

Towards an Ecumenical Ecclesiology:
The Roman Catholic Church in Dialogue

by

Nicholas Ayres Jesson

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of the University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
Master of Arts

Department of Religion

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Before beginning this thesis, I would like to include a personal note. I write this thesis as a Roman Catholic who is very happy and comfortable within my church. I also recognize, as all must, that there are those outside of the Roman Catholic Church who are faithful Christians. As

such, I make my own the positive affirmations of the Second Vatican Council regarding ecumenism. However, I am also well aware that my church has faults. It has failed in the past -- most grievously -- and continues to fail in many ways. In the list of failures of which I am aware, I would include the failure to develop an adequate theology of lay ministry, the failure to place an adequate emphasis on scripture in the religious education of children and adults, and the many problems associated with the exercise of authority. All of these failures are related to the failure after 30 years to sufficiently integrate the ecclesiology of Vatican II, and continues to affect the ability of the Roman Catholic community to develop an openness to other Christians. In this thesis I have tried to avoid castigating my church for these failures, or defending it unreasonably.

**TOWARDS AN ECUMENICAL ECCLESIOLOGY:
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN DIALOGUE**

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Anglican Consultative Council
ARCIC	Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (I & II)
B.E.M.	<u>Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry</u> , F & O Paper # 111
CCC	<u>Catechism of the Catholic Church</u> , English edition, (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994).
CCEO	<u>Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium, Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches</u> , Latin-English Edition, (Washington, DC.: Canon Law Society of America, 1992).
CDF	(Sacred) Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Vatican (also known as SCDF) (successor to the Holy Office)
CIC	<u>Codex Iuris Canonici, Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary</u> , James A. Coriden, et al, eds., (New York: Paulist Press, 1985).
C.W.M.E.	Council on World Missions and Evangelism, WCC
DAPNE	Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, <u>Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism</u> , (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993).
Denzinger	Heinrich Denzinger, <u>Enchiridion Symbolorum</u> , 30th ed., Karl Rahner, S.J., ed., (Freiburg: Herder, 1954). Available in English as <u>The Sources of Catholic Dogma</u> , Roy J. Defarrari, trans., (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1957).
<i>Dignitatis Humanae</i>	Declaration on Religious Freedom (Dec. 7, 1965), Second Vatican Council
ECT	"Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission In the Third Millenium," <u>Ecumenical Trends</u> 23 (1994), pp. 83-90.
F & O	Faith and Order Commission, WCC
<u>Final Report</u>	Final Report of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC I), 1982.
<i>Gaudium et Spes</i>	Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Dec. 7, 1965), Second Vatican Council

I.M.C.	International Missionary Council
JPIC	Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation, WCC
JWG	Roman Catholic Church-World Council of Churches Joint Working Group
<i>Lumen Gentium</i>	Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Nov. 21, 1964), Second Vatican Council
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
NCCB	National Conference of Catholic Bishops, U.S.A. (associated with USCC)
NCCC/USA	National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (also known as NCC or NCC/USA)
<i>Nostra Aetate</i>	Declaration on the Church's Relation to Non-Christians (Dec. 7, 1965), Second Vatican Council
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (including Apocrypha/Deutrocanonical Books)
PCPCU	Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Vatican (1960-1989: SPCU) (Also known as PCCU)
S.C.M.	Student Christian Movement
S.P.C.K.	Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge
SPCU	Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, Vatican. (since 1989: PCPCU)
S.P.G.	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Church of England
<i>Unitatis Redintegratio</i>	Decree on Ecumenism (Nov. 21, 1964), Second Vatican Council
WCC	World Council of Churches, Geneva
W.S.C.F.	World's Student Christian Federation

ABSTRACT

Interdenominational disputes originating in the Reformation are invariably affected by the dominant ecclesiology within each denomination. An assumption of the ecumenical movement which needs a critical examination is that there can be an ecclesiology that transcends these denominational divisions, and affirms that which each Christian tradition holds regarding the nature of the church. This thesis attempts to sketch the beginnings of such an "ecumenical ecclesiology."

The search for an "ecumenical ecclesiology" undertaken in this thesis is in response to the current programme study of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. This study was inaugurated by the World Council's Seventh Assembly in Canberra, Australia in 1991. This thesis attempts to evaluate the assumption that such an ecclesiology is conceivable.

The first part of this thesis begins with a study of the basic assumptions of Christian theologians regarding the nature of unity, then moves to an examination of the historical roots of the divisions in the church. The first part of this thesis concludes with a consideration of the historical progress of the twentieth Century rapprochement placing particular emphasis on the inauguration of the World Council of Churches and the Second Vatican Council.

In the second part of this thesis, a consideration of the modern dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and her ecumenical partners is undertaken. Considering in separate chapters the dialogues relating to baptism, eucharist and ministry, this thesis examines the ecclesiological issues related to these dialogues. It is the intent of this thesis to point towards prospects for further dialogue, and to highlight the rapprochement already achieved.

INTRODUCTION

The twentieth century has seen some remarkable changes in the relations between the myriad of Christian churches. Where just 45 years ago, Roman Catholic¹ lay-people were encouraged by their pastors to pass Protestant churches on the other side of the street, and the Vatican's Holy Office issued an Instruction which maintained a limited contact between Roman Catholics and non-Catholics,² now the Roman Catholic Church's hierarchy actively encourages Roman Catholic lay-people and clergy to meet, dialogue, and worship with Christians of all denominations.³ The great changes that have been wrought in the relations between the Roman Catholic Church and other Christian churches have their parallels in the changes in the relations between these other Christian churches as well.

Of course, the changes that have occurred in inter-denominational relations, or ecumenical relations, have not happened overnight. Many of the changes that have occurred have their roots in the embryonic ecumenical movement of the late years of the nineteenth Century. Quite clearly, as well, many more changes are yet to come for which the groundwork has also been set during the past century.

In order to examine the ecumenical movement at this particular point in time, in this thesis I will explore the development of contemporary Roman Catholic relations with other Christian churches. Keeping in mind that many surveys of Roman Catholic ecumenism are already available, I also intend to address myself to the relatively new and unexamined issue of ecumenical

¹ Throughout this thesis the term "Roman Catholic" can be assumed to include Eastern-Rite Catholics as well.

² Holy Office, *Ecclesia Catholica (Instructio ad locorum ordinarios; de motione œcumenica*, Dec. 20, 1949). Reprinted in *The Tablet*, v. 195 (1950), pp. 175-6.

³ see Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism (Libreria Editrice Vaticana: Vatican City, 1993).

ecclesiology. It is hoped that the intersection of these two concerns will provide an insightful approach to the study of contemporary ecumenical relations.

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Clearly, one way of approaching the subject of inter-denominational relations would be to conduct primary research of a social scientific nature, such as a survey of lay-people and clergy in a broad cross-section of each denomination. There are problems associated with that approach however, not the least of which is the lack of resources that I have at my disposal. And yet, there is an obvious need to proceed with an examination of the denominations using their own expressions of their traditions, rather than hearsay or the nuanced descriptions of an outsider. Therefore, in order to ensure that each of the denominations is considered in its own words and in its own context, I intend to limit my consideration to the agreed statements issuing from the formal dialogues between the denominations, and to the formal statements of ecumenical and ecclesiological principles which each denomination may have promulgated. In my judgment, far greater weight must be given to the authoritative internal statements of each church, rather than to those statements which are prepared by ecumenical bodies but which have not yet been received by the participating churches.

The limitations mentioned above not only limit the amount of material to be examined, they also limit the number of denominations that can be considered. There are a number of churches which are referred to as "ecumenical churches" on account of their active involvement in ecumenical initiatives associated with the World Council of Churches (WCC). Most of these churches would fit within the limitations outlined above. There are, however, a number of churches -- and whole traditions -- which are not involved with the WCC and are not in formal dialogue with any of the churches which are. Examples abound, but most prominently absent from the ecumenical dialogues are most of the Mennonite and Hutterite churches and many of the churches calling themselves "evangelical."⁴ In order to study the churches which are absent from the ecumenical dialogue, a significantly different methodology would have to be followed. I have considered it best that this thesis -- for the sake of brevity and consistency -- be limited to a consideration of only those churches in formal dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church.

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

Prior to any consideration of the dialogues between the various churches and the Roman Catholic Church, it is important first of all to examine a number of preliminary matters. Of primary importance is a clarification of the term "ecumenical ecclesiology." This implies situating ecclesiology within the theological disciplines and defining ecumenism or ecumenicity. Related terms such as "Christian unity" and "communion" must also be defined. And finally, some consideration of how these matters are related is required in order to properly describe the extent of the term "ecumenical ecclesiology." I will examine these matters in the first chapter, entitled "Towards an Ecumenical Ecclesiology." After reading ecumenical material extensively, it appears

⁴ The term "evangelical" is used advisedly. Certainly, not all churches calling themselves "evangelical" are absent from ecumenical dialogue. There are a number of member churches of the WCC which call themselves "evangelical." Most of these churches would also identify themselves as Lutheran, Baptist, or even Anglican. The evangelical churches absent from formal dialogue include the Pentacostal, Covenant, Alliance, and Brethren churches.

clear to me that there is no universally accepted ecclesiology which could be termed "ecumenical," and thus I would hope that the first chapter at least points towards such an ecclesiology.

Other matters must also be considered prior to examination of the dialogues. In order to identify the issues that the dialogues must consider and overcome, an historical survey of the break in full unity will be undertaken. The Roman Catholic Church is currently in dialogue with both the Eastern and the Oriental Orthodox churches.⁵ As well, there are dialogues with a number of churches which originate in the Reformation.⁶ In chapter two, entitled "Roots of Disunity," I will briefly survey the Monophysite schism, the so-called Eastern schism, and the roots of the Reformation. Although the purpose of this chapter is to identify the issues with which the dialogues must come to terms, a simple description of the historical events will not suffice. Therefore, I will also attempt to describe the contemporary interpretation of these historical events and issues.

The third chapter is intended to present the context in which the bilateral and multilateral dialogues to be discussed in the subsequent chapters are conducted. It appears that all ecumenical activity in the twentieth Century is derived from -- or in response to -- two major ecumenical events. These events are the establishment of the WCC in 1948, and the Second Vatican Council in 1962-65. To a certain extent, every ecumenical dialogue must come to terms with these events. In the third chapter I will focus on these two events, describe the context in which these events occurred, and explain their significance to the contemporary ecumenical movement.

⁵ The term "Oriental Orthodox" refers to the Coptic, Syrian, Armenian, Ethiopian, and (Indian) Malankara churches. Other terms used include: Ancient Orient, Lesser Eastern, and pre- or ante-Chalcedonian. They reject the Council of Chalcedon (451). See chapter 2 for further discussion.

⁶ For lack of a better term, these churches can normally be referred to as Reformation churches. They are the Lutheran, Presbyterian or Reformed and the Anglican churches. There are other churches that also originate in the Reformation era. These are the Anabaptist churches or the Radical Reformation churches.

The first three chapters that I have described above constitute the preparatory material that is essential to a consideration of the subject of this thesis. Each of these chapters will be developed to the extent that is necessary to provide the background to the subsequent chapters, and no further. This thesis is not intended to be a historical work, although it makes extensive use of historical material. The main focus of this thesis is the contemporary state of Roman Catholic ecumenical dialogue, and such a study requires a solid foundation in the historical antecedents of contemporary ecumenism.

Having completed the preparatory material in the first three chapters, I will then begin -- in the following three chapters -- a consideration of the bilateral and multilateral dialogues which are relevant to assessing the state of Roman Catholic ecumenical dialogue. By and large, the ecumenical dialogues are divided into three groupings: a) matters of faith, baptism, creed, and other related issues; b) the sacramental life of the community -- particularly the eucharist; and c) ordination, celibacy, authority, magisterium, papacy, and other matters related to the ministry. This division is found most prominently in the World Council of Churches' Faith and Order Commission document Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (B.E.M.), but is also found in many of the bilateral dialogues as well. As a general observation, I would point out that many of the dialogues begin with matters of faith unless these matters are not contentious. Even the Roman Catholic / Orthodox dialogue which assumes a substantial unity of faith has considered the subject of the Apostolic and Conciliar Creeds prior to consideration of more contemporary problems. As an organizing principle for this thesis I will follow the same groupings. Thus chapters four, five, and six are entitled: Faith in Convergence; The Eucharist in Dialogue; and Ministry in Ecumenical Perspective, respectively.

A list of abbreviations is included with the preparatory material on pages v and vi. These abbreviations are standard abbreviations in most cases, and are used throughout this thesis. Some abbreviations are punctuated with periods, while others are not. This reflects the standard usage of

these particular abbreviations. Where the term first appears it is presented in its full form and then the abbreviation appears in brackets. If the term is not used extensively it may be repeated in its full form at a later point in the text.

The spelling of certain words has presented an interesting insight into the ecclesiological chauvinism of some of the churches, in particular the Roman Catholic Church. In official Vatican documents the upper-case "Church" is used to refer to the Roman Catholic Church or to "local or particular Churches" while the lower-case "church" is used to refer to "ecclesial communities" of Christians not in communion with Rome. Throughout this thesis an attempt has been made to use the lower-case "church" to refer to the generic Christian community. The upper-case form appears in quotations from other sources where that form was used in the original. The upper-case form is also used in proper nouns such as the term "Roman Catholic Church." I judged the terms "Eastern churches," "Orthodox churches," and "Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches" to be cases in which the term "church" was used in its generic rather than formal sense and therefore I used the lower-case form. Similar usage appears for the terms "baptism" and "eucharist," while the upper-case is always used for the term "Christian." The term "Catholic" appears in both upper-case and lower-case depending on its usage.

II. DIALOGUE AS ECUMENICAL METHOD

In chapters four, five and six; I will examine the results of a variety of dialogues conducted over the past three decades. As well, in each chapter I will look at a series of multilateral dialogues conducted under the auspices of the WCC's Faith and Order Commission which resulted in the agreed statement entitled Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry. However, before I consider these dialogues, I will take a broader focus by examining the methodological process of dialogue.

During the course of ecumenical history, which will be discussed in chapter three, those involved in encouraging ecumenical rapprochement have discovered that the most rewarding means of approaching ecumenical matters is through dialogue. In chapter three, the conversations at

Malines between Abbé Fernand Portal and Viscount Halifax will be discussed. These conversations are sometimes pointed to as the opening of the modern dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion.⁷ This form of contact is frequently what is meant by the term "dialogue." One might characterize this understanding of dialogue as an "exclusive" understanding, in the sense that with this understanding dialogue is restricted simply to formal contact of at least a semi-official nature. A more "inclusive" understanding of dialogue is illustrated in the following quote from the Vatican's Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU):

In general terms, dialogue exists between individuals and groups from the moment when each party begins both to listen and reply, to seek to understand and to be understood, to pose questions and to be questioned in turn, to be freely forthcoming himself and receptive to the other party, concerning a given situation, research project or course of action, with the aim of progressing in unison towards a greater community of life, outlook and accomplishment. Each of the parties to the dialogue is ready to clarify further his ideas and his ways of living and acting, if it appears that truth is leading him in this direction. Thus reciprocity and a mutual commitment are essential elements of dialogue.⁸

The SPCU's description of the essence of dialogue reflects a more "inclusive" understanding of dialogue than is generally intended when ecumenical "dialogue" is discussed. There is an important distinction between these two understandings of dialogue. According to the exclusive understanding, churches are either in dialogue or not, and this dialogue consists of formal

⁷ There were of course even earlier ecumenical contacts between the two churches but the conversations at Malines were the first time that there was formal sanction for face to face discussion between representatives of the two communions. See Charles Lindley Wood (Viscount Halifax), Notes on the Conversations at Malines, 1921-1925: Points of Agreement (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co., 1928).

⁸ SPCU, "Reflections and Suggestions Concerning Ecumenical Dialogue," § II:1, Documents of Vatican II, v. 1, Austin P. Flannery, ed. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1975) pp. 539-40. See also DAPNE, § 172.

contact. However, according to the inclusive understanding, dialogue is a more tenuous concept.

In a discussion of dialogue from an interreligious perspective, Klaus Klostermaier has suggested:

A dialogue presupposes mutual recognition and begins with the assumption that each partner has something worthwhile to say. We do not create small-talk with dialogue, nor do we confuse lecturing with discussion. In a genuine dialogue all expect to learn from one another. This learning is not necessarily based on additional factual information (though this often is an ingredient, too) but on perceiving hitherto unnoticed aspects of an issue, being enlightened about a question in a novel manner, adding to one's understanding of a matter. One can enter into serious dialogue only if one is convinced that one has a nontrivial point to make and that others, too, have such points.⁹

It may be conceivable to say, at times, that dialogue exists despite the absence of formal contact, or official sanction. For example, some years prior to the conversations at Malines mentioned above, the Abbé Portal and Viscount Halifax and others of their respective churches corresponded and met for the purposes of personal edification and reflection on the subject of a future unity between their two churches. Though without any official sanction, this contact led to the official Vatican inquiry into the validity of Anglican orders, and the resulting papal bull *Apostolicae Curae*.¹⁰ In a similar manner, informal dialogue occurs today between almost all churches, and frequently involves both clergy and lay people.

In the following chapters, the formal dialogues between different Christian churches will be discussed. It must be acknowledged, however, that formal contact and discussion between two churches does not, of itself, constitute meaningful dialogue. While for methodological purposes the exclusive sense is used, it is used in a bracketed sense.

⁹ Klaus K. Klostermaier, "Interreligious Dialogue as a Method for the Study of Religion," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 21:4 (1984), p. 756. Though Klostermaier speaks of interreligious dialogue rather than intra-religious dialogue, the concepts are sufficiently similar in many respects.

¹⁰ see H. Hemmer, *Fernand Portal (1855-1926): Apostle of Unity* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1961), chapter 1 and Bernard & Margaret Pawley, *Rome and Canterbury Through Four Centuries* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), chapter 12.

There have been a variety of official and semi-official, bilateral and multilateral commissions established during the past century for the purpose of examining and evaluating doctrines:

the aim being to overcome the church-divisive divergences inherited from the past and reach agreements on those issues sufficient for the establishment of closer fellowship.¹¹

Ecumenical dialogue is termed "bilateral" when carried out between churches belonging to two separate ecclesial communions. Dialogue carried out between three or more communions is appropriately termed "multilateral."¹² Multilateral dialogue has normally been conducted under the auspices of a Council of Churches such as the WCC.¹³

As Arthur A. Vogel, Episcopalian Bishop of West Missouri, points out:

The documents contained in [the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission's (ARCIC) Final Report] are the first of their kind produced in the last 400 years of Western church history and should be approached with an appreciation of both their newness and their limitations.¹⁴

The same concern should be given to the examination of all of the subsequent documents arising out of the official and unofficial bilateral dialogues.

¹¹ Harding Meyer, "Dialogue, bilateral," Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), p. 281.

¹² For more on the distinction between "bilateral" and "multilateral" dialogues see the headings "Dialogue, bilateral" and "Dialogue, multilateral" in Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991).

¹³ There are notable exceptions, however, such as the U.S. Consultation on Church Union (COCU).

¹⁴ "Foreward to the American Edition" in Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, The Final Report (London: SPCK & Catholic Truth Society, 1982), p. iv.

III. RECEPTION OF THE DIALOGUE STATEMENTS

In the process of reflecting upon the report of the first Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC I),¹⁵ an apparent discrepancy in ecumenical method between the Vatican and Canterbury has come to light. A discussion of this discrepancy at this time may illuminate our discussion of the ecclesiological issues in contemporary bilateral dialogue. The discrepancy centres not on the process of dialogue itself, but on the process of reception of a dialogue's results.

At the 1988 Lambeth Conference, the assembled Anglican leaders declared that the Anglican Communion recognizes major sections of the Final Report of ARCIC I:

as *consonant* in substance with the faith of Anglicans and believes that this agreement offers a sufficient basis for taking the next step forward towards the reconciliation of our churches, grounded in agreement in faith.¹⁶

On the Roman Catholic side, however, when the official Vatican response to the Final Report was released, in December of 1991, it became apparent that the Vatican had been searching the document for *conformity* to traditional Roman Catholic formulations of the doctrines involved, and that they had not found that conformity.¹⁷ Immediate reaction from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and ecumenists of many stripes -- Anglican and Roman Catholic -- pointed to the distinction between the standards of judgment used by the two churches.¹⁸

¹⁵ The abbreviation ARCIC is used in this thesis to refer to both the first and second Anglican - Roman Catholic International Commissions. Following the establishment of ARCIC II, many publications have continued to designate ARCIC I as ARCIC. This will not be the practice here. See Abbreviations, pp. v-vi.

¹⁶ Lambeth Conference 1988, "The Truth Shall Make You Free," Resolution 8, § 1 (London: Church House Publishing/Anglican Consultative Council, 1988), p. 210. Italics mine.

¹⁷ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU), "Vatican Responds to ARCIC I Final Report," Origins 21 (1992), pp. 441-447.

¹⁸ George Carey (Archbishop of Canterbury), Origins 21 (1991), p. 447. Christopher Hill, The Tablet 245 (1991), pp. 1521-27 and "The Fundamental Question of Ecumenical Method,"

Following the release of the Vatican's response to ARCIC I, Christopher Hill, the former ecumenical affairs secretary to the Archbishop of Canterbury and a member of ARCIC I and ARCIC II, published an article entitled "The Fundamental Question of Ecumenical Method."¹⁹ In this article, Hill points to what he perceives to be the reason for the distinction between the standards of judgment used by the two churches; the Vatican dicastery responsible for ecumenical affairs is the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU),²⁰ while the official response to ARCIC I is a product of both the PCPCU and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF).

