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“The Church lives and moves like a ship whose sails
await the mysterious and guiding breath of the Spirit
of Christ.”

POPE PAUL VI

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS

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**THE SECOND
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
SYNOD OF BISHOPS
(Sept. 30 - Nov. 6, 1971)
ON THE
MINISTERIAL PRIESTHOOD**

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INTRODUCTION

The Second Vatican Council decreed that a Synod of Bishops representing the whole episcopate and all national conferences of Bishops meet periodically in order to help and advise the Pope in his task as Supreme Head of the Church.

The Second General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was held in Rome from September 30 to November 6, 1971. The Philippines was represented by **Archbishop Teopisto Alberto**, **Archbishop Antonio Mabutas**, **Bishop Julio Labayen** (elected by the CBCP), **Bishop Mariano Gaviola** (nominated by the Pope) and **Rev. Salvador Dimen** (Priest Auditor chosen by the Pope).

The Synod was presided over by three President Delegates: Cardinal Leon Etienne Duval, Archbishop of Algiers; Cardinal Paolo Munoz Vega, Archbishop of Quito; Cardinal John Wright, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Clergy. The Secretary General was Most Rev. Ladislao Rubin, Titular Bishop of Serta.

There were three Relators at the Synod. For the subject of **"The Ministerial Priesthood"**: a) for the doctrinal part, Cardinal Joseph Hoffner, Archbishop of Cologne; b) for the practical part, Cardinal Vicente Enrique y Tarancon, Archbishop of Toledo; for the subject **"Justice in the World"**: Most Rev. Teopisto Alberto, Archbishop of Caceres.

The Synod comprised 211 Fathers altogether. Of these, 14 were Patriarchs and Major Archbishops, 142 Bishops elected by Episcopal Conferences, 10 Religious elected by the Union of Major Superiors, 19 Cardinal Heads of Congregations and Departments of the Roman Curia, 1 Secretary General, 22 Bishops and 3 priests selected by the Holy Father. In addition, 23 Priest Auditors were named by the Holy Father.

The two themes taken up at the Synod have a special importance for today's priests. The first, "The ministerial Priesthood" answers the problem of priestly identity. The second "Justice in the World" shows how the evangelical preaching on the subject should be in complete conformity with the teaching of the Gospels and the Church.

In this issue of the Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas we offer to our brother priests and all our readers a report on the Synod based on the L'Osservatore Romano.

POPE PAUL VI'S ADDRESS

The II General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was opened on Thursday morning, September 30, as the Holy Father concelebrated a Holy Mass in the Sistine Chapel with the three Cardinal Presidents, Cardinal Mindszenty and the Secretary General of the Synod. In his Homily, the Pope said in part:

"And now, venerable Brothers, permit us to call to your attention a particular danger which can assail our synodal meeting and which in various ways, whether honest or treacherous, can disturb our serenity of judgment and even, perhaps, our freedom of deliberation. *This danger consists in pressure: the pressure of opinions which are in doubtful conformity with the teaching of the faith; the pressure of tendencies which seem unconcerned with traditions which are authoritative and which now form part of the authentic vocation of the Church; the pressure of over-anxiety to adapt to secular and worldly ways of thinking; the pressure of enticing or troublesome publicity; the pressure of accusations of anachronism or of a legalism which stunts spontaneous development; that so-called charismatic development of a new Christianity; and so on.*

"Pressure: its guises are many and its power is penetrating and dangerous. Let us take care to get free of it, by following the dictates of our consciences which are responsible both to our mission as pastors of the People of God and to God's judgment on the last day. Let us instead take care to preserve tranquility and strength of spirit in order to be able to gain good knowledge of everything and judge everything well, according to the spirit of Christ and according to the true needs of the Church and of the times (cfr. 1 Thess. 5, 21). Free from undue interference and outside influence in the exercise of our synodal duties, we ought to feel bound by those duties, among which must be mentioned the obligation of carrying out the mandates received from our respective Episcopal Conferences, from the Synods of the various Rites, or from the respective Unions of Major Superiors.

"You who are members of the Synod have prepared its work on a broad basis, together with the clergy — we greet with affection the group of priests who represent them here — and with the religious and laity actively participating in the life of the Church in our countries. You have subsequently studied and deliberated with our brothers in the episcopate concerning the contribution you are now called upon to make. Accordingly, it will not be by personal title that you will speak (except after an express declaration, as is laid down by the *Ordo Synodi*): you will be the qualified voices of your Churches for the entire Church.

"There is no need for us to tell you how important your voices are for our holy Church, one and catholic, voices which echo that of the Apostles. Nor need we tell you how grave is our shared responsibility. You know this very well. But may the desire we all have for the Church not be vain: that, through the power of the Spirit of God "who speaks in you" (Mt. 10, 20), and through the intercession of Mary, the Mother of Christ according to the flesh and also the Mother, we can say, of his Mystical Body according to the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the Church may be "built up" (cfr. Eph. 4, 12) by the Synod which today takes its place in the pages of her centuries-old history.

"The image of "building", so often used in Sacred Scripture, invites us today to work together, with all our strength, for the great purpose which is our life's one aim: to build up

the Church on its unshakable foundation, Christ himself, the way, the truth and the life.

“Let us not permit ourselves to deviate in the slightest from this way: it is the only way. Let us not permit ourselves to be noticed by any other voice: truth is one. Let us not permit ourselves to be drawn towards any fount other than that of the living and life-giving God.

“This is our duty as pastors, clearly outlined. May the Lord grant us to be faithful to it, following the example of the holy pastors who were able to guide the Church with courage and wisdom, down the centuries of its storm-tossed earthly pilgrimage, through the rocks towards the open sea, where Christ is calling it, that it may bring the good news of salvation to all.

“Although we are weaker and more infirm than Simon, we have received from the same Lord the name and the office of Peter, and we are with you to give new increase to the mystical and invisible edifice, in order that it may, today as in the past, welcome within its well-built luminous wells the People of God, who now stand in need, above all else, of the true faith which does not deceive, the sure hope which does not mislead, and the love reborn which does not grow cold and die.”

After the Mass, in the Synod Hall, following the address of greeting by Cardinal Duval, the Holy Father said:

“... You will be able to discuss freely the questions proposed to the present Assembly, the difficulty and extreme importance of which are known to you all... To encourage this freedom of expression, we ourself prefer to listen.

“While doing so, we also wish that the Synod discussions will take place in an atmosphere of mutual confidence and benevolence... To attain this purpose, everyone must offer his personal contribution, not seeking his own interests, but those of Jesus Christ (Phil. 2:21) which lead to the real advantage of the whole Church.

“We declare, therefore, our mind open, sincere and confident in all of you, gathered here to serve the universal Church so closely, while we deeply hope and fervently pray that this Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, thanks to your goodwill and diligent effort, will contribute to the glory of God and the real progress of Holy Mother Church.”

DOCTRINAL PART

The study of the subject "Ministerial Priesthood" was divided into two parts, namely, the doctrinal and the practical aspects of the priesthood. The work started on October 1 with two sessions daily, one in the morning and another in the afternoon. The discussion on the Doctrinal Aspect of the Priestly Ministry was ushered in by the Report of Cardinal Joseph Hoffner, Archbishop of Cologne, which we reproduce in its entirety.

CHURCH'S DOCTRINE ON MINISTERIAL PRIESTHOOD

by Cardinal Joseph Hoffner

The Synod of Bishops will discuss further some *practical* problems concerning the priestly life and ministry. However, a certain superficial pragmatism must be avoided for this would be the result if these problems were to be discussed as though they were unconnected with the doctrine of the faith. Undoubtedly some opinions are being put forward on the ministerial priesthood which distort Catholic doctrine. For instance, it is said that the ministerial priesthood was overstressed by the hierarchy simply in order to be able to dominate the People

of God. Some attribute to the laity the power to celebrate the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The doctrine of the II Vatican Council on the essential difference and not merely one of degree between the priesthood common to the faithful and the ministerial priesthood is minimized. When faced with this confusion, the Synod of Bishops cannot keep silent. Otherwise this sort of pluralism would lead to a rupture in the unity of the Church.

It is impossible to analyze the priestly ministry without reflecting at the same time on the mystery of the Church which is immersed in the realities of the world in which it lives and which is the recipient of the message.

"Salvation" is not alienation from the world, because it needs a certain presence. This, however, is not always interpreted in a proper sense.

The priestly ministry has its place at the centre of the community and presupposes the existence of a community spirit. On the other hand, since the ministerial priesthood was willed and instituted by Christ, it is of divine origin.

The Church's doctrine on the ministerial priesthood may be summed up in ten statements:

1. *Christ founded His Church by means of His priestly action.*

The new messianic people, which is the Church, takes its origin from the shedding of Christ's blood. He proclaimed the forgiveness of sins, and the coming of the kingdom of God, and through His death and resurrection, He accomplished His salvific work. Christ's intention and the goal of His work were not to establish a purely human solidarity which would be horizontal and sociological with the less privileged as though He were a "revolutionary" on the point of overturning existing social conditions. It cannot be denied that the Church can contribute very much to the progressive humanization of the human community and of history. On the other hand, the Church receives help from the world opening the way to the Gospel (this is the teaching of the Conciliar Constitution "On the Church in the Modern World", 40-45). However, the specific mission of the Church remains unchanged and also her legitimate autonomy from earthly reality.

2. *Jesus Christ gave the Church, the task of keeping present the work of redemption until His return: the Church is therefore essentially sacerdotal.*

In the New Dispensation, the only priesthood is that of Christ. The Pashal Mystery, the Gospel of Jesus Christ made Man who died and rose again and who at the end of time will return once more, is proclaimed and effectively represented by the Church as a whole. The faithful are called to make present and active the Church "in those places and in those circumstances in which she can become the salt of the earth and only by their means" (*Lumen Gentium*, 33).

3. *In order to be able to accomplish her mission, the Church was provided by Christ with a variety of gifts and ministries.*

In order that the specific character of the Church can be fully understood and realized, Christ endowed her with gifts and ministries (Ephesians, 4-8). Through these ministries Christ nourishes her. He preserves Her and helps Her progress through His spirit. The priestly ministry is distinguished from all the other ministries by its very nature. It is a particular form of sharing in the priesthood of Christ and is a specific form of Christian service within the Church. In the priestly ministry, the Christian who has been promoted to ordination "represents in the community and before Christ Himself in as much as He is its head". The Church can recognize or organize with her own power, other types of ministry to meet different necessities and opportunities. The Church has often made use of such possibilities instituting, for instance, the ministry of lectors, of catechists, and in the early Church, of widows.

4. *According to the doctrine of II Vatican Council, the priestly ministry is based on "divine institution" and endowed with "sacred power".*

The priestly ministry is not explained merely by sociological criteria. It does not come democratically from below as, for example, in a democratic state the power is conferred by the people. It is not merely a specification or a subfunction of the mission which is common to all the faithful. Nor is it a simple community exercise which every baptized person can assume *ad tempus*. Neither is it only "a certain presiding function which anyone of the faithful could exercise". The ministerial priesthood goes back to a divine institution.

5. *Even if one were to recognize in the primitive Church a certain development of structures, the priestly ministry retains its substantial identity.*

The ministry of the Apostles is "continued in the Bishop". The Apostles transmit their office to them. Their office is "to conserve in the midst of the Christian people the active presence of Christ the Head." For this reason even if in the primitive Church, one recognizes a certain time for the maturing of its structures, the Bishops have not founded "a new type of Church" but they continued in a succession which was uninterrupted, that Church which they received from the Apostles, without changing it substantially".

6. *The ecclesiastical ministry instituted by God is exercised in different orders; those called from earliest antiquity episcopal, presbyteral and diaconal* (Lumen Gentium, 28).

Sacred Orders, in the three different levels, are a gift for the whole Church, and "in order that the gift of the Spirit, conceded to one or the other, may be destined for the good of the whole People of God".

7. *The priestly ministry is conferred through the communication of the Holy Spirit, that is through the Sacrament of Ordination.*

The Sacrament of Order administered through the laying of hands and the prayer of ordination destines the consecrated person for the service of Christ and the People of God, imposing on him the obligation to exercise the ministry; it consecrates him and makes him a member of the presbyterium. Through Holy Orders the priest is made a participant in a special way in Christ's mission. In such a way, his priestly ministry works in the person of Christ, and represents before the Church, Christ Himself. He is nonetheless subject to imperfection and no less than each one of the faithful, he requires God's mercy, and he himself needs the ministration of other priests.

8. *Priestly ordination is not an inefficacious sign; it is a dynamic force that embraces the whole life of the priest who is dedicated to the service of God and men; it pervades his whole person.*

The gift of the Holy Spirit is the source of the mission directed to the service of the other faithful. It is also "a source of interior grace and spiritual transformation for the priest himself". The priestly ministry cannot be interpreted as a secondary function or quality. Before God and men, the dedication and unconditional choice of the priest finds its expres-

sion in that kind of life that is called "celibacy". Having been chosen for the sake of the kingdom of God it is a fitting compliment to the priesthood even though it is not demanded. Through celibacy, chosen for the sake of the kingdom of God, priests consecrate themselves to Christ in a new and noble way. They are united to Him more closely with an individual heart, and by the nature of the priesthood itself, dedicate themselves more freely to the service of God and men. They become a living sign of that future world already present through the faith, in which the children of the Resurrection are not united in matrimony.

Celibacy makes public the priest's decision to dedicate his existence exclusively to the priestly ministry. It witnesses to the strength of the love of God. It shows that men are capable of a complete transformation of effective life concentrated on the priesthood. The close following of Christ is always marked by the scandal of the Cross which is difficult for the world to understand. The more the faith of some is weakened and the charity of many is cooled, the clearer is the opposition to consecrated virginity and to celibacy.

In recent years the internal relationship between celibacy and the priestly ministry has been a subject of dispute, even among Catholics. At the present time, almost all who favor reform of the legislation in the Western Church have changed their tactics. They do not deny the internal relationship between priesthood and celibacy but for various reasons they reject the view that there should be an obligation to celibacy on the part of all candidates for the priesthood. A further examination of this question is not called for in this doctrinal part.

9. *The annunciation of the Gospel, the administration of the Sacraments, and the celebration of the Eucharistic Mystery have a mutual relationship to each other and in their intimate connection they constitute one single priestly service for the building up of Christ's Mystical Body.*

10. *The ministerial priesthood, even though it is for the service of the kingdom of God, which is not of this world, has and must of necessity have, consequences for the temporal Order.*

The priestly ministry, which has as its indispensable task, the efficacious representation before the People of God of the Redeemer's salvific work, is a service that requires active virtue

which is by its nature, eschatological. It cannot be reduced to a simple humanitarian or social function that would make the Church resemble a sort of Christian Red Cross. However, even if the ministerial function transmitted through priestly ordination is called upon to earn eternal salvation, it has nonetheless, consequences for the temporal order which are bound up with the eternal salvation of man. As all men, directed towards Christ, the Head of humanity, and of the whole creation, the priest who guides men to Christ, and therefore to the Father and to unity in charity, renders a service to mankind as a whole and to each individual which no one else can possibly render.

"A priest's task is to pray and offer sacrifice for his own people and indeed the entire people of God, realizing what he does and reproducing in himself the holiness of the things he handles. Let him not be undone by his apostolic cares, dangers and toils, but rather led by them to higher sanctity. His activities should be fed and fostered by a wealth of meditation, to the delight of the whole Church of God. All priests, especially those who are called diocesan in view of the particular title of their ordination, should bear in mind how much their sanctity profits from loyal attachment to the bishop and generous collaboration with him." (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, no. 41)

INTERVENTIONS OF THE FATHERS

The discussions on the doctrinal aspect of the priestly ministry took place from the first session on October 1 to the seventh session on October 5. 82 Synodal Fathers spoke. Some spoke on procedures, others on changes in the schema but the majority spoke on the doctrine of the Church on the subject. Very few spoke for themselves. The majority spoke in behalf of the episcopal conferences they represented. Since it is not possible here to reprint all the speeches, we have selected only some of them but which cover all the points taken up during the sessions.

CARDINAL JOHN HEENAN
Archbishop of Westminster

At first sight the two themes of this Synod might appear to be almost contradictory. The one considers the desperate misery of the poor, the other the so-called crisis in the priesthood. It would be tragic to give those outside the impression that the main interest of the bishops of the Church is in our domestic problem. Restlessness among the clergy is not so important as the world-wide problem of want.

It is possible to exaggerate the extent of the crisis in the priesthood. It is true that among priests as among laity some have become confused by the theological speculation of recent years. The Second Vatican Council has already been relegated to history by some writers of popular theology. Yet the schema *De Presbyterorum Ministerio et Vita* can hardly be regarded as out-of-date so soon. Priests have naturally been disturbed by theological ideas on the priesthood never expressed by a single bishop less than ten years ago at the Council.

