

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

JOINT PASTORAL LETTER ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Philippine Hierarchy

THE THEOLOGICAL FORMATION OF FUTURE PRIESTS

Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education

IN CHRIST — A NEW COMMUNITY

Jaime L. Cardinal Sin, D.D.

THE EVOLUTION OF CONSCIENCE AND TRINITARIAN INDWELLING

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Fathers' Residence
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EDITORIAL

Seek Unity in Love

The recent crackdown of the government on the **Signs of the Times** and the **Communicator** and on two radio stations in **Min-danao** operated by Church groups produced varied reactions among Church people. Some condemned. Some applauded. Some were indifferent. Some were afraid. Some felt challenged to continue the fight. Some were not bothered at all.

The President explained to the Papal Nuncio and to the Secretary of the Catholic Bishop's Conference of the Philippines that the government was not against the Church but only against some individuals and groups that have opted to oppose government policies. Such individuals and groups, the President stressed, are not to be seen as representatives of the Church.

If we are to believe the daily newspapers it would seem that the President has had the last word. But in fact the problems raised by the intervention of the government continue to be discussed — sometimes heatedly, sometimes more dispassionately — among Church leaders.

Unfortunately, it seems that no amount of position papers, pastoral letters or bishops' meetings will ever produce a consensus on how the Church should take government restrictions of Church

activities that have socio-political repercussions. Gone are the days when we can forge a solid stand on an issue in which other sectors of society feel they have a vital stake.

The fact is that the Church now lives and moves in a milieu which is — rightly or wrongly — pluralistic. Even among bishops, priests and sisters there will be different ideas about the Church's commitment to work for justice and the development of human beings. What some would label as plain "politics" and therefore not the concern of the hierarchy, others will claim to be a fight for justice and human rights, which is, of course, essential to the Church's mission in the world.

To maintain or regain unity — if not unanimity — we should recall that we, as followers of Christ, are committed to work for justice, yes, but we have to do this work out of love. It is difficult to give the name Christian to a fight for justice which does not clearly go hand in hand with a total commitment to love.

If we find ourselves divided because of our different views on justice, perhaps it is time for us to seek unity in love. After all, it is **LOVE**, not justice, which sums up the whole work and law of Christ.

In This Issue

Pursuing its task of evangelizing today's world, the Church of modern times is faced with problems that may not be altogether new but are more complex than before and more far-reaching in their consequences. Take, for example, the problems besetting Christian marriage. The **Joint Pastoral Letter on Christian Marriage** issued by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines points out the special difficulties facing Christian Marriages in the present Philippine conditions of life. We find the Bishop's assessment of the situation accurate and well expressed. We invite our readers to read it reflectively. The Letter goes on to show that the problems can actually be solved by a kind of "return to the sources":

by a new appreciation of "the Christian meaning and values of marriage and the family which, for centuries, have found expression in the Filipino way of life". True to their duty as pastors, the Bishops propose "some positive measures which could give greater legal support to marriage". They also exhort Christian spouses to heroism in making the sacrifices required by Christian morality. We hope our readers will not only study this Pastoral Letter assiduously, but will share their study with others, specially with young spouses and those making plans for marriage.

Another old-new problem of the Church is the **Theological Formation of Future Priests**. To meet the problematic aspects of the present situation, the document invites readers to recall the proper function of theology. Then it formulates some guidelines for the teaching of theology and establishes practical norms to be observed in theological institutes. "Although not every priest is called to be a specialist in theology," the document observes, "there does exist an affinity between pastoral ministry and theological competence. Priests are expected to exercise a true theological ministry in the Christian community, without it being necessary for them to be professional theologians".

The Ecumenical Movement continues to be troubled by the fact that "truth is often a mask for triumphant pride, and it may give rise to intolerance. But love too, is subject to deformation." To avoid such pitfalls the Archbishop of Manila, Jaime L. Cardinal Sin, proposes that ecumenists dedicate themselves to a love of truth and seek unity not by determining a minimum of what all should believe in, but by "rising to the heights of every faith". Hence, in his speech to the Biennial Convention of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines, the Cardinal exhorts Catholics and Lutherans to build: **In Christ — A New Community**.

Fr. Ted Gresh, M.M., gives us quite a challenging paper on **"The Evolution of Conscience and Trinitarian Indwelling"**. It summarises observations and conclusions of contemporary writers and Church documents on conscience and then attempts to draw some "theological coordinates" to link conscience to Christian life and experience, going beyond a merely ethical perspective.

PAULUS EPISCOPUS SERVUS SERVORUM DEI

Venerabili Fratri **ONESIMO CADIZ GORDONCILLO**, Episcopo titulo Gunugitano, ad cathedralem Sedem Tagbilaranam translato, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Curae maximae sine dubio particularibus Ecclesiis sunt a Nobis adhibendae, quae si vigeant floeantque, id in totum Corpus Christi mysticum salubriter redundat. Cum igitur nunc consulendum sit diocesi Tagbilaranae, cuius regendae munera Venerabilis Frater Emmanuel Mascariñas et Morgia se abdicavit, te eidem praepondere statuimus, qui sacri Praesulis Dumaguatiensis egisti Auxiliarem. Quae cum ita sint, audita sententia Venerabilis Fratris Nostri S.R.E. Cardinalis Praefecti Sacrae Congregationis pro Episcopis, apostolica Nostra potestate vinculo te solvimus Ecclesiae titulo Gunugitanae atque ad dioecesim **TAGBILARANAM** transferimus, datis iuribus impositisque obligationibus, cum dignitate et officio tuo conexas. Te quidem lege professionis fidei iterandae eximimus, volumus autem, ut ius iurandum des fidelitatis erga nos et Successores Nostros, adhibitamque formulam, rite signatam et sigillo impressam, ad Sacram Congregationem pro Episcopis mittas. Mandamus insuper, ut hae Litterae Nostrae clero ac populo in cathedrali templo dioecesis tuae legantur, die festo de praecepto. Quos filios dilectissimos cohortamur, ut te nos solum libenter suscipiant, factum animarum suarum patrem, magistrum, rectorem verum etiam praeceptibus tuis pareant et incepta pastoralia tua secundent. Denique supernae gratiae copiam et Beatissimae Virginis Mariae praesidium tibi, ad gravius munus ascito, vehementer precamur. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die tertio mensis Julii, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo septuagesimo sexto, Pontificatus Nostri quarto decimo.

JOANNES CARD. VILLOT
Secretarius Status

EUGENIUS SERVI
Proton. Apost.

JOINT PASTORAL LETTER ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

By

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The great majority of our people share a cultural tradition which has deeply imbued marriage and family life with Christian values. For centuries, Filipino life has been wedded to Catholicism; it has brought forth an outlook and practices that are both deeply christian and deeply Filipino. This christian moulding of our spirit is expressed in many ways—in our appreciation and love of children, in the deep respect in which we hold our parents and elders, in our esteem for chastity, in the dignity and respect accorded to women, in our close ties with one another within the family. The Christian values have, indeed, found a unique expression in the Filipino way of life; we cherish them and wish to preserve them for future generations as their rightful inheritance.

Yet today, we find that those Christian traditions of marriage and family life are seriously threatened, both from outside and from within. The rapid changes in the modern world create problems which seriously affect the family from outside. More and more people move to the city, attracted by the possibility of attaining a higher standard of living. Material ambitions, and the difficulty of raising children make many wish to limit the size of their family. Modern science and techniques offer means of family planning, such as contraceptives, sterilization and abortion, which are contrary to the Christian idea of marriage. In the city, married couples lack the social support of the extended family and of local customs and traditions. When their marriage comes under stress, it sooner reaches a breaking point. Many people believe that divorce would be a solution; but divorce is incompatible with Christian marriage.

The family is threatened also from within. Some of the weaknesses of our own character harm the family. The tendency, for instance, of parents to be excessively authoritarian alienates the emancipated younger generation; many tolerate unfaithfulness of the husband and the moral license of sons, accepting thereby a double standard of morality; in unconscious selfishness, some

parents see their children as means of support and fail thereby in giving them the love they deserve as children. All this undermines the unity of the family.

The recognition of the stress to which marriage and family life are subject, and the awareness of the threats to our own values, fill us with deep apprehension. We wish therefore to remind the faithful once more of the Christian meaning and values of marriage and the family which, for centuries, have found expression in the Filipino way of life. We are convinced that in this way we are serving not only the cause of Catholic faith or the good of the Church, but also the highest interests of the Philippine national community.

A LOFTY CALLING

Marriage has its origin in the mysterious attraction which draws a man and woman together, and inspires them with the desire to share their lives in an exclusive and permanent pact of love. That attraction and desire spring from the human heart as God created it in His wisdom and goodness. It is the Creator's will that man find in a woman "a helpmate like unto himself" (Gen. 2:18). God has also willed that a physical union seal and fortify the intimate friendship which binds husband and wife, and it is He who makes that physical union fruitful. The Creator blessed the first human couple and told them to increase and multiply (Gen. 1:28). Children are indeed, God's gift and blessing. They embody the bond of love which makes their parents one, and are another reason for the permanence of the conjugal union.

A GREAT SACRAMENT

In the partnership of marital love and of parenthood, the couple can find a unique form of Christian self-realization if they dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to one another and to their children. Marriage and family life promise a singular happiness.

We all know nevertheless that there are marriages which end in disillusionment and frustration. The weakness of human nature, and the materialistic and a moral character of secularized modern society, make men and women vulnerable to the temptations of selfishness. Egotism evidently goes counter to the very nature of the conjugal commitment, which requires precisely an unselfish devotion to one's spouse and children.

Aware of our human weakness, God has set a high ideal for Christian marriage, and has promised the help which is needed for its attainment. He has elevated marriage to the dignity of a sacrament, making it a sign of the bond of self-giving love which binds Christ and the Church. He pledges at the same time the grace which a Christian couple need in order to make their marriage truly a living reflection of that holy union it signifies.

It is important that Christian spouses understand what it means when they are told that marriage is a sacrament. In the light of our Christian faith, the sacrament of marriage presents itself as the sacred crowning-piece of the divine plan for man and woman. Thus they see each other wrapped in the sacred mystery of Redemption, and their mutual love acquires a mystical significance; it represents and realizes God's love for his people. Already in the Old Testament, the Spirit expressed through the prophets the relationship of Yahweh with Israel under the form of human love. In the new dispensation of the Incarnation, human love, raised to a sacrament, signifies and embodies, even physically, the marriage of Christ, the Word of God, with his eternal Bride, the Church.

This is the model that is proposed to Christian spouses: God's immeasurable love for his human creature, a love unto the death of the Cross, indissoluble love that no power in heaven and earth can destroy. Because God has wanted Christian marriage to reflect the bond of love between Christ and the Church, He gives the assurance that the couple will be able to perfect their fallible human love. But His grace will remain inoperative if the couple are unreceptive. They must live their married life, from day to day, as a holy union. They must be aware of the need for God's grace, and must dispose their hearts to receive it. It is therefore necessary that the Christian couple pray, and pray together; that they read the word of God and worthily receive the sacraments, in particular the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist which confirms their union "in the Lord" (I Cor. 7:39).

Christian marriage is a great sacrament, moreover, not simply because it reflects the relationship between Christ and the Church, but also because it cooperates in making the love of Christ for His Bride fruitful. As members of the Church by baptism, the Christian spouses have become part of the New Covenant with God in Christ. As individuals they have risen with Christ and remain oriented by their baptism towards eternal happiness as long as they do not renounce their faith. A Christian marriage consequently unites members of Christ's body, giving them an additional mission. The natural function of marriage, the propagation of the human race, is elevated in Christian marriage to the role of building up the

Mystical Body of Christ. The natural contract has become a Sacrament. When a couple sees in the light of faith that a function of the Church has been entrusted to them as two of her members, they will realize that it is the Church, the mother of all the living, who is the true mother of their child. It is she who, through the sacraments of baptism and marriage, bears the child into the New Covenant, into the fullness of life, both human and divine. The love of husband for wife and that of Christ for His Church are made fruitful in the child, as a child of God by grace.

UNITY AND INDISSOLUBILITY, ACCEPTANCE OF LOVE

It is in this context that we are able to fully appreciate our Lord's categorical teaching: "A man therefore, will leave his father and mother and will cling to his wife, and the two will become one flesh... what God has joined, let no man put asunder... if a man puts away his wife and marries another, he behaves adulterously towards her, and if a woman puts away her husband and marries another, she is an adulteress" (Mk. 10:2-12). On the basis of these words, the Church has always affirmed the indissolubility of marriage. This was done by the Council of Trent, by Pope Pius XI in the encyclical *Casti Connubii*, John XXIII in *Mater et Magistra*, Vatican II in the *Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, Paul VI in the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. They are words expressive of a consistent magisterial teachings that go beyond free discussion among Catholics. Indeed what the Father has united, and what the Spirit has sanctified, is no longer subject to human power; the marital bond is placed in an order in which the magistrates of this world have no jurisdiction. Even if they legalize divorce, such an attempt at law making will never receive its binding force from God, the source of all laws, because human lawmakers, having received their power to legislate of the same power without its invalidating consequences. True, they may still confer the name of "law" on such an attempt against the divine decree, and even enforce it; but it will never be worthy of the name "law", nor can it bind people in conscience.

EVILS OF DIVORCE

People who favor the legislation of divorce, we would want to believe, do not intend to undermine the stability of successful marriage. They are concerned with the so-called broken marriages. They fail to realize, however, the evil consequences that flow from divorce. Where the dignity of Christian marriage has been violated,

people have substituted legal concubinage for the legitimate union, married couples have neglected their mutual duties of fidelity, children have not observed the respect and obedience due to their parents, the ties of domestic affection have been relaxed, and — as a most detestable example and gravest prejudice to public morals — pernicious and regrettable separations have often succeeded an insensate love (Leo XIII, 1878, *Inscrutabili*; SW 1. 10).

Once divorce is tolerated, no restraint is powerful enough to keep public morality within the bounds marked out or anticipated. Great indeed is the force of example, and even greater still the might of passion. When are we going to learn from the experience of those countries where divorce is permitted by civil law? For as soon as divorce has become possible quarrels, jealousies, and judicial separations increase. Wherever divorce was introduced, the abuse that followed far exceeded anything the lawmakers foresaw. In fact many people contrive all kinds of fraudulent devices, such as false accusations of cruelty, violence, and adultery, merely to obtain the dissolution of a matrimonial bond of which amendment of the law has been regarded as urgently needed.

One hears it said that Catholics being opposed to divorce for religious reasons, should abstain from taking advantage of divorce laws, without however preventing others from having recourse to them, and without imposing their own beliefs on the whole nation. But this opinion, which invokes in its favor the pluralism of our society, is based on an individualism that we cannot share. For the purpose of legislation is not the advantage that the individual can draw from it or not, but the common good of society as such. We believe that divorce with the dissolution of the bond is contrary to the real national interest, whether believers have recourse to it or not. And it is in the name of this solidarity with the whole country that we address ourselves to all Filipinos.

There are voices heard around us which favor divorce on the ground that it is impossible to commit one's future by an irrevocable promise. We ask why not, since man is something more than the chance result of biological and psychological becoming? Man is the only creature capable of making a promise, and our very dignity is based on the power of carrying out our promises. We believe that man being a person is capable of keeping his word until death, and that marriage is precisely a call to this kind of promise. Karl Marx, not a catholic, opposed divorce on this same ground. He said: "Does there exist in nature a healthy, strong and firmly organized body that can be destroyed by any external impulse or

by any injury? Would you not be offended if it were established as an axiom that your friendship cannot stand up to the slightest difficulty and that it must necessarily be dissolved on account of every slight caprice?" (The bill on divorce)

POSITIVE MEASURES

As Pastors of the Church, we are not insensitive to the plight of many marriages. For this reason we now propose some positive measures which could give greater legal support to marriage.

1. Legal aid touching on marriage laws ought to be provided free for the poorer members of the community so that they may be accorded the same rights under the law as others.
2. Continued social research into the sources and causes of marital instability is desirable so that more factual information becomes available regarding the various factors which contribute to the breakdown of marriages, for example, the age at the time marriage was concluded, the degree of preparation and maturity of the spouses, extenuating circumstances, etc.
3. A more conscientious preliminary investigation of the contracting parties' capacity and attitude towards marriage should be made mandatory. Our existing civil law on this matter can be enriched by adapting the Church's parallel law which is more specific and has proven effective in ascertaining the degree of preparation of prospective spouses.
4. Broaden the legal bases for nullity of marriage. In this regard we propose that, in addition to the cases mentioned in Article 80 of the Civil Code as bases for void marriages, the following be included:
 - a) Those contracted without the consent of either contracting party, freely given;
 - b) Those not solemnized in accordance with Art. 55;
 - c) Those contracted with physical incapacity or impotence coeundi of one of both contracting parties, which exists at the time of the celebration of marriage and appears to be incurable and perpetual, whether known or unknown to the other party;
 - d) Those marriages declared null and void from the beginning by the authority of a church, religious sect or denomination legitimately operating in the Philippines

on common grounds accepted and recognized by both religious and civil laws.

These positive measures, to our mind, will promote the stability of marriage so necessary for a stable society. They would be positive steps to prevent the breakdown of marriage and to provide a more effective and realistic way of meeting the social problems and frustrations underlying the contemporary breakdown of marriage.

BIRTH CONTROL AND COMMUNITY LIFE

The Church has always held that both marriage and married love aim at the begetting and educating of children, who are "their ultimate crown" (*Gaudium et Spes*, n. 48), thus preparing for them a community of love and life, as some kind of a spiritual womb in which the children can properly and best grow to maturity and responsibility both as human beings and as Christians. This community of life, bonded by love at once conjugal, parental and filial — the home in the full sense of the term — is something for which no human invention can substitute. Yet, it is often denied today that this is an essential purpose of marriage and conjugal love. Some even go as far as to frustrate systematically the natural result of the marital relationship or to destroy the fruit of that relationship.

Our people, fortunately, have never fully accepted this. The Filipino couple spontaneously wish to be parents, and to be parents of several children. Recently, however, a systematic propaganda campaign has been launched against the large family. This campaign would have us believe that children will be better off if the family remains small, and that the development of the country requires a reduction of the growth rate of the population.

The Church is in favor of responsible parenthood. She means thereby that parents must plan the number of their children according to their capacity to raise a family. The Church does not allow, however, that artificial means are used to space birth, or to prevent them altogether. Nor does the Church hold that a small family is under all circumstances desirable. On the contrary, she encourages parents who can bring up a large family to do so "with generous and stout hearts" (*Gaudium et Spes*, n. 50).

We are of the opinion that it is a misconception to believe that the Philippines must reduce its birth rate at all cost. Elsewhere, the pressure of rapid population growth has been a strong and

positive stimulus to economic development. It leads to an increase of industrial production, it promotes specialization, and it stimulates responsiveness to change. On the other hand, the negative experience of other countries with population control programs makes us wonder whether our nation would not develop faster if the means available for population control were spent on more positive solutions to our economic problems, like manpower development, agricultural extension services, irrigation facilities, credit to farmers, etc. Furthermore, it is undeniable that a large family is a strong motivation force for hard work and enterprise. By inducing the married couples to reduce the number of their children to one or two, people's motivation to work may be decreased unwittingly. We do not believe that the Filipino family is an obstacle to economic development. On the contrary, if the family, is made the core and center of educational efforts directed to foster the spirit of hard and efficient work, and of imaginative and economic use of both physical and human resources, the family would be a major catalyst of progress

We are sadly aware that the media, and a number of social workers, nurses and doctors who favor family planning, advocate means which the Church rejects as immoral, means such as abortion, sterilization and contraception. No scientist doubts that new life has begun when a woman conceives and that this life is a human life. Since God is the giver of life and remains its master, man cannot claim any right to dispose of that life at will. Hence, the Church rejects abortion as the immoral taking of innocent life, whatever the stage of pregnancy. Advocates of abortion give many reasons why an unborn human life could be sacrificed in the early stages of its development. Whatever those reasons, the end does not justify the means if the means are in themselves immoral. God has not given us the right to dispose of our body as we please.

SEX IN GOD'S DESIGN

The sexual act is in its physical aspect entirely oriented towards conception. Conception however does not necessarily follow, for nature limits the fertility of the woman. The Church does not object if a couple exercise their marital right with the knowledge that conception would not take place because nature makes the woman infertile. It is not however permissible either for the husband or the wife to deliberately interfere with the natural course of the marital act in order to prevent conception.

In God's plan, the sexual act is both unitive and procreative by nature. Man is not free to separate the two. In fact, he deceives

himself and his partner if he thinks that the sexual act can be truly an act of love, and therefore unitive, if the natural course of the act is deliberately interfered with to prevent conception. Everybody admits that the sexual act must be an act of love. This means that the act must express a gift of one's whole self and an acceptance of the whole of the other. If one of the parties or both resort to artificial means of preventing conception the mutual acceptance and giving is not total anymore, and the sexual act is therefore not truly an act of love. The woman gives herself totally, and is accepted as fully woman, in as much as she can become a mother, and the man gives himself totally, and is accepted as fully man, in as much as he can become a father. Artificial means of preventing conception diminish one of both of the spouses, and frustrate thereby the integrity of the sexual act as an act of love.

HEROISM IN MARRIAGE

We do not question the fact that Christian morality demands and imposes sacrifices. A false philosophy of life suggests that man is entitled only to pleasure and that the pain of sacrifice should have no part in life. Christ sacrificed Himself for the Church and the Church suffers readily for Christ. The relationship of Christ and the Church is inconceivable without the sacrifice of the Cross. If the spouses live their married life in a spirit of faith and pattern their relationship after the bond between Christ and the Church, their sacrifices will be redemptive like the sacrifices of Christ and the Church; they will bring down blessings on them and on their children.

EDUCATIVE ROLE OF PARENTS

Marriage is the foundation of the Christian family. The procreative nature of marriage, so vital to the understanding of the meaning of the contract and of the sacrament, involves not merely the begetting of children, but also their upbringing as adult Christians, men and women who are ready to accept responsibility in the world. To this end, the children should be given the rightful view of the family principally by their parents who should be a living example of their children of family unity based on mutual love and a common life in the light of God's law.

It is in their image that the children will develop and grow up, for the parents are the models which the children will follow. Few parents are constantly aware of the responsibilities they share

in this regard. No matter what attitude the parents have towards these sacred obligations, this attitude constitute the example which the children will see and imitate. If the parents pay only lip-service to the faith, their children will eventually do even less, and their children will be almost ignorant of the very existence of religion. Hand in hand with this will go a serious decline in religious and priestly vocations, and the faithful, deprived of the help of priests will become even less Christian. The result is a vicious circle of dechristianization. It is the grim lesson of the Church in much of Europe and South America. It indicates that the notion of the prophetic role of the laity, is no mere empty formula, particularly in the context of the family. To live up to these responsibilities, therefore, the parents must set the example of Christian devotion and fidelity within the family as true witnesses to Christ's teachings and love.

Unfortunately, many parents fail in this respect. They think that they have acquitted themselves of their responsibilities if they send their children to school. The school, however, can never impart to its students the lessons they would learn from exemplary Christian parents. Worse still, many parents today are unconcerned with the educative effect that the secularized society has on their children. The movie industry, magazines and newspapers, radio and television, the lessening of moral values induced by a growing tourist industry—all these promote a permissive attitude towards sex. They often give the impression that the old morality which values chastity and fidelity in marriage, is outdated, and that a free life style suits the modern world.

We deplore the confusion which is sown in the minds of many people. The sexual act expresses a total mutual self-gift. If it is otherwise, the act becomes a means of self-gratification which diminishes the personal dignity of both partners. But a total self-gift is unconditional and irrevocable. It implies a lasting commitment, and for this reason finds its proper place only in the context of the exclusive and permanent marriage commitment. The freedom which many young people believe they are entitled to in sexual matters does not in fact exist. Freedom is never the liberty to do what is immoral. Nor is it true that love makes good what otherwise might be bad. Love is simply not true love if it seeks as its expression an act which is immoral.

There is then a need to re-stress the value of chastity, understood properly in its Christian meaning, and particularly as it applies to the courtship between prospective spouses. Courtship as a prelude to marriage must be taken seriously. It is an important preparation for marriage and in some sense, more important

than marriage itself, because if there is bad courtship the married life is already jeopardized. In this context, we urge that a pastoral program of pre-marriage counselling be formulated that will help prospective spouses acquire a clear idea of marriage and family life. This should include instruction on the sublime dignity of marriage, its nature as a personal commitment for life, and its relationships to society. A minimum of instruction along this line should be required of the prospective spouses before they are allowed to marry. This instruction on marriage and family life should also be integrated into the curriculum of our Catholic schools. Catholic groups should spread the same to our out-of-school youth. There should be holiness in the preparation, in the interpersonal relationship that precedes this holy institution. Chastity in those who are engaged to be married is a prelude to true love in the married life because if there is no reverence before marriage there will be no reverence in married life. Similarly, we encourage the ongoing family life programs the main objective of which is the enrichment of Christian life within the family.

CONCLUSION

We make an ardent plea to all of you to provide our country and the world with a testimony of the splendor of Christian marriage. Let the love of God for His People shine forth in your lives, in your conjugal love, in your dedication to the apostolate of family life and to the establishment of means adequate to make the apostolate effective. This means a dedication on the part of the hierarchy and the clergy; this means a devotion on the part of the laity. Together, we can strive to elevate Christian marriage and the Christian family to the sacred height where they belong. Less than this we cannot do if we believe we are God's own people.

Released for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines:

+ (Sgd.) JULIO R. CARDINAL ROSALES
President

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THE THEOLOGICAL FORMATION OF FUTURE PRIESTS

The Sacred Congregation For Catholic Education

INTRODUCTION

Deep cultural and theological changes are among the most conspicuous signs of our time. This ferment involves the whole Church but more especially the theological formation of future priests. Here, as in all branches of education, new fields of research, new methods, new interests and changes of emphasis are evident. In recent years numerous problems have arisen that demand the attention and consideration of all responsible.

For this reason the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education feels compelled to address Bishops and their collaborators in priestly formation with the following document on the theological formation of candidates for the priesthood. For many reasons, the matter must be treated seriously and at some length. Some of these reasons are intrinsic to theological formation itself; others, such as the changed circumstances of the times we live in, the conditions of life and of priestly ministry, problems of evangelization, and the general needs of the Church, are extrinsic. At the present time theological teaching holds a position of paramount importance and there is much hope for its fruitful renewal. Now a good theological formation of candidates seems one of the surest means of infusing our seminaries with strength and offering an ever firmer basis for the spiritual renewal of the clergy and their pastoral ministry.

To put things clearly and in due order, it is worthwhile here:

- I) to explain certain **aspects of the present situation**;
- II) to recall certain **demands of theological teaching** derived from the very nature of the proper function of theology;
- III) to formulate some **lines for the teaching of theology** in general and its particular disciplines;
- IV) to establish **practical norms** to be observed in all institutes to which have been entrusted the formation of future **priests**.

I. ASPECTS OF THE PRESENT SITUATION

I. New requirements of the pastoral ministry

1) The first reason for devoting special care to the deepening of theological preparation arises from the changed conditions in which priests will have to work. As their numbers decrease owing to the decline in vocations, they will be obliged to undertake greater responsibilities in a pastoral context where certain ministries will be shared with deacons and the faithful.

By virtue of their special character priests will be called upon to share more intimately in the cares of their Bishops undertaking more complex and general pastoral tasks and at the same time far greater initiatives both within their respective dioceses and outside. Such a great increase of pastoral responsibility demands outstanding competence in theology and sound doctrine.

2) Furthermore, priests will exercise their ministry in a Church moving and seeking to adapt herself to the new needs that are emerging both within herself and in the world. In such circumstances sound theological doctrine constitutes an indispensable pre-requisite both for correctly interpreting the signs of the times and for facing new situations, avoiding on the one hand stagnation and on the other dubious adventures and experiments.

3) Priests of tomorrow will also have to exercise their ministry among people who are more adult, more critical, and better informed, immersed in a world of ideological pluralism where Christianity is exposed to many interpretations and suspicions common to a culture becoming ever more alien to the faith. It will be impossible for priests to serve the faith and the ecclesial community effectively without sound theological formation begun in the seminary and carried on beyond. Nor must it be forgotten that many of the laity have more extensive theological knowledge. Many of them study in schools and faculties of theology. This demands that the clergy must have a high level of theological preparation.

4) It must be borne in mind that the very faith of the priests of tomorrow will be exposed to greater dangers than before. In fact, experience has already shown the difficulty that some priests find in overcoming the prevailing atmosphere of unbelief and the scepticism of the world in which they live. Formation of priests must take account of this difficult situation. How can they stand firm in their faith and strengthen their brothers in it without a theological preparation able to meet this situation?

5) These considerations clearly show that a priest cannot be content with a formation which is predominantly practical and culturally mediocre. Although not every priest is called to be a specialist in theology, there does exist an affinity between pastoral ministry and theological competence. Priests are expected to exercise a true theological ministry in the Christian community, without it being necessary for them to be professional theologians. Priests and Bishops, being pastors, are in fact responsible for official preaching in the Church.

II. NEW TASKS OF THEOLOGY

Theological formation, the importance of which we have tried to underline, must, therefore, face new situations and problems. Experience and different needs induce emphasis on some of the dimensions of theological research and teaching which seem to be especially urgent in view of the many tasks to be fulfilled today.

1) In the past, theology developed in a world whose culture accommodated it easily, because the faith of the Church inspired culture and customs. Today, on the contrary, society is secular and often indifferent to religious problems and no longer in sympathy with either the faith or the teaching of the Church. It is, therefore, most necessary to work to make the Gospel understood by our contemporaries; so we must find a language adapted to them. But, such a task is too delicate and too serious to be left to improvisation and the initiative of individuals. It is rightly the task of theology to provide a contribution of sound scholarship and clear doctrine.

