holy Spirit.



<sup>8</sup> The words of *Mystici Corporis* have been changed because among the baptized who do not acknowledge the Church's authority there are very many who never personally separated from the Church, as, for example, all the Baptists who, while they are being baptized, place an obstacle in the way of membership.

<sup>9</sup> Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c., pp. 199-100; 223-24.

<sup>10</sup> Boniface VIII, *Unam sanctam* (D 468); Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c. p. 211.

<sup>11</sup> See: (1) Clement VIII, Instruction *Magnus Dominus*: "#1. Recently the venerable brother Michael, Archbishop and Metropolitan of Kiev... and with him several of his fellow bishops in the Province... *with their hearts illumined by the divine light of the Holy Spirit*, began to think in themselves and to confer together with much deliberation and prudence, and seriously to consider that *they and the flocks they shepherd are not members of the Body of Christ* which is the Church because they are not in unity with the visible head of that Church, the supreme Roman Pontiff... For that reason, they decided to return to the Roman Church, their Mother, the Mother of all believers."

(2) Benedict XIV, *Singulari Nobis*, nn. 13 and 14: "It is certain that a person who *rightly* receives baptism from a heretic becomes, by virtue of that baptism, a member of the Catholic Church... We consider it established that those baptized by heretics, if they reach the age at which they can by themselves distinguish good from evil and commit themselves to the errors of the one who baptized them, are cast off from the unity of the Church and are deprived of the benefits that are enjoyed by members of the Church; they are not, however, freed from its authority and laws."

(3) Pius IX, *In suprema* (Acta, P. I, vol. I, p. 89f): "Nor can it ever happen that people are in the communion of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic [Church] if they wish to be separated from the solid Rock on which the Church was built by God... We do not, therefore, wish to place on you any other burden than what is necessary, namely that, returned to unity, you agree with Us in the profession of the true Faith which the Catholic Church holds and teaches and that, with the Church herself, you retain communion with this See of Peter."

(4) Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c., pp. 202-203 and 242-43.

(5) Letter of the Holy Office to the Archbishop of Boston.

(6) See also Pius V, *Regnans in Ecclesia*: "#3. ...Elizabeth the heretic... and those who agree with her on the matters mentioned, has incurred the sentence of anathema and is cut off from the unity of the Body of Christ;" and many other similar statements.

(7) To know the mind of John XXIII, happily reigning, see Address *In solemnibus* (AAS 52 [1960], p. 1009): "[The brethren] who are separated from Us and who are outside the fold of the Catholic Church... so that... they may someday enter into that unity [of which Jn 17:19-21 speaks]." *Prayer to the Holy Spirit*: "We also pray for the sheep who are *no longer* in the one sheepfold of Jesus Christ, that they also, if they glory in the name 'Christian,' may finally again find unity under a single Shepherd." What is meant by the Supreme Pontiff's words, "if they glory in the name 'Christian,'" is clear from his Address to the Faithful of Ireland (*L'Oss. Rom.*, March 18, 1961): "Be *Romans*, just as you are Christians. Belonging to the Church of Rome is the distinctive mark of every *true* Christian."

The Letter, *Quotiescumque Nobis*, to Cardinal Tien-Chen-Sin (*L'Oss. Rom.*, June 29, 1961): "... And in the first place, we exhort you, Venerable Brothers, that you not fail to remind the sheep entrusted to your oversight of these most serious and salutary truths: namely, that no one can render to Almighty God the worship due him nor be joined to him except through Jesus Christ; that he cannot be joined to Christ except in the Church and through the Church, which is his Mystical Body; finally, that he cannot belong to the Church except through the Bishops, successors of the Apostles, who are joined to the Supreme Pastor, who is the successor of Peter."

Enc., *Aeterna Dei sapientia* (AAS, 53 [1961], p. 794): "But it must be kept in mind that believers do not have that perfect union with the divine Redeemer and Head of all things by which they constitute with Him one living and visible body, unless, in union with one another in virtue of the same virtues of

soul and by sharing in religious rites and sacraments, they all also maintain and profess the same faith."

<sup>12</sup> On catechumens, see St. Ambrose, *De obitu Valentini*, 51 (PL 16, 1374); St. Augustine, *De Baptismo*, IV, 21,28 (PL 43, 172); Innocent II, *Epist. ad Episc. Cremon.* (PL 179, 624f) collated with Dz 388; Innocent III, *Epist ad Episc. Meten.* (PL 215, 986f), collated with Dz 413.

<sup>13</sup> Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c. pp. 242-43; Letter of the Holy Office to the Archbishop of Boston.

<sup>14</sup> See Pius IX, *Singulari quadam* (D 1648).

<sup>15</sup> A distinction must be made between divine faith simply and catholic divine faith. Catholic faith can be considered objectively (see, for example, Dz 1000) and subjectively (see Dz 1792). Subjective Catholic faith presupposes the magisterium of the Church as the norm of faith and as a motive of credibility. Baptism does not make one a member unless there is subjective Catholic faith. When, in the Council of Trent's Decree on Justification, ch. 7 (D 800), that faith is discussed by which someone is made a living member of the Body, if grace is present, it is a question of that subjective faith which catechumens beg of the Church, that is, of *Catholic* faith, formed by charity.

<sup>16</sup> The phrase "Communion of Saints" is not employed because it has various interpretations in the tradition.

<sup>17</sup> Note Augustine's distinction: between "leading on the way" and "leading to the way," between "leading in Christ" and "leading towards Christ;" see *In Ps.* 85, 15 (PL 37, 1092); Clement VIII, Instruction *Magnus Dominus*, "#1. ...with the divine light of the Holy Spirit illumining their hearts, they began to think among themselves ...that they and the flocks they shepherd are not members of the Body of Christ which is the Church."

<sup>18</sup> Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c., pp. 242-43. See Clement VIII, l.c.; Pius IX, *Syllabus*, n. 17 (Dz 1717); Letter of the Holy Office to the Archbishop of Boston.

<sup>19</sup> Mt 5:19-20; 7:21-22; 25:41-46; Jas 2:14.

## CHAPTER III

### THE EPISCOPATE AS THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF THE SACRAMENT OF ORDERS

#### THE PRIESTHOOD

##### *11. The Episcopate as a Sacrament*

Jesus, Apostle and High Priest of our confession (see Hb 3:1), the Shepherd and Guardian of our souls (1 Pet 2:25), so established the power of authoritatively teaching and governing in the Church that by its very nature it is closely connected with the power to sanctify that is conferred in the Sacrament of Orders.<sup>1</sup> There is no doubt, therefore, that the Episcopate belongs to the Sacrament of Orders; it is the priesthood at its supreme level, that which in the words of the holy Fathers and the ritual custom of the Church is called the high priesthood, the summit of the sacred ministry.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, since it is clear from Tradition, known especially from the liturgical rites<sup>3</sup> and from the practice of both the Eastern and Western Church,<sup>4</sup> that by the imposition of hands and the words of episcopal consecration, the grace of the Holy Spirit is conferred, no one should doubt that the Episcopate is truly and properly the supreme level of the Sacrament of Orders.<sup>5</sup> A consecrated Bishop, moreover, is so marked by the sacramental character of orders that he can never again become a simple priest or layman nor lose the power validly to confer the sacrament of confirmation and to ordain the ministers of the Church. Therefore, the Holy Synod declares that Bishops, even solely in virtue of the sacrament received, are superior to presbyters in the hierarchy of Orders.

##### *12. Presbyters*

Presbyters, who are ordained by Bishops as a support to their order and work and upon whom, as it were, the abundance of their paternal plenitude is poured out,<sup>6</sup> although they do not possess the apex of the Pontificate, nevertheless, by the sacrament they receive are true priests.<sup>7</sup> In offering the sacrifice of the Mass and in administering the sacraments, they too act in the person of Christ. But they do not obtain any jurisdiction or care of souls except through direct or indirect bestowal by the Roman Pontiff or by the competent Bishop, by whom they are received as co-operators and whom they represent in shepherding the flock.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See Leo XIII, Enc. *Satis cognitum* (ASS, 28 [1895-96] 723); Pius XII, Address to the Second World Congress on the Lay Apostolate (AAS, 49 [1957], p. 924).

<sup>2</sup> Leo XIII, Epistle *Apostolicae Curae* (ASS, 29 [1896-97], p. 200).

<sup>3</sup> In all the liturgical documents from the very first centuries of the Church, episcopal consecration is described in such a way that its sacramental character is clear since through it some grace of the Holy Spirit is conferred.

<sup>4</sup> It is certain that episcopal consecration was often conferred on a man who was not a priest; see Gregory of Nyssa, *Oration* 18, 33 (PG 35, 1027-30); John Chrysostom, *De Beato Philogonio, Hom.*, 6, 2 (PG 48, 751); Augustine, *Epist.* 209 (PL 33, 953f); *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, I, 209; Ordines Romani: see M. Andrieu, *Les Ordines Romani du Haut Moyen-Age*, III (Louvain, 1951), p. 572f, p. 608 and 610.

<sup>5</sup> This is also clear from the way the Roman Pontiffs speak; see Leo XIII, *Apostolicae Curae*, l.c., pp. 199-200; Pius XII, Apostolic Constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis* (AAS, 40 [1948], pp. 5-7); John XXIII, Address, May 8, 1960 (AAS, 52 [1960], p. 466): episcopal consecration confers both the episcopal character and grace.

<sup>6</sup> *Pontificale Romanum*, On the Ordination of a Presbyter. The image, taken from Aaron and his sons, is also found in many liturgical texts and in the Fathers. The words, "as a support," are found in the *Pontificale Romanum*, On the Ordination of a Presbyter. The image is taken from the seventy men who were appointed to assist Moses, and it is found in all the liturgical documents, and already in Hyppolytus of Rome's *Traditio Apostolica*.

<sup>7</sup> Innocent I, *Letter to Decentius* (PL 20, 554f; see Mansi 3, 1029; Dz 98).

## CHAPTER IV

### RESIDENTIAL BISHOPS

#### *13. The Office and Dignity of Bishops*

Christ "did not come to be served but to serve" (Mt 20:28), and the men he himself wished till the end of time to succeed the Apostles<sup>1</sup> in the office of teachers and pastors for the building up and ministry of his Church, these the Holy Spirit has appointed as Bishops to govern the Church of God (see Acts 20:28).<sup>2</sup> Individual Bishops, as vicars and legates of Christ,<sup>3</sup> rule the individual Churches entrusted to them with proper, ordinary and immediate jurisdiction in unity with the Roman Pontiff and under his authority,<sup>4</sup> ever mindful, as fathers of the faithful and shepherds of their flocks,<sup>5</sup> of the admonition of the Prince of Apostles: "Tend the flock of God which is your charge, not by constraint but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly, not as lording it over your charges but by becoming from the heart a pattern to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd comes, you will receive an unfailing crown of glory" (1 Pet 5:2-4). Not only can and must Bishops direct by counsel, persuasion, example, but they also have real and proper power not only in the internal and sacramental forum but also in the external and public forum. For they have the power to command by laws that bind in conscience, and this not only in matters relating to doctrine and morals, worship and sanctification, but also in those relating to discipline and external ecclesiastical administration. Finally, they can and at times they must, with great prudence and charity, coerce, compel and punish the erring and the contumacious by external judgment and salutary penalties for the public good, for the good of souls, indeed for the good of the delinquent himself.<sup>6</sup> Every bishop, therefore, taken from among men and beset with weakness, must have compassion on the ignorant and the erring (see Hb 5:1-2); and, ever stirring up the grace that is in him through the imposition of hands (see 2 Tm 1:6), let him fulfill the various duties of his office as a living image of the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep (see Jn 10:11); and, since he must one day render an account to God for souls (see Hb 13:17), he must care also, by prayer, preaching and charity, for those who do not yet belong to his sheepfold.

#### *14. Primacy and Episcopacy*

Although ordination to the highest level of the Priesthood, together with the office of sanctifying, also confers the offices of teaching and governing which constitute jurisdiction,<sup>7</sup> nevertheless, Bishops do not receive the exercise of jurisdiction from their sacred ordination itself, but in virtue of a mission, a mission that they receive, not from the Church insofar as it is the congregation of the faithful, nor from the faithful, even if gathered in great numbers, nor from the civil power, but from the supreme governing authority of the Church. For, as St. Leo the Great says, Blessed Peter the Apostle "was inundated with such copious effusions from the very spring of all charisms [Jesus Christ] that, since he alone received much, nothing passes on to anyone else except by participating in him."<sup>8</sup> This mission can be conferred by legitimate customs never revoked by the supreme and universal power of the Church, or by laws enacted or ratified by that same authority, or directly by the successor of Peter himself; and, if he should be opposed, Bishops cannot assume the office, and they can be deposed, transferred or reinstated by

him.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, Bishops are so subject to the supreme power of the Roman Pontiff that he can extend or restrict the exercise of their ordinary jurisdiction, even by exempting subjects; for the Roman Pontiff possesses sovereign authority over all other ordinary powers, as well as immediate and episcopal power of jurisdiction both over each and every Church and over each and every shepherd and member of the faithful.<sup>10</sup>

They err greatly, however, who maintain that Bishops have only delegated power and not a proper and ordinary power linked to the episcopal office itself. They also err greatly who maintain that this power of Bishops can be abolished, absorbed, or increased by the supreme pontifical power, or that the power of Bishops is not of divine origin and truly proper and so does not pertain to the constitution of the Church itself but can be changed into something else. By no means, then, are the rights of Bishops diminished by the authority of the Vicar of Christ, since, on the contrary, they are asserted, strengthened and defended by the supreme and universal Shepherd, as St. Gregory the Great said: "My honor is the honor of the universal Church. My honor is the solid vigor of my brothers. Then am I truly honored, when due honor is not denied to anyone."<sup>11</sup>

### *15. The Relationship of Bishops to the Entire Church*

Because Bishops individually are a center and foundation and principle of unity in their particular Churches, and because it is in these Churches and out of them, formed as they are in the image of the universal Church, that the one and only Catholic Church exists, whose center and foundation and principle of unity is the successor of Peter, the Vicar of Christ himself, each bishop represents his own Church, and all of them together with the Pope represent the whole Church "in the bond of Peace" (Eph 4:3) and of love.<sup>12</sup> Although bishops taken singly or even gathered in great numbers do not have power over the entire Church nor over any Church other than those committed to their charge except by participation in the power of the Roman Pontiff,<sup>13</sup> still they are bound to show a real solicitude for the whole Church; and, although this is not a power of jurisdiction, still, as the powerful support of fraternal communion, it contributes greatly to the benefit of the universal Church.<sup>14</sup> For Bishops must promote and safeguard the unity of faith and discipline common to the whole Church, instruct their faithful towards a love for the entire Mystical Body of Christ, especially for suffering members and those undergoing persecution for justice's sake (see Mt 5:10), and finally promote every activity common to the whole Church, especially that the faith may grow and the light of full truth dawn upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death (see Lk 1:79). Finally, it is a sacred truth that by governing well their own Churches as a part of the Universal Church, they greatly contribute to the good of the whole Mystical Body which is, according to St. Basil, itself a Body of Churches.<sup>15</sup>

### *16. The College of Bishops*

The College of Bishops, which succeeded the College of the Apostles in teaching authority and pastoral government, in which indeed the College of the Apostles continues to live on, and which continuously bears witness to the mission of Jesus Christ and to his teaching and

laws, is believed to be, along with its head, the Roman Pontiff, and never without this head, the one subject of full and supreme power over the whole Church.<sup>16</sup> But the power of this College, even its ordinary power insofar as it is inherent in the office, is legitimately exercised only in an extraordinary manner<sup>17</sup> and in devoted subordination to the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, when, as, and to what extent he deems it expedient in the Lord.<sup>18</sup> As for the constitution of this august College, all residential Bishops living in peace with the Apostolic See are by their own right members of it,<sup>19</sup> and no Bishop, whether residential or not, can belong to this College unless by direct act or by tacit consent he is admitted into it by the successor of Peter, the Vicar of Christ, and Head of the College.<sup>20</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See the Council of Trent, *On the Sacrament of Orders*, ch. 4 (Dz960); Vatican I, *On the Church of Christ*, c. 3 (Dz1828).

Leo XIII, *Satis cognitum* (ASS 28 [1895-96], p. 732): "Just as the authority of Peter must remain perpetual in the Roman Pontiff, so bishops, who succeed to the Apostles, inherit their ordinary power."

Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis* (AAS 35 [1943], p. 209): "He imparted the threefold power to the Apostles and to their successors;" "Therefore they should be held in reverence by the people as by divine law successors to the Apostles" (p. 212).

CIC, can 329, 1.

Provincial Council of Cologne, 1860 (Mansi 48, 106): "Therefore, from its very beginning the whole Church has believed that bishops 'succeed to the Apostles by vicarious ordination' [St. Cyprian, *Letter 69*], that they 'receive the succession from the Apostles and, with succession to the Episcopate, the sure charism of truth' [St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.*, IV, ch. 26, 43], and preside in God's place [St. Ignatius, *Epistle to the Magnesians*, 6]."

Third Provincial Council of Quebec, 1863 (Mansi 48, 411): "[The holy Fathers and Doctors] often and openly teach that bishops are the princes of the Church, the successors of the Apostles, and legates of Christ himself."