It would be wrong to identify the whole Church with the Church in Europe and America where a group of priests complain that they no longer understand their own priesthood. This does not mean that the majority of priests of the Church are worried about their priesthood — nor even a majority in Europe and America. We must not exaggerate the number of priests who complain of a crisis of identity or say that there is no difference between themselves and laymen. Few priests, in fact, regard the priesthood as a mere function to be performed for a time and then discarded.

It would be wrong for this Synod to spend most of our time on the priesthood to the neglect of our discussion on justice and peace. We must not give the impression that most priests are in doubt about the meaning of the ministerial priesthood. The times are grave and we should not give most of our attention to clerical problems which have already attracted far too much notice. Press, radio and television have a fascination for sex in every form. Matrimonial and clerical infidelity are equally attractive to the mass media. Protesting priests are not typical of their brethren. Most priests are not crying out for freedom from discipline, freedom from daily Mass and Divine Office, freedom from vestments, freedom from chastity. Most priests cry out, if at all, for greater spiritual help in their priestly lives. Let us give most of our attention not to our brothers in the priesthood but to our brothers in Christ who are seeking freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom from misery.

As I was about to leave Westminster I received a visit from that great friend of the poor, Mother Teresa in India. She expressed the hope that the bishops of the Synod will give full attention to the plight of the millions suffering from lack of food, clothes and shelter. She feels that little needs to be said about the priesthood. "The Church" she said "can say no more now than when I was a child. The priest is the only one who can bring Christ to our altars. All that matters about such a person is that he should be very holy. What more can be said about the Catholic priesthood?"

The priest must be recognised by all as a man of God. In him everyone should be able to recognise Christ the Priest. Our people like their priests to have intellectual and social qualities but the only thing they really care about is that priests should be men of prayer and men of God. This is what our Synod must emphasize.

Where the Church is poor and suffers hardship no priest feels any crisis of identity. He is too busy looking after his flock to think of himself. In Eastern Europe and in Asia where the Church has only the cross to offer priests there is little unrest and vocations to the priesthood are not wanting. *The message that should go from this Synod is the great need for the sanctification of bishops and priests. If we are holy the laity will follow us and together we shall be able to save the world.* Our people see Christ in the priest even if we do not always see Him in ourselves. The instinct of the people when they see the priest is to cry out: *benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini*. A holy priesthood will make a holy people. If the Church is holy it will be strong to work for justice and peace in the world. Hence the two subjects of our Synod are one. Through holy priests the poor of the world will be served.

CARDINAL JOHN DEARDEN

Archbishop of Detroit

The opening towards the future in coherence with the unchanging values of the past and as a development of them, is the hope that can be accomplished by the Synod.

CARDINAL GEORGE FLAHIFF

Archbishop of Winnipeg

The changes in the conditions of life and of conduct demand decisions that do not break with evangelical doctrine.

TEOPISTO ALBERTO Y VALDERRAMA

Archbishop of Caceres

Archbishop Alberto observed, above all, that in the schema there is a capital defect insofar as it laments the crisis of the priesthood but is completely silent on the basic cause of it, *namely, some opinions and arguments from certain clever theologians whose publications are widely diffused. They want to reform the Church but take little or no account of the most clear affirmations in Scripture, from the Councils, and from the Magisterium, and indulge instead in theories that are often erroneous which they spread forth as the doctrine of the Church. The Bishops should reflect on this cause of the problem, spreading itself abroad without the voice of responsible persons being raised or anything being done against it.*

In the proposed schema there are some points that should be better clarified and determined. The same can be said of the propositions formulated by the Theological Commission. Examining the first of these on which depend the others he stated that if it be true what is written in the schema, then one must logically conclude that there does not exist in the Church, nor can there exist either priesthood or priestly ministry (*willed by Christ but originated by the apostles*). Hence arises the necessity of thinking out by what ways traditional doctrine should be diffused.

SAMUEL E. CARTER

Archbishop of Kingston, Jamaica

So the priest who acts in the person of Christ and as a cooperator with the Bishop, is a sign of the priesthood as a whole which is at the service of the local community and guarantees full communion with the whole mystery of Christ the Head. He is in touch with all the saints of all times and in all places and with complete dedication of all the Church in its celebration of the memorial of Christ's death. When he presides over the Eucharistic celebration, within the local community

the priest is minister of the whole universal community, and so in this way he is a part of the dialectic between the unity and specialization of the Church.

LUIS E. HENRIQUEZ JIMENEZ
Auxiliary Bishop of Caceres, Venezuela

Young priests are strongly influenced by this attitude and show sympathy for the revolutionary struggle that overturns an openly unjust social system. It is obvious that in this situation, considering the present day lack of theological training, some will be asking themselves what is the real task of the priest in a society that is in evolution, and in the future society which they hope to create.

The Bishops of Venezuela, therefore, attach great importance to the doctrinal part and suggest that the teaching regarding Christ's priesthood be more deeply gone into.

CARDINAL ANTONIO POMA
Archbishop of Bologna, Italy

There should be a distinction between the essential and immutable aspects and the secondary and contingent ones. These can be further discussed by the present Synod on the basis of the pastoral experience of Bishops and in the light of theological studies.

The Cardinal suggested the following themes for study: the priesthood of Christ, which is the foundation and origin of all priesthood; the priesthood of the People of God, together with the concomitant charismata for building up the Mystical Body of Christ; the ministerial priesthood in relation to the priesthood of the People of God in its hierarchical order.

FRANCIS ARINZE
Archbishop of Onitsha, Nigeria

Celibacy is fitting for the priesthood for many reasons. Besides Christological, ecclesiastical and eschatological reasons, there is the fact that it allows him to dedicate himself more freely to the ministry which cannot be the case for married priests.

In Nigeria, as in many Churches of recent foundation, celibacy is considered one of the best charisms in the Church, a noble sign of its excellence and the supernatural origins of the Gospel. It is a strong argument for the credibility of the Church. Any change in this matter would damage the young Churches.

CARDINAL PAUL ZOUNGRANA
Archbishop of Ouagadougou, Upper Volta

This Synod is not called upon to issue new definitions. The Councils, particularly Vatican II, have already spoken. The Churches of Africa and Madagascar hold these teachings in communion with the whole Catholic Church.

It is undeniable that the crisis described in the schema does really exist even though in mission countries it is less acute. This crisis has its origin from a lack of faith and the change in historical situations. In looking for remedies we should remain docile to the Holy Spirit who is present everywhere and cannot be monopolized by somebody from outside or against papal infallibility.

The Cardinal expressed the pastoral preoccupation, about the use of the term "charism" on the part of certain authors. The Church's genuine doctrine should not be confused with the opinions of theologians. This is not to deny the validity of theological research, but freedom of research should be coupled with docility towards the Holy Spirit who expresses himself through the Church's Magisterium and does not tolerate distortion of the truth. Contestation, whether total or partial, which has recently arisen, also in the Church, on the part of some who appropriate to themselves the name of theologians, is not really a sign of scholarship but is a scandal for the People of God.

Sound research should be accepted when it is under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. There are many ways and many tasks in our Father's House. But sound pluralism is admissible only when substantial unity is preserved. The hypothesis of ordination *ad tempus* is inadmissible, for sacred orders are *in aeternum*. Priesthood demands communion of life with the living God, with Christ and with the whole Church which is set up hierarchically. This communion is strengthened by relationship of respect, love and obedience towards the Vicar of Christ. Diversity in the way of service rendered by priests should not be at the expense of their mission to evangelize. The connection between the ministerial priesthood and celibacy should be stressed and the present legislation maintained; this acceptable to African culture.

CARDINAL GABRIEL GARRONE

Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education

Our voice must be for the priesthood in the Council of Trent and in the Second Vatican Council.

CARDINAL JULIUS DOPFNER

Archbishop of Munich, West Germany

We do not have the time or energy to create a new systematic text on the priesthood. But to avoid excessive pragmatism it would be well to formulate some "theses" (propositions) as the foundation for further practical application. It would be well to instruct a Commission to pursue this course. Thus the Synod would be able to get on to the practical, urgent questions about priestly ministry in our time.

CARDINAL JOSEPH SUENENS

Archbishop of Malines-Brussels, Belgium

I would like to greet with joy those present in the Synod, priests, the laity, the ladies, with the prophetic perspective that the Synod will express one day not only the convening of Bishops but also that of the Church fraternally united around the Chair of Peter.

CARDINAL WILLIAM CONWAY
Archbishop of Armagh, Ireland

The Synod should take into account:

1) the historical reality: Luther in the 16th century, denied the real and essential distinction between the ministerial priesthood and the priesthood of all the faithful, asserting that the ministerial priesthood consisted in a simple external deputation for exercising the ministerial function. This is contrary to the Catholic faith, even as recently proposed in the II Vatican Council;

2) the actual situation: there are some in the Church who deny any such essential distinction. This is not proposed by outstanding theologians, but it is disseminated widely through books and periodicals;

3) the reality of the identity crisis: if you take into account number 2 above, you see how an identity crisis would occur.

This Synod has the duty to proclaim in a clear voice the Catholic doctrine on the priesthood. It would be enough to re-emphasize the teaching of Vatican II, since there would not be the time or the need to elaborate further on that teaching.

AUGUSTINE FARAH
Archbishop of Tripoli of the Melchites

The ministerial priesthood consists essentially in the participation in the eternal priesthood of Christ. But the priesthood of Christ is not solely spiritual; it consists in the obedience to the law of the Incarnation. The priesthood sharing in the mystery of the Trinity can be conferred only by the Holy Spirit through men chosen by the Spirit. This conception is faithful to the oriental tradition and has its foundations in Sacred Scripture. Priesthood is not a temporary function but a definitive consecration.

JUSTIN DIRAVIAM
Archbishop of Madhurai, India

A great part of the difficulties within the Church today are due to ourselves, religious, priests and Bishops.

By ordination the priest is immersed even more deeply into the Christian community, taking on a task for life that puts him in complete conformity with that of Christ. Priesthood is not temporary. It is necessary that the celibacy of the priest be understood, appreciated and preserved throughout the world. Dispensation from the obligation of celibacy in any particular region would have serious future consequences.

FRANCIS ADAM
Bishop of Sion, Switzerland

Bishop Francis Adam reported that the Bishops of his conference expressed their profession of faith in the doctrine of the priesthood as defined by the Council of Trent. Holy Orders constitute a sacrament;

and by it the power of consecrating, offering and administering the body and blood of Christ and of forgiving sins is conferred by the Lord. Although in a general way all the faithful share the priesthood, still there is an essential difference between baptism, confirmation and ordination. We cannot change or deny a doctrine defined by the Council. We should be concerned about furthering that dogma. Among today's confusion the greatest comes from the enemy of man, Satan (even at the risk of causing laughter). The Swiss Episcopal Conference wishes the law of celibacy to remain intact. If there would be any exceptions the judgment should be reserved to the Pope.

EMANUEL NSUBUGA

Archbishop of Kampala, Uganda

Archbishop Emanuel Nsubuga, speaking in his own name, expressed surprise that it should be necessary in this Synod to speak about the doctrinal aspects of priestly ministry since this was already clearly part of our faith. Priestly ministry cannot be equated with the Christian priesthood common to all baptized. As far as celibacy is concerned, he felt that this was not the reason for any lack of vocations and asks if it is necessary to reaffirm the law.

Speaking about the local Church and about "African Christianity", he warned against the danger of losing the true sense of the one Catholic Church. It would be preferable to speak of the Catholic Church in Africa.

"I believe in one, holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church", he said, and I do not desire to belong to the African Church.

OTTAVIO DERISI

Auxiliary Bishop of La Plata, Argentina

Much priestly confusion, especially in the area of celibacy, derives from the fact that priests are too concerned about solving purely temporal problems, forgetting their own vocation.

CARDINAL STEPHANOS I SIDAROOUSS

Patriarch of Alexandria of the Copts

Patriarch Stefanos I Sidarouss, speaking on behalf of the Coptic Synod, expressed support for the celibacy which is also a normal condition for the Church.

However, according to Oriental traditions, the Coptic Church also has some married priests. In general, without being monks, the Coptic priests do not regret their celibacy. The Oriental tradition therefore, honours celibacy. It can be noted that the married priest must also, of necessity, take care of his family and this means he cannot be completely dedicated to his ministry. Without being an essential condition, celibacy is also desired for the Oriental clergy, while keeping open the possibility of ordaining mature married men of exemplary life: while the priest who wishes to marry will be reduced to the lay state and will not be permitted to exercise his ministry.

It is not desirable for the Latin Church to renounce celibacy; fewer priests but better formed in the spirit of faith, prayer, and sacrifice, will exercise a more fruitful ministry than a great number of part-time priests. Therefore we should not allow ourselves to be concerned about the lack of priests.

CARDINAL FERNANDINO QUIROGA Y PALACIOS

Archbishop of Santiago de Compostela

The Synod must also keep some principles in mind: the distinction between the apostolic ministry and the common priesthood of the faithful; its divine origin; its transmission not through the community but through the mission and the sacrament of Ordination; the irrevocability of the gift of Orders; this is the supernatural goal of the ministry (man's salvation and liberation not only in the eschatological order but also in the temporal insofar as this is connected with the former).

All this has a twofold goal: to establish clear unchanging doctrinal foundations and to open the way to further study by establishing at the same time, more suitable forms for the exercise of the priestly ministry today.

CARDINAL JOSYF SLIPYJ

Metropolitan Archbishop of Ernakulan of the Malabar Rite

Paying tribute to seminary professors, he recalled that the servant of God, Metropolitan Andrew Szeptycky, once said *it was easier to find a good Bishop than a good seminary rector*. Cardinal Slipyj then stressed the need for solid training in the seminaries.

It should not be said lightly that celibacy is closer to Christ, because marriage is a sign of the unity of Christ with His Church. The Cardinal said that when he was rector of a seminary in the East he always preferred candidates vowed to celibacy, but he always left them free lest they should feel themselves obliged to.

Considering the ecumenical question, there are 200 million Orthodox, who allowed a married clergy, 100 million Protestants and Anglicans who do the same. It would be no help to tamper with the freedom of the Catholics of the Oriental Rite in this question. This is the more so since His Holiness, Paul VI spontaneously said in Bombay of the Melchite Rite: "I promise solemnly not to change your Rite: or your discipline". In spite of the present difficulties in the West, the Latin Church should act and come to its decisions without conflict with the Eastern Church. It would be premature to try to introduce a single discipline regarding ecclesiastical celibacy.

PATRIARCH ANTONIO RIBEIRO

Lisbon, Portugal

Regarding celibacy, the present legislation should not be changed. Stress should be laid on the total and irrevocable gift which the priest freely makes in consecrating himself to God. It should be gladly lived

in complete fidelity. The law with its pedagogical and protective character of the gift of the Holy Spirit, will help to defend the priest in moment of temptation against his own inner tendencies and against those who would wish to exploit his weakness.

GREGORIO B. VARGHESE THANGALATHIL

Metropolitan Archbishop of Trivandrum of the Syrian Malanjarese

Metropolitan Gregorios B. Varghese Thangalathil spoke in the name of the Malankarese Church. The discipline of the Oriental Churches in India regarding priestly celibacy has not been continuous — sometimes it was optional, and at other times it was obligatory. Today among the Orthodox it is optional, but a married priest has to abstain from conjugal relations before celebrating the Eucharist. Marriage after priesthood is so severely prohibited that a priest who married is not allowed to enter the sanctuary.

When Pius XI received Archbishop Mar Ivanios and his followers into the Catholic Church, he left the choice regarding celibacy to the Archbishop. Mar Ivanios decided to have a celibate clergy. However, married Orthodox priests continued to enter the Catholic Church. So there is an increasing number of celibate priests and a decreasing number of married ones. Experience shows that in spite of the best will and disposition in the married priests, his service is greatly hampered. When able to choose between the service of the married and the celibate priest, the people prefer the celibate.

From the doctrinal point of view, celibacy is of the highest value. It unites the priest more intimately with Christ and makes him more open for more graces. The speaker gave concrete examples and stated that celibacy makes the priest more effective.

ARCHBISHOP DIEM

Archbishop of Hue, Vietnam

Archbishop Philippe Nguyen-Kim-Diem affirmed that in his country vocations are still numerous but the candidates to the priesthood desire fuller light on the ministerial priesthood in order to dedicate themselves more completely.

Non-Catholics are looking towards the Synod with interest. They would be disappointed by any decrease in value of the value of the ministerial priesthood that might result, for they have a great respect for the priesthood. The Archbishop, in conclusion, exhorted the Fathers to present the doctrine on the priesthood in a way which is understandable and easily accessible to the present generation.

ARCHBISHOP PRIMATESTA

Archbishop of Cordoba, Argentina

Priests are tempted to dedicate themselves — and this under the pretext of evangelization — to political and social activities.