2) Today ecumenical dialogue weighs heavily on theology, at the same time it encourages new research into the history and sources of our doctrine, eliciting a new climate both in theology and in the whole Church. Above all, it imposes the task of rediscovering the ecumenical dimension of theology and formulating the truths of the faith "more profoundly and precisely, in ways and in terminology which our separated brethren too can really understand".¹

3) Heavy demands also are made on theology today by the life of the Church which raises new practices which need to be analyzed and if possible, integrated in the faith. Here we can see the importance of pastoral activity, which provokes theological reflection and stimulates teaching so that it becomes more alive and up-to-date without losing authenticity. This function of theology is necessary for the service of the people of God.

¹ Decr. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. II.

4) Furthermore, there are grave problems in the modern world which call upon theology for solution with ever greater insistence. The Constitution *Gaudium et spes* demonstrates the interest which the Church takes in the whole human family. Recent theology has shown itself more sensitive to the economic, social, and political problems of humanity seen in the light of the Gospel. A great awareness of the social implications and consequences of dogma has caused ferment not only on the level of action but also on the level of theological reflection. This cannot be ignored in the formation of the clergy.

5) To fulfill its mission of serving the Church today, theology must come to terms with the human sciences. Certainly, these sciences are no longer ignored by theology; on the contrary, some of their findings have been as it were "canonized" to the extent of having been incorporated in the historical formulations of the faith.

But theology, while convinced that it can derive ever greater advantages from the human sciences, cannot be blind to certain drawbacks which such an encounter might have at the present moment. The greater penetration of the human sciences in today's culture sometimes shows the inadequacies of a certain kind of theological language; further, the enormous prestige that these sciences enjoy today has such an influence in some theological circles that the sacred science is disfigured by them, losing its specific character. What is called theology is often only history, sociology, and the like. It is well to be aware of these difficulties and to bear in mind the urgent need accurately to define the epistemological terrain of theology in relation to other sciences.

6) Another phenomenon that is characteristic of our present situation is the loss of that unity which the teaching of theology once had. Theological disciplines are now open to new problems, new philosophies, and new contributions of science. In consequence of this, religious questions are becoming ever more complex and subject to different interpretations. Thus the way is open to a certain pluralism. It is one of the tasks of contemporary theology to define the legitimate and necessary limits of such a pluralism. This emphasizes the need for a renewal of theological teaching.

7) Finally, in teaching theology today there is ever greater difficulty in reconciling the lack of time available with the enormous development of the particular theological disciplines. It is evident that in such a situation an encyclopedic teaching that offers complete answers to all the questions in dispute is quite impossible. For this reason a new arrangement of all theological teaching is necessary to allow it to give the seminarist a cohesive, global vision of the Christian mystery.

II. THE DEMANDS OF THEOLOGICAL TEACHING

I. The fundamental demands

Anyone who is engaged in teaching theology cannot possibly ignore the complicated situation described above. Teaching of theology has certain fundamental demands, which derive from the nature of theology itself, and from its function.

1. The nature of theology

1) It is of paramount importance to bear in mind the nature of theology. If theology is to be renewed and adapted to the needs of our times, it must not lose touch with tradition, and it must always be true to itself as the science of Christian Revelation. *Fides quaerens intellectum*, that is, faith that searches for and develops its self-understanding, reaches its goal in a higher and more systematic form through theology. The object with which theology is concerned is not the truth acquired by human reason but the truth revealed by God and known by faith.

The context of faith is essential to theology, and theology can make no progress if it is confused with sciences outside the perspective of faith.

2) Within the ambit of faith, theology responds to what comes from the dynamism of faith itself — “cum assensu cogitare” —, or to the demands of culture, to integrate the faith within the contemporary psychological and social context, in the midst of the fundamental questions and worries of modern man.

3) As a science born from faith and developing within the ambit of faith and in the service of faith, theology uses rational reflection and the data of culture for better understanding of its own object.

Because of this, theology enjoys a special position in the articulation of the various sciences, also religious ones, but, it must not be confused with them nor reduced to their methods.

a) In particular, theology cannot be confused with or reduced to the level of the history of religions or of dogma to religious psychology or to the sociology of the Church. It must always remain faithful to its own nature and to its specific function, also in the epistemological context of disciplines concerned with religion.

b) In the social and cultural conditions that have been determined by the development of the human and natural sciences,

theology adopts the assured conclusions of these sciences, always taking into account the mentality and spirit which they engender amongst men and the interpretation that man gives of himself in every generation.

For this, theology can and, indeed, must develop a dialogue that is well informed, pertinent, and accessible, above all, on points of dogma and morals, regarding the origins, constitution, behaviour, development, conditions, and destiny of man, all the time being very careful not to lose sight of the certain and unchangeable data of the word of God.²

4) Catholic theology cannot prescind from the doctrine and experience which come from the life of the Church,³ within which the Magisterium guards and authentically interpret the deposit of faith contained in Sacred Scripture and Tradition. For this reason the Catholic theologian, in the field of exegesis and in his other scientific work, cannot unconditionally follow methods or accept the results of theologies opposed or extraneous to the Church. An uncritical conformism to such theologies neither responds to the specific character of Catholic theology nor is it in the best interests of ecumenism.⁴

5) Since theology has for its object truths which are principles of life and personal commitment,⁵ both for the individual and the community of which he is part, it has a spiritual dimension and, therefore, the theologian cannot be purely intellectual in his research and study, but must always follow the requirements of faith, always deepening his existential union with God and his lively participation in the Church.

By its nature, theology has a vital character, which gives it a unique place in the epistemological framework of science.

2. The function of theology

As the **science of Christian Revelation**, theology has a specific function in the broad sphere of the activities and ministries of the Church—the community of faith and love to which God has

² Cf. PAUL VI, Homily *Hodie concilium*, in the last session of the Conc. Vat. II, Dec. 7, 1965: AAS 58, 1966, pp. 55 ss.; Alloc. *L'Homme existe-t-il?* at the International Thomistic Congress, Sept. 12, 1970: AAS 62, 1970, pp. 602 ss.

³ PAUL VI, Exhort. Apost. *Quinque iam anni*, five-years after the Vat. Conc. II, to the whole episcopate, Dec. 8, 1970: AAS 63, 1971, pp. 102-103.

⁴ Cf. Decr. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. II.

⁵ «The obedience of faith» (*Rom.* 16, 26; cf. *Rom.* 1, 5; *2 Cor.* 10, 5-6) must be given to God who reveals, an obedience by which man entrusts his whole self freely to God, offering «the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals» (Const. *Dei verbum*, n. 5).

entrusted Christian Revelation and the work of salvation accomplished by Christ.

1) Theology investigates Revelation and studies it in depth; it describes its limits and plays its part in homogeneous development according to the needs of faith⁶ and the signs of the times, in which it sees the signs of God.⁷ This essential function of theology cannot be put aside or passed over in any contingent situation, especially at the present moment.

2) In developing this function, theology has a very relevant influence on the spiritual life because it clarifies and deepens a sense of the laws of salvation and the way of spiritual progress that Revelation offers to Christian life. This is particularly true in the formation of future priests in an enlightened and solid piety founded upon an understanding of their ministry and an exact appreciation of what the Church asks of them.⁸

3) Here also arises the part theology has to play in the Christian apostolate and especially in the pastoral ministry; it shows their place in the economy of salvation and helps their completion with the resources of doctrine and the practical indications it gives. Hence, the necessity for a first class theological formation for future pastors of souls.⁹

4) For the building up of the «Body of Christ which is the Church» (Col. 1, 24), theology is called upon to be constructive in its service to the Magisterium either by elaborating the data of faith and morals provided by Revelation and to be applied to present-day problems, or by a scientific treatment of problems that concern the life and thought of the Church, or, finally, by singling out, clarifying, and solving difficult points which arise on a doctrinal practical level.¹⁰

In particular, theology must be able to interpret, encourage, and serve the impetus of the Church's new missionary awareness. It is necessary to establish conditions for dialogue with non-Christian

⁶ Cf. Const. *Dei verbum*, n. 8.

⁷ Cf. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 4.

⁸ This aspect of theology must be given special prominence in the introductory course in which «the mystery of salvation is put forward in a way that the students can understand the significance of ecclesiastical studies, their structure and their pastoral goal while at the same time being helped to make the faith the foundation and spirit of their whole life and become strengthened in their embrace of their vocation with a complete personal dedication and joy» (Decr. *Optatam totius*, n. 14).

⁹ Cf. Decr. *Optatam totius*, n. 18; Decr. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 19; *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, nn. 82-85.

¹⁰ Cf. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, nn. 46 ss.

religions and cultures which will lead to new forms of evangelization as people grow closer together.¹¹

Within the Christian world, theology should take into account new ecumenical needs, either by the study of sources held in common, or by deeper knowledge of the thought of various churches and Christian communions on controversial points, by the development of the ecumenical dimension of ecclesiology and other areas of theology closely related to the problem of Christian unity.¹²

5) Confronted with the problems of Christians in the world, theology must pick out the human and evangelical elements which they often contain and try to clarify the points where they touch on the Gospel message without attempting to hide differences. Theology should make sure that the solutions today sought for these problems benefit from the superior power of Christianity to clarify and construct.¹³ Within the same context, there are problems of the new solidarity between social classes and peoples, the liberation of man from exploitation and alienation, sharing in the life of the state and of international society, the conquest of hunger, disease, and illiteracy, elimination of war as a means of solving quarrels between peoples, and the creation of more effective means of preserving peace.¹⁴

In this sense, theology has a "political" function that is original and unique, because it throws light on problems and directs action in man's various occupations, according to the indications and precepts of God's word.

II. THE COMPONENTS OF THEOLOGY

By its very nature and function, theology is a unifying science nourished by Revelation, laying bare the data it receives from it **ad lumen fidei** either by the process of positive investigation or by speculative development. Consequently, theology is both positive and systematic. In fact, the basis of theology is the study of the sources of Revelation for the purpose of establishing what God has revealed. Such a scientific study of the **auditus fidei**, gives rise to **positive theology**. The results of positive theology are the object

¹¹ Cf. Declar. *Nostra aetate*, passim; Decr. *Ad gentes* nn. 11, 22.

¹² Cf. Decr. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 11; Cf. as well SECRETARIAT FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY, *Ecumenical Directory*, Part II: On ecumenical matters in higher education: AAS 62, 1970, pp. 705 ss.

¹³ Const. *Gaudium et spes*, nn. 46 ss.

¹⁴ Const. *Gaudium et spes*, nn. 63 ss.; JOHN XXIII, Enc. Lett. *Mater et Magistra*; *Pacem in terris*; PAUL VI, Enc. Lett. *Populorum progressio*; Apost. Lett. *Octogesima adveniens*.

of further scientific development by means of systematic theology, which according to the demands of the *intellectus fidei* seeks to penetrate the meaning of revealed truths and discover how they are related, thus co-ordinating the whole in an organic and unifying manner.¹⁵ These two components of theology — historical research and rational reflection — cannot be ever completely separated, because they have a continual reciprocal interaction and their functions are complementary. It is necessary that they remain in continual equilibrium without one dominating the other.

1. The historical dimension of theology

With regard to historical research, which is predominant in the positive part of theology, the directives to be followed are three-fold:

1) It must be developed by methods that are in accordance with its own nature. This implies a legitimate freedom of research based upon valid documentation but it does not permit theology to be reduced to mere philology or historical criticism. To stay exclusively on such a level would be to risk positive theology becoming sterile and betraying its proper mission.

In fact, positive theology must recognize, as a matter of primary importance, the supernatural character of its object and the divine origin of the Church. Its development cannot be guided only by human reason without the light of faith nor can it dispense with the Magisterium of the Church. It is founded on the theology of Revelation, inspiration, and on the Church. It belongs to the Church to keep faithfully and interpret authentically the Word of God.¹⁶

2) Since there is an historical dimension of Revelation, of its transmission, and of the Magisterium, which preserves and interprets it, positive theology must have recourse, over and above its traditional methods of research (philology, history, historical criticism) to philosophical and philosophico-theological reflection. Such reflection should be concerned with the nature of the evidence at the disposal of the historian, the relationship that exists between the facts narrated and their interpretation, and also the nature of this relationship, and the relationship between eye-witnesses and the community of believers. Furthermore, the particular character

¹⁵ Cf. CONC. VAT. I, Sess. III, Const. *De fide cath.*, cap. 4; DENZ.-SCHONM., n. 3016.

¹⁶ Cf. Const. *Dei verbum*, n. 10.

of the times in which the history of our salvation took place should be considered, as well as the historical character of the narratives and of the events narrated.¹⁷

3) Moreover the need for positive theology to have recourse to philosophy is a consequence of developments of modern hermeneutics which are due to the particular sensitivity of today's culture to historical fact. It is this that attracts the attention of theologians to the historical conditioning of thought in its various expressions and consequently the difference between the way modern man thinks and expresses himself, and what is found in the Bible and in the traditional formulations of faith. It follows that theology should undertake the task of expounding and re-interpreting the content of faith to express it in concepts more readily understood by modern man and separating it from forms of expression which belong to the past and may not be completely accessible today.

In this regard it is worth noting that the substance of the ancient doctrine in the deposit of faith is one thing and its formulation is another.¹⁸ It is important that only its formulation should be conditioned by history, change, and adaptation, leaving the substance unchanged and firm. It is, therefore, essential that the theologian should know how to avoid the hazards of mere positivism and historicism which likes to explain the phenomena of thought and morality solely by historical causes¹⁹ to the point where all permanent and objective truth is reduced to the relativity of historical contingency. Therefore, the theologian, in order to fulfill successfully his grave responsibilities, must allow himself to be guided not only by the Magisterium²⁰ and the rules of exegesis²¹ but also by sound philosophical principles concerning the objective values of human knowledge.²²

¹⁷ Cf. PONT. BIBLICAL COMMISSION, instruction *Sancta Mater*, on the historical truth of the Gospels, April 21, 1964: AAS 56, 1964, pp. 712 f.

¹⁸ JOHN XXIII, Alloc. *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia* on the occasion of the opening of the Vatican Council II, Oct. 11, 1962: AAS 54, 1962, p. 972.

¹⁹ Cf. PAUL VI, Apost. Exhort. *Petrum et Paulum*, Feb. 22, 1967: AAS 59, 1967, p. 198.

²⁰ Cf. Const. *Dei verbum*, n. 10.

²¹ Cf. Const. *Dei verbum*, n. 12.

²² S. C. for CATHOLIC EDUCATION, Circular letter on the Teaching of Philosophy in Seminaries, Jan. 20, 1972, Part II, n. 3b: "From the fact that the methods themselves of positive science (exegesis, history, etc.) start their work from various given preliminaries, which implicitly are results of a philosophical choice (today this is especially necessary, for instance, regarding the exegetical method of Rudolf Bultmann), without, however, assuming an absolute, critical function in the face of divine revelation...".

2. Systematic Dimension

A characteristic of the present situation is a certain disaffection for philosophy; hence, the importance of giving prominence to the nature as well as to the necessity of theological speculation prescribed by the Council. The Decree *Optatam totius* requires that for «making the mysteries of salvation known as thoroughly as they can be, students should learn to penetrate them more deeply with the help of speculative reason exercised under the tutelage of St. Thomas».²³

1) Systematic theological reflection (*intellectus fidei*) is the natural and necessary continuation of the positive method, of which it constitutes in a certain manner the fulfillment and climax. It is true that some reflection is present in every phase of the theological process, even in the positive; but this reflection, be it in *exegesis* to determine the meaning of every fact and concept in Scripture or be it in *Biblical theology* to formulate fundamental themes, is not of itself sufficient to give an adequate and properly theological understanding of revealed facts or to give them an organic and complete systematization.

2) Only a more profound and scientifically methodical reflection is capable, with the help of philosophy, of penetrating in any great degree revealed truth so as to set in order various facts and formulate a mature judgement.²⁴ Such a recourse to speculative reflection is not simply a characteristic of Medieval scholasticism; it satisfies a theological and intellectual need that always tries to understand more and to understand better.

3) Naturally, systematic theological reflection does not pursue "speculation for speculation's sake" but it keeps in living contact with the sources of Revelation and tends to a more organic understanding of the Word of God which is the permanent internal factor of such speculation.

At this stage of theological study, philosophy is called upon to play the role more of an instrument than a master. We are not dealing with purely intellectual activity but with a process that, while being strictly logical according to philosophical principles, is conducted *ad lumen fidei*. In fact, it is this constant reference to the faith that makes it possible to discover the order and the deeper significance of Revelation.

²³ Decr. *Optatam totius*, n. 16.

²⁴ Cf. LEO XIII, Enc. Lett. *Aeterni Patris*, Aug. 4, 1879, DENZ.-SCHÖNM., n. 3137.

4) Revelation, the object of all theological speculation, is not merely a sum of truths fed to the intellect but also and above all the means by which God has communicated Himself to man.²⁵ Therefore, every authentic theological reflection should induce an attitude of sympathy and personal commitment towards the object of study as well as a spiritual affinity with revealed truth. Philosophical reflection, if properly conducted, far from suppressing the spiritual dimension of theology, presupposes and needs it.

5) Reason should never cease to be applied to Revelation. It correspond to fundamental questions of what faith means and of its dialogue with science and human culture. Reasoned reflection makes possible a **theology of the Word** which cannot be substituted by a "theology of practice" which prescind from all metaphysical commitment and reduces theology to a mere science of man, leading back in consequence to a pure phenomenologism and pragmatism.

6) Today there is a very common tendency to underestimate the contribution of philosophy to theology and, in fact, an aversion to any systematic thought. Nevertheless, it is necessary to insist on the value of speculation in dogmatic and moral theology in order to assure its solidity and cohesion. In fact, well-understood speculation does not make the study of theology dry or divorced from life but confers on it a whole hearted seriousness that is truly vital and personal.

7) Today it is especially desirable to construct and develop a systematic and organic theology that comprises within its scope the data of faith, as the results of historical research and of what the Church proposes; a rational reflection on it in the light of the faith, the interpretation of the results obtained in a more compact synthesis of its fundamental elements; its application and its response to the individual and collective demands of modern life and thought.

It is evident, then, that what distinguishes Catholic theology as a science is its constant reference to the faith. The strictly scientific nature of the process, be it positive or systematic, does not exclude but demands the continual presence of the *sensus fidei* which guides and directs theology from within, in the fields of exegesis, patristics, liturgy, canon law, history and systematic and pastoral theology. It is faith which, in agreement with the *Magisterium*, guides theology and gives it, together with its specific identity, its full meaning and certainty.

²⁵ Cf. Const. *Dei verbum*, n. 2-6.

III. Some of the conditions of theological work

The present situation of theology and the teaching of theology is characterized on the one hand by an intense application to developing Biblical themes and on the other hand by a new attention to modern currents in philosophy, sociology, and psychology. Some believe that they can take from these not only the result of research, analysis, and experiments, but also categories and criteria of thought. This openness to the natural and human sciences and to the problems of the present time, creates in some people a certain estrangement from the Magisterium of the Church and from traditional Christian theology and philosophy. Thus there is a risk of creating a theology without a solid basis which is outside the area of faith. It is, therefore, fitting to make quite clear the conditions of sound theological work. This is related to the Magisterium, to the theological and philosophical patrimony received from ancient times, to philosophy, science, and finally to the problems and values of this world which are of such great interest today. This is to treat once again of a clarification of the epistemological status of theology as the science of Christian Revelation with regard to principles which are enduring and to historical conditions which change.

1. Theology and the Magisterium

1) The faith which theology seeks to understand and examine in depth is the faith of the Church, the faith professed by the body of the Church (*sensus fidelium*), watched over and authentically interpreted by the ordinary and extraordinary Magisterium entrusted to the Apostles and their Successors by Jesus Christ. Both Revelation and the Magisterium form a natural and inseparable union. According to Vatican Council II "It is clear that the Holy Tradition of the Church and the Holy Scriptures, and the Magisterium of the Church are, by a most wise disposition of God, so united and joined together as to be unable to exist apart".²⁶ Hence in Catholic theology the ecclesial character of the faith should be made concrete by constant reference to the Magisterium.

2) The Magisterium can be considered both as authority and as service. It is "not superior to the Word of God but serves it, has received and, by divine command, listens to it attentively, reverently keeps and faithfully expounds it, and out of this deposit of faith, it obtains all it proposes for belief as the revealed Word of God."²⁷

²⁶ Const. *Dei verbum*, n. 10.

²⁷ *Ibidem*.

Because of this, the Magisterium must not be thought of as extraneous to the Church, something that oppresses it. On the contrary, it should be thought of as having a role, function as a charismatic service in the community and for the community. It follows that the Magisterium is not something external to and outside of theology, but rather an internal inspiration, completely natural to it, not a limitation, but an indispensable help, a *conditio sine qua non* of Catholic theology.

3) The Magisterium can said, indeed, must be presented and considered as:

a) the bearer, interpreter, and guarantor of the rule of faith for the sake of the unity of the community of believers;

b) the active proponent of a syntheses of assured and common values which emerge from various opinions and experiences;

c) the power to judge the conformity of the results of research, theological reflection, and the spiritual experience of individuals and groups, and Revelation which has been handed down through the ages by tradition; this the Magisterium looks after, authentically interprets, and proposes to the faithful.

4) The Church has the right and the duty to demand of theologians a loyalty to the Magisterium that, so far from prejudicing legitimate research, guarantees that it will promote an authentic building-up of the Body of Christ which is the Church. In fact the *munus docendi* belongs to the Bishops united in collegiality with the Supreme Pontiff, in the line of apostolic succession;²⁸ the episcopal Magisterium in theology, as in all forms of catechesis and preaching, cannot be replaced by individual thought, which has the limited function only of investigating, illustrating, and developing objective data which comes from God; this is guarded and proclaimed by the Church.

Theologians have the task of research and critical reflection. They can receive from the Magisterium a share in its *munus docendi* (*missio canonica docendi*). However, the Magisterium must maintain its authority to judge the relation of theological speculation to the Word of God. In particular, the task of professors of theology in seminaries, which is to prepare suitable and good ministers of God, future teachers of the faith,²⁹ requires the greatest loyalty to the Magisterium, both ordinary and extraordinary.

²⁸ Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 25; PAUL VI, Alloc. *Libentissimo sane*, to the international Congress on the Theology of Vat. II, Sept. 1, 1966: AAS 58, 1966, pp. 890 ff.

²⁹ Cf. Decr. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 4.

2. Theology and the theological and philosophical patrimony of Christianity

1) In the same context of the Magisterium of the Church, the perennially valid³⁰ patrimony of Christian thought, and especially of St. Thomas, referred to by the Council,³¹ must always be borne in mind, not only for the employment of philosophy in theology, but also for the assessment of the intrinsic dynamism of this, inasmuch as doctrinal patrimony is the expression of the continuity of the life of faith in the Church in particularly intense moments.

In fact beyond the recognized authority of the individual Fathers or Doctors of the Church, the work of these Fathers and Doctors is part of the Church's living tradition, to which providentially they have brought a contribution of lasting value at times which were quite favourable to a synthesis of reason and faith.

2) It is under the impulse of that tradition and in the light of the teaching of St. Thomas that theology can and should progress and its teaching be conducted. Close contact with the dynamism of tradition is a protection against exaggerated individualism and an assurance of that objectivity of thought which the Church particularly holds.

3. Relations between theology and philosophy

1) With reference to the complex problem of the connection, not only extrinsic, but also intrinsic, between philosophy and theology, we should bear in mind two premises:

a) Theology is radically independent of any philosophical system. Its term of reference is, in fact, the reality of faith; every other reference is merely instrumental. It follows from this that theology is free to accept or reject various philosophical theories in the fulfillment of its own research and reflection. It may adopt the contributions of common sense — in so far as they help its rational development — availing itself of all they have to give but without identifying itself with any one of them.

b) It is necessary for theology to take up the critical challenges which any philosophy may present, not only to theology but also to faith. Theology cannot avoid such confrontations without the danger of being undefended and misunderstood by the various

³⁰ Cf. Decr. *Optatam totius*, n. 15.

³¹ Cf. Decr. *Optatam totius*, n. 16; Declar. *Gravissimum educationis*. n. 10.

philosophies of today. But, it must not blindly close itself to their suggestions and proposals.

2) Given this point of view, it is not difficult to understand the soundness of the Church's attitude on these matters, which is twofold:

a) While remaining open to every new and old philosophy, she will not accept any that cannot be reconciled with Christian belief.

b) Her preference is for a philosophy whose fundamental tenets are in harmony with Revelation, because it is not possible for there to be any contradiction between the natural truths of philosophy and the supernatural truths of faith.

3) Obviously the Church cannot accept a philosophy whose tenets are in contradiction with Revelation. In certain circumstances the Church can accept a healthy philosophical pluralism³² arising from different regions, different cultures, and mentalities, and expressed perhaps in different ways, since the same truth can be reached in different ways, and can be presented and expounded in different ways. On the other hand, it is not at all possible for her to accept a philosophical pluralism which compromises the fundamental truths connected with Revelation such as is apt to occur in certain philosophies influenced by historical relativism or materialistic or idealistic immanentism.

Defects of theirs explain why today it is not so easy to realize a philosophical synthesis with these philosophies as St. Thomas did with the philosophical thought of ancient thinkers.

4) For this reason the Council was justified in the emphasis it put on St. Thomas when, in the decree *Optatam totius*, (n. 16), it speaks of speculative theology. His philosophy clearly explains and harmonizes the first principles of natural truth with Revelation, not in any static form but with the dynamism that is peculiar to St. Thomas and which renders possible a continual and renewed synthesis of the valid conclusions of traditional thought and the advances made by modern thought.³³

4. The contribution of the human and natural sciences

1) After philosophy, theology acknowledges the valuable help given by the natural sciences, history, and anthropology. In fact

³² Cf. S. C. for CATHOLIC EDUCATION, Lett. Circ. on the teaching of philosophy in seminaries, Jan. 20, 1972, Part III, n. 2.

³³ PAUL VI, Lett. *Lumen Ecclesiae*, on the occasion of the 17th centenary of the death of St. Thomas, Nov. 20, 1974, n. 17: AAS 66, 1974, pp. 690-691; cf. also alloc. *Nous sommes*, Vth International Thomistic Congress, Sept. 10, 1965: AAS 57, 1965, pp. 790 ff.

the **man-God** relationship lies at the very centre of the economy of salvation, in which Revelation, and hence, theology, are for the sake of mankind. Therefore, each of the sciences, in its own way, offers theology a valuable aid to a better knowledge of man one of the terms of this relationship, at the same time they stimulate it to determine more precisely the meaning of revealed truth that refers to man.

Furthermore, the contact of theology with sciences enriches it thematically and prevents it becoming culturally isolated in a world such as ours in which science flourishes and arouses universal interest.

2) But the two fields of theology and the natural sciences must be kept very distinct each respecting the autonomy of the other. In fact, they have different ends. Hence, just as the sciences should not be subject to theological **a priori** affirmations, so theology cannot solve its problems on the basis of scientific hypotheses and results. Theological studies are concerned with things far beyond the province of the research of the sciences: the mystery of the revealed Word of God. But, should a theological problem touch upon a subject that concerns one of the sciences (e.g. the problem of the origin of man and the world, questions of moral and pastoral order) it cannot ignore what the sciences say with certainty on the matter.

3) Theology without interfering in any way with the sciences can yet help them because theology itself has a more complete understanding of man, and of the world, and because of its hierarchy of values which always reminds scientists to direct their life and thought towards the light of divine truth. Substantially it is a contribution of **wisdom**. According to Vatican Council II, « our era needs such wisdom more than bygone ages if the discoveries made by man are to be further humanized ».³⁴

4) The contributions of the sciences to theology generally (but not necessarily) come to it through the mediation of philosophy, which today, besides other tasks, has also to evaluate and sift the complex problems set by science and by the solutions proposed so as to pick out what has permanent value with regard to human reason and its connection with Revelation. On the basis of this, theology can better evaluate the real contributions of science.

5) From a methodological point of view theology while remaining faithful to the demands of its **deductive-inductive** method, cannot ignore the **scientific spirit**, so widely diffused in the human natural sciences. It should follow, even in its own work, as far as possible,

³⁴ Const. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 15.

the laws of positive research, of control of sources, and of the verification of facts, which are common to the sciences.³⁵ But, so that it may appreciate and use such a method, theology must remain fully aware of its own epistemological status and avoid confusing itself with the other sciences, even on the level of procedure.

5. Application of theology to earthly reality and integration of human values

1) Among the tasks of theology, there is also that mentioned in the decree **Optatum totius** n. 16) which invites theologians to employ theological method when applying eternal truths to the unsettled conditions of our time, so that students « may learn to search for a solution of human problems in the light of Revelation; and apply eternal truth to the unsettled conditions of this world and communicate it in the appropriate manner to their contemporaries ». Furthermore, the same Council, in the Constitution **Gaudium et spes**, has often invited theologians to give more attention to the problems of contemporary culture and science, so as to renew their way of thinking and contribute « ad compositionem culturae cum christiana institutione » (n. 62).

2) It is as if theologians must write a new chapter in theological and pastoral epistemology, beginning — methodologically — with the facts and questions of the present day, rather than the ideas and problems of the past.

The complex cultural and social reality of our times and the changed attitude toward theology and the Church makes this work difficult, but it is a commitment to evangelization which theologians cannot ignore.

3) Theological endeavour in this field leads to the concrete task:

a) of integrating into Christian doctrine and morals all that experience finds of value in earthly reality and the development of human values;³⁶

b) of illuminating earthly reality and human values — without altering their identity — in relation to the kingdom of God;

³⁵ With regard to the employment of human sciences, cf. PAUL VI, Apost. Lett. *Octogesima adveniens*, May 24, 1971, nn. 38-41: AAS 63, 1971, pp. 427 ff.; cf. PAUL VI, Apost. Exhort. *Quinque iam anni*, five years after the conclusion of Vat. C. II, Nov. 8, 1970: AAS 63, 1971, p. 102.

³⁶ Cf. PAUL VI, Encycl. Lett. *Ecclesiam Suam*, 4th Aug. 1964: AAS 56, 1964, pp. 627-628.

c) of promoting and inspiring such values even on the level of their natural identity, which is better formed if referred to transcendental reality and values;³⁷

d) of contributing towards freeing earthly values and realities from the secular and worldly over-valuation that often accompanies them and thus saving their identity.