Provincial Council of Cologne, 1863 (Mansi 48, 519): "Anyone who knows the series of bishops in the Church, which has been, by the Holy Spirit's guidance, continuous since the Ascension of Christ, does not doubt that bishops are the legitimate successors of the Apostles... Bishops who have succeeded to the place of the Apostles."

Second Plenary Council of Baltimore, 1866 (Mansi 48, 912): "Bishops, who are successors of the Apostles."

<sup>2</sup> The text, which can be discussed exegetically, is cited because it is used in Church documents quite often; see: Council of Trent, *On the Sacrament of Orders*, c. 4 (Dz960); Vatican I, *On the Church of Christ*, c. 3 (Dz1828); the provincial Councils of Cologne, 1860 (Mansi 48, 106), and Kalocsa, 1863 (Mansi 48, 519), the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore, 1866 (Mansi 48, 912), the provincial Councils of Ravenna, 1855 (Mansi 47, 201), and Vienna, 1858 (Mansi 47, 782).

<sup>3</sup> See the provincial Councils of Cologne (1863) and Quebec (1863), cited in note 1; Benedict XIV, *Brief Romana Ecclesia* (*Benedicti Papae XIV Bullarium*, t. IV, [Rome, 1758], p. 21): "...as a bishop, who represents Christ and carries out his role;" Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c. p. 211: "they feed and rule in the name of Christ;"

Leo XIII, *Satis cognitum*, l.c., p. 732: "they should not be considered the vicars of the Roman Pontiff" (Insofar as the power of bishops is not delegated by the Pope, therefore, they cannot be called vicars of the Roman Pontiff. Therefore, this vicarious power must be Christ's.); *Letter, Officio*

*Sanctissimo* (ASS 20 [1887], p. 264).

Iacobus Lainez, *Disputationes Tridentinae*, t. I (Innsbruck, 1886), pp. 232f: "...[adversaries] argue from the titles and prerogatives which the Fathers grant to bishops. For they call them *vicars of Christ*... They are also said to *carry out Christ's role*... We reply that bishops do indeed have these prerogatives... *Although they are called and are vicars of Christ*, they are not *vicars general* over the whole Church, but only in their own dioceses. And therefore they are created by the vicar general who can only be placed at the head by Christ..."

<sup>4</sup> See Vatican I, *On the Church of Christ*, c. 3 (Dz1828);

*Draft of a Second Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ, Revised in accordance with the Comments of the Most Reverend Fathers*, c. 4 (Mansi 53, 310): "...and they rule the Churches entrusted to them with proper and ordinary power. Individually, therefore, in each one's Church and gathered in Synods, they make decisions about doctrine and discipline, pass laws, make judgements... The other prelates are subject to the Roman Pontiff, individually in administering their own Churches and together in dealing with the common needs of the Church."

Leo XIII, *Satis cognitum*, l.c., pp. 732ff; Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c., pp. 211f; CIC, can. 329, 1; can. 334, 1;

Provincial Council of Cologne, 1863 (Mansi 48, 519): "...having immediate authority over the clergy and people, as legitimate and proper pastors, they shepherd the Lord's flock within the limits of their dioceses."

<sup>5</sup> On bishops as "Fathers", see: the Provincial Councils of Reims, 1857 (Mansi 47, 562); Cologne, 1860 (Mansi 48, 107); Kalocsa, 1863 (Mansi 48, 520), and Utrecht, 1865 (Mansi 48, 675). "Fathers of the faithful" is used to indicate that power in the Church is that of a father in a family and that juridical power must be governed by the spirit of affection that must exist between the faithful and bishops. For bishops as "pastors", see: Vatican I, *On the Church of Christ*, c. 3 (Dz1828); Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c., p. 211; CIC, can. 334, 1; can. 2214, 2.

<sup>6</sup> See Benedict XIV, Epistle *Ad assiduas* (*SS.mi D. N. Benedicti XIV Bullarium*, t. IV, p. 163: "#1. You see that the author of this horrid product tends and is headed towards weakening, shaking, and quite eliminating the power which Christ our Lord and Savior conferred on his Church *not only to direct by advice and persuasion, but also to command by laws, and to coerce and force the deviant and stubborn by external judgements and salutary penalties*. He so subjects the Church's ministry to secular domination that he says that it is the latter that has the role of investigating and judging every external and visible matter of governance. A depraved and pernicious system, long ago rejected by the Apostolic See *and expressly condemned as heretical*, especially by Our Predecessor, John XXII, in the Constitution, *Licet iuxta doctrinam*..."

Pius VI, Constitution *Auctorem fidei*, #4-5 (Mansi 38, 1265; Dz1504-1505); CIC, can 335,1; Vatican I, *First Draft of a Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ*, c. 10 (Mansi 51, 543): "There are two types of power in the Church, power of orders and power of jurisdiction. With regard to the latter, we teach that it is not only power in the internal and sacramental forum, but also power in the external and public forum, power that is absolute and quite complete, that is, legislative, judicial, and coercive. The subject of this power are the shepherds and teachers given by Christ, and they exercise it freely and independently of all secular dominion. Therefore, with full authority they rule the Church of God by needed laws that oblige in conscience, by definitive judgements, and by salutary penalties for the guilty, even if they are unwilling; and they do this not only with regard to matters that concern faith and morals, worship and sanctification, but also with regard to matters concerning the external discipline and administration of the Church."

*Ibid.*, can. 11-12 (Mansi 51, 552): "Canon XI: If anyone says that the Church was established as a society of equals, that bishops have an office and ministry indeed, but no proper power of government



that is theirs by divine ordination and that they can exercise freely, *Anathema sit*. Canon XII: If anyone says that the power conferred on his Church by Christ our Lord and Savior is only power to guide by advice and persuasion, but not power to command by laws and to coerce and force the deviant and the stubborn by external judgement and salutary penalties, *Anathema sit*." There are several other texts, *Ibid.* (Mansi 51, 589-97, 625-26).

Vatican I, *Draft of a Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, c. 8 (Mansi 53, 314): "Finally, against the perverse doctrine of some innovators, we determine and declare that by divine ordination ecclesiastical governance does not pertain only to the internal and sacramental forum, but also to the external and public forum, and that full authority has been given to the Church by God, not only to guide by advice and persuasion, but also to command by laws and to coerce and force the deviant and stubborn by external judgement and by salutary penalties. It is clear that the Apostles themselves and the prelates who succeeded them have in every age used this power both to decide matters pertaining to faith and morals and to divine worship and the sanctification of the faithful and in establishing and sanctioning external discipline." *Ibid.*, can. 12 (Mansi 53, 316): "If anyone says that this power is only directive and not legislative, judicial, and coercive, *Anathema sit*."

<sup>7</sup> See the Preface for the Consecration of a Bishop.

<sup>8</sup> *Sermo 4 de natali ipsius* (PL 54, 159); see his *Epist.* 10 (PL 54, 629).

<sup>9</sup> See the Council of Trent, *Canons on the Sacrament of Orders*, can. 8 (Dz968); Clement VI, Epistle *Super quibusdam* (C. Baronius, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, t. VI [Lucae 1750], p. 529; Dz 570h, 570p); Pius VI, Brief *Super soliditate*, #4 (A.A. Barberi, *Bullarii Romani Continuatio*, t. VII (Rome 1843), p. 672f; Dz 1500;

*Ibid.*, #16 (p. 675): "...for the other bishops, however, it is necessary that each one's specific portion of the flock be assigned to him not by divine but by ecclesiastical law, not by the mouth of Christ, but by hierarchical ordination, so that he may exercise ordinary power of governance over it. Anyone who would wish to deprive the Roman Pontiff of this supreme authority of assignment would be attacking the legitimate succession of so many bishops throughout the world, bishops who rule over churches originally founded by apostolic authority, either separated from others or united together with them, and who have received the mission to rule them from the Roman Pontiff. This great and wonderful sharing of power could not be attacked without immense disturbance of the Church, therefore, and danger to episcopal governance. This sharing of power was given by divine condescension to the Chair of Peter so that, as Leo the Great said, Peter might properly rule over all those whom Christ also principally rules; and if there is something which Christ wished other princes to share with Peter, *he always gave through Peter what he did not deny to others*."

Pius IX, *Syllabus*, #50-51 (ASS 3 [1867], p. 173; Dz1750-51); CIC, can. 329,2; can. 332,1;

Vatican I, *Draft of a Second Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, c. 4 (Mansi 53, 310): "But because the primacy was given to Peter so that the one Church of Christ and the one Chair would be manifest, the other prelates are subject to the Roman Pontiff, both singly in administering their own churches and all together in dealing with common matters of the Church. For it belongs to the supreme hierarch to establish new churches, to define the limits or even to abolish those already established, *to choose their own pastors for them or to confirm those elected, to expand and restrict their ordinary power*, to pass judgement on the acts of individual bishops and of synods, and, should there be need, to remove the prelates themselves from their office. Nor can the latter arrange or decide anything for the whole Church unless they have been called by the reigning Pontiff to share in his solicitude..."

<sup>10</sup> See Pius VI, *Super soliditate*, l.c.; *Auctorem fidei*, #6-8, 45 (Dz 1506-1507, 1545); Vatican I, *On the Church of Christ*, c. 3 (Dz 1827-31); CIC, can 218,2; Leo XIII, *Romanos Pontifices* (ASS 13 [1880], p. 483ff; CIC, can. 893-94, 2245,2-3; Vatican I, *Draft of a Second Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, c.

4 (Mansi 53, 310; see note 6). That the bishops' exercise of ordinary jurisdiction can be expanded or restricted is proved by common laws, by exceptions, etc.

<sup>11</sup> St. Gregory, *Letter to Eulogius, Bishop of Alexandria*, Bk. 8, c. 30 (PL 77, 933); Vatican I, *On the Church of Christ*, c. 3 (Dz 1828); Leo XIII, *Satis cognitum*, l.c., p. 737 (Dz 1962); Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, l.c., p. 212. Leo XIII, *Est sane* (ASS 21 [1888], pp. 321f): "It is our task to watch and to see to it that the divine power of bishops remains safe and inviolate. It is also our task to command and to see to it that it everywhere enjoys its honor and that nothing is ever lacking in Catholics of the just obedience and reverence it deserves. For the divine edifice, which is the Church, most surely rests, as upon its visible foundation, first of all on Peter and his successors, and then on the Apostles and their successors, the bishops, so that anyone who hears or scorns them hears or scorns Christ the Lord. Bishops comprise by far the most venerable part of the Church, for it teaches and rules men by divine law; for that reason whoever resists them or stubbornly refuses to listen to what they say, removes himself far from the Church (Mt 13:17). Nor is this obedience to be kept, as if within boundaries, only for matters pertaining to Christian faith, but is rather to be rendered far more widely, to all those things that episcopal power encompasses. Within the Christian people they are indeed teachers of the holy faith; but they also preside as rulers and leaders, and they preside in such a way that one day they will have to render to God an account concerning the salvation of all those whom God has entrusted to them."

<sup>12</sup> St. Ignatius, *Epistle to the Philadelphians*, 3,2; 8,1 (PG 5, 700, 704); *Epistle to the Smyrnians*, 8,1 (PG 5, 713); St. Cyprian, *Letters* 69, 27, and 76 (PL 4, 406, 298; PL 3, 1140); *On the Unity of the Catholic Church*, 4-6 (PL 4, 498-501); St. Leo the Great, *Sermon 4* (PL 54, 149f); Vatican I, *On the Church of Christ*, cc. 1, 3, and 4 (Dz 1821, 1827, 1837); Leo XIII, *Satis cognitum*, l.c., p. 733f (Dz 1960); *Epistle Testem benevolentiae* (ASS, 31 [1898-99], p. 479; Dz 1976); *Letter of the Holy Office to the Bishops of England* (ASS 2 [1866], p. 685f; Dz 1686); Martin V, *Bull Inter cunctas*, #5-6 (Dz 657-58); Pius VI, *Super soliditate*, ##1, 5, 20, 22 (l.c., pp. 671, 673, 676): "#20: The prelates of France in 1681 issued a very clear testimony to the primacy of the Roman Pontiff, a witness in full agreement with the views mentioned of the teachers at Paris and with the constant tradition of their forebears: 'He is the Head of the Church, the center of unity. He has over us the primacy of authority and of jurisdiction conferred on him in the person of St. Peter by Jesus Christ. Whoever would depart from this truth would be a schismatic, indeed a heretic.'"

<sup>13</sup> Fourth Lateran Council, c. 5 (Dz 436); Second Council of Lyons, *Profession of Faith of Michael Palaeologus* (Dz 466); Clement VI, *Super quibusdam*, l.c.; CIC, can. 271-80; Vatican I, *Draft for a Second Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, c. 4 (Mansi 53, 310, 321): "Nor can [bishops] arrange or decide anything for the universal Church unless they have been called by the Roman Pontiff to share in his solicitude. And although, when gathered by him, as true judges they issue both decrees on faith and disciplinary laws, it is the Roman Pontiff's role not only to convoke and dissolve their general councils but also to direct and to confirm them." All power above that of the bishop, therefore, is a participation in the power of the Pope, for example, the power of an archbishop or a patriarch, etc.

<sup>14</sup> St. Gregory, *Letter to Eulogius* (l.c., p. 933): "My honor is the honor of the universal Church. My honor is the strong vigor of my brothers." Pius IX, *Quanta cura* (Dz 1688); Pius XI, *Rerum Ecclesiae* (AAS, 18 [1926], p. 69): "...thus it follows that care for spreading the faith so belongs to Us that you must without hesitation, so far as the singular and proper performance of your duties allows, share in this task with Us and assist Us in it;" Pius XII, *Fidei donum* (AAS 59 [1957], p. 236f): "...but, if every bishop is proper pastor only of the portion of the flock entrusted to his care, his quality as legitimate successor of the Apostles by divine institution renders him in solidarity responsible for the Church."

<sup>15</sup> St. Basil, *On Isaiah*, 15,296 (PG 30, 637), collated with St. Gregory the Great, *Morals*, 4,7:12 (PL 75, 643). Similar things are found in Clement of Alexandria, Cyril of Alexandria, John Damascene, and

others.

<sup>16</sup> The teaching is found in the theology of Ecumenical Councils and in the teaching on the succession to the Apostles and their College. Bishops united in council along with the Pope constitute one tribunal, are true judges of the faith and legislators; the right to take part in a Council belongs to all residential bishops (see the official Report of Bishop Zinelli in Mansi 52, 1109f).

Vatican I, *Draft of a Second Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ*, c. 4 (see note 4 above), and further: "But bishops are not without the supreme role of teaching and governing the universal Church. For that pontifical role of binding and loosing which was given to Peter alone was also given to the college of Apostles, only in union with their head, in the words of the Lord: 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven' (Mt 18:18). For that reason from the beginning of the Church, the decrees and statutes of ecumenical councils have quite rightly been received with supreme reverence and a like submission by the faithful, as if they were the judgements of God and the decisions of the Holy Spirit." (See also there, Kleutgen's report on the revised draft; pp. 321-23).

N.B. The body or college in itself prescind from the question whether it is the subject of only the power of jurisdiction or also of other powers.

<sup>17</sup> It is said, "in an extraordinary manner": this follows from the fact that Ecumenical Councils are not, absolutely speaking, necessary; the *action* of the Body of Bishops, therefore, insofar as it is a *juridical* action, is not by divine institution permanent in the Church.

<sup>18</sup> The doctrine is contained in the theology of Ecumenical Councils, especially in the truths about their juridical convocation and juridical confirmation; see the Fifth Lateran Council, *Pastor aeternus* (Dz 740); CIC, can. 222-29; for other documents, see H. Schauf, *De Conciliis Oecumenicis* (Rome 1961).

<sup>19</sup> The doctrine is found in the theology of Ecumenical Councils and especially in the teaching on the right to participate in Ecumenical Councils; CIC, can. 223,1:2.

<sup>20</sup> The doctrine derives from and is contained in the truth about the Primacy, the Roman Pontiff as Head of the Body of Bishops, and about the office of bishops.

## CHAPTER V

### THE STATES FOR ACQUIRING EVANGELICAL PERFECTION

#### *17. The Evangelical Counsels*

The great Shepherd of the sheep, the Lord Jesus Christ (see Hb 13:20), not only strengthened his Church with saving precepts by observing which the door of salvation would be open to all who believe in him (see Mt 19:17-19); he also provided it with most holy counsels so that to those who were willing there might be provided an easier and safer way to the fulfilment of that love which is the fulness of the divine law (see Rm 13:10). As his death drew near, therefore, to his own example he joined words inviting those who wished to imitate him more perfectly to live without anything of their own (see Mt 19:21; Mk 10:21; Lk 18:22) and in chastity (see Mt 19:11-12), and, as already in antiquity the Church understood and approved, to seek to imitate his obedience towards his Father (see Jn 6:38; Ph 2:8) more strictly under an established authority.

Lest these counsels of obedience, poverty and chastity, commended both in word and example by the holy Apostles and Fathers, remain unheeded, the Lord added to his invitation the grace in virtue of which in all ages of the Church the faithful of both sexes have, either in part or in whole, generously embraced and followed the counsels faithfully. The lives of such persons have greatly contributed to the fact that the note of holiness with which the divine Founder wished his Church to be distinguished shines forth and glistens before the eyes of all with constant and ever increasing splendor.<sup>1</sup>

The Holy Synod teaches, therefore, that these counsels and their exercise are of divine origin, and it strongly recommends their observance, which it reckons among the constitutive elements of the Church's note of holiness.