One dicastery knows the other churches and fosters the dialogues but another makes the ultimate doctrinal decisions. This structural problem will adversely affect all the ecumenical dialogues in which Rome is engaged as they move to the crucial point where decisions have to be made.²¹

From Hill's perspective as an Anglican observer, the evaluation of the Final Report appears to have been conducted on the basis of the CDF's traditional methodology -- which looks for "conformity" -- at the expense of the ecumenical methodology generally exercised by the PCPCU -- which looks for "consonance." Hill suggests that the CDF and the PCPCU spent a great deal of time and effort arguing about which dicastery was responsible for the official response.

In essence, what seems to have happened is that the [Pontifical] Council for Promoting Christian Unity has persuaded the Congregation for the Doctrine of the

Catholic International 3 (1992), pp. 134-40. Edward Yarnold, S.J., The Tablet 245 (1991), pp. 1524-5. Kevin McDonald, "Clarifying Objectives and Methodology: A Presentation of the Holy See's Response to ARCIC I's Final Report," Catholic International 3 (1992), pp. 130-2.

¹⁹ Christopher Hill, "The Fundamental Question of Ecumenical Method," Catholic International 3 (1992), pp. 134-40.

²⁰ The Vatican's Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU) was promoted to the status of a Pontifical Council in 1989.

²¹ Hill, "The Fundamental Question of Ecumenical Method," p. 134

Faith to accept a genuinely positive and ecumenical tone, while failing to persuade it to modify its substantive judgments.²²

The result is an official response which neither rejects nor accepts the report. Instead, what we read is a detailed analysis which finds the report lacking in many areas, which "sets forth for further study those areas of the Final Report which do not satisfy fully certain elements of Catholic doctrine,"²³ which applauds the extent to which agreement has been found, and which asks for further clarification on a long list of issues. Numerous instances are found of the formula:

Despite considerable convergence in this regard, full agreement on the nature and the significance of ... has not been reached.²⁴

Obviously such an analysis is a far cry from an evaluation which seeks to determine whether the Final Report is "consonant with Catholic *faith*." Rather, it appears to be asking the question: "Do the ARCIC statements conform to Catholic doctrine?"²⁵ Clearly, in the CDF's view it is not possible that an Anglican statement on the eucharist could affirm the sacramental real presence of Christ and thus be "consonant with Catholic faith," without using the substantial terminology of "transubstantiation." Undeniably, some effort must be made to determine what level of agreement must be reached: convergence, consonance, conformity, or congruence.

In September of 1993, ARCIC II approved a new document entitled: "Clarifications of Certain Aspects of the Agreed Statements on Eucharist and Ministry."²⁶ The new document addresses the differing expectations of the Vatican and the Lambeth Conference with regard to

²² Ibid.

²³ CDF and PCPCU, "Vatican Responds to ARCIC I," p. 443.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 445.

²⁵ Hill, "The Fundamental Question of Ecumenical Method," p. 135

²⁶ ARCIC II, "Clarifications on Certain Aspects of the Agreed Statements on Eucharist and Ministry," Catholic International 6/1(1995), pp. 32-6.

ecumenical method. As ARCIC II points out *Unitatis Redintegratio*, the Second Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism, itself explains that:

sometimes one tradition has come nearer than the other to an apt appreciation of certain aspects of a revealed mystery, or has experienced them in a clearer manner. As a result, these various theological formulations are often to be considered as complementary rather than conflicting.²⁷

Furthermore, ARCIC II point out, the new Catechism of the Catholic Church acknowledges that when the church:

puts down her roots in a variety of cultural, social, and human terrains, she takes on different external expressions and appearances in each part of the world. The rich variety of ecclesiastical disciplines, liturgical rites, and theological and spiritual heritage proper to the local churches, in harmony among themselves, shows with greater clarity the catholicity of the undivided Church.²⁸

ARCIC II contends that beneath the diversity of expressions and practices of the two traditions there is "a profound underlying harmony."²⁹

While there is some concern regarding the requisite level of agreement between agreed statements and pre-existing doctrinal statements of the doctrinal partners, there are other matters relating to the reception of these statements that require attention. An important principle of dialogue is at issue here. Presumably these agreed statements will never acquire authority within either church until they are adopted by that church. How this might happen is dependent upon the appropriate processes that each church uses for developing doctrinal statements. At some point, ecumenical convergence requires that each dialogue partner acknowledge the affirmations of faith made by the other as legitimate, and adopt as their own the affirmations presented in the agreed

²⁷ Ibid., p. 32. Quoted from *Unitatis Redintegratio*, § 17.

²⁸ Ibid. Quoted from Catechism of the Catholic Church, English Edition (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994), § 835.

²⁹ Ibid.

statements arising from their mutual dialogues. The present situation, in which agreed statements are simply sent to the churches for further study, is abrogating the obligation that these agreed statements represent. This obligation holds true for all churches that enter into dialogue, not only the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches discussed above.

IV. MODELS OF UNITY

There are as many different ways of envisioning unity or convergence between separated churches as there are churches. While there are some models of unity that are more popular or which are promoted by the mainstream traditions, there is no single model which has proven more effective than the others. There is, however, a clear distinction between unity and mere convergence. In chapter one, I will examine what actually constitutes unity. For the moment, suffice it to say, unity rather than convergence is the ultimate goal of the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, prior to examining the ecumenical movements further, it is essential to consider the various models through which unity has been sought.

There are in my opinion two distinct approaches to -- or models of -- ecumenism. The first of these models I have called the "prodigal church" model. In this model, one church is seen as having left the other and gone off to squander the riches of its Christian patrimony. The goal, then, is to encourage the "prodigal church" to repent of its errors, and return to the church which it has left. The obvious problems with this model include the necessity for one church to admit it is in error. This model is frequently associated with the Roman Catholic Church prior to the Second Vatican Council. One ecumenical observer has referred to this model as "you-come-in-ism."

The second model, I have called the "Emmaus" model. Here, the two -- or more -- churches are seen as walking on the road to Emmaus. While each is different, and they sometimes disagree, they walk together with the guidance of Christ. It is this model which has given rise to covenant agreements between local congregations and dioceses. The value of this model is that it

allows for a gradual strengthening of the ties between churches, without the necessity of condemnations or admissions of guilt.

The Roman Catholic Church has traditionally taught that the goal of the ecumenical movement is "organic unity." From an institutional point of view, organic unity consists of canonical uniformity. As I have shown above, it is unclear as to what level of doctrinal agreement is necessary for unity: convergence, consonance, conformity, or congruence. Whatever the case, the ultimate goal of Roman Catholic participation in the ecumenical movement is a unity which will allow the sharing of the eucharist with integrity. This is called "full communion."

CHAPTER 1

TOWARDS AN ECUMENICAL ECCLESIOLOGY

The reflection of numerous churches about their own identity as well as many ecumenical developments - for example the response of churches to the *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (B.E.M.) document - call for comprehensive discussion on the nature and mission of the church.¹

The above statement was made at the Canberra Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in February of 1991 in a report from a discussion group. The Assembly accepted the recommendation from Section III "that a study on ecumenical perspectives of ecclesiology be undertaken in the WCC with a view to re-enforcing [sic] our work towards the unity of the church."² This call for study of the ecclesiological aspects of the churches' ecumenical positions does not constitute a new programme of the Faith and Order Commission. Rather, it was intended by those drafting the report that the new study form part of the existing programmes of the WCC Commissions. The mandate of the Faith and Order Commission includes reflecting upon the work of the various commissions of the WCC. It was in this respect that this new study was called for.

Ecclesiology constitutes a part of the study of theology according to the divisions of the discipline in the classical manuals of theology. But until the developments of the contemporary ecumenical movement there has not been such a thing as "ecumenical ecclesiology." To me, the term "ecumenical ecclesiology" seems to be an oxymoron, ecclesiology implying the unity of the church, and ecumenism the apparent division of that same church. However, as the Canberra Assembly noted, there is a growing need to study the ecclesiological assumptions which the churches bring to the dialogues in which they participate. Can such a study lead to the

¹ "Report of Section III: "Spirit of Unity - Reconcile Your People,"" in Signs of the Spirit, Official Report of the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Canberra, 1991, Michael Kinnamon, ed. (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), p. 97.

² Ibid.

development of an "ecumenical ecclesiology," that is, an ecclesiology that points the way towards unity, and that the churches recognize as being consonant with their own faith experience?

I. THE ROLE OF ECCLESIOLOGY IN THE THEOLOGICAL ENTERPRISE

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, the formal object of Christian theology is God, while the material object is humanity. Thus the theological enterprise is divided between that which deals with "God as principal" and that which deals with "creatures in relation to him, who is their origin and end."³ That which deals with "God as principal" is called doctrinal or dogmatic theology, while that which deals with "creatures in relation to him" is pastoral, liturgical, moral, or fundamental theology. Each of these divisions is characterized as having its own particular audience and method, while sharing in the product of theological reflection in the others. In addition there are also sub-disciplines, not least of which are biblical and patristic studies, that contribute to the theological reflection of each of the main divisions.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the Prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, has characterized the theological enterprise as being motivated by a concern for "orthodoxy" - the search for correct doctrine - and "orthopraxis" - the search for appropriate practice. Ratzinger points out that ecclesiology does not fit as clearly into this broad distinction between formal and material objects of theology as one might like. Rather, it appears that ecclesiology bridges the division between the two. It was no accident, I would note, that the Second Vatican Council promulgated two constitutions on the church, one dogmatic and one pastoral. Ratzinger insists on maintaining a balance, cautioning against the over-emphasis of orthopraxis at the expense of orthodoxy.⁴ However in recent statements it sometimes appears to

³ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I q.1 a.3

⁴ Joseph Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987), p. 316-8.

me that Ratzinger over-emphasizes orthodoxy at the expense of orthopraxis, creedal witness at the expense of prophetic witness.

Ecclesiology reflects upon the New Testament teaching that Christ is present where two or more are gathered (Mt. 18:20). In what way, the ecclesiologist ponders, is Christ present? Further, the promise in Matthew's Gospel that Christ will always be with us (Mt. 28:20), and the Pauline injunction to unity (Eph. 4:1-6) provide grist for the ecclesiological mill.

Ecclesiology is the reflection upon the communal character of the new covenant made through the incarnation and the crucifixion of Christ, and confirmed through the new sign of the covenant; viz., baptism. The Greek term "*ekklesia*" refers to an assembly, "*ekklesis*" is an appeal or a challenge. Each of these words derive from the root "*klesis*" which means: calling or call.⁵ Thus the term "ecclesiology" indicates a particular understanding of the Gospel community; that is, that the community is in its normative sense, an assembly called together, and challenged by Christ: the church. Or, vice versa, the church is the community - the people of the new covenant.

In each of the different Christian traditions, reflection upon the experience of Christian community has developed into either a formal or an informal perception of the nature of the Gospel community. The significant consensus and convergence on ecclesiology will be discussed in later chapters, however, at this point I should note that in each tradition the doctrine that has developed has served to provide a distinctive framework for both pastoral and liturgical theology as well as for further doctrinal reflection.

II. ECCLESIOLOGICAL THEMES IN SCRIPTURE

As noted above, ecclesiology is, at least partly, a reflection upon biblical teachings about the early community of Christ's disciples and their own followers. While ecclesiology may also be

⁵ see Greek-English Lexicon, H. G. Liddell & R. Scott, comp., new ed. (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1940).

a reflection on our own experience of community, it cannot be divorced from its biblical grounding. This grounding is found primarily in the New Testament, but is also found to a lesser extent in the Old Testament.

A variety of ecclesiological themes can be found in Scripture. By "theme" I mean something akin to Avery Dulles' "models," except that they may be less clearly formed in the New Testament than Dulles found them in the contemporary church.⁶ These different themes are not exclusive of each other, as one might think, but rather are interwoven throughout the New Testament, and draw heavily upon the Old Testament as well. Nevertheless, certain themes are identified more with particular texts, and individuals. For example, the "Body of Christ" theme can be found more clearly in Paul's writings than elsewhere. Other themes that are found prominently are the "people of God," the "servant-people," and the "community of the saints."

The "Body of Christ" theme is that in which the community of believers is identified as the body of the risen Christ (Rom. 14:7-9). Christ calls all those who believe into a community which is His body, and wherein He resides. This community is the church. There are many members but there is but one body (Rom. 12:4-5, I Cor. 10:17, I Cor. 12:12, Eph. 4:4). All who are members of the Body are mutually dependent, as they are part of each other (Rom. 12:5). But those who believe and are made one in His body by baptism (Rom. 6:1-5, I Cor. 12:13) are brought freedom from law, sin and death (Rom. 6-8, Eph. 2:1-10, Col. 2:16-23).

The "Body of Christ" theme is found primarily in Paul's letters, but may also be found in other writings as well. In particular, John speaks of the body of Jesus "as the temple, which is to

⁶ see Avery Dulles, S.J., Models of the Church (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1974).

be destroyed and built again (Jn. 2:19-21)." The letter to the Hebrews speaks "of the body as the realm of Christian solidarity in suffering" (Heb. 13:3).⁷

The "people of God" theme, or model, can also be found quite clearly in Paul's writings. But it is not exclusive to Paul, it is also found in Matthew, Luke, and Acts, and to a lesser extent in Mark, John, James, and Revelation. The theme of the people of God is dependent upon the identification of the followers of Christ with the people of Israel. Thus the contention that the people who follow Christ have been born again to a new life under a new covenant (Acts 28:20). They are the people of the new covenant (Heb. 8:8-10), the Sons of Abraham (Mt. 3:9, Jn. 8:39, Rom. 4:1-6, Gal. 3:7-29, Heb. 11), the new people of Israel (Mt. 12:29), and the twelve tribes of Israel (Mt. 19:28, Lk. 22:30, Jas. 1:1, Rev. 7:4, 21:12).⁸

The "servant-people" theme is based upon the duties which derive in response to faith. The believers are bound to Christ and to one another in the same manner as Christ bound Himself to all. And those who are bound to Him are bound to each other (II Cor. 4:5, Gal. 5:13). It was not uncommon for New Testament authors to refer to "themselves as slaves of God (Tit. 1:1) and of Christ (Rom. 1:1, Phil. 1:1, Jas. 1:1, II Pet. 1:1, Jude 1:1, Rev. 1:1)."⁹

New Testament authors also frequently refer to the "community of the saints." This designation is seemingly interchangeable with the term "church," as is seen in Paul's letter to "those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus" (I Cor. 1:2) or in similar greetings in many other works. This term designates those who were called to be saints, and who lived life in a search for sanctification. Paul's use of the term bears no resemblance to the current Roman Catholic usage which describes

⁷ P. S. Minear, "Church, idea of," in The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (Nashville-New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 615.

⁸ Ibid., p. 610

⁹ Ibid.

one who has been canonized. It is clear that for Paul these people were seen as constituting the church in that city.

The various ecclesiological themes above, to which I have given a cursory overview, are found throughout New Testament writings as well as other writings of the early church such as the apocryphal writings and the Church Fathers. These themes are also found in theological reflection throughout the history of the church.

Having given some thought to the nature of the ecclesiological enterprise and the ecclesiological themes in Scripture, it is now appropriate to consider the ecumenical character of ecclesiology. Specifically, I will deal with the question of what ecumenicity involves.

III. THE MEANING OF ECUMENICITY

"Ecumenicity" is the English word for "oikoumene," a Greek word derived from "oikein," to inhabit. Oikoumene has come to refer to the "inhabited earth," or the "whole world."

[The] ecclesiastical use of the term is linked with the extension of the Christian community across the entire Roman empire. By the 4th century the oikoumene had become the "Christian world," with the double (political and religious) meaning of the "Christian empire" and the "whole church." Thus ecumenical is a quality claimed for particular councils and their dogmatic decisions..., or is used as a title of honour for specific patriarchal sees or for respected teachers of the whole church.¹⁰

However, a new meaning of the term has arisen which "refers to a spiritual attitude manifesting the awareness of the oneness of the people of God and the longing for its restoration."¹¹ An individual, a community, a process, or a concept can all be termed as ecumenical insofar as they tend toward, promote, or express, Christian unity. Hence the

¹⁰ Konrad Raiser, "Oikoumene," Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans; Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), p. 741.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 742

ecumenical movement is a process that promotes this goal of Christian unity.¹² The WCC Faith and Order Commission has undertaken a programme to search for a coherent explication of ecumenical theology. Although "ecumenical theology" could be a variety of different things, it appears that ecumenical theology for the WCC is a theology that is motivated by both orthodoxy and orthopraxis.

In order to describe the dynamic implications of the term "ecumenical," I shall examine the essential meaning of the concept "Christian unity." This will also elaborate upon what is meant when one prays for the unity of all Christians. When one examines the term "Christian unity" one must define not merely the two terms "Christian" and "unity" but also the conjunction of the two. "Christian unity" cannot simply mean the unity of Christians, although it undoubtedly means that, but must also mean "unity as Christians." In other words, there is a Christian impetus to the unity that is sought. At the local level, ecumenists do not merely seek the unity of a group of people who coincidentally happen to be Christian. Rather, they seek the unity of a group of people because their faith calls them to seek this unity. For some Christians, this gospel call to unity applies whether the group is uniformly Christian or not. For these Christians, their faith calls Christians to seek this unity beyond the bounds of their "co-religionists," with those of other faiths and practices.¹³ In this sense, ecumenism may be recognized as one dimension of evangelism.

¹² Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, Nov. 21, 1964), § 1, in The Documents of Vatican II, Walter M. Abbott, S.J. & Joseph Gallagher, eds. (Piscataway, N.J.: New Century Press, 1966), p. 342. (Unless otherwise indicated, all subsequent references to Vatican II documents are to this edition.)

¹³ There is some difference of opinion regarding the prerequisites for inclusion in the *oikoumene*. Many liberal churches express a "whole-world" vision of ecumenism which involves social action, inter-faith dialogue, and political advocacy. See United Church of Canada Inter-Church Inter-Faith Committee, "Toward a Renewed Understanding of Ecumenism" (Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 1994). Many other churches reject these factors and express a vision of the *oikoumene* which only includes those who have heard and received the Gospel.

Not only does "Christian unity" have a Christian character because it derives from a Christian discipleship, but also because it is found in the nature of Christianity. Of course other religions may also at times seek unity, either implicitly or explicitly. But the form of the unity sought by Christians is particularly Christian in that it is a unity in Christian faith. This does not necessarily mean uniformity in faith; it is even argued by some that uniformity is antithetical to the Christian spirit of unity.

Because my examination of the term "Christian unity" is not primarily to be undertaken as an analysis of the development of the concept, but rather as an explication of the contemporary meaning of the concept, my analysis will start with a concept that is currently popular; "unity in diversity." In order to evaluate the ecumenical movement in the chapters that follow it is important to set criteria by which rapprochement may be judged. Conversely, it is also important to set criteria by which diversity may be judged. I hope that the concept of "unity in diversity" will provide the basis upon which such criteria can be set, or in other words, I hope that by showing the inter-relation between these two concepts that the essential meaning of each concept will become clearer. This chapter will address this subject as it applies in particular to the ecclesiological presuppositions of the various churches participating in the ecumenical movement.

IV. A DEFINITION OF UNITY

It is a particularly auspicious time, now in 1995, to consider the subject of unity. In the recent past we have seen the re-unification of Germany and the renewed debate over national unity in Canada. We have seen the unification of the European Community in 1992, and many of us look forward with mixed emotions to the re-unification of China and Hong Kong in 1997. We watch on the sidelines as North and South Korea discuss their future, and as the black community in South Africa takes a leading role in the development of democratic structures in their homeland. We even see many of the newly independent republics of the former Soviet Union re-uniting in a Commonwealth of Independent States. All this might be enough to cause one to suspect that unity

is breaking out all over, on the political level at least. However, we also see Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia in arms over the break-up of Yugoslavia, and we see continued violence in Armenia, the Punjab, El Salvador, Haiti, Iraq, and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It is obvious to me that a close reflection on the subject of the "unity of humankind" is not only of interest, but may in fact be necessary.

Unity is not merely a matter of political theory but is rather a matter of fundamental inquiry at the root of all intellectual disciplines. Medieval scholastic philosophers and theologians identified "unity" as one of four transcendental notions: being, one, true, good.¹⁴ In the modern ecumenical movement it has become increasingly evident that Christian unity is not merely a matter of juridical recognition and affiliation between Christian communities, but that it involves a dynamic spiritual fellowship as well. This was recognized by Pope Paul VI and the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I in their joint declaration removing the anathemas of 1054. Both Pope and Patriarch acknowledged

that this gesture of justice and mutual pardon is not sufficient to end both old and more recent differences between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, those differences will be overcome through cleansing of hearts, through regret for historical wrongs, and through an efficacious determination to arrive at a common understanding and expression of the faith of the apostles and its demands.¹⁵

Unity is a term which is used in a variety of ways. The most common way is that of quantitative unity, singularity. Another use of the term is that of transcendental unity, which refers

¹⁴ William L. Reese, "The Transcendent," in Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion: Eastern and Western Thought (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1980), p. 585.

¹⁵ Pope Paul VI - Patriarch Athenagoras I, "Common Declaration" (Dec. 7, 1965). Text from Abbott & Gallagher, The Documents of Vatican II, p. 726.

to "the oneness of indivisibility," the opposite of "distinction" and "diversity."¹⁶ It is the quality that relates two related beings together. The Scholastic axiom "*ens et unum convertuntur*" (being and one are convertible) highlights the essential meaning of unity.

Being and one are subjectively the same, but "one" signifies the notion of indivision or undividedness. One, thus understood, must not be confused with homogeneity. Man, though heterogeneous in his many parts, is one; that is, he is undivided in himself since he is a human being, and not many beings by reason of his parts. The principle means that whatever is, is one in this transcendental sense. Hence we can say that whatever is, is one, and whatever is one, is.¹⁷

Unity is perhaps most commonly used with reference to human social groupings, such as in the case of the recent "national unity debate" with respect to the Canadian Constitution. In this example there is the direct implication that we are dealing with a debate about what makes our "nations" one country. The term "nation" also contributes to this implication, although less directly. Another example of the use of the term "unity" is that which I am primarily concerned with here, that of the unity of the church.