All this belongs to the ambit of that "Christian or integral humanism"³⁸ which hinges on the principle of *gratia supponens et perficiens (sanans) naturam*.³⁹

4) Working in this field does not mean that theology becomes so anthropological or anthropocentric that it ceases to be the science of God and divine things. It is, on the contrary, a matter of giving greater relevance to the problems of mankind by bringing theology more up-to-date without, however, changing the man-God relationship on the metaphysical, gnoseological, or ethical level. This relationship, in fact, lies at the very centre of theology and is always resolved in a definite reference to God.

III. GUIDELINES FOR THE TEACHING OF THEOLOGY

I. General guidelines

From a consideration of theology and of the theological teaching in seminaries, today some characteristic facts emerge. Among those, to which particular attention should be given, is a plurality of tendencies, opinions, and interests with a relative lack of unity; the narrow scope of some fields of research, of study, of themes, even notions of theology, and of its connection with philosophy and the sciences, outside an organic and constructive synthesis. A correct concern to find an attentive partner in theological dialogue and to find a type of discourse which interests him, not without a tendency to adaptation, could, if pushed beyond certain limits, mean a break with tradition and a distortion of theology.

In this climate, certain methodological requirements for teaching arise which involve the nature and function of theology.

1. Plurality and unity

1) The plurality, so common today, in the theological expression of faith is nothing new. We find it in the early centuries of the

³⁷ Cf. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, nn. 35-36, 41-43.

³⁸ PAUL VI, Encycl. Lett. *Populorum progressio*, Mar. 26, 1967, nn. 16, 20, 42 and passim: AAS 59, 1967, pp. 265, 267, 278.

³⁹ S. THOMAS AQ. *Summa theol.*, I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2.

Church in the great theological currents of the West and the East. This tendency grew and manifested itself in the variety of theological schools which later developed, each taking its departure from different organizational principles and different fundamental concerns. Each of these "schools" represents an approach to the Christian mystery, an attempt to interpret the reality of Revelation. None of them can identify with the other except on the level of revealed truth which all are trying to understand and on the level of the Church which recognizes them.

2) But, theological pluralism today differs from that of the past in that its scope is so wide and so deep that it could be described as radical. From the quantitative point of view, this is due to the enormous amount of material accumulated by each discipline which theology takes into consideration and utilizes by means of a complex articulation of organizational processes. From the point of view of the arrangement and spirit of theology, today's pluralism is due to the diversity of methods employed, the variety of philosophies followed, the different terminologies used, and basic outlooks adopted. These and other characteristics ensure that the new forms of pluralism, which especially have appeared after the Second Vatican Council, can be seen as even qualitatively distinct from earlier forms of pluralism.

3) In the past the Church not only tolerated but also encouraged a pluralism of theological tendencies because they were an indication of attempts to provide new and better explanations of certain themes and problems which were addressed under different aspects. The Church today has not changed. She encourages and favours a certain pluralism for kerygmatic, pastoral, and missionary reasons, provided always that such pluralism is a further enrichment of a doctrine of faith already well and clearly determined and in constant reference to it.⁴⁰

The Church, however, must deplore arbitrary and chaotic pluralism which uses philosophies far removed from faith, and

⁴⁰ Cf. Decr. *Ad gentes*, nn. 10, 16, 22; *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 64;

Const. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 44: "Thanks to the experience of past ages, the progress of the sciences, and the treasures hidden in the various forms of human culture, the nature of man himself is more clearly revealed and newroads to truth are open. These benefits profit the Church, too. For, from the beginning of her history, she has learned to express the message of Christ with the help of ideas and terminology of various peoples, and has tried to clarify it with the wisdom of philosophers, too. Her purpose has been to adapt the Gospel to the grasp of all as well as to the needs of the learned, in so far as such was appropriate. Indeed, this accommodated preaching of the revealed Word ought to remain the law of all evangelization".

very disparate terminology thus making understanding between theologians ever more difficult, if not impossible. Such a situation can only lead to confusion of language and concepts and a break with the theological tradition of the past. It cannot be considered as favourable for the formation of future priests and so may not be tolerated in theological teaching.⁴¹

4) It is absolutely essential that candidates for the priesthood — as beginners in learning theology — should, above all, acquire a sound **forma mentis** from the great Masters of the Church. From them they can learn the true science of theology and the true Christian doctrine. Besides, this principle is true of learning and formation in any field of knowledge and culture.

5) For the theological formation of students at any level the following principles concerning pluralism must be applied:

a) The unity of the faith must be safeguarded. For this purpose it is, above all, necessary to distinguish what is matter of faith, to which everyone is obliged to adhere, and what is the level where the faith, permits a choice of opinions.

b) In the area of theological opinion, the common doctrine of the Church and the **sensus fidelium** must be respected. In theology there is a nucleus of affirmations that are certain, common, and which cannot be given up, constituting the basis of all Catholic dogmatic teaching.

These cannot be questioned but only clarified, studied in depth, and better explained in their historical and theological context.

c) With regard to various theological systems, their unequal value should be borne in mind. Above all, it is necessary to see whether they are guided only by restricted interests, limited to some particular aspect of revealed truth, or whether they embrace the whole Christian mystery, systematizing and integrating a great quantity of data in the light of simple principles and of a value bordering on the universal. In any case, a system shall only be judged valid if it ignores none of the essential aspects of reality and is demonstrably capable of assimilating new points of view in an organic and harmonious synthesis. Under this aspect, the thomistic synthesis retains its full value.

⁴¹ With regard to the just limits of theological pluralism, cf. the "proposizioni" of the Pont. International Theological Commission on "The Unity of Faith and Theological Pluralism" in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 124, 1973, vol. II, pp. 367-369.

PAUL VI, Alloc. *We have come*, to the Bishops of Oceania, Dec. 1, 1970, *Noi non usciremo*, at the general audience of Aug. 28, 1974: *Insegnamenti di Paolo VI*, vol. XII, p. 764 ff., Città del Vaticano 1975.

Following these principles and criteria the teacher of theology can move safely among the hazards of modern pluralism.

2. Prospects of a synthesis

1) The theology of today in its search for new arrangement and new formulae is marked by a transitory and provisional character. Always in search of a new synthesis, it is like a huge construction-site in which the building is only partly completed, while within there is an accumulation of material which must be used in the building.

Consequently the teaching of theology has in many cases lost its unity and compactness, and presents an incomplete fragmentary aspect so that it is often said that theological knowledge has become "atomized". When order and completeness are lacking, the central truths of the faith are easily lost to sight. Therefore, it is not at all to be wondered at, if, in such a climate, various fashionable "theologies", which are in great part one sided, partial, and sometimes unfounded, gain ground.

2) These difficulties, inherent in the novelty of many of the problems with which theologians are called upon to deal, and in the vastness of their scientific interests as well as in the general climate of opinion, cannot leave indifferent those who are responsible for the teaching of theology, even in the basic courses. The ideal of unity and synthesis, although it seems difficult, should interest both professors and students. It is a matter of the greatest importance on whose solution depend in great part the efficiency, vitality, and practical utility of their studies. It involves:

- a) A synthesis of the various doctrines.
 - b) A synthesis of the different levels of the theological studies, e.g. systematic theology, exegesis.
 - c) A synthesis of sciences and religious experiences in relation to pastoral activity, etc.
- 3) Among the indispensable means to achieve this end are the following:

a) At the beginning of the studies, it is necessary « to organize very well the different theological and philosophical disciplines so that they may converge in harmony towards a progressive opening of the mind of the student to the mystery of Christ, which penetrates the whole history of the human race, working always in the Church, and operating chiefly through the priestly ministry.»⁴²

⁴² Decr. *Optatam totius*, n. 14.

In a special introductory course, «the mystery of salvation should be proposed in a way that students can understand the point of ecclesiastical studies, their structure, and their pastoral aim.»⁴³

b) It is necessary to have a detailed and co-ordinated programme of studies that guarantees the integrity and internal cohesion of the whole theological course, the completeness of the material to be studied, as well as a solid foundation and co-ordination of each particular discipline.⁴⁴

c) The personal commitment of the professors is indispensable. They should have a complete understanding of the ideal of unity and of synthesis, and they should be able to embody single parts and fragmentary data in an organic unity which they already possess and to which they can refer partial considerations.

d) From this, importance of lectures by a master should be evident. They should be sufficient in number and well prepared. The work of the students in groups and «seminars» should aim to give them a better grasp of the synthesis and an introduction to method of scientific work. In any case, these groups and seminars are no substitute for lectures, and cannot give students a complete and synthetic vision of the material to be studied.⁴⁵

e) In view of completeness of the teaching and of a desirable theological synthesis, it is necessary to establish fixed canon of principal disciplines and the fundamental and central themes of the faith which it is obligatory to study. The principle of free choice on the level of the basic courses must be limited to certain auxiliary and special matters only, which must be carefully worked out.⁴⁶

f) The pivot of the effort necessary to obtain a greater completeness and synthesis is constituted by the programme of studies and by the effective unity of the teaching staff. It imposes, above all, an interdisciplinary co-ordination and collaboration which must be in some way institutionalized, especially in the drawing up of the programmes and in the subdivision of the various tasks.⁴⁷

g) It is necessary to recognize and respect the extremely important role of the prefect of studies, who must be complete master of his job and truly efficient.⁴⁸ He should try to keep alive in the teachers a concern for completeness and synthesis, exerting

⁴³ *Ibid.*; cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, nn. 62.

⁴⁴ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 77 ff.; 80, 81, 90; cf. nn. 60-61.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 91 a.

⁴⁶ *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, nn. 78-80; 82-84.

⁴⁷ *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 90.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

himself together with the teachers to avoid at any cost fragmentary teaching, polarized on certain questions of the day, or limited to incomplete modern theologies (e.g. the theology of development, the theology of liberation, etc.).

3. Vitality and transmission of theological knowledge

1) Perhaps never more than today has theology been so aware of its duty to pass on the Christian message. This awareness was notably accentuated by Vatican Council II, at which Pope John XXIII urged «ut haec doctrina certa et immutabilis, cui fidele obsequium est praestandum, ea ratione pervestigetur et exponatur, quam tempora postulant nostra».⁴⁹ On their part, the students themselves like theological teaching to be alive, spiritually effective, pastoral, and social.

2) By its very nature, theology leads to personal contact with God, stimulating those who teach or study it to prayer and contemplation. Spirituality born from a life of faith is a kind of internal dimension of theology to which it imparts supernatural flavour. On the other hand, to have a more intense spiritual life and an adequate pastoral preparation, serious scientific education is also necessary; without it, any adaptation in the ascetic and pastoral life is of no value.

3) The vitality of theology in relation to prayer and contemplation, according to the teaching of Vatican Council II, is to be found in the Word of God, manifest and working in the history of salvation, which finds the centre of its life and its synthesis in the mystery of Christ.⁵⁰ The truths of the faith become ever more alive as we see in them their profound unity in Christ, encountered in a particular manner in the Fathers and liturgy. For this reason a greater familiarity both with the Holy Scriptures and with the Fathers of the Church and the liturgy can be considered the most effective means of discovering the vital force of a theological formation. For this end, it is clear that all the efforts and means already mentioned in connection with giving theological teaching unity and cohesion will also help to achieve this other result.

4) Spirituality is one of the principal components of pastoral adaptation but of itself it is not enough. In fact, a greater contact with life is also necessary. With this end in view, the professors should have useful contacts with pastoral situations, with priests

⁴⁹ Inaugural Alloc. *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*, Oct. 11, 1962: AAS 54, 1962, p. 792.

⁵⁰ Cf. Const. *Dei verbum*, n. 24; *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 16; Decr. *Optatum totius*, nn. 14, 16; *Ad gentes*, n. 16.

having the care of souls, with the faithful, and especially with believing and cultured professional men.⁵¹ In this way the teachers can become more aware of the real problems that daily life and scientific progress set out for the faith, and thus should be able to present courses in such a manner « ut alumni hodiernae aetatis indole recte perspecta, ad colloquium cum hominibus accommodate praeparentur ».⁵²

5) In order to communicate the faith to the man of today, theology certainly supposes and demands an analysis of man's dispositions and perceptive capacities in relation to the truth that must be proposed to him.⁵³ Therefore, it must formulate the truth in relation to the **forma mentis** of man, so that it can acquire for him a real meaning and a vital relevance, even in connection with the social, political, and cultural problems that most interest the modern world.

In this work the sense of transcendence of the Christian message must not be lost, nor must theology be reduced to a kind of philology or sociology of religion elaborated by a theologian; nor must it abandon the classical tradition of theology nor neglect the true object of theology which is God.

6) This task, mentioned above, obviously presents theologians with a problem of language which is felt today even by the interest taken in modern hermeneutics. Theology should be very sensitive to the language of the modern world if it wishes to be rooted in modern culture and to communicate with modern man.⁵⁴ Pope Paul VI à propos of this said: « We must look ahead so as to confirm the integrity of the whole of our doctrine—without any instability due to passing fashions—in the forms of new language, which must not be precluded except for reasons of absolute loyalty to Revelation and the infallible Magisterium of the Church, with respect for the **sensus fidelium** and for edification in charity ».⁵⁵

II. PARTICULAR GUIDELINES FOR THE VARIOUS THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES

Having mentioned certain orientations of a general nature and of special importance for the teaching of theology, it is now opportune to define certain methodological orientations with special

⁵¹ *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, nn. 36, 37.

⁵² PAUL VI, Alloc. *Nous sommes heureux*, to the International Theological Commission, Oct. 11, 1972: AAS 64, 1972, p. 683.

⁵³ Cf. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, nn. 44, 62.

⁵⁴ Alloc. *Siamo assai grati*, to the College of Cardinals, June 22, 1973: AAS 65, 1973, p. 384.

⁵⁵ Const. *Dei verbum*, n. 24.

reference to the theological disciplines which are today at the centre of scientific interest and are called upon to confront special problems and difficulties.

Up to now much thought has been given to safeguarding the specific nature of theology, of faithfully respecting its special methodological procedure, of making good use of philosophical reflection, of natural and human sciences, of seeking a greater internal cohesion, of assuring the vitality and practical utility of theological knowledge, in closer contact with the sources of Revelation and with life. All that has a much stronger and more concrete resonance when it is a matter of applying it within disciplines such a exegesis, dogmatic theology, moral theology, patristics, pastoral and fundamental theology, which will be dealt with later. All these disciplines—because of the direct contact they have either with the sources, or with the central nucleus of the Christian mystery, or with life—are today particularly questioned due to conciliar directives and to the general present-day situation.

1. Holy Scripture

1) The first thing which must be taken into account in the teaching of theology is that Holy Scripture is the point of departure, an **enduring foundation** and the life giving principle and soul of all theology.⁵⁶

It is, therefore, necessary that professors of Biblical studies should develop their teaching with that competence and scientific completeness which the importance of their discipline demands. So as to be faithful to their task, they must work on the level of texts, on the level of the facts contained in it, on the level of the tradition which the text communicates and interprets. The professors of this subject must have recourse to textual, literary, and historical analysis. But they must also maintain in the souls of the students a sense of the unity of the mystery and of the plan of God. The Scriptures have been handed down by the Church and in part they were born in the Church and, therefore, they must be read and understood in the ecclesial tradition.⁵⁷

2) Such is the principal role occupied by Scripture that it cannot but determine the nature of the connections which exist between itself and theology with its diverse disciplines. This being the case, it cannot be considered onesidedly in the service of the said dis-

⁵⁶ Cf. PONT. BIBLICAL COMMISSION, Instruction *Sancta Mater*, on the historical truth of the Gospels, April 21, 1964: AAS 56, 1964, pp. 713 ff.

⁵⁷ Cf. Const. *Dei verbum*, n. 12.

ciplines (as a source of *loci probantes*), but the whole of theology is called upon to make its contribution to a better and ever more profound understanding of the sacred texts, that is, of the dogmatic and moral truths that they contain.

It follows from this that the teaching of Sacred Scripture, having dealt with all the introductory matter, should culminate in a Biblical theology presenting a united vision of the Christian mystery.

3) Biblical theology, to serve truly a better understanding of Holy Scripture, must have its own subject matter, elaborated by a specific methodology, and with a certain autonomy, that is to say with a certain exclusive attention to the character and integrity of Biblical teaching. Such a relative autonomy does not at all mean an independence or antagonism towards systematic theology, which today does sometimes unfortunately happen.

Between the positive and systematic parts of theology—while maintaining the specificity of their respective methods—there should be, on the contrary, a fruitful and continual collaboration. Properly speaking, in theology there are not two phases of work, inasmuch as the speculative part is already present in the positive; the positive is the speculative “*in fieri*” and the speculative is the positive carried through to its completion.

4) To achieve such an end as this, there must be effective co-operation and co-ordination between the teachers of the disciplines chiefly involved: that is to say exegesis, fundamental theology, dogmatic and moral theology, so as to arrive at a suitable division of tasks, and also at a more perfect harmony and structure of the matter being taught.

One expects from professors of Holy Scripture a correct openness towards and an understanding of the problems of other theological disciplines, keeping always present the requirements of the integrity and internal coherence of the faith, expressed in the principle of the **analogy of the faith**.⁵⁸

The importance justly given today to the Biblical sciences, while it increases the responsibility of Biblical scholars “*vis à vis*” those involved in the other disciplines, does not justify an independent and superior attitude. Biblical scholars should be, above all, the servants of the Word of God, bearing well in mind the delicacy of many exegetical problems that, especially in a seminary course,

⁵⁸ Cf. PONTIFICAL BIBLICAL COMMISSION, Instruction, *Sancta Mater*, on the historical truth of the Gospels, April 21, 1964, n. 4: AAS 56, 1964, pp. 717-718.

must be treated with the greatest prudence and moderation, also because of the influence they can have on catechesis and preaching.⁵⁹

5) The professor of Sacred Scripture should be aware, above all, of the task that his teaching fulfills for dogmatic, moral and fundamental theology, the pastoral ministry and the spiritual life of future priests. Here it should be enough to call to mind that:

a) with a view toward systematic theology, exegesis should tend toward a true and proper Biblical theology;

b) in fundamental theology, Biblical science requires a scientific "aggiornamento" united to a mentality that is constructive in using sure scientific information to serve faith;

c) in pastoral ministry, it is necessary to offer a vision of Sacred Scripture which is as complete as possible, not overlooking the more serious problems,⁶⁰ to guide the students to a wise use of properly interpreted texts;

d) in the spiritual life, the students must be encouraged to respect and love Sacred Scripture⁶¹ and to be trained to profit from the Bible in the liturgy, and in priestly piety and asceticism.

6) To give a formative value to the teaching that begins with Biblical themes, a professor of Holy Scripture must try to co-ordinate them in one theological-ecclesial synthesis, inspired by the **Profession of the Catholic Faith** that summarize the understanding that the Church has of Revelation. In this, theology will be linked to the fundamental articles of the Christian faith.

2. Patristics

1) One could say something similar for patristics, although it is clear that what has been said about the Sacred Scriptures cannot be applied wholly to patristics, because of the evident objective differences between the two disciplines.

But in patristics as in the Biblical sciences it is equally necessary:

a) to respect the special character of the method of historical research;

⁵⁹ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 78.

⁶⁰ Cf. Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 24.

⁶¹ Cf. Decr. *Optatum totius*, n. 16; and also S. C. for CATHOLIC EDUCATION, Circ. *Synodi Episcopalis*, May 22, 1968, in which, for an adequate theological formation of priests, there is sought, amongst other things, «a united structure of teaching; a very precise idea of what theological work is and of its sources; a solid historical formation.»

b) to aim at unity in theological teaching, even if this unity must be done by means of partial and gradual syntheses.

2) One of the principal objects in teaching patristics is to outline the picture of theology and the Christian life in the time of the Fathers in its historical reality. To assign to it other objectives runs the risk of fragmenting it and making it sterile.

3) Furthermore, the teaching of patristics should tend to give a sense of the continuity of theology, which corresponds to fundamental data, and of its relative nature, which corresponds to its particular aspects and applications. In this way, it can help theology in a global sense to remain within the faith interpreted and guarded by the consensus of the Fathers.

4) For this reason also, it will be opportune to strengthen the ties that exist between the teaching of patristics and the teaching of Church history, in order that they may contribute to a systematic understanding of the problems, events, experiences, and doctrinal, spiritual, pastoral, and social developments in the Church at various times.⁶²

3. Dogmatic theology

1) The genetic method laid down for dogmatic theology by Vatican Council II⁶³ consists of five stages: Sacred Scripture, the patristic tradition, history, speculation, the liturgical life, and the life of the Church with an application to the problems of today. This guarantees teaching founded on revealed data, unified in the history of salvation, ordered and integrated in a complete vision of the faith, enlivened by a contact with the liturgy and the life of the Church, and open to pastoral needs, thanks to the attention given to the needs of our time.

2) To realize all the possibilities of such a method, as well as to overcome any difficulties it presents, the first condition is to respect and apply the principle of the **continuity of the faith**, while bearing in mind the need for future generations to understand it ever more deeply and in a way ever better adapted to the needs of the world.

For the sake of this continuity the following points should be considered:

a) the need for a constant reference to Revelation, inasmuch as it is the inexhaustible and objective principle of the faith be-

⁶² Decr. *Optatam totius*, n. 16.

⁶³ Decr. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 11.

getting both dogma and the different expressions of the Christian life, particularly **theology**;

b) the intervention of the ecclesiastical Magisterium to fix and define the permanent requirements of faith;

c) the necessity and also the relative nature of theology, which discovers and brings forth the depths of faith;

d) the need of a contemporary understanding of faith, received and professed in its wholeness, in reference to the new cultural situation, and, therefore, to the special task of theology.

3) A good application of the aforesaid method also requires a good relationship between dogmatic theology and Biblical science, a matter which has already been touched upon.

A direct contact with Sacred Scripture makes it possible to have a greater thematic richness and a teaching more active and creative but consequently a much more demanding work for both professors and students.

4) From what has been said, there emerge certain specific tasks for the teacher of dogmatic theology, especially with regard to the positive part of the teaching under a Biblical and a historical-patristic aspect:

a) under the Biblical aspect he must always remember that Holy Scripture does not only serve to supply proofs to support a thesis, but it is also and above all a point of departure and a source of inspiration for all theological teaching;

b) under the patristic-historical aspect dogmatic theology should be able to acquire promising results from the examination and study of the great masters of Christian tradition, to be used not only in the historical part of theology, but also as a guide in Christian reflection and systematic organization.

5) One must always keep in mind the need of a close co-ordination of disciplines and of an effective co-operation of teachers between the positive and speculative parts of theology, which should be based on two principles:

a) the breath and the importance of the positive part of the genetic historical method should not lessen in the least the weight that speculative development must have in the teaching of theology;

b) the integrity of the genetic historical method admits of a certain flexibility in consideration of the nature of the themes taught: some in a more positive way (e.g. penance) and others in a more speculative way (e.g. grace and freedom or the internal consciousness of Christ).

6) In the teaching of dogma, besides the substantial integrity of the genetic method, the material integrity of the discipline must be assured so that all the truths of the faith are treated as they should be. Obviously, a judicious choice is taken for granted. In making this, the essential must be distinguished from the unessential. In fact, there exists a «*hierarchia veritatum doctrinae catholicae, cum diversus sit earum nexus cum fundamento fidei christianae*».⁶⁴ But it is evident that in dogma as in all the other principal disciplines of the seminary course all options and premature specialization must be excluded.

4. Moral theology

1) The renewal of moral theology desired by Vatican Council II is a part of the effort that the Church is making to understand better the man of today and to go out to meet his needs in a world that is in the process of profound change.

It is a matter of putting the yeast of the Gospel teaching «into the circulation of the thought, expression, culture, customs, and tendencies of humanity as it lives and moves about on the face of the earth today».⁶⁵

The teaching of moral theology contributes most effectively to this task of the Church, and, therefore, it must be renewed and brought to perfection in accordance with these needs.

2) To overcome onesidedness and fill in the omissions of which moral theology has at times given evidence in the past, due in great part to a certain legalism and individualism, as well as to a certain separation from the sources of Revelation, it becomes necessary to clarify its **epistemological status**.

It remains, therefore, to determine the way in which it must be built up always in close contact with Holy Scripture, Tradition, (received through faith and interpreted by the Magisterium) and in reference to the natural law (known by means of reason).

On this basis, a revision and a revaluation of moral theology should be possible, and the same is true of its spiritual, pastoral, and "political" application. In this way it will have a place as authentic theology. Placing it in this position should be of primary concern, so that theology can meet the demands of what is known as "orthopraxis".

⁶⁴ PAUL VI, Encycl. Lett. *Ecclesiam Suam*, Aug. 4, 1964: AAS 56, 1964, pp. 640-641.

⁶⁵ Cf. S. C. for the DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, Declar. *Persona humana*, n. 9, Dec. 29, 1975: *L'Osservatore Romano*, Jan. 16, 1976, p. 1.

3) With this aim in view, it is necessary, above all, to have a lively awareness of the link between moral and dogmatic theology, so that moral questions can be treated as a true and fitting theological discipline, in conformity with all the fundamental epistemological and methodological rules that are valid for all of theology. With regard to this it would be as well to refer to St. Thomas Aquinas, who, like other great masters, never separated moral from dogmatic theology, but, instead, inserted it in a unified scheme of systematic theology, as a part that concerns the process by which man, created in the likeness of God and redeemed by the grace of Christ, tends towards his full realization, according to the demands of his divine calling, in the context of the economy of salvation historically realized in the Church.

4) By virtue of the strict link between moral and dogmatic theology, the specific procedure of theology should be adopted also in morals, developing properly both the positive and the speculative aspect, drawing widely on Revelation and developing every discourse in harmony with the thought and mind of the Church.

It is much to be desired that there should be the same concern for the material completeness of the teaching of this subject as is demanded by dogmatic theology.

5) For moral theology, even more than the other theological disciplines, it is necessary to bear in mind the results of the natural and human sciences, and also of human experience; while these cannot ever find or absolutely create the rules of morality,⁶⁶ nevertheless, they can throw much light on the situation and on the behaviour of man, encouraging research, revision, the profound understanding of doctrine which lies between the sure and certain principles of reason and faith, and their application to the concrete facts of life.

The mediation between moral theology and the human and natural sciences will be accomplished by profound philosophical reflection, stimulated by Christian Tradition which has never failed to consider the problem of man, with particular reference to his nature, his destiny, and his whole development on his way to God.

6) It is also necessary to introduce into moral theology the dynamic aspect which will provoke the reply that a man must give to the divine call that comes in the process of his growth in love, in the bosom of a community of salvation. In such a way, moral theology will acquire an inner spiritual dimension in response to the demand for fully developing the *Imago Dei* which is in man, and the laws of spiritual development described by

⁶⁶ Const. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 46.

Christian ascetics and mysticism. For precisely this reason, moral theology must keep in strict contact with Biblical and dogmatic theology, always bearing in mind the pastoral tasks that future priests must fulfill in directing souls and administering the Sacrament of Penance.

7) In a particular way, the teaching of moral theology to students who are preparing for the priestly ministry brings with it the need for a close contact and relation with pastoral theology, which will encourage it to study the problems posed by the experience of life, and will provide plans of action inspired by the needs of the Word of God and theologically well-grounded and developed. This is the way of renewal indicated by Vatican Council II: « Sub luce evangelii et humanae experientiae ».⁶⁷

5. Pastoral theology

1) Particular attention must be given to the teaching of pastoral theology, both as a part of all the theological disciplines⁶⁸ and also as a science that interprets and stimulates the genuine needs of the pastoral ministry and guides their fulfilment in contemporary circumstances according to the demands of faith, in the light of Revelation.⁶⁹

2) Pastoral theology keeps in touch with reality, that is to say, with the problems of the ministry and the solutions which have been given to them at various times, especially today, but it is bound to the rest of theology and draws on it in two fundamental ways:

a) it appeals to and stimulates the other theological disciplines (especially moral theology), by putting before them problems that they cannot hope to solve in a purely empirical and autonomous way, because they must be seen in the light of faith;

b) it studies the practical application of theological solutions, always bearing in mind the concrete situation and respecting the plurality of possible choices, when there is room for different opinions.

3) Following these criteria, the teaching of pastoral theology can give an authentic formation and prepare the ground for well defined action, avoiding on the one hand timidity and frustration and on the other imprudent and rash initiatives, whose defects would be shown up by a sound theology.

⁶⁷ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 94.

⁶⁸ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 79.

⁶⁹ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 84b; *Normae quaedam ad Constitutionem Apostolicam "Deus scientiarum Dominus" de studiis academicis ecclesiasticis recognoscendam*, n. 33.

4) It will depend on all professors of theology in the basic courses to make the teaching of pastoral theology harmonious, coherent, and formative both as an aspect of the other theological disciplines and as a specific development of matters regarding the ministry. An adequate place should be given to this material in the structure of the course. Encouragement should be given to developing a year's pastoral course, at the end of the institutional course;⁷⁰ however, such teaching should not be excluded earlier in the course when local requirements and possibilities will determine the best form for it to take.

5) In any case it should be kept in mind that the teaching of pastoral theology must not be omitted, nor can the whole of theology be reduced to it.

6. Fundamental theology

1) Fundamental theology is the basis of the rational procedure of all theology. The object of its study is the fact of Christian Revelation and its transmission in the Church, themes which are at the centre of all discussion of the relationship between reason and faith.

2) Fundamental theology is to be studied as an introduction to dogmatic theology and also as a preparation, reflection, and development of the act of faith (the "Credo" of the creedal Symbols) in the context of the requirements of reason and of the relationship between faith, culture and the great human religions. Moreover, it is also a permanent dimension of all theology, which must try to answer the contemporary problems presented by the students and by the world in which they live and in which they will one day have to conduct their ministry.

3) The essential task of fundamental theology is the rational reflection which a theologian, together with the Church and starting from faith, makes on the truth of Christianity as a work of God Who has revealed Himself and made Himself present in Christ, and on the Church herself as the institution willed by Christ to carry on His work in the world.