#### *18. The Importance of the States of Perfection in the Church*

Through the observance of the evangelical counsels, Holy Church, inexhaustibly fruitful in all good things, is ever resplendent. For the grace of the Holy Spirit never ceases to encourage many to undertake, as far as it is possible in the flesh, the life of the heavenly Jerusalem and to seek to imitate Christ more closely, with the result that their apostolate is strengthened and their merit doubled. So it has happened that, under the same Spirit's driving force, from the divinely planted seed various forms of life for attaining that perfection have slowly grown up, like a marvelously branched tree in the vineyard of the Lord. For, since the evangelical counsels are necessarily linked with the imitation of Christ and effectively free the soul from secular concerns, they attract to their observance, more than anyone else, those who desire more clearly to express the life of the Savior in themselves, either by prayer or contemplation, or by apostolic work, or by the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, or by leading a common life.

This way of the counsels, since it is ordered to the perfection of the love of God and of neighbor,<sup>2</sup> is intimately in accord with the role of the Church in bringing God to men and men back to their God. Therefore, whatever may be the form for acquiring evangelical perfection he embraces, each person benefits in his own way the saving mission of the Church.

Let all who are especially called to evangelical perfection remember, therefore, that it is their responsibility that through them the Church show Christ forth more clearly every day, whether it be Christ in contemplation on the mountain, or Christ preaching to the people, or Christ healing the sick and wounded, or Christ converting sinners to good lives, or, finally, Christ doing good to all.<sup>3</sup> Let each one, therefore, earnestly strive to remain and to excel more and more in the vocation to which he has been called.

### *19. The Place of the States of Perfection in the Church*

In order to assume more publicly and to show more clearly that the observance of the evangelical counsels is something proper to herself,<sup>4</sup> kindly Mother Church, zealously following the movements of the Holy Spirit, has on its own supreme authority passed laws or approved laws drawn up by eminent men and women, so that those who follow them might constitute the state for acquiring perfection and a select portion of the Mystical Body of Christ.<sup>5</sup>

The state of perfection is not some intermediate position between the clerical and lay conditions, but can be common to both. The closer and stronger the communion with God and Jesus Christ, the more does the Church honor the observance of the evangelical counsels. Hence, of its very nature, this observance is better when undertaken under vow rather than by promise, with a perpetual rather than a temporal bond.<sup>6</sup> By this matchless resolve, a person is at once conformed to the image of the obedient, poor and virginal Christ and likened to the Church herself, intimately and indissolubly bound as she is to Christ her bridegroom and the visible harbor of salvation for all those who journey towards their homeland. This conformity with Christ, who was also a most perfect man, and this assimilation to the Church, which is a society not only human but also divine, more than sufficiently shows that the state of perfection, so far from hindering the growth of the human person, supremely promotes it.

The Holy Synod declares to be false, therefore, the views of those who strive to maintain that the observance of the evangelical counsels is the greater the lesser is the obligation assumed before God and the Church, or that the state of perfection hinders or diminishes the development of the personality.

Since it belongs solely to the sacred hierarchy to approve and to watch over how the life of perfection is to be led and regulated,<sup>7</sup> all institutes founded at any time for the purpose of pursuing it, if they are to grow and flourish, must always and everywhere be subject to the vigilance and authority of the Church. For this reason and so that better provision may be made for the needs of the whole flock of the Lord, the Roman Pontiff, in virtue of his primacy over the whole Church, but without in any way obstructing the principles of the divinely given constitution of the Church, can withdraw any institute of perfection and its individual members from the jurisdiction of Bishops and make them immediately subject to himself.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, in carrying out the ecclesiastical office arising from their special way of life, those so exempted must show respect and obedience to the local Ordinaries in accordance with the canonical laws. The reason for this is that they may be closer assistants of the sacred hierarchy in promoting and strengthening the Kingdom of Christ, and that they may draw the other members of the Church to follow the law of the Lord promptly and with all their might.

Therefore, the Holy Synod exhorts every individual especially called to evangelical

perfection constantly to be able to repeat by his own deeds that saying of St. Paul: "Be imitators of me, brethren, and mark those who so live as you have an example in us" (Ph 3:17), so that their works may contribute to the greater glory of God and the fragrance of their lives may delight the Church of Christ.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See Vatican I, *Draft of a Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ*, ch. XV, n. 48 (*Collectio Lacensis*, t. VII, 628c.); Pius XI, Enc. *Quas primas* (AAS 17 [1925], p. 609).

<sup>2</sup> See St. Thomas, *Summa theologiae*, II-II, q. 188, a. 2; St. Bonaventure, *Apologia Pauperum*, c.3,3 (ed. Quaracchi, t. VIII [1898], p. 245a).

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<sup>8</sup> See Leo XIII, Constitution *Romanos Pontifices* (ASS 13 [1880], p. 483); Pius XII, Address *Annus sacer* (AAS 43 [1951], p. 23f).

## CHAPTER V

### THE STATES FOR ACQUIRING EVANGELICAL PERFECTION

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This way of the counsels, since it is ordered to the perfection of the love of God and of neighbor,<sup>2</sup> is intimately in accord with the role of the Church in bringing God to men and men back to their God. Therefore, whatever may be the form for acquiring evangelical perfection he embraces, each person benefits in his own way the saving mission of the Church.

Let all who are especially called to evangelical perfection remember, therefore, that it is their responsibility that through them the Church show Christ forth more clearly every day, whether it be Christ in contemplation on the mountain, or Christ preaching to the people, or Christ healing the sick and wounded, or Christ converting sinners to good lives, or, finally, Christ doing good to all.<sup>3</sup> Let each one, therefore, earnestly strive to remain and to excel more and more in the vocation to which he has been called.

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Therefore, the Holy Synod exhorts every individual especially called to evangelical



perfection constantly to be able to repeat by his own deeds that saying of St. Paul: "Be imitators of me, brethren, and mark those who so live as you have an example in us" (Ph 3:17), so that their works may contribute to the greater glory of God and the fragrance of their lives may delight the Church of Christ.

### NOTES

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## CHAPTER VII

### THE TEACHING OFFICE OF THE CHURCH

#### *28. The Existence and Nature of an Authoritative Teaching Office*

In order that the Church might religiously exercise its duty of faithfully preaching the message of the Gospel to all nations, her divine Founder made his beloved bride a most trustworthy teacher of his truth and through the Holy Spirit endowed her with the charism of indefectible truth.<sup>1</sup> This is why the Church has always been aware and has insistently proclaimed that she is in the world the pillar and bulwark of the truth (see 1 Tm 3:15).<sup>2</sup> The indefectibility of the authoritative teaching office was given to the Church so that the indefectibility God promised to the whole Church might be kept safe.

The Lord established the authoritative teaching office of the Church to be the proximate principle and perpetual organ of this indefectible truth, and to it he gave the task of preserving the integral deposit of faith, of faithfully explaining it, and of keeping it immune from all error.<sup>3</sup> For to the Apostles and to their successors he promised a special gift of the Holy Spirit by which they would be the witnesses of evangelical truth to the very ends of the earth (see Acts 1:8); to them he gave the power to teach with authority, saying: "Going therefore teach all nations..., teaching them to observe whatever I have commanded you" (Mt 28:18-19); and to them, finally, he gave the assurance that the Spirit of truth (see Jn 14:16-17; 16:12-14) and his own presence would remain with them until the end of the world (see Mt 28:20), sby which they would be preserved from error in teaching the flock.<sup>4</sup>

Thus there exists in the Church a lasting and living teaching office to which is given the task of teaching with authority in Christ's name on matters of faith and morals.<sup>5</sup> When a person listens to this teaching office, it is not men he hears teaching, but Christ, according to his own statement: "He who hears you hears me; he who rejects you rejects me" (Lk 10:16);<sup>6</sup> and it is by adhering to it that the people of the faithful is kept in evangelical truth. For Christ the Lord, always living in heaven as the Head of his Mystical Body, illumines the whole Church in all his members: the pastors so that they may teach the word of God; the faithful so that they may accept and rightly understand it; and both, so that they may witness to their faith--on all these Christ sends forth the promised Spirit of truth to keep them all from error and to lead them to acknowledge and profess the divine truth.<sup>7</sup>

The prerogative of infallibility with which the Church's teaching office is endowed when it teaches is distinct from the charism of inspiration, nor is its purpose in any way to enrich the Church with new revelations; it exists, rather, so that the deposit of faith, handed down by the Apostles either in writing or orally, may be kept whole in the Church, be preached, be transmitted, and in the course of time be more fully explicated,<sup>8</sup> but always with the same meaning and the same view, that is, without ever retreating from earlier views or contradicting them.<sup>9</sup>

#### *29. The Object of the Authoritative Teaching Office.*

The principal concern of the authoritative teaching office of the Church is to preach, guard, and interpret the written or handed-down word of God; but with the same authority, its

scope also extends to all those things whatever which, even if not revealed explicitly or implicitly, are nevertheless so connected to what was revealed that they are necessary if the deposit of faith is to be kept whole, properly explained, and effectively defended.<sup>10</sup> But since the same teaching office is a ministry of salvation by which men are taught what path to follow in order to gain eternal life, it has the task and right to interpret and infallibly to declare not only the revealed law but also the natural law and to pass judgement on the objective conformity of all human actions with evangelical doctrine and the divine law. There is, then, no area of human activity which in its ethical and religious aspect can be withdrawn from the authority of the teaching office which Christ established.<sup>11</sup>

It is also part of its authority to pass authoritative judgment on the origin and nature and especially the doctrinal and moral worth of extraordinary words and deeds that are proposed as being of divine origin.<sup>12</sup>

### *30. The Subject of the Authoritative Teaching Office.*

The task of the authoritative teaching office, fortified with the charism of truth and existing in the Church by divine institution, although it may be exercised by many persons or organs, is always one and indivisible. For it was established by the one and supreme Teacher, Christ the Lord; it represents his authority, and to it is present the one Spirit of Truth so that in carrying out its task it may teach his truth. It is exercised in the first place by the Roman Pontiff, since he bears the person of the Divine Teacher for the universal Church and since he was established by Christ not only as the teacher of the faithful but also as the one who would strengthen his brother bishops in the faith, according to Christ's word: "I have prayed for you that your faith not fail; and you, when you have turned, strengthen your brothers" (Lk 22:32).<sup>13</sup>

Thus the Roman Pontiff is the supreme teacher of the truth for the whole Catholic Church and to him chiefly belongs the right and duty of integrally keeping, defending and infallibly proposing the doctrine of salvation for all Christians. When he does so, that is, when, in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he speaks in the name of Jesus Christ, *ex cathedra*, on matters of faith and morals, his judgement, of itself, because it is pronounced in the name of Christ and not in virtue of the consent of the faithful and of the other bishops, is infallible and therefore also irreformable;<sup>14</sup> and by divine providence it expresses or defends and promotes the at least implicit faith of the Church and promotes its good.<sup>15</sup> For then the Roman Pontiff, even if he is teaching on his own authority, is not proposing a judgment as a private person, but rather, as the Shepherd and Teacher of the universal Church and Head of the College of Bishops, he is proposing or defending a divine truth which, written or handed-down, is transmitted whole and entire through the legitimate succession of bishops and especially by the efforts of the Apostolic See and is faithfully preserved in the Church by the directing light of the Spirit of truth. To know which truth, apt means are abundantly supplied to the Roman Pontiff by divine Providence.<sup>16</sup> When, then, he defines a doctrine on faith or morals to be held by the whole Church, it is by that very fact certain that the doctrine is contained in the revealed deposit or necessarily agrees with that deposit.

To the authoritative teaching office of the Roman Pontiff, even when he is not speaking *ex cathedra*, religious submission of mind and will must be given, in such a way that his supreme

teaching office is reverently acknowledged and sincere adherence is given to the judgment proposed by him, and this in accord with his manifest mind and will,<sup>17</sup> as this appears chiefly from the nature of the documents, from the repeated statement of the same teaching, or from his manner of speaking. The mind and will of the Roman Pontiffs is manifested particularly through the doctrinal acts which affect the whole Church, such as Apostolic Constitutions or Encyclicals or the more solemn Addresses. These are the chief documents of the ordinary teaching office of the Church and serve chiefly to explain and to form it; and what is taught and inculcated in them for the most part already belongs to Catholic doctrine. But if the Supreme Pontiffs in these acts should take care to pass judgment on a matter hitherto controverted, it must be clear to all that this matter, according to the mind and will of the same Pontiffs, can no longer be considered a question for public discussion among theologians.<sup>18</sup>

The other bishops who are in communion with the Roman Pontiff also exercise the office of the authoritative teaching office. As successors of the Apostles, bishops have by divine institution the duty and right to preach the Gospel to the flocks entrusted to them and to propose its precepts authoritatively, to be vigilant that the deposit of faith handed down by the Apostles be faithfully kept by their faithful, and to bring forth from the inexhaustible treasury of revelation "things new and old" (see Mt 13:52) suited to the good of souls. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit which they receive at their consecration and in virtue of their apostolic mission,<sup>19</sup> individual bishops, when, scattered throughout the world, they teach their several churches individually or gathered in particular councils, although they do not possess the prerogative of infallibility, are nevertheless for their own faithful true doctors and authoritative teachers of Catholic doctrine,<sup>20</sup> and for the whole Church they are official witnesses of evangelical truth. But when the episcopal college is united at an Ecumenical Council along with its head, the Roman Pontiff, and never without him or without being subordinate to him, the Bishops gathered in synod become for the whole Church teachers and judges of faith and morals, and along with him they exercise the supreme power to teach,<sup>21</sup> and the definitions of the Synod itself enjoy the same infallibility enjoyed by the *ex cathedra* definitions of the Roman Pontiff.

The body of legitimate pastors and teachers of the Church enjoy the prerogative of infallibility not only when in a solemn judgment at an Ecumenical Council, they collegially exercise the power to teach, but also when, teaching authoritatively, individually, each in his own diocese, they agree along with the Roman Pontiff upon one judgment, acting as witnesses of the faith in handing on revealed doctrine. Whatever matters of faith and morals, therefore, are held by all bishops around the world along with the Roman Pontiff and are taught by the ordinary teaching office, even outside a solemn definition, are to be held as irrevocably true in the sense in which they are taught; and if they are proposed as having been divinely revealed, they are to be believed with divine and Catholic faith.<sup>22</sup>

The authoritative teaching office of individual bishops in matters of faith and morals, so long as they exercise their office in communion with the Apostolic See and with the other bishops of the Catholic Church, is to be received by their subjects with inner and religious assent of the mind and is to be honored by all Christians as a testimony to divine and Catholic truth.

### *31. Auxiliary Organs of the Authoritative Teaching Office.*

In order more easily to fulfill their divinely given task, authoritative teachers in the Church enlist helpers of their own choice to whom they assign determinate and particular tasks.<sup>23</sup>

For the Roman Pontiff does not exercise his teaching office solely by himself; he can also in part entrust it to the Sacred Congregations and to other groups of experts established by him for particular purposes so that, not without the assistance of the Holy Spirit who distributes his gifts to various organs in accordance with the place they occupy in the Mystical Body, they may defend the doctrine of salvation in the Church and take vigilant care that it is kept inviolate by all. To the decisions and declarations of such groups also, therefore, even though they are not infallible or irrefragable, is owed, not a merely external submission, but a religious and inner assent of the mind.<sup>24</sup>

### *32. The Task and Authority of Theologians.*

Theologians also enjoy their own doctrinal authority in the Church. In explaining the Scriptures, documents of the holy Tradition, and acts of the Sacred Teaching office; in determining Catholic doctrine and the theological note for individual truths; in defending the faith and its articles and preambles; in theological deduction, speculation and synthesis, individual theologians enjoy their own authority, greater or lesser depending on how well versed they are in the sacred sciences and how greatly illumined they are by the Holy Spirit. All other things being equal, those who teach in word or writing in the name of the Church in virtue of a canonical mission will command greater authority, be more “qualified”. But the authority of theologians, even of those who are approved and publicly acknowledged and who teach in the name of the Church, is specifically different from the authority of a Bishop, who alone teaches in the name of Christ and can in his name impose doctrinal assent.

Besides the authority of theologians taken singly, there is an authority insofar as all theologians for many centuries constantly and with moral unanimity agree upon one opinion. This authority arises from intimate association with the sacred teaching office of the Church, which entrusted the formation of the clergy to such theologians, sought their counsel in preparing ecclesiastical documents, in synods, and even in Ecumenical Councils, directs and vigilantly assists them, and publicly recommends the authority of many of them with the title, "Doctor of the Church." The holy Synod, therefore, warns all that no one is permitted without serious and truly proven reasons to depart from those points of doctrine that are taught by the common consensus of theologians.<sup>25</sup> As for doctrines that are maintained and taught with the unanimous and constant consensus of Catholic theologians as theological truths and conclusions so certain that the contrary opinions, although they cannot be said to be heretical, would earn some other theological censure, no one can depart from them without temerity and without placing the faith itself in danger.<sup>26</sup>

Individual theologians should be aware of the seriousness of their office and ought always to listen to the ecclesiastical teaching office as the proximate norm of truth,<sup>27</sup> remembering that they must always teach in fidelity to the mind of the Church.