What is important about the term "unity" is not only the implication of singularity but also the implication of commonality. Whether one understands this commonality as a tendency towards a common end, or as drawing upon a common origin, what is significant is the force that motivates this unity. Karl Rahner talks of unity as a task in a teleological sense.

If and in so far as each individual existent with its initial unity belongs to a world of *becoming* and unity is a transcendental determination of every existent as such - that is, must also belong to the goal of this becoming itself - then to every existent

¹⁶ "*Unitas*," in A Lexicon of St. Thomas Aquinas, Roy J. Deferrari et al, comp. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1948), p. 1125.

¹⁷ R. Smith, "Scholastic Terms and Axioms," in New Catholic Encyclopedia, v. 12 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1967), p. 1151.

there belongs also a unity imposed on it *as a task, a unity still to be realized as telos* (goal) of its becoming.¹⁸

This goal imposed as a task is what Rahner describes as the "absolute unifying unity" - God. All things tend towards their proper end, which is God, their existential object.

Rahner applies the concept of "unity as task" to humanity, asserting that though many contemporary Christian theologians no longer propose an anthropology based on a single human couple, Adam and Eve, as progenitors of the whole human race, nonetheless Christian theology does contend that humanity shares a common beginning and end, and as with every other being, by virtue of our creation, humanity's end is God.

V. UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

It appears that even in the New Testament there was considerable diversity in ecclesiologies. In the Gospel of Mark there appears to be a skeleton conception of "church," which is found fleshed-out in Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. However, Luke-Acts portrays a distinctly different vision of the church than the Gospel of John. And despite the similarities between the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew appears to have a different vision than Mark and Luke. Further, the Pauline letters display a wide diversity of ecclesial communities, each with their own distinct characteristics and concerns.

Karl Rahner has addressed the question of differing ecclesiologies, and has identified a number of distinct approaches within the New Testament. For example, Rahner suggests that Luke-Acts distinguishes three distinct periods in salvation history; "the period of Israel, the period of Jesus as the 'centre of time,' and the period of the Church" which extends until the final days. Further, Rahner identifies Matthew as primarily concerned with showing the continuity of the church with Israel, and thus "the law of Christ is proclaimed for this new people of God and for

¹⁸ Karl Rahner, S.J., "Unity of the Church - Unity of Mankind," in Theological Investigations, v. 20 (New York: Herder & Herder, 1981), p. 155.

this new Covenant."¹⁹ In the Pauline letters, Rahner finds that "this new community of the church is founded sacramentally on baptism and the eucharist. The mystical body of Christ lives by that body which is received at the Lord's Supper."²⁰ Of course there is a considerable degree of nuance to these ecclesiologies, and there are shadows of other ecclesiologies in other texts that are believed to be written by the same authors.

A solution to this apparent problem of diverse New Testament ecclesiologies is proposed by Rahner. He suggests that despite the apparent contradictions between the ecclesiologies, that "ultimately there does exist a deeper unity in the idea of the church in the New Testament."²¹

It can no longer be held that Paul's concept of the church is incompatible with that of the original community. Nor can we or must we maintain any irreconcilable differences between the original Jewish Christian community, the Jewish Hellenistic communities, and Hellenistic Christianity..., nor between Paul and the so-called early Catholicism which becomes clear in Luke and in the Pastoral Epistles.²²

Rahner argues that a development can clearly be seen in the theology of the New Testament within the apostolic period. It should thus come as no surprise that it is "not until the beginning of the second Christian century or even later..., that we find everything which we correctly regard today as the divine constitution of the church."²³

My intent here is not to address the specifics of the diversity of ecclesiologies in the New Testament, interesting as such a study may be. Rather, I wish to argue that the point is moot. Whether the New Testament expresses a single ecclesiology or not, is relevant to my study only if

¹⁹ Karl Rahner, S.J., Foundations of Christian Faith (New York: Crossroad, 1978), p. 337.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 338

²¹ Ibid., p. 340

²² Ibid., p. 341

²³ Ibid.

it expressly rejects or endorses particular ecclesiologies. The fact that a number of apparently diverse ecclesiologies exist within the canon of the New Testament implies that a diversity of ecclesiology in the contemporary church is not inconceivable. In a search for an ecclesiology which transcends the denominational barriers of the present, Scripture will undoubtedly be a guide and a starting point. However, we should not expect to find such an ecclesiology hiding within an unexplored scriptural hermeneutic. The question that remains unanswered is whether diversity as an ecclesiological character is an inherent contradiction.

VI. THE ECCLESIAL DIMENSION OF HUMANITY

In his recent book, Being as Communion, John Zizioulas distinguishes between the biological and the ecclesial hypostasis of the human. The biological hypostasis, to paraphrase Zizioulas, is the conjunction of the biological nature of the human - as a body which is born, which lives, and will someday die - and the recognition of being uniquely an individual. The result of this hypostasis is a radical sense of freedom. As Zizioulas explains:

[The human] body is the tragic instrument which leads to communion with others, stretching out a hand, creating language, speech, conversation, art, kissing. But at the same time it is the "mask" of hypocrisy, the fortress of individualism, the vehicle of the final separation, death.²⁴

The ecclesial hypostasis is much more complex. It is "constituted by the new birth of man by baptism":

Consequently, if, in order to avoid the consequences of the tragic aspect of man which we have discussed, the person as absolute ontological freedom needs a hypostatic constitution without ontological necessity, his hypostasis must inevitably be rooted, or constituted, in an ontological reality which does not suffer from createdness.²⁵

²⁴ John D. Zizioulas, Being as Communion (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985), p. 52.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 54

Christology... is the proclamation to man that his [Christ's] nature can be "assumed" and hypostasized in a manner free from the ontological necessity of his biological hypostasis, which, as we have seen, leads to the tragedy of individualism and death.²⁶

This leads to unity. The biological hypostasis, as a result of the fall according to Zizioulas, leads to a radical sense of individuality and of freedom. This is contrary to the action of the ecclesial hypostasis. The ecclesial hypostasis serves to render unity from disunity. It is, as Zizioulas explains, the divine gift of the Incarnation. Christ takes upon himself the biological necessities of birth and death, of simple survival, and in death leads the people of God into the divine unity that is God. Christ is thus the first along a path that he leads between the radical individuality of the biological hypostasis and the divine unity of the Godhead.

I have called this hypostasis which baptism gives to man "ecclesial" because, in fact, if one should ask, "How do we see this new biological hypostasis of man realised [sic] in history?" the reply would be, "In the Church."²⁷

This ecclesial hypostasis is, according to Zizioulas, only made possible in the church. It is in the church that the eucharist is celebrated. The eucharist is the manifestation of the Incarnation of Christ, it is the body of Christ, and it brings the community itself into the body of Christ. It celebrates the unity of the community, the body of Christ, the church; and it is a foretaste of the Kingdom to come, the divine unity, salvation.

VII. *KOINONIA*: THE ECCLESIOLOGY OF COMMUNION

The vision of the ecumenical movement is Jesus' high priestly prayer "that they all may be one" (Jn 17:21). However, in recent years, reflection by ecumenists upon this prayer has led to a greater appreciation for its context:

that they all may be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 56

²⁷ Ibid.

The understanding of Christian unity expressed in this text is essentially Trinitarian and evangelical. Firstly, it expresses a Trinitarian understanding of Christian unity in the connection it makes with the "unicity" of the three persons of the Trinity. Christians are called to a unity which reflects that of the Trinity, insofar as that is possible for humanity. Secondly, it is evangelical in the sense that it is ultimately so that the world might believe and follow Jesus that all Christians must be able to live in unity. This realization is not wholly new, it has long been understood that Christian unity serves the evangelical mandate of Christians expressed in the final verses of Matthew's gospel.

The term *koinonia* is used in the New Testament to refer to the unity of the people of God. Although found in the New Testament, and recognizable in Vatican II texts and in other theological works, it is only in the last ten years that the ecclesiological emphasis on *koinonia* has become conspicuous. In the ecclesiology of communion, the accent is upon the communion or *koinonia* of the Christian community rather than the hierarchical and juridical accents of other ecclesiologies.

The English term "communion" comes from the Latin: "*communio*", which in turn comes from the Greek: "*koinonia*". Used in the New Testament in reference to the early Christian community,²⁸ the term has since become identified with the relationship between the three persons of the Trinity. Though not found explicitly in the Gospels, but the concept itself is found throughout the Gospels and the epistles. In the first letter of John, the term is used "to signify in one word the simultaneous union of Christians with the Father and the Son and among themselves (1 Jn 1:3, 6-7)."²⁹ Thus, the ecclesiology of communion or "*koinonia* ecclesiology" in its simplest form describes the nature of the Christian community as it is, and as it is becoming, in terms of the relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The early Christian community is described

²⁸ see Acts 2:42; I Cor. 1:9, 10:16; II Cor. 13:14; Phil. 2:1; I Jn 1:3, 1:6-7.

²⁹ J.-M.R. Tillard, "*Koinonia*," in Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement, p. 570.

in Acts 2:42-47 as a community that devoted itself to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship (*koinonia*). It expresses this fellowship in its service to the poor, and by distributing their possessions throughout the community.

The bond of unity is the common sharing of the sacraments, especially baptism and the eucharist. The communities that share together the eucharist signify by this fact that they are truly one church. As Christ willed that we may all be one (Jn 17:21; Eph. 4:1-6), so too did He will that we share in His body (Mt. 26:20-30; Mk. 14:17-26; Lk. 22:14-23; Jn. 13:21-30).

For most Christian groups, ecclesiology is dependent upon eucharistic theology.³⁰ There is but one Body of Christ, one eucharist, and thus there is one church. That church is truly the Body of Christ, and all who are part of the Body of Christ are part of the church. By the common bond of baptism, the baptized are all made one in the Body of Christ, and by sharing the eucharist the bond of unity is strengthened.

For the purpose of this thesis, the assumption shall be that sharing at the eucharistic table is the *sacramental* bond of unity. The beauty of eucharistic ecclesiology is that it is grounded very clearly at the root of theology, and has made possible both the exercise of the freedom of diversity and the expression of unity.

Pope John Paul II, in an address to a Coptic Orthodox delegation, raises an additional issue in our examination of this vision of unity:

It is fundamental for this dialogue to recognize that the richness of this unity in faith and spiritual life must be expressed in the diversity of forms. Unity - whether on the universal level or at the local level - does not signify uniformity or the absorption of one group by the other. It is rather at the service of all groups, to

³⁰ The exception would be those churches which are non-sacramental. For example, the Society of Friends, although even here some individual Quakers have expressed an appreciation for sacramental theology.

help each one to give better expression to the gifts which it has received from the Spirit of God.³¹

VIII. THE LIMITS OF ECCLESIAL DIVERSITY

There are, however, many challenges to unity even within a local congregation or diocese. Between the various dioceses there is even greater opportunity for tension. I would not assume that pluralism is any greater a force for tension today than it would have been in the early days of the church. In fact, in the first century the church had to come to terms with the divisions between the Judaic and the Gentile Christian communities. The lessons learned at that time, and passed down through the Scriptures, have not always been learned by the church in every era. However, I would propose using the teaching of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-35) as a model in which to view diversity in the church today.

Yves Congar, in his book Diversity and Communion, expresses a very interesting point. He points out that "given that the axis of Christian faith is assured, one can accept various expressions of it."³² It is clear that in the early church there were limits required of diversity that may not be necessary in our modern era. In the infancy of Christian faith the definition of the faith had not yet been settled. However, after two millennia of Christian faith there have developed certain touchstones of orthodoxy such as the Scriptures and the early church witness. Despite the wide diversity of opinion in the church today, Christian orthodoxy is still defined in terms of the Trinitarian faith of the early Councils.

Congar, of course, was not the first to express an openness to diversity, although amongst contemporary Roman Catholics he is probably one of the more prominent individuals to have

³¹ Pope John Paul II to the Coptic delegation (22 June 1979), Irénikon 52 (1979), p. 377, as cited in Yves Congar, O.P., Diversity and Communion (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1985), p. 33.

³² Congar, p. 92

expressed it. Other traditions also reflect an appreciation for diversity. The Augsburg Confession teaches that:

The church is the assembly of saints in which the Gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly. For the true unity of the church it is enough to agree concerning the teaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments. It not necessary that human traditions or rites and ceremonies, instituted by men, should be alike everywhere. It is as Paul says, "One faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all," etc. (Eph. 4:5, 6).³³

And in 1893, Pope Leo XIII reiterated the view expressed by Aquinas that "in those things which do not come under the obligation of faith, the Saints were at liberty to hold divergent opinions, just as we ourselves are."³⁴ Clearly for some traditions the limits of legitimate diversity are narrower than other traditions.

The implication of the above affirmations of the legitimacy of diversity, which was not followed up by Congar, is that there is a great breadth of opportunity for diversity of opinion and practice over matters not directly related to the Trinitarian datum of faith. While this is true, there are limits to diversity that some traditions have accepted and which may at times result in tension. The historic churches³⁵, for example, generally agree that a greater degree of agreement than

³³ Augsburg Confession, Article VII, in The Book of Concord, Theodore G. Tappert, trans. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p. 32.

³⁴ Pope Leo XIII *Providentissimus Deus* (Nov. 18, 1893), § 19, in The Papal Encyclicals, v. 2, Claudia Carlen IHM, ed. (Raleigh: McGrath Publishing Co., 1981), p. 335.

³⁵ The term "historic churches" refers to the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches, and the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the Reformation churches of the Anglican, Lutheran, and Calvinist traditions.

simple acceptance of Trinitarian doctrine and the Scriptures is necessary.³⁶ These traditions also commonly agree that the formulations of the first seven Ecumenical Councils are a legitimate expression of the scriptural witness, even though they may not unanimously agree on the authority of those Councils themselves.

The question arises then, as to what level of diversity should actually be permitted in any future ecumenical union. The Ecumenical Councils primarily formulated doctrinal expressions of faith, and instituted apostolic creeds. It would seem that, if the Ecumenical Councils did not see it important to formulate binding liturgical rubrics, there is need for some other justification if one is to suggest that liturgical uniformity is desirable.

The position explained above clearly relativizes many of the teachings of all of the churches, and is therefore unacceptable to some of them. In the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches, the ecumenical character of a Council is what makes its teachings collegial and thus obligatory for the faithful. What, I might then ask, is the status of the doctrinal formulations of the Roman Catholic Church since 1054? The Roman Catholic Church identifies Vatican II as the twenty-first ecumenical council. Recognizing that the first seven are accorded the dignity of being true Ecumenical Councils by many churches, does this mean that the other fourteen are not Ecumenical Councils, and thus cannot be seen to have formulated definitive, and normative, doctrine for the universal church?

Congar has addressed this question as well. He points out that there are a variety of criteria that have been used to qualify a Council as ecumenical. It was not until Bellarmine,

³⁶ Despite minor differences in their recognition of the contents of the canon of the Bible, the churches generally recognize that they are in essential agreement in this matter. The canon of the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) is slightly supplemented in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches by the Deutrocanonical texts, called Apocrypha by those traditions that do not include them. Between the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches there are minor differences in the canon of the Deutrocanonical texts as well.

Congar reminds us, that the current list of Ecumenical Councils in the Roman Catholic Church was formulated, and that it has no official status.³⁷ The question of the reception of Council's teachings is a difficult matter to settle, but Congar has an interesting suggestion to make. He draws upon comments from Louis Bouyer who distinguished the regional character of some of the Councils. As Bouyer and Congar point out, certain Councils have been accepted as being Ecumenical despite their regional character. Certainly it has always been recognized that a Council will not be the last word on the subject, and that there may be a slightly different formulation of the teachings of a Council at a later date. Each council or synod is limited by its temporal concerns.

That amounts to the fact that an acceptance, pure and simple, of the general councils of the West and their definitions without the opportunity for discussion cannot constitute a prelude to the reunion between East and West. All that the West can and should ask of the East is that the work of these councils should be accepted provisionally by the East, as a favourable light, as a positive element essential for a broader and deeper consideration of the questions involved. At the same time, the West should offer the East the same consideration of the councils and dogmatic decisions which this other part of the church is unanimous in judging to be equally important.³⁸

Could it not come about that the churches of the East, and some of the separated brethren of the West might at some future time in a reconciled church recognize their own faith within the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, and thus agree to designate it the Eighth Ecumenical Council?

In dealing with the question of the Orthodox Churches' recognition of the Second Vatican Council, I have highlighted an important principle that is essential in any ecumenical rapprochement. It must be clear that the past history of each church must be recognized by the

³⁷ Congar, p. 93

³⁸ Louis Bouyer, *L'Église de Dieu, corps du Christ et temple de l'Esprit* (Paris, 1970), pp. 678f, as quoted in Congar, pp. 94-5.

others as a legitimate expression of Apostolic faith, although not necessarily a complete expression of that faith. Conversely, it is also clear that no church can be obligated to accept as normative a tradition that has developed solely in another church. This would appear to rule out the Vatican's age-old "return to Rome" approach to ecumenism.

CONCLUSION

Can there be such a thing as an ecumenical ecclesiology? And if there can be, what would it entail? I have identified a principle which must hold true if there is to be any progress toward such an ecumenical ecclesiology, namely, that the past history of each church must be recognized as a legitimate expression of the apostolic faith. But does not such a principle merely apply to an interim stage in the process of rapprochement, the period of denominationalism? If it does, then this prospective ecumenical ecclesiology should only be seen as a description of a stage on the path toward the greater goal of full unity. Or is such a stage - wherein the churches maintain their independent characters but acknowledge each other's legitimacy - in fact what ecumenists mean when they say they are seeking full unity?

The answer to this last question can only be grounded in our own denominational perspectives. Each church must examine its own tradition and its particular interpretations of Scripture as well as those of other churches, with an openness to repentance for past failings and with the goal of assuring each other of the orthodoxy of one's own tradition. Depending on our own individual faith commitments each church may in fact come to acknowledge each other church's legitimacy and thus extend eucharistic hospitality while maintaining their own particular ecclesial structures and practices. In short, a community of autonomous churches. Is there any justification for the claim that organic unity is a greater expression of unity than this?

In the next chapter I shall discuss the roots of the contemporary state of disunity between the East and West, and between the churches of the West. I intend that the concept of Christian unity as examined above will serve as a standard by which to judge the ecumenical positions

discussed in later chapters, and that the eucharistic character of ecclesiology as described above will serve in a similar capacity in my discussions of ecclesiology.

CHAPTER 2

ROOTS OF DISUNITY

The Church's identity is fashioned not only by its theology, ecclesiastical structure and other traditions, but also by its historians' selective interpretations of the past. The task of the church historian in every age is not only to discover new facts but also to discover new ways of thinking about them. The ecumenical perspective is the new way of thinking about the church in our time.¹

Having outlined the meaning of ecumenical ecclesiology in the last chapter, we now move to a consideration of the ways in which our historical experience has influenced our distinct ecclesiological visions. We shall undertake in this chapter a study of the roots of the current disunity in which Christians find themselves by an examination of the tensions that have developed between conciliar and papal authority, and between evangelical and structural ecclesiologies. In order to do this we shall look successively at the Monophysite Schism, the *filioque* controversy, the Eastern Schism,² and the Reformation; including special emphasis on individuals such as Cardinal Humbert, Patriarch Michael Cerularius, and Martin Luther. Such a study should outline to a considerable extent the fundamental issues that precipitated the various "schisms."

However, such a study must avoid assigning responsibility by suggesting that one party or the other was schismatic, or that the various reformers were rebels or heretics. Such designations were effective in the context of polemical attacks, but in the context of the current ecumenical rapprochement more affirming designations must be sought.

¹ T. V. Philip, "Church History in Ecumenical Perspective," Ecumenical Review 39 (1987), p. 417.

² The term "Eastern schism" normally refers to the separation between Eastern and Western Christianity beginning in 1054. The term "Great Schism" is also used at times. The adjective "eastern" is used in the West to differentiate it from other schisms that occurred in the West. We must keep in mind, however, that the term does not imply that responsibility for the schism lies with the Eastern churches. This schism should also not be confused with the Monophysite schism following the Council of Chalcedon.

Not only should we see the events and persons in their wider historical context, but we should also see them in relation to one another and not as isolated events: for example, recent Luther studies by Roman Catholic historians in the wider context of the history of the sixteenth century and in relation to the development both in the Protestant world and the Catholic Church have brought about a new understanding of Luther.³

Perhaps a more appropriate focal point for our study would be the ecclesiological tensions that led to the "schisms," always being mindful of the fact that it was a human failure to respond adequately to the concerns of a significant portion of the church that led to the tensions becoming "schisms." Such a study may in fact be considerably more reconciliatory than a study of the former variety.

Another matter that should be kept in mind is that the Monophysite Schism, the Eastern Schism and the Reformation, though each is a particular historical occasion or period, are also a continuing reality in the life of the churches. It is this continuing reality that concerns us in this thesis, and thus the particular historical incidents that are examined in this chapter are examined for the purpose of eliciting some insights into the contemporary ecumenical dialogue that we will examine in later chapters.

The tensions that will be discussed in this chapter will be those that arise between region and empire in the case of the Monophysite Schism, papal and conciliar authority in the case of the Eastern Schism, and evangelical and structural ecclesiologies in the case of the Reformation. In the latter case, we will be particularly concerned with the reforms initiated by Martin Luther. The obvious assumption that we will be making in this chapter is that the three periods of schism were motivated by significantly different issues. This should not be a surprise since the Monophysite Schism, the Eastern Schism and the Reformation occurred in different periods in history. However, it is important to emphasize that the motivating factors are different for each of these three historical incidents. To the amateur observer, removed by four hundred and seventy-five

³ Philip, p. 424

years from the Reformation, over nine hundred years from the Eastern Schism, and over fifteen hundred years from the Council of Chalcedon, the distinctions appear at first glance to be insignificant.