The principal causes of this crisis are to be found in the lack of spiritual life and prayer, in an insufficient theological formation and inadequate understanding of the teachings of Vatican II.

However, there are many priests who in the wake of what the faith and the magisterium teach, are trying to adapt the methods of evangelization to the needs of the times.

The Synod should proceed to a profounder discussion of the essence of the priesthood.

The Bishops of Argentina ask particularly for a precise and clear study regarding the ministerial priesthood and how it is to be distinguished from the priesthood common to all the faithful, also the ministerial priesthood in its relationship to Christ the Head.

METROPOLITAN KOCISCO

Metropolitan Archbishop of Munhall of the Rutherians

Metropolitan Stephen Kocisco said that there were two traditions in the universal Church regarding the priesthood. The Latin rite tradition insists on celibacy. The Eastern rite tradition extolled celibacy for its clergy but permits married men to be ordained. In the past, these two traditions have coexisted without great difficulty in countries belonging wholly to one or other of the traditions. The problem arises in countries where there is a mixture of rites. In the United States, for instance, the Latin rite made its appearance first and has great preponderance in numbers. When the Eastern rite clergy made their appearance they were not readily accepted. In 1929 the Holy See directed that only celibates could be ordained or admitted to exercise the priestly ministry among the faithful of the Oriental rite.

Without wishing to forestall any decision of the Synod or of the Pope, the speaker suggested that a uniform discipline regarding the celibacy of the clergy applied in the United States equally to the Latin rite and all Oriental rites. He said he was speaking with the full knowledge that the consensus of the Episcopal Conference of the United States favours the preservation of the present discipline of priestly celibacy in the Latin Church.

SALAZAR LOPEZ

Archbishop of Guadalajara, Mexico

The doctrine should be examined concerning how all the baptized participate in Christ's priesthood. It should be remembered that Christ Himself chose twelve from among his disciples to form his new family. To these He gave the mandate to preach. He sanctified them and conferred on them the power to consecrate the Eucharist.

Following the will of Christ, the Apostles passed on this power to others chosen from among the baptized by the rite of the laying on of the hands. In this way they were at the service of the people of God through a sacrament which was quite distinct from that of Baptism.

The Apostles and their successors became a sign of Christ. They act in the person of Christ. They are men of God who represent Christ the Head of the Mystical Body under the influence of the Holy Spirit. They are joined to Christ and they work for the salvation of the world.

The ministerial priesthood cannot in any way be understood without reference to the one unique priesthood of Christ; it is unique because of the unique hypostatic union which makes Christ the one mediator.

ARCHBISHOP PADLYARA

Metropolitan Archbishop of Changanachery of the Syrian Malabarese

The present crisis was due at least partly to the unrestricted activity of theological writers who speak with little regard for the Magisterium and ecclesiastical tradition.

Referring to the Eastern Churches, the speaker recalled that they never allow priests to marry and continue in their ministry. Celibacy is not a matter of dispute from the theological point of view for it is a sign of man's transcendence over the material. In a predominantly materialistic world it renders valuable testimony.

The ministerial priesthood is a special way of sharing the priesthood of Christ. Christ was priest and victim. His victimhood is the sphere in which His love for His Father found concrete expression. Christ the priest and the victim — these two are inseparable. Therefore, sharing in Christ's priesthood implies sharing in His victimhood. Priestly celibacy is an expression of this.

Considering priestly celibacy in the context of the Church in India, it takes on a special significance. *In India, celibacy is regarded with high esteem, as an eminent mode of self-abnegation which liberates man to be united to the absolute. It is difficult for a Hindu to think of someone as a man of God if he is not a celibate.*

The faithful expect their clergy to be celibate. It is true that celibacy is difficult today. It must be shown to be a positive experience rather than a purely negative renunciation.

What is needed is not speculations on celibacy but reorganization of the priestly ministry as a whole.

BISHOP SANTOS ASCARZA

Bishop of Valdivia, Chile

It must be emphasized that the Eucharist is the culmination of priestly action. Finally, the intimate unity of the prophetic, the priestly and regal functions of the hierarchical ministry should be further clarified by recalling the Augustinian distinction between "true sacrifice" and "external sacrifice", which is the cultic sacrifice.

BISHOP METODIO STRATIEW
Exarch of Sophia for the Byzantine Rite

The priest, like Christ, is a mediator. He is designated by the Spirit through the laying on of hands. He is designated to communicate to men grace, and God's mercy and pardon.

Throughout the Church, both Eastern and Western, the character received in ordination is considered an impediment to marriage. This is why even today the Orthodox Church does not allow a second marriage to priests who become widowers. The Oriental Church allows married men to be ordained but we should remember St. Paul's words: 1, Corinthians, 7-13. The Catholic hierarchy of the three Bulgarian dioceses, as well as the clergy and faithful, hope that the Church will maintain the tradition of celibacy.

The priest's adaptation to the modern world does not involve the abandonment of his own special identity. There is too much stress on the human aspect of the priest, forgetting that his role is above all supernatural. The reasons for defections are lack of prayer and faith and the weakening of the supernatural vision. A solid interior life is a guarantee of efficacy, gives eloquence to the priest's words and earns him the respect of all.

BISHOP COLIN MacPHERSON
Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, Scotland

The Bishops of Scotland consider that the document at this moment before the Synod — i.e. the doctrinal section of the schemata, *De Sacerdotio Ministeriali* — is a full and accurate rendering of the faith, tradition and mind of the Church on the ministerial priesthood. However, they are also agreed on the need for a succinct re-affirmation by the Synod of the precise nature of the ministerial priesthood.

One apparent source of the present difficulty is the use of the one word "priesthood" to describe two altogether different realities. The Church teaches that the two priesthoods — that of Baptism and that of Holy Order — differ from each other in kind, and not only in degree. These two priesthoods differ in origin. The priesthood of the laity is rooted in Baptism, while the ministerial priesthood is conferred by Holy Order. Through Baptism the Christian becomes in Christ a child of God, participating in a mysterious way in the Sonship of Christ. Through Holy Order the ministerial priest participates not only in the sonship of God (which is already his by Baptism) but precisely in that role of Christ which is his as Mediator, as High Priest, as Good Shepherd and as head of the Mystical Body.

The ministerial priest (Bishop and Priest) is sign and embodiment of truth and reality that there is no other name by which we are saved than the name of Jesus, the one Redeemer. In this specific status lies the identity and function of the ministerial priest. This must be clearly established and authoritatively proclaimed. In the light of this central truth all difficulties will be resolved.

What then are we to say of the mission of the priest in the Church and the world of today? In a word, the priest is the person who makes Christ the Redeemer present to the Church and to the world.

1. *He is a man of the Spirit.* Like his Master he is a sign which is contradicted by the hostile world. He is a prophet of the world to come.

2. *He is a faithful steward of God's Word,* the evangelist of the good news of reconciliation and peace with God.

3. *He is a dispenser of God's mysteries,* exercising his ministry through sacramental signs. His whole life is a living sign of Christ, and it finds its greatest meaning and fulfillment in the eucharistic sacrifice.

4. *He is a shepherd of God's flock,* giving himself wholly to building up the Church as a communion of faith and love for the redemption of the whole world.

CARDINAL GIUSEPPE SIRI Archbishop of Genoa, Italy

Cardinal Giuseppe Siri spoke in his own name. He stressed the necessity of adhering to the magisterium of the Church both solemn and ordinary. What the Council of Trent said should be maintained. Vatican II has said many things but issued no definitions. Because of the consent of all Fathers and the proclamation made by the Supreme Pontiff what is said in Vatican II is part of the ordinary magisterium of the Church, a secure guide which cannot be ignored. In these documents, the sacramentality of Orders is maintained. Through Orders a character is impressed and this constitutes the essential difference between the priestly ministry and the priesthood of the faithful. The ministerial priest shares in Christ's priesthood and has the task of cooperating with the Bishop. The People of God expect the Synod to reaffirm these elements found in Sacred Scripture, in Tradition and in the Magisterium of the Church.

CARDINAL ANGELO DELL'ACQUA Vicar General of His Holiness for the City of Rome

More should be said about the relationship and collaboration between priests and Bishops.

If the difference between episcopal consecration and priestly ordination is not clearly set out, how can one show the necessity of collaboration and of obedience on the part of the priest towards the Bishop? It is well in this connection to recall the sacrament on which was founded the apostolic succession and from which comes the hierarchical structure of the Church together with the powers to govern and sanctify.

The section on the ministerial priesthood needs to be perfected, stressing both its essential nature and its functions. What is needed is not definitions but a restatement of what is solid and traditional doctrine in

this matter that is of such importance for the Church today. Silence would disappoint all. If certainty and tranquility are not restored to priests and seminarians, it is useless to discuss work for social justice.

CARDINAL JAN WILLEBRANDS

President of the Secretariat for the Unity of Christians

The ministerial priesthood with its connection with all aspects of Christian doctrine, occupies a central point in the dialogue with our separated brethren. The very notion of the Church herself and of the ministerial priesthood has a different meaning within the Church and within the separated communities of the Reformation. The most important points of doctrine for dialogue are:

1. The essential difference between the ministerial priesthood and the priesthood of all the People of God is intimately connected with their reciprocal ordination in the sense that one cannot exist and function without the other.

2. The priestly ministry not only exist *within* the community but also *in front of* it. Protestant theologians accept this in general but the question remains: what is exactly meant by *in front of*? Does it refer only to a presiding function within the community or to the priest as a representative of Christ Himself who is Head of the community?

3. Our separated brethren admit that the Sacrament of Orders cannot be conferred twice but they are not clear about its basis; is it only a juridical act or is it the sacrament of Orders that gives to a man a new ministry and a new state?

4. The affirmation of the II Vatican Council that recognizes not only the ministry of the sacraments, but also that of the word and of preaching the Gospel, is of capital importance.

5. From the historical and theological point of view, there should be more research into the triple form of the ministry (episcopal, presbyterial, and diaconal). Is this the only possible form? The document does not give a clear description of the priesthood of Christ and therefore of the ministerial priesthood. Perhaps the concept of the Mediator could give a clearer view. Christ the Mediator continued His mediating mission through the ministry of priests. What is unique in Christ is continued ministerially by priests insofar as in them and through them Christ continues His priestly work in the world.

ARCHBISHOP ECHEVERRIA RUIZ

Archbishop of Guayaquil, Ecuador

This crisis is caused not only by environmental factors, but also by a decrease in the spirit of faith and prayer, a certain permissiveness in general morality, and lack of mortification.

The Synod represents in a certain way the whole of the Church. The Christian people expect clear direction. Many are hoping for a return to the traditional training of priests. Vocations are not entirely lacking, but many candidates for the priesthood lose the high ideals they had because of the prevailing uncertainty and confusion of ideas.

BISHOP EDUARDO PIRONIO
Secretary General of CELAM
Council of the Latin American Episcopal Conference

In the present situation of the Church in Latin America there are three points of special importance: a) the relationship between the two themes proposed for the Synod. The problems of the priesthood that derive from the Church's strong missionary awareness in the face of the reality of the modern world. The Gospel does not say what the priestly role should be in such a situation. For this reason, it is easy for a priest to be more attentive to the cry of the people than to the voice of God speaking to him in prayer. This is why there have been some attempts, sincere but sometimes misguided, for a greater incarnation in the world to show solidarity with the poor and the oppressed. Celibacy is not the principal problem, for it makes a man freer to be completely available for the service of his fellowmen; b) the ministerial priesthood should be seen in the Context of the Church's mission which is essentially a religious one. Evangelization and human development should neither be identified with one another nor opposed to one another. Christian vindication of justice is part of the genuine preaching of the Gospel of peace. The Church's religious message leads to the complete liberation of man. The question of violence should not overrule this issue; c) in the Church, the community of the saved, the ministerial priest is consecrated by the Holy Spirit and given a mandate for the complete salvation of man. Christ confers a mission of salvation and gives the necessary powers for this. To the Christian community the priest must bring the ministry of the word and of the Eucharistic sacrifice in full communion with Christ, with the Bishop, with the Presbyterium and the whole People of God. On the other hand, the priest must share with the world its anxieties, sorrows and aspirations. It is within all these elements that the priest must be able to find his identity. The Latin American priests expect clear guidelines to help them resolve these problems.

CARDINAL FRANCOIS MARTY
Archbishop of Paris, France

He stressed the opinion of the French Episcopal Conference of giving precedence to the theme of world justice; to study it is of capital importance both because it puts the Church in a condition of "service" and because it also throws light on the numerous delicate questions on the ministerial priesthood.

Therefore the language circles should not become lost in abstract considerations, but try to illustrate exactly the relationship between the theological propositions related by Cardinal Hoffner and the problems of the clergy, of their ministry, of their personal life. Also, a list should be drawn up of the problems that require an immediate reply from the Synod and those that must be studied in greater depth after the Synod. After this, one or more study commissions should be created as foreseen in the rules, charged with examining these problems and giving immediate responses.

CARDINAL PAUL GOUYON
Archbishop of Rennes, France

The Gospel describes the priesthood as a function of authority and of service. For a time, it sets down its characteristic duties and its missionary dimension. The way in which the priest must carry out his pastoral service is delineated also by St. Peter in his first letter. From the Acts of the Apostles it is clear that no one can claim for himself the function of priests; the parable of the Good Shepherd, as it was interpreted and understood in the beginning of the Church, leaves no doubt about the specific nature of the priestly ministry as a continuation of the mission of Christ and a participation in the function of Christ the Head. Cardinal Gouyon was most insistent that the Biblical notion of Christ as Shepherd be stressed.

EPISCOPAL ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

Let us pray for our Bishops on the occasion of their
episcopal ordination anniversaries

Most Rev. Manuel Salvador
Jan. 18, 1967

Most Rev. Bienvenido Lopez
Jan. 22, 1967

Most Rev. Teotimo Pacis
Jan. 25, 1967

THE LANGUAGE GROUPS

For a more profound study of the subject, 12 language groups were formed: 3 English, 3 French, 1 German, 3 Spanish, 1 Italian, 1 Latin. At the morning session on October 8, the representatives elected by each group gave a report. Following are selected portions of these reports of language groups.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE GROUP

ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH CORDEIRO
(Karachi, Pakistan)

Rapid changes in the world today require new forms of priestly ministry, but they require priestly qualification. The following points should be affirmed:

1. That ordination to the priesthood is a sacrament.
2. That the sacrament of orders confers a character which involves sacred powers.
3. That the oblation of Christ on the cross cannot be made present again in the Mass unless the presiding celebrant be an ordained priest.
4. That a priest, once ordained, always remains a priest.
5. The priest's vocation is from God, but the mandate comes through the Bishop.
6. That the priest's participation in the priesthood of Christ gives him a *status vivendi*, a way of life, rather than a mere function.
7. By this participation, he serves the people of God by proclaiming the word, teaching and ministering to it, and in its name offering the Eucharistic Sacrifice to God in the person of Christ.
8. Christ founded the Church in the apostles. By its apostolic nature, the Church has a mission to bear Christ's saving action to the contemporary world in which it finds itself. The ministerial priesthood, because he belongs to the Church, must share this mission, he must do it in the way that is proper to him, since the ministerial priesthood is something different from the common priesthood of the laity. It is proper to him and gives him a special way of life inasmuch as he represents Christ at the head of the community and in front of it.

REV. EDWARD L. HESTON, C.S.C.

(President of the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications)

As was evident from the individual expression of opinion, the members of the group were unanimously in agreement that this Synod should issue a clear and concrete statement on the priesthood. This declaration cannot be expected to contain anything really "new" as far as substance is concerned. At the same time, the Synod must avoid mere repetitions. Its language cannot afford to be stilted or frozen in the terminology of the past. Its tone must be contemporary and must reflect a deeply spiritual approach along the lines of *Lumen Gentium*.

...To sum up briefly the mind of the group, we may say that:

1. a statement on the priesthood must be issued;
2. this statement should be narrative in style, not schematic to avoid the danger of "legalism", and would have its ultimate foundation in the mission of the Church;
3. it should state clearly what an ordained priest is by virtue of the sacrament of Orders which he has received;
4. it should put in a clear light the relationship of the priest to Christ, to Christ's Church, to his bishop, and to the entire people of God. Lastly, the Synod should, at least in essential outline, clarify in what the ministry of the priest consists.

...The group addressed itself to the relationship between celibacy and the priestly office. Its conclusion was that although none of the reasons usually advanced are in themselves sufficient to establish a necessary, much less essential, bond between them—and in this agrees the centuries-old teaching of the Church—nevertheless there are certain considerations which have their own particular value for the priesthood in the Latin Church, without prejudice to those Churches of the Eastern Rites where a different discipline has obtained. One of these is that celibacy makes possible a complete and total commitment to God and the spread of His Kingdom. Again, total dedication calls for total sacrifice. Also, celibacy is a challenge for full identification with Christ. God's call to celibacy, the granting of this special "charism", is an exercise of His supreme dominion over the life of every creature. Another consideration was that a life of celibacy affords the priest the opportunity to live that "emptying of self" whereby he becomes more closely united with the self-emptying of the Word becoming man for us and for our salvation.