### *33. Helpers of the Teaching Office in its Pastoral Role.*

Knowing full well the tremendously important duty of transmitting the word of salvation to all people and of forming Christ and his teaching in the minds of the baptized, the Roman Pontiff and the Bishops, as did Christ the Lord and the Apostles, surround themselves with assistants, particularly those elevated to the priesthood.

To those priests who have received from the Roman Pontiff or from a legitimate bishop the office of teaching the word of God, all the faithful are required to lend docile ears. If this office has been entrusted to them along with the cure of souls, the faithful should know that the office of preaching was given to these priests by Mother Church so that they might instruct and confirm the faithful people in doctrine.<sup>28</sup> The holy Synod wishes these teachers of the Christian people to present not their own but the Church's sure doctrine, necessary to salvation, in accordance with the teachings of the authoritative teaching office, and to avoid profane novelties of expression and what is falsely called knowledge (see 1 Tm 6:20).<sup>29</sup>

The teaching office of the Church also calls upon the help of other members of the faithful, whether from clerical or religious orders or also from among the laity, to instruct the children of the Church in the Christian faith and religious culture. A special task and duty falls upon Christian parents, to whom is entrusted the most pleasant burden, as cooperators of Christ himself and of Mother Church, of engraving the beginnings of the faith on the souls of their children.

Those who assist the Church's teaching office should know that to fulfill their office faithfully and fruitfully, divine assistance will not be lacking, and with it they are bound carefully to comply. They should also remember that the souls entrusted to them were purchased by the blood of Christ and belong to his Church. Finally, they should recall especially their chief duty, to know well the doctrine of the Church which they are to impart through word and life to their students or children.

#### *34. The Cooperation of all the Faithful with the Church's Teaching Office.*

The holy Synod rejoices that there are so many Christians who, imbued with the apostolic spirit, devote their efforts that the divine teaching-mission of the Church may be able fully to respond to today's needs.<sup>30</sup> Experts in questions of medicine, law, social science, economics, and other disciplines of this sort can and at times must fittingly contribute to the forming of a moral judgment in those areas, so that questions are properly posed and rightly answered in accord with Christian principles. The holy Synod recommends all of them, in proportion to their intellectual training, seriously to devote themselves to a deeper knowledge of revealed truth and of Catholic doctrine, both for their own edification and for solving the questions of their time. The Synod also gladly acknowledges their right, so long as the Church's teaching office keeps watch and its prescriptions are maintained,<sup>31</sup> to propose to others, as brothers to brothers, the fruits of their studies and to do so also in writing.

#### *35. Errors to be Avoided.*

To prevent errors from arising and dangerously spreading, the Holy Synod wishes all the children of the Church always to remember: that it is a mark of a Christian not readily to consider

himself a master in theological matters; that judgments on theological matters are not to be made on the basis of profane scientific opinions; that Christian prudence and sound method demand that, before they propose anything new, they first study the doctrine of those who have earned the praise of the Church in their investigation of the truth; and that it is the duty of all the faithful, clergy as well as laity, faithfully to comply with the decisions of the authoritative teaching office.<sup>32</sup> Finally, all should know that they may not hold the false opinion that lay people engaged in sacred studies, because they do not exercise an official ecclesiastical office, are not subject to the vigilance and precautionary measures of the sacred teaching office.

Finally, the Holy Synod earnestly exhorts all the Christian faithful not to be ashamed of the Gospel, even when they are placed in difficult circumstances; and it warns them all of their duty to grow in the knowledge of the faith they have received, so that they may "always be prepared to give an account to anyone who asks" of the hope that is in them (see 1 Pet 3:15).

### COMMENTARY

With regard to the Church's teaching office, here are the chief things proposed for the Council's determination in the suggestions of the bishops, Roman congregations, and ecclesiastical faculties:

a) A statement about the relationship between the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff and that of the whole teaching Church (very many bishops, the Sacred Congregation for Seminaries and Universities, the Pontifical Gregorian University). "Indeed it also seems useful to deal with the link between the infallibility of the hierarchical Church and the infallibility of the believing Church so that all of the elements, mutually complementary, of the teaching on the Church's infallibility may be set out" (Pontifical Gregorian University).

b) A statement on the authority of the ordinary teaching office of the Roman Pontiff and of Bishops, and especially on the doctrinal authority of encyclicals and of the assent owed to them (very many bishops; the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office; the Sacred Congregation for Seminaries and Universities).

c) A statement on the relationships between the duties and tasks of theologians and the authoritative teaching office of the Church (very many bishops, especially of France; the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office; the Sacred Congregation for Seminaries and Universities).

d) A statement on the extension and delimitation of the secondary object of the Church's teaching office (many bishops; Pontifical Gregorian University).

e) A statement on the obedience of all the faithful, lay people, too, toward the Church's authoritative teaching office (many bishops).

f) A statement on the role of pastors, of preachers, of all the faithful in the teaching office of the Church.

The chapter on the Church's teaching office was composed in order to satisfy these requests, and that is the basis for passing judgement on its teaching and structure. In order to understand these, what is set out in the following paragraphs should be noted:

[*The existence and nature of the authoritative teaching office*] Three things are stated:

a) the indefectibility of the universal Church in professing and preaching revealed truth;

b) the proximate cause of this indefectibility: the existence of an authoritative and infallible teaching office;

c) and the supreme cause: the illuminating action of Christ the Lord and the assistance of the Holy Spirit which by means of the Church's authoritative teaching office preserve the whole Church in evangelical truth, without new revelations indeed but not without a deeper understanding and presentation, as time goes on, of the same truth.

[*The object of the authoritative teaching office*] The primary and secondary objects of the teaching office are stated. On the matter, however, it was not thought necessary to enumerate all the cases so far considered by theologians; it would be enough, as in the schema prepared for the First Vatican Council, to set out the general principle the application of which is a matter for the teaching office itself to judge.

On the other hand, however, it seems appropriate in today's circumstances to make an explicit statement on the authority of the authoritative teaching office in interpreting and applying the natural law, because this is the area of greatest difficulty, even among some of the Church's children. Similarly, a statement is in order on the competence of the Church's teaching office to pass judgement on all religious "phenomena," or on those that are pointed to as such, whether in the Church or outside her, because it is very important to safeguard the essential distinction between public Revelation and all other religious facts.

[*The subject of the authoritative teaching office*] This sets out the teaching on the organs of the authoritative teaching office that are of divine law, with the competence and authority proper to each.

The first paragraph also delineates the relationships between the teaching office of the Pontiff and that of Bishops, while the last paragraph speaks of the force and authority of the ordinary teaching office, as almost everyone requested.

[*The subsidiary organs of the authoritative teaching office*] The dogmatic principles with regard to their authority are set out, leaving all the juridical determinations either to the Code of Canon Law or to proper decrees of the Holy See which can propose another discipline as times change.

[*The task and authority of theologians*] The purpose of this paragraph is not to set out everything that could be said about the task of theologians but to state only those in which theologians themselves serve the Church's teaching office, and the authority proper to them when they are fulfilling this task, and then their particular essential dependence on the Church's teaching office in exercising their role.

According to the Church's documents, there are two distinct classes or categories of theological teachings, whose respective authority is stated:

a) there are theological teachings or opinions that are proposed by everyone as "certain doctrine" but without any particular censure. In their regard the Church's teaching office does not require complete adherence but instead submissive respect as for a proven and venerable tradition until solid arguments prove that the truth is other (e.g., the interpretation of the first



chapter of Genesis for many centuries);

b) there are theological teachings or opinions that are proposed by theologians “by common and constant consensus,” as so linked to the deposit of faith that they cannot be denied without temerity or error in the faith. These opinions, from the very fact that they are proposed in such a way by theologians under the watchful eye of the authoritative teaching office, are indirectly proposed by the teaching office itself which entrusts to theologians the task of doctrinally instructing the Church in its name. See the proposal of the Lateran University on the relation between the Church’s teaching office and sacred theology.

[*Helpers of the teaching office in its pastoral role and the cooperation of all the faithful with the Church’s teaching office*] Not everything that could be said on these topics is set out here, but only the things that seem to be needed for greater doctrinal statement in present circumstances:

a) the authority of ministers of the Word of God toward all the faithful of whatever intellectual culture, and its basis, either supernatural (for they share in the gift of preaching the faith “in Spirit and in power” that belongs to the Church for the forming of the faith of believers) or juridical, in the mission of preaching received from the Church’s teaching office;

b) the duty and the cooperation of the faithful in the Church’s pastoral teaching office, of those especially with responsibility for educating young people. These too are called to cooperate with the Church in the Christian education of children, either from the nature of things as Christian parents or by explicit mandate of the Church as catechists, etc., or from the right of the Church toward her children which they represent among their students. Therefore, all of these also are helped by a supernatural gift in order to fulfill their office;

c) finally the duty of all the faithful, especially of those endowed with special gifts of intellectual culture, and how they should relate to the Church’s authoritative teaching office and to the theological tradition.

All of these things are set out in a pastoral style lest a dogmatic text appear too juridical.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See Pius IX, *Qui pluribus*, *Pii IX P.M. Acta*, pars I, vol. I, p. 9; Leo XIII, *Satis cognitum*, *ASS*, 28 (1895/96), 721-23; Pius XI, *Divini illius Magistri*, *AAS*, 22 (1930) 53-54.

<sup>2</sup> See the Council of Trent, Sess. XIII, ch. 1: Dz 874; Gregory XVI, Encyclical *Singulari nos*, Dz 1617; Leo XIII, Encyclical *Sapientiae christianae*, *ASS* 22 (1889/90) 398; Pius XI, *Divini illius Magistri*, l.c., p. 53. 1 Tm 3:15 is explicitly cited or referred to in these texts.

<sup>3</sup> See Leo XIII, *Satis cognitum*, l.c., pp. 717-21; Pius XII, Dogmatic Bull *Munificentissimus Deus*, *AAS* 42 (1950), 756-57.

<sup>4</sup> These are the principal Scriptural texts adduced in the documents mentioned above, especially in *Satis cognitum*, in support of the authority of the authoritative and infallible teaching office of the Church.

<sup>5</sup> See Leo XIII, *Satis cognitum*, l.c., p. 721: "For this reason Jesus Christ established in the Church a living, authoritative and lasting teaching office; he endowed it with his own power, invested it with the spirit of truth, confirmed it by miracles, and desired and most gravely ordered that its doctrinal precepts be accepted as if they were his own." Pius XII, *Orientalis Ecclesiae*, *AAS*, 36 (1944) 144.

<sup>6</sup> See Pius XII, *Humani generis*, AAS 42 (1950) 568.

<sup>7</sup> See Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, AAS 35 (1943) 216, where the illuminating influence of Christ the Head upon the whole Church, and its different modalities, are discussed.

<sup>8</sup> See Vatican Council I, *De Ecclesia Christi*, Dz 1836, and the prepared *Schema Const. dogm. de Ecclesia Christi secundum RR. PP. animadversiones reformatum* (a R. Kleutgen, ch. 7; Mansi, 53, 313).

<sup>9</sup> See Pius XII, *Munificentissimus Deus*, l.c., pp. 757-58, along with Vincent of Lerins, *Commonitorium* 23; PL 50, 668.

<sup>10</sup> See the First *Schema Const. Dogm. De Ecclesia Christi* prepared for the Vatican Council, ch. 9 (Mansi 51, 542-43), and *Schema Const. Dogm. De Ecclesia Christi secundum RR. PP. animadversiones reformatum*, ch. 7 (Mansi 51, 313). The statement in which the secondary object of the authoritative teaching office is described is taken from the text in which Bishop Gasser explained the secondary object of the teaching office of the Supreme Pontiff; see Mansi 52, 1226.

<sup>11</sup> More recent documents of the teaching office especially bring out its authority in explaining and applying the natural law, which is why it is recalled here, since in today's circumstances it causes greater difficulty and is most necessary. See Leo XIII, *Sapientiae christianae*, l.c., pp. 395-98; Pius XI, *Quadragesimo anno*, l.c., pp. 190-91; Pius XII, *Radio Address* for the fiftieth anniversary of *Rerum novarum*, AAS 33 (1941) 196-97; *Address Magnificate Dominum mecum*, AAS 46 (1954) 671-73. The text is taken almost literally from *Divini illius Magistri*, l.c., p. 53-54, where these words of St. Pius X are cited approvingly: "(The Church) was established by its divine Author as the pillar and bulwark of truth so that it might teach all men the divine faith, might guard the deposit entrusted to it whole and inviolate, and might direct and mold men, their societies and their activities towards probity of morals and integrity of life according to the norm of revealed doctrine."

<sup>12</sup> See John XXIII, *Radio Message*, AAS 51 (1959) 147.

<sup>13</sup> See Pius XII, *Address Si diligis...pasce*, AAS 46 (1954) 314-15.

<sup>14</sup> Vatican Council I, *De Ecclesia Christi*, ch. 4 (D 1838).

<sup>15</sup> The Vatican Council did indeed explicitly define only the fact of the infallibility of a definition of a Roman Pontiff speaking *ex cathedra*; but from the most certain principle of the supernatural Providence by which the life of the Church is directed by its heavenly Head and is assisted by the presence of its soul, the Holy Spirit, it can rightly be deduced that acts as vital for the Church as are *ex cathedra* definitions, cannot occur inopportunately and cannot but benefit the building up of the Church in faith and love. And this theological conclusion is confirmed by declarations of the teaching office itself about the opportune character of a solemn definition.

<sup>16</sup> See Bishop Gasser, final *Relator* of the Deputation *De Fide*, on chapter 4 of the Dogmatic Constitution *De Ecclesia Christi*: "We do not exclude the cooperation of the Church because the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff does not occur by way of inspiration or revelation, but by way of divine assistance. Thus the Pope, in accord with his duty and the seriousness of the matter, is bound to make use of the means apt for investigating the truth correctly and enunciating it fittingly; such means are the councils or also counsels of bishops, Cardinals, theologians, etc. These means do differ as the times differ, but we must piously believe that in the divine assistance granted to Peter and to his successors by Christ the Lord, there is also contained the promise of the means that are necessary and apt for affirming a Pontiff's infallible judgement" (Mansi 52, 1213).

<sup>17</sup> See Vatican Council I, *Dei Filius*, the warning after the canons (Dz 1820); Code of Canon Law, can. 1324; Leo XIII, *Sapientiae christianae*, l.c., p. 395; Pius XI, Enc. *Casti connubii*, AAS, 22 (1930) 580: "And if they are not to deprive themselves of the assistance given with such liberal kindness by God, they

must necessarily give this obedience not only to the more solemn definitions of the Church, but also, in the proper mode, to other Constitutions and Decrees in which some opinions are proscribed and condemned as dangerous or perverse."

<sup>18</sup> See Pius XII, *Humani generis*, AAS 42 (1950) 568.

<sup>19</sup> There was no agreement in the Theological Commission on the words: "*Through the gift of the Holy Spirit which they receive at their consecration and in virtue of the apostolic mission, etc.*"

<sup>20</sup> See Code of Canon Law, can. 1326; Pius XII, *Si diligis... pasce*, l.c., p. 314-15.

<sup>21</sup> See Code of Canon Law, can. 228:1.

<sup>22</sup> See Vatican Council I, *De fide cath.*, ch. 3 (Dz 1792); Code of Canon Law, can. 1321:1.

<sup>23</sup> See Pius XII, *Si diligis... pasce*, l.c., pp. 314-15.

<sup>24</sup> See the documents cited above in n. 14, and, in addition, Pius IX, Epistle *Tuas libenter*, *Pii IX P.M. Acta*, pars I, vol. V, pp. 642-43 (see also Dz 1684); St. Pius X, Decree *Lamentabili*, prop. 7-8, *ASS* 40 (1907) 471 (see also Dz 2007-2008); Motu proprio *Praestantia Scripturae*, *ASS* 40 (1907) 724.

<sup>25</sup> See Pius XII, *Si diligis... pasce*, l.c., p. 315-16.

<sup>26</sup> See Pius IX, *Tuas libenter*, l.c. (see also Dz 1683-84).

<sup>27</sup> See Pius XII, *Humani generis*, l.c., pp. 567-69.

<sup>28</sup> See Pius XI, Enc. *Ad catholici sacerdotii*, *AAS* 28 (1936) 7, 15-16; Code of Canon Law, can. 1329.

<sup>29</sup> See Code of Canon Law, can. 1347:1-2.

<sup>30</sup> See Leo XIII, *Sapientiae christianae*, l.c., pp. 390-92.

<sup>31</sup> See Code of Canon Law, Book III, Title XXIII.

<sup>32</sup> See Pius XII, *Si diligis... pasce*, l.c., pp. 315-17.

## CHAPTER VIII

### AUTHORITY AND OBEDIENCE IN THE CHURCH

#### *36. The Crisis in Authority; the True Notion of Authority.*

Concerned to guard and spread the divine truth and law under present-day conditions, this Holy Synod is grievously afflicted to see that there is a certain crisis of authority in the world that arises both from erroneous doctrines and lack of discipline and also at times from misunderstanding and incorrect exercise of power. This crisis is even threatening to affect some of the Church's children.<sup>1</sup> In accord with its duty to teach, the Council, to correct all this, wishes that the following principles, derived from the evangelical law and the Catholic tradition, be maintained and be put into practice by all the faithful, in accordance with their respective conditions.