Further, our approach to the matter has changed during the past century from that of a simple recognition of a state of schism to that of a common search for unity. In earlier times, the different nature of the three divisions was not very significant. However, in the contemporary ecumenical movement these distinctions are very important. We must keep in mind that the means to achieve unity will be different between different churches. For example, dialogue between the Roman Catholic and the Reformation churches will focus primarily on the Reformation concerns, and attempt to find a new and common affirmation of the positions that each side has found to be essential in their faith experience over the intervening centuries. Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches will focus primarily on the concerns of our common heritage, and on the concerns that each church has developed in the intervening centuries as well. Dialogue between the Oriental Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches will focus primarily on the Council of Chalcedon and its historical antecedents.

In a very interesting way, however, dialogue between the Orthodox and the Reformation churches will be radically different from either of the two dialogues mentioned above. Such a dialogue will focus on both the concerns of the common heritage of each of the churches, of issues such as apostolicity that are essential to the Orthodox, and of issues arising from the Reformation experience. Because the Orthodox and the Reformation churches do not have quite the same level of polemics dividing them, they may have a greater opportunity for ecumenical charity than the Western churches have between themselves. Dialogue between the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches will bear considerable resemblance to the Roman Catholic and Oriental Orthodox dialogue surrounding the Council of Chalcedon, and each of these dialogues will benefit from each other.

Our comments above have referred to the Orthodox as though the Orthodox churches think and act uniformly. This is, of course, not the case but is simply a generalization for illustrative purposes. It might be noted that the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox represent two widely distinguished traditions, each having justifiably claimed through the centuries that they represent the faith of the Apostles. In 1964, the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches around the world declared:

We recognize in each other the one Orthodox faith of the church. Fifteen centuries of alienation have not led us astray from the faith of our fathers... On the essence of the Christological dogma we found ourselves in full agreement. Through the different terminologies used by each side, we saw the same truth expressed.⁴

It is hoped that through the dialogue between the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox their churches might enter into full communion⁵ Such an action is intended to celebrate the common priesthood of the celebrating ministers, and is thus a symbol of unity. In the eucharistic and ecclesiological understanding of Orthodoxy, this eucharistic celebration both celebrated and made present the unity that Christ wills among His churches. This is the closest form of unity that can be imagined by the Orthodox.

⁴ K. M. George, "Oriental Orthodox - Orthodox Dialogue," Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement, Nicholas Lossky, et al., eds. (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), p. 758.

⁵ The term *full communion* is used here in the sense used by the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission at Lund in 1952: "Full communion... [is] when Churches in doctrinal agreement, or of the same confessional family, allow communicant members freely to communicate at the altars of each, and where there is freedom of ministers to officiate sacramentally in either Church (i.e. Intercelebration)." Quoted from Documents on Christian Unity, Fourth Series, 1948-57, G. K. A. Bell, ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 230. The term *concelebration* refers to the practice of a bishop jointly consecrating the Eucharist together with other bishops and priests.

I. THE CHRISTOLOGICAL CONTROVERSIES

The histories of Eastern and Western Christianity bear a significant resemblance in the first three centuries. In this era there were certainly many differences between Greek and Latin Christianity, but these differences were primarily geographic and cultural in nature. The local churches of both East and West were subject to persecution by the Roman authorities, and thus shared a common experience in which their embryonic faith was formed. In such a context local variations of witness were not significant, the standard by which authenticity of witness was judged was the common experience of persecution, and the promise of redemption through Christ's Passion.

The context changed with the conversion of Constantine in the early fourth Century. With the legalization of Christianity came a great influx of new "faithful." The confusion and upheaval that must have occurred at the beginning of the fourth century has probably never been equaled until the recent legalization of religious practice in the former Soviet Union. Similar to the experience of today's Eastern European churches, the churches of the fourth century required a structure in which to educate the new Christians, and by which they could judge the authenticity of different doctrines that developed. It took very little time before the structures of the pagan Roman empire were adopted for the new Christian empire. The episcopacy that had developed through the first centuries very quickly took upon itself a role as princes of the empire, and princes of the church. In many cases the local bishops served as administrators in the Emperor's name. Under Constantine, the judicial decisions of the bishops were invested with civil authority.⁶

By 325 A.D. the tensions in the Christian world were so great that the Emperor was forced to call a Council at Nicaea. This in itself was a new structure for Christianity. At this Council,

⁶ Thomas Bokenkotter, A Concise History of the Catholic Church, revised edition (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1979), p. 51.

the bishops assembled from all corners of the empire,⁷ presided over by the Emperor, defined certain doctrines relating to the divinity of Christ and issued a creed, which following modification at the Council of Constantinople in 381, has become known as the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed or Symbol.

Despite the agreement reached at Nicaea and Constantinople -- or rather because of -- the discussion and debate over Christology continued. Having agreed that Christ was both divine and human, attempts to explain this reality became the focus of the debate. The doctrines offered to explain this reality became confused with the ecclesiastical politics of the empire. Constantinople, the new capital of the empire, claimed status as New Rome, with all the prerogatives that Rome enjoyed. Alexandria, which was the apostolic see of St. Mark, contending that apostolic sees are higher in honour and dignity than other patriarchal sees such as Constantinople, claimed primacy over the North African and Ethiopian churches. As both Constantinople and Rome claimed these territories as well, there was considerable tension. Jerusalem, which was by this point practically divested of all authority and territory, and Ephesus, which was officially demoted, placed their support behind whomever was supportive of their causes. Antioch which would lose prestige and territory if Jerusalem's claims were accepted defended the status quo as expressed at Nicaea (which had endorsed Antioch's territorial claims). As if these tensions between the apostolic sees were not sufficient, the various patriarchs who held these sees also had their particular alliances. Into this turmoil stepped an Antiochene monk, Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople.

Nestorius was reluctant about the term *theotokos*, "Mother of God" due to a concern that this would be incorrectly understood to imply that the divinity of Christ was born of Mary. Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria challenged this position as an apparent heresy. In February 430, Cyril sent

⁷ It should be noted that while all regions of the empire were represented, the majority of participants came from the Eastern empire. The same is true of subsequent councils and synods.

to Nestorius a long letter expounding the Alexandrian Christological doctrine. According to Cyril, the differences between the divinity and the humanity of Christ are not abolished by their union, but they constitute a single entity (*hypostasis*). As such we can say that God was born at Bethlehem.⁸ Nestorius' reply reasserted the Antiochene doctrine of Theodore which held that:

the union of God and man in Christ to form a single person (*prosopon*) in no sense destroys or qualifies the permanent duality of the two uniting "natures."⁹

The stage had been set. Two rival doctrines which had been proposed in earlier times -- by Theodore in Antioch and Apollinaris in Alexandria -- had now come into direct confrontation. While both doctrines accepted Nicaea's contention that Christ is both human and divine, Cyril and the Alexandrian school held that these two natures become one in the incarnation, and Nestorius, Theodore and the Antiochene school held that these two natures continue in the incarnate Word.

In response to Nestorius' receiving some Pelagian heretics condemned by Rome, Pope Celestine I demanded Nestorius recant. Celestine's letter arrived in Constantinople in the company of a letter from Cyril demanding that Nestorius accept Cyril's Twelve Anathemas including the condemnation of the position that certain words and acts of Christ can be ascribed to the individual natures of Christ. Cyril required that Nestorius admit that "the Word of God suffered in the flesh."¹⁰ The emperor, Theodosius, called a council at Ephesus at Pentecost in 431 to resolve the dispute.

Unfortunately for Nestorius, John of Antioch and the bishops of Syria were late arriving at the council. Before they arrived, Cyril and his suffragans had excommunicated Nestorius. When the Antiochene bishops arrived, they proceeded to depose both Cyril and Memnon of Ephesus.

⁸ Henry Chadwick, The Early Church, The Pelican History of the Church, v. 1 (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1967), pp. 195-96.

⁹ Ibid., p. 193

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 196-97

Then the Roman legates arrived, and with Cyril condemned Pelagianism, and prohibited any additions to the Nicene Creed.¹¹ The decisions of the two rival synods were submitted for ratification to Theodosius, who -- in his wisdom or ignorance -- ratified both synods decisions including the depositions of Nestorius, Cyril and Memnon, who he incarcerated. Nestorius conceded and was allowed to return to his monastery in Antioch. Cyril, after considerable bribes, escaped from prison and returned to Constantinople.

The long term effects of the council at Ephesus were multiple. Firstly, as no clear consensus was reached on the Christological dispute, the matter continued to separate the empire, and occasionally erupted into polemical declarations. Secondly, John of Antioch and Cyril of Alexandria were completely at odds. In 433, in order to heal the wounds, John of Antioch agreed to accept both the deposition and condemnation of Nestorius, and in exchange, Cyril agreed that his Twelve Anathemas would not be imposed. Further, Cyril signed a Formula of Reunion which accepted the Antiochene doctrine in its essentials. It declared that Christ was:

perfect God and perfect man consisting of rational soul and body, of one substance with God in his Godhead, of one substance with us in his Manhood, so that there is a union of two natures; on which ground we confess Christ to be one and Mary to be mother of God.¹²

The phraseology of the Formula was very careful. It contained just enough that the Alexandrians could sign it. The Formula's assertion that Jesus was formed from "a union of two natures" was significant in Cyril's decision to sign the Formula.¹³ In 435, Proclus, the new patriarch of Constantinople, in an attempt to interpret the Formula eirenically, taught that there is "one

¹¹ Ibid., p. 198

¹² Ibid., p. 199

¹³ W.H.C. Frend, The Rise of the Monophysite Movement (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 22.

hypostasis of the incarnate Word" and that "one of the Trinity became incarnate."¹⁴ Despite the good-will built by John of Antioch, Cyril of Alexandria, and Proclus of Constantinople, by 446 all three were dead and replaced by men who did not have the same level of good-will.

In 448, Eutyches, an archimandrite in Constantinople with significant connections in the imperial court, "challenged the orthodoxy of those who said that in Christ there are two natures after the union." Eutyches used Cyril's formula that there is "one nature after the union."¹⁵ Although Eutyches was condemned, the emperor Theodosius II protected him until July 450 when Theodosius died in a hunting accident. According to W. H. C. Frend, Theodosius supported the Cyrilline Christology, and found it easier to follow the "overwhelming tide" in its favour.¹⁶ In 449 a second council was held at Ephesus which deposed Flavian of Constantinople, Domnus of Antioch, and Eusebius of Dorylaeum, and reinstated Eutyches. Ephesus II was the vindication of Alexandrian Christology, but was short-lived. Upon the sudden death of Theodosius in 450, his sister Pulcheria assumed the powers of government. She chose as her consort Marcian, an elderly Thracian officer. She had already established correspondence with Pope Leo, and had agreed with him that Eutyches was heretical. She exiled Eutyches, and returned to the support of the Antiochene Christology. In 451, a general council was called to "end the disputations and settle the true faith more clearly, and for all time."¹⁷ The council was convened at Chalcedon on October 8, 451. As Frend explains, the assembled bishops, confronted with a pro-western emperor, "found little difficulty in modifying their views to support the new regime." The depositions of Ephesus II were reversed -- except Flavian who had died -- Dioscorus of Alexandria was deposed, and Pope

¹⁴ Chadwick, p. 200

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 201-2

¹⁶ Frend, p. 35.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 46

Leo's *Tome* -- which agreed with the Formula of Reunion but not with Ephesus II -- was declared orthodox. In addition the condemnation of Nestorius was confirmed.¹⁸ The Christological decision of Chalcedon was built upon the Formula of Reunion. Adopting Cyril's concept of the hypostatic union of the Word and the incarnate Christ, the Chalcedonian formula expressed a "two natures" Christology in which it is "taught that there are two natures inseparably joined in one person and one hypostasis, each nature retaining its own properties yet sharing in the properties of the other."¹⁹ The final form of the Chalcedonian formula pronounced Christ to be:

perfect God and perfect man, consubstantial with the Father in his Godhead, and with us in his manhood; made known *in* two natures without confusion, change, division, or separation... the difference between the natures is in no sense abolished by the union... the properties of each nature are preserved intact, and both come together to form one person (*prosopon*) and one *hypostasis*.²⁰

Those who disagree with Chalcedon's "two natures" Christology are characterized as Monophysites meaning that they only acknowledge one nature in Christ. The bishops clearly saw this formula as a compromise between the orthodoxy of Cyril and the "two natures" Christology of Antioch, Rome, and Constantinople. In 457, Marcian died, and when the news reached Alexandria a violent mob seized the new pro-Chalcedonian patriarch Proterius and tore him to pieces. He was succeeded by the ultra-Monophysite bishop Timothy Aelurus.²¹ Monophysite views prevailed once again in Alexandria and in Syria. However, as Frend indicates:

it was not until the time of Severus of Antioch, and due largely to his 'strictness' (ακριβεια) in relation to the reception of the sacraments from Chalcedonians that

¹⁸ Though Nestorius' condemnation was confirmed he was already dead. However, his views took hold in the churches in Persia. These churches were outside of the borders of the empire and cut off from the wider Christian community. These Nestorian churches exist to this day.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 47

²⁰ Chadwick, p. 204

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 205

permanent division between supporters and opponents of Chalcedon was rendered inevitable, and even then the organization of a rival Monophysite hierarchy took a very long while.²²

II. EASTERN CONCILIAR VERSUS WESTERN PAPAL AUTHORITY

With the division of the empire into Eastern and Western provinces, the transfer of the capital to Byzantium (renamed Constantinople), and the strong identity of the Western church with the structures of the Western empire following Constantine's conversion, it was only natural that Eastern and Western Christians would grow apart. As the Eastern and Western parts of the Empire became estranged, so too did the Eastern and Western church. As Kallistos Ware points out:

Had it not been for the fact of this pre-existing estrangement, the subsequent doctrinal disputes would never have proved so explosive. The two halves of Christendom drifted into schism, mainly because Christians on either side had already become *strangers* to each other. This is not to say that no point of doctrine was involved in the separation; but the difficulties were never exclusively doctrinal.²³

A. The *Filioque* Controversy

One of the points of doctrine that was involved was that of the *filioque*. *Filioque* is a Latin term meaning "and from the Son" which was inserted into the Athanasian Creed in Spain during the seventh Century. When the Nicene Creed was adopted in Spain, the term *filioque* was also inserted.²⁴ The Creed which had previously been professed as:

"... We believe in the Holy Spirit ... who proceeds from the Father ..."

became:

²² Frend, p. 62

²³ Kallistos Ware, "Christian Theology in the East: 600-1453," in A History of Christian Doctrine, Hubert Cunliffe-Jones, ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), pp. 201-2.

²⁴ Steven Runciman, The Eastern Schism (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1955, p. 29. The *filioque* appears in the acts of the Fourth Council of Toledo in 633.

"... We believe in the Holy Spirit ... who proceeds from the Father and from the Son ..."

This addition was made, according to Ware and others, to guard against Arianism's denial of the divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit. As Steven Runciman explains, to the Western church the *filioque* simply gave precision to a doctrine which was already inherent in the Creed. In the Western theological tradition, Arianism was the chief enemy, and thus the Trinity was understood as a single unchangeable *hypostasis*. This contrasted sharply with the Eastern view which developed through the Christological controversies discussed above. Thus the Eastern view by the seventh Century was that the Trinity is "composed of three Persons with separate properties joined in one hypostatic union."²⁵

The addition of an extra term, *filioque*, into the Creed as professed in a local liturgy would not have been a significant matter of dispute had it not become widespread. In the sixth century the Western liturgy had not yet developed into a strict liturgical uniformity, such as there is today in the Roman Catholic Church. The dispute over the *filioque* developed because its usage spread from Spain into Germany, and from there to Rome, where it received papal sanction. According to Runciman, it is difficult to identify the exact point of schism between East and West. Throughout the period in which the churches are traditionally believed to have been in communion there were periods in which one side or the other questioned the orthodoxy of the other. As Runciman points out, the tradition of a patriarch sending a systatic letter containing a statement of faith to the other patriarchs upon his accession was not always followed. Nor were the patriarchs always commemorated in the *diptychs* of the respective patriarchates. The last time at which a Pope is commemorated in the *diptychs* in Constantinople was John XVIII in 1009. His successor, Sergius IV sent the systatic letter but was rejected due to his inclusion of the term *filioque*.²⁶

²⁵ Ibid., p. 31

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 32-3

The Eastern churches object to the *flioque* for a number of substantial reasons, one of which is that of the implied papal authority in the use of the modified Creed. As Ware points out, the Orthodox churches object to the implication that the Pope has the authority to modify a Conciliar document.²⁷ Ware quotes Archbishop Bessarion of Nicaea from the Council of Florence (1439) as saying;

Indeed, we are not ignorant of the rights and privileges of the Roman Church; but we know also the limits set to these privileges... No matter how great the Roman Church is, it is notwithstanding less than an Ecumenical Council and the universal Church.²⁸

The question of the *flioque* was first raised in 867 by Photius, the Patriarch of Constantinople. The dispute actually centered, according to Ware, on the subject of papal claims to Bulgaria, papal refusal to recognize Photius as Patriarch, and smaller problems such as the rules regarding fasting, celibacy, and chrismation. The *flioque* only came up as a minor point. The so-called Photian schism ended quite quickly later in 867 when Pope Nicholas I died and Photius was deposed. Although Photius was reinstated as Patriarch in 877, both Pope John VIII and Photius refrained from pressing their disputes.²⁹

Another dispute erupted in 1054 when Cardinal Humbert of Moyen-Moutier was sent as a papal legate to the Patriarch, Michael Cerularius, to attempt to reach an understanding on the issue

²⁷ It might be pointed out that at the Second Vatican Council, papal authority fell short of modifying the Conciliar documents. Pope Paul VI personally made many modifications to the documents, but only before the final votes by the Council Fathers.

²⁸ Ware, p. 212, quoting J. Gill, Personalities of the Council of Florence and Other Essays (Oxford, 1964), p. 267. Ware indicates that this individual later "acceded to the full Roman position" and became a Cardinal. It is not clear in Ware's text whether these are related. However, it remains that his fellow Eastern bishops acknowledged this statement as expressing the Eastern position, and that Ware (an Orthodox historian) considers this statement representative of Orthodoxy at that period in history.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 204

of the Western use of unleavened bread in the eucharist. This apparently was a matter of considerable importance to the Eastern churches, and so Humbert was sent to calm the waters. That is not quite what happened. Bokenkotter and Ware assign the blame in a different manner, Bokenkotter blaming Humbert for being impetuous, and Ware blaming both Humbert and Cerularius for their intractability.³⁰ Runciman suggests that both parties were to blame for misunderstanding and intractability, but that Humbert was willfully acting beyond his authority.³¹ Unfortunately, as Runciman points out, the West did not understand that the East was concerned primarily with upholding the Christological doctrine of Chalcedon. "To add to the Creed was to question the authority and inspiration of the Fathers of the Church."³²

Whoever was to blame, it appears that the two sides became frustrated after one Eastern monk, Nicetas Stethatus, raised the issue of the unleavened eucharistic bread. As Runciman explains, Humbert lost his temper and replied to Stethatus in an abusive tone. In the context of his reply Humbert also raised the *filioque*, which up to that point had not been mentioned.³³ The subsequent furor became quite heated, leading Humbert to lay a bull of excommunication on the altar of the Hagia Sophia during a vespers service. The bull named Cerularius personally, but refrained from anathematizing the Byzantine church. In response Cerularius and his Synod excommunicated Humbert and his companions, but refrained from naming the Pope or the Roman church. As Ware, Runciman and Bokenkotter indicate, Humbert was exceeding his authority since the bull was issued in the name of a Pope who had been dead for three months. Ware and

³⁰ Bokenkotter, pp. 147-9; and Ware, p. 204

³¹ Runciman, pp. 45-6

³² Ibid., p. 32

³³ Runciman, p. 47

Runciman confirm that in fact both Humbert and Cerularius were well aware of the fact that the Pope was dead, and that as such Humbert had no authority to act in the way in which he had.³⁴

The mutual excommunications, according to Ware, were rarely discussed and were considered inconsequential until 1965 when Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras removed and "erased from the memory and midst of the Church" the excommunications and offensive words and gestures surrounding the incident³⁵ The incident that probably went the furthest toward separating the Eastern and Western churches was the sacking of Constantinople by crusaders in 1204.³⁶ Already, as Runciman points out, the tension was high due to the intrusion and colonization of the crusaders in Eastern lands. Yet, despite the tension, the clerical attitude was to ignore or deny the idea of schism. "Everyone clung as long as possible to the belief that the Christian Church was still one and undivided."³⁷ When the crusaders got sidetracked and took Constantinople, as though it were a holy crusade, the rupture was just too great.³⁸

Two Councils were held in an attempt to heal the breach. The first at Lyons in 1274, and the other at Ferrara and Florence in 1438-9. The more significant Council was that of Florence which dealt extensively with the questions of the *filioque* and papal primacy. The Council reached an agreement, but this agreement subsequently failed to be received by the Eastern churches. The Council was primarily a Western Council with Eastern participation, and these participants were not completely successful in convincing the Council that the Eastern objections were worthy.

³⁴ Ware, p. 204; Runciman, pp. 45-6

³⁵ Pope Paul VI - Patriarch Athenagoras I, "Common Declaration" (Dec. 7, 1965), The Documents of Vatican II, Walter M. Abbott & Joseph Gallagher, ed. (Piscataway, N.J.: New Century Publishers, 1966), p. 726.