Besides confronting faith with reason in abstract terms, it is conceived as a theology of dialogue on the borderline with the expression of modern atheism (especially of Marx, Freud, and Nietzsche), with religious indifference in a secular world dominated by technology, industrialism, and economic values, and finally, with the demands of believers, who today face new doubts and diffi-

⁷⁰ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 79.

culties, and ask new questions of theology and catechesis. To answer the needs and experiences emerging from these varied groups, fundamental theology seeks to define the meaning which Christ and His message and His Church have in such a situation, and to arouse and secure the assent of faith as a way of God.

4) These general lines of fundamental theology involve the study and explanation of the relationship of Christianity to history, language, other religious experiences, mysticism, philosophy, science, and the human condition. But, its specific task is to show by reasonable arguments that are valid for believers and non-believers alike how the mystery of Christ present in the Church, not only enlightens but also completes human existence, by uplifting it through the relationship with God which perfects and saves it.

5) Far from fundamental theology being reduced to anthropology it will have its full meaning inasmuch as it is an introduction to the total mystery of Christ and so to theology.

This introductory function means among other things that the professor also has the task of clearly bringing out the basic elements of theological epistemology in order to give the students an exact idea of the sacred science.⁷¹

6) It is opportune to add that, in the teacher and student alike, fundamental theology, set forth according to its full dimension, helps to develop a mature personality in the continual confrontation between faith and reason, achieving a superior harmony between them, as may be seen in so many great masters of the Christian tradition. It helps both the theologian and the pastor of souls to overcome all sense of inferiority in the face of the data of culture and more especially of science, which they use as expressions of rational truth but without becoming enslaved to it, according to the methodological criteria used by fundamental theology. Finally, this fundamental theology serves to stimulate in everyone the courage of the faith, without which neither Christian life nor good theology is possible.

7) For these reasons, fundamental theology is to be considered necessary for theological and pastoral formation, and, consequently, its teaching should hold a place in the programme of studies that corresponds to its importance.

7. Other theological disciplines

Naturally a complete theological formation of future priests goes together with other disciplines of great importance, for example

⁷¹ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 76.

liturgy, canon law, church history, and the ancillary subjects: spiritual theology, the social teaching of the Church, ecumenism, missionary theology, sacred art, sacred music etc. These either go side by side with the principal disciplines or (as in the case of catechetics and homiletics) belong to the realm of pastoral theology.

Regarding these, there are directives given partly in the documents of Vatican Council II (Const. **Sacrosanctum Concilium**, Decr. **Optatam totius**, **Ad gentes**, **Unitatis redintegratio**, **Orientalium Ecclesiarum**, **Inter mirifica**, etc.), and partly in **Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis**, and in various other special documents.⁷²

Every one of these disciplines, while carefully attending to its own problems and specific objects, can derive great advantage from this document, above all, insofar as it is concerned with a more lively awareness of present tasks as well as the need to enter constructively into theological discourse, according to the spirit of the faith.

IV. PRACTICAL NORMS

To conclude the preceding considerations it seems right to formulate certain norms specifying the duties of authorities set over seminaries, of professors and students.

I. The duties of those responsible for theological formation

1. The authorities set over seminaries: Bishops and Episcopal Conferences, Rectors

1) The authorities set over seminaries have the responsibility of testifying that the candidates for the priesthood possess, besides other requisites, a theological preparation that will enable them to

⁷² Cf. the documents published: The SECRETARIAT FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY, *Directorium*, Pars altera (see above all n. 75: *De oecumenismo ut peculiari disciplina*); S. C. FOR THE EVANGELIZATION OF THE PEOPLES, Lett. circ. on the missionary dimension of priestly formation, Pentecost 1970; SECRETARIAT FOR NON-BELIEVERS, the note on the study of atheism, July 10, 1970; S. C. FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION, Lett. circ. on the teaching of philosophy in seminaries, Jan. 20, 1972; Lett. circ. on the study of Canon Law, March 1st, 1975. The same Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, in these recent years, has been publishing in the review "SEMINARIUM" series of articles giving an orientation toward the promotion of the conciliar renewal of the various disciplines in the philosophico-theological curriculum.

carry out their duty of teaching the faith and acting as spiritual guides of the faithful.

2) The preparation of future priests cannot be adequate without an efficient and qualified body of teachers. It follows that Bishops and Rectors of seminaries should not hesitate to allow candidates capable of higher studies the time necessary to obtain academic degrees recognized by the Church.

They should make available to them adequate instruments of work (libraries, books, periodicals) and willingly allow them periods for renewal.⁷³

3) The formation of future priests should be considered as one of the most important ministries in a diocese and, in some ways, the most demanding. In fact, the work of teaching unites the professor very closely to the work of Our Lord and Master, who prepared His Apostles to be witnesses of the Gospel and dispensers of the mysteries of God.

4) These norms will be effective only if they are accompanied by strict vigilance on the part of all those responsible.

2. The professors

1) The role of the professor is particularly important in the seminary course. It is, in fact, he who demonstrates the continuity of faith, tradition, and the life of the Church. It is he who assures, in the present pluralistic climate, lasting assent to fundamental truths as well as critical judgement, and a balanced assessment of a situation.

He is the unifying element indispensable for giving a solid basic formation. Therefore, it is necessary to reassess the function of the professor, for whom the Church quite aware of the difficulty of his mission, wishes to express appreciation and recognition.

2) As the servant of the Word of God, the professor of theology is bound to Christ and to the Church. His teaching should be carried out in the horizon of faith in the Word of our Lord and Saviour, and with an outlook of loyalty to the Church and her Magisterium.⁷⁴

3) The plurality of schools of thought in the Church is a common phenomenon and in some ways can be considered beneficial. It was Vatican Council II that recognized its legitimacy and fruitfulness.⁷⁵

⁷³ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, nn. 32-38.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 87.

⁷⁵ Decr. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 17.

Nevertheless such plurality must not become a pluralism of systems that undermine the unity of faith which must always remain intact. It would be lamentable if theological pluralism were to be confused with pluralism of faiths.

4) In his teaching, the professor must show himself abreast of the most recent contributions of theological research, and capable of expounding and evaluating them.

He must guard against that kind of a **priori thinking** which could induce a mentality that holds new ideas and theories as certain simply because they are new, and older ideas as out of date simply because they are less recent.⁷⁶

5) Theology today has become very much aware of the necessity of a collaboration between the disciplines. In theology, just as in the field of profane science, teams of professors dedicate themselves to finding a deeper knowledge of faith. It is greatly to be desired that seminary teachers intensify amongst themselves those exchanges that help interdisciplinary work on the level of both teaching and research.⁷⁷

6) In the interests of a more effective formation and especially of a more systematic theological preparation which is complete and doctrinally sound, up-to-date textbooks for each of the disciplines are highly to be recommended as the basis of both lectures and private study.⁷⁸

7) Since theological teaching in seminaries has for its principal object the formation of priests for the pastoral ministry, professors must keep this in mind, and, to understand better the needs of the pastoral life, they should keep in touch with parish priests and those who work in the areas of their students' future ministry.⁷⁹

3. The Students

1) Students should feel co-responsible for their own theological formation. In fact, today they should take a more active part in the area of doctrine as in other areas of their formation. This is in conformity with the best traditions of teaching, which today are being given their full value.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 88.

⁷⁷ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 90.

⁷⁸ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 88.

⁷⁹ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 94.

⁸⁰ Cf. Decr. *Optatam totius*, n. 17; *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, nn. 35, 91.

2) Before students are introduced to theology, they should have the necessary literary⁸¹ and philosophical preparation, unless the philosophical course is integrated with the theological one. Their philosophical formation should not comprise only the history of philosophy but also systematic reflection on the world and on man culminating in the affirmation of a personal Absolute. The philosophical course, according to the norms prescribed, should last at least two years.⁸²

3) Students of theology should be ready to approach the sources of theological reflection (in a special way the New Testament, the documents of the Magisterium, the works of the Fathers of the Church and of the great Scholastics), by means of an adequate knowledge of Latin⁸³ and the Biblical language⁸⁴ and by the use of works of contemporary research (translations and commentaries).

4) Student of the theological course should take pains to attend lectures regularly. In fact it is a case not merely of imparting knowledge but of giving a tradition of faith. In this matter of Christian tradition, contact with the master is indispensable, since he is also bearing witness to the faith which has illuminated and transformed his life.

His teaching thus becomes the discourse of a believing and praying theologian in whom there coincide an understanding of the mystery and intimate joining of it to his life. Theology cannot be taught and studied as if it were a secular subject before which one can remain neutral.

Personal contact between the professors and the students in lectures, written work, seminars, and personal direction is very important.⁸⁵

II. The arrangement of theological studies

1) In all seminaries the basic formation necessary to prepare a man for the priesthood should take at the very least four years of theology, or its equivalent in systems that integrate philosophy and theology.⁸⁶ The same applies to religious scholasticates.⁸⁷

⁸¹ Decr. *Optatam totius*, n. 13; *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, nn. 65 ff.; cf. *ibid.*, nn. 59, 60.

⁸² Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, nn. 60, 61; 70, 75, and also S. C. FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION, Lett. Circ. on the teaching of philosophy in seminaries, Jan. 20, 1972, Part III, nn. 1, 2.

⁸³ Decr. *Optatam totius*, n. 13; *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 66.

⁸⁴ Decr. *Optatam totius*, n. 13, *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 80.

⁸⁵ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, nn. 35, 38, 91.

⁸⁶ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 61.

⁸⁷ Cf. *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, n. 2.

2) A seminary course in theology should aim to give a systematic vision of the Christian mystery, including the study of the essential themes of faith and the Christian life. Without such a formation assuring, as it does, the solidity and fruitfulness of every later specialization, the priestly vocation would run the risk of collapsing. It would not be possible even to speak of a solid basic formation, if one or other of the following themes were to be omitted or treated hastily and superficially: Revelation and its transmission by means of Tradition and the Holy Scriptures, the affirmation of one God in Three Persons; of God as the Creator, of the Incarnation of the Son of God and of the Redemption of man the paschal mystery), the Church and the Sacraments; Christian anthropology (grace and the life of God); eschatology; Christian morals (fundamental and special); the whole of the Sacred Scriptures (the law and the prophets, the synoptics, John and Paul).

Equally important in this vision of the Christian mystery are the studies of fundamental theology, theological epistemology, liturgy, Church history, canon law, pastoral theology, the social teaching of the Church, ecumenism, missionary theology.

3) Without being confused with the human sciences so that it becomes psychology, sociology, or anthropology, contemporary theology, even in a seminary course, cannot overlook the problems posed to the man of today by the development of the human sciences. In fact, theology should be not only an understanding of the Word of God but also the understanding of mankind to whom the Word of God is addressed and of the conditions under which this Word is heard. It must speak of the Christian mysteries in such a way that it reaches an understanding of what they are in themselves and what they are for us.

4) In teaching the various theological disciplines, the guidelines indicated in the third part of this document (some affirmations of which have been here deliberately repeated and emphasized) should be kept constantly in mind, in such a way as to assure students, whether or not they are candidates for Holy Orders, of a sound and complete formation.

Conclusion

The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education entrusts this document to the Bishops and to all others responsible for the theological formation of candidates for the priesthood to help them in the serious tasks that they must carry out in today's situation.

An attempt has been made to set forth the true nature and specific mission of the teaching of theology — set in the new outlook initiated by Vatican Council II and by the successive documents of the Supreme Pontiff and the Holy See — to assure the future “masters of the faith” of a doctrinal formation fit for our times. In this way they will be able to *cognoscere quod agunt et imitari quod tractant*.

It is to be hoped that the assimilation of the Word of God and of its saving value will be translated by them into a life in conformity with it, sustaining an authentic priestly spiritual, which will bring the truth into harmony with the needs of pastoral charity, directed to the transmission of the faith of the Church.

Rome, given at the Offices of the Sacred Congregations, February 22, 1976, the feast of Saint Peter's Chair.

GABRIEL-MARIE CARDINAL GARRONE, Prefect

✠ JOSEPH SCHRÖFER,
Tit. Archbishop of Volturnum,
Secretary

OFFICIAL INFORMATION

ARZOBISPADO DE MANILA
1000 General Solano St.
P.O. Box 132
Manila, Philippines

COMMUNICATION

In compliance with the expressed instruction of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in its letter dated 23 December 1976 with Prot. N. 828/76s, it is herein communicated that due to an invalid dispensation, the CANONICAL MARRIAGE entered into by the REV. SAMUEL WILEY, S.J. is ab initio NULL AND VOID, and that the same REV. SAMUEL WILEY, S.J. has in effect incurred in EXCOMMUNICATION according to the norm of the SACRED CANONS.

By Order:

(Sgd.) MSGR. BENJAMIN L. MARIÑO
Chancellor

10 January 1977, Manila

FEATURES

"IN CHRIST — A NEW COMMUNITY"

(Address delivered by His Eminence, Jaime Cardinal L. Sin, Archbishop of Manila, during the Biennial Convention of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines, held in Quezon City, October 29, 1976)

"Our fellowship (koinonia) is with the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Jn. 1:4).

The invitation that your President, Rev. Robert McAmis, graciously sent to me in April of this year to address your biennial convention carried these significant words: "Your presence would visualize and verbalize a reminder that we are all members of the Body of Christ, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, and part of the 'New Community'."

I must confess that the very theme of your convention, "In Christ—A New Community," and these words of your President produced in me a reaction of deeply felt Christian fellowship. My acceptance of the invitation is a testimony of the sincerity of my reaction. It is in this spirit therefore that I shall address you today.

My address will draw rather heavily from recent speeches of Pope Paul VI and from the well-known French writer Jean Guitton. In their company I feel safe.

I

One of the crucial problems of life today is to reconcile truth with love. From the beginning, this difficulty has been at the centre of the relations Christians have with the world, and even more, the relations they have with one another, in their separations and in the desire to dispel them in order to unite again. And this cross of ecumenism is felt even more deeply in those rare and blessed moments in which brethren, having already attained union without reaching unity, acutely feel the depths of what brings them near one another and the obstacle that still separates them. These are moments when joy and sorrow are mingled: people brush up against one another without touching one another, they embrace without uniting, they pray to the same Father without being able to break the same bread.

People are much too scandalized by the divisions between the Christians. It would be vain to deny them; they are a scandal in the eyes of others, a wound for our heart. I feel, however, that in a certain sense it is an extremely noble and pure motive that inspires these separations. What motive? The one that urges man to put truth above everything, his family duties, work and even, in certain cases, life itself. Man is an animal who sometimes prefers truth to life. In the history of the separations this motive is seen in action. Today Love seems to have precedence over Truth and here we are again up against this crucial and fundamental problem of the relationship of truth and love. Either word can be adulterated. Truth is often a mask for triumphant pride, and it may give rise to intolerance. But love too, is subject to deformation. How equivocal are the most beautiful words, such as freedom, peace and love!

When love is true love, it contains in its essence and at its root love of truth, in its two forms: the desire to seek it always, and the duty to spread it, whatever may happen.

It should be added that, in both camps, what leads to the separations is the sentiment of what could be called the integrity and virginity of truth. In both families of spirits, the idea is held that it is not possible to take up one's stand on a compromise; truth is a structured totality and that it is distorted if a particle is taken away and its balance compromised.

It is for this reason that in all dialogues between Christians still separated, there is always a dramatic silence. It is a question of something serious. Each of the parties differs in what is, for the religious spirit, the most important thing, which leads to temporal and eternal consequences that is, the true interpretation of the thought of Jesus Christ. Hence ecumenical silence, a silence that is perhaps even more impressive than words: and this silence honours in each family the love it has of truth, of obedience to the divine plans and thought of the divine founder of the Faith: Jesus Christ.

This disagreement on what is essential is, or can be and must be, a source of love, because far from causing us to despise the person who contradicts us, the feeling each one has of the other's love of truth causes us to honour it in him.

Love of truth must reign in discussions and ecumenical conversations. It must always be manifested in the concern to distinguish in the different denominations what is essential and what concerns concepts, languages and thought patterns. A first effort must be to determine and express what is common to the two denomina-

tions. But it is obvious that this effort to seek the essential common minimum contains a danger, which is that each of the two denominations will diminish its essential elements in order to unite with the other on the basis of the common minimum.

If this tendency were carried to extremes, the result would be an ecumenism of the minimum, that is, a new super-Church, called the ecumenical Church, would be created, which would be a betrayal of each of the particular Churches. Actually, it is not by descending to the common basis that the union of Christians can be brought about, but on the contrary by rising to the height of every faith. In other words, it is not by being less Lutheran that a Lutheran will draw nearer to a Catholic, but on the contrary by deepening his faith in the truth he has received from his Church, and gradually discovering the depths of its height. And in the same way a Catholic will make himself more acceptable to other Churches not by being less Catholic, but by deepening and elevating the ideal of fullness and synthesis, which is the Catholic ideal.

It is not by descending to the lowest point, but by rising towards the highest point of themselves that separated Christians will at last be able to unite both in time and at the last moment of time, (since in eternity there will no longer be a visible Church, they will immediately be united in eternal love).

II

It is precisely in this context that I would like to place the basic fact that constitutes the truth of our real fellowship, that makes us members of the New Community in Christ. The point of departure is the agreement on Baptism that was signed four years ago between the Lutheran Church in the Philippines and the Roman Catholic Church. That fateful agreement embodied one paragraph that expresses the essential elements of our common fellowship.

Speaking about the effects of Baptism the Agreement states: God "incorporates the baptized into the crucified and glorified Christ. By incorporating the baptized person into the living Christ, He also incorporates him into the Church, and thus adopts him into His own family, making him a brother to all other baptized persons" (cf. Rom. 6:3ff.; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27-28).

Here we are then, Lutherans and Catholics, united in a family, a "New Community."

But the Agreement states further: "All Christians are bound to show forth by the example of their lives and speech that new man they put on at Baptism . . . This one Baptism therefore demands that those who through it had been brought together into the Body of Christ, the Church, strive together for greater expression of their oneness in Christ and for unity in all areas of faith."

Let me develop now what the demands are of our baptismal commitment as fellow Christians in the New Community, the Church. First to live our Baptism, then through our lives build the Church.

We became Christians when we were incorporated in Christ, who died for us and rose again for us.

Let us recall among the many scriptural texts which teach us about the relation existing between Christ and us, between his passion and resurrection and our regeneration to the new and supernatural life, at least the following two, which St. Paul stresses as the foundations of the new community: "Jesus Christ . . . was put to death for our sins, (this is the meaning, the sacrificial value of the cross), and rose again for our justification" (this is our salvation).

And how is this salvific purpose of Christ, who died and is risen, carried out in our lives? It is carried out individually, according to the normal plan established by God, in a marvelous, sacramental form, which reflects in each of us, in a symbolic way, but with a mystical efficacy of effect, the death of Christ, which is operated in us as the death of the old self, the man disinherited from vital and supernatural contact with God, and the resurrection of Christ himself, by means of a regeneration to a new life, inserted in that of the Risen Christ, and therefore sharing the adoption of the heavenly Father, and animated by the mysterious breath of the Holy Spirit (cf. F. Prat, *La Theol. de St. Paul; Lumiere et vie, le Baptême*, 26 and 27, 1956; III, 66).

For us baptized there arises a way of conceiving life, which we could call 'post baptismal', and which reflects in thought, in feelings, in behaviour, an outlook consistent with the extraordinary event of our Christian rebirth, by means of Baptism. We must check, that is, if our conception of life is in conformity with the grace conferred on us with that regenerating sacrament, with the faith that it demands and with the moral commitment that it involves.

One word sums up our "post-baptism", it is the word "faithfulness". Baptism is prolonged for the whole life in faithfulness, to the grace of which it is the source, to the promises of which it is the principle. As the Lord says in the Apocalypse: "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Apoc. 2, 10).

III

We must then live our Christian lives. But in them and through them we must help in building the New Community, the Church. The word "Church" recurs three times in the Gospels (Mt. 16, 18; 18, 17; 18, 17 bis); but students of the New Testament find it twenty-three times in the Acts of the Apostles and sixty-four times in the Letters of St. Paul. And it means: assembly, meeting, gathering, with regard to religious act; it acquires the meaning of community, often used to indicate the local community, (cf. 1 Cor. 1, 2; Rom. 16, 1; Apoc. 1, 4); or domestic gathering (Rom. 16, 5; Col. 4, 15; etc). The Church is the social expression of the "Kingdom of God"; of the Mystical Body" of Christ, of which He is the Head (Eph. 1, 22-23; Col. 1, 17; 2, 17), the fullness of Christ (Eph. 1, 23); the Bride of Christ (Eph. 5, 25); and so on. Let us stop at the symbol already mentioned, chosen by Christ, that of the God's building, built by Himself: "I will build my Church."

"You are God's building" St. Paul says solemnly. (cf. 1 Cor. 3, 9). In this expression, echo of the Lord's thought, some constitutional concepts of the Church are expressed: that of the divine origin of the mystical building, and the increase, which is also divine, of its human and social composition, and of its deep and structural adhesion (cf. L. Cerfaux, *La Theol. de l'Egl., suivant St. Paul*, Paris, 1948).

A word greatly used today seems to sum up and express this aspect of the Church. It is the word **communion**, in its double reference to God and to Christians among themselves.

The Second Council of the Vatican often uses it: the Church is a communion of faith and charity (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, nn. 4, 9 espec., 13, 23, 49; etc.). This is a beautiful word, which can well be applied to the building which we are called to compose under the operating hand of Christ; communion, cause and effect of its compactness, its solidity; and since it is a question of a living building, such as a social body is, its vitality. Communion means, in our plan, grace when it indicates the relationship of unity with God. It means brotherly love in sharing the same faith, the same hope and the same charity, when it indicates the relationship with our brothers. It is like the circulation of the blood in a living, healthy man. It is a factor of spiritual and social unity in a composite organism. St. Paul seals the concept and the precept of Christian communion in the magnificent recommendation: "maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" Eph. 4, 3).

Communion is, therefore, the uniting cement that connects the single parts of the "building of the Church", both in its mystical

composition, the communion of Saints, and in its community expression that is organic insertion in the visible body of the Church herself.

We must recognize that this united character of the Church has become more evident and more deeply felt in our days. That it interprets the true and supreme thought of Christ, no one will deny (cf. Jn. 17). Ecumenism has reawakened the necessity of it for everyone, and has increased joy and humility in Christians who already enjoy its inestimable benefit, just as it has produced a more conscious torment and a more generous desire for perfect communion.

But how can we construct the Church? It can be constructed on faith, as Christ himself taught, and with the force of love. Only those who love the Church can construct it: that is edify, vivify. And from this point of view it is Christ himself who sets the example: *Christus dilexit Ecclesiam*" (Eph. 5, 25), Christ loved the Church, St. Paul writes, and gave himself up for her. Love assumes the highest expression and measure: that of sacrifice. "Greater love has no man than this" . . . Jesus in fact says . . . "that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn. 15, 13).

But the most important thing to remember when we propose to construct the Church, is the foundation on which the construction rests and must rise up; and this foundation is faith, faith in Jesus Christ "You are," St. Paul writes again, "God's building. According to the commission of God given to me, like a skilled builder I laid a foundation, and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care how he builds upon it. For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3, 10-12). The Apostle wrote this to the Corinthians; he then taught the Romans, opening the way to Christian theology: "It is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live'" (1, 17; cf. 3, 2). He will live drawing from faith the principle of salvation, of justification: an objective principle, as God's gift; and a subjective principle, as acceptance of the gift to faith.

It means to construct, to take shapeless, scattered materials, and, keeping their essential structure, mould them, unite them, assemble them in an architectural plan, and confer on them the usefulness and the dignity of one design, which reflects a thought, a purpose, a beauty, which belongs to all the single materials that compose it and to the building as a whole. This is Christ's idea about mankind, about the kingdom of God, about construction.

A construction which for us, sons of time, is, it can be said, always beginning! All of the work carried out in the centuries that have gone before us, does not exempt us from collaboration with

the divine builder. On the contrary, it calls us, not just to a faithful task of preservation of passive traditionalism, or of hostile rejection of the perennial innovation of human life. It calls us to begin all over again, mindful indeed, as jealous guardians, of what the true history of the Church has accumulated for this and for future generations, but aware that the building, until the last day of time, demands new work, demands laborious, fresh, brilliant construction, as if the Church, the divine building, were to begin today its adventurous challenge to the heights of heaven (cf. 1 Cor. 3, 10; 1 Pet. 2, 5). Here it is necessary to shake off the tiredness, the laziness, the lack of confidence, the self-inflicted wounding of systematic contestation, and to try to interpret in the needs of society, with youthful freshness, with brilliant audacity, with great, humble confidence, the plan that Christ, the builder, prepares for his followers:

Conclusion

Let me finish by reminding ourselves that this work of living our common Christian faith, of helping in constructing the Church of Christ which she wanted to be one, where all his disciples would be "one as the Father and He are one," has received a powerful thrust through the many common initiatives of the Lutheran Church and the Roman Catholic Church. The conversations at the official level between the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, the regular meetings between representatives of the Roman Catholic Bishops Commission for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs in the USA and of the USA National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation that has already produced five valuable volumes on ecumenical topics of paramount ecumenical importance, and in a more modest way of conversations that were held — and hopefully will soon be resumed — between the ecumenical commissions of the Lutheran Church and the Catholic Church in the Philippines are indications that we are moving towards unity, the full blossoming of a union — albeit imperfect — we already have and that was instilled in our baptism.

We are moving in the New Community towards communion. Communion is not a temporary dress for the church. Communion is a happy and necessary condition of our pilgrimage, because it is part of the very structure of the city towards which we are journeying. It gives us a foretaste of these eschatological blessings. This communion which is entirely directed to the complete establishment of the Kingdom, demands that we work in all seriousness, sincerity and earnestness to the promotion of the goal of unity: "In Christ — A New Community."

ST. ALBERT, THE FORERUNNER OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

By

Ciriaco Pedrosa, O.P.

We are all familiar with a well established practice, known as "citation", used when an institution decides to make a public recognition of the superior services rendered by a person to a community. A plaque is presented, symbol of appreciation and containing an inscription in which are recorded the deserving merits for perpetual memory.

It we read attentively the part of the Mass of St. Albert now called the "opening prayer", we see that it contains a summary of the heroic deeds and virtues that make the Saint worthy of being presented to the faithful as a model for imitation. In fact, it is a close imitation of, if not a real citation. In the case of St. Albert, we are shown something unique, not found in any other saint of the calendar. The Church, in proclaiming St. Albert Patron of those who devote their lives to the study of natural sciences, presents him as a supreme model: first, in asserting the conformity between divine wisdom and human wisdom, between faith and science; and second, in expecting that the cultivation of human knowledge may bring man more and more close to God. Here is the translation:

God, you endowed St. Albert with the talent of combining faith with human wisdom. Keep us true to his teaching so that the advance of human knowledge may deepen our knowledge and love for you.

The mission of St. Albert is well defined in the words of the citation we find in the Liturgy — to consolidate the harmony between divine wisdom and human wisdom, between divine knowledge and human knowledge, between Religion and Science.

The dichotomy of the supernatural (revealed) and the natural (philosophical, scientific) truths, emerged from the same source, the Archetypical ideas in the mind of God. They can neither antagonize nor exclude each other, no matter how persuasive appearance may be. St. Albert dedicated his efforts and his talents to work out a conciliation between the revealed and the Scientific truth. To show that the theological and philosophical knowledge must converge towards the same eternal source from which all are derived. Thus, St. Albert accomplished a mission that centuries later would be taken over by the Catholic universities of today. The involvement demanded however by the present catholic universities is more comprehensive than the mere reconciliation of Catholic theology with the doctrine of Aristotle and Averroes, or with the deficiently experimented conclusions of the XIIIth century Physics, Chemistry and Astronomy.

The history of Theology shows a close parallelism with that of the Catholic university; both have to encounter similar problems and sustain the pressure from secular discipline, demanding new institutional structures.

But the pattern outlined by St. Albert has set firmly on the ground, and never ceased to lend an indispensable buttress to institutional theology. Today, centuries after theology was dropped from the university scene, we assist at the rebirth of the consortium of catholic universities in which Theology (the doctrine of revelation) has been reinstated, if not exactly as the "Queen of the Sciences", certainly in a position to dialogue with all other knowledges, and contribute effectively to maintain the dimension of "catholicity" of the university, which without the vital influence of theology, will in fact not be catholic whatever the name or the sponsorship.

A Catholic University must be above all, a University with all its implications, that is, a high standard institution committed to search for and to dispense human wisdom in all forms. But a Catholic University has the trust to dispense human wisdom in the light of and in conformity with the principles of divine wisdom. A Catholic University may fail from its commitments on double account: if its search and teaching of human knowledge falls short of the expected academic standard, or if its projection of divine wisdom on natural science approaches non-existence. It has to

be a place where knowledge is sought and shared; but the education imparted must be more than merely intellectual. Certainly if the thirtieth-century needed one St. Albert to reconcile religion and science, the twentieth-century would need not one but hundreds of catholic universities to perform adequately the role of St. Albert. It is true that not every branch of human knowledge may be equally hostile to revelation. We may be sure that St. Albert did not write about Botany because he found in it some point of disagreement with the Faith.

We must look at a Catholic University not as a fragmentary composite but as an integrated and indivisible whole, every part of which must be blended to the whole and work in unison with it. There are departments and professors whose main business is doctrinal discipline or political and social orders; but the moral values belong to no department in particular. All must share in the responsibility of upholding the scope of an institution that has pledged itself to search and communicate the eternal mysteries that are hidden in nature.

We are prone to consider the university as an abstract entity, or as a complex of buildings, offices, playing grounds, etc., quite apart from the personnel that supports it. This conception is, the least to say, very unrealistic. University means above all the administration, the faculty, the student body; in one word, the **human element**, which like the soul in the body, makes a living structure of the University. That is what we may call the **Human university**, committed to carry on the task and the function of which St. Albert was a supreme model, namely: to assert before the world of intellectuals that science and revelation are not exclusive of each other, nor do they nurture any real conflict between them. All members of the **Human University** must contribute to the realization of that moral undertaking, whatever their position in the University may be.

THE EVOLUTION OF CONSCIENCE AND TRINITARIAN INDWELLING

by

Fr. Ted Gresh, M.M.