All legitimate power comes from God (see Rm 13:1); and it has the power in God's name to bind in conscience, not because of the knowledge, prudence, or any other quality in superiors that is required in the exercise of authority, but because of God's will.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, anyone who resists a legitimate power legitimately exercising its authority resists "God's ordinance" (Rm 13:2).

#### *37. The Origin and Nature of Authority in the Church.*

All legitimate power in the Church comes from Christ, and it represents his royal power, and is ordered towards the supernatural purpose that he entrusted to his Church, namely, to extend to all the benefits of his universal redemption.

By this supernatural prerogative, authority and obedience in the Church are both elevated to a higher excellence and dignity. The exercise of authority is a human cooperation, commanded and ruled by Christ's will as the humble service rendered to brothers in order to achieve the supernatural goal of redemption willed by him. Obedience, in turn, itself pursues the same goal, both personal and social; and it has a supernatural principle, namely, the mystery of Christ the Redeemer, by whose obedience men have been made just (see Rm 5:19). The exercise of authority and of obedience, moreover, is assisted by the grace of the Holy Spirit so that it may reach its intended goal, the true freedom of the children of God, and so that the exercise of both authority and obedience may succeed in imitating the example of Christ. To all Christians of all times and of all conditions, Christ the Lord is proposed for imitation,<sup>3</sup> whether as the Good Shepherd who came "not to be served but to serve and to give his life for the redemption of the many" (see Mt 20:28), or as the one who was "made obedient unto death" that he might save all (see Ph 2:8) and was subject to Mary and Joseph that in their authority he might acknowledge the authority of God the Father.

They are mistaken, therefore, who say that there is no power of Christ in the Church except Christ himself and his divine law; they are mistaken who teach that Christian obedience cannot be reconciled with human dignity and the rights of a free person or with the freedom of the children of God; they are mistaken who teach that certain Christians, because of special charisms or missions which they claim to have received from God, are not required to obey the ecclesiastical hierarchy which Christ instituted; they are mistaken who maintain that legitimate

authority has no right to command unless superiors have first discussed an issue with their subjects and some agreement has been reached,<sup>4</sup> or that no command is legitimate unless it seems to be the best course;<sup>5</sup> they are mistaken who maintain that subjects are the ones to make the final judgement on the necessity or opportuneness of things commanded for the goals and common good of the Church.

### *38. The Relationship between Superiors and Subjects; the Right of Free Criticism.*

These principles of faith and right reason throw light on the duties and rights of both superiors and subjects in the Church of Christ.

All superiors are appointed for the good of the community and of souls, and they have no legitimate authority which does not have its origin in Christ and is not exercised according to what he has established. In exercising their power, therefore, they are required exactly to know and to follow the divine law, both natural and positive; they must faithfully observe the laws and constitutions of the Church, both general and particular, and not exceed the limits of their power; they must give their subjects the example of their own faithful obedience to their superiors; by using means appropriate to the seriousness of the matter, they must form a prudent judgement on what they intend to command, making use especially of counselors well qualified either by office or by the nature of the matter; indeed, should it appear appropriate in the Lord in forming their judgement, they should not refuse to listen to the views of their subjects or deny room for undertakings either suggested or even spontaneously initiated by their subjects. Endowed with Christ's authority, they should also know that they must put on the image of the Good Shepherd; they should love their subjects with genuine affection and seek to be loved more than feared,<sup>6</sup> always remembering that both subjects and superiors have one Lord in heaven, who is no respecter of persons (see Eph 6:9).

With the eyes of faith, subjects, in turn, must always see Christ in their superiors, especially in those whose authority was instituted by Christ the Lord. They should obey them "in simplicity of heart, as they would Christ; not merely outwardly, currying favor with men, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Eph 6:5-6). Nor should they forget to commend their superiors to God in their prayers, that they, who will one day render an account of the souls of their subjects, may be able to fulfil their responsibility with joy and not with grief (see Hb 13:17). If all this is done with joy, subjects will also experience how obedience, which excludes all servile fear, can co-exist with the true freedom of the children of God.

In proportion to their learning, competence in the matter, and whatever authority they possess, subjects themselves have the possibility and indeed at times also the duty to make known their views on matters pertaining to the good of the Church or of their community. To be done in a Christian manner, however, this activity must be undertaken above all through the prescribed institutions of the Church, if there be any such; and it must always be done with Christian prudence, truthfulness, humility, courage, and love, and with due reverence towards those who represent Christ the Shepherd, even if they are not imitating him perfectly.<sup>7</sup> But when a legitimate authority has commanded something, those who are led by a Christian spirit, instead of opening the door to free criticism, should strive rather to submit their own judgement about what is to be done to the superior's judgement and carry out the command in ready obedience.<sup>8</sup>

Public denouncing of evils that occur in the Church, especially in writings, cannot be allowed unless it follows the order recommended by Christ the Lord (see Mt 18:15-17), avoids scandal as much as possible, and retains respect for authority, so that it will not destroy but build up faith and discipline. No public denunciation of evils in the Church can be admitted which takes the form of calling into question the essential indefectibility of the Bride of Christ in carrying out her saving mission.

### *39. Public Opinion in the Church.*

Lest the nature and purpose of the Church be mistakenly confused with those of civil society, the following must be maintained with regard to the value and rights of public opinion in the Church.

As is well known, there exists in the Church a certain supernatural sense of the faith on the part of the whole Christian people. This is always good and constitutes an indefectible and unique mark of the Catholic Church. It comes from above and is nothing other than the agreement of faithful and pastors in matters of faith and morals, an agreement governed by the authoritative teaching office. Ultimately, it is aroused by the Holy Spirit, who, while present to the same official teachers when they present Catholic doctrine, is also at work in the faithful so that they may obediently accept the doctrine presented, rightly understand it, and investigate it more deeply. The divine and saving mission of the Church is greatly assisted by this sense of the faith.<sup>9</sup>

Public opinion, which is concerned with practical matters, is something different. It is the spontaneous and vital reaction of the faithful to all that is happening either in individual communities or in the universal Church.<sup>10</sup>

Particular manifestations of this public opinion will be circumspect or imprudent or even mistaken and evil insofar as they do or do not arise from a true knowledge of the matter and from a truly Catholic spirit. For that reason, just as healthy public opinion can promote the good of the Church and ought to be highly regarded and not merely tolerated by the pastors of the Church as they exercise their governing authority, so also, when it does not have the required knowledge of the matter or the spirit of thinking and feeling with the Church, it is destructive of the Mystical Body of Christ and must be corrected by suitable means. When on practical matters there are various opinions, each having its own probability, and the competent authority has not yet made its decision, no competent person should be prevented from freely saying what he thinks. But in discussing controversial issues, charity should reign so that each person seeks only what is better and not simply to impose his own view.

The pastors of the Church should strive to pass fair judgements on all matters brought before them, especially those raised by experts in the matters. But the opinion of those who maintain that superiors in the Church must always and necessarily consult public opinion or judge and decide all issues on the basis of majority opinion among the faithful is absolutely to be rejected. The Holy Synod, finally, rejects the view that in the Church one may inconsiderately and without the most serious reasons appeal to public opinion in order to effect some change in the decrees of the Sacred Hierarchy.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See Pius XII, *Si diligis... pasce* (AAS 46 [1954], p. 314); *Magnificate Dominum mecum* (AAS 46 [1954] pp. 673-74). More on this may be found in the Gregorian University thesis by R. Torrella Cascante, *Lo humano y lo divino en la Iglesia. Aspectos del reformismo catolico contemporaneo* (Rome, 1958).

<sup>2</sup> See 1 Pt 2:13-17 and the theological explanation of obedience given by St. Thomas in *Summa Theologica*, II-II, q. 104.

<sup>3</sup> See Leo XIII, Epistle *Testem benevolentiae* (ASS 31 [1898-99], p. 476): "Christ is the teacher and model of all holiness, and all those who wish to be joined with the saints must be conformed to his norm." Pius XI, Enc. *Casti connubii*, (AAS 22 [1930] p. 548).

<sup>4</sup> See Pius XII, *Address to the General Congregation of the Society of Jesus (Discorsi e Radiomessaggi di S.S. Pio XII, XIX, pp. 384-85.*

<sup>5</sup> See Pius XII, *Magnificate Dominum mecum*, l.c., p. 672.

<sup>6</sup> See *The Rule of the Holy Father Benedict*, ch. 64; St. Augustine, *Rule for the Servants of God*, 11 (PL 32, 1384); Pius XII, *Magnificate Dominum mecum*, l.c., pp. 675-76.

<sup>7</sup> See Leo XIII, *Sapientiae Christianae* (ASS 22 [1889-90], pp. 400-401.

<sup>8</sup> See Leo XIII, Epistle *Epistula tua* (ASS 18 [1895], pp. 3-8; Pius XII, *Magnificate Dominum mecum*, l.c., pp. 673-75.

<sup>9</sup> See Pius XII, *Munificentissimus Deus* (AAS 42 [1950], p. 756). The paragraph is not intended to present everything that could be presented on the nature of the Christian people's sense of faith, but only what is needed in order to distinguish it clearly from so-called "public opinion", which is concerned with practical matters.

<sup>10</sup> See Pius XII, *Address L'importance de la presse* (AAS 42 [1950], p. 256).

## CHAPTER IX

### RELATIONS BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE

*40. The Principle: The Distinction between Church and Civil Society, and the Subordination of the Purpose of the State to the Purpose of the Church.*

The human person, destined by God to a supernatural end, needs both the Church and civil society in order to reach full perfection. The role of civil society, to which man belongs in virtue of his social nature, is to attend to earthly goods and to provide those conditions in which citizens can achieve a perfection worthy of man and can lead here on earth "a quiet and tranquil life" (see 1 Tm 2:2). The Church, to which man must belong in virtue of his supernatural vocation, was founded by God so that, by spreading itself farther and farther, it might by its doctrine, sacraments, prayers, and laws lead the faithful to their supernatural goal.<sup>1</sup> Each society is provided with all it needs in order properly to carry out its own mission. Each of them is perfect, that is, supreme in its own order and therefore not subject to the other, possessing as it does legislative, judicial, and executive power.<sup>2</sup> This distinction between the two cities, as a constant tradition teaches, is hinted at in the words of the Lord, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's" (Mt 22:21).

The two societies exercise their power over the same persons and often with regard to the same matters; while they remain quite distinct, therefore, they still cannot neglect one another; indeed they most certainly must work together in harmony if they themselves and their common members are to prosper.<sup>3</sup>

Desiring to teach what relationships, arising from the nature of each, should obtain between the two powers, the Sacred Synod establishes in the first place that it must be firmly held that both the Church and the civil society were established for the benefit of man.<sup>4</sup> The temporal happiness that the civil power concerns itself with, however, is of no value to man if he loses his own soul (see Mt 16:26; Mk 8:36; Lk 9:25). That is why the goal of the civil society must never be sought to the exclusion or detriment of man's final goal, eternal salvation.<sup>5</sup>

*41. The Power of the Church and its Limits; the Church's Duties towards the Civil Power.*

The Church's power extends over everything by which eternal salvation may be reached by human beings, but matters pertaining to temporal happiness fall as such under the civil authority. The Church, therefore, is not concerned with temporal matters except insofar as they bear upon the supernatural goal. In matters bearing on the goal of both Church and society, for example, marriage, the education of children, and other things of the sort, the rights of the civil power are to be exercised in such a way that, in the Church's judgement, no harm is done to the superior goods of the supernatural order. In other temporal affairs which, as long as the divine law is kept, can be obtained or done in various ways, the Church does not in any way involve itself. Guardian of its own rights and scrupulously observant of the rights of the other, the Church does not believe that it is its role to determine what form of society is to be preferred or by what arrangements the civil affairs of Christian peoples are to be carried out. As long as religion and morality are preserved, the Church does not disapprove of any of the various types of state.<sup>6</sup> As it does not renounce its own freedom, so the Church does not prevent the civil power from freely



exercising its rights and laws.<sup>7</sup>

Civil rulers cannot be ignorant how many benefits the Church brings to civil society as it carries out its mission.<sup>8</sup> The Church herself labors to form citizens good in their Christian virtue and piety, who, if they are what Christian teaching commands them to be, will without a doubt, as Augustine says, be a great blessing to the state.<sup>9</sup> The Church also imposes on citizens the duty of obeying legitimate ordinances, "not only because of wrath, but also for conscience's sake" (Rm 13:5).<sup>10</sup> It admonishes those responsible for governing a state to carry out their role, not out of lust for power, but for the good of their citizens, as having one day to give an account to God (see Hb 13:17) for the power God has given them.<sup>11</sup> Finally, the Church insists upon the observance of the laws, both natural and supernatural, by which the whole civic order, both among citizens and among nations, is in accord with the norms of justice and peace.<sup>12</sup>

#### *42. The Religious Duties of the Civil Power.*

The good of the State itself requires that the civil power not consider itself indifferent towards religion. It was established by God to help men acquire a truly human perfection; it must, therefore, not only provide its members the opportunity to procure temporal goods, both material and cultural, but must also assist them so that the spiritual goods for leading a religious life can more easily abound. Among those goods none is to be more highly regarded than to know and acknowledge God and to fulfil the duties owed to God, for these are the foundations of all private virtue, and indeed of all public virtue as well.<sup>13</sup>

These duties toward God are not to be fulfilled only by individual citizens, but also by the civil power, which in its public acts represents the civil society. For God is the author of civil society and the source of all the goods which through it flow down to every member. Although, in the order willed by Christ, liturgical worship belongs only to God's Church, still the civil society must also worship God in some social way.<sup>14</sup> In the light of its nature, it will especially do this if by procuring the common good it faithfully observes the laws of God established by the divine Majesty for this economy of salvation. This demands above all that full freedom be granted to the Church and that whatever the Church judges to hinder the attainment of the eternal goal is excluded from legislation, governing, and public activity. The goal indeed should be to make it easier to live a life on Christian principles, one conducive to eternal life.<sup>15</sup>

#### *43. A General Principle of Application.*

No individual can worship God in the manner prescribed by Christ unless he is convinced that God has spoken through Jesus Christ,<sup>16</sup> indeed unless he knows the saving mission of the Church. So also the civil community is not obliged to such worship unless the fact of revelation has first been accepted by its citizens and by the civil power insofar as it represents the people. The Church has always acknowledged that different relationships, beneficial to both, will obtain between the two powers in accordance with whether the civil power, representing the people, acknowledges Christ and the Church he founded. For the good of the community itself, citizens should be granted full freedom to decide that their civil life be shaped according to Catholic principles and thus that, as St. Gregory the Great said, "the road to heaven be broadened."<sup>17</sup>

#### 44. Conclusion.

The holy Synod acknowledges that the principles about the mutual relationship between the ecclesiastical and civil powers are to be applied only with the moderation explained above; but it cannot allow them to be obscured, under the pretext of the common good, by some false laicism. For these principles are based on the absolutely firm rights of God, on the unchangeable constitution and mission of the Church, and on the social nature of man which remains the same in all times and determines the essential purpose of the civil society itself, despite differences in political government and other alternations of circumstance.<sup>18</sup>

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Leo XIII, Encyclical. *Immortale Dei*, 1 nov. 1885, *ASS* 18 (1885), 166 (Dz 1866); Pius IX, Encyclical *Etsi multa luctuosa*, 21 nov. 1873, *ASS* 7 (1872), 471 (Dz 1841).

<sup>2</sup> Benedict XIV, Letter *Ad assiduas*, 4 March 1755 (*Benedicti XIV Bullarium*, IV [Rome, 1758], 163); Pius VI, Const. *Auctorem fidei*, 28 August 1794 (Dz 1505); Pius IX, Enc. *Quanta cura*, 8 Dec. 1864, *ASS* 3 (1867), 164-65 (Dz 1697-98); Syllabus, 8 Dec. 1864, props. 19, 20, 54 (Dz 1719, 1720, 1754); Leo XIII, Enc. *Immortale Dei*, l.c., p. 174 (Dz 1869); Code of Canon Law, the many canons which presuppose the character of the Church as a perfect society, e.g., 109, 120-21, 265, 1160, 1322:2, 1495:1, 1496, 2214:1, 2390; Pius XI, Enc. *Ubi arcano*, 23 Dec. 1922, *AAS* 14 (1922) 697ff; Enc. *Quas primas*, 11 Dec. 1925, *AAS* 17 (1925), 604ff (Dz 2197); Enc. *Divini illius Magistri*, 31 Dec. 1929, *AAS* 22 (1930), 52-53 (Dz 2203); Pius XII, Address to Sacred Roman Rota, 2 Oct. 1944, *AAS* 36 (1944), 289; Address to Sacred Roman Rota, 29 Oct. 1947, *AAS* 39 (1947), 495; Address to Participants in Tenth International Congress of Historians, 7 Sept. 1955, *AAS* 47 (1945), 677.