³⁶ Runciman, p. 149-50

³⁷ Ibid., p. 103

³⁸ Ibid., p. 151

Ware identifies two distinct Orthodox approaches to the *filioque*, which he characterizes as the liberal and the rigorist views. The liberal view assumes that the *filioque* controversy was based more on confusion and lack of communication than on any real difference in faith. According to the liberal view, the Greek affirmation that "the Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son" and the Latin affirmation that "the Spirit proceeds from the Father and from the Son" amount to the same thing when applied to the relationship between Son and Spirit. In other words, the two prepositions "through" and "from" are only significant when one considers the relationship of Son or Spirit to the Father. Thus the *filioque* is simply a different theological standpoint, "acceptable in western but not in Greek Trinitarian theology."³⁹

The rigorist view is somewhat different. The rigorists, Ware explains, distinguished between the "eternal procession" and the "temporal mission" of the Spirit. As with the Creed's distinction between the "eternal generation" of the Son from the Father and "His Incarnation or birth from the Blessed Virgin Mary at a particular moment in time," so too must the distinction be made between the "eternal procession" of the Spirit from the Father, and the "temporal mission," "the sending of the Spirit to the world."⁴⁰

When Greeks and Latins argued about the *filioque*, they were not arguing about the sending of the Spirit to the world, for over this there was no conflict between them: both sides agreed that the Spirit is sent by the Son. Where they disagreed was over the procession, that is, over the eternal relationships existing within the Trinity. The term "proceed"... is to be understood throughout as denoting the hypostatic origin of the Spirit, the eternal source from which He derives His being.⁴¹

³⁹ Ware, p. 208

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 209

⁴¹ Ibid.

Such distinctions in theological understandings are not simply something for the rarefied atmosphere of the theological academy but have a significant value in the daily experience of each Christian. As Ware explains;

The Latins, while affirming the divinity of the Spirit, have failed to appreciate sufficiently His distinct personality. As a result of the *filioque*, they have tended to treat the Spirit as a function and instrument of the Son, and not as a sovereign and co-equal hypostasis in His own right... The living and immediate presence of the Spirit has been too much forgotten, and so the Pope has come to be regarded as the "vicar" of an *absent* Christ, while the Church has come to be understood predominantly in terms of earthly power and jurisdiction, and not in terms of divine grace and of a free and direct encounter with God in the Spirit.⁴²

B. Papal Primacy

The question of papal primacy has been as hotly debated with the Eastern churches as that of the *filioque*, and as mentioned above, appears to rest at the root of the *filioque* controversy. There has not, as of yet, been as much agreement about the nature of the debate on papal primacy as there has been about the *filioque*. However, there are certain matters that are generally agreed. One of the matters that is agreed is that there was a *pentarchy*, a system of five Patriarchates. These were, according to Ware, "in order of precedence, Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem."⁴³ Thus there developed a sense that Rome, the church established by Peter and Paul was *primus inter pares*, first among equals. As long as Rome remained free of error, the East "looked on Rome as constituting, more clearly than any other apostolic see, the norm of doctrinal orthodoxy."⁴⁴ According to Nilus Cabasilas, Archbishop of Thessalonica (†1363);

⁴² Ibid., p. 211

⁴³ Ibid., p. 212

⁴⁴ Ibid.

As long as the Pope observes due order and remains in the truth... he preserves the first place which belongs to him by right; he is the head of the Church and supreme pontiff, the successor of Peter and of all the apostles; all must obey him and treat him with complete respect. But if he departs from the truth and refuses to return to it, he deserves condemnation.⁴⁵

Rome, of course, claimed far greater authority than the East was willing to acknowledge. The question of papal primacy has changed little since the thirteenth Century, what has changed is the context. The contemporary dialogue over the question of papal primacy is in the context of the Roman Catholic doctrine of infallibility. It must be recognized that the doctrines relating to primacy and infallibility are separate, the former resting on the individual commissioning of Peter, and the latter resting on the founding of the church by Christ.

The dispute over papal primacy rests on the papal insistence that primacy consists of a universal jurisdiction. While the East is willing to recognize the right of bishops to appeal to Rome to settle a dispute, the East will not recognize the Roman insistence that papal jurisdiction includes proactive intervention and ordinary jurisdiction. In the West, papal authority has included everything from authorizing liturgical texts and disciplining clergy to appointing bishops. Papal authority has become greater over the centuries, although local variations still are found,⁴⁶ the nature of papal primacy that must be dealt with in the contemporary ecumenical context is that of universal jurisdiction.

Ware suggests that there is an underlying reason for the dispute over papal primacy, and all the subsequent issues that are dependent upon it.

⁴⁵ Nilus Cabasilas, "On the Primacy of the Pope," *Patrologia Graeca* 149, 728D-729A as cited in Ware, p. 213.

⁴⁶ see *Codex Iuris Canonici, Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary*, James A. Coriden, et al., eds. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), Can. 377, § 1, and related commentary. Until very recently Roman Catholic bishops in some European countries continued to be chosen by a local synod. Bishops in Latin America in some cases are still appointed by the State, a power ceded to Spain by the Papacy in the sixteenth century.

It was a matter ... of unequal doctrinal development: the Latins sought to define and analyse, where the Greeks preferred to limit themselves to the language of the Early Church, and otherwise (for the most part) to preserve a reverent agnosticism.⁴⁷

The apparent Western proclivity to "define and analyse," had led to a comparatively extreme attitude in Rome toward the codification of doctrine.

Eastern Christians have long felt... that Latin theology is too juridical, too much influenced by the notions of Roman law. In the words of a recent Orthodox writer, "One of the features which distinguishes our theology from that of the Catholics is this -- it does not look at things legalistically, but in terms of God's grace."⁴⁸

An example of the problems that stem from this juridical approach to doctrine is the doctrine of purgatory. The West was, according to the East, overly concerned with the "established measure of punishment which man must undergo either in this life or the next" while the East "thought rather in terms of the soul's capacity to enjoy the vision and glory of God."⁴⁹ This exaggeration of the juridical underlies the doctrine of indulgences and the collection of merits for good works.

Ware proposes another factor which he suggests has been a root cause of the separation of East and West. To Western minds, who generally think of the Roman Catholic Church as extremely defensive of "sacred tradition," Ware's criticism may seem strange. However, Ware suggests that the East is wary of the West's preference for the "abstract syllogism" over "sacred tradition."

The Latins, so the Byzantines felt, had attempted to make theology too "scientific" and philosophical, as if the realities with which it deals were accessible to ordinary human reasoning; whereas theology should be above all else "mystical", for it is

⁴⁷ Ware, p. 206

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 213. Quotation from Alexander Elchaninov, The Diary of a Russian Priest (London, 1967), p. 54.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

concerned with a mystery that surpasses all scientific reasoning and human understanding.⁵⁰

As we shall see below, the Eastern criticism of the West's preference for "abstract syllogism" was matched by the Reformation criticism of Rome's preference for the institutional structure at the expense of the proclamation of the Gospel.

III. EVANGELICAL VERSUS STRUCTURAL ECCLESIOLOGIES

It must be kept in mind that, unlike the disputes between East and West, the Reformation was not a series of disputes that developed between established and autonomous churches, but rather within a single church. Further, at the time of the Reformation, the protest movements sprang up within the context of Western Christianity, and were concerned primarily with western theological and ethical abuses. While reformation sentiment may have spread east, the Reformation never took hold in the Eastern church. It remains true today that the churches of the Reformation and Radical Reformation⁵¹ are distinctly Western churches.

A further distinction to be noted is that the Eastern Schism was the result of a dispute between two Patriarchs -- Rome and Constantinople -- and was based more on political concerns than theological concerns. The Reformation in the West, on the other hand, was based primarily on doctrinal and pastoral concerns, rather than overtly political concerns, and was -- with a few notable exceptions -- generally led by low-ranked clergy rather than by bishops and other members of the hierarchy. Certainly the Reformers received support -- without which the reformers would have been subject to ecclesiastical and civil penalties -- from higher ranking members of the church hierarchy and from various civil authorities, and certainly a good measure of this support was given for political reasons rather than objective support for the theological ideals of the reformers,

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 214

⁵¹ By "Radical Reformation" we refer to the churches of the Anabaptist traditions, particularly the Mennonite and Hutterite traditions.

but that does not detract from the fact that the Reformation was not initially a politically motivated occurrence.

When we discuss the Reformation we must give special consideration to Martin Luther, however we must not make the mistake that many have made in earlier studies by equating Luther with the Reformation. Nor was the posting of Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses* the definitive act of the Reformation, as our high school history textbooks would have us believe. While to a great extent the Reformation may have been made possible by Luther and his reforms, it is also quite true that there were significant reform movements quite apart from Lutheran control.⁵² Further, we must avoid the temptation to identify Luther as the actual inspiration of the reforms. While to a certain extent Luther's precedent inspired reform minded individuals, it is essential to look beyond the particular reformers to the ecclesiastical and social milieu which made the reforms possible. The undeniable inspiration for reform came from the abuses prevalent in the fifteenth and early sixteenth Century church, in particular the sale of indulgences.⁵³ Even more so, the "renaissance spirit," the growth in population, and the economic hardships associated with the increase of population, all supported an attitude of support for reform.⁵⁴ It is therefore unreasonable to assess sole responsibility for an historical movement, or ecclesial revolution, to a single individual.

As Lewis Spitz explains, the concept of "reformation" is closely related to that of "renaissance."

The concepts of the Renaissance as a cultural rebirth and the Reformation as a religious restoration were clearly distinguishable. But they were so closely related

⁵² Such as the movements associated with John Hus, John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli, Thomas Cranmer, Conrad Grebel, Menno Simons and others.

⁵³ Lewis W. Spitz, The Protestant Reformation: 1517-1559 (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), pp. 51-53.

⁵⁴ see Spitz, chapter I: Reformation Europe.

that Renaissance and Reformation have become forever linked in the mind of Western man.⁵⁵

During the medieval period, the term "reform" was used to refer to the restoration of the ideal monastic community life, and later to the Gregorian reform of the eleventh and twelfth Centuries.⁵⁶ Had the term not become so closely associated with the Protestant Reformation, I would have expected it to be used to refer to the "aggiornamento" of Pope John XXIII.

The written histories of the period are certainly not wrong in pinpointing Luther as a significant figure in the Reformation. It should be noted that the circumstances conspired to support Luther. In an earlier era, Luther would have found it difficult to avoid being branded a heretic and burnt at the stake or forced to recant. In fact, many of Luther's contemporaries and predecessors suffered that fate. The fact that Luther received support from the authorities in various parts of the Empire, and thus avoided the penalties associated with excommunication, should be seen as indicative of a broad appreciation of the need for reform in the church. And it is that need for reform that precipitated the Reformation.

It is clear when one examines contemporary studies of Luther, that the images of Luther that previous biographers have given us are sometimes oversimplified.

Even specialists in the field cannot escape the temptation of depicting the professor from Wittenberg as so much of an ivory-tower scholar that he seems to have been engaged in a systematic research program, as if all he had had to do was to arrange his various exegetical discoveries and after a brief analysis draw the appropriate conclusions that led him directly to the Reformation... But not even an ordinary academic career runs so smoothly, and not even Luther was in a position to advance according to plan. Discovering the Scriptures was a process fraught with surprises and not infrequently with perplexities. He kept finding new passages that spoke to him in the voice of the living God. Scholarship alone

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 3

would neither have provided this challenge nor would it have been able to cope with it.⁵⁷

As we come to understand the real Luther -- or the Luther as our age chooses to know him -- we will understand a good deal more about the Reformation of which he was so much a part. This is a role for scholars from a variety of denominational backgrounds.

In examining the roots of the divisions of the Western church, I will concern myself primarily with the earliest divisions that developed as a result of the evangelical concerns of the Reformation. The results of these divisions are the mainline churches of the present day: the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran and Calvinist traditions. In addition to the mainline churches, the churches of the Radical Reformation also developed in the sixteenth Century.⁵⁸ However, we shall not concern ourselves with the Radical Reformation at this time. The reason for excluding this important aspect of the Christian experience is so as to examine the historical development of the mainline churches involved in the dialogues which we will discuss in chapters four, five, and six. Our intent in this chapter is not to give a complete history of the Western church in this era, but rather to highlight the main concerns of the reformers. By doing so, we hope to elicit some insight into the roots of the disunity that confronts us in the modern day.

A. Justification versus Sanctification

If one takes the *Ninety-Five Theses* as an indication of Luther's attitude toward the church in 1517, then one might suppose that Luther's only real objection lay with the question of indulgences. In Roman Catholic theology, the doctrine of indulgences is a teaching that the church may grant from its "treasury of merits and good works stored up by Christ, the Blessed Virgin

⁵⁷ Heiko A. Oberman, *Luther: Man between God and the Devil*, Eileen Walliser-Schwarzbart, trans. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 158.

⁵⁸ The development of individual churches and denominations is a matter of considerable interest and discussion by historians. It would not be correct to say that all of these churches understood themselves to be developing a separate church or denomination.

Mary, and the saints of the Church, both living and dead," "remission... of the debt of temporal punishment after the guilt of sin has been forgiven."⁵⁹ The doctrine of indulgences developed over a considerable length of history, but it was not until the eleventh Century that an "indulgence grant in the strict sense of the term" was available. In the late fifteenth Century and early sixteenth Century, the doctrine of indulgences was abused by many clerics and misinterpreted by many of the laity. One could purchase an indulgence to shorten one's own, or another's, time in purgatory. Luther, and many reformers, objected to this use and abuse, and spoke out on the matter.

However, Jaroslav Pelikan has pointed out that the objection to indulgences really is only the surface of a much larger issue.⁶⁰ The issue for Luther rested upon his doctrine of justification. In a comparative study of the Reformation, Luther's concept of justification is customarily contrasted with the Roman Catholic concept of sanctification. As I shall outline below and in chapter four, such a sharp distinction is somewhat elementary.

Of all the issues that Luther objected to, he contended that the dispute over the way in which we are justified in God's eyes is the most important because justification resulting in salvation is the singularly most important aspect of our relationship with our Creator.

The doctrine of justification is "the summary of Christian doctrine," "the sun which illuminates God's holy church." It is the unique possession of Christianity and "distinguishes our religion from all others." The doctrine of justification preserves the church. If we lose this doctrine, we also lose Christ and the church; for then no Christian understanding remains. What is at stake in this doctrine is the decisive question as to how man can continue to stand before God.⁶¹

Early Lutheran opinion on the subject of justification can be found in a number of writings, including the *Formula of Concord* (1577), the *Smalcald Articles* (1537), and the

⁵⁹ P. F. Palmer, "Indulgences," New Catholic Encyclopedia, v. 7, pp. 482-3.

⁶⁰ Jaroslav Pelikan, Spirit Versus Structure (New York: Harper & Row, 1968). See ch. 1.

⁶¹ Paul Althaus, The Theology of Martin Luther, Robert C. Schultz, trans (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), p. 224.

Augsburg Confession (1530).⁶² In discussing the issue of justification many other doctrines are brought into the discussion. Terminology such as grace, righteousness, redemption, salvation, faith, sin, church, and gospel, are all used in the normal explanation of how one can come to be justified. Justification itself is an enigmatic concept, Luther explained it this way:

[We are justified] by faith (as St. Peter says) we get a new and clean heart and that God will and does account us altogether righteous and holy for the sake of Christ, our mediator.⁶³

In Article III of the *Formula of Concord*, justification is described as being:

absolved and declared utterly free from all his sins, and from the verdict of well deserved damnation, and ... adopted as a child of God and an heir of eternal life.⁶⁴

In 1530, Emperor Charles V convened the Diet of Augsburg, a meeting of the German princes, electors and representatives of the free cities to be held at Augsburg in April. Charles asked the princes "to discuss the religious differences ...in the hope of overcoming them and restoring unity."⁶⁵ Accordingly, the Lutheran reformers at the Diet formulated a common statement of their beliefs to be read at the Diet. This statement became known as the *Augsburg Confession*. Article IV of the *Confession* is devoted to justification. It reads:

Our churches also teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works but are freely justified for Christ's sake through faith when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven on account of Christ, who by his death made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in his sight (Rom. 3,4).⁶⁶

⁶² The Book of Concord, Theodore G. Tappert, ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959).

⁶³ Smalcald Articles XIII:1; Tappert, p. 315

⁶⁴ Formula of Concord III:9; Tappert, p. 540

⁶⁵ Tappert, p. 23

⁶⁶ Augsburg Confession (or *Confessio Augustana*) IV:1-3; Tappert, p. 30

This is all that is said in that article regarding justification, and all that is contained in the *Confession* that directly addresses the question of justification. Although this text gives us a general understanding of Luther's concept of justification, we will have to look to other sources for more details.

The *Formula of Concord* teaches that we are justified by the "sheer grace" of God, given freely, by the merits of:

total obedience, the bitter passion, the death, and the resurrection of Christ, our Lord, whose obedience is reckoned to us as righteousness [grace]. The Holy Spirit offers these treasures to us in the promise of the Gospel, and faith is the only means whereby we rightly learn to know Christ is our redeemer ...that solely for the sake of his obedience we have forgiveness of sins by grace, are accounted righteous and holy by God the Father, and are saved forever.⁶⁷

The *Formula* teaches that if a man has faith in Christ, then the grace imparted to him freely from the Father, through the Son, and by the action of the Holy Spirit, will "have reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sins, the grace of God, adoption, and the inheritance of eternal life."⁶⁸

In response to Luther's reforms, and those of his colleagues, Pope Paul III called a General Council, the expectation of which had inspired the *Smalcald Articles*. The purpose of this Council was to clarify the church's position on those issues that had arisen in the Reformation. The Council discussed the issue of justification in its sixth session, convened on January 13th, 1547, and then promulgated a statement and 33 anathemas. In Chapter VIII of the statement, the Council explains that we are:

justified by faith, because faith is the beginning of human salvation, the foundation and root of all justification, without which it is impossible to please God. ...we are

⁶⁷ Formula of Concord III:9-11; Tappert, p. 541

⁶⁸ Formula of Concord III:16; Tappert, p. 541

therefore said to be justified gratuitously, because none of those things that precede justification, whether faith or works, merit the grace of justification.⁶⁹

In Chapter VII of the Council's statement, *In what the Justification of the Sinner Consists, and what are its Causes*, the language is reminiscent of scholastic theology. Essentially the Council affirms that for the glory of God, Christ, and life everlasting (Final Cause), God (the Efficient Cause) by virtue of the merit of Christ's Passion (Meritorious Cause) washes away our sins through baptism which is the sacrament of faith (Instrumental Cause), "without which no [one] was ever justified," and thereby declares the sinner to have the justice of God (singular Formal Cause).⁷⁰ As with the Lutheran explanation, Roman Catholicism affirms that we are justified by grace, but unlike the Lutheran, through the "sacrament of faith," rather than through faith alone.

The early objections of Luther included the medieval church's apparently unscriptural insertion of the church as dispenser of sacraments into the process of salvation. It seemed almost as if grace were not given to the sinner freely, but rather, was given to the church to dispense as if it were an object that could be bartered and sold. The Council Fathers at Trent were clearly aware, and sensitive to the charges that Luther had made. Although it was not explicitly suggested by the Council's statements, the actions and statements of the leaders of the church in the years before the Council -- such as the sale of indulgences -- make it reasonable that the Lutheran reformers might have understood this to be the Catholic position.

The Catholic criticism of the Lutheran reforms rest upon the description of faith. The Catholics, besides disliking the loss of the church's immediate role in the faith of the laity, felt that by claiming that lack of faith is the sole obstacle to grace, one is reducing faith to a subjective state

⁶⁹ H. G. Schroeder, O.P., Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent (London: B. Herder Book Co., 1955), p. 35.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33

of confidence in one's own redemption. In order to clearly state their position on this issue, the Council declared:

If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in divine mercy, which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this confidence alone that justifies us, let him be anathema.⁷¹

The traditional church preferred to understand faith as part of the sacrament of baptism, such that one who is faithful will inevitably elect to be baptized and to baptize one's children if one's tradition includes such a practice.⁷² Furthermore, while baptism is a necessary result of faith, so too are good works. Nobody who is truly faithful will refrain from performing good works, although one might sin again.⁷³ For the Lutheran, the Catholic emphasis on good works served to obscure the connection between faith and justification. For the Catholic, however, the emphasis was on sanctification rather than justification.

According to the Lutheran understanding, good works were solely subsequent to the reception of grace; "good works follow such faith, renewal, and forgiveness,"⁷⁴ and as a result the lack of good works do not disrupt the sinner's justification. This did not mean that the faithful were not expected to perform good works, nor that they were unlikely to do so, merely that good works were the result of justification, rather than of faith. Faith leads to justification, and justification leads to good works. Of course, the Catholic would respond that if justification does not *necessarily* imply sanctification then it cannot truly be the result of grace. God's gift of grace, received in faith, leads to the sanctification of the sinner. The faithful Christian, aware that one's

⁷¹ Ibid., Canon 12, p. 43

⁷² As such, we can have such a thing as an *anonymous Christian* by way of the doctrine of *votum*. One who does not have knowledge of Christ, but who is faithful is thereby 'baptized in the heart.'

⁷³ see Canon 22-32; Schroeder, pp. 45-6

⁷⁴ Smalcald Articles XIII:2; Tappert, p. 315

faith allows the reception of God's sanctifying grace, is thus assured of his or her own justification. In other words, justification and sanctification while in theory distinguishable, are in Catholic theology inseparable co-requisites. As we will see in chapter four, this is a realization that the modern ecumenical dialogues have recently affirmed.

B. Spirit versus Structure

Luther objected to the offering of indulgences primarily because he objected to the teaching that grace is imparted through the intercession of the church. While the actions of the church may support the individual in his or her faith commitment, it was understood that it is the individual's response of faith (in faith) to God that merits justification. It was this understanding that came into conflict with the prevailing church.