...But there was agreement that celibacy of itself will not make a man a better or more zealous priest. Celibacy, like marriage, is a positive commitment and needs to be really "lived". Motivation is essential, and this must of necessity be of the supernatural order.

REV. THEODORE VAN ASTEN

(Superior General of the White Fathers)

The basic principle is: Holy Orders is a sacrament that confers important powers. This should be described in terms meaningful today. The

call to the priesthood comes from Christ but the community has a role in the recognition of it.

...the priest's role in celebrating the Eucharist in the person of Christ should be stressed more than the priest's presiding function.

...The group then drew up a number of points which they think the Synod should carefully consider:

- the distinction between the ministerial priesthood and the priesthood of the faithful;
- the character conferred by priestly ordination; the priest acts in the person of Christ, Head of the Church;
- the need for a special calling for the exercise of the priestly ministry;
- whether the priest can achieve his sanctity specially through the exercise of his ministry;
- how to develop to the fullest the multiple possibilities of priestly ministry;
- whether the priest's ministry is a permanent reality or a mere mandate for a transitory function of the Church;
- the concept of priest as mediator between God and men;
- the meaning of "priest" in the New Testament;
- the priest's role in the promotion of the development of people.

FRENCH LANGUAGE GROUP

REV JOSEPH LECUYER

(Superior General of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost)

It was the unanimous opinion of this group that doctrine should not be presented in abstract formulae but in the context of the difficulties priests encounter today. Traditional doctrine should be accepted, but the voice of priests today—including their doubts—should be carefully listened to. The Synod must give evidence of its determination to face these difficulties, seeking solutions of a practical order.

...From the New Testament, it is clear that the institution of the apostolic college of Christ and the handing down of the Apostles' functions to the successors, has come to us unchanged in its fundamental structure. The triple ministry of Bishops, priests and deacons is directed towards the good of the people of God. The Fathers of the Church, specially the Greek, show that this is a sign of God's activity. God acts through his Spirit in the world by means of visible structures. That is, ministers in the Church represent Christ Himself, and are designed to perform visible rites which the Church calls sacraments.

The preference of the ministry and of the priestly character. If the ministry were simply due to juridical delegation on the part of the community, it could be only a temporary mission. Stress, therefore, should be laid on the permanence of a gift received through a sacrament.

BISHOP PAUL JOSEPH SCHMITT
(Metz, France)

The starting point should be Christ as the image of the Father and the visible manifestation of the living God. The mystery of the Church originates from here.

In Christ there is a triple function of Prophet, Priest and King. If one or other of these three is emphasized disproportionately, the function of the priest will lose its unifying factor. Christ, the image of the Father, is the priest's model. He manifests the eternal love of the Father and makes it operative through the Holy Spirit in the history of the Church.

...The sacraments do not come from the community. Their source is the Trinitarian communion to which Christ's life is witness. Sacraments are signs of the transcendent initiative of God in the work of salvation which the Church today announces and accomplishes. They actualize, on the human level, the operative presence of Christ who saves man both as an individual and as a member of the whole of humanity.

GERMAN LANGUAGE GROUP

BISHOP FRANZ HENGSBACH
(Hessen, Germany)

The problem was examined in the light of the pre-Synodal schema, the suggestions of many episcopal conferences, Cardinal Hoffner's report, and the speeches of the Fathers in the Synod, as well as the final report.

The Synod should not produce a new doctrinal statement, but formulate clear proposals which will help to resolve the present problems on the meaning and function of the ministerial priesthood.

1. It maintains in particular that the eight theses drawn up by the Episcopal Conferences of Germany and Austria — accomplished by an introduction on the present problems of the priestly office — may be used by the Synod as its own.

2. Furthermore, an attempt should be made to draft a document in seven propositions prepared by the International Theological Commission in order to meet the present problems concretely.

In the introduction, it was stressed that Bishops and priests share in the unique priesthood in the world of today whose joys and sorrows the priests must share. The importance of the Church's traditional doctrine was insisted upon:

1. The ministerial priesthood and the priesthood of all the faithful. Vatican II threw light on the doctrine of the common priesthood of the faithful and then discussed the ministerial priesthood. Does this mean that the second derives from the priestly nature of the Church?

From the Epistles of St. Paul, it is clear that the apostles act on a mandate received from Christ. The powers of an apostle come from Him and are transmitted to their successors. This has always been the structure of the Church in an unbroken tradition.

2. Access to Christ. Exegesis does not tell us much about the person of Christ and about His time, but the priest should follow Christ in whose name he acts.

3. The priestly ministry and other ministries. As in the Church of today, ministries are multiplied (some previously exercised exclusively by priests are now exercised by laymen as well). The question arises: what is the specific nature of the priestly ministry. From the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, one sees the stress placed on the pastoral function. This consists in the preaching of the Gospel, uniting and governing the ecclesiastical community, the forgiveness of sins, and above all, the celebration of the Eucharist, over which the priest alone may preside by virtue of his ordination.

4. Fraternal charity and authority. The Church needs institutional authority but this is spiritual, that is, in imitation of Christ it is an exercise of love.

5. Variety of gifts and permanence of the office. Salvation which was promised by God through Christ to the human race is definitive and once and for all. The Church as a sign and instrument of this promise, acts also in a definitive way through a ministerial sacrament conferred once and for all.

6. Priests in the communion of the Church. Even though the priest exercises his ministry in one particular community, he is not ordained for a single group or area. His ministry is in reference to the Church as a unit. In his office as priest, he is intimately united with the Bishop, who in his turn, through the Episcopal College, is in communion with the Pope. This is true also of priests not dedicated to the service of a particular community, such as missionaries and religious.

7. The mission of the priest in the world today. Today, the mission of the Church towards society and the world is greatly stressed. Priests share in this. They announce the Word and witness to the Gospel, in a way which transform the world and saves it. The world cannot be saved by merely human efforts.

The group completed its work by proposing amendments to the eight theses of the German and Austrian Hierarchies.

SPANISH-PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE GROUP

BISHOP OCTAVIO NICOLAS DERISI

(Auxiliary of La Plata, Argentina)

... The transmission of the apostolic ministry does not come from delegation by the community, but from the mission of the sacramental consecration instituted by Christ, in virtue of which the ministerial priesthood has a sacred power in order to represent Christ the Head, and accomplish in the community the work of sanctification through the sacraments which He instituted. These include the celebration of the Eucharist and the remission of sins. Christ enlightens the Church through His magisterium and governs it with His power.

Even when performing a function open to every Christian, such as announcing the word of God, the priest accomplishes it as one who presides over the community.

This ministerial priesthood appeared from the beginning in the life of the Church.

According to the Council of Trent and Vatican II, three hierarchical levels are to be distinguished as of divine right in the ministerial priesthood: Bishops who have the power which is communicated by Christ in its fullness; priests who have sacred power communicated to them also by Christ but in a manner subordinate to the Bishop; and, thirdly, deacons.

It follows that Bishops and priests are at different levels, but all participate in Christ's unique priesthood and ministry. Therefore, they have the triple priestly function of teaching, sanctifying and governing the People of God.

Bishops should consider priests as real and active collaborators and not merely executives of their commands, but the exercise of the priestly ministry must remain directly subordinate to the Bishop.

The apostolic ministry, even though of an eschatological nature already becomes a dynamic force to promote human progress and free man from all servitude to sin and its effects such as injustice, ignorance, war, and oppression of every sort.

ARCHBISHOP MARCUS McGRATH

(Panama)

Even though the ministerial priesthood is for the community and in the community, it is not derived from the community. It is not delegated

by the community but makes Christ present as the Head of the Church. The ministerial priesthood is a gift of the Holy Spirit and is conferred through ordination in apostolic succession. The sacrament of Orders gives the minister a sharing in the authority and the service of Christ and confers a permanent character.

The temporal order should be directed to the eschatological one. Therefore every Christian activity must refer to this in efforts to serve and liberate man. The priest can do much to improve the temporal order particularly in the solution of the most serious human problems, but this must always be done in keeping with his priesthood.

BISHOP JUAN TORRES OLIVER

(Ponce, Puerto Rico)

. . . The sharing in Christ's unique priesthood is in two ways: the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial priesthood. Between these two, there is a difference not only in degree but also in kind, though they are related to one another. The common priesthood is exercised in the reception of the Eucharist in a way proper to the faithful, in prayer and in testimony to the faith. The priestly ministry is exercised by the preaching of the Gospel, in the guidance of the community, and the remission of sins and in the celebration of the Eucharist.

Those who are consecrated to the priestly ministry participate in the functions of Christ and unite all the faithful to God. They act in the name and the person of Christ by virtue of the priestly character.

. . . The transmission of the sacrament. The ministerial priesthood is conferred through the sacrament of Orders; by virtue of the sacrament the recipient is made a real ministerial priest of the New Testament. He is consecrated in the image of Christ; in such a way he receives a permanent and irrevocable gift from the Holy Spirit who works in him transforming him radically.

ITALIAN LANGUAGE GROUP

ARCHBISHOP ENRICO BARTOLETTI

(Apostolic Administrator of Lucca, Italy)

. . . Through the will of Christ, a ministerial and hierarchical priesthood exists in the priestly people. This is distinct from the common priesthood not only in degree but also in essence.

The ministerial priesthood, in fact, through the power of Christ which it enjoys, strengthens and upholds the priestly people; it celebrates the Eucharistic Sacrifice—the apex and source of all Christian life; it reconciles sinners with God in the Sacrament of Penance; in this way it brings into effect the sacramental presence of Christ, Head of His Church and continues His ministry of reconciliation by virtue of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, Christians called to the priesthood do not receive functions or delegations from the assembly, but through the sacrament of Orders they are consecrated to preach the Gospel, guide the faithful and celebrate divine worship.

Christian tradition is confirmed—a Tradition specially expressed in the Council of Trent concerning the sacramental nature of the ordained ministry.

... What is the priest's place and mission in the world today? The Church's own mission is not political, economic and social, but religious, directed to establishing the communion of men with the Father and between them in Christ in the Spirit. However, this salvific action, which embraces the whole of man and his dignity, requires the service of other men for their complete and progressive "liberation" which is to be promoted in suitable ways in the light of the Gospel and with personal and community testimony.

Priests, in a way proper to themselves, are called to participate also in this task.

LATIN LANGUAGE GROUP

S. B. IGNACE PIERRE XVI BATANIAN
(of Cilicia of the Armenians)

...in order to eliminate some uncertainties which are creeping in, especially among young priests, two points should be further explained: the clear distinction between the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial priesthood; the indelible character imprinted by ordination. To this end, the proposition enunciated in the schema, but with some amendments and additions for clarity, could be of use.

1. Specify more clearly that the hierarchical ministry draws its origin from the institution of the Apostles by Christ.

2. The complete sacrifice of Christ consists in the offering of Himself made to the Father and completely fulfilled on the Cross. The ministry of Bishops and priests is priestly because it makes the salvific mission of Christ present not only in the effective proclamation of the Gospel, in uniting together and guiding the community but also in the re-admission of sinners, and above all, in the celebration of the Eucharist. These last two duties are so proper to the priest that they are not within the competence of any member of the faithful.

. . . Add the explicit affirmation, according to the doctrine of the Council of Trent, of the permanence of ordination, of that spiritual reality called character which is not lost even if the priest, for any motive whatsoever, even personal, is removed or dispensed from the exercise of the ministry.

"Priests fulfill their chief duty in the mystery of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. In it the work of our redemption continues to be carried out. For this reason, priests are strongly urged to celebrate Mass everyday, for even if the faithful are unable to be present, it is an act of Christ and the Church."

(Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, no. 13)

SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS

After the discussions Cardinal Hoffner presented to the Synod Fathers the following synthesis of all the points studied.

From all the interventions, there appears a deep concern for the uneasiness of the clergy and the discouragement of many, and, indeed, a wish to find fitting remedies.

Two methods are proposed for treating the question. Either to begin from the unshakeable foundations of the ministerial office or to begin from the real problems. The greater part of the interventions are favourable towards the first method, convinced that these can lead to secure conclusions. Some Fathers proposed to reconcile the two criteria. While all agreed that they should not draft new treatises on priestly ministry, many requested that there should be drawn up some which should constitute the basis for future meditation. In such a method it would be possible to help the clergy, especially the young, who are sometimes uncertain and disturbed by certain theological presentations.

THE PRIESTLY OFFICE

Various questions came up about the priestly office. However, not even indirectly was it ever insinuated that the priestly office is derived from the community of the faithful. A clearer demonstration of the relationship between "Christological justification" and the "Pneumatic" was requested. Many suggestions were made vis-a-vis the relationship between the authority and fraternity, between priests and Bishops, between priests and people. No one challenged the existence of a sacrament of Orders. There was some discussion as to whether the "ministry" should be related to the priestly office almost as a "species". As far as the role of the priest in the life of the Church is concerned, one of the questions asked was,

following the Vatican Council, how do we see the vision of Trent as obligatory today. The emphasis of Trent was placed strongly on Eucharist; but today should we not insist more on openness towards the world on the part of the Church and indeed on the part of the priest? Should not a broader understanding of the missionary situation of the Church place its accents more on preaching than on the administration of the Sacraments. Here we begin to face the problem of the direct participation of priests in their activity in the world of today and eventually we will have to ask the question about direct political action. This latter was rejected by many who proposed rather that the priest should explain to the laity the general principles. But some of the Fathers, especially from Latin America, insisted on the relationship between Christian salvation and human liberation which indeed priests should be promoting.

On the third series of themes, related to the person of the priest, there were many interventions on the spiritual life of the priest. Crisis of vocation will exist if there is not proposed to youth an ideal worthy of the priesthood which demands generosity and the complete giving of one's self to Christ.

The greatest number of those who spoke about clerical celibacy stated that they were in favour of the unconditional preservation of celibacy.

He then proposed a synthesis of problems as given by the Synodal Fathers:

A SYNTHESIS OF PROBLEMS

1. The opportunity or the necessity of an explicit statement on the doctrine of the Church on the ministerial priesthood; its eventual form.

2. Today there was a need for such a statement to avoid doubt or confusion, though a complete doctrine certainly could not be given for lack of time or because of the false impression that the former doctrines were no longer valid. The Synod should proceed in a positive manner; often the doctrine of Vatican II and the decisions of Trent are set in opposition. This is a false premise. No Council tends to exhaust all of

Revelation or to take away from preceding Councils, even though Vatican II was a great and useful advance. The Synod, of course, does not carry the authority of an Ecumenical Council. However, the Bishops are witnesses to the faith and with the consent of the Pope, can speak with full authority.

Some Fathers have suggested that we elaborate some "propositions" or "theses" containing the principal points of doctrine most necessary today.

Let us keep the following in mind:

1) Ministerial priesthood can be understood only in the context of the entire mission of the Church; 2) such a mission cannot be exhaustively contained within human concepts; Christ is prophet, king, pastor, saviour, mediator, etc. and indeed the recent theological elaborations of the triple office of Christ (priest-king-prophet) is not even adequate. In the Church, the ministry of the priest shares in that incomparable foundation; 3) the mission conferred by Christ on the Church and in particular on the Apostles, is founded on a special calling. The responsibility of the Apostles was unique as witnesses of the Resurrection and founders of the Church; 4) the Apostles, to maintain the fundamental structure of the Church intact, transmitted their mission to others inasmuch as it was communicable; 5) Christ always assists and fortifies His Church with gifts of the Spirit; 6) in the light of Scripture and Tradition, the hierarchical ministry is an efficacious sign of the presence of Christ and of the Spirit without monopolizing the manifold action of Christ. And so, some acts can be carried out only by the ordinary minister (for example, some sacraments). But ministerial activity cannot be reduced to that type of action alone; 7) it is true that some of the writings of the New Testament almost never use the term "priests" for the ministers of the Church. However, the Fathers legitimately used this term, because if it was not a New Testament word, the reality was still recognized. Vatican II used the word at least thirty times, as if the term "priest", expressed the totality of the duties of ministry. The Council used the expression "presbytery" because of the antiquity of the word, and to distinguish the ministry of the priest from that of the Bishop. It was also used to inculcate the spirit of service; 8) ministers should be distinguished from the other faithful through that permanent reality of "character" which does not create super

Christians but confers a permanent gift of the Spirit through which the minister shares in the authority of the Lord; 9) since ministry is conferred through divine ordination and not merely by an act of the community, Christ wished to underline the gratuity and the supernatural aspects of salvation.