I. Analysis of Conscience from the Psychological Point of View

- A. Freudian School
- B. Lindz
- C. Erikson
- D. Frankl
- E. Allport
- F. Cousins
- G. Monden
- H. Orsy
- I. Goldbrunner
- J. Meissner
- K. Brooke

II. How to explain in a more comprehensible way the union of man's conscience with the Trinity

- A. Rahner and the Psychological Analogy
- B. Eastern Theology
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- D. Authentic Love of God and Neighbor
- E. Transactional Analysis
- F. Glasser
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- H. Application of Curran's definition of synderesis and conscience.

III. Teilhard's theology of process as developed by E. Baltazar Towards a metaphysics of union.

Corollaries

- a) Conscience and Church Authority.
- b) Process and the Problem of the Christian Conscience.
- c) Conscience in an anonymous presence.

AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

In recent years, psychologists, theologians, Bishop's conferences and the Vatican Council II have given increasing attention to the function of conscience in the life of man. In this paper we shall examine the writings of some prominent psychologists and theologians on the subject. From their observations and conclusions we will attempt to draw some "theological coordinates" to link conscience to Christian life and experience.

After establishing a relationship between God and conscience, we shall try to explain in a more comprehensible way, the union of man's conscience with the Persons of the Trinity.

In the normal life of grace:

Christ comes to us **from within outwards**. Gods' grace transforms, heals, and **raises our fundamental option**. The normal way with God's saving action is that an efficacious virtue flows from this interior rebirth of the heart, and little by little permeates, strengthens, unifies and enkindles human activity as a whole. In the ordinary designs of divine love, the **process of interior unification** in God brings about a behaviour authentically human, a perfect psychic integration. The divine action of grace promotes an interior harmony of all our powers, aspirations and impulses, not only in order to purify them but also to give them deeper root and greater intensity. God works "from within outwards." (Roysbroeck) **Grace radiates outward** when it is given free scope in our life. (Emphasis mine)¹

Finally, we shall propose Teilhard's theology of process, developed by E. Baltazar, as the model which best synthesizes the elements and factors which come into play in the development of the Christian conscience.

With the help of the psychologists and theologians mentioned, we will try to synthesize their insights within the Teilhardian model, showing how the Persons of the Trinity come to us "from within outwards" and how the judgment of conscience, in communion with the Divine Persons in human community gradually harmonizes our powers, aspirations and impulses, raises our fundamental option and leads us through a process of interior unification in God to a radiation of that interior life in the life of others.

¹ Peter Fransen, *The New Life of Grace* (New York: Seabury Press,

Psychological Dimensions Some Current Views of Conscience

A. FREUDIAN SCHOOL

Some psychologists of the Freudian school have located the conscience in the superego and explain it as one of the two sub-systems which govern it (the other being the ego idea). The child incorporates the values of parental figures in the ego ideal through the mechanism of introjection and evaluates his actions according to his conformity or non-conformity with the interiorized parent.

When he deviates from his ego ideal, the conscience punishes him by making him feel guilty. When he acts in consonance with the ego ideal he feels interiorly happy and joyful.²

The early experiences of the child, even the infant, tends to precipitate and contribute to the formation of a nucleus of responses called conscience. In new situations, the habits of the past operate automatically in moral judgements and the emotions of fear, subservience and aggression which were present in the genesis of this moral attitude are also felt and experienced in the adult. (A similar theory has been expanded and systemitized in the school of transactional analysis which we will refer to later).

B. LINDZ

Lindz, citing Erikson, points out the importance of early heightening of conscience in the resolution of the Oedipal crisis. Oedipal strivings can create feelings of guilt and anxiety the desire for punishment and death, but they can also lead to an initiative to become a person like the parent through identification with mother or father. A conscience or superego develops in order to regulate initiative and enforce dependability.³

C. ERIKSON

Erikson, in his chapter on "Identity", sees conscience as the governor of initiative and the ontogenetic cornerstone of morality. This "inner voice" observes, guides and punishes the self according to the judgment of conscience. There are dangers here, however,

1969), p. 349.

² Calvin S. Hall and Gardner Lindzey, *Theories of Personality* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 1957), p. 35.

³ Theodore Lindz, *The Person* (New York: Basic Book Inc. 1968), pp. 190-191.

and we often observe children who have become cruel and uncompromising through malformation and poor guidance. "One of the deepest conflicts in life is caused by hatred for a parent who served initially as the model and executor of the conscience, but who was later found trying to 'get away with' the very transgressions which the child could no longer tolerate in himself".⁴

Transposed into a theology of ecclesia docens as one cardinal expressed it, it reads, "We are the Church, the laity belong to it". We can see how those who were regarded as the "simple faithful" can come to resent such ecclesiastical outbursts of superiority, especially in areas where laymen have more competence than their clerical brothers. What is happening is that a Church that formerly looked on its members as children, is being asked to address them as mature men and women. David Belgum blames the present generation for relaxing discipline and going soft morally. For religious man, there is a moral law governing the universe and conscience is a response to that reality. While some patients may require a relaxation of a morbid and severe conscience (superego) all of us need limit setting controls from within. (The difficulty with his presentation here is situating the conscience in the superego and still requiring a response from within. As we shall point out later, superego and conscience should be clearly distinguished).

D. FRANKL

And as Frankl says, the conscience is not the result of Skinnerian conditioning processes as, for example, a dog who slinks off after having wet the rug. For him, this type of reductionism is sub-humanism.

Frankl defines conscience as that noological dimension by which man reflects upon himself and makes himself an object which he accepts or rejects, by being "conscientious." It presupposes the capacity to rise above oneself and to judge one's deeds in moral and ethical terms.

Love and conscience are the two most human examples of self transcendence since man transcends himself either toward another person or toward meaning. (But even here the two do not appear to be mutually exclusive) Love, he says, is the capacity to grasp the meaning of the situation in its uniqueness. Both are intuitive capacities, but the uniqueness of love refers to the unique possibilities of the loved one, whereas conscience refers to a unique necessity or need to be met.

⁴ Erik Erikson, *Identity, Youth and Crisis* (New York: Norton and Co. 1968), p. 119.

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We agree with Frankl that conscience is distinguished from the superego since it often must oppose those conventions, standards and traditional values which are transmitted by the superego. The prophets of the Old Testament, those who protested against the Vietnam War, civil rights leaders, theologians of liberation have all had to face these situations. If conscience has the function of contradicting the superego, it certainly cannot be identical with superego. To reduce conscience to the superego or deduce love from the id are both doomed to failure.⁵

Even to seek a "good conscience" directly, as one would seek or intend pleasure, happiness, self actualization, health or peak experiences as ends in themselves is self-defeating. To seek health directly makes us hypochondriacs and the quest for the "good conscience" can make us Pharisees.⁶

In another place, Frankl defines conscience as "the intuitive capacity of man to find out the meaning of a situation". Since it is unique, it does not fall under any general law and only the conscience can grasp and hold these meaning Gestalts.⁷

E. ALLPORT

Gordon Allport sees conscience as the crucial agent which controls transitory impulses and opportunistic adjustments in the interest of achieving a long range aim consistent with the self image. Like Frankl, he rejects the simplistic identification of conscience with superego since we often discard codes imposed by parents and culture. As man matures, his conscience should direct the self from opportunistic becoming to oriented becoming, and from a negative motivation of fear to a positive motivation of love. Fear, says Allport, prompts a series of "oughts" which are perceived in terms of a self image which is "not yet", while love is the motivation of actions springing from an authentic self love and the experience of being at peace with oneself. Nevertheless, even St. Paul experience this division and complained about doing the things he ought not and not doing the things he ought. "For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members" (Rom. 7:22-23).

Perhaps then, it is not such a "travesty" as Allport suggests, if we see religious people whose conscience are motivated by

⁵ Victor Frankl, *The Will to Meaning* (New York: New American Library, 1969), pp. 18-19.

⁶ Ibid., p. 41.

⁷ Ibid., p. 63.

mixed feelings of love and fear, analyzed in the writings of R. Otto, the beginning of Wisdom in the Old Testament, and the personal experience of St. Paul.

Allport lists three stages in his evolution of conscience. 1) External sanctions give away to internal ones, 2) experiences of prohibition, fear and "must" give way to experiences of preference, self-respect and ought, through the development of the self image and value systems. 3) Specific habits of obedience give way to generic self guidance and give conduct its direction. It is this generic self guidance which allows one to build his style of being and warms him against those factors which would tend to tear it down. As generic conscience becomes the monitor of growth, the emphasis shifts from tribalism to individuality. Fear gives way to ought and opportunistic becoming is replaced by oriented becoming.⁸

If we were to draw religious "coordinates" to Allport's model of conscience we could relate "transitory and opportunistic impulses" to Paul's experience of the war in his members against the aspirations of his mind. This moral ought can only be accomplished in Jesus Christ.

For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:3-4).

Thus man can then achieve the long range goal and aim consistent with the self image, now identified with Jesus Christ. "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). The specific habits of obedience (The Law) give way to generic self guidance (through the action of the Holy Spirit) who gives his conduct its direction (in answering the call of the Father). We can now see how Frankl's observation "To reduce conscience to the superego or deduce love from the id are both doomed to failure" fits Allport's model. Rather it is the Holy Spirit who corrects the transitory and opportunistic impulses of the flesh (id) as the person brings his self image (ego) into conformity with Christ and orients his life toward the long range aim consistent with this self image (the ultimate aim and goal being union with the Father through perfect charity which casts out all fear).

For you do not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is the Spirit himself

⁸ Gordon Allport, *Becoming* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), pp. 68-74.

bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him (Rom. 15-17).

F. COUSINS

As Ewert Cousins puts it, in the mature Christian, law has been subsumed in love, the commandments have completely interiorized and lifted to a divine level where the Christian can experience the love of Trinitarian life.

Having been drawn into the Trinitarian life of love, the mature Christian is assimilated in his moral self to the Trinity and shares in a special way in the mystery of creation and the incarnation. In the technical sense of moral theology, conscience "is a judgment of practical reason on the moral goodness or sinfulness of an action" (Jones, 1953, p. 38). As incarnate spirit, man must express himself in his actions in space and time. His conscience is his guide, the faculty that directs this expression so that his actions will be the adequate expression of his moral self as image of God. Having united himself to Christ, the Christian is swept up into the mystery of the generation of the Son from the Father. As perfect image of the Father the Son adequately expresses the reality of the Father: and as Word of the Father, He is the vehicle for all expression in creation and ultimately in the incarnation. The Trinity is the mystery of perfect expressionism—both internally in the processions and externally in creation and the incarnation. Through union with Christ, the Christian strives to approximate the perfect expressionism of the Trinity. Through the guidance of his conscience in the incarnate moral decisions of his life, the Christian grows toward the maturity of the ideal expressionism revealed in the Trinity.⁹

G. MONDEN

Fr. Louis Monden also distinguishes three levels of conscience which correspond roughly to those of Allport; instinctive, moral, and Christian religious. 1) At the instinctive level there is an ambivalent feeling and it is experienced as a pressure or law coming from without as, for example, taboos and restrictions imposed by society. 2) At the moral level, law is internalized and becomes an opportunity for growth and self-development in correspondence with the structure of the inner self. Man owes it to himself to be faithful to this demand and conscience is the deepest self conscious-

⁹ Ewert Cousins, "The Mature Christian Conscience," *Conscience*, ed. by C. Ellis Newson (New York: Newman Press, 1973), pp. 148-149.

ness of man, insofar as it acts as a power of discrimination deciding in every choice what will promote authentic self-realization and what will stand in the way. While not infallible, still, it must be obeyed. 3) On the Christian religious level the law of love is so interiorized that self actualization is not foremost, but rather intimacy with God. The moral duty is transformed into an ought and obligation becomes vocation. Conscience here is "love itself as a power of discriminating what can promote and what can hinder its growth." A mature conscience welcomes the direction of one's development through God's call within the Church. Ideally, the Christian conscience would act as a compass of love that pointed the direction so clearly that external law would no longer be needed. As an assimilated personal attitude, conscience would have become a conscious instinct and an infallible power of discrimination.¹⁰ It would seem that Fr. Monden is referring here to a Christian already in the "unitive way" as it is described in ascetical theology or to one who has either attained to or well on the way to mystical marriage as described by St. Teresa of Avila.

But even the conscience of the average Christian must be a "graced" conscience, and as we have seen both in the psychological model of Allport, and Monde, and in the writings of St. Paul, the Christian conscience already exhibits phenomenological changes at the lower levels of the Christian life which are measurable both in the external acts of the person and in his psychological orientation. While even the saint may not experience the mystical presence of the Trinity with the intensity and clarity of a St. Theresa (as Fr. Orsy points out) there are nevertheless varying degrees of this perception.

H. ORSY

Union could, perhaps exist without any perception of it, but contemplation necessarily implies some knowledge of it, because no one can adhere to God in mind and heart without having some certainty in mind and heart that he is clinging to God. What is the nature of this perception? How far does this Christian maturity, or indeed, progress to ward this maturity, include the experience of union? An answer had been given by St. Paul: in the consciousness of a Christian there is an

¹⁰ Louis Monden, *Sin, Liberty and Law*, trans. by Joseph Doneell (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1965), pp. 6-7; p. 102.

experience of the prompting of the Spirit who leads us to Christ and to the Father . . . This awareness is not an infallible divine certainty, but a quiet security granted by God present. It is not a clear intellectual apprehension; it is an intuition of God's children. It manifests itself in peace, joy, and contentment in the service of God, or better, in faith, hope and charity. It is expressed by a good conscience.¹¹

I. GOLDBRUNNER

Joseph Goldbrunner situates the conscience within the four stages of individuation through a process of centration. Spiritual dispositions and organs subordinate themselves to the potential center of the psyche which then becomes the center of all decisions and actions. (We have difficulty accepting the fact that the conscience, as psychic center of decisions and actions, will subordinate "all" the spiritual dispositions and organs. This may be an ideal to be aimed at but seldom achieved in actual fact). For Goldbrunner the conscience also contains the synthesis between the conscious and the unconscious and expresses itself in the tertiary: consciousness, unconscious and self. Goldbrunner compares this individualized psyche to St. Augustine's psychological doctrine or analogy of the Trinity. The hidden Father is paralleled to the unconscious; the conscious with the Logos; and the Self with the Holy Spirit who serves the other two. The self, the core of the person and conscience are considered as different aspects of one and the same anthropological seat of justice, therefore conscience is not merely an organ, voice of function. Activated by the call of other persons in social and communal life and in a loving and personal relationship with God, man becomes whole and whole by being a man for others. The conscience is involved with this Thou relationship to God and is impregnated at the very center of personality.¹²

While we can agree with the conscience as involved in an interpersonal relationship with God at the very core of the personality, Goldbrunner's attempt to explain the Trinitarian Indwelling in terms of unconsciousness-Father; consciousness-Logos; and Self-Holy Spirit is never expanded and remains fundamentally unclear.

¹¹ Ladislaus M. Orsy, S.J., *Open to the Spirit* (Washington: Corpus Books, 1968), pp. 232-233.

¹² Joseph Goldbrunner, *Cure of Mind and Core of Soul* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1962), p. 99.

J. MEISSNER

William Meissner's formulation seems closer to the mark but is still rather vague. "The conscience urges man from the "with-in" towards a fundamental option which introduces him to the intimacy of the Trinitarian life and indwelling, struck in the image of the Son, by the seal of the Holy Spirit.¹³

We can begin to see, however, how grace can guide man's moral life through the operation of his conscience in a process flowing from a fundamental option and core freedom at the center of the person.¹⁴

K. BROOKE

Dom Odo Brooks tells us that however obscurely may be the beginnings of participating in trinitarian life, we are given a new "identity" and a new "center" through the presence of the divine persons within us. We experience, know and love in a new way, and we should note that this unification of knowledge and love is rooted in the experience of "presence". (A notion which is developed and runs all through Teilhard's Divine Milieu)¹⁵

This new meaning and free loving response is discerned in the experienced presence of divine persons and unlike the experience of the senses, this experienced presence gives a contact not with the "limite" but with the unlimited; . . . Communion with the divine persons is communion with human persons in that divine presence. To live from this new center, this new "identity", demands a radically new development which begins in the basic act of faith, develops in the increasing gradations of what is called the "mystical life" and is fulfilled on the other side of death.¹⁶

Can we, with the help of present psychological models, begin to formulate a more precise or at least more comprehensible explanation of this union between God and man, than the older Thomistic substance and accident model, the created actuation by uncreated act of de la Taille, the obediential capacity and "supernatural existential" of Karl Rahner?

¹³ William Meissner, *Foundations for a Psychology of Grace* (Glen Rock: Paulist Press, 1965), p. 208.

¹⁴ See John W. Glaser, S.J., "Transition between Grace and Sin, Fresh Perspectives," *Theological Studies* 29 (1968), pp. 260-274.

¹⁵ Dom Odo Brooke, "A Psychological Aspect of the Trinitarian Indwelling," *The Downside Review* 90 (July 1972): pp. 163-166.

¹⁶ See also, Piet Fransen, "Towards a Psychology of Grace," *Cross Currents of Psychiatry and Catholic Morality*, op. cit., pp. 31-61.

Again it would seem that any theological consideration of conscience should include some aspects of the core of the person in relation to its Trinitarian operations. When we speak of the graced person in the traditional language of a theology of grace, we mean that a person is loved by God and is capable of loving Him in return. For the Christian, this experience of loving and being loved by God is conscious, but, as Rahner asserts, it should also be Trinitarian.

A. RAHNER AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALOGY

De Gratia considers only "strictly appropriated relations" and is as much as to say "we ourselves have really nothing to do with the mystery of the Trinity, beyond receiving some revelation 'about it'".¹⁷

In an anthropocentric perspective, Rahner asserts:

We need only make the quite legitimate assumption that on account of God's absolute self-communication in "uncreated grace" the immanent Trinity is strictly identical with the economic Trinity and vice versa, and we are then able to read the doctrine of the Trinity "anthropologically" without falsifying it.¹⁸

While Rahner's theology would seem to call for an explication of the Indwelling Trinity in relation to consciousness, his writings leave us "open" to such a relationship but do little to explain it. Grace, he says:

cannot be sufficiently described by purely formal ontological categories alone (created "quality", accident, habitus, etc.) but that personal categories (love, personal intimacy, self-communication) can neither be avoided in the description of what grace is, nor, because they do not belong to the realm of formal ontology, are they on that account inaccessible to a more precise philosophical or theological reflection or stand in no need of it.¹⁹

Regina Bechtle, in a recent article entitled "Karl Rahner's Supernatural Existential: A Personalist Approach", has attempted to put the supernatural existential in the personalist framework, but unfortunately, the interpersonal relationship keeps referring to "god"

¹⁷ Karl Rahner, "Remarks on the Dogmatic Treatise 'De Trinitate'" *Theological Investigations*, Vol. IV (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1969): p. 82.

¹⁸ Karl Rahner, "Theology and Anthropology" *Theological Investigations*, Vol. IX (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1972): p. 28.

¹⁹ Karl Rahner, "Concerning the Relationships between Nature and Grace," *Theological Investigations*, I (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1961): pp. 302-303.

and the human person, throwing little light on the reality of Trinitarian Indwelling.²⁰

Man does have this dialogical structure, says Gregory Baum, Mackey, and those of the personalist school. But in grace, who does the human person dialogue with? God? The Trinity? Uncreated Grace? or the Divine Persons under the aspect of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit? And if the Indwelling Trinity does dialogue with the human person, how does he become psychologically attuned to the Divine Persons within him. Is it possible (as seems the case with Rusbroeck, Elizabeth of the Trinity and Teresa of Avila) that at least some persons are called to a conscious awareness and presence of the Trinitarian life within them and not merely to an interpersonal dialogue with "god"?

Can we validly address some of our prayers to the Father, others to the Son, and some to the Holy Spirit within us? Is there a psychological ternary structure to the human psyche which can respond to the Trinity of God and do the formulation of psychology (id, ego, superego; parent-adult-child in transactional analysis; Goldbrunner's conscious-unconscious-self; Augustine's memory, will, intellect, etc.) point in some way to a tripartite ground of our being which can respond to a grace in terms of Trinitarian Indwelling? Should the Indwelling of the Trinity remain simply "ontological" or develop into psychological experience?

As J. P. Mackey points out:

The terms "purely psychological" and "purely mental" could only be applied in the strict sense to hallucinations, in the very broadest range of meaning for that word. Apart from these there is no valid distinction between the psychological and the ontological, unless that is a (rather misleading) manner of expressing the distinction, which does exist, between the psychick and the physical. Significantly enough, theologians who reject a certain concept of grace as purely psychological are often driven to use the term "physical" of grace, with all the formidable difficulties that this usage involves, at the very least in terms of false impression. Certainly nobody would dream of downgrading the personal knowledge and love on which we wager the substance of our happiness by calling it merely psychological or merely mental.²¹

While the psychological model is quite ancient, receiving its fullest treatment in the writings of St. Augustine, the opinion of Karl Rahner is that this model contains many difficulties. While

²⁰ Regina Bechtle, "Karl Rahner's Supernatural Existential: A Personalist Approach," *Thought* 48 (Spring 1973): pp. 62-77.

²¹ J. P. Mackey, *Life and Grace* (Dublin: Gill and Son, 1966), pp. 58-59.

this may be true, the same criticism could be leveled against most of the traditional writings on grace with its "three story" concept of human nature (substance, powers and activities).²²

Rahner has a long explanation on the development of the Augustinian psychological model.²³ He implies that the Greek Fathers saw their entire theology as a salvific explication of the Trinity. The West took over the formal portion of this doctrine and filled out the mathematical and formalistic theology in terms of Augustine's psychological doctrine.

In his book, *The Trinity*, Rahner has enlarged upon the difficulties of the Augustinian model which he had mentioned in *Theological Investigations*:

When the theologian mentions this connection... his Augustinian-psychological speculations on the Trinity result in that well known quandry which make all of his marvelous profundity look so utterly vacuous: for he begins from a human philosophical concept of knowledge and love; and now after having speculatively applied these concepts of the Trinity, he must admit that this application fails, because he has clung to the "essential" concept of knowledge and love, because a "personal", "notional" concept of the Word and inclination of love cannot be derived from human experience.²⁴

Following the Greek Fathers and the present insights of modern psychology, we would expect the contrary — that this *imago dei* would leave its impression both upon creation and the human personality.

Even Rahner admits later in his presentation:

At any rate, such "psychological" interpretation of the Trinity can be legitimate, important and illuminating only if it shows how it derives from the real and only starting point of the whole doctrine of the Trinity and leads back to it.²⁵

Perhaps Western theologians should again reexamine these traditions of the Greek Fathers to see if it can be shown how, (while anthropologically, we begin with the missions of Son and Holy Spirit) all of creation derives ultimately from the Trinity and leads back to it. We relate this theme to the writings of Teilhard who traces the course of "Trinitization" from the first coment of creation to the Parousia.

²² Ibid., p. 36.

²³ *Theological Investigations*, Vol. IV (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1969): p. 85.

²⁴ Karl Rahner, *The Trinity* (London: Burnes and Oates, 1970), p. 19.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 48.

B. EASTERN THEOLOGY — EVODKIMOV

Western theology, says P. Evodkimov, has exaggerated the theology of opposed relations within the Trinity.

For the East, the relations in the Trinity are not relations of opposition or separation, but of diversity mutual revelation, and communion in the Father.²⁶

P. Corcoran, in evaluating Evodkimov's theology, tries to redeem the Western approach by emphasizing that the whole theology of relations has evolved precisely to underline "diversity, mutual revelation, and communion". But some of Evodkimov's criticisms seem valid, at least, as they are presented by Corcoran:

Evodkimov is oversensitive (says Corcoran) when he feels that the Western formulations make the divine nature and not the Person of the Father the principle of unity within the Trinity. Elsewhere he describes this as a basic displacement which led to the Filioque. Western theology describes unity in the Trinity in essence. All three Persons are divine. But it also insists that this unity is based on relations of origin. The Father and not some indeterminate divine nature communicates the divine nature to the Son. To make the nature as such the principle of unity is open to the obvious difficulty which Evodkimov raises that each person would then partake in its own origin. Again, he criticizes Western theology for describing the Holy Spirit as the *nexus amoris* between the Father and Son. It is hardly enough to dismiss this by saying that love belongs to all three, a point of course on which Western theology is insistent.²⁷

As Corcoran concludes, these difficult questions concerning the Trinity cannot be evaded. We cite Evodkinov in an attempt to harmonize his insights (especially that of the Father as principle of unity) with those we mentioned earlier in a consideration of Allport's model of conscience and its religious coordinates in the theology of St. Paul.

C. TRINITARIAN INDWELLING

Central to our thesis is an understanding of Trinitarian Indwelling in terms of the Father as origin of the missions of the Son and Holy Spirit and that of the Father as he who calls the Christian and the Church (vocation) through the visible and invisible missions of the Son and Holy Spirit to final unity and term at Omega. In

²⁶ Patrick Corcoran, S.M., "Some Recent Writings on the Holy Spirit," *Irish Theological Quarterly*, vol. 39 July 1972, p. 282.

²⁷ Corcoran, *Ibid.*

the theologians of salvation history, there is already an effort to transcend purely positivist Biblical theology and present God's self disclosure in terms of an ordered sequence of trinitarian relationships. The Father discloses himself through the Son and in the Spirit and in the ascending order or movement the Holy Spirit leads us through the Son to the Father.²⁸

Thus "conversion" is not only a "new creation", an "ontological transformation" but also must be related in some way to our "psychological transformation", which transforms our limited human ways of knowing and loving.²⁹ Also central, is situating the Christian conscience at the core of the human personality and demonstrations that through its judgments and actions it orients the person along an axis leading to union with the Father through the visible and invisible missions of the Son and Spirit as we attempt to illustrate below.

While Rahner (and Tillich before him) are both dissatisfied with the Augustinian psychological model, their own alternative formulations hardly speak the language of modern man, who for better or for worse, finds it difficult or impossible to see the relevance of the Trinity in their own lives. Rahner constantly complains about the lack of sermons on the Trinity and Trinitarian life in the Christian:

One might almost dare to affirm that if the doctrine of the Trinity were to be erased as false, most religious literature could still be preserved almost unchanged throughout the process. And it cannot be objected that Incarnation is such a theologically and religiously central element in Christian life that on that account the Trinity is always and everywhere irremovably present. For when the Incarnation of God is spoken of, theological and religious intention is today concentrated on the fact that "God" has become man, that "a" person of the Trinity has assumed flesh-but not on the fact that this person is precisely that of the Word. Logos. (Theological Investigations, Vol. IV, Ch. 3, pp. 78-79)

But while Rahner's theology shows how man is fundamentally open to such relationships (because he has an "obediential capacity" and a "supernatural existential") which "calls" for such a union, he does not develop it further.

D. AUTHENTIC LOVE OF NEIGHBOR IS LOVE OF GOD

We could, I think, quite legitimately begin with man's experience of human love as valid anthropological approach to an understanding of the Trinity. Human love is already "graced" positing

²⁸ Dom Odo Brooke, op. cit., p. 155.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 156-157.

Rahner's "supernatural existential" and a Trinitarian indwelling is already presupposed in an experience of authentic love of neighbor.³⁰

Rahner himself went to some length to express this in "Unity of Love of Neighbor and Love of God"³¹ but he does relate this to Trinitarian experience. Rather he shows how the horizontal and vertical dimensions of interpersonal relationships bring one to a God whom we love, even though we do not see him except in our neighbor.

He speaks of love as a reflected and explicit mode of action and as an unconceptualized transcendental horizon of action.

Where the whole "transcendental" depth of interhuman love is realized and represented (which, as has been said, can at least be *caritas*, as is quite certain from tradition) there such a love is also necessarily a conscious love of God and has God as its reflex motive (even though this is of course true once more in very different degrees of clarity). **Theological Investigations**, Vol. VI, p. 238.

If, as Rahner poses, there is a possibility that all human love (if it is authentic) is also *caritas* in terms of its moral radicality and orientation toward God and includes the moral activity of the "anonymous Christian" in such an orientation (and here, following the Greek Fathers and Teilhard, we would see this orientation toward God, as toward the Father) then we implicitly posit the indwelling of the Trinity. (You cannot have *caritas* without it, although as in the case of the anonymous Christian, there may be no conscious experience of this reality, nevertheless, it remains on the ontological level.³²

In developing this theme, we could show how in very authentic human relationship there is a sequence and a dynamics of trust, leading to belief in the other and finally to love of the other who now dwells in me in interpersonal relationship. These powers of trust, belief and love can be shown to have their theological coordinates in Faith, Hope and *Caritas* which are not merely derived from the analogies of human love but make authentic human love

³⁰ For a defense of this approach see G. F. Mackrell, S.M.M. "The Trinity and Human Love." *New Blackfriars*

Also Edward G. Bozzo, C.F.X., "The Neglected Dimensions: Grace in an Interpersonal Context." *Theological Studies* 29 (September 1968).

Ewert Cousins: "A Theology of Interpersonal Relations," *Thought* 45 (1970): pp. 56-82.

³¹ Karl Rahner, "The Unity of Love of God and Love of Neighbor," *Theology Digest* (Vol. 12, No. 2, Summer 1967), pp. 87-93. (also *Theological Investigations*, Vol. VI).

³² See Norbert Rigali, S.J., "Morality as an Encounter with God," *Cross and Crown* (Vol. 26, No. 3, September 1974).

possible since the love of neighbour and love of God are not separate realities, but the horizontal and vertical coordinates of Divine Life within us, bisecting at the core of the human person where the divine missions of the Son and Holy Spirit are internalized and radiate outward in varying degrees of intensity and complexity, involving us in communitarian life, centered not only in the Divine Nature, but in a union with the Father who will ultimately be revealed in glory.

Such an approach could make a valuable contribution in explicating our understanding of biblical "faith" to the non-believer, the atheist and the non-Christian.

A brief analysis of any love story, or what is more important, the "experience" of almost every man and woman will indicate the phenomenon of "falling in love" or "being in love". But love is only a "fall" when it is inauthentic or misdirected — when passion replaces *caritas* as the force of attraction.