<sup>3</sup> On the need for harmony between the two societies: Gregory XVI, Enc. *Mirari vos*, 15 Aug. 1832, *ASS* 4 (1868), 344 (Dz 1615); Pius IX, *Quanta cura*, l.c., p. 161 (Dz 1688); Syllabus, prop. 55 (Dz 1755); Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*, l.c. pp. 166, 173 (Dz 1866-67); Enc. *Libertas praestantissimum*, 20 June 1888, *ASS* 20 (1887), pp. 603 and 611; St. Pius X, Enc. *Vehementer Nos*, 11 Feb. 1906, *ASS* 39 (1906), 12-13 (Dz 1995); Enc. *Pascendi*, 8 Sept. 1907, 614-15 (Dz 2092); Pius XI, Enc. *Divini illius Magistri*, l.c., pp. 55-56 (Dz 2205); Pius XII, Address to the Roman People, 20 Feb. 1949, *AAS* 41 (1949), 75-76; Address to First Universal Congress on the Catholic Apostolate of the Laity, 14 Oct. 1951, *AAS* 43 (1951), 785; Address to Society of Reporters for Foreign Newspapers residing in Rome, 12 May 1953, *AAS* 45 (1953), 399f; Address to Tenth International Congress of Historians, l.c., p. 679. In this Address Pius XII explicitly refers to the doctrine of Leo XIII and cites the Encyclicals *Diuturnum illud*, *Immortale Dei*, and *Sapientiae Christianae*.

When legates of foreign nations presented their credentials, Pius XII used quite often to recall the need for this harmony. See, for example, his remarks to legates of the following countries: Italy, 7 Dec. 1939, *AAS* 31 (1939), 705; Rumania, 15 Nov. 1940, *AAS* 32 (1940), 501; Argentina, 22 Nov. 1941, *AAS* 33 (1941), 503; France, 10 May 1945, *AAS* 37 (1945), 147; Chile, 20 Jan. 1952, *AAS* 44 (1952), 185.

<sup>4</sup> Leo XIII, Enc. *Sapientiae christianae*, 10 Jan. 1890, *ASS* 22 (1889-90), 385; Pius XI, Enc. *Divini Redemptoris*, 19 March 1937, *AAS* 29 (1937), 79; Pius XII, Enc. *Summi Pontificatus*, 20 Oct. 1939, *AAS* 31 (1939), 433; Radio Message, 24 Dec. 1941, *AAS* 34 (1941), 12, 14; Address to newly created Cardinals, 20 Feb. 1946, *AAS* 38 (1946), 145ff; Address to Participants in First International Congress on the Histopathology of the Nervous System, 13 Sept. 1952, *AAS* 44 (1952), 786.

This doctrine on the Church was explicitly presented by Pius XI to the Lenten preachers, *Civiltà Cattolica*, 78/1 (1927), 554-55; Pius XII, Enc. *Mystici Corporis*, 29 June 1943, *AAS* 35 (1943), 222f.

<sup>5</sup> Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*, l.c., p. 164: "Since civil society arises for the common good, if it is to defend the prosperity of the society it must so provide for its citizens that not only does it not place any obstacles but does whatever it can to provide opportunities for them to obtain and achieve their supreme and unchangeable goal;" *Libertas praestantissimum*, l.c., p. 595; St. Pius X, *Vehementer nos*, l.c., p. 5: He is speaking of the French Law of Separation: "...it measures the action of the State solely by the prosperity of this mortal life, the proximate reason for civil society; it quite neglects the ultimate purpose of its citizens, the eternal happiness presented to men after this brief life, as if it were alien to the State. On the contrary, not only must the State not hinder, it must favor the attainment of that supreme and absolute goal for which this whole order of fleeting things is arranged;" Pius XII, *Summi Pontificatus*, l.c., p. 433, places among the purposes of the State "that it help citizens achieve the heavenly goal to which they are destined;" John XXIII, Enc. *Grata recordatio*, 26 Sept. 1959, AAS 51 (1959), 676.

<sup>6</sup> Leo XIII, Enc. *Sapientiae christianae*, l.c., p. 396.

<sup>7</sup> The first Article of the Gallican Clergy, declared null by Alexander VIII, 4 August 1690 (Dz 1322); again condemned among the errors of the pseudo-Synod of Pistoia by Pius VI in the Constitution, *Auctorem fidei*, 28 August 1794 (Dz 1598-99); Pius IX, Condemnation of the proposition of John Nep. Nuytz, *Ad Apostolicae*, 22 August 1851 (*Pii IX P.M. Acta*, I/I, p. 287), which is also found in the Syllabus, prop. 24, *ASS* 3 (1867), 171 (Dz 1724); Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*, l.c., pp. 166-67 (Dz 1866): "Whatever, therefore, is sacred in human affairs, whatever concerns the salvation of souls and the worship of God, whether it does so of its nature or because of some particular reason, all this falls under the authority and the judgement of the Church," a sentence referred to by Pius XII, in his Address to Participants in the First International Congress of Historians, l.c., p. 677-78.

From this derives the right of the Church to pass judgement on civil laws under their religious aspect: Leo XIII, *Sapientiae christianae*, l.c., p.97. In a letter written by Cardinal Merry del Val to Cardinal Sevin, the Archbishop of Lyon, on the occasion of the Congress of Catholic Lawyers held in 1913, the works of Tarquini, Cavagnis, and Billot are recommended: *AAS* 5 (1913), 559. Pius XI, *Ubi arcano*, l.c., p. 698; Pius XII, Address to Cardinals and Bishops, 2 Nov. 1954, *AAS*, 46 (1954), 671-73; Address to Members of Society of Foreign Journalists, 12 May 1953, l.c., p. 400.

<sup>8</sup> Ever since the French Revolution, the Supreme Pontiffs have taught the dangers to the State that follow from the neglect of Christ's religion and law. For example: Pius VI, Consistorial Address, 29 March 1790, which cites St. Augustine, *Letter to Marcellinus*, 138, 15 (PL 33, 532) and *Against Faustus*, 21, 14 (PL 42, 398); Letter to Louis XVI, 17 August 1790; Gregory XVI, *Mirari vos*, l.c., p. 343, citing St. Augustine, *On the Psalms*, 124, 7 (PL 37, 1654); Pius IX, *Quanta cura*, l.c., pp. 166-67; the Draft prepared for the Vatican Council: by virtue and piety it makes citizens good; the duty of civil obedience is grounded in divine authority; it teaches rulers to direct their governance not to their own comfort but to the common good (Mansi, 51, 545ff).

Leo XIII, Enc. *Diuturnum illud*, 29 June 1881, *ASS* 14 (1881), 3-14, citing on p. 13 St. Augustine, *On the Morals of the Church*, I, 30 (PL 32, 1336); Enc. *Cum multa sint*, 8 Dec. 1882, *ASS* 15 (1882), 242: "For where religion is taken away, those principles will surely be shaken on which the health of society chiefly rests and which derive most of their force from religion, the most important of them being to govern justly and moderately, to submit to the judgement of conscience, to restrain desires by virtue, to give to each what is his, not to touch what belongs to another;" Enc. *Nobilissima Gallorum gens*, 8 Feb. 1884, *ASS* 16 (1883), 242-43; Enc., *Humanum genus*, *Ibid.*, pp. 417-33; Enc. *Au milieu des sollicitudes*, 16 Feb. 1892, *ASS* 24 (1891-92), 520; Enc. *Caritatis*, 19 March 1894, *ASS* 26 (1893-94), 525; Apostolic Letter, *Praeclara gratulationis*, 20 June 1894, *Ibid.*, p. 715; Letter *Longinqua oceani*, 6 Jan. 1895, *ASS* 27 (1894-95), 389; Enc. *Tametsi futura*, 1 Nov. 1900, *ASS* 33 (1900-01), 283-85.

St. Pius X, Enc. *Iucunda sane*, 12 March 1904, *ASS* 36 (1903-04), 520; Benedict XV, Enc. *Ad*

*Beatissimi*, 1 Nov. 1914, *AAS* b (1914), 567-68, 571; Letter, *Anno iam exeunte*, to Rev. Joseph Hiss, 7 March 1917, *AAS* 9 (1917), 172; *Ubi arcano*, l.c., pp. 683 and 687; *Quas primas*, l.c., pp. 604-05; Pius XII, *Summi Pontificatus*, l.c., pp. 423-24; Address to Girls in Catholic Action in Italian Dioceses, 6 Oct. 1940, *AAS* 32 (1940), 411; Address to Teens in Catholic Action in Italian Dioceses, 10 Nov. 1940, *Ibid.*, pp. 495-96; John XXIII, Enc. *Ad Petri cathedram*, 29 June 1959, *AAS* 51 (1959), 528-29: "We think this particularly certain: when the sacred rights of God and of religion are neglected or trampled on, the very bases of human society collapse and are ruined, as our very wise Predecessor, Leo XIII, remarked: 'The result is...that the force of laws is broken and all authority is weakened when the supreme and eternal reason of God's commands and prohibitions is repudiated' [Letter *Exeunte iam anno*, 25 Dec. 1888, *ASS* 21 (1888), 327]. Cicero's statement agrees with this judgement: "You, Pontiffs..., fortify the city better by religion than by the walls themselves" (*De nat. deor.*, III, 40).

<sup>9</sup> St. Augustine, *Letter to Marcellinus*, 138, 15 (PL 33, 532): "Let those who say that the teaching of Christ is opposed to the state provide the sort of army that the Christian doctrine commands soldiers to be, provide the kind of provincial governors, husbands, spouses, parents, children, masters, servants, kings, judges, tax-collectors and tax-payers that Christian doctrine commands, and then they may dare to say that it is opposed to the state; but let them not hesitate to confess that, if it is followed, it is of great benefit to the state."

<sup>10</sup> See also Tit 3:1; 1 Pt 2:13-15.

<sup>11</sup> See also Wis 6:4-6; Rom 13:1.

<sup>12</sup> Pius XII, Radio Message, 24 dec. 1942, *AAS* 35 (1943), 10.

<sup>13</sup> Leo XIII, *Libertas praestantissimum*, l.c., p. 603: "Nature herself proclaims the necessity of the State providing means and opportunities whereby the community may be enabled to live properly, that is to say, according to the laws of God. For, since God is the source of all goodness and justice, it is absolutely ridiculous that the State should pay no attention to those laws or render them abortive by contrary enactments. Besides, those who are in authority owe it to the commonwealth not only to provide for its external well-being and the conveniences of life, but still more to consult the welfare of men's souls in the wisdom of their legislation;" *Sapientiae christianae*, l.c., p. 385; *Au milieu des sollicitudes*, l.c., p. 520.

<sup>14</sup> Leo XIII, *Humanum genus*, l.c., p. 427: "Human society, for which we are by nature born, was established by God, the author of nature; and from it as from the principle and source flow all the force and endurance of the innumerable goods with which society abounds. Thus as we as individuals are warned by nature's voice to render pious and holy worship to God because we have received from God life and the goods that accompany life, so must peoples and States for the same reason; *Immortale Dei*, l.c., p. 163; *Libertas praestantissimum*, l.c., p. 604: "Civil society, therefore, because it is a society, must acknowledge God to be its originator and author and revere and worship his power and rule;" *Au milieu des sollicitudes*, l.c., p. 520; St. Pius X, *Vehementer nos*, l.c., p. 5: "[God] is the creator and conservator of human society no less than of individuals and thus must be worshiped not only privately but publicly also;" Consistorial Address, 21 Feb. 1906, *ASS*, 39 (1906), 30-31: "But God is the Lord and ruler not only of individuals but also of nations and states, and thus should be acknowledged, revered, and worshiped by nations and their governors;" Pius XI, *Quas primas*, l.c., p. 609; Pius XII, Enc. *Mediator Dei*, 20 Nov. 1947, *AAS* 39 (1947), 525ff.

<sup>15</sup> See the texts cited in n. 5 above, to which add: Pius VII, Enc. *Diu satis*, 15 May 1800, *Bullarii Rom. Continuatio*, XI, pp. 21ff.; Pius IX, *Quanta cura*, l.c., p. 166; Pius XI, Enc. *Ad salutem*, 20 April 1930, *AAS* 22 (1930) 219-20.

<sup>16</sup> Pius IX, Enc. *Qui pluribus* (Dz 1637).

<sup>17</sup> St. Gregory the Great, *Letter 65 to Mauritius* (PL 77, 663). For the condition here set out on the application of the Catholic teaching, see Taparelli D'Azeglio, *Essai théorique de droit naturel*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Paris-Leipzig-Tournai, t. I, pp. 388-390).

<sup>18</sup> Many writers have recently taught that the principles presented here are only contingent norms given by the Supreme Pontiffs in relation to circumstances no longer existing.

Pius VI, to the Archbishop of Bordeaux, 10 July 1790: "The king's duties towards God are certainly immutable and may not be neglected for any reason whatever, even if he intends to fulfill them again when these perverse times have ended."

There is no doubt that Leo XIII intended to provide an immutable doctrine in the Encyclical *Immortale Dei*, "On the Christian Constitution of States." For he presents that doctrine as grounded in revelation and in accord with natural reason.

The successors of Leo XIII taught that the doctrine is immutable because grounded in those three principles: the rights of God, the social nature of man from which flows the State's essential purpose, and the immutable nature of the Church.

St. Pius X, Letter *Notre charge apostolique*, 25 aug. 1910 (Condemnation of *Le Sillon*), *AAS* 2 (1910), 612, 625, 627; Benedict XV, Letter *Anno iam exeunte*, l.c., pp. 171-75.

Pius XI, Enc. *Divini illius Magistri*, l.c., pp. 65-66: "Everything we have said so far ... has as its most firm and immutable basis the Catholic doctrine on *the Christian constitution of States*, which was so well presented by our Predecessor, Leo XIII, especially in the Encyclicals *Immortale Dei* and *Sapientiae christianae*." Having cited the Encyclical *Immortale Dei* on the distinction and relations between the two powers and on the Church's indirect power, he adds: "Whoever refuses to accept these principles and to apply them to education must both deny that Christ founded his Church for the sake of men's salvation and affirm that civil society and the State are not subject to God and to his natural and divine law. Which is manifestly impious..."; Letter of the Secretary of State to M. Duthoit, 12 July 1933; Ed. Bonne Presse, X, p. 241; Enc. *Divini Redemptoris*, l.c., p. 81.

Pius XII, Enc. *Summi Pontificatus*, l.c., pp. 432-33: "As our very wise Predecessor, Leo XIII, teaches in the Encyclical *Immortale Dei*, the State's authority was established by the supreme Creator of all things that it might direct the society on the basis of the requirements of that order which consists in *the universal principles and unchangeable norms by which it is ruled*, so that it might help the human person in this present life, with respect to his bodily and mental powers and right living, more easily achieve perfection, and so that it might assist citizens attain the goal to which they are destined;" Address to the Sacred Roman Rota, 6 oct. 1946, *AAS* 38 (1946), 393; Address to the Sacred Roman Rota, 29 oct. 1947, *AAS* 39 (1947), 495; Address to Participants in Tenth International Congress of Historians, l.c., pp. 677-78: "Leo XIII as it were enclosed in a formula the proper nature of these relations, of which he gives a luminous presentation in his Encyclicals *Diuturnum illud* (1881), *Immortale Dei* (1885), and *Sapientiae christianae* (1890)."

On the opposition between contemporary laicism and Christian doctrine, John XXIII teaches in the Enc. *Grata recordatio*, l.c., p. 677: "It should also be noted that types of reasoning and of philosophizing as well as types of behavior have become common today that can in no way accord with Christian doctrine. We will never cease to state this serenely but firmly and certainly. But God made men and nations capable of healing (see Wis 1:14). That is why we hope that the arid postulates and proposals that arose from this way of thinking and behaving and have been crystalized and hardened and imbued, as everyone knows, with the claims of 'laicism' and 'materialism,' will be set aside and that appropriate remedies will be sought and found in that healthy doctrine which experience is confirming more everyday. This doctrine testifies that God is the author of life and of its laws and that he is the vindicator of the rights and of the dignity of the human person. God, therefore, is 'our salvation and our Redemption' (from the Sacred Liturgy)."

## CHAPTER X

### THE CHURCH'S OBLIGATION TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL TO ALL NATIONS OF THE WORLD

#### *45. The Existence and Basis of the Task.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ said of himself, "I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I desire that it be kindled" (Lk 12:49), and when he was about to return from this world to the Father, he commanded the Apostles to preach the Gospel to all nations: "Going into the whole world, preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mk 16:15). The Apostles experienced and acknowledged this command as a true necessity imposed on themselves. The Apostle says, "If I preach the Gospel, it is no glory to me, for necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel" (1 Cor 9:16). This greatest and holiest of duties was not to come to an end with their earthly lives, but was to be continued by the Church until the end of the world.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, it is a part of that chief mission of the Church by which it is to spread the true worship of God in living faith and love to the very ends of the earth and to make all men sharers in Christ's redemption so that they may attain eternal happiness.<sup>2</sup> The duty to preach the Gospel to all nations and the right to fulfil it derive from the primal right of Christ himself, for he solemnly said, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Going, therefore, teach all nations" (Mt 28:19).