PRIESTS AND DEVELOPMENTS

Many of the Fathers wanted to underline — and rightly so — the necessity or a clarification about the problems concerning the relationship between the priestly ministers and the development of peoples. If salvation is concerned with the totality of man and not only the individual but even the community, it would be prejudicial to think of the priesthood as a function limited exclusively to what concerns the Church internally.

As was stated frequently, everyone in the Church has the same vocation. Consequently, everyone, therefore, also priests, are coresponsible in forming the temporal order. History shows that the Church and priests have achieved this in diverse ways according to circumstances of their time and place. It is difficult if not impossible to determine strict limits in making any proposals; however, we might keep the following in mind: Above all it is well to remember that the Church as such does not have a specific competence in explaining the structures, methods, techniques, and politics appropriate to solving all the great problems of humanity. It can, however, and it should be present in every activity serving mankind. In the second place, it is good to remember that priests are called above all to be heralds of the Gospel and so to concentrate their activities in areas more worthy of the scope and dimension in which they can best help resolve the problems of mankind.

"IN THE LIGHT OF FAITH"

4. As far as the problem of celibacy is concerned, repeatedly mentioned during the discussion, it is necessary to note that the problem of its opportunities or otherwise is relegated to the second part of our treatment (practical questions). Given the brevity of time, it was impossible to respond to the many who requested or suggested a deepening in the reasons for

celibacy. It seems opportune to call to mind certain reflections that can validate it, by recalling that only in the light of faith can it possibly be understood:

a) beyond the motives already given in the course of history against the discipline of celibacy in the Latin Church, there were brought forth today considerations according to which celibacy would be construed as an impediment to the involvement of a priest in historical reality. Further, by recognizing the exalted value of this charism, it is suggested that there is a need for the presence of some married priests who could offer the witness of family life;

b) indeed it is almost impossible to draw up, after so many centuries, new reasons in favour of celibacy. Yet it seems useful to remember an argument founded on evangelical radicalism. As is evident from the "Sermon on the Mount", Christ is shown as being very demanding towards those whom He called to the apostolic function.

The Apostle Paul is a shining example of this radicalism which he considered a divine gift for anyone who wished more easily to dedicate himself totally to God. The Church can therefore with reason establish that only those who are disposed to assume the commitment of celibacy may be admitted to the priesthood. Celibacy makes the priest more available for evangelization, strengthens the value of his testimony and guarantees liberty against every form of oppression. Finally, it constitutes a form of participation in the "kenosis" of Christ in his Paschal Mystery.

CELIBACY TRANSCENDS

Celibacy is not fear of life. It transcends common conditions and has its origin in a personal decision; it is upheld through the help of grace and constitutes a valid example of fidelity to the faithful who choose the matrimonial life.

The Cardinal ended by asking the language groups to state clearly in their doctrinal discussions: the present most important problems of the ministerial priesthood; to define the perspective and form in which they desire these problems to be dealt with, and to express their views regarding the validity and the fitness of the subjects and "formulations" in the documents consigned to them, so that they can be used — at least in part — as a basis of discussion.

PRACTICAL PART

After the debates on the doctrinal aspects of the priesthood Cardinal Enrique y Tarancon of Toledo, at the morning session on October 7, delivered his Report on the Practical Problems of the Ministerial Priesthood. The problem was how to apply the doctrines to actual practice and how to solve the problems which are encountered in actual ministry. These problems are the same in all places substantially. However they receive different modifications in different nations.

The practical aspects of the priesthood was studied by the general sessions and the language groups from October 8 to 15 and 132 Fathers intervened.

In these pages we present the Report at the start of the debates and the Summary of the Synodal discussions both made by Cardinal Enrique y Tarancon from which we can get an idea of the synodal debates.

PRACTICAL PROBLEMS OF THE MINISTERIAL PRIESTHOOD

by CARDINAL ENRIQUE Y TARANCON

From the very beginning, we should have this objective before us in our discussions: to open new ways for the progress of the Church by finding a form of priestly life that responds to the following:

- a) The needs of the world today which is in an increasing state of secularization and suffers from a profound religious crisis;
- b) The difficulties that the Christian communities feel today regarding their pastors;

c) The problems that the priests of today meet in almost every part of the world;

d) The requirements of the Church in a state of renewal.

We should be concerned not only with the priests of today but above all with those of tomorrow. Boldness is necessary.

THE NATURE AND THE SPECIFIC MISSION OF THE MINISTERIAL PRIESTHOOD

The relationship between evangelization and the celebration of the sacraments must be more precisely pointed out. If they are considered as two distinct realities or simply considered side by side, the heart of the Church would be divided and the ministerial priesthood seriously wounded.

It is not a theological problem; it is an existential one. Priests living in countries with a longstanding Catholic tradition feel uneasiness and a certain frustration when they celebrate the sacraments for baptized people who are insufficiently prepared. Other priests do not easily resign themselves to being simply "employees of cult", and they are afraid of becoming prisoners of cult that does not leave them any time for missionary activity. Still others feel a difficulty in integrating men in a sacrament in such a way that this commits them for life.

Our attention should be concentrated on the three following points:

1. *The ministry of the word*: the necessity of dedicating one's self to all aspects of the Gospel means that the Church should announce the need for a change of heart to every man. The Church acts as the conscience of humanity, exercising a critical function in human society.

2. *The celebration of the Sacraments*: stress should be laid on the need for preparation on the part of the faithful before they receive the Sacraments. The faith has to be purified from any magical concept. The liturgical renewal has to be continued and adapted daily to the psychology of peoples and the characteristics of every community.

3. *The relationship between the ministry and other activities*; we should ask ourselves how non-ministerial tasks can serve the mission of the Church as well as the needs of the Christian community. We should reflect on the motives behind the assumption of such tasks.

The motives would be insufficient if they were simply to better one's economic condition, or to recover a kind of psychological balance, or to have an improved social status.

The fundamental principle should be this: leave open every real and concrete possibility for the exercise of the priestly ministry that presents itself to the priests.

In certain cases, the mission of preaching the Gospel may demand the following tasks:

— Sharing the condition of the working class that is unjustly placed in a condition of inferiority; this can be a very important apostolate.

— The acceptance of political responsibility poses a difficult problem. The priestly ministry must, at all costs, be safeguarded; even while making political choices it is well not to be engaged as militant politicians.

— We should apply the same principle to other tasks such as scientific research. The fact that priests have traditionally engaged in them does not make them of themselves, suitable for priestly activity.

ORGANIZED PASTORAL ACTION WITHIN THE CHURCH

The organization of the Church and its juridical government have only one end in view *which* is to strengthen and protect the liberty of the children of God. Personal liberty that is in accordance with the individual's vocation and special gifts, and the needs of the community as a whole are the two conditions that must determine the style of the individual's pastoral action in the Church.

1. *Pastoral planning*: above all pastoral planning must always respect the individual's mission and the mission of a particular group coordinating ends and means. It should take its starting point from the sociological and religious situation and all must play their part in it. On the diocesan chancery, the presbyteral council and the pastoral council.

2. *Ecclesiastical structures*: it is inevitable that a number of structures become unnecessary with the passing of time. They could even obscure the image of Christ who is present in the Church and become an obstacle to evangelization. This is why the Church is called to continual renewal.

It is not the task of structure to stifle personal initiative. On the contrary, they should encourage it, and stimulate it. The charismatic nature of the Church cannot be suffocated by the law.

3. *The relationship between priests and Bishops*: Vatican II does not consider authority as personal; that is, it is for the benefit of the whole community and not for the individual, and necessarily requires collaboration with the People of God:

- authority is service;
- the priests and the faithful should be associated with the work of the Bishop;
- pastoral action must involve everyone;
- priests are essentially "active and necessary collaborators" of the Bishops, and in the strict sense not subjects.

The relationships should now be seen as a new context: supernatural charity together with human friendship can alone produce unity of mind and heart:

- priests should have easy access to their Bishop;
- small groups should be free to have frequent discussions with the Bishops;

— appointments should be made according to each one's qualities and aspirations. The Bishops should be fully aware of his priests' needs, economical, psychological and spiritual;

— special attention should be devoted to those in difficulties;

— priests should feel that they are looked after, but still free.

This means that dioceses must not be too big. The Bishop must personally direct the apostolate. He should live a simple life close to his priests. In every diocese there should be an efficient service for the clergy.

It is preferable that associations of priests arise spontaneously and not become pressure groups that divide the clergy.

4. *The relationship between priests and the laity.* It is important to fit the activity of the laity within the general picture, pointing out their particular responsibility. Most difficulties come from three sources:

— the essential difference between the ministerial priesthood and that common to all the faithful has not been clearly enough explained, particularly in reference to pastoral activity;

— the maturity of the laity demands that they be allowed initiative;

— they should be given responsibility and left free. But in practice there have been difficulties with priests and also with Bishops;

— the difficulties with priests and also with Bishops;

— the difficulties are all the greater when it is a question of the laity's activity in the temporal order. The independence of the Church should be safeguarded and no one should claim for himself exclusively her authority.

One principle that would help towards the solution of these problems is to keep always in mind communion within the Church. Within this, personal liberty with individual gifts and talents and the life and action of the People of God as a whole should be harmonized.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF PRIESTS

In rapidly changing situations, we must always return to the same source of Christian spirituality. The priest, like all Christians, is invited to personal sanctity. Sometimes there has been advocated for priests a disembodied spirituality that does not integrate them in their ministry or in the world about them. Today there is an even greater gap between efforts towards personal sanctification and the efforts to sanctify the Christian community. This is because in pastoral action there is no realization of the sanctifying effect that pastoral activity itself has on the priests.

The priests should realize more fully the meaning of pastoral charity as the Vatican Council spoke about it. This charity must penetrate fully the priestly ministry. The priest's total availability for God's action includes a total availability to the People of God. His whole life expresses the mystery of reconciliation which is the priestly task assigned to him. Because of his responsibility towards the Christian community, he should find in it the principal motive for his prayer even when he prays in private.

THE PRIESTHOOD AND CELIBACY

Surveys that have been carried out show that this is not a central problem. Nor is it so vast as some people think. It has to be faced, however, with absolute loyalty and calmness. Whatever the decision the Church may come to in this matter, it will not bear fruit if the evangelical and pastoral motives behind it are not properly understood and evaluated. Here are some reflections:

1. Nobody doubts that celibacy is a legitimate form of life that can be lived both humanly and in the Christian spirit. The motive of love that inspires it should penetrate all aspects of the person's life.

2. The priestly ministry brings with it a fittingness for the complete availability of the priest for the priestly tasks in the service of his fellowmen and of the Church.

3. When the Church demands the charism of celibacy, she does not do so for reasons of "ritualistic purity". Nor does she consider that this is the only way for achieving sanctity. Her intentions is above all to find the best way in which the priestly ministry can be exercised within the community for the building up of the Church.

4. Celibacy is still a valid sign when it is not lived in a mere legalistic way. It is a mysterious witness of love for the kingdom of God.

5. This charism, however, cannot be assured for an individual by the Church even through the administration of sacraments. It presupposes a life of strong faith.

6. Before the step is taken of ordaining married men for pastoral necessity, the whole concept of pastoral action has to be carefully examined. I mean the possibility of a better distribution of ministries in which deacons and the laity could assume certain functions.

7. The training of candidates for the celibate priesthood must be enriched with theological, spiritual and philosophical thought.

ECONOMIC SECURITY OF PRIESTS

This is an important question, because it has a bearing on the following problems: fair distribution of priests, the system of "benefices" and the "stole fees", social security, etc.

The distribution of the clergy should be according to pastoral needs. The system of assigning benefices should be reformed quickly. Stole fees are anachronistic. But the idea that the faithful should contribute towards the needs of the Church should perhaps be more stressed. Economic security for the clergy should be insured by ecclesiastical institutions or better still, by means of public bodies of social security.

Another aspect is devoting Church funds for social action. It must be shown as a service to the community in order to avoid scandal.

THE TRAINING OF PRIESTS TODAY

According to the surveys, priests feel they have not been sufficiently trained. They do not feel doctrinally adequate, nor equipped to meet the needs of the day. Regarding the practical training of future priests, the following should be kept in mind:

— is it enough to give priests a general training or should they from the very beginning be given specialized training?

— how should seminarians be trained to work together so that they will find teamwork easy later on?

— how should seminarians acquire, even in their years of training, some pastoral experience?

As for definitive training of a priest, it involves two things:

— updating as rapidly as possible in new theological research and the changing conditions of modern life;

— continuing education which must constantly be brought up to date with new methods.

CONCLUSION

Let us look to the future with confidence. These times so full of disquiet, confusion and conflict, are preparing a new way for Christ to be present in the world. We can help bring this about if we are attentive to God's inspiration.

EPISCOPAL ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

Most Rev. Jose Querexeta
Jan. 25, 1964

Most Rev. Leopoldo Arcaira
Jan. 25, 1962

Most Rev. Lino Gonzaga
Jan. 28, 1952

Most Rev. Reginald Arliss
Jan. 30, 1970

SUMMARY OF THE SYNODAL DISCUSSIONS

After an introduction in which he gave a panorama of the problems and called for joint action of the Church, Cardinal Enrique y Tarancón summed up the debates thus:

PRIESTLY SPIRITUALITY

The Fathers agree that the priest's piety and sanctity should be invigorated. Some insist on daily celebration of Mass, on frequent confession and on Marian devotion. Others maintain that the priest should be prepared for the secularized world. Therefore, he should not remain in a mere "supernaturalism."

With the prophetic office, he must find other ways of spirituality in the world in order to save himself and mankind. From this emerges the question of the young priest's image example, and stimulus to modern youth.

Many Fathers affirm that quality is more important than quantity. Statistics say very little about spirituality. Young people are more attracted by an arduous ideal than by facility and mediocrity. *Where there is martyrdom, there vocations will be found, and in these countries there is no crisis of identity.* Therefore, there should be a learning towards integral evangelical values.

Two Fathers insist on the internal affinity between evangelical counsels and perfect priestly life. One denies this, asserting that spirituality is part of all baptized people and that priestly piety is different only in the way (bolder faith and more ardent love for souls).

Many Fathers, however, insist on the image of the Good Shepherd, which makes a total donation of self to God and which must dedicate its specific spirituality to the flock.

The priest, as builder of unity, should by his own life, witness to unity with men, among men and between men and God. The priest's preaching should be confirmed by his own life.

PRIESTLY CELIBACY

The variety and complexity of the views expressed make it difficult to have a complete synthesis. Here are the main points:

A. PRIESTHOOD AND CELIBACY

1. Mutual understanding: Even though celibacy and priesthood are not necessarily linked, celibacy is recognized as the ideal condition for exercising the apostolic mission. Almost unanimously, the Synodal Fathers want it to remain a universal law for the Latin Church.

2. Meaning: Historical and philosophical values were brought forward. Celibacy is enforced in the Church both for its intrinsic quality as a witness to evangelical values and for its expression of the highest human ideals, for it is an antidote to the alienation of today's consumer society. It is an expression of personal love and faith in the ultimate realities of human history.

3. The hierarchy is concerned with quality more than quantity. When admitting to the priesthood only those who have the charism of celibacy, the Church attends to her duty of choosing for the ministry only those entirely dedicated to the Gospel. Faithfulness to the Gospel gives the Church the right to determine the conditions under which candidates for the priesthood are admitted.

B. ORDINATION OF MARRIED MEN

It is understood under two aspects:

1. The necessity, the value and the meaning for today of such ordinations.

a) Some Fathers have seen this as a solution for those countries where there is a shortage of priests. Some have said that the uniting of priesthood and marriage would give evidence to the world of new values and would be an expression of the consecration by which the Christian elevates worldly and temporal values. The celibate priesthood itself, which is preferable, would thereby take on an added value as a sign.

b) Most of the Fathers think that to preach and administer the Sacraments, some married men may be ordained in those local Churches that wish to have them, under certain conditions, by way of exception and at the discretion of the Holy See.

c) Still other Fathers, while recognizing the validity of these arguments, believe that no such permission should be conceded at the present time.

2. In the discussion, it was said that giving permission to ordain married men would inevitably lead to further concessions and finally, to the abolition of the law itself. They adduced historical and psychological reasons for this and also mentioned the publicity campaign in the means of social communications.

3. A great number of the Fathers feel that the ordination of married men would not only not resolve the fundamental problem but would create a more serious one. Such priests would lack the freedom of movement

and be less effective in their mission, because of the complexities of family life under the psychological, sociological and economic aspects. It would also create two classes of clergy, one of them second class.

The most serious argument against the suggestion would be the consequences on the priests of today, on seminarians and on future vocations, for these would lack the high ideal of total dedication. The Church would lose some of its luster and its missionary zeal. Its courage to resist, particularly in countries where the faith is persecuted, would be diminished—this has been revealed by the Fathers who come from those regions.