It is here that psychologists have been most effective in pointing out in therapy that the person either lacks deep interpersonal relationships or that those which do exist are in some way inauthentic, either through his own fault or due to circumstances of his unique being-in-the-world in situations where the significant others in his life have led to distortions. There is a gold mine of literature to be sifted and analyzed by the theologian who can coordinate these findings of psychology with the authentic love, which is *caritas*.

For example, the tons of pulp magazines grinding out stories of people who have fallen in love can be shown to be precisely that: falling or falling in love. Being and growing in love is an entirely different reality and the writings of men like Berne and Harris in their analyses of our interpersonal transactions is an attempt to distinguish the false coin of manipulation from authentic and genuine love.

E. TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS

Timothy Collins has applied this method of transactional analysis to the notion of "relationship" and the theology of grace and tried to relate it to the other areas of psychology.³³

First, theology has placed a growing emphasis on the significance of relationship within God himself. Moving beyond older, more static understandings of the Trinity, authors tend now to speak of the Trinity as Community.

³³ Timothy E. O'Connell, "Grace, Relationship and Transactional Analysis," *Thought* 48 (Autumn 1973): pp. 360-385.

A community, of course, is characterized by the individuality of its members, on the one hand, and by the unity of intention and desire, on the other. And in the Trinity we find these same complimentary qualities.³⁴

J. P. Mackey cautions against this approach in a section of his article on "Preaching on the Blessed Trinity" and, in fact, entitles the section "How not to Preach on the Blessed Trinity":

Sometimes this kind of preaching goes so far as to speak of the Blessed Trinity as a kind of family of persons, so that one begins to think of a second holy family giving example to human families on earth. This kind of language undoubtedly conveys the impression that the Blessed Trinity consists of three persons, as one normally understands that English word, namely, as three individuals with each his own mind and will (for how can they know and love each other if they do not each possess his own mind and will, and what else does a family consist of except persons so constituted?).³⁵

While Mackey may have a point, it seems he has formulated the argument upside down. Anthropologically, (and what other way can we as humans speak?) we should try and show what is in fact distinct centers of consciousness, individuals with each his own will and mind in the human family is somehow united in God in a way in which the Divine Persons retain their personhood, mutual revelation and communion with the Father.

The traditional notion of the three distinct persons in the Trinity, then, appears as a rich way of emphasizing uniqueness of the Godhead's triple reality, a uniqueness not lost but rather generated in the relationship of one to another. In God is found pre-eminently a concept long treasured by the philosophers and psychologists: "relationship" as "letting be," it also implies "becoming one." So also in the theology of God, the triple reality of the Divine Persons must be complemented by the unitary reality of the Divine Nature, (This is true of Western theology but as Evodkimov states, this unity might better be explained in terms of the Father as the principle of unity). If the divine community, like an ideal human community, maximizes the individuality of its members, so also does it, like the human community, flourish with the support of a union of mind and heart.³⁶

Based on the revelation of the Trinity, it does seem to project our intuition of an ideal human relationship with a personal thou, and our ideal of the radiation of this union in the human com-

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ J. P. Mackey, "Preaching on the Blessed Trinity," *Furrow* 21 (January 1970): p. 15.

³⁶ O'Connel, op. cit., p. 364.

munity, especially the sacramental community of the Church, toward an absolute union with the Persons of the Trinity in whom our deepest intuitions and desires of union and communion will find real fulfillment.

O'Connel attempts a coordination of grace and the transactional theory of Harri's Parent, Adult, Child in which the authentic interpersonal transactions must be identified and labeled for what they are: Games, Rituals, Activities and Pastimes with their ulterior manipulative motivation.

The importance of attitudes in approaching an Other, already examined in the personalistic writings of Mounier, Nedoncelle, Guitton etc., are reduced to the four basic stances of the human person as he faces the Other.

I'm OK — You're OK
 I'm not OK — You're OK
 I'm OK — You're not OK
 I'm not OK — You're not OK either.

While we cannot summarize his theory here, it does provide us with a contemporary model which the average college student understands and appreciates. As any teacher or professor knows, the fundamental problem running through the mind of most students at this period in their life is not the content of their college course, no matter exciting or stimulating, but the search for the significant other, the unique thou with whom he or she hopes to share his or her most intimate life experience. Only the mutually experienced "I'm OK — You're OK" can lead to a happy relationship of union either in marriage or friendship and while the other three attitudes may only be "psychologically experienced" attitudes they can also be shown to reveal the ontological realities of one's relation to God and neighbour. The false conscience then, is either the conscious or unconscious manipulation of the other which the self terms as OK. (And this is bound to have its parallels in the prayer life of the individual in his interpersonal dialogues with "God". The task of transactional analysis and moral theology is to sensitize the conscience to unmask these false transactions and lead the person along the path to conversion, in authentic lovely relationship.

F. GLASER

If we can assume that the moral action of man is love (the unit of love of God and love of neighbor) and that this very action is, seen from the agent's point of view the act of his own cocreation, his answering himself in abiding existence . . . that this invitation to love occurs in ever deeper invitations, at not entirely pre-

dictable *kairoi* of Gods loving initiative in each person's salvation history; and if we can assume that this tridimensional "object" of man's freedom (God's self-offering; the created personal other which mediates this divine initiative; the individual himself as offered possible abiding love) is primarily though not necessarily exclusively, present to the agent's consciousness in a preconceptual manner of knowing . . . then we can describe **moral conscience** as the preconceptual recognition of an absolute call to love and thereby to cocreate my genuine future, or in the insight into a radical invitation to love God in loving my neighbor, and thereby become myself abiding love.³⁷

In short, conscience is an insight into love; the call issued by the ultimate value and promise of love; the warning of the destructive power of indifference or hostility to this invitation.³⁸

We give here a short phenomenological description of a possible scenario in the personalist categories:

From the beginning there is: 1) an experience of loneliness, a feeling of being alone and of not being understood; 2) the experience of meeting somebody-where there is a sudden flash of understanding. The experience of meeting was presented very forcibly in the movie the West Side Story (though there are thousands of examples we could cite either from personal experience, literature plays, movies, etc.) when Tony and Maria encounter each other on the dance floor. A genuine experience of meeting requires that people reveal themselves by their true selves to one another. 3) There is both presence and dialogue—a being together, with each other, in each other's presence. This is a continuation of meeting—a paying attention to each other as persons. In dialogue the attention is directed toward each other. 4) There is knowing each other as person—which requires a revelation of one's mind, an opening up, a free consent to reveal. 5) There is the consent—to love. This is simply an acceptance of a person who is there and whom one has found.

When two persons communicate with each other, each one experience himself, grasps his own identity, and in the same instant becomes aware of the need to surrender this identity to the newly recognized identity of the other person. This is a basic fact of love.

³⁷ John W. Glaser, "Conscience and Superego: A Key Distinction" in *Conscience*, op. cit., pp. 168-169.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

Experienced in this way love presents a constant challenge. It is not a static state of peace, but a dynamic and growing interaction. There may be harmony or conflict, joy or sadness, pleasure or suffering. But essentially there must be 6) union.³⁹

Anyone who has examined personalist literature during the past fifteen or twenty years knows that the above description is more or less typical. There are, however, a few elements which need clarification. Otherwise, Bonnie and Clyde could just as well apply the description of the phenomenon of love to themselves as to the Holy Family.

If human love is to be a graced relationship and not merely an egoism for two, it must be examined in the total context of community, society, and ultimately of the cosmos. While most of us may consider our activities so insignificant that they add or detract little in terms of the total unification of the world in love or disintegration in hatred and war, from a theological perspective no human act is indifferent and contributes either to the unification of mankind in love or to the disintegration of true community and communion. Our task will be to show that it may be possible to plot the course of dynamic growth in interpersonal love both in the salvation history of the individual and of the cosmos.

G. FARICY

Robert Faricy has attempted such a synthesis, and states the problem as moving beyond the metaphysics of being of St. Thomas to an understanding of the Indwelling in a framework within which the personal growth and development of the Christian can be seen as dependent on the interpersonal relationships of Indwelling.⁴⁰

He begins by mentioning the work which has been done on the doctrine of sanctifying grace from Petau in the seventeenth century through Scheeben and de Regnon in the nineteenth century. Among the more recent contributors, he lists the significant work of B. Lonergan (*Divinum Personarum*, Rome: 1949) and in the 1950's, the dialogue and discussion of the problem by P. de Letter, F. Baurassa and M. Donnelly, W. Hill, working within the Thomistic framework, showed that in the teaching of Aquinas, there are personal relationships of the Christian to each of the Divine Persons Indwelling on the level of habit and operation.

³⁹ Thomas L. Knoebal, "Grace and Freedom," *Thought* 49 (March 1974): p. 50.

⁴⁰ Robert Faricy, "The Trinitarian Indwelling," *The Thomist* 32, No. 3 (July 1971), p. 401.

More recently, K. Rahner, P. Fransen and E. Baltazar have move the problematic beyond scholastic categories and reconsidered sanctifying grace in terms of the interpersonal categories. For example, Rahner's notion of the supernatural existential and "quasi-formal causality" are not opposed to a consideration of each Person in terms of a personal quasi-formal causality in the union of grace.

We agree with Faricy that the difficulty with this model is that the "supernatural existential", although it shows that a Christian can have a personal relationship with each divine person, does not tell us the nature of these relationships or their modality and function.⁴¹ Therefore, any model based on nature and causality is inadequate to describe a relationship which is between persons—not rock to rock or nature to nature.

For this reason, many theologians such as J. Alfaro, P. Fransen and E. Baltazar and J. Mackey have turned to a personalist model which might better formulate the dynamics of the interpersonal relationships involved in the Divine Indwelling.

But Faricy also considers many of these attempts inadequate, since they fail to show how a personalist theology of Indwelling can be consistent with, and evolved from the scholastic traditional theology of grace.⁴²

What must be shown, adds Faricy, is that the Christian is not only in relation to each of the Divine Persons but that these relationships are transforming and that they are at the root and core of Christian growth and development in a process of social interaction. (And we might add here, the necessity of situating the Christian conscience within this root and core, in terms of the fundamental option of conversion and the subsequent life and growth of the Christian through his judgments and actions. It is obvious that any static metaphysical categories are inadequate to carry the weight of an interpersonal dynamic relationship.

The task then is to show that the personal relationships in the interpersonal model are consistent with the theological tradition but adds the needed dimension of personal relationships which are developmental and dynamic.⁴³ The method is to examine the teachings of St. Thomas and after a reflexion upon the writings of Teilhard de Chardin regarding person and community, to build a contemporary model for a theology of Indwelling.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 373.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 373.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 375.

While St. Thomas asserts that we are united to God through charity, the question is how are we united through charity to God as attainable object (or should we say subject?)⁴⁴

It cannot be in the immediate union of God as agent cause, since this is common to all creatures. In grace, God dwells in us in a special way for through the gift of sanctifying grace the three Divine Persons dwell in us and begin in us a new mode of existence. But since God is immutable, his new mode of existence is not a change in him but a created effect in us, by which God dwells in us. In this special mode of existence, God is present as known and loved in the lover. The word "dwelling" stresses God's active presence in the union, while sanctifying grace points to the fact that the basis for this union is a created effect in us.⁴⁵ Faricy then reasons that since our life is now a participation in Divine Life, and since we are ordered to God through our operations, we should expect our immanent operations to participate according to their modes in the Trinitarian life.⁴⁶

If we participate in the Trinitarian life at the core of our being, then we should participate in this life in the habits and acts of our faculties. Furthermore, just as sanctifying grace is the basis of a union with God and not a result of the union so our relations to the Indwelling Persons should have sanctifying grace (or at least charity) as their basis or foundation. It is in the union of sanctifying grace that we participate in the Divine Life, and it is in this union and this participation that our relations to the Persons will be found. Lastly, these relations should be found to be consonant with God's part in the union: as cause of the union and as attainable object, through charity, of our aspirations.⁴⁷

In his treatment of the invisible missions according to St. Thomas's teaching in the Summa and the Commentary on the Sentences, Faricy points out that in the Summa, the invisible mission of the Holy Spirit is never considered as such. Perhaps Thomas thought the problem to be too difficult to include in a summa for ordinary theological students or perhaps he intended to treat of it later. In any event, it is only in the Sentences that Thomas makes a direct connection between charity and the Holy Spirit.

While the whole Trinity dwells in us, Thomas points out that only the Word and the Holy Spirit have invisible missions to our soul. They can have missions because they proceed from an origin

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 375.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 377.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 378.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 378.

and have a new way of existing in the person to whom they are sent. However, while the mission is temporal, and the Divine Person begins a new way of being in us, the change is in us and not in the Divine Person. Since the Father does not have an origin he cannot be sent, he cannot have a mission; but the Father communicates himself to us in sanctifying grace and dwells in us as do the Word and the Holy Spirit.⁴⁸

(Our own understanding of the presence of the Father would be in terms of the One who sends and the One who calls, the origin of missions and the term of vocation. This would be true of the visible missions of the Word and Spirit, and the invisible missions of the Christian and the Church in time until the Parousia).

The Pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature. For it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she takes her origin, in accordance with decree of God the Father.

This decree flows from "that fountain of love" or charity within God the Father. From Him, who is "the origin without origin" the Son is begotten and the Holy Spirit proceeds through the Son. Freely creating us out of His surpassing and merciful kindness, and graciously calling us moreover to communicate in life and glory with Himself, He has generously poured out His divine goodness and does not cease to do so.⁴⁹

By an utterly free and mysterious decree of His own wisdom and goodness, the eternal Father created the whole world. His plan was to dignify men with participation in His own divine life... He planned to assemble in the Holy Church all those who would believe in Christ. Already from the beginning of the world the foreshadowing of the Church took place. She was prepared for in a remarkable way throughout the history of the people of Israel and by means of the Old Covenant. Established in the present era of time, the Church was made manifest by the outpouring of the Spirit. At the end of time she will achieve her glorious fulfillment. Then, as may be read in the Holy Fathers, all just men from the time of Adam, "from Abel the just one, to the last of the elect", will be gathered together with the Father in the universal Church.⁵⁰

The Son, therefore, came on a mission from his Father... When the work which the Father had given the Son to do on earth (cf. Jn. 17:4) was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 379-380 passim.

⁴⁹ "Decree on Missionary Activity in the Church," *The Documents of Vatican II*, ed. by Walter M. Abbott, S.J. (New York: Corpus Books, 1966), p. 585.

⁵⁰ "The Church," *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

order that He might forever sanctify the Church, and thus all believers would have access to the Father through Christ in the one Spirit.

... Thus, the Church shines forth as "a people made one with the unity of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit".⁵¹

Thus He who made all things (the Father) may at last be "all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28) procuring at one and the same time His own glory and our happiness.

Summarizing St. Thomas, Faricy reflects the thinking Vatican II:⁵²

It is clear that St. Thomas does not consider the invisible missions to our soul as simply appropriated to the Word and the Holy Spirit but that he considers them as belonging personally and properly to the Persons. The Word and the Holy Spirit come to us in a properly and personal way; through sanctifying grace we are perfected not only in that we can use grace itself, but we are also so perfected and disposed by sanctifying grace that we can possess and enjoy the divine person himself.⁵³

He adds a further observation that seems consonant with our contemporary understanding of "core decision" and can perhaps situate the Christian conscience within its graced matrix.

The missions of the Word and the Holy Spirit cannot be distinguished in the root (core) of sanctifying grace, in the essence of the soul; but they can somehow be distinguished in the faculties of our elevated nature, in the illumination of the intellect and in the warmth of the will.⁵⁴

Thus, while causality of sanctifying grace may be attributed to the three Persons as *extra* as an operation common to all Three, this does not preclude a distinction of Persons within the union of sanctifying grace. Faricy argues consistently that just as the Incarnation was caused by the Trinity, but only the Word became Incarnate, and that the visible mission of the Holy Spirit is also caused by the Trinity, but the Spirit is sent, so also as regards the invisible missions of the Divine Persons dwelling within the soul. They can only be distinguished in the results of the external works of the Trinity. (For example, that one is a Christian, that he possesses the Holy Spirit and that he has a particular vocation or call from the Father will be determined by the results of this external works — by his fruits you will know him).

⁵¹ "The Church," *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

⁵² See "The Church Today," *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222.

⁵³ Faricy, *op. cit.*, pp. 380-381.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 381.

In the Indwelling, the invisible mission of the Word is attained in the illumination of the intellect in the highest gift of wisdom and the mission of the Holy Spirit in the gift of charity which perfects the will. Thus God is present to us as the known in the knower and the loved in the lover, for we are so joined to God by grace that we become participators of the Divine Word and of Proceeding Love so that we are able to freely know God and love Him. (Faricy notes that Participation here is taken in an analogous sense, and participation in the Word through Wisdom is participation through exemplarity). But he holds that charity is not simply appropriated to the Holy Spirit and there are indications that the charity in us is "through infusion of the Holy Spirit who is the Love of the Father and Son and whose participation in us is created charity itself."⁵⁵

The Word and the Holy Spirit both have an invisible mission to the soul, but each is present according to the mode of his procession, the Word and the Holy Spirit as love. The difference in the modalities of the two eternal processions has its consequence in the temporal terminations; the presence of the Holy Spirit through the gift of charity, and the Word through the gift of Wisdom. Faricy concludes that "the Holy Spirit then, is the term of the habitual union of charity. And just as the Holy Spirit according to his proper Personality unites the Father and the Word insofar as he is their love, so does the Holy Spirit properly connect us to God".⁵⁶

H. APPLICATIONS OF CURRAN'S DEFINITION OF SYNTERESIS AND CONSCIENCE

Applying Charles Curran's contemporary definition of synteresis and conscience to this conclusion, we have a set of coordinates linking Divine Indwelling to conscience.

"Adopting a synthetic approach, we can define synteresis as the power of conscience situated in the inmost part of the soul (*scintilla animae*). In its rational aspect, synteresis tends to the truth so that man almost intuitively knows the fundamental principle of the moral order — good is to be done and evil is to be avoided. In its volitional aspect, synteresis tends toward, the good and the expression of such a tendency in action."⁵⁷

Keeping in mind what we have said earlier in relating Gordon Allpot's definition of conscience with its religious description in

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 385.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 389.

⁵⁷ Charles Curran, "The Christian Conscience Today," *Conscience*, op cit., p. 135.

St. Paul and drawing the horizontal and vertical coordinates derived from authentic love of God and love of neighbor, we can say now that only under the influence of the Word presented to the mind and intellect of man as he grasps this particular concrete situation in its uniqueness and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that he can reach out to an Other in authentic love which is *caritas* (although as in the case of the anonymous Christian he may not be conscious of this activity in its Trinitarian dimensions). According to the degree of clarity with which he grasps the truth and uniqueness of the situation, and the intensity and degree of Love with which he performs the act as self donation, the person participates in the mission of the Son and Holy Spirit and centers himself and calls the other to union at that center of Trinitarian love along an axis leading to ultimate union with the Father.

Conscience is the concrete judgment of the practical reason, made under the twofold influence synteresis about the moral goodness of a particular act. Conscience forms its judgment discursively from the objective principles of the moral order; but at the same time there is also a direct connatural knowing process. The dictate of conscience is concrete, subjective, individual, and existential.⁵⁸

What Curran calls here a "connatural knowing process" demands further clarification. For one can make judgments and perform actions in conformity with a deformed or misguided conscience in terms of the "connaturality" of and in consistency with a past personal history.

The connaturality of the Christian conscience, especially in the mature Christian conscience, would indicate a knowing process and loving response which had at its core and source the activity of the Indwelling Persons of the Trinity. Otherwise, our moral theology is simply an ethical humanism derived from philosophical reflection. In traditional language this can be expressed as follows:

The purpose of the invisible missions of the Word and the Holy Spirit is to bring us back to God (the Father) to join us to God in grace so that we may be joined to him in glory, to order us effectively to our ultimate end. We are incapable of attaining our ultimate end by our unaided natural powers, for only God can naturally operate effectively with himself as object; only God can by nature know and love himself directly. In order to proportion our operations to our final end, God unites himself to us in the union of sanctifying grace so that

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 135-136.

we not only share in the Divine Being in the essence of our soul but also participate in the Divine Processions of Trinitarian Life, directly in the Holy Spirit and indirectly in the Word, in our habits and operations.⁵⁹

Fr. Charles Meyer has summed up this problem in much the same manner as Faricy.

The Incarnation is the prototype and exemplar of all missions. So why do theologians insist on appropriation when considering the operation of the divine persons in grace relationships modelled as it is on the Incarnation? Once again Rahner comes to the rescue. Appropriations is in order when there is a question of merely efficient causality. All operations in this line of causality are common to the three Persons. But when there is a question of formal or quasi-formal causality, there is no reason to deny its possibility of proper relationships with the Divine Persons. In fact, in a relationship such as that established through grace, a personal relationship the use of appropriation would be totally inadequate.⁶⁰

But to establish a "transformation of coordinates" from St. Thomas' metaphysics of being to an understanding of the Indwelling in a framework in which the personal growth and development of the Christian can be seen as dependent on the interpersonal relationships of the Indwelling, Faricy, Meyer, and Baltazar turn to Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

III. TEILHARD'S THEOLOGY OF PROCESS DEVELOPED BY E. BALTAZAR

Eulalio Baltazar, in his book on *Teilhard and the Supernaturals*, gives us a basic philosophy of process based on the Teilhardian model. Discussing the values of philosophical systems and world views as opposed to "piece meal" philosophies, he sees a need and value in attempting a synthesis of facts and phenomena in some kind of cosmic synthesis. Thus a philosophy of process is viewed as a synthesis of the traditional philosophies of being and becoming.

In moving from the Thomistic view to the Teilhardian, he observes, "we could not, nor do we aim to present a perfect alternative to Thomism. Thomas was in a much better position in relation to his world than Teilhard was in relation to his. For Thomas had a ready-made philosophy, that of Aristotle, which had already mapped out for him the philosophical structure of a static

⁵⁹ Faricy, *op. cit.*, p. 395.

⁶⁰ Charles Meyer, *Chicago Studies* 7 (1968), p. 42.

universe. But Teilhard was his own Aristotle. In this he was a pioneer. What remains for us to do is to make explicit the philosophy implicit in his world view.

(He limits his presentation of a philosophy of process to its relation to the supernatural).⁶¹

While a full reading of Baltazar's chapter on the "The Basic Category of Process Established" will be much clearer than our attempt to summarize him, we sketch here the outline of his thesis.

1. In his operational definition of process he asserts that process is motion and change but not all motions and changes are processes. Process is growth from within, immanent motion and is developmental in the scientific sense of that term. The seed, embryo, etc. provide us with examples of the individual while "evolution" pertains to the macrocosmic level. (Thus we will attempt to relate conscience and grace in the individual to grace in the Church, world and cosmos).

2. There is a conversion of the notion of substance into the notion of process. To make the transition from the category of substance to that of process, he states as a necessary condition, that one give up his aristotelian-thomistic framework as absolute and as ultimate norm of philosophical acceptability, at least for the duration of this study.⁶²

Common sense observation presents us with a world of species of plants animals and a world which seems eternal and unchanging. Thus, the category of substance was devised to explain this seeming permanence based on common sense observation. Activity proceeding from a subject is explained in terms of the categories of act and potency.

Thus we have philosophy whose basic category is substance and whose dynamism is act and potency. Substance is the ultimate substratum which is not predicated of anything else, it exists of itself and not in another and is the substratum of accidents. It is a dynamic principle of identity, activity and organization, as a principle of activity and organization, it is called nature and as principle of identity it is called essence.

But with the discovery of the macrocosmic process and the application of a time scale over periods of billions of years, it is apparent that the aristotelian-Thomistic framework does not apply in the same way as absolute and perennial.

⁶¹ Eulalio Baltazar, "The Basic Category of Process Established," *Teilhard and the Supernatural* (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1966), pp. 91-

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 104-106.

The two dimensional context (2D) of common sense is now seen to be a process which is three dimensional (Baltazar distinguishes time as 1D, 2D, 3D and 4D. 1D is mythical time of false eternity, e.g., the dwelling place of platonic forms, mythical events of S.S. etc.; 2D is the time of common sense and the activities perceived by the senses; 3D is evolutionary time, and 4D is the fullness of time or true eternity. (These categories of time are not to be confused with the mathematical notions of time.)

He concludes that this new awareness proves that the two dimensional awareness of permanence is not absolute and the discovery of the third dimension reveals that all things are processes, not substances. Substances is process.

Previously, evolution or process was relegated to the category of the accidental or historical as opposed to the metaphysical or ontological, Maritain, Raeymaeker, etc. situate evolution within the category of accident and contend that evolution as a power of operation or activity cannot be the basic category of reality since it cannot replace the category of the substantial or metaphysical.

But Baltazar cites birth and death as two examples of phenomena which are inadequately explained by thomistic aristotelian categories. Rather than viewing a being that is born, lives and dies in terms of 2D (Aristotelian-thomistic) the coming-to-be of being, death the cessation of being, we should study it in terms of process, a beginning, middle and end, alpha, beta and omega.

He argues that birth is not an accident that proceeds from or inheres in the substance that is born, because the substance in question does not yet exist, for birth implies the non-existence of that which is born. Substance then, proceeds from birth and is contained, so to speak, in the process of birth. Furthermore, birth is not just a first event in the existence of the substance; rather, substance is continually born to the next moment, hence substance is always in the context of process.

In the last analysis all processes are within larger processes and are ultimately contained in the process of evolution of the cosmos with its ultimate meaning in its Omega, or term. But in all of these processes, the approach is to be seen as linear and not static-like points.

Summing up, 2-D analysis of substance and accidents is inadequate to explain birth and death since they are equated (as accidents) with talking, typing, and eating. Rather, birth and death transcend both the ontological and phenomenal 2-D analysis. Maritain's attempt to reduce evolution to the 2-D framework fails, says Baltazar, because it is not 2-D motion.

TOWARDS A METAPHYSICS OF UNION

Baltazar argues that had God actually created a world in terms of the aristotelian categories, the individual would be able to attain its end by its own natural resources and capabilities, but even precending from for the order of "grace" and the supernatural this is not possible.

The "I" is a being-towards-the other. Its end is union, so that is very ontological structure and finality requires the need for an "other". The end is impossible of attainment by the "I" alone, for true love requires two terms... But even in a universe of love it may be objected, God cannot create a nature in vain. Hence, to create the "I" without giving it the powers to attain its end is to create it in vain.⁶³

Baltazar answers this objection by placing "self sufficiency" not in the individual, the "I" alone, but in the "I-Thou" of a "we" universe.

As at every level of union, Teilhard demonstrates powerfully that the term of union is greater than the sum of the aggregates, and so even on the interpersonal level it is true that man does not attain his end naturally, that is, by his own powers alone, but only in union with others. In a 3-D universe, the end is always transcendental and the results and term of union in love. (Or if such possibilities are "natural" to man there is an implicit admission that such union is metaphysically essential to man).

The aristotelian universe, says Baltazar, has described the basic relation among natures in terms of justice or exigency.

Thus a given nature has an exigency-ontological for non-personal beings, moral for personal beings-which is called a right.⁶⁴

This partly influenced the medieval Church in the extreme juridical formulations of its theology.

The redemption, the greatest example of love, was formulated in terms of justice; the Church, the bride of Christ, was seen as an impersonal, juridical structure; moral theology which was supposed to explain Christ's one law of love, was nothing but a treatise on justice, and grace was defined as a perfection which was beyond nature's right or exigency. (emphasis mine).⁶⁵

We cite William Frost as a typical example of substance-accident thinking. He writes in comparing Buddhism with Christianity:

⁶³ Baltazar, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

⁶⁴ Eulalio Baltazar, *Teilhard and the Supernatural*, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

Let us look at Billy Graham and his evangelistic sermons. When he describes to his listeners their sinfulness, this may be quite salutary. Indeed man may benefit from a conversion of heart... This word "sinner" then, is a term which describes a historical aspect of man. But it is not to be taken as a metaphysical term. (Metaphysical concepts determine the essential nature of beings). No one is a sinner by essence because there are good and praiseworthy aspects in man. The evangelist is allowed to call people sinners insofar as this is true in the dialectical sense of the word.⁶⁶

In other words, for him and for aristotelian-thomism the relationship between God and man, the change of heart and conversion in love, the *unum necessarium*, the one thing necessary for my salvation and ultimate fulfillment is an accident!!! For the relation between God and man is not metaphysical. Consciously or unconsciously, Frost is working out of the old substance and accident model. But in a metaphysics of union, relation is of the very essence of the individual, for no one can become a person without an Other, and all personal relationships have their ultimate ground and fulfillment in relation to the Other who is God. Thus man be shown to have an essential dependence on human others and on God. "I need you to become myself" is not a personalist cliché, but the very ground and metaphysical first principle at every level of the evolutionary process.⁶⁷

Fr. Joseph Bracken has also criticized the notion of individual substance as an adequate explanation of the being and activity of man. He looks rather to man's social nature and proposes a new metaphysical category:

The philosophical model for the Trinity which is proposed in these articles is, however, of a different order of being and activity than the unity of an individual substance. It looks rather to the social nature of man and suggests that, just as the organic unity of a physical substance with respect to its immanent operations transcends the merely extrinsic unity of present in a simple aggregate, so the unity of persons-in-community transcends the unity of individual substance. The community as such is an ontological totality which is greater than the sum of its members, just as the substance or organism is an ontological totality greater than the sum of its operations.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ William P. Frost, "Buddhism, Progress or Regression?" *American Ecclesiastical Review* 168, No. 7 (September 1974).

⁶⁷ See Peter Fransen, "Person and Community," *The New Life of Grace*, op. cit., esp. pp. 58-59.

⁶⁸ Joseph Bracken, "The Holy Trinity as a Community," *Heythrop Journal* 15 (April 1974): p. 171.

Here, Bracken is obviously arguing along Teilhardian lines and while he does not mention Teilhard, even a cursory perusal of the *Phenomenon of Man* will show the similarities. Neither is this "metaphysics of union" exactly new. As we mention below Teilhard had already proposed it in his *Coment je vois* in 1948 and he in turn was influenced by the French personalist school before him. And in 1968 Charles Meyer wrote "I believe that it is in Teilhardianism as well as in existentialism and psychology that the new approach to grace and the supernatural will discover its philosophical underpinnings."⁶⁹

He tells us that up to the present "theology has been a kind of logical chess game played with such pieces as substances and accident, natural and supernatural. The problems it sought to solve arose from the values given to the chessman and the limitation of their movements in accordance with their "essences" and "ends."⁷⁰ While this evaluation may be too extreme, we also conclude that the substance-accident model is inadequate to synthesize the modern understanding of man.