More than either dogma or the papacy, it was the sacramental system that constituted the heart of religious belief and practice for the true Christian. Luther's attack on the sacramental system, which occupied a large part of *The Babylonian Captivity*, was therefore an important measure of how radically he was willing to subordinate structure to spirit. "The invention of sacraments is of recent date," he was willing to say, thus denying the validity of the developments of church structures out of which the sacramental system had emerged.⁷⁵

Thus even the conflict over the sacraments, or other practices such as indulgences, were not the root of Luther's dispute with the church. As Pelikan points out, the root of Luther's dispute was his insistence on the supremacy of scripture. It was this insistence, *sola scriptura*, that led to Luther's rejection of papal authority. Anything which inhibits the Gospel cannot be scriptural. Since Luther perceived papal authority to be teaching unscriptural doctrines with regard to sacraments and indulgences, he rejected both the doctrines and the papal authority that supported them.

To the established church, the teachings of Luther were dangerous insofar as they emphasized the kingdom of God to come, rather than the rule of the church in the present day.

⁷⁵ Pelikan, *Spirit Versus Structure*, p. 24

While Luther was primarily concerned with ensuring that the church was a vehicle to ensure the salvation of the faithful, the church was concerned with ensuring the survival of the faith. For Luther the true "Church of Christ" was yet to come, but for the established church the true "Church of Christ" was present in the church instituted by Christ at the Last Supper.

Pelikan has characterized this difference of ecclesiological approach as one of "spirit versus structure." According to Pelikan, Luther's emphasis was on the spirit of the Gospel, a concern which was diametrically opposed to the concern of the prevailing church hierarchy: the structure of the church. Pelikan follows contemporary scholarship when he suggests that initially Luther was not completely opposed to the specific structures themselves, but only with certain abuses associated with them. The dispute over indulgences was just such a case.

Such an analysis of Luther brings us to an important observation. Based upon the view that Luther was not so much opposed to the structures themselves but rather to the abuse of the structures, it would certainly appear that the evangelical concerns of classical Protestantism⁷⁶ are not necessarily incompatible with all of the structural concerns of Roman Catholicism or Orthodoxy. Such an observation is obviously the assumption of many who engage in ecumenical dialogue between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism or Orthodoxy. A necessary corollary to such an observation is that Luther is, of course, not exhaustive of Protestant opinion, but only a distinguished proponent of early Protestant opinion.

C. The Church: Visible and Invisible

A stereotypical distinction that is raised between Luther and the church teachings of his day is that of the visible and the invisible church. This distinction is related to that made by Pelikan between spirit and structure. According to the stereotype, the traditional Roman Catholic

⁷⁶ The term "classical Protestantism" is used so as to indicate that there is a healthy diversity of opinion in Protestantism that has developed since the Reformation.

concern has been with the visible manifestation of the church; with the offices of bishops, priests, and deacons; with the community that publicly professes the apostolic creeds; and with the sacramental and liturgical life of the church. Comparatively, classical Protestantism has been seen as fixated on the invisible church. The "invisible church" has a broader membership than the "visible church." The concept of the "invisible church" generally includes all those that profess a faith in Jesus Christ. The "invisible church" is the community of those whose witness to Christ through their faith and in their work. The concept of the "visible church" is identified by Pelikan as the "catholic substance" toward which Luther focused his reform concerns.

"Catholic substance"... means the body of tradition, liturgy, dogma, and churchmanship developed chiefly by the ancient church and embodied (but not exhausted) for Luther in the Roman Catholic Church of his day. "Protestant principle" is a summary term for the criticism and reconstruction of this Catholic substance which Luther and his Reformation carried out in the name of the Christian gospel and with the authority of the Bible.⁷⁷

Characterizations such as these are no longer accurate -- if they ever were -- and nor are they particularly helpful. Roman Catholics have considerably more concern for the traditionally Protestant concerns than this stereotype admits; and certain Protestant traditions, such as Calvinism, have had considerably more concern for ecclesiological structures -- a stereotypical Catholic concern.

Another manner in which the same concept is approached is by way of the scholastic distinction between the *ens actu* and the *ens potentia*. The *ens actu* is that which is in actuality, while the *ens potentia* is that which is in potentiality. Thus the scholastic distinction is between the church that is -- the visible church -- and the church that is to come -- the kingdom of God. For Luther, the true church was the kingdom of God to come.

⁷⁷ Jaroslav Pelikan, Obedient Rebels (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 13.

D. A Paradigm Change in Ecclesiology

An interesting study has been published by Hans Küng and David Tracy on the subject of paradigmatic change in theology. Working from Thomas S. Kuhn's definition of a paradigm as "an entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community,"⁷⁸ Stephan Pfürtner explains that assuming one accepts Kuhn's theory of paradigmatic revolution, there must be one breakthrough insight which "brings a change of perspective, and hence a qualitative change, in the former viewpoint."⁷⁹ Effectively, the new insight must be seen to be incompatible with the prevailing paradigm, and must be "sufficiently unprecedented to attract an enduring group of adherents."⁸⁰

Kuhn's The Structure of Scientific Revolutions concerns itself specifically with the movement from one scientific paradigm to another. A prime example provided by Kuhn is the movement from the Ptolemaic to the Copernican paradigm. Pfürtner attempts to apply Kuhn's theory to the Reformation, suggesting that there was a shift from a Thomistic to a Lutheran/Protestant theological paradigm. While there remain certain methodological issues to be resolved with respect to Kuhn's theory as applied to scientific revolutions, the scientific community has generally received the theory quite positively. It remains to be seen, however, whether the theological community will accept the theory as Pfürtner has applied it to the Reformation.

It seems that the greatest challenge to Pfürtner's application of Kuhn's theory to the Reformation is the implication that the theological reforms were in fact the significant cause, even

⁷⁸ Hans Küng and David Tracy, eds., Paradigm Change in Theology: A Symposium for the Future (New York: Crossroad, 1989), p. xv.

⁷⁹ Stephan Pfürtner, "The Paradigms of Thomas Aquinas and Martin Luther: Did Luther's Message of Justification Mean a Paradigm Change?," in Paradigm Change in Theology: A Symposium for the Future, p. 133.

⁸⁰ Pfürtner, p. 133, quoting Thomas S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, 2nd ed. (Chicago, 1970), p. 10.

if not the sole cause of the paradigm shift. It is clear that there were other factors at work in the social and intellectual world of sixteenth Century Europe. What is unclear in Pfürtner's analysis is whether the theological reforms were a cause of the various other factors, or whether they were a result of those other factors.

Setting aside the question of whether the Reformation was the cause of the paradigm shift, the question arises as to whether the hypothetical Lutheran / Protestant paradigm is actually incompatible with the Thomistic / Scholastic paradigm? Pfürtner suggests that, in fact, "the new epoch-making paradigm -- the Protestant doctrine of justification -- constituted a development towards an inward coherence in the whole Christian understanding of life which was greater than that of previous epochs."⁸¹ Effectively, Pfürtner is claiming that, for those who adopted the new paradigm, the Thomistic theological values, beliefs, and techniques were obsolete. Despite the self-criticism that many Roman Catholics are becoming accustomed to, such a claim may still seem a trifle harsh, although it is probably quite close to the mark.

Pfürtner's study dealt specifically with the Protestant doctrine of justification, suggesting that this doctrine affected "all talk about God, the self-understanding of human beings, the interpretation of the church, and relations between the church and society."⁸²

Moreover, the complexity of the whole experience of life that had begun to impinge on people could no longer be adequately explained by the earlier paradigms. At the same time the new paradigm required the exclusion of numerous elements of shared language, because these had now to be viewed as pre-theological or mythical, even though in the previous epochs these elements undoubtedly still exhibited a certain inward coherence.⁸³

⁸¹ Pfürtner, p. 137

⁸² Ibid., p. 133

⁸³ Ibid., p. 137

Pförtner discusses a number of implications of the paradigm shift that he is postulating. One of these implications is particularly relevant to a study of ecumenical ecclesiology. Pförtner suggests that in the pre-Reformation church there was little or no concept of the individual, and thus little consideration of the personal relationship of faith. As evidence he points to the visual arts, noting that we have no accurate portraits of any outstanding figures such as Aquinas, Francis of Assisi, or Dominic.

Even the painters' own sense of authenticity was not such that it made them sign their works. All this developed to any extent only with the beginning of modern times. In the Middle Ages the individual still lived, largely speaking, in the collective.⁸⁴

It would take a more extensive study than Pförtner's to actually confirm the suggestion that there is a paucity of medieval portraiture, and that what there is has not been signed. However, it is quite evident that there are substantial numbers of portraits of individuals such as Luther, Erasmus, Loyola, and others of the Reformation era. This may support Pförtner's contention that the Reformation had implications even in the way in which people thought about themselves, namely:

In terms of developmental psychology, as seen by Piaget or Erikson, we would say that a medieval person was still in a pre-critical stage of rule awareness, in which the community providing the norms was an authority accepted without reservation.⁸⁵

Pförtner further contends that

in theological theory there was so little awareness (according to our way of looking at things) of human beings as subjects in the Holy Spirit, and hence so little stress on their legitimate claim to their own identity of conscience.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 147

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 148

Pförtner suggests that, in the post-Reformation era, a stress on the individual rather than the community resulted in the modern understanding of human dignity, and the rights deriving from it. He also proposes that the new paradigm was in fact eventually responsible for the American Revolution and the Declaration of Independence, and thus of modern democratic theory.⁸⁷

Apart from its implications in the political realm, the new appreciation for the individual resulted in a new understanding of ministry. Here Pförtner is on safer ground:

If every believer was capable of receiving the revelation of God's gospel through God's Holy Spirit, this was bound to have a revolutionary effect on the understanding of the church's ministry. As we know, it led to the theological theory of the priesthood of all believers. Luther developed this, among other things, in 1523, in a work entitled *That a Christian assembly or congregation has the right and power to judge all doctrine and to call teachers, install them and depose them. Scriptural ground and reason.*⁸⁸

As we have mentioned before, the ground on which this new understanding of ministry rested was the understanding of the individual. The difference between the new understanding and the traditional understanding was the failure in the new understanding to distinguish between the laity and the ordained. While the traditional church had taught that there was "an essential difference between "the consecrated" and "the unconsecrated," with a corresponding competence with regard to teaching, the worship and ceremonies of the church, and its government,"⁸⁹ the reformed churches each taught varying theories with respect to ministerial ordination. Ordination, which had been seen as a rite by which one was consecrated, and thus received "holy orders,"

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 150. I am not, however, convinced that modern democratic theory owes as much to the American experience as Pförtner suggests. It would not be appropriate to discount the democratic implications of British common law.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 150. A reference to this work is given as M. Luther, *Werke* 11, pp. 408-416.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 150

became for Lutheran churches a rite by which one was appointed to -- or installed in -- a ministry.

Pförtner argues that in the context of the new paradigm:

the old distinction between different members of the church can only be judged a survival from a mythological epoch of archaic, priestly religion, or a relic of religious caste thinking.⁹⁰

Pförtner's analysis of the Reformation leads to a much different understanding of the period than the traditional views. Traditional views of the Reformation from a Roman Catholic perspective have seen the reformers as either genuinely sincere but misguided or as hot-headed radicals. Pförtner's analysis suggests that while the reformers may have been genuinely sincere, they were also genuinely constrained by events which overcame them. "Here I stand, God help me, Amen!" The reformers, while themselves the instrument of a theological paradigm change, were not necessarily the authors of that change. This analysis, if accepted by Roman Catholics, would bring Roman Catholics considerably closer to the traditional Protestant interpretation whereby it is assumed that the majority of reformers, and certainly Luther, had no wish to bring about division in the church.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have attempted to identify the ecclesiological themes in the historical developments that have led to the current state of Christian disunity. I have analyzed the Monophysite Schism, the Eastern Schism and the Reformation, identifying a significant distinction between the causes of each historical occasion. The Monophysite Schism was caused by a combination of political intrigue and theological ill-will. The schism might have been avoided had there been an openness on both sides to accept a diversity of opinion, and a willingness to accept that the Trinity is a mystery which does not require a precise explanation. Conceivably, the varying opinions on the incarnation could have co-existed within a wider Christian community that

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 151

was not concerned with enforcing its own theological agenda on dissidents. That is not what happened, and there has been over fifteen hundred years of schism as a result.

The Eastern Schism while involving theological concerns was primarily a political and cultural estrangement. In our modern mass-communication era, we can hope that such cultural misunderstanding will swiftly evaporate. As well, we can hope that our theological misunderstandings and misrepresentations will be as easily circumvented and a wider dialogue will be inaugurated. In the post-Cold War world, such a hope does not seem too far-fetched. The ecumenical progress of the the past century is a direct result of the limited level of dialogue already undertaken.

The Reformation, as well, was a result of a combination of theological factors and other factors. However, it appears that the theological factors were primarily responsible for the divisions that developed in the Western church. In both the East and West the divisions that have developed have been exacerbated by the passage of time. However, as we move into a new multicultural and multifaith era, we can hope that as our churches challenge the prevailing secular world we will find common purpose. In our era, perhaps a more eirenic spirit will allow us to recognize each other as Christ's chosen.

CHAPTER 3

STRIVING FOR UNITY

The story of the origins of the World Council of Churches reminds one of the development of a theme in a symphony. At first one or two instruments introduce the new melody and one expects that the other instruments will take it up. But no, the theme disappears in the mass of sound. Here and there it tries to disengage itself, but its time is not yet. Suddenly it comes out clearly and dominates all other sounds.¹

These words were first written by Willem A. Visser't Hooft, the first General Secretary of the World Council of Churches in 1954, only six years after the inauguration of the World Council in Amsterdam in 1948. Although Visser't Hooft was reflecting upon the years between the establishment of the first ecumenical agency -- the International Missionary Council (I.M.C.) -- in Edinburgh in 1910 and the establishment of the WCC in 1948, they are equally as appropriate as a reflection upon the forty-four years of ecumenical history since 1948. For Visser't Hooft, the ecumenical advance is the theme which dominates all others in the religious history of the twentieth Century.

In this chapter I intend to "take up" the theme of Visser't Hooft's "symphony" by surveying the ecumenical advance since 1910. Many contemporary people have a historical mindset in which history is generally understood as a series of quantitative and qualitative changes of a positive nature. In other words, history is understood as a series of advances. To the modern mind then, to suggest that the major theme of modern religious history is the ecumenical advance might seem ludicrous, as well as overstated. Nonetheless, "advancement" is perhaps the only consistent theme in the history of the ecumenical movement in the twentieth Century. The only other consistent theme in this history is that of "expansion", which in a certain way is associated with advancement.

¹ Willem A. Visser't Hooft, "The Genesis of the World Council of Churches," ch. 16 of A History of the Ecumenical Movement, v. 1 (1517-1948), 3rd ed., Ruth Rouse & Stephen Charles Neill, ed. (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1986), p. 697.

There a number of important turning points in the history of the modern ecumenical movement. The World Missions Conference in 1910 that established the I.M.C. is one of the most significant. It is at this point that the ecumenical movement developed beyond the lonely initiatives of individual church leaders and lay-people, and become a body capable of surviving the loss of many of its key players. Another important development is the spread of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This week of prayer, and other forms of spiritual ecumenism have provided a great impetus to the ecumenical formation of both clergy and laity around the world. Perhaps the next most significant point in the history of the ecumenical movement is the establishment of the WCC in 1948. In my opinion, the most momentous turning point was the entrance of the Roman Catholic Church into the ecumenical movement at the Second Vatican Council in 1962-65. The most recent turning point is the 1982 release of the Faith and Order document entitled Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (B.E.M.). The result of a fifty year programme study that pre-dates even the WCC, the B.E.M. document was sent to the member churches of the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church for an official response.

For the first time, all the Christian churches have been asked for their considered opinion concerning a doctrinal document which touches their faith at the deepest level.²

In this chapter, I will examine the three most significant advances in the modern ecumenical movement: the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the development of the World Council of Churches in 1948, and the Second Vatican Council from 1962 to 1965. In order to do this, I will look at the developments that made possible the establishment of the modern ecumenical movement, and the entry of the Roman Catholic Church into the ecumenical movement. Specifically, I am concerned with outlining the context in which the contemporary ecclesiological

² Max Thurian, "Introduction," Churches Respond to B.E.M., v. 1 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1986), p. 1.

dialogue is framed. With the completion of this chapter I will have dealt with the necessary background material to begin a study of the bilateral and multi-lateral ecumenical dialogues in the post-Vatican II era. To return to Visser't Hooft's metaphor with which I began this chapter, the first three chapters of this thesis serve the function of the first movement of a symphony: the prelude. In the succeeding chapters, or movements, I will present the main theme of the ecumenical symphony: the dialogues.

I. SPIRITUAL ECUMENISM

Paul Irénée Couturier, the so-called founder of the modern Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, shared two things with his namesake, Irenaeus: Lyons and an abiding passion for the unity of Christians.³ For Couturier:

the quest of Christian unity can no longer be thought of as a reversion to the past, but rather as an integration, to be attained in the future, of all Christian values.⁴

His first contact with non-Catholics appears to have been his work with Russian émigrés. According to one of his biographers, Geoffrey Curtis, there were some 10,000 Russian refugees in Lyons and its suburbs in 1923.⁵ Through his contact with them, he got to know well the Russian Orthodox priests and archpriests, and a few members of the exiled Russian hierarchy. Confronted with the question of Christian unity in this manner, he was ever after to see the need for a wider Christian unity. "As always happens, the Russian question led me to the Anglican question."⁶ Couturier took to heart the text known as "The Testament of Cardinal Mercier," which contains the following insight:

³ Geoffrey Curtis, Paul Couturier and Unity in Christ (London: SCM Press, 1964). For an interesting reflection on the history of Christian unity in Lyons, see chapter two.

⁴ Ibid., p. 40

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

In order to unite with one another, we must love one another; in order to love one another, we must know one another; in order to know one another, we must go and meet one another.⁷

Although Couturier is popularly known as the "father" of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Geoffrey Curtis attributes the concept to the World Evangelical Alliance which presented a "call to prayer to Christians all over the world in a New Year Week of Prayer."⁸ Curtis suggests that this was most likely in response to James Haldane Stewart's "invitation to Christians to set aside the first Monday of the year for prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit."⁹

For the origin of the idea of spiritual ecumenism, Curtis points to two sources. The first is the liturgical expressions in the eucharistic rites of the Roman and Eastern rites:

that our Lord will grant to his Church "that peace and unity which is according to his will,"¹⁰

and a similar prayer in the Book of Common Prayer in which

God is constantly besought "to inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord."¹¹

The other source which Curtis points to are certain organized movements of prayer which he considers as "preludes" to the later "crusades of prayer for unity."¹²

Amongst these may be recalled the great movement of united prayer for the Holy Spirit and Revival which passed from Scotland to America and swept back thence to England, Holland, Switzerland and America finding prophetic expression in the

⁷ Ibid., p. 48. The text was probably written by Dom Lambert Beaudoin. Quoted from *L'Œuvre des moines Bénédictins d'Amay-sur-Meuse*, 2nd ed. (Amay, 1926), translator unknown.

⁸ Ibid., p. 53

⁹ Ibid. Curtis cites James Haldane Stewart, Hints for a General Union of Christians for Prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (1821).

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 52. Quoted from the Tridentine rite.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., p. 52

work of the New England Congregationalist Jonathan Edwards (1705-58), An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's people in Extraordinary Prayer, for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, Pursuant to Scripture Promises and Prophecies concerning the Last Time.¹³

Curtis suggests that this movement was responsible for:

drawing together Christians of different denominations in that missionary and evangelistic activity which did so much to bring about the ecumenism of our own times.¹⁴

The eventual institution of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity derives from a recommendation from the Lambeth Conference in 1878 for "the observance of a special season for [prayer for reunion] round about Ascension Day."¹⁵ A particular date was chosen for this observance by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1894. It was observed by the Church of England on Whit Sunday -- Pentecost -- in both 1894 and 1895. In 1895, the Roman Catholic Church in England joined their Anglican neighbours in this observance in obedience to the request of Pope Leo XIII. Leo XIII had already "enjoined upon Catholics throughout the world the first octave or novena of prayer for Christian Unity to be observed from the feast of the Ascension to Pentecost."¹⁶ In 1897, in the encyclical *Divinum illud munus*, Leo XIII established this novena in perpetuity.

It was not until 1908 that the observance was first observed on the dates on which it is commonly associated. Spencer Jones, a Church of England clergyman, and Lewis Thomas Wattson, a Protestant Episcopal Church of America clergyman, jointly initiated the observance as

¹³ Ibid., p. 53

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 56

¹⁶ Ibid.

January 18 to 25, the feasts of the Chair of St. Peter at Rome and that of the Conversion of St. Paul.¹⁷ Wattson, who had established the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, was received into the Roman Catholic Church along with his community later in the same year, becoming Paul James Francis, S.A. The Fathers of the Atonement have maintained Wattson's zeal for unity and for the octave. In 1909, Pope Pius X approved the observance of the new octave, and extended its observance to the whole Roman Catholic Church the following year.¹⁸ While the modern dates of the Week of Prayer were established in 1909, it was Paul Couturier who popularized its observance. It is for this that he is known as the father of the Week of Prayer.

The dates of January 18 to 25 are still observed annually throughout the world. In Canada the Week of Prayer is observed between the two Sundays within which January 25 falls. In the United States and elsewhere, the January 18 to 25 dates are observed more rigidly. The advantage of the Canadian observance is that there are always two Sunday services during the observance. There has been some discussion of moving the Canadian observance to the summer dates so as to avoid winter weather. This change has been resisted so as to allow Canadian churches to observe the occasion simultaneously with churches around the world.

Worship and educational material are prepared annually by a joint committee of the World Council of Churches and the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. This material is distributed worldwide in many languages, and is distributed with supplementary material by local ecumenical centres and national councils of churches.

There are a number of other forms of spiritual ecumenism as well. Pulpit exchanges occur between many churches from time to time, although mainly during the Week of Prayer. As well, bible studies and prayer groups regularly include -- and in fact seek out -- members of other local

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 59-60

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 59-61

congregations. Many churches have entered into "twinning" arrangements or covenants with other local churches. Each year, the World Day of Prayer is held. While originally a day of prayer for women and women's issues, the day has widened its appeal and its focus in recent years. More recently, the March for Jesus has been developed in evangelical circles, and is also growing in popularity in mainline churches.

II. THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The World Council of Churches (WCC) was formed in 1948 at a General Assembly in Amsterdam. However, the WCC was a dream that had taken a long time to come to fruition. It would be wrong to suggest that the WCC is either the focus of the modern ecumenical movement, or the greatest achievement of it. I should also note that there are a significant number of Christians worldwide whose churches and ecclesial communities are not associated with the WCC.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the WCC has become one of the more significant ecumenical developments of the modern era. Of course, neither should I suggest that the modern ecumenical movement is not rooted in the previous centuries of prayer and work for unity. In fact, the ecumenical movement traces its history as far back as the first divisions in the church. In the West, the earliest significant ecumenical encounter after the excommunication of Martin Luther would have been the Diet of Augsburg in 1530. There were in fact pre-cursors to that event as well. As well there were ecumenical encounters between East and West at the reunion Councils of Lyons (1274) and Ferrara and Florence (1438-9) which I discussed in chapter two.

As late as the nineteenth Century there was a significant level of ecumenical dialogue, although almost exclusively between individuals of the various churches, rather than between the various official agencies of the churches themselves. There were, however, also contacts made by

¹⁹ Even though the Roman Catholic Church is not a member of the WCC it does maintain a close relationship with the Council. There are, as well, other Christian groups who for reasons of conscience are not -- or cannot -- be members of the WCC.

individuals involved in the various mission societies. Many mission societies found themselves competing at the grass-roots, and sought to find ways in which to co-operate with the other mission societies. There were a few examples of early co-operation that seem quite astounding even today.

Stephen Neill relates the story of how in the eighteenth and nineteenth century missions in India, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.) being unable to find a single suitable Anglican candidate, made use of German Lutherans.

All had Lutheran orders only. In many cases they used the Prayer Book of the Church of England; indeed the first translation of the Book of Common Prayer into Tamil was made by these missionaries. They baptized children and celebrated the Holy Communion according to the Anglican Rite What is to be thought of this strange episode, in which an Anglican society in the highest standing for considerably more than a century made use of the services of men, not one of whom, according to the strictest Anglican standards, was validly ordained? "They considered that ... it is rather to be connived at that the heathen should be Lutheran Christians rather than no Christians".²⁰

Such co-operation would -- even in our day -- seem to be extremely ecumenical. That it happened in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries can possibly be explained by the fact that it happened far from the scrutiny of the General Synod of the Church of England. Neill also explains that the S.P.C.K. was able to act outside of the usual Church of England norms because of the independence of the S.P.C.K. from the Church of England. The S.P.C.K.'s sister society, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (S.P.G.) was an official agency of the Church of England and was thus constrained in its activities by Church of England policy.

Aside from this and other similar anomalies there was very little co-operation to speak of between the various mission societies. Slowly through the nineteenth Century, national organizations were developed which brought together individuals representing the various Protestant and Anglican mission societies, regardless of denomination. It was so as to encourage greater co-operation that the World Missions Conference was organized in Edinburgh in 1910. It

²⁰ Stephen Charles Neill, Anglicanism (London: Penguin Books, 1958), pp. 213-4.

was at this Conference that the decision was made to form the International Missionary Council (I.M.C.).

The I.M.C. was to be a co-operative agency, with delegates from each of the member mission societies. The Council would not legislate for the agencies, but would help to co-ordinate their actions, and allow for the further development of the missions. Ultimately the I.M.C., and its successor the WCC Council on World Missions and Evangelism (C.W.M.E.), was a contributing factor in the maturation of the missionary churches, allowing them to develop into fully independent and equal members of the confessional bodies to which they belong.

The formation of the I.M.C. is identified as the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement because it is at this time that the first permanent ecumenical body was established. However, the limitations of the I.M.C. were manifold. In order to bring many of the agencies together, it was agreed that the basis for consultation would have to exclude discussion of questions of faith and church order, and of the missions to nominally Christian populations. In effect, the I.M.C. restricted itself to the missionary societies that conducted missions to non-Christian peoples. This restriction, though intentional, was recognized by some prominent Christian leaders as a barrier to further work towards Christian unity, and thus two additional but diverging ecumenical movements were formed, the Faith and Order movement at Lausanne in 1927 and the Life and Work movement at Stockholm in 1925. Unlike the I.M.C. however, the Faith and Order and Life and Work movements were made up of official delegates of the churches, rather than of arms-length agencies.

The Faith and Order movement was primarily concerned with addressing the theological concerns leading to -- or inhibiting -- unity. This movement has sponsored significant multi-lateral dialogue projects. The Life and Work movement was concerned with coordination the churches socialaction. This movement has been actively involved in refugee work, development aid, famine relief, and the anti-racism campaign. The early participants in the I.M.C., the Faith and Order, and

the Life and Work movements had their roots in the Student Christian Movement (S.C.M.) and the World Student Christian Federation (W.S.C.F.). These early contacts contributed greatly to the early success of these new movements.

A. The Ecumenical Establishment

This proliferation of ecumenical bodies proved to be a problem for the ecumenical movement. While the different bodies were each individually worthy, the ecumenical leadership found itself spread quite thin. In the earliest days of the ecumenical movement there were very few leaders, and few of them could devote their full attention to the ecumenical movement. Further, it was felt that in order not to divide the churches' attention to the ecumenical movement and to encourage the churches to commit to the movement, it would be necessary to create a single body that could represent the various diverse groups, and interests, in the different movements.

The Life and Work Conference in Oxford in 1937, and the Faith and Order Conference in Edinburgh later in the same year, approved a plan for a union of their two movements. A provisional committee was formed with Willem A. Visser't Hooft as General Secretary, and was charged with the responsibilities of organizing the first General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, tentatively scheduled for 1941. Unfortunately, the 1941 Assembly had to be postponed due to the Second World War.

During the war years the different churches discovered that they could work together, and that in their ministries they shared a common goal. Pastors and people of various different Christian traditions all found themselves responding to the Gospel call for justice by resisting the Nazis and by caring for those victimized by the war, and there for the first time they met their Christian brethren on common ground.

During World War II, when beleaguered Catholics and Protestants in Europe found themselves in concentration camps together because they placed allegiance to Jesus Christ higher than allegiance to Adolf Hitler, they discovered that the

things they shared, in the face of the common enemy, were much more important than the areas where they still differed.²¹

Most historians of the ecumenical movement suggest that the wartime postponement was a providential development for the Council as it allowed a certain maturation of ecumenical ties prior to setting down the initial course for the new Council.

Yet, though it would be hard to define how, the moment left its imprint. Post-war relations between Roman Catholics and Protestants in many countries could never quite ignore, even if they could never quite recapture, a quality they had known in that hour.²²

Following the war the plans for the World Council were swiftly brought together and the first Assembly was planned for Amsterdam in 1948. The Roman Catholic Church did not join the World Council and to this day it is not a member. As is discussed later in this chapter, the Vatican expressed strong reservations toward the WCC and expressly prohibited Roman Catholics to accept the personal invitations to observe the Assembly. Despite this, however, the Dutch bishops sent a pastoral letter to their parishes which was read on the Sunday prior to the start of the Assembly:

During these days, pray for all those who take part in this congress, and for the many other non-Catholic Christians, who longingly look out for unity, who truly follow Christ and live in His love and who - although they are separated from Christ's flock - yet look to the Church - be it often unconsciously - as the only haven of salvation.²³

Despite the great similarities in ecclesiological outlook between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, the Orthodox churches were involved in the Amsterdam Assembly through the

²¹ Robert McAfee Brown, The Ecumenical Revolution: An Interpretation of the Catholic-Protestant Dialogue (London: Burns & Oates, 1967), p. 52.

²² Oliver Stratford Tomkins, "The Roman Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Movement: 1910-1948," ch. 15 in A History of the Ecumenical Movement, v. 1, p. 688.

²³ Bernard Leeming, S.J., The Churches and the Church (Westminster, Md: Newman Press), 1960, p. 292. Also cited in Brown, p. 53.

participation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople and the Church of Greece, and were followed by other Orthodox churches at the Evanston (1954) and New Delhi (1961) Assemblies. The participation of Orthodox representatives at the Amsterdam Assembly constituted a major change for the ecumenical movement, which had up until that point been an almost exclusively Protestant and Anglican movement.²⁴

The Constitution of the WCC indicates the intention of the churches in the formation of the WCC. The Basis of the WCC as adopted at Amsterdam (1948) states:

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour.²⁵

This was amended at New Delhi (1961) to reflect that the common faith in Christ is a confession, that this confession is based upon the Scriptures, and that this faith is trinitarian. The revised Basis of the WCC therefore states:

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit...²⁶

The third stream of the Protestant ecumenical movement, the I.M.C., remained independent of the WCC until the 1961 Assembly in New Delhi, at which time it was incorporated into the WCC as the Council on World Missions and Evangelism (C.W.M.E.). In the intervening years, 1948-1961, the I.M.C. and the WCC co-operated quite extensively and shared many goals and

²⁴ It might also be noted that the Anglican participants were generally of a Protestant persuasion. Those Anglicans inclined to dialogue with Rome generally avoided the Life and Work and the Faith and Order movements.

²⁵ Documents on Christian Unity, 4th series, 1948-1957, G. K. A. Bell, ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 201. Also, Documents of the Christian Church, Henry Bettenson, ed., 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 471.

²⁶ Bettenson, p. 472.

interests. By 1961, it was clear that the separation between the two bodies was more a hindrance than a benefit to their common goals, and thus the integration of the I.M.C. into the wider interests of the WCC was undertaken.

B. Challenges and Criticisms of the WCC

There has been a significant amount of criticism of the WCC on a number of important matters. One of the charges raised against the WCC by both the Roman Catholic Church and some Evangelicals is that the WCC seeks to be a "Super Church". The World Council explicitly rejected this criticism in a Central Committee meeting in Toronto in 1950, stating:

The World Council of Churches is not and must never become a Super-Church ... The World Council cannot and should not be based on any one particular conception of the Church. It does not prejudge the ecclesiological problem ... Membership in the World Council does not imply the acceptance of a specific doctrine concerning the nature of church unity ... The member Churches recognize that the membership of the Church of Christ is more inclusive than the membership of their own church body ... The member Churches of the World Council recognize in other Churches elements of the true Church. They consider that this mutual recognition obliges them to enter into a serious conversation with each other in the hope that these elements of truth will lead to the recognition of the full truth and to unity based on the full truth.²⁷

Despite this attempt to answer the ecclesiological concerns of many Christians, including the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, the concerns still remain. J.-M.R. Tillard has described an incident which has convinced him that the WCC serves as a super-church for some of its members. This incident was the re-admission of the China Christian Council into the WCC at the Canberra Assembly in 1991.

This Christian Council, which sees itself as post-confessional, explains its membership in these terms: "The China Christian Council understands that important as it is for Chinese Christians to have a selfhood of their own, there cannot be a full selfhood of a Church apart from its being a member of the Universal Church of Jesus Christ.

²⁷ Bell, pp. 216-21. The complete report of the Toronto (1950) Central Committee meeting can be found in Bell, pp. 215-23.

So far, so good. However, they continue:

"The particularity of the Church can be developed only within the universality embodied in such an organization as the World Council of Churches." It could hardly be put more clearly, and the reactions of several delegates showed that the position of the Chinese Christians had nothing ecclesiological odd about it in their view.²⁸

The problem is that the "universality" or catholicity of the church cannot be accomplished, according to Catholic and Orthodox theology, in the context of a mere Council of Churches. That the China Christian Council, and many of the WCC delegates, consider this to be possible indicates either a significantly different understanding of catholicity or a different understanding of the WCC. Clearly, the China Christian Council considers its membership in the WCC as equivalent to membership in the "Universal Church of Jesus Christ."

The Orthodox participants at Canberra issued a statement expressing concerns about certain trends in the WCC. Highlighted amongst the Orthodox concerns was that:

the tendency to marginalize the Basis [of the WCC] in WCC work has created some dangerous trends in the WCC. We miss from many WCC documents the affirmation that Jesus Christ is the world's Saviour. We perceive a growing *departure from biblically-based Christian understandings* of: (a) the Trinitarian God; (b) salvation; (c) the "good news" of the gospel itself; (d) human beings as created in the image and likeness of God; and (e) the church; among others.²⁹

The Orthodox feel that:

the results of Faith and Order work [should] find a more prominent place in the various expressions of the WCC, and that tendencies in the opposite direction [should] not be encouraged.³⁰

²⁸ Jean-Marie Roger Tillard, O.P., "Was the Holy Spirit at Canberra?", One in Christ 29 (1993), pp. 57-8.

²⁹ "Orthodox Statement," in Signs of the Spirit, Official Report of the Seventh Assembly of the WCC, Canberra 1991, Michael Kinnamon, ed. (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), p. 280.

³⁰ Ibid.

The Orthodox participants end their reflection on the work of the Canberra Assembly with the following ominous question:

*Has the time come for the Orthodox Churches, and other member Churches to review their relations with the World Council of Churches?*³¹

Orthodox participation in the WCC is considered essential by the Roman Catholic Church. Primarily, the Orthodox presence within the WCC provides a witness of sacramentality, of apostolicity, and of "a kind of magisterium" which carries authority "to which Orthodox and Catholics testify."³² As well, from the Roman Catholic perspective, the Orthodox participation in the governance of the WCC serves as a partial but meaningful corrective of the tendencies which the Orthodox also identify as problematic.

At the Canberra Assembly, another statement was circulated by participants of Evangelical perspective. Their concerns involved some very similar matters to those expressed by the Orthodox. They note that Heinz Joachim Held, the moderator of the Central Committee of the WCC, reports the inability of the WCC to develop a "vital and coherent theology."³³ The Vancouver Assembly in 1983 had called for the development of a "vital and coherent theology" in the WCC which would result from greater interaction between the theological perspectives of the various units and sub-units of the WCC. The Evangelicals assert that:

The ecumenical movement needs a theology rooted in the Christian revelation and [which] is relevant to contemporary problems. At present there is insufficient clarity regarding the relationship between the confession of the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to scripture, the person and work of the Holy Spirit, and legitimate concerns which are part of the WCC agenda ... This theological

³¹ Ibid., p. 282

³² Tillard, p. 53

³³ Signs of the Spirit, p. 283. For Held's report see Signs of the Spirit, pp. 127-49, particularly pp. 136-41.

deficit not only conspires against the work of the WCC as a Christian witness but also increases the tensions among its member churches.³⁴

The common basis of concern for both Evangelical and Orthodox participants was conspicuous to both the other Assembly participants and these participants themselves. As a direct result of this conspicuously common concern, delegates of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Evangelicals invited by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Wuerttemberg, met at Stuttgart, Germany in February 1993. This meeting resulted in a statement entitled "A Newly Discovered Affinity."³⁵ In this statement a number of common convictions are identified, as well as a number of issues on which they have some consensus but require more exploration. The statement also restates the concerns raised in their Canberra Assembly statements -- though in a more general and considered manner -- and recommends that plans for an encounter between Eastern and Oriental Orthodox on one side, and Evangelicals on the other be pursued.³⁶ Sometimes, ecumenical breakthroughs occur when they are least expected.

Another significant problem for the WCC has been the general unwillingness of the member churches to make any substantive changes to their relationships with each other. While there have been notable exceptions to this, the Council has from time to time felt it important to call the churches to account. In Lund in 1952, the third Faith and Order World Conference expressed an important principle which has shaped the ecumenical movement more than any other single statement.

We ... earnestly request our Churches to consider whether they are doing all they ought to do to manifest the oneness of the people of God. Should not our Churches ask themselves whether they are showing sufficient eagerness to enter into conversation with other Churches, and whether they should not act together in all

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ "A Newly Discovered Affinity: Report of the Orthodox-Evangelical Meeting at Bernhauser Forst, Stuttgart, Germany (8-12 February 1993)," Catholic International 4 (July 1993), pp. 343-4.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 344

matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately?³⁷

The result of the application of the Lund principle, either directly or because others have come to the same conclusion themselves, has been the enormous growth of the churches' participation in the Life and Work programmes of the WCC. Although the Faith and Order movement has been retained intact within the WCC as the Commission on Faith and Order, the Life and Work movement finds itself in a number of separate commissions and units.

There continues to be a tension within the WCC between the Faith and Order and the Life and Work movements despite attempts by the Central Committees and the General Secretaries to avoid this. The fundamental problem, from the Faith and Order perspective, is the lack of theological reflection undertaken by the various Life and Work programmes. Much of this tension finds expression in the Orthodox, Evangelical, and Roman Catholic critique of the WCC described above. The latest attempt to resolve this tension was the "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation" (JPIC) World Consultation in Seoul in 1990. At the JPIC Consultation the various commissions and units of the WCC, including Faith and Order, contributed to and participated in the programme. The result of the Consultation has been a growing consensus on the churches' response to the Gulf War³⁸, to the Earth Summit³⁹, and the war in Bosnia. While the opinion is not unanimous, there is certainly a conscious awareness by the churches on either side of both the

³⁷ Bell, p. 244. Also "Lund 1952: Final Report," section I, § 3, in A Documentary History of the Faith and Order Movement: 1927-1963, Lukas Vischer, ed. (St. Louis, MO: Bethany Press, 1963), p. 86.

³⁸ The WCC gathered in Canberra in February 1991 for its Seventh Assembly. The ongoing war in the Persian Gulf region was discussed both in the official Assembly proceedings and by delegates, observers, visitors, and staff during coffee breaks and other unofficial venues. Although there was not unanimous consensus on the issue -- and thus the Assembly chose not to outright condemn the war -- the debate broke along national lines rather than denominational lines.

³⁹ The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1991.

peace and the environmental issues that the other churches have undertaken a serious theological reflection of those issues. This alone has contributed to a new level of inter-church respect.

III. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC AWAKENING

Through two thousand years of church history there have been numerous instances of division that have split the church apart. Beginning with the early heresies, and the divisions associated with the early Councils, the church has almost always managed to bring the dissenting parties back to the fold, or to limit the damage where that was not possible. Even the schisms with the Oriental Orthodox following the Council of Chalcedon and with the Eastern Orthodox in 1054 had very little practical impact on the local churches in the West. However, since the Reformation the unity of the Western church has been rent asunder. In response, at the Council of Trent and through the ascendancy of the Papacy and religious orders, the Roman Catholic Church consolidated itself and built a uniformity of liturgy, doctrine, and church structure that has artificially maintained unity within the Roman Catholic Church and has prevented any significant achievement of reunion between the Roman Catholic Church and the churches of the Reformation.⁴⁰ It is only in the last thirty years that the Roman Catholic Church has taken a firm and active role in the modern ecumenical movement, and has entered into dialogue with the other churches as partners, rather than as adversaries.

⁴⁰ It is worth noting that the Roman Catholic Church has managed to achieve some level of *rapprochement* with certain Byzantine churches. However, this advance has been at the expense of good relations with the remaining Orthodox churches. For example, with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1595, a majority of the Byzantine hierarchy in the Ukraine resumed relations with Rome, and formed the Ukrainian Catholic Church. This remains a source of harsh feelings even in the present day. In June 1993, the Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church stated that this means of unity, known as uniatism, can no longer be accepted either as a method to be followed or as a model of the unity our churches are seeking." *Origins* 23 (1993), p. 167.

A. The Malines Conversations

This change of attitude began almost a century ago with unofficial exploratory discussions between certain Anglicans and the appropriate individuals approved by the Vatican. In the late nineteenth century there occurred the first serious attempt by certain Roman Catholics and Anglicans to achieve an element of unity between the Roman and the Anglican Communion. Due to the friendship of Viscount Halifax and the Abbé Portal, a movement was started to achieve a ruling by the Vatican on the validity of the Anglican Orders. The movement had the support of certain highly placed Anglicans, as well as a few members of the Roman Catholic Church on the continent. However, the majority of Anglicans and Roman Catholics in England would not have supported the movement had they been informed of it. As a result, the communications between Halifax, Portal and the Roman Curia were kept secret.

Cardinal Vaughn, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster became aware of the talks and although supporting the request for a ruling, was in support of an unfavourable ruling, as that would leave as the only option the total submission of the Anglicans.⁴¹ Unfortunately, the Cardinal was successful, Pope Leo XIII issued a Papal Bull entitled *Apostolicae Curae* (1896) which declared that the Anglicans had broken the apostolic succession during the reign of Edward VI (1547-1553). According to Leo XIII the succession was broken by changing the rite of ordination in the Edwardian Ordinal to omit the words "for the office and work of a bishop" following the words "Receive the Holy Ghost" such that the sacrament itself was defective both in form and in intent.⁴²

⁴¹ Bernard C. Pawley & Margaret Pawley, Rome and Canterbury through Four Centuries: A Study of the Relations between the Church of Rome and the Anglican Churches 1530-1973 (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), p. 241.

⁴² Denzinger, Henrich, The Sources of Catholic Dogma, Roy J. Defarrari, trans. (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1957), § 1963-1966, pp. 496-7. Originally published as Enchiridion Symbolorum, 30th ed., Karl Rahner, S.J., ed. (Freiburg: Herder, 1954). Abbreviated as Denzinger.