#### *46. The Nature of the Task.*

Since it was conferred on the Church by its divine Founder, this duty is of divine origin. As is clear from the words of Christ, it embraces all men and all parts of the world.<sup>3</sup> For the Church must perpetuate the work of Christ who came down from heaven and became incarnate for the salvation of the whole world. Everywhere on earth, therefore, independently of any human power, the Church has the inalienable right to send preachers of the Gospel,<sup>4</sup> to establish Christian communities, by baptism to make people her members, and to exercise over them, as her subjects, her power to teach, rule, and sanctify.<sup>5</sup>

No civil community, therefore, should consider that it can legitimately oppose the fulfilment of this mission divinely entrusted to the Church for the whole world.<sup>6</sup> For Catholic doctrine contains nothing that is not supremely consonant with human reason, most in harmony with human dignity, and so perfective of human life, individual and social, that, if citizens imbued with the spirit of Christ were to devote themselves to the common good, they would be for the state what the soul is to a healthy body.<sup>7</sup> Much less should a civil society think that it can impede the exercise of this mission in order to gain temporal benefits. For we are to make such use of temporal goods that we do not lose eternal goods.<sup>8</sup>

Some people think that it possible to oppose to the preaching of the Gospel the just and legitimate desire to preserve those true benefits which, as a sacred heritage, constitute a nation's own distinctive character. This is not only an error, it also harms the good of their own people. For in the forms of human and civic life proper to any nation, in the customs received from ancestors, and in traditional institutions, the law of the Gospel refuses only what is contrary to natural reason and to the divine law. Whatever truth, goodness, nobility, or beauty any nation

possesses as its own character and genius, the Church insists must be preserved and, in accordance with her role, she raises all that to a higher order.<sup>9</sup>

The Church can never tolerate that her right to preach the Gospel be taken from her; nor can she ever cease to undertake it. If she did, she would not be fulfilling her chief mission; she would be failing to glorify God her Savior; she would be depriving people of the ordinary means of salvation. If civil societies try to prevent her from exercising her right and duty, the Church cannot give in to them; she has to resist even to the point of shedding her blood; for, as the Apostle says, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

The holy Synod, therefore, solemnly proclaims before all peoples the right of the Church to preach the Gospel to all the nations of the world and to offer them all the helps to salvation. It also admonishes all who exercise authority over peoples not to oppose the full freedom of the Church to fulfil this task, but rather to support its exercise in the nations which divine Providence has entrusted to them.

*47. Who have the Power and Duty to Preach the Gospel, and how they are to Exercise it.*<sup>10</sup>

Concern for the preaching of Christ's Gospel throughout the world belongs to the body of pastors along with the Vicar of Christ, for it was to them in common that Christ gave the command and imposed the common duty.<sup>11</sup> All bishops, therefore, and not only bishops and vicars apostolic living in the missions, along with their Head, should be concerned with this apostolic task of proclaiming the faith to all nations.<sup>12</sup> But what is commanded of all the Apostles and of their successors falls principally upon Peter and his successors, the Roman Pontiffs, to whom the Lord entrusted the totality of his flock. The Roman Pontiff, therefore, has the supreme, absolute, and universal right to send preachers of the faith into the whole world, and he has the duty to strive with all his skill that the Church be spread everywhere and that all men become sharers in the redemption of Christ.<sup>13</sup> Individual bishops have not only the right and duty with all their energies to see to it that unbelievers living in their territories are evangelized;<sup>14</sup> out of the concern with which they are required to promote the good of the universal Church in their own dioceses, they must also encourage vocations to the missions. They must not, moreover, cease promoting with all their hearts those missionary works by which the spiritual and temporal needs of universal evangelization are provided for.<sup>15</sup> Secular and religious priests, religious men and women, and all the faithful can be endowed by the Sacred Hierarchy with a mandate, so that each in his own way can provide assistance to the fulfilment of this supreme task of the Church. For all, as members of the Mystical Body of Christ, must contribute as much as possible to its growth (see Eph 4:16; Col 2:19).<sup>16</sup> Religion and charity, furthermore, always require of all Catholics that, grateful to God for the very precious gift of the faith they have received, they never let pass any opportunity to communicate that gift to others<sup>17</sup> or to assist with their prayers, contributions, and other means<sup>18</sup> those who are actively engaged in fulfilling the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will always be present to the Church lest it ever fail to proclaim the Gospel to all nations, according to the divine promise, "Behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world" (Mt 28:20).

**NOTES**

<sup>1</sup> See Benedict XV, Enc. *Maximum illud*, 30 Nov. 1919, *AAS* 11 (1919), 440-55; John XXIII, Enc. *Princeps Pastorum*, 18 Nov. 1959, *AAS* 51 (1959), 834ff, 845ff.

<sup>2</sup> Pius XI, Enc. *Rerum Ecclesiae*, 28 Feb. 1926, *AAS* 18 (1926), 65: "The Church arose for no other purpose than to make all men sharers in the saving redemption by spreading the Kingdom of God throughout the world"; Pius XII, Enc. *Fidei donum*, 21 April 1957, *AAS* 49 (1957), 237, citing the Address of 24 Nov. 1946 (*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, VIII, p. 328); John XXIII, *Princeps Pastorum*, l.c.

<sup>3</sup> See Mt. 28:18-20; Mk 16:15,20; Lk 24:47; Acts 1:8.

<sup>4</sup> Code of Canon Law, c. 1322:2: "Independently of any civil authority, the Church has the right and duty to teach all nations the doctrine of the Gospel."

<sup>5</sup> St. Augustine, *Letter 199 to Hesychius*, c. 12 (PL 33, 922-24); St. Augustine teaches that the goal of the preaching of the Gospel is that the Church may be established everywhere to render God the worship due him; c. 923: "Among whatever nations the Church does not yet exist, it must be established there"; St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, I-II, q. 106, a. 4, ad 4; Pius XI, *Rerum Ecclesiae*, l.c., p. 74: "For what other reason, we ask, are there missions except that the Church be established and strengthened in so vast an immensity of places?" Pius XII, *Reply to the Homage of the Pontifical Missionary Works*, 24 June 1944, *AAS* 36 (1944), 207-08, 210; Letter *Perlibenti quidem animo*, 9 August 1950, *AAS* 42 (1950), 727; Enc. *Evangelii Praecones*, 2 June 1951, *AAS* 43 (1951), 507: "As everyone knows, the first aim of these expeditions is that the light of Christian truth should shine more splendidly among new nations and that there should be new Christians. But the final goal which must be pursued ... is that the Church should be firmly established among other peoples and that it have its own hierarchy, drawn from among the native people;" *Fidei donum*, l.c., p. 228.

<sup>6</sup> The following defend this right with regard to the civil authority, whether Catholic or non-Catholic: F. Suarez, *De Fide*, disp. XVII, sect. I; F. Vittoria, *De Indis*, Rel. prior, sect. 3; D. Scoto, *In IV Sent.*, D. 5, q. un., a. 10; De Lugo, *De virt. Fidei Divinae*, d. XIX, sect. II, #1; Salmeron, *In Ev. et Act. Apost.*, l. XI, tract. XXXIII; l. XII, tract. XXXVIII.

The following allude to this right of the Church in the question about the nature of the teaching office: Franzelin, *De Ecclesia Christi*, Theses (Rome, 1887), pp. 58-60; Billot, *Tractatus de Ecclesia Christi*, II (Rome, 1899), pp. 64ff; Salaverri, *De Ecclesia Christi*, in *Sacrae Theologiae Summa*, I (Madrid, 1950), pp. 525, 532ff; Journet, *L'Eglise du Verbe Incarné*, II (Paris, 1951), pp. 1223-1251 (Missiology); H. de Lubac, *Le fondement théologique des Missions* (Paris, 1946).

Canonical experts more explicitly discuss this right with regard to the civil authorities. For example: Wernz-Vidal, *Ius canonicum*, IV/II (Rome, 1935), pp. 6-7; G. Vromant, *Ius Missionarium* (Louvain, 1934), P. II, c. 1, pp. 50-56; G. Sartori, *Iuris Missionarii elementa* (Rome, 1951), pp. 41-42.

<sup>7</sup> See *Letter to Diognetes*, ch. 6 (PG 2, 1176).

<sup>8</sup> See the Oration for the third Sunday after Pentecost.

<sup>9</sup> This paragraph is drawn from several documents of Pius XII: Enc. *Summi Pontificatus*, l.c., pp. 428-29; Address *Vivamente gradito*, 24 June 1944, *AAS* 36 (1944), 210; *Evangelii Praecones*, l.c., pp. 521-24. John XXIII, *Princeps Pastorum*, l.c., pp. 843ff, 848, 854.

<sup>10</sup> For the whole paragraph, see note 6.

<sup>11</sup> St. Celestine, *Letter to Syn. of Ephesus* (Mansi, 4, 1283); Benedict XV, *Rerum Ecclesiae*, l.c., pp. 68-69; Pius XII, *Fidei donum*, l.c., p. 237.

<sup>12</sup> St. Celestine, l.c.; Benedict XV, *Maximum illud*, l.c., pp. 440, 442; Pius XII, *Fidei donum*, l.c., p. 237.



<sup>13</sup> In addition to the documents cited in n. 11, see: Leo XIII, Enc. *Grande munus*, 30 Sept. 1880, *ASS* 13 (1880), 145: "The great task of spreading Christianity which was entrusted in a particular way to St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and to his successors impels the Roman Pontiffs to see that heralds of the holy Gospel are sent at various times to the various nations of the world;" Code of Canon Law, cc. 1327 and 1350:2; St. Bernard, *De consideratione*, l. III, c. 1 (PL 182, 757-60); Thomas of Jesus (1564-1627), *De procuranda salute omnium gentium*, ed. Pammolli (Rome, 1940), l. II, pp. 67-68: "As the Supreme Pastor of the Church and the Successor of Peter in the apostolate, the Roman Pontiff has the authority to send preachers to spread the faith throughout the world."

<sup>14</sup> Code of Canon Law, c. 1350:1; Synodus Vicariatus Sutchuens., 1803 (Coll. Lacensis, VI, 633: "*Among the chief duties of the apostolic office the most important is certainly that of spreading the faith among the gentiles and of keeping it whole and unblemished among the faithful;*" Leo XIII, *Quae mari sinico*, 17 Sept. 1902, *Acta Leonis XIII*, XXII, p. 204: "Wherever uncivilized nations still remain devoted to the frightful worship of idols, bishops and priests must know that they are to work for their conversion;" Encyclical Letter of the Sacred Congregation for Spreading the Faith (1879), (*Coll. S.C.P.F.*, II, n. 1507); Plenary Council of North America celebrated in Rome in 1898 (Ed. Rome 1900), p. 339: "Neither bishops nor pastors who know that there are Indians within their jurisdictions who have not yet been converted will satisfy their pastoral duties if they concentrate only on the faithful and do not attempt to rescue the others from the darkness of unbelief and to call them to Christ."

The theological reason is thus explained by Wernz-Vidal, *Ius canonicum*, IV/II (Rome, 1935), p. 58, n. 653: "The foreign missions get their name more from their principal aim, the *spreading* of the Catholic faith among people *foreign* to the Catholic Church, than from their distant lands. In this sense, every bishop in *his own* diocese, where there are unbelievers, heretics, schismatics, has from the very beginning of the Church down to our own age been established as a true successor of the Apostles to be an apostolic missionary in order to bring about their conversion and the spread of the Catholic faith."

<sup>15</sup> St. John Chrysostom, *Letter 123* (PG 52, 676-68); Leo XIII, Enc. *Sancta Dei civitas*, 3 Dec. 1880, *ASS* 13 (1880), 242, 246ff; Benedict XV, *Maximum illud*, l.c., pp. 451-55; Pius XI, *Rerum Ecclesiae*, l.c., pp. 71-75; Pius XII, *Evangelii Praecones*, l.c., pp. 525-28; *Fidei donum*, l.c., pp. 235-48.

<sup>16</sup> See note 15.

<sup>17</sup> Benedict XV, *Maximum illud*, l.c., p. 451; Pius XI, *Rerum Ecclesiae*, l.c., p. 68; Pius XII, *Evangelii Praecones*, l.c., p. 526; *Fidei donum*, l.c., pp. 225-27.

<sup>18</sup> See the documents cited in notes 15 and 17. Also: Pius XII, Epist. *Perlibenti quidem animo*, l.c., pp. 725-27.

## CHAPTER XI

### ECUMENISM

#### *48. Introduction.*

Since the Church, as the one and unique institution of salvation, was built by Christ to be the one and only sign lifted up among the nations, nothing can ever intrinsically violate its unity.

But the separations from the Catholic Church that have occurred over the centuries do in some way obscure the manifestation of this indefectible unity before the whole world.<sup>1</sup>

This Sacred Synod, deeply grieving over these separations, declares that nothing should be left undone which might contribute to the restoration of the full unity of all Christians, that the will of Christ by which all the members of the Church are one in him might be extended to all those who glory in his name, and that the true faith might be more effectively announced to those who are not yet Christians.

And this is all the more urgent in our times, when, by the disposition of divine Providence, the separated communities of Christians are also themselves more eagerly aspiring to the unity of all.

#### *49. The Existing Bonds and the Unity Intended by Christ.<sup>2</sup>*

The Catholic Church, acknowledging the bonds by which the separated brethren, and particularly those of the Eastern rites, are linked to it, pursues with maternal love<sup>3</sup> all those who, reborn in baptism (see 1 Tm 3:5), along with the Church confess Christ to be both God and Savior, and bear witness to him before the world, especially if they share in the true Body and Blood of Christ.

But these bonds of mutual union, even if they are Eucharistic, cannot constitute that unity which Christ commanded to exist among all the baptized and which Holy Scripture and the Church's venerable tradition so manifestly display.

For, right from the beginning, Eucharistic worship was so intimately linked with true profession of the apostolic faith that all the faithful were said to persevere at once in the teaching of the Apostles and in fellowship, in the breaking of the bread and in prayer (see Acts 2:42).

From its beginnings, the Church has considered the Eucharist to be the consummation of its unity of faith and fellowship and as the sign and source of its unity before the whole world. That is why when schisms and heresies arose, it so affirmed the necessity of the unity of all Christians that it would only admit to eucharistic worship those who, in communion with a bishop linked to the Roman See, professed the one, true and entire faith.<sup>4</sup>

Only in this way is that Eucharistic communion a sign of that perfect unity of the whole Church which St. Paul commended when he said, "Because there is one bread, we, though many, are one Body, because we all eat of the same bread" (1 Cor 10:17).

#### *50. The Relationship of the Catholic Church to Individual Separated Christians.*

The Catholic Church, knowing that separated Christians are deprived of many of the means of salvation and that by their separation the manifestation of the unity of the sign lifted up

among the nations is in fact obscured, looks with maternal love upon them individually and lovingly invites them to herself.<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, this Holy Synod approves the initiatives of Catholics by which separated brethren are being enlightened about the teaching and life of the Church so that even individually they may be drawn towards her, and it urges that such efforts be still further promoted.

#### *51. The Relationship of the Catholic Church to Separated Christian Communities.*

It is not only as separate individuals but also as united communities that separated Christians find inducements to come to the Church's unity. For in these communities there are certain of the elements of the Church, especially the Sacred Scriptures and the sacraments, which, as efficacious means and signs of unity, can produce mutual union in Christ and by their very nature, as realities proper to Christ's Church, impel towards unity.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, insofar as these communities retain those elements in such a way as to separate them from the fullness of revelation, they in fact constitute one of the causes of the division of Christ's heritage.

While not denying that the elements retained by these communities can be salvific there also and can produce the fruits of a Christian spiritual life, this Sacred Synod nevertheless firmly teaches that the fullness of revelation was entrusted by Christ solely to the Catholic Church, that it cannot be divided,<sup>7</sup> and that, therefore, it is there that it must be acknowledged by all Christians.

Therefore, this holy Synod admonishes all the faithful more and more by word and example to show the separated brethren that the fullness of revelation is truly and purely maintained only in the Catholic Church, and to do this in such a way that when finally our brothers are again linked with us, they may with us also possess the fullness of Christ's heritage.<sup>8</sup>

#### *52. The Relationship of the Catholic Church to the Ecumenical Movement outside the Church.*

This holy Synod joyfully acknowledges that in many parts of the world, among many of the communities which are separated from the Chair of St. Peter, a certain ecumenical movement, as it is called, has arisen for the sake of bringing into unity all who believe in Christ the Lord. This Synod benevolently follows these attempts the more closely the more it perceives the breath of God to be present in it.<sup>9</sup>

But if it is to conform to Christ's will, this manifestation of unity must be strictly shaped in accordance with the same Christ's will, in unity of faith, sacramental communion, and government. Those, therefore, who seek to obey Christ's will with all their hearts and to grow in their degree of "ecumenicity," must, led by the Spirit of Christ, draw closer and closer to that Church which, although it is a single and indivisible house of God, still rejoices in its many mansions all over the world, in unity of faith, government and communion beneath the one Vicar of Christ.

This holy Synod, knowing that the path to restoring the unity of all Christians has for various reasons become very difficult, most lovingly commends to the prayers of the faithful the sincere efforts of dissident Christians to overcome the separations.

#### *53. The Purpose of the Ecumenical Movement within the Catholic Church; Errors to be Avoided.*

This holy Synod also rejoices that the ecumenical movement is also growing daily within the Catholic Church, which not only seeks to help by heartfelt prayer the separated Christians who are seeking unity, but also strives by theological and pastoral efforts that the Church may daily more clearly appear to all Christians as their paternal home<sup>10</sup> and that the separated communities themselves may more easily find their way to true unity.