While we hold that "grace" is free and liberating and that any claim to "what is due" is already the beginning of the death of love, it follows that much of our "liberation theology" and emphasis upon "social justice" is an admission that love has failed, since not only are we unable to persuade "others" and ourselves) to love our neighbors, we cannot even juridically legislate and enforce laws that would give them what is due them.

As Joseph Comblin points out, the Pelagian controversy had led to arguments about grace and freedom, nature and supernature, Protestantism, Jansenism, Molinism, etc. in which the more important themes of liberation and freedom centered around justification and how freedom could be affirmed without destroying grace and vice-versa, reproducing a situation and matrix within which modern atheism (man's absolute autonomy from God) developed.⁷¹ No doubt, the substance-accident model of man in which he finds his subsistence in himself and not in another played its part in the development of this phenomena.

But say Comblin, for Christians the problem is not only secondary, but insignificant and only obscures Jesus' message of freedom.

⁶⁹ Charles Meyer, op. cit., p. 285.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Joseph Comblin, "Freedom and Liberation," *Concilium* 6, No. 18, p. 95.

This tradition had concentrated the entire discussion on the formal question of the constituent of the act of justification, and while acknowledging freedom as one of the conditions for choosing salvation, almost it totally neglected the content of this freedom.

It isn't surprising that here this freedom of justification seemed alien to the social problems of our age, so that **no one thought of making the connection.** The Church's social teaching developed in a perspective of a social order and justice based on a natural order, and justification surrendered even the name of liberation. The biblical message of freedom had disappeared: no one needed it any more: why not forget it? And the liberation movements proceeded under the dominance of an historical reason alien to Christianity. (Emphasis mine)

In fact the matter of Christianity is how grace frees, how it remarks freedom, and what this freedom actually is (the content of freedom). The field of human freedom is social life. Man is free "with" other men and in his relations with them. He is free in his action with them on nature. **Therefore it is a question of revealing the connection between the Spirit and this field of freedom:** that is the object of the Christian message. The rest is relatively gratuitous philosophical speculation. Theology has let itself be drawn on to the ground chosen by the Pelagians—that of individual asceticism and the affirmation of a freedom of solitude and withdrawal into the self. The Pelagian concept of freedom was not put into question. (Emphasis mine)⁷²

But is it any wonder that in a theology dominated by the substance-accident model no one thought of making the connection between justification and the social problems of our age? Or that they did not reveal the connection between the Spirit and this field of freedom? Or that this model led to an exaggeration of individual asceticism and the affirmation of a freedom of solitude and a withdrawal into the self?

If relationship with God is relegated to the category of accident, the relationship of man with his neighbor becomes even more "incidental" and inconsequential. A natural reaction to such a metaphysical structuration was to deny any relationship totally with God (atheism) and to place essential relationship of man within the context of human community (atheistic communism).

It is only within a metaphysics of union that we can adequately make this connection between grace and freedom and relate it to the social problems of our age and reveal the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the field of freedom.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

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The Teilhardian universe, however, is based on a metaphysics of love (union).

As Teilhard says, love (not in its popular sentimental meaning but in its full reality as the propensity to unite, the affinity of being with being) is not peculiar to man but is found on all levels of reality. (See *Phenomenon of Man*, p. 264). The philosophy of process takes account of this insight by saying that **being is not an island (nature) but being-with-another, and that its dynamism is that of love.**⁷³ (Emphasis mine)

And in an often quoted passage, Baltazar sums up his insights into "grace" in the context of a metaphysics of union.

In the context of love, the "I" has no exigency for the end to which it is intrinsically ordained. There is no claim on the part of the "I" for the "Thou", since the union is freely entered into by both. The "Thou" calls freely and the "I" responds freely. The only means by which the "I" can attain its end is a union of love. Hence, by the law of love, justice is excluded. (We prefer to say "transcended" or as John XXIII said so often, "Let justice be the instrument of love".) If there is any exigency at all, it is the exigency that there be no exigency (claim or due), for this would be the death of love. Thus the "I" waits on the good pleasure of the "Thou" and hopes for his coming. The attitude of the "I" is one of full surrender and complete abandonment. The "Thou" on his side, is not coerced into union. If he gives himself it is out of love. **Thus gratuity is of the essence of the relationship of love.** In other words, love necessarily requires freedom to give oneself to the other; gratuity or gift giving is intrinsic to the I-Thou relation; it is its condition, its nourishment.⁷⁴

Evolution is motion, but it is not an accident of substance, rather it underlies substance and as the matrix of substance it provides a deeper ontological level from which the category of process derives.

In a philosophy of process there is also a transformation of the category of existence from an act of "to be" as self-containedness to existence as union. "To be = "to be united" (passive) or "to unite" (active).

This notion is central in Teilhard's seminal thought and appears in his *Comment je vois*, written in 1948:

Teilhard reproaches classical metaphysics with proceeding from a statistically conceived "being", treated as a primary and irreducible notion. The science of nature

⁷³ Baltazar, *Teilhard*, p. 244.

⁷⁴ Baltazar, *Teilhard*, p. 244.

and analysis of cosmic development makes us aware that being is a definite sort of movement, to wit a movement of union.⁷⁵

Thus, for Teilhard, creation itself will be reflection of an image of the Trinity,⁷⁶ as it achieves higher and higher degrees of union in the process of evolution.

In the **Phenomenon of Man** he has traced the pattern of creative union from the dawn of creation to the present. In the course of this process, he establishes a line of progressive complexification through creative union, marked out by critical thresholds of life and thought. The complexity of life advances along a main axis (with its paramenters of cephalization and vertebrate structure) and despite the infinite possibilities of chance, it has, by a seemingly infallible inner impulse or intuition given birth to man and to Christ.

From the billions of years necessary to produce life, and the millions of years of myriad social organizations in the pre-history of man, at last there emerged an unlikely aggregation of primitive tribes which were to become the People of God.

Again, within the history of this people there is a gradual but perceptible rise in consciousness, a growing sensitivity in morality, (e.g. Job and the suffering of the Good Man, the law of Talion, etc.) hope in an after life (Dan. 12, 2, Wisdom, etc.) and in a Messiah who is at last revealed in Jesus Christ.

With the establishment of the Church, His life and Spirit have continued in the World for close to two thousand years, functioning as a kind of biological phylum, carrying within its Mystical Body the seeds of an absolute future.⁷⁷

By drawing a line from creation to man, Teilhard had established an axis and trajectory which passes through Christ as absolute center of the cosmos and continues up to the present in the activity of the Church. The sacraments are an extension of Christ in space and time and centers the Church of every age along this main axis. The visible missions of the Son and Holy Spirit continue in the new People of God.

They have access to this cosmic center who is Christ, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist which functions at the tip of the arrow of time in the process of history, providing the inner life and nourishment of true personalization and progress.

⁷⁵ Piet Smulders, *The Design of Teilhard de Chardin*, (New Press:

⁷⁶ See Christopher Mooney, *Teilhard de Chardin and the Mystery of Christ* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 173.

⁷⁷ See Christopher Mooney, *Teilhard*, p. 153.

To unite ourselves to Christ in the Eucharist, therefore, is *ipso facto* inevitably to incorporate ourselves little by little into a Christogenesis which is itself the soul of cosmogenesis.⁷⁸

Christ thus becomes 'physically' a universal element a Milieu and a Centre who controls in and through the extension of his Eucharistic presence the whole movement of the universe. Ultimately, the purpose of such control is the salvation of mankind, that is, the gradual organization of Christ's Plenitude at the end of time and the construction of a New Earth.⁷⁹

The function of the Christian conscience, then is to perceive the center which is Christ, to align oneself along this axis through an incorporation into the Body of Christ so that one may respond to the inner call of the Father who is gradually perceived and revealed through the activity of the Son and the Spirit within the individual and community.

The Christian conscience transforms and transcends a merely ethical perspective and allows one to judge and act with the Spirit of Christ, a spirit both discerning and discerned in the mutual interaction of individuals and community.

Having centered one's self along this axis, then, as Fr. Monden has said, the ideal Christian conscience would act as a compass of love that pointed the direction so clearly that external law would no longer be needed, and as an assimilated personal attitude it would become a conscious instinct and an infallible power of discrimination.

Thus the individual, societal and cosmic dimensions of salvation are inter-related, as the acts of individuals radiate from family to community, from society and nation in a growing, dynamic complexification of authentic inter-personal relationships whose summit and highest degrees of instensification and union will be achieved at Omega.

The Trinitarian image, stamped in the most insignificant elements of matter and perceived as producing something greater than the mere sum of their aggregates finds its most perfect expression in creation in Christ. The gradual unification of man through the missions of the Son and Holy Spirit is a process of interpersonal love, consciously perceived as uniting oneself with society and the cosmos in a return to the Father.

If all things are in some way to be reconciled in Christ then the cosmos itself must somehow be an object of salvation. The cosmic text of Rom. 8:18-25 has been

⁷⁸ Mooney, *Teilhard*, p. 86.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

much discussed, and some points seem clear. It is the totality of creation that shares in God's plan. The hope of mankind is also the hope of creation. Creation and salvation are inseparably connected. What has been created to be saved, is object of salvation, and this includes the whole cosmos. The salvation of the cosmos is a consequence of man's salvation, especially of the salvation of man's body through resurrection. The cosmos is not just an instrument of man's salvation, it is itself object of salvation.⁸⁰

"Consciousness raising" and "liberation theology" are other ways of speaking about sensitizing or raising the level of the Christian conscience through a "liberation of the Spirit" and awakening it to a perception of the social dimensions of morality. Thus we see individuals and the community seeking to discern the Spirit of love and by that same Spirit to achieve higher levels of union, to prophecy against the causes of disunion, the evil and injustice in individuals, societies and states, and against the oppressive structures and power which they employ. In this context, even the protests of ecologists against the waste of energy, pollution of the environment and the killing of endangered species, etc. becomes an appeal to the Christian conscience to recognize the sacramental character of the cosmos.

As Fr. Mooney explains it:

The meaning of this "final crowning" becomes clear when Teilhard gives what he calls "an ultimate and final definition of the Omega Point". Omega is the Person of Christ in his Plenitude at the Parousia, acting as unifying focus for three centres, one inside the other, which reach a point at the top of the cone of time. The outside center is the natural summit of the humano-cosmos cone; within this is the supernatural summit of the humano-Christic or Church cone; and the innermost centre is the transcendent divine Trinity. With this explanation we are able to penetrate more deeply into the nature of the Christian phenomenon. The Church is not simply a teaching but a living organism: the embryo of a super-life inserted into the heart of the noosphere by the historical appearance of Christ Jesus; not a parasite, adding to and deforming the evolving human cone, but a cone within the human cone, gradually impregnating and spreading over and sustain-

⁸⁰ Robert Faricy, "Dimensions of Salvation," *Theological Studies*, p. 469; Faricy is basing his analysis on S. Lyonnet. "The Redemption of the Universe," in *The Church, Readings in Theology*, ed. at Canisium-Innsbruck (New York: 1963): pp. 44-58.

ing the whole rising mass of the world, and causing it to converge concentrically upon the same summit. Consequently, in the genesis of humanity's social organism, the Church is not epi- or a para-phenomenon but forms the axis itself, the nucleus around which men are destined to gather together.⁸¹

CONSCIENCE AND CHURCH AUTHORITY

A final aspect of the relation of the individual conscience and Church authority remains to be dealt with. Given a hypothetical situation in which a person has situated himself within the Church, has attained a certain maturity of conscience and fulfills those criteria which we have already mentioned, would it be possible for him to disagree with the authority of the church in its magisterial teaching and discipline and still remain faithful to the Church and in good conscience?

Fr. Dulles, in presenting this issue, limits his discussion of the situation to official magisterial pronouncements, and omits any consideration of the unofficial authority of the Scholar, the man of experience and the charismatic, p. 116 (and therefore disqualifies himself, if we want to push to issue). It is to those teachings which demand an internal assent that he directs his topic.

He asserts, 'Freedom of conscience obtains when a man is able to make this decision sincerely and spontaneously without undue moral or psychological pressures'.⁸² After balancing of texts which express Christianity as freeing and liberating against those which strengthen Church authority ("He who hears you hears me" Lk. 10:16) and that there will always be some who "will not endure sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:3) he concludes that we should not regard the magisterium as omniscient.

Modern psychology and theology have pointed out that many would like to prostrate themselves before an omniscient Church and abdicate the responsibility for their own religious convictions. He suggests that we need a more realistic theology of the magisterium, and that it has no power to pass judgment on questions that belong properly to the human sciences. He calls for a theology of the Church's fallibility. There can, he says, be a theology of conscientious dissent within the Church. A Christian has the right and duty to weigh the authority of the magisterium against the evidence of reason and against other authorities, e.g., the consensus of theologians and the sense of the faithful.

⁸¹ Christopher Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

⁸² Avery Dulles, "Conscience and Authority" in *Conscience*, *op. cit.*, pp. 115.

While there should not be any relativising of truth and history, any attempt to settle controversies by decree will almost certainly fail in the present pluralistic Church. "The response given to recent papal pronouncements on trans-substantiation, on clerical celibacy, and on artificial contraception proves that the attempt to use authority of office to terminate the discussion often merely fans the flames of controversy."

He concludes with the observation that many today are leaving the Church not because they reject Christ but because the Church does not appear to be Christian enough. He suggests that if we make the Church to appear more as a place of freedom, this phenomenon will be less widespread. Furthermore, a few thousand free and committed believers can do more than millions of bored, unhappy and oppressed Christians. The more we can recapture that enthusiasm and sense of freedom which characterized the New Testament times, the more it will bear effective witness to Christ and the world and will more powerfully attract those who are drawn by grace to Christ.

Dulle's observations appear to be well balanced and valid. A Church which wishes to exercise its prophetic charisms and mission in denouncing unjust structures and oppressive governments, and decrying psychological and moral manipulation will have to face the criticism of both those within and without the Church, "Physician, cure thyself". It is only through the appeal to those who have a mature Christian conscience that we can begin the task of removing the planks in our own eye, before searching out the specks in the eyes of others. The ideal model of the Church should be a sign and witness to the world, the reality finds us often practicing those very things which our consciences condemn with our own hands in the cookie jar and in the till. While condemning the injustices of multi-national corporations, we invest in them to help the poor. While diagnosing the cancer of unmitigated capitalism and suppressive regimes, we apply the band-aids of Catholic relief. Demanding an internal assent on the level of orthodoxy, we are often indistinguishable from our non-Christian neighbors on the level of praxis.

As Juan Luis Segundo remarks, even in the area of dogma, while the dogmatic theologian may not propose "conservative" dogmas, because of their autonomy in relation to Christian praxis, the members of this scientific discipline have been channelling much of its content towards a conservative ideological function.

"So there has taken shape, in isolation from dogma, moral theology which, while it is not temporal, is profoundly similar to the civic morality required by established society"...

By theology we therefore understand in a much more direct fashion *fides quarens intellectum*, faith in search of its own understanding, to orientate the historical praxis. We do not accept that a single dogma can be studied under any other final criterion than that of its social impact on the praxis.⁸³

And as Gutierrez puts it:

That is why a liberating praxis insofar as it starts from authentic solidarity with the poor and the oppressed, is specifically a practice of love: real love, affective and historical, for men of flesh and blood... Therefore, it seems more genuine and profound to speak of a practice of love which is rooted in the gratuitous, free love of the Father, and which makes itself history in solidarity with the poor and dispossessed, and through them in solidarity with all men.⁸⁴

PROCESS AND THE PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE

We merely intend to sketch here, a possible line which conscientious dissent in the Church might take and still remain a healthy phenomenon within the Church. Granting that there may be some "cryptic heretics" within the Church and that the Church has to draw the line somewhere, we would like to apply some of the notions of process to the problem of the Christian conscience.

As we have seen every individual conscience is developmental, passing through three stages in the models of Allport and Monden, they could be coordinated roughly with the purgative, illuminative and unitive ways of ascetical theology. Few, it seems, attain that freedom of conscience and spontaneity of action characteristic of the unitive way. Most Christians find themselves struggling at the first and second levels of conscience and spirituality. It follows that within a given community, not all have attained the same level of Christian maturity and judgment, and the process of maturing will differ from individual to individual, both as regards the time required to achieve a higher level of maturity and the degree of maturity attained. Paul himself had to grapple with this problem in dealing with the Corinthian "enthusiasts" and the Judaizing "legalists".

If this is true of both the local churches of his day and ours, all the more, at the level of the universal church, there will be

⁸³ Juan Luis Segundo, "Capitalism-Socialism," *Concilium*, 6, No. 10, New Series (June 1974): pp. 115-116.

⁸⁴ Gustavo Gutierrez, "Liberation, Theology, and Proclamation," *Concilium*, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

some who are "behind" the magisterial teachings, while others may be "ahead" of its pronouncements. (We also concede that there may be some who are "outside" this trajectory.)

Using Baltazar's model of alpha, beta and Omega, we could take alpha as the origin of the magisterial dogma or statement, and beta as the present formulation and understanding of that statement by the official magisterium. Omega belongs to an absolute future which will produce deeper and deeper insights into the fonts or origins of these pronouncements, all of which are historically and culturally conditioned. We mention this to show that the "beta" or present understanding of a particular pronouncement may, at the level of the local Church also be either "ahead" or "behind" that of the official magisterial pronouncements. For example, the Church of North America is characterized as being a legitimizer of the *status quo*, while that of South America sees itself as a legitimizer of change. There is also more at stake here than mere "interpretation" and "adaptation".

Here we could also employ the Augustinian analogy of memory, intellect and will both to the individual and the Church. Memory, in an ecclesial context becomes the Tradition of the Church, intellect is its official understanding of itself at the present moment in the (beta) and will pertains to its praxis. Ideally, these elements would converge and radiate in Christian wisdom and incarnate love. The reality again is something quite different.

As regards Tradition, we know that there have been many points in the past upon which the official Church has led to revise or even reject its former stance. The case of Galileo, the practice of "usury" or the exacting of interest in the making of loans, the tolerance of slavery, the alliances of power between Church and State are a few examples.

Our memory also tells that there were some who challenged these disciplines or practices (beginning with Paul himself) but were later proven faithful to the Tradition. Later vindication then, proves that some at least, have been ahead of magisterial teaching.

At the same time there are some, and their numbers are legion, who have not yet even "caught up with" the present aggiornamento of a post Vatican II Church. And since life is always ahead of law and the discoveries of science are always ahead of their ethical and moral application the magisterium itself is always involved in a process of "catching up". And since it is a corporate responses on a global level we cannot expect that it would be at the cutting edge of the future. What we would hope for, how-

ever, would be that the gap between the magisterial pronouncements on the ongoing process of life and science would not be too great and that they would be expressed in a language easily understood by the faithful. To anathematize those who are either "ahead" the official magisterium will not solve the problem, but neither will orthodox formulations of pronouncements from the nineteenth century solve the problems of the twenties. Thus a fruitful dialogue between those who are behind and ahead of the magisterium could help to center the Church on its trajectory for the future.

As Hans Kung has put it:

From the very beginning the Church was involved in controversy on both sides. On the right was legalism, trying to regulate and impose rules on the Spirit. Against this Paul had said: "Do not quence the Spirit" (I Thess. 5:19). On the left was enthusiasm, trying to turn the Spirit into a private possession and manipulate it at will. Against this stood Paul's words: "Test everything (I Thess. 5:21) ... Psychology, sociology, philosophy and all modern sciences can and should help us and mankind to be human. But... if we have the courage, for all our forward looking, to look back, we shall be struck by the fact that the gospel of Jesus Christ itself is infinitely richer than everything that is presented as new revelation of the Spirit or of the age... (For) The Word without Spirit is spiritless. The Spirit without the Word, wordless. The word expresses the Spirit in speech, the Spirit makes the word understood.⁸⁵

CONSCIENCE IN AN ANONYMOUS PRESENCE

Rigali moves from a nature approach to man to one of persons in relation, but only applies this relationship to God and not to Persons of the Trinity. He speaks of "implicit awareness" and "God consciousness" locating this awareness in the conscience.⁸⁶

His definition of conscience is:

Conscience is the first part of the process of morality. It is man in the act of determining what he should do. It is man confronting his true self in the depths of his being and passing judgment on his own activity in the light of the criterion found there. In a word conscience is an individual evaluating a possible course of action for himself in relation to his true self.

⁸⁵ Hans Kung, "The Word and the Spirit," *Clergy Review* 55 (May 1970): pp. 340-341.

⁸⁶ Norbert Rigali, S.J. "Morality as an Encounter with God," *Cross and Crown*, 26, No. 3 (September 1974), p. 264.

Man can only live authentically in relation to something bigger than himself. For the Marxist this is the classless, for the patriot, his country. But whether in this awareness of a transcendent other, whether the person be consciously aware of it or not, what he is actually confronting is God himself.

"The first part of the moral process is conscience and the basic experience that, to be truly himself, he must live according to something more than himself. Morality then, begins in a person being up against something that transcends him and presents itself as an absolute in his life. In short, morality begins with an anonymous encounter with God. As Vatican II says, "Conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of man. There he is alone with God, whose voice echoes in his depths (Gaudium and Spes, No. 16).⁸⁷

Arguing from the fact of human experience he appeals to everyman's conscience asking if it is not true that you are only yourself to others. And even though man knows that the neighbor is not an absolute Thou, there can be an absolute demand to respond to the call and need of the neighbor. This is not a delusion; it is the experience of love because:

The anonymous presence of God in conscience is the presence of love itself, addressing the individual, seeking the individual, seeking to be accepted freely and personally into his life, and calling him to action in the world in accordance with itself."

Just as the creative act of God originates in God and brings forth the world, so too the moral process begins within the depths of the individual in the depths of his soul and terminates in his external activity in the world. It is love itself which calls the individual out of himself to fashion a world in accordance with its principles. Love is present both at the beginning and end of this moral process, directed toward bringing all men together in Love "that God may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:28).

Certainly for the atheist and perhaps for the non-Christian, experience of God begins as a kind of anonymous presence but it does not seem that it should end there.

⁸⁷ Norbert Rigali, *Morality*, p. 266.

LITURGY

OPTIONS AT MASS?

by

Herman J. Graf, S.V.D.

A letter to the editor voiced the following complaints: "Recently I concelebrated with another priest. In this Mass I experienced the following surprises: (1) concerning the liturgical vestments. Over his ordinary street dress this priest placed a wide and long chasuble, and on top of it a long stole. That was all. (2) When he came to the doxology of the eucharistic prayer he invited the congregation to recite with him the words: "Through him, with him, etc." (3) Before holy communion, holding up the sacred host, he said the usual formula, but concluded with the words: "Happy are they who are called to his banquet (instead of supper)". The music and the rhythm of the "Lamb of God" sung by the people were more fitting for the overture of an Opera, than for the pleading of God's mercy."

1. Mass Vestments

The first complaint of this priest found a lengthy answer as early as 1973 in the **Liturgical Information Bulletin of the Philippines**, May-June pp. 52-57. Here follows a summary of the presentation by the secretary of the National Liturgical Commission, to which some further observations have been added.

For a long time priests in tropical countries found the Mass vestments of the Roman rite a heavy burden. Soon after the new Missal had been published in Latin, attentive readers noticed that the cassock was no longer mentioned in the Missal. Upon an enquiry the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship informed our Bishops' Conference that the cassock, not being a liturgical vestment, was no longer required for Mass. The same letter of the Congregation observed that the white cassock, used formerly by priests in the Philippines, looks very much like an alb. It therefore suggested that it could be used in place of the alb, provided it would be "used only (for Mass) and not a dress during the day. Hygienic reasons warrant this." This was the first simplification of liturgical vestments in the Philippines, approved by Rome.

In the late sixties the Indian bishops obtained from Rome the permission to use a single, tunic-like chasuble with a stole, which had also a special form. Since this concession was not received with enthusiasm everywhere in India, its use remained optional.

At about the same time also different European countries began to experiment with new forms of liturgical vestments. As early as 1970 I observed in many parishes and religious houses in Germany and Switzerland wide-flowing vestments at Mass covering the whole body. The color of this vestment was usually not white, but a little greyish. Its form seemed to be inspired by the monastic cuculla. The stole, usually wider and long, was worn on top of this vestment.

In view of these experiments in other countries, also our Bishops' Conference asked Rome for a similar adaptation. As their reasons our bishops stated that the proposed vestment seemed to be Asian, was better adapted to our tropical climate, and would prove ultimately cheaper, since only one chasuble would be needed, not different chasubles for different colors. Only the stole's color would change.

On March 12, 1973, the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship approved the request of our bishops, sending them a letter which was identical with the one it had sent to the French bishops in 1971 when they had approached the Congregation with a similar request. During the following years other countries all over the world obtained the same privilege, like Argentina, Brazil, France, Venezuela and Zambia, to mention only a few.

There are certain restrictions in the Roman document concerning the place and the occasion for using this new vestment. But "it seems that the text can be interpreted rather broadly, as no absolute terms are used and n. 3,c of the answer speaks of 'similar cases for which this solution is advisable in view of the place and the persons'" wrote at that time the secretary of the National Liturgical Commission (*Liturgical Information Bulletin*, May-June 1973, p. 57).

Is this the end of the development? I do not think so. The same decree of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship concludes with the remark "that the approval of a new type of liturgical vestment should not keep artists and manufacturers from exerting further efforts of research regarding both the form of the sacred vestment and the fabric and color of the cloth used". Two conditions, however, should be fulfilled: special emphasis should be given to the stole worn on top of the new vestment, because it is the special sign of the priest's place in the hierarchy; it signifies that in the liturgical celebration he acts "in the person of Christ". Secondly, the vestment should be ample enough to cover the whole body of the celebrant in a way that would be in keeping with the sacred character of the celebration.

Unfortunately, we observe today in this country a tendency to do away entirely with sacred vestments in liturgical celebrations, including the Mass. There are religious houses, where concelebrants are only offered stoles, to be worn over the street clothes. Sometimes even the main celebrant uses only a stole. At a priests' retreat I observed a tall Indian priest, without cassock, but wearing an oldstyle "gothic" chasuble which did not even reach his knees. Most of the retreatants concelebrating had only a stole, and some of them not even that. In view of this our simple people ask why we follow seemingly the example of many non-Catholic sects.

Is it so difficult to cultivate a sense of beauty and decency in the liturgy in a spirit of faith and reverence?

2. The Final Doxology

"All should listen to the eucharistic prayer in silent reverence and share in it by making the acclamations" (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 55,h). With these words the Missal makes it clear that the eucharistic prayer is a presidential prayer, not a part of the people. No liturgical rite in East or West ever considered the eucharistic prayer as a part of the people, or as a prayer to be said together by the priest and the people.

But the guidelines of the Missal mention "acclamations" of the people during the eucharistic prayer: the answers to the introductory dialogue, the Sanctus, the anamnestic acclamations after the words of the Lord and the final "Amen". Rome has been asked during the last years to increase the number of these acclamations, especially for Masses with children. The three experimental eucharistic prayers for Masses with children, approved by Rome until the end of 1977, contain a number of additional acclamations. But also these eucharistic prayers reserve the final doxology to the priest.

The eucharistic prayer ends — as it began — with the praise of God. This final praise of God "is confirmed and concluded by the acclamation of the people," the final "Amen" (Ibid.). This concluding "Amen" is the Christian community's ratification of the whole eucharistic prayer. When the people pronounce their "Amen" they make themselves one with Christ and the Church in confessing the glory of the Father brought about in the saving work of Jesus Christ. This "Amen" is the people's signature under the whole prayer with all its thoughts: those of adoration, of remembrance of the Lord's words and saving deeds, of praise and thanks-

giving, of the expectation of our absolute future, of intercessions for the living and the dead. If the people would say the doxology together with the celebrant, this aspect of the final "Amen" as affirmation to the whole prayer would be obscured. Consequently, it was not a good idea of this priest to invite the people of his congregation to join him in the concluding doxology.

In ancient Christian times the people were deeply convinced of the importance of this final "Amen". In the Roman basilicas, as St. Jerome attests, it sounded like a thunder-clap. In many of our Christian communities the "Amen" is so weak and feeble that it appears to be rather insignificant. Here is a task waiting for preachers to explain the eucharistic prayer to their people, in its entirety and in its individual parts.

3. The Invitation to Holy Communion

Right from the beginning of the Mass reform (1969) priests were encouraged to formulate with their own words the introduction to the Mass of the day (after the initial greeting), to the individual readings and — after the Prayer over the Gifts — to the eucharistic prayer. This concession of free formulation — not very often used in our parishes — was greatly extended in the circular letter of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship "Eucharistiae Participationem" of April 27, 1973. Its main part has been inserted into the foreword of the Sacramentary as published by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (in the edition published by Catholic Trade, Manila, on p. 12f). It deals explicitly with the free formulation of the introduction to the penitential rite at Mass and to the Lord's Prayer: "By their very nature these brief admonitions do not require that everyone use them in the form in which they appear in the Missal. Provision can be made in certain cases that they be adapted to some degree to the various circumstances of the community". Cf. the Penitential Rite Prayers published by B. LeFrois, S.V.D., in the *Boletín Eclesiástico* 50 (1976) 342-346.

Subsequently, an official of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship stated that the concession of free formulation also extends to the invitation to the Prayer over the Gifts (Orate fratres) and to holy communion (Behold, the Lamb of God...)¹ The change of words (**banquet** in place of **supper**) was therefore, a very minor application of this freedom. Why not insert into this invitation — where it is feasible — the communion antiphon, which is only too

¹ Cf. H. J. Graf, Positive Aspects of a Negative Document, *Liturgical Information Bulletin*, July-August 1973, 78-85, esp. p. 84 f.

often neglected by the priests? On the eighth Sunday in ordinary time one of the communion antiphons — each Sunday Mass has two — is taken from (Mt. 28:20). Why not use it in the invitation, saying:

This is the Lamb of God, our Lord Jesus Christ who is with us always, until the end of the world. Happy are those who will share in his banquet in heaven.