The shortage of vocations is not due to the law of celibacy. History shows that celibacy is possible only in social context and in a community where it is favourably looked upon.

4. The majority of the Fathers do not wish to see the permission granted to local Churches to ordain married men, as this would constitute moral pressure on neighboring Churches to adopt similar measures and would lead to the abolition of celibacy. Many of the functions for which it is alleged that married priests are required, could be allotted to lay people, religious men and women who could integrated more fully in the missionary activity of the Church. There is also the possibility of having married deacons.

C. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Some Fathers have observed that celibacy is more difficult because of the changes in today's world. This is especially so in the anthropological and social order—the importance of sexuality, the changed relations between the sexes, creative activity, an exaggerated cult of liberty etc. Other changes within the Church herself and the recognition of the Christian value of new forms of life make the problem appear still more complex. In this new cultural and religious context, celibacy can appear in a new light and with fresh splendor as an expression of a personal call to the love of God, absolute liberty at the service of God and one's neighbour, the rejection of every form of slavery, radical contestation of the consumer society and of the stifling atmosphere of hedonism and sex.

In order that celibacy may be developed as a valid sign in the eyes of the Church and the whole world, certain human, ecclesial and spiritual conditions are indispensable: evangelical poverty, brotherhood, spirit of service, joy, hope, contempt of empty honours, constant vigilance and a continual ascetical effort.

D. OTHER PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH CELIBACY

1. Readmission to the ministry. All the Fathers who have spoken about this were against it.

2. Attitude towards laicized priests. Some said this problem required further study. Ex-priests should be treated with greater justice and charity and given the duties and privileges allotted to all the faithful.

Some have asked that the process of laicization should be simplified and made more human. Still others have said that it should be left to the local Bishops.

3. Relationship between local Churches and the Holy See. Regarding celibacy, all the Fathers are of the opinion that this matter should not be left entirely to the Episcopal Conferences.

4. Admitting women to the ministry. A number of Fathers said that this subject required further study. Considering the greater importance that women have assumed in the modern world, would it not be right that even in the Church greater responsibility should be given to them?

5. Catholic Churches of the Eastern Rites. These have their own tradition in this matter, but what the Latin Church has to learn from them is not clear from their own interventions.

E. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The question of celibacy has called attention to other problems.

1. The insistent need to integrate the laity in the total mission of the Church, giving them new tasks perhaps, also of a ministerial nature.

The possibility of diversifying the ministry by introducing new forms. The necessity, however, must be kept in mind of preserving the unity of all the ministries in the Church and the relationship between the ministry and its various functions (prophetic, cultic, and pastoral).

3. A new form of presence in the world requires that the apostolic ministry be impregnated with greater missionary spirit, more flexibility, more availability and greater freedom. Celibacy should be seen in this context. This will be helped by certain conditions of ecclesial and individual life—an evangelical way of exercising authority in the Church, fraternal relations with the Bishop, corresponsibility, real integration of every priest in the work of the presbyterium, and an ascetical and spiritual life.

4. The relations between the missionary-prophetic dimension and the cultic-sacramental dimension of the priest, i.e., the proclamation of the Word of God in all its forms and the celebration of the Sacraments. While it is said that the identity crisis of the priest is due to having reduced him simply to the cultic activity, it would be contradictory to devise new form of sacerdotal life which, because of a civil profession or the duties of marriage, would confine the priest to the Eucharistic celebration and the administration of the Sacraments. Such a type of priesthood would in no way be an answer to the mission of the Church, and to evangelization in the circumstances of today.

5. Consideration must be given to the reform of ecclesiastical structures in order to integrate the Church better in the world of today. History has shown that to every new type of society a corresponding new form of ministry should be devised.

F. ECONOMIC COMPENSATION

This has been dealt with only in passing. In general, one cannot complain about the economic situation of priests. Some, however, have alluded to the difficulties under which the missions labor, sometimes to the extent of harming vocations. Some attach great importance to the economic problem, but said that it could be faced without excessive preoccupation.

A further study of the matter is desirable. There should be a reform of the present structures, keeping in mind the different conditions from place to place and leaving the matter to the study and decision of the Episcopal Conferences.

These should be the guiding principles.

1. A sufficient compensation is required by justice.
2. There should be a fund providing social security.
3. There should be more balanced compensation.

The majority of the Fathers mentioned the problem of the relationship between the support of the clergy and the funds that come from the administration of the cult. Some feel that the present practice of stole fees is legitimate, while others feel it is scandalous and ask for radical reforms. Some consider that such reforms would endanger the life of the dioceses.

Some have seen a solution to these difficulties in priests taking up civil profession. Others thought that these would sap the energies of the ministerial priesthood, foster materialism and deprive others of their jobs.

Many Fathers have called attention to the relationship of this problem to the spirit of poverty and evangelical witness.

Some feel that the economic organization of dioceses belongs to the priests' councils. Others think that the laity should handle this.

Some have stressed that even in mission countries, the People of God should shoulder the responsibility of providing for the needs of the Church. Some mentioned the need of keeping a budget showing credits and deficits.

G. PREPARATION FOR THE MINISTRY

Referring to the problem of celibacy, many Fathers have stressed the importance of seeing it as a witness of unconditioned dedication to Christ to meet the needs of the modern world.

In continuation, Cardinal Tarancon proposed the following points to be studied by the language groups:

1. Evangelization and Sacraments
2. Pastoral Ministry and Secular Activities

3. Corresponsibility in Pastoral Action
 - A. Relation between Bishops and Priests
 - B. Relations between Priests and Laity
4. Priestly Celibacy
 - A. Celibacy
 - B. Ordination of Married Men
5. Spiritual Life of Pastors
6. Financial Compensations of Priests
7. Preparation for the Priesthood Today

FINAL VOTING ON THE MINISTERIAL PRIESTHOOD

After the debates, a Synodal document was drafted and voted on before submission to the Holy Father. The following is the result of the votation.

	Placet	Non Placet	Placet iuxta modum	Abstentions
1st Vote:				
Introduction	190	7	—	1

POINTS OF DOCTRINE

2nd Vote:				
“Christus Alpha et Omega”	138	2	58	4
3rd Vote: n. 2				
“Ecclesia a Christo per Apostolos”	148	5	45	4
4th Vote: n. 3				
“Ministerii hierarchici origo et oratio	182	14	—	2
5th Vote: n. 4				
“Permanentia sacerdotii”	137	1	60	4
6th Vote: n. 5				
“In se-vitium communionis”	167	—	30	5
7th Vote: n. 6				
“Sacerdotes et res temporales”	151	5	39	7

PRESBYTERII IN MISSIONE CHRISTI ET ECCLESIAE

8th Vote: n. 1				
“Missio, evangelizatio et vita sacerdotalis”	182	12	—	4
9th Vote: n. 2				
“Operositates profanae et politicae”, (par. a)	149	1	47	5
10th Vote: n. 2				
“Operositates profanae et politicae”, (par. b)	143	1	51	7
11th Vote: n. 3				
“Vita spiritualis presbyterorum” ...	136	3	61	2

12th Vote: n. 4				
"Coelibatus"	169	22	—	7
13th Vote: n. 5				
"Lex coelibatus sacerdotalis in Ecclesia latina vigens in- tegre servari debet"	168	10	21	3
14th Vote: n. 6				
"Priestly ordination of married men"				

FORMULA A:

"Without prejudice to the right of the Supreme Pontiff, the priestly ordination of married men is not admitted, not even in particular cases"	107	—	—	
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FORMULA B:

"It pertains to the Supreme Pontiff alone, in particular cases, to permit for reasons of pastoral necessity, and 'bearing in mind the good of the universal Church' the priestly ordination of married men, of mature age, and of ap- proved moral character	87	—	—	
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PRESBYTERII
IN COMMUNIONE ECCLESIAE

On this ballot, there were two ab-
stentions and two invalid votes)

15th Vote: n. 1				
"Relationes inter presbyteros et episcopum"	144	3	51	4
16th Vote: n. 2				
"Relationes presbyterorum inter se"	179	2	17	4
17th Vote: n. 3				
Relationes inter presbyteros et laicos"	170	4	24	4
18th Vote: n. 4				
"Ratio economica"	166	3	27	6
19th Vote:				
Conclusion	168	11	14	9

POPE PAUL'S CLOSING ADDRESS

The Holy Father concluded the work of the Synod on the morning of Nov. 6. Responding to the speech of President Delegate Cardinal Duval, the Pope said in part:

You very rightly considered with thoroughness the part to be played by priests in the apostolic office of the episcopal body, and the true nature of the ministerial priesthood, when you

devoted special attention to the preaching of the Gospel, whereby the priest proclaims the Saviour of the world to the men of our age.

It follows from your discussions that the bishops of the entire Catholic world wish to retain intact that absolute gift by which the priest is dedicated to God; and a not unimportant part of that gift — in the Latin Church — is sacred celibacy.

The Fathers of this Synod therefore, making use also of the experience in this matter which has been gained since the Second Vatican Council, have decisively affirmed the doctrine of the same Council, which taught: "Celibacy accords with the priesthood on many scores". Through celibacy," observed for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven, priests are consecrated to Christ in a new and eminent way. They more easily hold fast to him with undivided heart.

"They more freely devote themselves in him and through him to the service of God and man. They more readily minister to his Kingdom and to the work of heavenly regeneration, and thus become more apt to exercise fatherhood in Christ, and do so to a greater extent" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 16).

We therefore confirm these sentiments of the Synod: exception being made of the discipline of the venerable Eastern Churches, which are ever dear to us. In stating this, *we turn our thoughts to all the priests whom this matter concerns. How many of them are striving to serve the Lord with unshaken fidelity and to obtain the salvation of souls, even in the midst of great difficulties! How many of them, working in obscurity and bearing sorrows and insults, are devoting the whole of their energies to the Church! It is indeed proper, at the close of this Synod, to sing the praises of so many true priests. Let each and every one of them know that the Pope is by their side, that he loves them with sincere affection and that he prays for them.*

We are confident therefore that priests, being guided by a supernatural outlook and receptive to the Church's voice, will enthusiastically stand firm on the glorious path which through their divine vocation they freely chose. We greet them all from our heart.

THE SYNODAL DOCUMENT ON THE MINISTERIAL PRIESTHOOD

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, especially since the close of the Second Vatican Council, the Church is experiencing a profound movement of renewal, which all Christians should follow with great joy and with fidelity to the Gospel. The power of the Holy Spirit is present to illumine, strengthen and perfect our mission.

Every true renewal brings the Church undoubted benefits of great value. We well know that through the recent Council priests have been fired with new zeal and that they have contributed much to fostering this renewal by their daily solicitude. We have before our minds our many heroic brothers who, in fidelity to their ministry, live lives dedicated to God with joy, either among the people where the Church is subjected to a harsh yoke or in mission lands. At the same time, however, the renewal also entails difficulties, which are especially felt by all in the priesthood, whether bishops or priests.

We should all scrutinize the signs of the times in this age of renewal and interpret them in the light of the Gospel (cf. GS 4), in order that we may work together in distinguishing between spirits, to see if they come from God, lest ambiguity cloud the unity of the Church's mission or excessive uniformity hinder needed adaptation. Thus, by testing everything and holding fast to what is good, the present crisis can give occasion for an increase of faith.

In accordance with its importance, the Holy Father put forward the ministerial priesthood for discussion by this year's Synod. Before the Synod many episcopal conferences examined this theme together with priests and quite frequently with lay people. Some priests were also called to the Synod as "auditores", to assist the bishops in dealing with important questions.

We wish to fulfill our duty with the evangelical simplicity which befits pastors who are serving the Church. Considering our responsibility before the fraternal community of the Church, **we desire to strengthen the faith, uplift the hope and stimulate the love both of our brothers in the ministerial priesthood and of all the faithful.** May our words bring solace to the People of God and the priests dedicated to their service and renew their joy!

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION

1. The extent of the Church's mission was illustrated at length by the Second Vatican Council. Indeed, the Church's relationship with the world was the subject especially of the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes*. Many good results followed from a closer consideration of this matter: **it is more clearly seen that salvation is not an abstract category outside, as it were, of history and time, but that it comes from God and ought to permeate the whole of man and the whole history of men and lead them freely to the Kingdom of God, so that at last "God may be all in all" (1 Cor 15:28).**

However, as is understandable, difficulties have also arisen: some priests feel themselves estranged from the movements which permeate society and unable to solve the problems which touch men deeply. Often too the problems and troubles of priests derive from their having, in their pastoral and missionary care,

to use methods which are now perhaps obsolete to meet the modern mentality. Serious problems and several questions then arise, especially from real difficulties which they experience in exercising their function and not — although this is sometimes the case — from an exasperated spirit of protest or from selfish personal concerns. **Is it possible to exhort the laity as if from the outside? Is the Church sufficiently present to certain groups without the active presence of the priest? Is the situation of the layman better? What is to be thought of the celibacy of Latin-rite priests in present-day circumstances, and of the personal spiritual life of the priest immersed in the world?**

2. Many priests, experiencing within themselves the questionings that have arisen with the secularization of the world, feel the need to sanctify worldly activities by exercising them directly and bring the leaven of the Gospel into the midst of events. Similarly, the desire is developing of cooperating with the joint efforts of men to build up a more just and fraternal society. In a world in which almost all problems have political aspects, participation in politics and even in revolutionary activity is by some considered indispensable.

3. The Council emphasized the pre-eminence of the proclamation of the Gospel, which should lead through faith to the fullness of the celebration of the sacraments. But current thinking about the religious phenomenon fosters doubts in many minds concerning the sense of a sacramental and cultic ministry. Many priests not suffering from a personal identity crisis ask themselves another question: **What methods should be used so that sacramental practice may be an expression of faith really affecting the whole of personal and social life, in order that Christian worship should not be wrongly reduced to a mere external ritualism?**

Since priests are very concerned with the image of herself that the Church seems to present to the world, and at the same time are deeply conscious of the singular dignity of the human person, they desire to bring about a change within the Church herself in inter-personal relationships, in relations between persons and institutions, and in the very structures of authority.

4. And still, relationships between bishops and priests and between priests themselves are growing more difficult by the very fact that the exercise of the ministry is becoming more diversified. Present-day society is divided into many groups with different disciplines, which call for differing skills and

forms of apostolate. This gives rise to problems concerning brotherhood, union and consistency in the priestly ministry.

Happily the recent Council recalled the traditional and fruitful teaching on the common priesthood of the faithful (cf. LG 10). That, however, gives rise, as by a swing of the pendulum, to certain questions which seem to obscure the position of the priestly ministry in the Church and which deeply trouble the minds of some priests and faithful. Many activities which in the past were reserved to priests — for instance, catechetical work, administrative activity in the communities, and even liturgical activities — are today quite frequently carried out by lay people, while on the other hand many priests, for reasons already mentioned, are trying to involve themselves in the condition of life of lay persons. Hence a number of questions are being asked: Does the priestly ministry have any specific nature? Is this ministry necessary? Is the priesthood incapable of being lost? What does being a priest mean today? Would it not be enough to have for the service of the Christian communities presidents designated for the preservation of the common good, without sacramental ordination, and exercising their office for a fixed period?

5. Still more serious questions are posed, some of them as a result of exegetical and historical research, which show a crisis of confidence in the Church: Is the present-day Church too far removed from its origins to be able to proclaim the ancient Gospel credibly to modern man? Is it still possible to reach the reality of Christ after so many critical investigations? Are the essential structures of the early Church well enough known to us that they can and must be considered an invariable scheme for every age, including our own?

6. The above-mentioned questions, some of them new, others already long familiar but appearing in new forms today, cannot be understood outside of the whole context of modern culture, which has strong doubts about its meaning and value. New means of technology have stirred up a hope based excessively on enthusiasm and at the same time they have aroused profound anxiety. One rightly asks whether man will be capable of being master of his work and directing it towards progress.

Some, especially the young, despair of the meaning of this world and look for salvation in purely meditative systems and in artificial marginal paradises, abandoning the common striving of mankind.

Others dedicate themselves with ardent utopian hope devoid of reference to God to the attainment of some state of total liberation, and transfer the meaning of their whole personal lives from the present to the future.

There is therefore a profound cleavage between action and contemplation, work and recreation, culture and religion, and between the immanent and the transcendent aspects of human life.