But this holy Synod warns all the faithful that there is need for great prudence in this activity lest, moved by a certain apostolic zeal but without knowledge, they be exposed to the danger of indifferentism or a so-called interconfessionalism or by an excited way of proceeding injure rather than serve the intended purpose.<sup>11</sup>

For this reason, the Synod entrusts the ecumenical movement to the bishops of the world so that, under the leadership of the Apostolic See, they may skillfully promote and prudently direct it.

#### *54. Communion in Sacred Worship.*<sup>12</sup>

In communities separated from the Church, sacraments besides baptism are sometimes validly conferred, and it can happen that the children of the Church can and even must rightly request the administration of those sacraments by separated ministers. On the other hand, kindly Mother Church most greatly desires that the separated brethren, insofar as it is possible and they need it, come to share in the many goods which Christ entrusted to his Bride alone;<sup>13</sup> for, as properly baptized, they too, if they are in good faith, are *per se* capable of receiving the other sacraments fruitfully.<sup>14</sup> Finally, the Church, although reluctantly, does tolerate mixed marriages, in which the Catholic party and the baptized non-Catholic party are the ministers of the sacrament. For all these reasons, not every active participation by which dissident Christians have some effective part in Catholic liturgy, or by which Catholics take a similarly active part in the liturgy of the separated brethren, must be considered of itself intrinsically evil, even if quite often such participation must, for serious reasons, be prohibited. Therefore, the Church has the right and duty to lay down laws on communion in worship for the good both of the Church and of those who are unfortunately separated from her.

The principal obstacle to liturgical communion between Catholics and the separated brethren is the nature of the communion in worship by which the members of the Church themselves are linked with one another. For the communion of the members of the Church with one another in their sacred worship is a gift of Christ himself, given solely to his one Church, by which the union in faith and in communion under one supreme pastor is consummated and which is a sign of that unity in truth and love by which the Church is the mystical Body of Christ and already here on earth a figure and anticipation of heavenly union in Christ.

Since, therefore, in the sacred liturgy, carried out by ministers in Christ's name and with the Church's mandate, the communion of the faithful confesses the faith of the Church (see Acts 2:42), active participation in the sacred liturgy must *per se* be considered a certain profession of faith. Consequently, the active participation of dissident Christians both in the very worship of the Church in general and in particular receptions of the sacraments generally cannot be permitted, since, intrinsically, it is contrary to the unity of faith and communion and, extrinsically, it obscures the sign of the unity of the Body of Christ, and from such defects the dangers of religious indifferentism, interconfessionalism, and scandal often flow.

Therefore, it is only for serious reasons and if the dangers are removed that the active participation of separated Christians in the Church's worship can be permitted. Whether and under what conditions the Church can assist with the sacraments those who have not departed from the Church by their own act is to be determined in the first place by the seriousness of their need or of the great spiritual benefit to them.

This same inviolable teaching about the unity of the Church also generally prohibits the active participation by Catholics in the sacred rites of the separated communities.

For it is an intrinsically evil act, and therefore never to be permitted, not only when a Catholic, taking part in the worship of a separated community, inwardly approves of it, but also when, without such inward approval, in communities in which the sacraments are not validly conferred, he dares to receive the putative sacrament. Since the very rite itself offends against Catholic truth, such reception must be considered intrinsically evil and is never to be permitted. Therefore, any active participation by Catholics in such worship cannot of itself be permitted.

Furthermore, even in communities in which the sacraments are validly conferred, common worship is prohibited by the nature of the case. For the worship offered in those communities, insofar as it is separated from the worship of the Church does not effect the consummation of unity and contradicts the uniqueness of the sign which Christ gave the Church in its worship, and it is therefore not legitimately performed. Nor should it be forgotten that active participation in the sacred worship of a separated community, even if no consent at all is given to its error, of its very nature signifies assent to the faith of that community and therefore regularly provokes scandal and bears with it a danger to the faith. Even in these circumstances, therefore, any active participation by Catholics in their worship, even when the sacraments are not received, can only be permitted for serious reasons, when care has been taken to avoid scandal and the danger of perversion of faith or indifferentism, and with the permission of legitimate authority.

Where extreme spiritual necessity or at least some great advantage urges it, it can be permitted to ask for and to receive the sacraments from the minister of such a separated community, as long as the conditions mentioned are fulfilled. For it is a matter here of sacraments proper to the Church which are carried out in an objectively true worship, and therefore such reception is not necessarily linked to agreement in the error proper to this community.

Sometimes in a worship of itself objectively true, there are, nevertheless, false liturgical prayers or even incorrect preaching; and in these cases it is very difficult to remove the dangers of perversion of the faith, indifferentism, and scandal.

Finally, the conditions to be set down for licit participation vary according to the nature of each sacrament.

The mere presence of separated Christians at our sacred liturgy is entirely licit, indeed to be desired, while, on the other hand, Catholics may, for a reasonable cause and provided the dangers are removed, simply be present at the worship of a separated community.

As for the sacramentals, prayers, sacred places, funerals and other things of this sort, with regard to which the doctrine of the Church's unity does not of itself prohibit communion, the Church prescribes what is demanded for the benefit of souls, both Catholic and separated Christians, according to circumstances of time and place.

But it is not permitted at all to consider true communion in worship as a means generally to be used to bring about the restoration of the unity of Christians in the one Church of Christ. But some religious manifestation of the awareness of our many links with separated Christians is not excluded, provided that the principles given above are followed and with the approval of superiors in accordance with circumstances of time and place.

### *55. Cooperation between Catholics and Separated Christians.*

Catholics can and sometimes must cooperate with separated Christians when it is a matter of the ways and means of defending certain principles of the Christian religion or also of the

natural law, or restoring a right social order, or of meeting the economic or cultural needs of a people.<sup>15</sup>

Such cooperation can not only be of great good to the human family, it can also be an important help in overcoming mutual suspicions and prejudices.

But for this to be done without spiritual danger, this holy Synod warns Catholics that they must always keep in mind divine revelation and the Church's teaching, particularly on social issues,<sup>16</sup> and that all such efforts must be undertaken with the approval and under the vigilance of ecclesiastical authority.

Finally, this noble work of restoring the unity of all Christians in the one true faith and the one Church must become an ever greater part in the care of souls. Let all the faithful, together with the separated brethren, insistently pray God for this unity, and let them be convinced that the most effective means of opening a way for separated Christians to acknowledge and embrace the one Church of Christ is the faith of Catholics when it is confirmed by their honorable lives.<sup>17</sup>

## NOTES

1. See Instruction of the Holy Office, *Ecclesia Catholica*, AAS 42 (1950) 144.

2. Paragraph 2 is presented in this way for the following reasons:

1) For the sake of the *dissident Eastern Orthodox*: For they make the Eucharist the center of all religion. Orthodox theologians, today, generally abandoning the idea of a democratic structure of the Church ("*sobornost*"), especially stress Catholic elements and particularly the doctrine about the Eucharist, as "*koinonia*." Led in the first place by Prof. Afanassief, many Orthodox theologians create an opposition between a universalistic ecclesiology (that is, a theology of the one and universal, hierarchically organized Church--as in the Catholic Church) and a Eucharistic ecclesiology (that is, a theology of the particular Churches, not juridically subordinated in virtue of divine law--as in the Orthodox Church). That is why it seems most useful to indicate how the Catholic Church also begins from a Eucharistic ecclesiology which is at the same time universalistic. See N. Afanassief, N. Koulomzine, J. Meyendorff, A. Schmemmann, *La primauté de Pierre dans l'Eglise Orthodoxe* (Neuchâtel, 1960).

2) For the sake of "High Church" Protestants: These all agree that Eucharistic "*koinonia*" is a sign of unity of faith and ecclesiastical communion; indeed they generally admit apostolic succession, but never unity of ecclesiastical communion under the Pope. See E. Abbot, *Catholicity: A Study in the Conflict of Christian Traditions in the West*, being a Report presented to H.Gr. the Archbishop of Canterbury (London, 1947); M. Thurian, *L'Eucharistie* (Neuchâtel-Paris, 1959); H. Asmussen and W. Staehlin, *Die Katholizität der Kirche* (Stuttgart, 1957).

3) For the sake of Lutherans of a pure reforming type: They generally consider worship, especially the Eucharist, to be a sign of the unity of the Church, requiring unity in the confession of faith, but not ecclesiastical communion. See W. Elert, *Abendmahl und Kirchengemeinschaft in der alten Kirche, hauptsächlich des Ostens* (Berlin, 1954); P. Althaus, *Die christliche Wahrheit*, Gütersloh, 1952, pp. 507-27.

4) In the "World Council of Churches" unity is lacking with regard to doctrine and a practical mode of acting with respect to intercommunion, a difference of opinion which is closely connected with the question of the unity of the Church. That is why it will be useful to indicate the dogmatic and biblical basis for the sign of unity displayed in worship itself.

5) Nor do all Catholics have a clear view of the essential relation between ecclesiastical and Eucharistic communion, and this is the source of some less than praiseworthy views both of the unity and of the uniqueness of the Church and of the unity and uniqueness of worship.

3. See John XXIII, *Ad Petri cathedram*, *AAS* 51 (1959) 515.

4. See L. Hertling, "Communio und Primat," in *Miscellanea Hist. Pontif.*, VII (Rome, 1943) 1-48, esp. 27-34; see also G. Bardy, *La théologie de l'Eglise de S. Clément de Rome à S. Irénée* (Paris 1945), and, from the Protestant side, W. Elert, l.c., pp. 113-21.

5. See John XXIII, *Ad Petri cathedram*, l.c., pp. 515 and 517.

6. With regard to the dissident Oriental communities, see John XXIII, *Ad Petri cathedram*, l.c., p. 515; see also J. Gribomont, "Du Sacrement de l'Eglise et de ses réalisations imparfaites," *Irénikon*, 22 (1949) 356-57. Whatever the nature of such a separated community may be, it is certain that in the tradition the name "Church" is *often* and *constantly* attributed to the separated Oriental communities. See the following documents of the Church:

1074-1075: Gregory VII speaks of "the Church of Constantinople" (PL 148, 385-87) and of "the Oriental Church" (PL 148, 399-400);

1095: Urban II listed among the goals of the Crusade "the liberation of the Oriental Churches" (Villey, *La Croisade*, p. 81);

1215: the Fourth Lateran Council speaks of "the Church of the Greeks" (Mansi, 22, 989), as does Gregroy IX (Mansi, 23, 58 A,C.E and 59, B and C);

1274: the Second Council of Lyon: "Even if it does not refer to the Oriental Churches still separated, the conclusion of the profession of faith of Michael Paleologus still has its value: "The fullness of authority consists in this: that it admits other churches into a share in its solicitude; of them many and particularly the patriarchal churches have been honored by the same Roman Church with various privileges, while maintaining its prerogatives both in the general Councils and in some other matters" (Mansi, 24, 70Af);

1439: Council of Florence: In the Bull, *Laetentur caeli*, 6 July 1439, it is written: "The wall that divided the western and the eastern church has been removed;"

1848: Pius IX, *In Suprema*: "whether this unity of the Holy and Apostolic Church can be found in so great a division of their Churches" (*Pii IX P.M. Acta*, I, p. 85);

1867: Pius IX, Consistorial Address about the Patriarchate of Armenians in Cilicia, 12 July 1867, *ASS* 3 (1867), 345, notes that the eastern schism "long ago unfortunately separated those Churches from Catholic unity... Although some of those Churches have returned to Catholic unity...;"

1868: Pius IX, Apostolic Letter *Arcano divinae Providentiae*, *ASS* 4 (1868), 129-31, has as its title: "The Apostolic Letter of Pius IX to all the bishops of the Churches of the Oriental Church not in communion with the Apostolic See." At times in this letter those separated communities are called "Churches."

1894: Leo XIII, Enc. *Praeclara gratulationis* (*Leonis XIII P.M. Acta*, 14 [1894], 202), speaks of the "eastern Churches" and says, "when communion with us was restored, what great dignity, what glory came by divine grace to your Churches;"

1898: Leo XIII, Apostolic Letter, *Cum divini Pastoris* (*Ibid.*, 18 [1898], 49), has the following title: "Apostolic Letters on the erection of the Archsodality of Prayers and Pious Works for the Return of the Dissident Churches to Catholic unity;"

1907: the Sacred Congregation for Indulgences speaks of "praying for the desired union

between the Catholic Church and the Churches dissenting from it;"

1912: St. Pius X, Apostolic Constitution *Tradita ab antiquis*, AAS 4 (1912), 610: "peace between the Greek Church and the Latin;"

1920: Benedict XV, Enc. *Spiritus Paraclitus*, AAS 12 (1920), 421: "And would that the eastern Churches, which have been too long distant from the Chair of Peter, especially would obey these warnings;"

1924: Pius XI, AAS 16 (1924), 491: "the doctrines and practices of the Churches of the East;"

1928: Pius XI, Enc. *Mortalium animos*, AAS 20 (1928), 9: speaks of the efforts of non-Catholics "to associate the Christian Churches" (but here "Church" seems to be used in a sociological sense);

1944: Pius XII, Enc. *Orientalis Ecclesiae decus*, AAS 36 (1944), 129ff, several times calls the separated eastern communities "eastern Churches;"

1945, Pius XII, Enc. *Orientalis omnes Ecclesias*, AAS 38 (1946), 35, 36, 42, 45-48, is speaking of the separated communities (p. 33) which are sometimes called "societies" (p. 59) and sometimes "Churches" (e.g., p. 56);

1953: Pius XII, Enc. *Orientalis Ecclesias*, AAS 45 (1953), 5, speaking of the separated communities.

For the material in this note, see Congar, *Chrétien désunis*, pp. 381-82, complemented by *Irénikon*, 23 (1950), 22-24.

7. John XXIII, *Ad Petri cathedram*, l.c., p. 511; see also the Allocution of the same Supreme Pontiff on the occasion of a "Holy Hour" in the Vatican Basilica, *L'Osserv. Rom.*, June 7, 1959; another Allocution of his to the diocesan directors of Italian Catholic Action, *L'Osserv. Rom.*, August 10-11, 1959; and his Encyclical, *Grata recordatio*, AAS, 51 (1959) 677-78.

8. See St. Augustine, *Miscellanea Agostiniana, t. I, Sermones* (Morin), p. 575: "I don't say to him, 'Lord, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me;' I say, 'Lord, tell my brother to share the inheritance with me.'" Also, *Sermo ad Caesareensis Ecclesiae plebem*, n. 5 (PL 43, 694): "Come to the inheritance, especially since that inheritance is not the land given to the sons of Jacob. The land was given to the sons of Israel, and the more who took possession of it, the smaller it got. Our inheritance is called peace. I read the will: "My peace I give to you; my peace I leave to you" (Jn 14:27). Let us possess together what cannot be divided. Many possessors, no matter how many come, do not make peace smaller."

9. Instruction of the Holy Office, *Ecclesia Catholica*, l.c., p. 142.

10. John XXIII, *Ad Petri cathedram*, l.c., pp. 510-11.

11. Instruction of the Holy Office, *Ecclesia Catholica*, l.c., p. 144.

12. See Martin V, *Ad evitanda scandala*, Mansi 27, 1192-93; on this constitution see Suarez, *Disput., De Censuris*, disp. IX, sect. II, ed. Vives, Paris, 1866, t. XXIII, pp. 262-70; F. Cappello, *De Censuris*, ed. 4, Rome, 1950, p. 133. For almost all the past documents see, "Verballi delle Conferenze Patriarcali sullo stato delle Chiese Orientali e delle adunanze della Commissione Cardinalizia per promuovere la riunione delle Chiese dissidenti, tenute alla presenza del S.P. Leone XIII (1894-1902) con note illustrative e documenti (manuscript)," Vatican Press, 1945, pp. 537-637 (*de Communicatione in Sacris*); also Marco della Pietra, *Collectio Rescriptorum praesertim S.S. Congreg. S. Officii et de Prop. Fide*, 1933, preserved in the Sacred Congregation



for the Eastern Churches, prot. 38/29. To these documents should especially be added the "Decree of the Holy Office on giving the sacraments under certain conditions to children of the 'Orthodox' studying in Catholic schools," issued in 1957. The following canons of the Code of Canon Law are also pertinent: 731:2; 1258:1; 2259-2263; 2267; 2238:2; 2316 and 2314:1,n.1.

A revision of the prescriptions of the Roman Curia on relations with non-Catholics and especially a relaxation with regard to communion in worship with the Eastern "Orthodox" is requested by more than sixty Bishops from oriental regions and by two Superiors general of religious orders. Six Armenian Bishops and some others spoke against a false and dangerous "ecumenical irenicism." But Cardinal Agagianian and his eight Armenian Bishops made no statement about communion in worship (See *Acta et Documenta Conc. Vat. II apparando*, Ser. I, Vol. II, Pars IV, pp. 394-400 and Pars IV passim).

A relaxation of the prescriptions on communion in worship was also requested by the Pontifical Institute for Oriental Studies (see *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, Pars I, pp. 158ff.)

13. See Leo XIII, *Satis cognitum*, ASS 28 (1895-95) 712.

14. See P. Gasparri, *Tract. canonicus de SS. Eucharistia*, t. II, Paris, 1897, p. 354: "Baptized wayfarers in virtue of the divine law are capable of receiving Holy Communion. But...the Church...forbids that Holy Communion be given to some people, even though capable of it by divine law."

15. Instruction of the Holy Office, *Ecclesia Catholica*, l.c., p. 145.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 146-47.