On the twelfth Sunday in ordinary time one of the communion antiphons is taken from Jn. 10:11,15. Why not invite the faithful to holy communion with the words:

This is the Lamb of God, the Good Shepherd, who gives his life for us, his sheep. Happy are those who are called to his banquet.

To use a third model: on the sixteenth Sunday in ordinary time one of the communion antiphons is taken from Rev. 3:30. The priest may invite the faithful to the eucharistic banquet in the following words:

This is the Lamb of God, our Lord Jesus Christ who says: "I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and sit down those who are called to his supper.

But a warning should be added in view of the tendency observed here and there, that these invitations and admonitions tend to become mini-homilies: they should remain short and concise. Therefore, they should be prepared by the priest before the Mass. The circular letter mentioned above writes: "In all cases it is well to remember the nature of an admonition, and not make them into a sermon or homily; care should be taken to keep brief and not too wordy, for otherwise they become tedious" (Ibid., p. 13).

4. The Melody of the "Agnus Dei"

Is the "Kyrie eleison" really and exclusively a pleading for mercy? Literally, yes. But it is not so exclusively. A well-known liturgist (Th. Schnitzler) wrote recently that the "Kyrie eleison" is closer to the Gloria than to the penitential act of the Mass. Its principal meaning is the praise of the divine mercy that comes to us in Christ, the Lamb of God. This is also true of the "Lamb of God" whose text is found — even literally — as part of the Gloria. As praise, the melody of the "Agnus Dei" may also be joyous and rhythmic.

It is difficult to give an objective judgment concerning the quality of a melody used in the liturgy. Our judgments are usually subjective, and "de gustibus non est disputandum".

HERE AND THERE

EAST ASIAN REGIONAL MEETING

A regional meeting under the patronage of the Federation of Asian Bishops Conferences, was held in Seoul, Korea, from 21-25 September 1976 to consider the theme "Catechetics in our time, with special reference to Catechetics for Children, Adolescents and Young Adults in East Asia". Bishop delegates came from Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao. The Apostolic Pro-Nuncio in Korea, Archbishop Luigi Dossena, was also present at the meeting.

The discussions covered the full range of the teaching mission of the Church as well as the attention given by the Church to the health and welfare of the people of East Asia.

The resolutions issued by the meeting stress that catechesis must be rooted in personal holiness. "The Christian," the bishops say, "must show that his personal life, his life in family and in society, receive a fullness, hope and happiness, from his life of prayer".

The bishops emphasize that the Church's teaching brings a vision of complete and integral human development. It must also point out elements which are negative or opposed to human dignity. "At a time when East Asia is going through a period of rapid social change the Church should stand ready to help preserve and bring to new light the traditional spiritual and moral values so that they may yield more abundantly fullness of life in Christ".

* * *

The meeting stressed that catechesis cannot be a private affair restricted to the church, classroom or house. "The Church," the bishops say, "through its Christian Associations, must enter the public forum through the mass media, to present Christian and human values and to criticize those values opposed to Christian and human life".

The particular questions to which the meeting turned its attention are treated in 14 resolutions which deal successively with catechetics for children, for adolescents and for young adults. A section is devoted to the importance of the liturgy in the religious education of children and of making use of choices and of flexibility

in line with the Holy See's **Directory for Masses with Children**. The bishops also stressed the central role of the family in religious education and said that the Church must urgently look for suitable ways to educate parents on the importance of religion and of moral values for their children. This was becoming a greater need as often both parents worked long hours and religious education in the family was receiving less attention.

In treating of catechetics for adolescents the meeting stressed that the young person must feel at home in the Church and be attracted by the Gospel which provides an answer to his yearnings and frustrations. Catechesis must present the doctrines of the Church in a complete and integrated way so as to show what are the goals of the Church and the value of belonging to the Church.

In speaking of young adults the bishops stressed in particular the need of a catechesis which showed forth the human dignity of the worker and the Christian value of work and manual labour. In the sections dealing with Christian marriage recommendations include that young people, in their preparation for marriage, should be provided with full instruction in the values of Christian married life; that special attention be devoted to the pastoral care and instruction of those who enter into mixed marriages and that commissions be set up for the formation of young married adults.

In conclusion the bishops expressed their gratitude and appreciation, in the name of the entire Church in East Asia to all those who have devoted themselves to the teaching of the Church. They emphasized the responsibility of the members of the Church to provide such teachers with adequate recognition and remuneration to help them in their work of Christian love.

HOMILETICS

By

Bernard J. LeFrois, S.V.D.

I. BIBLICAL NOTES

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

(February 6, 1977)

First Reading: Isaiah 6:1-2a.3-8

Second Reading: First Corinthians 15:1-11 (15:3-8.11)

Gospel Reading: Luke 5:1-11

First Reading: In this stupendous vision of Yahweh's transcendent greatness, Isaiah the prophet receives his call. Loftiness of throne and length of train emphasize God's majesty while the triple call of the seraphim ring out his holiness. Hebrew lacks superlatives, so it uses the triple form of an adjective to designate highest degree. The seraphim are heavenly beings, regarded as composing the court of heaven along the lines of the royal courts of that time. "Seraph" derives from the root-verb "to burn". "Lord of hosts" depicts God as a warrior leading Israel's armies (as did the ark in Num. 10:35). His infinite majesty and holiness radiate out over the whole world (it is full of his glory), so will Jerusalem radiate that glory in Is. 60:1. The smoke (cloud of incense?) indicates God's divine presence, as did the cloud over the tabernacle in Ex. 40:34.

Overwhelmed by this overpowering encounter with the all-holy God, Isaiah, fully aware of his utter unworthiness and that of his people, deems himself doomed to death, for common conviction held that no one could see God and live (Ex. 33:20). But Yahweh himself takes the initiative and the (burning) Seraph purifies him with a burning coal from the altar, to symbolize his interior cleansing and transformation. It is a most generous response to Yahweh's call for a volunteer to carry out his mission he promptly offers himself. So penetrated is he with God's holiness that his entire prophecy re-echoes it over and over again (5:19; 5:24; 10; 17; 10:20).

Gospel Reading: Luke telescopes several scenes into one, with a definite purpose of high-lighting the spontaneous response of Peter and his companions to the call of Jesus. He focusses on Simon's boat (without mentioning Andrew who was with him in

the boat, see v.6), to point up his leadership in the chosen band. Even the use of the word "lake" has often in Luke the theological overtone of the place where Jesus manifests his power.

The fishermen, tired and disappointed for having labored hard all night, were certainly not ready to put out to sea in broad daylight, for daytime is not propitious for a good catch. Despite this, Peter obeys with full reliance on Jesus' word. The results are overwhelming. Overawed by such a manifestation of the divine. Luke has Peter now address Jesus as "Lord" (although that reflects a later awareness. Fully conscious of his unworthiness (recall Isaiah in the first reading), Peter's drastic solution is one of complete separation. Just the opposite is the Lord's invitation: they are called to follow him and be with him. This involves complete transformation from fishermen catching fish for consumption to being fishers of men in order to save them for eternal life. Their response is now total renunciation of everything in order to follow the call. Their lives are now completely taken up with Jesus.

Second Reading: Foremost among the doctrines which lay the foundation of the Christian faith are Christ's redemptive death (together with his real burial) and his resurrection. Paul appeals first of all to the Old Testament prophecies (Is. 53 and Ps. 16). He then lists a large number of divinely appointed witnesses who saw the Risen Christ personally, many of whom could still be interviewed. (Only men are mentioned since the Law considered valid the witness of men only). At the end of this formidable list of witnesses, which ought to convince anyone of them of Christ's resurrection, Paul places himself. He refers to himself as to one who had an abnormal (aborted) birth, because it was sudden and wholly out of the ordinary. He cannot forget that he was once the great persecutor, but his transformation has made a great impact on the believing community. That ought to render all the more powerful and reliable his testimony concerning Christ's resurrection, which is identical with the testimonies of those mentioned above. The entire hope of Christians hangs on Christ's resurrection.

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

(February 13, 1977)

First Reading: Jeremiah 17:5-8

Second Reading: First Corinthians 15:12.16-20

Gospel Reading: Luke 6:17.20-26

First Reading: A contrast and a double comparison. No blessing accrues to him but only a curse who turns from God and puts his trust solely in human help for success (be it science, wealth

or anything offered by man). He is like a dry shrub in the desert or any similar waterless waste. He will come to naught and offer nothing of real value to his fellowmen. But blessing rests on the man whose trust is the Lord. He is like a flourishing tree planted along running water, its roots sunk deep, and constantly being replenished with nourishment. It passes through all droughts and storms, while its green foliage continues to bear plentiful fruit. This is a familiar image in the Bible (see Ps. 1). In those lands water was a valuable treasure. The lesson is that man is to rely on God if he wishes to see genuine fulfillment. Away from God, the source of living water (Jer. 2:13), man comes only to naught.

Gospel Reading: Again a contrast: a fourfold blessing contrasted with a fourfold woe. Like Moses, Jesus had come down from the mountain where he had been in communion with God, and had chosen his twelve apostles. Now he is in the midst of the twelve, besides a large number of disciples and a huge crowd, symbolic of the graduation in the future believing community. Many of these followers of his are poor, sick, and in deep distress. They look to Jesus for help (v. 18). Contrary to all expectations, Jesus breaks out in pronouncing them blessed! He knows only too well that in the reign of God, it is these needy ones who will benefit most, if their whole hope is the Lord.

What a reversal of values in the eyes of men! His little band of fruitful followers will be exposed to much contradiction and persecution. But just because they shared his sufferings, they will share his great glory. On the contrary, the rich, the well-fed, the self-sufficient are not at all the truly fortunate ones. Riches are no security for eternal happiness; nor are all the luxuries and pleasures of this life. Flattery and adulation from the side of man is no true guarantee of lasting happiness. How radical the views of Jesus! No wonder he incurred the anger of many! Yet he sees with divine insight and judges with divine justice.

Second Reading: Both the divine Scriptures and the most reliable witnesses (vv. 3-8) were ample proof that Christ was truly risen from the dead for men of faith. To admit Christ's resurrection includes the admission of the reality of the resurrection as such. To deny Christ's resurrection topples the entire Christian edifice. There would be no redemption from sin, men are still spiritually dead in sin. What miserable men would Christians be if they had only this life to live for! But the undeniable fact remains: Christ is risen from the dead, the cause and exemplar of all those who are one with him, just as the offering of the first fruits embodied in itself the consecration of the whole harvest.

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
(February 20, 1977)

First Reading: First Samuel 26:2.7-9.12-13.22-23

Second Reading: First Corinthians 15:45-49

Gospel Reading: Luke 6:27-38

First Reading: In this scene (similar as in ch. 24), David shows true magnanimity of heart. Persecuted unto death by Saul the king, David is offered an easy opportunity to slay him, but he spares his life out of great respect for the sacred office of the king. He prefers to leave his own future in the hands of a provident God.

Gospel Reading: This entire section like the sermon on the mount in Mt. 5-7 is an elaboration of the commandment of love of neighbor. Many sayings of Jesus are woven together from various occasions. The chief points are: 1) "Neighbor" in Jesus' mind includes also one's enemies. One is not only told to forgive them but to do good positively to them and to pray to God for them. So also in v. 35. 2) Love includes forbearance. By two graphic examples which are to be taken in the figurative sense, we are told not to take reprisals but to be willing to suffer even more than was inflicted. 3) Everyone who appeals for help from you is your neighbor (as long as it is genuine need. Beggars are often controlled by a racket). Give gratuitously. 4) The golden rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. 5) A Christian's love must surpass the ordinary goodness inherent in every man. His model is God himself in his universal goodness and mercy.

Second Reading: A contrast between Adam and Christ. The first man is the source of man's natural and physical life. Christ by his glorious resurrection becomes totally spiritualized and is thus the source of the life of the Spirit. Regenerated in Christ in baptism, we are destined to take on more and more the likeness of the glorified Christ, exemplar and cause of man's glorified life. Paul brings this out well in 2 Cor. 3:18: "All of us, gazing on the Lord's glory with unveiled faces, are being transformed from glory to glory into his very image by the Lord who is the Spirit". The phrase "last Adam" points out that Christ's glorified humanity has attained the ultimate in perfection.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT **(February 27, 1977)**

First Reading: Deuteronomy 26:4-10**Second Reading: Romans 10:8-13****Gospel Reading: Luke 4:1-13**

First Reading: Of special importance in Israel was the offering of the first-fruits of the harvest, for it symbolized that the full harvest belonged to God. This rite was accompanied by a profession of faith which reminded the offerer of Yahweh's providential designs towards his forefathers, but especially of the deliverance out of Egypt and of the gift of the Promised Land of which they were now in possession. As an expression of gratitude he offers the first-fruits of his crops, acknowledging God's goodness by making a return gift. "A wandering Aramean" either refers to Abraham who sojourned in Aram (Mesopotamia), or Jacob who remained there for a long time, or is simply a synonym of "nomad".

Gospel Reading: Mark, the earliest of the witnesses to the proclamation of the Good News, comprises the temptations of Jesus in one sole verse (Mk. 1:12), which Matthew elaborates into eleven and Luke into thirteen verses. That Jesus was tempted remains an undeniable historical fact, but Matthew and Luke may well be giving us the deeper meaning of them in the form of an early catechetical instruction. Luke shows Christ as the true Israel, tempted as Israel was in the desert (even the number forty is corresponding). All three temptations (lack of trust in divine providence, presumption, and striving for independence from the divine will) correspond to the temptations of Israel in the desert. Whereas Israel defaulted, Christ comes out victorious in every case. All three replies of his were said by Moses to Israel, God's People (Deut. 8:3; 1:63; 6:16). Thus Luke holds up Christ as the model for all God's People in their encounters with the Tempter. Luke however climaxes his account with the holy city for the entire ministry of Jesus in Luke leads toward Jerusalem from where salvation goes forth (24:27).

Second Reading: Faith is preached to all men without distinction. Salvation is for all who believe that Jesus is the Lord (his divinity) and that the Father raised him from the dead (his resurrection). These two are the foundation stones of the Christian religion. Internal assent must necessarily be followed by outward mani-

festation of the faith by one's words (profession) and deeds. In other words, faith alone is not sufficient, but "faith which expresses itself through love" (Gal. 5:6). No one is excluded from the possibility of being saved, no matter of what race or people. It is open to all and everyone who "calls on the name of the Lord" (Joel 3:5).

II. HOMILIES

TEST OF FAITH REWARDED

February 6, 1977: Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

The Human Situation. Toward the end of his life, St. Philip Neri needed one of his spiritual sons to be his close confident on whom he could fully rely both in his physical weakness and his spiritual communications. He chose a certain Pietro but he tested him at first to no small extent. When he was at work at an important writing, he made him stop and switch his energies in something very trivial. When Pietro had to undergo an examination, Philip bade him tell the examiners he was well educated and needed no examination. Pietro stood all the tests, humiliating though they were. Then Philip made him his close friend and confident, and favored him with the secrets of his heart, relying on him fully.

The God News: All night long they had labored, letting out their long trawling-nets so well known along our Philippine shores, and then drawing them in again, only to find nothing, absolutely nothing in them. If only there had been just a few fish, it would have sufficed for the morning, but there was nothing at all in the net. It was as if all fish had left that part of the lake. And in spite of that, the Master tells them to move out again into the deep and let down their nets for a catch. Everyone knew that nighttime not daytime was the proper time for a good catch. Long experience had taught these fishermen that there was no point in letting down the nets if they had caught nothing all night long.

This is just where faith steps in. Faith does not consider the human side of things, it does not rationalize and consider the possibilities according to human reckoning. It firmly believes that God can do all things even when they look impossible from man's viewpoint. Jesus tested Peter's faith in him, for he wanted to make of Peter the leader and mainstay of his chosen band. Would Peter

be equal to the test? He had seen some of the Master's wonderful deeds. He knew he was a prophet in their midst. It was a question of putting aside his own better judgment in the matter and relying totally on that of the Master's.

In the same way Abraham had been tested and became the great man of faith for all subsequent generations. He was told to leave his family, his home and his country and go to an entirely unknown country far off, where God would reward him with a new home and a great progeny. It all seemed so impossible. Yet Abraham went (Gen. 12). Then, when his wife Sarah was well along in years and still childless, which must have been a continual test of faith because he had been promised a large progeny, he is suddenly told that he would have an heir from Sarah even though he himself was old and Sarah was past the age of child-bearing. And Abraham believed (Gen. 17). Finally, when the lad had grown to be a handsome young man, the pride of his eyes and in whom his hope for a great progeny rested, God tested Abraham to the utmost: "Take your only child, Isaac whom you love, and go to the mount of Moriah. There you shall offer him as a holocaust to me" (Gen. 22). Abraham could scarcely believe his ears; and it is heart-rending to see the two walking along together, the father prepared to offer up his only son. As the author to the letter of the Hebrews says: "He offered his only son in sacrifice, though the promise of a great progeny had been made to him through Isaac. He was confident that God had the power even to raise the dead" (Hebr. 11:17f). O great faith of Abraham! No wonder he was blessed by God so bountifully. God spared his son and gave him an abundant progeny through that very son. He became the friend of God and the model for all future generations.

Peter too stood the test. "On the strength of your word, Master, I shall let down the net". Not for any human reasons, for that would be pointless, but only because Jesus had commanded it would Peter do so. Well did Jesus know that this man was to be the leader of the chosen band and the head of the future church. He needs to be tested so that he is reliable and a man of total abandonment to God in unswerving faith. He let down the nets. And the effect was overwhelming. Such a sudden change from not a single fish to such a multitude so that both boats were nearly sinking, made a terrific impact on Peter, simple and honest man that he was. And in the presence of such a manifestation of divine power he was at once aware of his own unworthiness. In all humility he begs the Master to depart. But the Master, well pleased with Peter's trust in him, on the spot calls him to a life-long profession of fisher

of men and to a world-wide office of guiding the bark of Peter to eternal shores. Instead of departing from Peter, Jesus invites him to share his companionship and divinity for all eternity.

Our Response: It is not easy to see God's hand in what is asked of us by the Lord in time of trial, or again, in the person of his Church or of those placed over us. One must take the leap of faith into the unknown like Abraham did, and, relying entirely on the Lord, go against one's own better judgment. God can do all things. He rewards our faith with divine generosity, once he has tried and tested it. God is never outdone in generosity.

BLESSED ARE YOU POOR!

February 13, 1977: Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

The Human Situation: Francis of Assisi came from a wealthy family. His father was a rich merchant. Touched by the grace of God, Francis saw the emptiness of all that this world offers, and stripping himself of all his possessions, even to the clothes on his body, he left his home and became the "poor man of Assisi". He deliberately strove to be poor, calling poverty "Lady Poverty" so much did he cherish it. Yet he radiated joy everywhere. And his towering example has been an incentive to thousands of followers for centuries. Truly blessed was Francis in his holy poverty.

The Good News: How can the Lord pronounce the poor, the hungry and those in distress blessed? Are Christians not expected to help them out of their miserable conditions and even fight for better living and working conditions in regard to the under-privileged? Is not social justice part and parcel of Christian morality, and something greatly emphasized by the Church in these past decades? Why the encyclicals of the popes and the pastoral letters of bishops on helping the marginal and minority groups, the stress on proper distribution of wealth, decent wages for the laborer, proper care of dependents?

Yes, social justice and care for the under-privileged is a foremost concern and duty for all Christians. Christ's immediate followers were convinced of that. Paul told Timothy: "Tell those who are rich in this world's goods not to rely on so uncertain a thing as wealth. Charge them to do good, and be rich in good works, generously sharing what they have (1 Tim. 6:17f). St. James addressed the wealthy in severe terms: "Crying aloud are the

wages you withheld from the farmhands who harvested your fields. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts (Jam. 5:4f). Jesus himself in the section immediately following today's gospel lays down principles which show how much he expects of his followers in caring for their fellowmen: "Give to all who beg from you" (Lk. 6:30). "Do good and lend without expecting payment" (6:35). "The measure you measure to others will be measured back to you" (6:38).

Why then does the Lord congratulate the poor, the needy and those in distress? Because he himself was sent to the poor (Lk. 4:18). To the poor of Yahweh, the anawim who put their whole trust in the Lord despite their miserable conditions, he preached the good news of the kingdom. Those who had little or nothing in this life Jesus promised the riches and bounty of God's kingdom. Therefore they are truly blest. The wealthy were in reality the poorest off, for in this short span of life they had had their fill, but what after this life? What about eternity? Can this lifetime on earth begin to be compared with that life which never ends? Who is really blest, those who have their fill here below but are deprived of God's eternal kingdom forever, or those who are poor and in distress in this life and thus learned to rely on the Lord to come to their aid, and so can look forward to the possession of everlasting blessing and divine riches?

The fact remains that while all things possible must be done to help the poor and the downtrodden, there will always be conditions on earth that are brought about by man's greed and injustice. "The poor you always have with you", Jesus told his apostles (Jn. 12:8). He himself chose a peasant family to be born in and all his life he lived in utter simplicity and detachment. He had nowhere to lay his head, and no tomb of his own after his death. Before he died they even took the last clothes off his body and raffled them off. Giving this example, he showed mankind that true happiness did not consist in the wealth of this world. Instead of accumulating it, he told his followers to 'store up heavenly treasure, which neither moths nor rust corrode, nor thieves break in and steal.' (Mt. 6:20). And that is the kingdom of God which the poor of Yahweh will someday possess.

Our Response: Efforts to relieve our fellowmen in their material conditions are surely part of the Church's mission, and those who go into various lines of social action are worthy of all commendation. Yet it is good to keep in mind that the primary end of the Church is to bring men to eternal salvation. To preach the kingdom of God within us remains the first duty of all Christ's followers. And it is noteworthy that Jesus never posed as merely

a social reformer, nor even devoted his main efforts to relieving the temporal needs of others. He came to establish the kingdom of God, and his first duty was to make known to men of all classes the Good News of the kingdom. Though it affects the entire man, it is primarily a spiritual message.

LOVE OF ENEMIES

February 20, 1977: Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time.

The Human Situation: Juan Gualbert was not a specially religious man, but he had the faith. Yet, when someone murdered his brother he was bent on avenging him. One day on a Good Friday he came upon the murder in a narrow passage where escape was impossible. In this extreme, the murderer flung himself on his knees, stretched out his arms in the form of a cross and in the name of Jesus crucified begged for mercy. Juan remembered then that on that day Jesus had forgiven his enemies hanging on a cross. Instead of killing his enemy he went up to him and embraced him, sparing his life. That act changed his whole life. Soon after he felt the inner call to leave all things and follow Christ. He entered a monastery and became St. Juan Gualbert.

The Good News: Today's gospel is all taken up with love of neighbor and it begins with love of one's enemies. We are so accustomed to speaking of "neighbor" as referring only to those who are living close to us in the same neighborhood that we are liable to forget what "neighbor" means in the vocabulary of Jesus. In the mind of Jesus, even a perfect stranger is my neighbor if he is in need of my help. This he showed vividly in the parable of the man fallen among robbers who was in great distress. His own countrymen passed him up but a Samaritan whom the Jews considered their enemies interrupted his business-journey, disregarded all personal dangers and inconveniences, and really came personally to the aid of the man with tender care. Jesus made clear that this is the idea of "neighbor" that he was selling. (Lk. 10:30)

A perfect stranger! How many will get involved when there is an accident on the road or some public misfortune like a hold-up? How many will interrupt their business, and take the trouble to come to the aid of a person in real need, even if he is at variance with one's own national ideals, or one's personal likes and dislikes! But today's gospel even emphasized love of real enemies. Christ's concept of "neighbor" included these also. And today's gospel says that Jesus is giving his counsel to "those who

are listening". Many hear this advice of Jesus but do not want to listen because love of enemies is very demanding. It is easy to love those who love you in return, Jesus says. It is not difficult to do good to those who you know are going to do you a favor also. Even pagans and sinners have that much good in them.

Jesus sets a much higher ideal for his followers. They are to do good to those who hate them, persecute them, speak all manner of evil against them. They are to do good to them by praying that God will bless them and their families. This is true Christian virtue. Then indeed are we truly sons of the heavenly Father who is good and kind not only to those who love him and offer him reverence and worship, but even to those who ignore him, curse and blaspheme him and offend him deeply. God is all love and mercy. He lets his sun shine upon both good and evil and lets his rains prepare the fields of both good and sinful men. This is the model for every child of God.

Jesus would never give his followers such a demanding ideal if it were not attainable. By human effort alone it is not attainable. It is only attainable with the help of the Spirit of love which he has poured out upon us in baptism. The Spirit fills the heart with God's universal love for all his children, for "the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Spirit of God who has been given to us", St. Paul tells us in Rom. 5:5. Moreover we have the sublime example of Jesus hanging on the cross and saying to his heavenly Father: "Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing" (Lk. 23:34). The Spirit of God within us will assist us to forgive our enemies as Juan Gualbert forgave his, and as the great apostolic soul of Stephen forgave those who were stoning him to death with these words on his lips: "Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (Acts 7:60).

At times, forgiveness will not involve such serious matters as enmity, but there are other occasions when one is set aside, snubbed, offended or laughed at. Then Jesus in today's gospel asks his true followers not to take reprisals but to be willing to suffer still more for his sake in imitation of him. That is what is meant by turning the other cheek and giving up both garments. For the Christian spirit is one of forgiveness, reconciliation and gentleness, and it is the Spirit of Jesus' loving-kindness that lives in the members of Christ. An early Christian writer wrote: "The pagans hear us proclaiming the words of God and they marvel at their beauty and nobility, but when they watch us **not only not loving our enemies but hating even our friends** in the bargain, they deride

us and blaspheme God's name". Why? Because many Christians are only Christians in name. Their lives do not live up to their sacred calling.

Our Response: In spite of Jesus' example and clear teaching, there are Christians who refuse to forgive a fellowman who has done them real harm wither bodily or in reputation. They refuse to speak to him, and exclude him totally from their hearts. How can such persons recite the "Our Father" with a sincere heart? How can they receive the same Lord in holy communion? One can at least pray for one's enemy and make some attempt to forgive an injury done, remembering how much God has forgiven on his part.

HE WAS TEMPTED IN EVERY WAY THAT WE ARE (Hb. 4:15)

February 27, 1977: First Sunday of Lent

The Human Situation: In the last war a pilot, returning from a distant mission, had to ditch his plane because of lack of fuel. He managed to salvage a small rubber raft to which he clung for days, hoping to be rescued. As his strength waned, his will to live was also strongly put to the test. He had all he could do to resist the strong temptation to just slip away and end it all. But the words of a Sister who had taught him in grade school kept ringing in his ears: "If you die in sin, you will never see God." that word kept him alive and willing to live. And he lived to be rescued and to tell the story.

The Good News: That the Lord suffered much opposition in his public life and cruel torments in his passion is known to all. But is everyone also aware that he was tempted in many ways just as we are? This is the clear statement of the sacred writer in the letter to the Hebrews: "He was tempted in every way that we are, but he did not sin". (Hb. 4:15). That is the lesson today's gospel brings home to us. His mission was to overthrow the kingdom of Satan and establish the kingdom of God. But this did not go unchallenged. Today we see the two antagonists in the struggle: Christ and Satan. The temptations are the manifestation of the great struggle going on behind the scenes for man's redemption. But Christ is the Victor in every suggestion of the Tempter.

He will may have been tempted to doubt divine providence in his life when it was not at times so discernible that the Father was caring for his needs! He was tempted to discouragement when

his best intentions were misinterpreted and the leaders of his own people took a stand against him, and constantly opposed him. Yet he relied on the word of the Father, sounded at his baptism "This is my beloved Son, my favor rests on him" (Mt. 3:17).

He was tempted to launch out on his own and avoid the difficult path proposed to him by God for man's salvation, that of austerity and suffering. Like any other man he had a natural urge to throw off the yoke that straitened him and be independent. It was very tempting to forsake this stiff-necked people with their preconceived notions as to what the Messiah should be, and go to the pagans who were hungry for God and the message of salvation. They would have received him with open arms. Yet he reminded himself that "his mission only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mt. 15:24).

When they came to make him king, he must have experienced a natural desire to go along with their enthusiasm, and enjoy the favor they wanted to pour out on him. But on the contrary, he fled back to the mountain alone to gather new strength for the onslaught, in prayer with the Father (Jn. 6:15). When Peter, the chief of the chosen band and his close friend, tried to convince him that a suffering Messiah would be unacceptable to everybody including the Twelve, Jesus had to remonstrate violently so as to keep his eyes on the standards set for him by God: "Get out of my sight, Peter. You are like Satan, trying to make me trip and fall. You are judging not by God's standards but by Satan's" (Mt. 16:23). When the crowds all turned away and went no longer with him, it was a great temptation to call them back and either water down the conditions for following him, or at least explain his mysterious words of eating his flesh and drinking his blood. But he did nothing of the kind. Instead, he faced the Twelve and demanded if they too wanted to leave him. He was ready to start all over again, but swerve from the path the Father had shown him he would not (Jn. 6:66).

At the last supper he said: "You will be scattered and each of you will go his way leaving me quite alone" (Jn. 16:32). Undoubtedly he felt the loneliness at the thought that all of his closest friends would forsake him, but he said: "I can never be alone, for the Father is with me". That was his strong rock, his anchor in every temptation, his solid foundation: to do the will of the Father. It

was his food (Jn. 4:33) and to do the Father's will gave him the strength the needed to keep him up in every adversity, every trial and temptation, every situation.

Our Response: We can and must learn from our Savior how to battle with the Tempter. He does not rationalize. He does not argue. A definite word from the Scriptures, a thought of past assurances of the Father, a determination to do his will at all costs puts to flight any suggestion of the Evil One. "For there is One greater in you than there is in the world" (1 Jn. 4:4). It was the Spirit of holiness and courage that led Jesus to combat and it he who stands by us also as our Advocate and Helper. In his strength we shall always conquer. Relying on him we can always experience that Christ has conquered Satan, and conquers him anew in us.

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