Thus the world itself is obscurely awaiting a solution to this dilemma and is paving a way whereby the Church may go forward proclaiming the Gospel. Certainly, the only complete salvation offered to men is Christ himself, Son of God and Son of Man, who makes himself present in history through the Church. He joins inseparably together love for God and the love which God has until the end for men as they seek their way amid the shadows, and the value of human love whereby a man gives his life for his friends. In Christ, and only in him, do all of these become one whole, and in this synthesis the meaning of human life, both individual and social, shines forth. **The mission of the Church, Christ's Body, far from being obsolete, is therefore rather of the highest relevance for the present and the future: the whole Church is the witness and effective sign of this union, especially through the priestly ministry. The minister's proper task in the Church's midst is to render present, by the word and sacrament, the love of God in Christ for us, and at the same time to promote the fellowship of men with God and with each other. All this of course demands that we should all, especially those who perform the sacred office, strive to renew ourselves daily in accordance with the Gospel.**

7. We know that there are some parts of the world in which that profound cultural change has hitherto been less felt, and that the questions raised above are not being asked everywhere, nor by all priests, nor in the same way. But since communications between men and peoples have today become more frequent and more speedy, we judge it good and opportune to examine these questions in the light of faith and to give humbly but in the strength of the Holy Spirit some principles for finding more concrete answers to them. Although this response must be applied differently according to the circumstances of each region, it will have the force of truth for all those faithful and priests who live in situations of greater tranquillity. **Therefore, ardently desiring to strengthen the witness of faith, we frater-**

nally urge all the faithful to strive to contemplate the Lord Jesus living in his Church, and to realize that he wishes to work in a special way through his ministers; they will thus be convinced that the Christian community cannot fulfill its complete mission without the ministerial priesthood. Let priests be aware that their anxieties are truly shared by the bishops, and that the bishops desire to share them still more.

Moved by this desire, the Synod Fathers, in the spirit of the Gospel, following closely the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, and considering also the documents and addresses of the Supreme Pontiff Paul VI, intend to set forth briefly some principles of the Church's teaching on the ministerial priesthood which are at present more urgent, together with some guidelines for pastoral practice.

PART ONE

PRINCIPLES OF DOCTRINE

1. CHRIST, ALPHA AND OMEGA

Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Word, "whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world" (Jn. 10:38), and who was marked with the seal of the fullness of the Holy Spirit (cf. Lk 4:1, 18-21; Ac 10:38), proclaimed to the world the Good News of reconciliation between God and Men. His preaching as a prophet, confirmed by signs, reaches its summit in the paschal mystery, the supreme word of the divine love with which the Father addressed us. On the cross Jesus showed himself to the greatest possible extent to be the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep in order to gather them into that unity which depends on himself (cf. Jn. 10:1ff.; 11:52). Exercising a supreme and unique priesthood by the offering of himself, he surpassed, by fulfilling them, all the ritual priesthoods and holocausts of the Old Testament and indeed of the pagans. In his sacrifice he took on himself the miseries and sacrifices of men of every age and also the efforts of those who suffer for the cause of justice or who are daily oppressed by misfortune. He took on himself the endeavours of those who abandon the world and attempt to reach God by asceticism and contemplation as well as the labours of those who sincerely devote their lives

to a better present and future society. He bore the sins of us all on the cross; rising from the dead and being made Lord (cf. Phil. 2:9-11), he reconciled us to God; and he laid the foundation of the people of the New Covenant, which is the Church.

He is the "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5), "for in him were created all things" (Col 1:16; cf. Jn 1:3ff.) and everything is brought together under him, as head (cf. Eph 1:10). Since he is the image of the Father and manifestation of the unseen God (cf. Col 1:15), by emptying himself and by being raised up he brought us into the fellowship of the Holy Spirit which he lives with the Father.

When therefore we speak of the priesthood of Christ, we should have before our eyes a unique, incomparable reality, which includes the prophetic and royal office of the Incarnate Word of God.

So Jesus Christ signifies and manifests in many ways the presence and effectiveness of the anticipatory love of God. The Lord himself, constantly influencing the Church by his Spirit, stirs up and fosters the response of all those who offer themselves to this freely given love.

2. COMING TO CHRIST, IN THE CHURCH

The way to the person and mystery of Christ lies ever open in the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures understood in the living tradition of the Church. All the Scriptures, especially those of the New Testament, must be interpreted as intimately inter-linked and inter-related by their single inspiration. The books of the New Testament are not of such differing value that some of them can be reduced to mere late inventions.

A personal and immediate relationship with Christ in the Church should still for the faithful of today sustain their whole spiritual lives.

3. THE CHURCH FROM CHRIST THROUGH THE APOSTLES

The Church which he had declared would be built on Peter, Christ founded on the Apostles (cf. LG 18). In them are already manifested two aspects of the Church: in the Group of

the Twelve Apostles there are already both fellowship in the Spirit and the origin of the hierarchical ministry (cf. AG 5). For that reason, the New Testament writings speak of the Church as founded on the Apostles (cf. Rev. 21:14; Mt 16:18). This was concisely expressed by ancient tradition: "The Church from the Apostles, the Apostles from the Christ, Christ from God".¹

The Church, which was founded on the Apostles and sent into the world and is a pilgrim there, was established to be a sacrament of the salvation which came to us from God in Christ. In her, Christ is present and operative for the world as a Saviour, so that the love offered by God to men and their response meet. The Holy Spirit stirs up in and through the Church impulses of generous free will by which man participates in the very work of creation and redemption.

4. THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF HIERARCHICAL MINISTRY

The Church, which through the gift of the Spirit is made up organically, participates in different ways in the functions of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King, in order to carry out her mission of salvation in his name and by his power, as a priestly people (cf. LG 10).

It is clear from the New Testament writings that an Apostle and a community of faithful united with one another by a mutual link under Christ as head and the influence of his Spirit belong to the original inalienable structure of the Church. The Twelve Apostles exercised their mission and functions, and "they not only had helpers in their ministry (cf. Ac 6:2-6; 11:30; 13:1; 14:23; 24:17; 1 Th 5:12-13; Phil 1:1; Col 4:11 and passim), but also, in order that the mission assigned to them might continue after their death, they passed on to their immediate cooperators, as a kind of testament, the duty of perfecting and consolidating the work begun by themselves (Ac 20:5-27; 2 Tim 4:6 taken together with 1 Tim 5:22; 2 Tim 2:2; Tit 1: 5; Saint Clement of Rome to the Corinthians 44:3), charging them to attend to the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit placed them to shepherd the Church of God (cf. Ac 20:28). They appointed such men,

¹ Tertulian, *De Praescr. Haer.* XXI, 4; cf. also I Letter of Clement *Ad Cor.* XLII, 1-4; Ignatius of Antioch *Act Magn.* VI and passim; Irenaeus *Adv. Haer.* 4, 21, 3; Origen *De Princip.* IV, 2, 1; Serapion, Bishop of Antioch, in Eusebius *Hist. Eccl.* VI, 12.

and made provision that, when these men should die, other approved men would take up their ministry (cf. Saint Clement of Rome to the Corinthians 44:2) (LG 20).

The letters of Saint Paul show that he was conscious of acting by Christ's mission and mandate (cf. 2 Cor. 5:18ff.). **The powers entrusted to the Apostle for the Churches were handed on to others insofar as they were communicable (cf. 2 Tim 1:6), and these others were obliged to hand them on to yet others (cf. Tit 1:5).**

This essential structure of the Church — consisting of a flock and of pastors appointed for this purpose (cf. 1 Pt 5:14) — according to the Tradition of the Church herself was always and remains the norm. Precisely as a result of this structure, the Church can never remain closed in on herself and is always subject to Christ as her origin and head.

Among the various charisms and services, the priestly ministry of the New Testament, which continues Christ's function as mediator, and which in essence and not merely in degree is distinct from the common priesthood of all the faithful (cf. LG 10), alone perpetuates the essential work of the Apostles: by effectively proclaiming the Gospel, by gathering together and leading the community, by remitting sins, and especially by celebrating the Eucharist, it makes Christ, the head of the community, present in the exercise of his work of redeeming mankind and glorifying God perfectly.

Bishops and, on a subordinate level, priests, by virtue of the sacrament of Orders, which confers an anointing of the Holy Spirit and configures to Christ (cf. PO 2), become sharers in the functions of sanctifying, teaching and governing, and the exercise of these functions is determined more precisely by hierarchical communion (cf. LG 24-27-28).

The priest is a sign of the divine anticipatory plan proclaimed and effective today in the Church. He makes Christ, the Saviour of all men, sacramentally present among his brothers and sisters, in both their personal and social lives. He is a guarantor both of the first proclamation of the Gospel for the gathering together of the Church and of the ceaseless renewal of the Church which has already been gathered together. If the Church lacks the presence and activity of the ministry which is the laying on of hands with prayer, she cannot have full certainty of her fidelity and of her visible continuity.

5. PERMANENCE OF THE PRIESTHOOD

By the laying on of hands there is communicated a gift of the Holy Spirit which cannot be lost (cf. 2 Tim 1:6). This reality configures the ordained minister to Christ the Priest, consecrates him (cf. PO 2) and makes him a sharer in Christ's mission under its two aspects of authority and service.

That authority does not belong to the Minister as his own: it is a manifestation of the "exousia" (i.e. the power) of the Lord, by which the priest is an ambassador of Christ in the eschatological work of reconciliation (cf. 2 Cor 5:18-20). He also assists the conversion of human freedom to God for the building up of the Christian community.

The lifelong permanence of this reality, which is a sign, and which is a teaching of the faith and is referred to in the Church's tradition as the **priestly character**, expresses the fact that Christ associated the Church with himself in an irrevocable way for the salvation of the world, and that the Church dedicates herself to Christ in a definitive way for the carrying out of his work. The minister whose life bears the seal of the gift received through the sacrament of Orders reminds the Church that the gift of God is irrevocable. In the midst of the Christian community which, in spite of its defects, lives by the Spirit, he is a pledge of the salvific presence of Christ.

This special participation in Christ's priesthood does not disappear even if a priest for ecclesial or personal reasons is dispensed or removed from the exercise of his ministry.

6. FOR THE SERVICE OF FELLOWSHIP

Even if he exercises his ministry in a determined community the priest nevertheless cannot be exclusively devoted to a particular group of faithful. His ministry always tends towards the unity of the whole Church and to the gathering together in her of all men. Each individual community of faithful needs fellowship with the bishop and the universal Church. In this way the priestly ministry too is essentially communitarian within the presbyterium and with the bishop who, preserving communion with the Successor of Peter, is a part of the body of bishops.

This holds also for priests who are not in the immediate service of any community or who work in remote and isolated territories. Religious priests also, within the context of the special purpose and structure of their institute, are indissolubly part of a mission which is ecclesially ordered.

Let the whole life and activity of the priest be imbued with a spirit of catholicity, that is, with a sense of the universal mission of the Church, so that he will willingly recognize all the gifts of the Spirit, give them freedom and direct them towards the common good.

Let priests follow Christ's example and cultivate with the bishop and with each other that brotherhood which is founded on their ordination and the oneness of their mission so that priestly witness may be more credible.

7. THE PRIEST AND TEMPORAL MATTERS

All truly Christian undertakings are related to the salvation of mankind, which, while it is of an eschatological nature, also embraces temporal matters. Every reality of this world must be subjected to the lordship of Christ. This however does not mean that the Church claims technical competence in the secular order, with disregard for the latter's autonomy.

The proper mission entrusted by Christ to the priest, as to the Church, is not of the political, economic or social order, but of the religious order (cf. GE 42); yet, in the pursuit of his ministry, the priest can contribute greatly to the establishment of a more just secular order, especially in places where the human problems of injustice and oppression are more serious. He must always, however, preserve ecclesial communion and reject violence in words or deeds as not being in accordance with the Gospel.

In fact, the word of the Gospel which he proclaims in the name of Christ and the Church, and the effective grace of sacramental life which he administers should free man from his personal and social egoism and foster among men conditions of justice, which would be a sign of the love of Christ present among us (cf. GS 58).

GUIDELINES FOR THE PRIESTLY LIFE AND MINISTRY

Guidelines for the Priestly Life and Ministry

Considering the priestly mission in the light of the ministry of Christ and the communion of the Church, the Fathers of this Synod, united with the Roman Pontiff and conscious of the anxieties which bishops and priests are expressing in the fulfilment of their common role today, present the following guidelines to clarify certain questions and to give encouragement.

I. PRIESTS IN THE MISSION OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

1. Mission: Evangelization and Sacramental Life

a) "By their vocation and ordination, the priests of the New Testament are indeed set apart in a certain sense within the midst of God's people. **But this is so, not that they may be made distant from this people or from any man, but that they be totally dedicated to the work for which the Lord has raised them up**" (PO 3). Priests thus find their identity to the extent that they fully live the mission of the Church and exercise it in different ways in communion with the entire People of God, as pastors and ministers of the Lord in the Spirit, in order to fulfil by their work the plan of salvation in history. "By means of their own ministry, which deals principally with the Eucharist as the source of perfecting the Church, priests are in communion with Christ the Head and are leading others to this communion. Hence they cannot help realizing how much is yet wanting to the fullness of that Body, and how much therefore must be done if it is to grow from day to day" (AG 39).

b) Priests are sent to all men and their mission must begin with the preaching of God's Word. "Priests have as their duty the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ to all... For through the saving Word the spark of faith is struck in the hearts of unbelievers and fed in the hearts of the faithful" (PO 4). The goal of evangelization is "that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his Church, to take part in her sacrifice and to eat the Lord's supper" (SC 10). **The ministry of the Word, if rightly**

understood, leads to the sacraments and to the Christian life, as it is practised in the visible community of the Church and in the world.

The sacraments are celebrated in conjunction with the proclamation of the Word of God and thus develop faith by strengthening it with grace. They cannot be considered of slight importance, since through them the word is brought to fuller effect, namely communion in the mystery of Christ.

Let priests then perform their ministry in such a way that the faithful will "have recourse with great eagerness to the sacraments which were instituted to nourish the Christian life" (SC 59).

An enduring evangelization and a well-ordered sacramental life of the community demand, by their nature, a **diaconia** of authority, that is, a **serving of unity and a presiding over charity**. Thus the mutual relationship between evangelization and the celebration of the sacraments is clearly seen in the mission of the Church. A separation between the two would divide the heart of the Church to the point of imperilling the faith, and the priest, who is dedicated to the service of unity in the community, would be gravely distorting his ministry.

Unity between evangelization and sacramental life is always proper to the ministerial priesthood and must carefully be kept in mind by every priest. And yet the application of this principle to the life and ministry of individual priests must be made with discretion, for the exercise of the priestly ministry often in practice needs to take different forms in order better to meet special or new situations in which the Gospel is to be proclaimed.

c) Although the pedagogy of faith demands that man be gradually initiated into the Christian life, the Church must nevertheless always proclaim to the world the Gospel in its entirety. Each shares in the special responsibility of preaching the whole of the Word of God and of interpreting it according to the faith of the Church.

The proclamation of the Word of God is the announcement in the power of the Spirit, of the wonders performed by God and the calling of men to share the paschal mystery and to introduce it as a leaven into concrete human history. It is the action of God in which the power of the Holy Spirit brings the Church together interiorly and exteriorly. The minister of the word

by evangelization prepares the ways of the Lord with great patience and faith, conforming himself to the various conditions of individuals' and peoples' lives, which are evolving more or less rapidly.

Impelled by the need to keep in view both the personal and social aspects of the announcement of the Gospel, so that in it an answer may be given to all the more fundamental questions of men (cf. CD 13), the Church not only preaches conversion to God to individual men, but also, to the best of her ability, as the conscience of humanity, she addresses society itself and performs a prophetic function in society's regard, always taking pains to effect her own renewal.

As regards the experiences of life, whether of men in general or of priests, which must be kept in mind and always interpreted in the light of the Gospel, these experiences cannot be either the sole or the principal norm of preaching.

d) Salvation, which is effected through the sacraments, does not come from us but from God; this demonstrates the primacy of action of Christ, the one priest and mediator, in his body, which is the Church.

Since the sacraments are truly sacraments of faith (cf. SC 59) they require conscious and free participation by every Christian who has the use of reason. This makes clear the great importance of preparation and of a disposition of faith on the part of the person who receives the sacraments; it also makes clear the necessity for a witness of faith on the part of the minister in his entire life and especially in the way he values and celebrates the sacraments themselves.

To bishops and, in the cases foreseen by law, to episcopal conferences is committed the role of authentically promoting, in accordance with the norms given by the Holy See, pastoral activity and liturgical renewal better adapted to each region, and also of determining the criteria for admission to the sacraments. These criteria, which must be applied by priests, are likewise to be explained to the faithful, so that a person who asks for a sacrament may become more aware of his own responsibility.

Let priests, with consciousness of their office of reconciling all men in the love of Christ and with attention to the dangers of divisions, strive with great prudence and pastoral charity to form communities which are imbued with apostolic zeal and which

will make the Church's missionary spirit present everywhere. Small communities, which are not opposed to the parish or diocesan structure, ought to be inserted into the parochial or diocesan community in such a way that they may serve it as a haven of missionary spirit. The need to find apt forms of effectively bringing the Gospel message to all men, who live in differing circumstances, furnishes a place for the multiple exercise of ministries lower than the priesthood.

2. Secular And Political Activity

a) The priestly ministry, even if compared with other activities, not only is to be considered as a fully valid human activity but indeed as **more excellent than other activities, though this great value can be fully understood only in the light of faith.** Thus, as a general rule, **the priestly ministry shall be a full-time occupation.** Sharing in the secular activities of men is by no means to be considered the principal end nor can such participation suffice to give expression to priests' specific responsibility. Priests, without being of the world and without taking it as their model, must nevertheless live in the world (cf. PO 3, 17; Jn 17:14-16), as witness and stewards of another life (cf. PO 3).

In order to determine in concrete circumstances whether secular activity is in accord with the priestly ministry, inquiry should be made whether and in what way those duties and activities serve the mission of the Church, those who have not yet received the Gospel message and finally the Christian community. This is to be judged by the local bishop with his presbyterium, and if necessary in consultation with the episcopal conference.

When activities of this sort, which ordinarily pertain to the laity, are as it were demanded by the priest's very mission to evangelize, they must be harmonized with his other ministerial activities, in those circumstances where they can be considered as necessary forms of true ministry (cf. PO 8).

b) Together with the entire Church, priests are obliged, to the utmost of their ability, to select a **definite pattern of action, when it is question of the defense of fundamental human rights, the promotion of the full development of persons and the pursuit of the cause of peace and justice;** the means must indeed always be consonant with the Gospel. These principles are all valid

not only in the individual sphere, but also in the social field; in this regard priests should help the laity to devote themselves to forming their consciences rightly.

In circumstances in which there legitimately exist different political, social and economic options, priests like all citizens have a right to select their personal options. But since political options are by nature contingent and never in an entirely adequate and perennial way interpret the Gospel, **the priest, who is the witness of things to come, must keep a certain distance from any political office or involvement.**

In order that he may remain a valid sign of unity and be able to preach the Gospel in its entirety, the priest can sometimes be obliged to abstain from the exercise of his own right in this matter. Moreover, care must be taken lest his option appear to Christians to be the only legitimate one or become a cause of division among the faithful. Let priests be mindful of the laity's maturity, which is to be valued highly when it is a question of their specific role.

Leadership or active militancy on behalf of any political party is to be excluded by every priest unless, in concrete and exceptional circumstances, this is truly required by the good of the community, and receives the consent of the bishop after consultation with the priests' council and, if circumstances call for it, with the episcopal conference.

The priority of the specific mission which pervades the entire priestly existence must therefore always be kept in mind so that, with great confidence, and having a renewed experience of the things of God, priests may be able to announce these things efficaciously and with joy to the men who await them.

3. The Spiritual Life Of Priests

Every priest will find in his very vocation and ministry the deep motivation for living his entire life in oneness and strength of spirit. Called like the rest of those who have been baptized to become a true image of Christ (cf. **Rom 8:29**), the priest, like the Apostles, shares besides in a special way companionship with Christ and his mission as the Supreme Pastor: "And he appoint-

ed twelve; they were to be his companions and to be sent out to preach" (Mk 3:14). Therefore in the priestly life there can be no dichotomy between love for Christ and zeal for souls.

Just as Christ, anointed by the Holy spirit, was impelled by his deep love for his Father to give his life for men, so the priest, consecrated by the Holy Spirit, and in a special way made like to Christ the Priest, dedicates himself to the work of the Father performed through the Son. **Thus the whole rule for the priest's life is expressed in the words of Jesus: "And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth" (Jn. 17:19).**

Following the example of Christ who was continually in prayer, and led by the Holy Spirit in whom we cry, "Abba, Father", priests should give themselves to the **contemplation of the Word of God** and daily take the opportunity to examine the events of life in the light of the Gospel, so that having become faithful and attentive hearers of the Word they may become true ministers of the Word. **Let them be assiduous in personal prayer, in the Liturgy of the Hours, in frequent reception of the sacrament of penance and especially in devotion to the mystery of the Eucharist.** Even if the Eucharist should be celebrated without participation by the faithful, it nevertheless remains the centre of the life on the entire Church and the heart of priestly existence.

With his mind raised to heaven and sharing in the communion of saints, **the priest should very often turn to Mary the Mother of God, who received the Word of God with perfect faith, and daily ask her for the grace of conforming himself to her Son.**

The activities of the apostolate for their part furnish an indispensable nourishment for fostering the spiritual life of the priest: "By assuming the role of the Good Shepherd, they will find precisely in the pastoral exercise of love the bond of priestly perfection which will unify their lives and activities" (PO 14). In the exercise of his ministry the priest is enlightened and strengthened by the action of the Church and the example of the faithful. The renunciations imposed by the pastoral life itself help him to acquire an ever greater sharing in Christ's Cross and hence a purer pastoral charity.

This same charity of priests will also cause them to adapt their spiritual lives to the modes and forms of sanctification

which are more suitable and fitting for the men of their own times and culture. Desiring to be all things to all men, to save all (cf. 1 Cor 9:22), the priest should be attentive to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in these days. Thus he will announce the Word of God not only by human means but he will be taken as a valid instrument by the Word himself, whose message is "living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb 4:12).

4. Celibacy

a) the basis for celibacy.

Celibacy for priests is in full harmony with the vocation to the apostolic following of Christ and also with the unconditional response of the person who is called and who undertakes pastoral service. Through celibacy, the priest, following his Lord, shows in a fuller way his availability, and embarking upon the way of the Cross with paschal joy he ardently desires to be consumed in an offering which can be compared to the Eucharist.

If celibacy is lived in the spirit of the Gospel, in prayer and vigilance, with poverty, joy, contempt of honours, and brotherly love, it is a sign which cannot long be hidden, but which effectively proclaims Christ to modern men also. For words today are scarcely heeded, but the witness of a life which displays the radical character of the Gospel has the power of exercising a strong attraction.

b) convergence of motives.

Celibacy, as a personal option for some more important good, even a merely natural one, can promote the full maturity and integration of the human personality. This is all the more true in regard to celibacy undertaken for the Kingdom of heaven, as is evident in the lives of so many saints and of the faithful who, living the celibate life, dedicated themselves totally to promoting human and Christian progress for the sake of God and men.

Within modern culture, in which spiritual values are to a great extent obscured, the celibate priest indicates the presence of the Absolute God, who invites us to be renewed in his image. Where the value of sexuality is so exaggerated that genuine love is forgotten, celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom of Christ calls men back to the sublimity of faithful love and reveals the ultimate meaning of life.

Furthermore, one rightly speaks of the value of celibacy as an eschatological sign. By transcending every contingent human value, the celibate priest associates himself in a special way with Christ as the final and absolute good and shows forth, in anticipation, the freedom of the children of God. While the value of the sign and holiness of Christian marriage is fully recognized, celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom nevertheless more clearly displays that spiritual fruitfulness or generative power of the New Law by which the apostle knows that in Christ he is the father and mother of his communities.

From this special way of following Christ, the priest draws greater strength and power for the building up of the Church; and this power can be preserved and increased only by an intimate and permanent union with Christ's Spirit. The faithful people of God wish to see in their pastors this union with Christ, and they are able to recognize it.

Through celibacy, priests are more easily able to serve God with undivided heart and spend themselves for their sheep, and as a result they are able more fully to be promoters of evangelization and of the Church's unity. For this reason, priests, even if they are fewer in number, but are resplendent with this outstanding witness of life, will enjoy greater apostolic fruitfulness.

Priestly celibacy, furthermore, is not just the witness of one person alone, but by reason of the special fellowship linking members of the presbyterium it also takes on a social character as the witness of the whole priestly order enriching the People of God.

c) celibacy to be kept in the Latin Church.

The traditions of the Eastern Churches shall remain unchanged, as they are now in force in the various territories.

The Church has the right and duty to determine the concrete form of the priestly ministry and therefore **to select more**

suitable candidates, endowed with certain human and supernatural qualities. When the Latin Church demands celibacy as a necessary condition for the priesthood (cf. PO 16), she does not do so out of a belief that this way of life is the only path to attaining sanctification. She does so while carefully considering the concrete form of exercising the ministry in the community for the building up of the Church.

Because of the intimate and multiple coherence between the pastoral function and a celibate life, the existing law is upheld: one who freely wills total availability, the distinctive characteristic of this function, also freely undertakes a celibate life. The candidate should feel this form of living not as having been imposed from outside, but rather as a manifestation of his free self-giving, which is accepted and ratified by the Church through the bishop. In this way the law becomes a protection and safeguard of the freedom wherewith the priest gives himself to Christ, and it becomes "an easy yoke".

d) conditions favouring celibacy.

We know well that in the world of today particular difficulties threaten celibacy from all sides; priests have indeed already repeatedly experienced them in the course of the centuries. But they can overcome these difficulties if suitable conditions are fostered, namely: growth of the interior life through prayer, renunciation and fervent love for God and one's neighbour and by other aids to the spiritual life; human balance through well-ordered integration into the fabric of social relationships; fraternal association and companionship with other priests and with the bishop, through pastoral structures better suited to this purpose and with the assistance also of the community of the faithful.

It must be admitted that celibacy, as a gift of God, cannot be preserved unless the candidate is adequately prepared for it. From the beginning, candidates should give attention to the positive reasons for choosing celibacy, without letting themselves be disturbed by objections, the accumulation and continual pressure of which are rather a sign that the original value of celibacy itself has been called in question. Let them also remember that the power with which God strengthens us is always available for those who strive to serve him faithfully and entirely.

The guiding principle expressed by the Second Vatican Council in the decree **Presbyterorum Ordinis** namely that **the very unity of consecration and mission requires the hierarchical communion of priests with the order of bishops**, is considered fundamental to a practical restoration or renewal, with full confidence, of the mutual relationship between the bishop and the presbyterium over which the bishop presides. This principle is more concretely to be put into practice **especially by the diligence of the bishops**.

The service of authority on the one hand and the exercise of not merely passive obedience on the other should be carried out in a spirit of faith, mutual charity, filial and friendly confidence and constant and patient dialogue. Thus the collaboration and responsible cooperation of priests with the bishop will be sincere, human and at the same time supernatural (cf LG 28; CD 15; PO 7).

Personal freedom, responding to the individual vocation and to the charism received from God, and also the ordered solidarity of all for the service of the community and the good of the mission to be fulfilled are two conditions which should shape the Church's proper mode of pastoral action (cf. PO 7). The guarantee of these conditions is the bishop's authority, to be exercised in a spirit of service.

The **Council of Priests**, which is of its nature something diocesan, is an institutional manifestation of the brotherhood among priests which has its basis in the sacrament of Orders.

The activity of this council cannot be fully shaped by law. Its effectiveness depends especially on a repeated effort to listen to the opinions of all in order to reach a consensus with the bishop, to whom it belongs to make the final decision.

If this is done with the greatest sincerity and humility, and if all onesidedness is overcome, it will be easier to provide properly for the common good.

The Priests' Council is an institution in which priests recognize, at a time when variety in the exercise of their ministry increases every day, that they are mutually complementary in serving one and the same mission of the Church.

It is the task of this Council, among other things, to seek out clear and distinctly defined aims, to suggest priorities, to indicate methods of acting, to assist whatever the Spirit frequently stirs up through individuals or groups, and to foster

A priest who leaves the ministry should receive just and fraternal treatment; even though he can give assistance in the service of the Church, he is not however to be admitted to the exercise of priestly activities.

e) the law of celibacy.

The law of priestly celibacy existing in the Latin Church is to be kept in its entirety.²

f) the ordination of married men.

Two formulas were proposed to the vote of the Fathers:³

Formula A: Excepting always the right of the Supreme Pontiff, the priestly ordination of married men is not permitted, even in particular cases.

Formula B: It belongs solely to the Supreme Pontiff, in particular cases, by reason of pastoral needs and the good of the universal Church to allow the priestly ordination of married men, who are of mature age and proven life.

II. PRIESTS IN THE COMMUNION OF THE CHURCH

1. Relations Between Priests And Bishop

Priests will adhere more faithfully to their mission the more they know and show themselves to be faithful to ecclesial communion. Thus the pastoral ministry, which is exercised by bishops, priests and deacons, is an eminent sign of this ecclesial communion, in that they have received a special mandate to serve this communion.

But in order that this ministry may really become a sign of communion, the actual conditions in which it is exercised must be considered to be of the greatest importance.

² Result of the vote on this proposition: *Placet* 168. *Non placet* 10. *Placet iuxta modum* 21. Abstentions 3.

³ According to the directives of the Presidents the vote was taken not by *Placet* or *Non placet*, but by the choice of the first or second formula. The first formula, A, obtained 107 votes; the second, B, obtained 87. There were 2 abstentions and also 2 null votes.

the spiritual life, whence the necessary unity may more easily be attained.

New forms of hierarchical communion between bishops and priests (cf. PO 7) must be found, to facilitate contacts between local Churches. A search must be made for ways whereby priests may collaborate with bishops in supra-diocesan bodies and enterprises.

The collaboration of religious priests with the bishop in the presbyterium is necessary, though their work is of valuable assistance to the universal Church.

2. Relations Of Priests With Each Other

Since priests are bound together by an intimate sacramental brotherhood and by their mission, and since they work and plan together for the same task, **some community of life or a certain association of life shall be encouraged among them**, and can take various forms, including non-institutional ones. This shall be allowed for by the law itself through opportune norms and by renewed or newly-discovered pastoral structures.

Priestly associations should also be fostered which in a spirit of ecclesial communion and being recognized by the competent ecclesiastical authority, "through an apt and properly approved rule of life and through brotherly assistance" (PO 8), seek to advance the aims which belong to their function and "holiness in the exercise of the ministry" (*ibid*).

It is desirable that, as far as possible, ways be sought, even if they prove rather difficult, whereby associations which perhaps divide the clergy into factions may be brought back to communion and to the ecclesial structure.

There should be greater communication between religious priests and diocesan priests, so that true priestly fraternity may exist between them and that they provide one another with mutual help, especially in spiritual matters.

3. Relations Between Priests And Laity

Let priests remember "confidently to entrust to the laity duties in the service of the Church, allowing them freedom and room for action. In fact, on suitable occasions, they should invite them to undertake works on their own initiative" (PO 9).

The Laity, "likewise sharing their cares, should help their priests by prayer and work to the extent possible, so that their priests can more readily overcome difficulties and be able to fulfil their duties more fruitfully" (*ibid*).

It is necessary to keep always in mind the special character of the Church's communion in order that personal freedom, in accordance with the recognized duties and charisms, of each person, and the unity of life and activity of the People of God may be fittingly combined.

The **pastoral council**, in which specially chosen clergy, religious and lay people take part (cf. CD 27), furnishes by its study and reflection elements necessary for enabling the diocesan community to arrange its pastoral programme organically and to fulfil it effectively.

In proportion as the co-responsibility of bishops and priests daily increases (especially through priests' councils), the more desirable it becomes that a pastoral council be established in each diocese.

4. Economic Affairs

The economic questions of the Church cannot be adequately solved unless they are carefully examined within the context of the communion and mission of the People of God. **All the faithful have the duty of assisting the Church's needs.**

In treating these questions account must be taken not only of solidarity within the local Church, diocese or religious institute, but also of the condition of dioceses of the same region or nation, indeed of the whole world, especially of the Churches in the so-called mission territories, and of other poor regions.

The remuneration of priests, to be determined certainly in a spirit of evangelical poverty, but as far as possible equitable and sufficient, is a duty of justice and ought to include social security. Excessive differences in this matter must be removed, especially among priests of the same diocese or jurisdiction, account also being taken of the average condition of the people of the region.

It seems greatly to be desired that the Christian people be gradually instructed in such a way that priests' incomes may be separated from the acts of their ministry, especially sacramental ones.

CONCLUSION

To priests exercising the ministry of the Spirit (cf 2 Cor. 3:4-12) in the midst of the communion of the entire Church, new ways are open for giving a profoundly renewed witness in today's world.

It is necessary therefore to look to the future with Christian confidence and to ask the Holy Spirit that by his guidance and inspiration doors may be opened to the Gospel, in spite of the dangers which the Church cannot overcome by merely human means.

Having always before our eyes the Apostles, especially Peter and Paul, as the examples for the renewal of the priesthood, we should give thanks to God the Father that he has given us all the opportunity of manifesting more faithfully the countenance of Christ.

Already there are true signs of a rebirth of spiritual life, while men everywhere, amid the uncertainties of modern times, look forward to fullness of life. This renewal certainly cannot take place without a sharing in the Lord's Cross, because the servant is not greater than his master (cf. Jn. 13:16). Forgetting the past let us strive for what is still to come (cf. Phil 3:13).

With real daring we must show the world the fullness of the mystery hidden through all ages in God so that men through their sharing in it may be able to enter into the fullness of God (cf. Eph 3:19).

«We proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ» (1 Jn 1:2-3).