Another attempt at reconciling the "schism" was made some twenty-five years later, at the instigation of Viscount Halifax, the Abbé Portal, and Joseph Cardinal Mercier, the Archbishop of Malines and the Primate of Belgium. This time the talks, which were held at Malines under the chairmanship of Cardinal Mercier, aimed at coming to an understanding and conclusion of some of the doctrinal disputes between the two Communion. There were three members of either Communion present at the talks; Cardinal Mercier, Abbé Portal, and Mercier's deputy, Mgr. Van Roey, on the Roman Catholic side, and Halifax, Fr. Walter Frere, and Dr. Armitage Robinson on the Anglican side.⁴³ Once again the movement had to be kept secret as neither side had the support of their own members, although the Archbishop of Canterbury and Popes Benedict XV and Pius XI had approved of the talks.⁴⁴

Doctrinally the Conversations achieved little, except that the open exchange of views after so long was no doubt salutary. It is hard to imagine how much more could have been achieved at that time, before the climate of entrenched ideas on both sides had begun to change.⁴⁵

The report from the Conversations was written in October 1926, after the death of Cardinal Mercier in January, and the Abbé Portal in June, of that year. Mgr. Van Roey became the new Archbishop of Malines and chaired the final meeting at which the report, Conversations at Malines, was written.⁴⁶ However, due to the political repercussions if it became known at that time that the Anglicans had held talks with the Roman Catholics, Randall Davidson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, held back the printing until after the new Prayer Book passed through Parliament.

⁴³ Pawley, p. 285

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 284-6

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 297

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 296

Although the Prayer Book Measure failed to pass, it did not become appropriate at any later date to publish the report.⁴⁷

Although the report was never published, Halifax published a pamphlet in 1928, which he had written based on his notes from Malines. Entitled; Notes on the Conversations at Malines 1921-1925, the pamphlet makes reference to certain agreements reached by the six friends while in "conversation."

According to Halifax, the group came to conclusions on the issues of; Papal supremacy, the authority of Scripture in doctrine, the role of baptism, and the consecration of the eucharist.

First, on baptism, the group agreed that baptism is "the means of entry into the Church of Christ."⁴⁸ Secondly, scripture is seen to require "the interpretation of the Church before it can be accepted as the ultimate standard of faith and doctrine."⁴⁹ Further, Halifax contends that the position of the Anglican Communion on the necessity of scriptural derivation for all doctrines, is not inconsistent with the Roman Catholic position. On the role of the Pope, Halifax explains that the group came to the conclusion that it may be:

reasonable to suppose that our Lord did in fact make some provision for such a visible Head of His Church in the persons of S.Peter and his successors, to act as a perpetual safeguard and centre of unity for the whole Episcopate scattered throughout the world.⁵⁰

From this understanding of the papal role, Halifax explains, the group determined that the Pope's authority:

⁴⁷ Charles Lindley Wood (Viscount Halifax), Notes on the Conversation at Malines, 1921-1925: Points of Agreement (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co., 1928), pp. 3-4.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 5

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 6

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 7

consists, not in proclaiming or imposing new dogmas, but, as the chief bishop and pastor of the flock, in declaring explicitly and authoritatively what is the faith which our Lord Jesus Christ has committed to the keeping of His Church.⁵¹

The final agreement that was reached at Malines was on the eucharist. The group came to the agreement that the "Sacrifice [of Christ] is sacramentally offered by the showing forth ... of that death, mystically represented by the separate Consecration of the bread and wine"⁵² Further agreement was also reached that in the eucharist "the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed given, taken, and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper."⁵³

This agreement on the eucharist consists in an acceptance on behalf of both sides that "transubstantiation" consists in the reception of "the body and Blood of Christ". This is also the agreement reached during the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission discussions between 1970 and 1981, which will be discussed in chapter five.

The conversations held at Malines, although authorized by both the Pope, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, were not authorized to come to conclusions, but only to identify areas of dispute that might possibly be overcome by further discussion at a later date. The fact that the participants overstepped their authorization was a factor in the Archbishop's decision not to publish their report, and not to continue the talks. Years later, when dialogue once again was started between the two Communion, the rallying cry was; "No more Malines!"

Though nothing came of the "conversations" at Malines, the incident is instructive in that it shows the Vatican's willingness to enter into dialogue on an unofficial, pragmatic, and face to face level. As I discussed above regarding the establishment of the WCC, that willingness did not readily include seeking membership in the WCC.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., p. 6

⁵³ Ibid.

B. *Mortalium Animos*

In January 1928, Pope Pius XI responded to the previous year's Faith and Order Conference in Lausanne by issuing an encyclical on religious unity, *Mortalium Animos*. While the encyclical dealt with the ecumenical movement, it did so with a tangential approach. Pius XI's main concern seemed to be with "that false opinion which considers all religions to be more or less good and praiseworthy"⁵⁴. A further concern seems to be that:

A good number of them ... deny that the Church of Christ must be visible and apparent, at least to such a degree that it appears as one body of faithful, agreeing in one and the same doctrine under one teaching authority and government; but on the contrary, they understand a visible Church as nothing else than a Federation, composed of various communities of Christians, even though they adhere to different doctrines, which may even be incompatible one with another.⁵⁵

He further condemns those that might suggest that the "longstanding differences of opinion which keep asunder ... the Christian family, must be entirely put aside, and from the remaining doctrines a common form of faith drawn up and proposed for belief."⁵⁶ Instead he proposes an alternative, that which Rome has always proposed, that all those who call themselves Christian submit to a visible unity with Christ's Vicar, the Bishop of Rome.⁵⁷ The "Return to Rome" proposal has always been in the background of Rome's relations with other Christians, this was simply another opportunity to express it.

In order to ensure that these perceived errors did not spread within the Roman Catholic Church itself, the Pope reiterated the restriction upon participation in non-Catholic assemblies. This restriction was re-affirmed again before the 1937 Oxford Conference of Faith and Order and

⁵⁴ Pope Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos* (Encyclical on Religious Unity, Jan. 6, 1928), § 2, in Claudia Carlen, ed. *The Papal Encyclicals*, Raleigh: McGrath Publishing Co., 1981.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, § 6

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, § 7

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, § 10

the Amsterdam (1948) and Evanston (1954) Assemblies of the WCC. At Amsterdam, the local Roman Catholic Archbishop had agreed to allow limited participation by authorized Roman Catholic theologians, until Rome intervened and refused to allow any Roman Catholic observers. Nonetheless, a statement from the Archbishop was read to the Assembly, explaining the reasons why Roman Catholics could not participate and wishing the WCC well in its endeavours.

C. The Ice Begins to Melt

In December of 1949, the Holy Office issued an instruction known as *Ecclesia Catholica*, which was addressed to local bishops of the Roman Catholic Church. The Instruction was concerned with the ecumenical movement. Despite coming from the Vatican office responsible for preserving the doctrine of the faith, the Instruction is surprisingly open to the ecumenical movement in its many facets. The Instruction places the responsibility in the Bishops hands for ensuring that the movement be kept "under effective supervision", but also that it be given "prudent encouragement and direction".⁵⁸

Notwithstanding the openness of the Instruction to the ecumenical movement, the restrictions on Roman Catholic participation in ecumenical conferences were only slightly loosened. As well, the restriction on *communicatio in sacris*⁵⁹ was relaxed so as to allow the common recitation of the Lord's Prayer or other approved prayer at ecumenical gatherings. Nonetheless, the local Bishop was to approve before hand every ecumenical encounter and ensure that it conformed to the guidelines set down in the Instruction.

At the Evanston Assembly in 1954, the Archbishop of Chicago, exercising his authority as outlined in the Instruction, refused to allow Roman Catholics to travel to Evanston for the purposes

⁵⁸ Holy Office, *Ecclesia Catholica (Instructio ad locorum ordinarios; de motione œcumenica)*, Dec. 20, 1949), no. I. Reprinted in *The Tablet*, v. 195 (1950), pp. 175-6.

⁵⁹ See footnote 88

of participating in the Assembly. According to ecumenical folklore, a number of influential Roman Catholic theologians housed themselves in a motel just outside the Archbishop's jurisdiction, and were available to the Assembly delegates for consultation.

IV. THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

Although *Ecclesia Catholica* represented a small movement by the Vatican with respect to the ecumenical movement, the big breakthrough came with the election of Pope John XXIII in 1958. The new Pope stunned the world early in the following year by calling an "Ecumenical Council", and by establishing in 1960 the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. To illustrate the level of surprise that John XXIII engendered by calling the Council, consider the comparison offered by Phillip Berryman:

In the 1950s it would have been as difficult for Catholics to imagine the pope launching a broad reform movement within the church as it would be for Americans today to conceive of the Kremlin initiating a far-reaching democratization [*sic*] of the Eastern bloc countries. Yet that is what occurred with the Second Vatican Council.⁶⁰

There was some misunderstanding amongst the laity in both the Roman Catholic Church, and some of the other churches, as to the intent of the Council. It was apparently thought in some quarters that the Council would bring together delegates of all the Christian churches in a truly "ecumenical" council. Although there was some sense of disappointment when it was discovered that the Council would be a council of the Roman Catholic Church, there was still a sense of excitement as invitations were sent to the other Christian churches to send official observers to the Council.

Günther Gassmann has expressed an interesting reflection upon the significance of the Second Vatican Council for the churches of the Reformation. He relates his experience as an

⁶⁰ Phillip Berryman, Liberation Theology: The Essential Facts about the Revolutionary Movement in Latin America and Beyond (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), p.15.

assistant to Edmund Schlink, an official observer at the Council, and the manner in which Schlink who had previously been extremely cautious with respect to Roman Catholic ecumenism became more optimistic. Thus Gassmann states, Schlink was for him:

an impressive symbol of the recognition that the Council, and especially [*Unitatis Redintegratio*], addressed and challenged us Lutherans and Reformed in a way that required a response in the form both of a reconsideration of our own judgements and attitudes and of a renewal of our own theological thinking and ecclesiastical life.⁶¹

Unitatis Redintegratio, the Decree on Ecumenism,⁶² was presented to the Council by the newly formed Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU). It consisted of five chapters, the first three of which were revised and became the final decree, and the last two of which became the Declaration on the Church's Relationship with Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*) and the Declaration on Religious Freedom (*Dignitatis Humanae*).

Unitatis Redintegratio is not a conciliar constitution in the sense that *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes* are, and thus does not express the same level of authority. Nonetheless, the decree constitutes a significant change in the Roman Catholic Church's response to its relations with groups outside of the church. When *Unitatis Redintegratio* and *Lumen Gentium*, were promulgated on November 21, 1964, Pope Paul VI "made the explicit point that the doctrine on the Church in *Lumen Gentium* was to be interpreted in the light of the further explanation given in the

⁶¹ Günther Gassmann, "The Decree on Ecumenism: The Churches of the Reformation," *One in Christ*, v. 26, 1990, p. 32.

⁶² *Unitatis Redintegratio* (Nov. 21, 1964) in *The Documents of Vatican II*, Walter M. Abbott, S.J. & Joseph Gallagher, ed. (Piscataway, NJ: America Press, 1966). All English language Vatican II documents will be cited from this source. Latin texts available in *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils (Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta)*, Norman P. Tanner, ed. (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990).

Decree on Ecumenism."⁶³ The most significant new insights are with respect to the validity of the Christian witness of those in other churches, the recognition of the eastern churches as "sister churches", the introduction of a "hierarchy of truths", and the decision to describe the Church of Christ in *Lumen Gentium* as "subsisting in" the Roman Catholic Church.

Probably the most radical change that arose with respect to the ecclesial self-understanding of the Roman Catholic Church at the Council was the recognition that:

in some real way [non-Roman Catholic Christians] are joined to us in the Holy Spirit, for to them also He gives His gifts and graces, and is thereby operative among them with His sanctifying power.⁶⁴

Lumen Gentium further suggests that:

many elements of sanctification and of truth can be found outside of [the Roman Catholic Church's] visible structure. These elements, however, as gifts properly belonging to the Church of Christ, possess an inner dynamism toward Catholic unity.⁶⁵

Thus *Unitatis Redintegratio* teaches;

Undoubtedly, in ways that vary according to the condition of each Church or Community, these actions can truly engender a life of grace, and can be rightly described as capable of providing access to the community of salvation.⁶⁶

There are a number of terms used by the Council that indicate the perspective of the Council Fathers with respect to the non-Roman Catholic churches. The term "separated brethren" is frequently used in the Council documents to refer to those who are "properly baptized" and yet

⁶³ Francis A. Sullivan, S.J., "*Subsistit In*: The Significance of Vatican II's Decision to say of the Church of Christ not that it "is" but that it "subsists in" the Roman Catholic Church," *One in Christ*, v. 22, 1986, p. 117. The citation given is *Acta Apostolica Sedis* (AAS) v. 56, 1964, pp. 1012-3.

⁶⁴ *Lumen Gentium* (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Nov. 21, 1964), § 15.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, § 8

⁶⁶ *Unitatis Redintegratio*, § 3

who do not belong to the visible communion of the Roman Catholic Church. While the term "separated brethren" is used to refer to individuals, the term "ecclesial communities" is used to refer to certain bodies which are not properly called "churches" from the Roman Catholic perspective.

Implicit in the use of [the term "ecclesial communities"], and in the Decree, is the idea that the more a Church has of the essential structures of the Catholic Church, the more it approaches the ideal of the Church. On this institutional scale of measurement, some are more properly called Churches than others, and the Decree regards Eastern Churches as practically sister Churches of the Roman Catholic Church ... Another reason, of course, for the expression "ecclesial Communities" and the word "Communities" throughout the Decree is that some Christian bodies do not wish to be called "Church."⁶⁷

A. "Hierarchy of Truths"

Unitatis Redintegratio also proposes another new concept that had not been expressed before. This is the concept, or notion, that there is a "hierarchy of truths". The church teaches many things, but these things are not all equally as significant in the history of salvation.

When comparing doctrines, they [Catholic theologians] should remember that in Catholic teaching there exists an order or "hierarchy" of truths, since they vary in their relationship to the foundation of the Christian faith.⁶⁸

This term "hierarchy of truths" expresses a very new idea in Catholic theological teaching. Previously, in Roman Catholic theology there was no qualitative distinction between different doctrines. Any matter which was considered as dogmatic truth was given a similar weighting in terms of the assent required from the faithful. However, at Vatican II, Cardinal Franz König of Vienna proposed an amendment to the draft decree "*De Oecumenismo*" which introduced the concept of a hierarchy into the discussion. In his written *modus*, he:

⁶⁷ Walter M. Abbott, S.J., footnote 45, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, p. 355.

⁶⁸ *Unitatis Redintegratio*, § 11

emphasized that the truths of faith do not add up in a quantitative way, but that there is a qualitative order among them according to their respective relation to the centre or foundation of the Christian faith.⁶⁹

Rather, it is clear that certain matters are dependent upon others for their truth. The Sixth Report of the Joint Working Group (JWG), in its study of the notion of a "hierarchy of truths" explains that:

The notion of "hierarchy of truths" acknowledges that all revealed truths are related to, and can be articulated around the "foundation" - the "mystery of Christ" through which the love of God is manifested in the Holy Spirit.⁷⁰

And further,

There is an order between propositional truths of doctrine and the realities which are known by means of the propositions. Propositional truths of doctrine which articulate the faith, such as the Marian dogmas, refer ultimately to the divine mystery and guide the life of the people of God.⁷¹

Thus, to elaborate on the example proposed by the JWG, the church teaches that Mary was conceived without original sin. This is called the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception. It is quite evident that, whether the particular Dogma is scripturally sound or not, it is far removed from the essentials of a Christian faith. The Dogma does however, in the view of the Roman Catholic Church, lend itself to a pious and reverent faith in the Incarnation of the Lord. It is in this way that the Dogma is to be understood in ecumenical dialogue, according to *Unitatis Redintegratio*.

But some churches do not teach the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception. That does not mean that they necessarily deny the Immaculate Conception, rather, they simply do not teach it.

⁶⁹ Joint Working Group (JWG), "The Notion of "Hierarchy of Truths": An Ecumenical Interpretation," Appendix B of the Sixth Report (Geneva-Rome: WCC Publications, 1990), § 7, p. 39.

⁷⁰ Ibid., § 29, p. 43

⁷¹ Ibid., § 17, p. 41

Does that mean that the Roman Catholic Church cannot be reunited with those who do not explicitly profess this particular Dogma?

The answer to the question would generally be "No", there is no reason that the Roman Catholic Church cannot find some level of unity with churches and individuals who do not explicitly profess a faith in the Immaculate Conception. This is possible because the Immaculate Conception is not directly at the foundation of the Christian faith, but is only related to it in a hierarchical manner. However, greater difficulty would be found in reunion with those who implicitly reject such a dogma. Such dogmas, because of their relation to the foundation of the Christian faith, imply a certain attitude and perspective on that faith. By implicitly, or explicitly, rejecting such a Dogma, one implicitly rejects the implied perspective on the foundations of the Christian faith. The application of this concept of a "hierarchy of truths" can be quite significant for ecumenical dialogue. The window is opened considerably wider than it was with the encyclical *Mortalium Animos* or the instruction *Ecclesia Catholica*.

A complementary manner of explaining the concept of a "hierarchy of truths" is by reference to the categories of *a priori* and *a posteriori* elements of revealed truth. In Roman Catholic theology, it has long been recognized that the doctrine of infallibility rests upon the commissioning of the apostles, especially Peter, and the power of the keys given to them. Thus, apostolicity is an *a priori* element of Catholic faith, while infallibility is *a posteriori*. "For Protestants, the gospel has a more immediate link with the foundation than does the ministry which serves the gospel."⁷² Thus, the gospel is - for many Protestants - the subject of a faith which is revealed *a priori*, while the ministry, which is to serve the gospel, is *a posteriori*.

⁷² Ibid., § 35, p. 44. By "gospel" is meant the content of the Christian message, rather than the texts of the four Gospels.

It is clear that this concept of a "hierarchy of truths" can be extremely helpful to an ecumenical consideration of doctrinal controversies. Its usefulness in ecumenical dialogues will, of course, depend on the extent to which it becomes a meaningful part of the theology of both Roman Catholics and of their dialogue partners.

B. "Subsists In"

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, expresses the understanding that:

This Church [the true Church of Christ], constituted and organized in the world as a society, *subsists in* the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in union with that successor, although many elements of sanctification and of truth can be found outside of her visible structure. These elements, however, as gifts properly belonging to the Church of Christ, possess an inner dynamism toward Catholic unity.⁷³

It has been argued that the term "subsists in" leaves open the question of whether the Roman Catholic Church is exclusively the true Church of Christ. This is a very significant point, especially considering the fact that the original text prepared by the Commission used the Latin

⁷³ *Lumen Gentium*, § 8. Emphasis added. Latin text: *Haec Ecclesia, in hoc mundo ut societas constituta et ordinata, subsistit in Ecclesia catholica, a successore Petri et Episcopis in eius communione gubernata, licet extra eius compaginem elementa plura sanctificationis et veritatis inveniantur, quae ut dona Ecclesiae Christi propria, ad unitatem catholicam impellunt.* Some English translations have "catholic" in lowercase, as in the Latin original. Illustrative of the gulf yet to be bridged between the Roman Catholic Church and the "separated brethren" is a corresponding comment by an Anglican group "of the "Catholic" school of thought: "In our divided Christendom we do not believe that any existing institution or group of institutions gives a full and balanced representation of the true and primitive Catholicity. It is the recovery of that Catholicity that is our quest." Catholicity: A Study in the Conflict of Christian Traditions in the West, A Report presented to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1947), pp. 9-10.

word "*est*" rather than "*subsistit in*", which in English would translate as "This Church ... is the Catholic Church ..."74

The change in wording is extremely significant, not only for ecumenical dialogue, although here especially. The implication of the term "subsists in" is, of course, that there are others who bear elements of the true Church of Christ, and while possessing an inner dynamism towards a universal unity, are nonetheless in their own right properly called "church". Thus, in *Unitatis Redintegratio* and elsewhere, the Orthodox churches are referred to as sister churches, and there is a movement to extend this designation to the Anglican Communion as well.

There has been some significant level of argument over this interpretation of the change from "*est*" to "*subsistit in*", particularly from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF). The CDF is the Vatican congregation charged with safe-guarding the doctrines of faith, and is the successor to the Holy Office and the Holy Inquisition. With such a history, it would not be overstating the case to say that the CDF is known for being conservative.

In *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, the CDF's 1973 declaration in defense of the Roman Catholic doctrines on the church, *Lumen Gentium* is quoted as such:

[this Church of Christ] set up and structured as a society in this world, *perdures* in the Catholic Church ...75

The term "perdures" has the sense of permanency and durability.76 In no way does this term imply exclusivity. Nevertheless, only eleven years after the release of *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, the new Prefect of the CDF, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger could insist that the term

74 *Haec igitur Ecclesia, vera omnium Mater et Magistra, in hoc mundo ut societas constituta et ordinata, est Ecclesia catholica ... Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae de Ecclesia*, Pars I (Vatican: Polyglot Press, 1963), § 7, p. 11, lines 19-21.

75 CDF, *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, "In Defense of the Catholic Doctrine on the Church," (June 24, 1973), *The Pope Speaks*, v. 18, 1973, p. 146. Emphasis is added.

76 The Oxford English Dictionary defines "perdures" as "to continue, to endure, to last on".

"*subsistit*" has the sense of substance, and ... as substance can be only one, the Church of Christ must therefore subsist in the Catholic Church alone.⁷⁷

However, one should not have the impression that the officials of the Vatican are of one mind on this issue. Cardinal Willebrands, then Prefect of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, presented a far different view in a speech to the National Workshop for Christian Unity in Atlanta, Georgia on May 5th, 1987. In his speech Willebrands recounts the Council deliberations on the subject of the "*subsistit in*" in great detail. According to Willebrands, the doctrinal commission expressed the following reasoning:

Nineteen fathers propose that we should write "*subsistit integrally*" in the Catholic Church. Another 25 want to add "subsists by divine right." Again 13 others want *est* instead of *subsistit in*. One, however, proposes *consistit* instead of *subsistit*. Obviously there are two tendencies, one which would somewhat broaden the proposition, the other which would like to restrict it. For this reason the commission, after long discussion, chose *subsistit in*, a solution agreed upon by all present.⁷⁸

Willebrands, while expressing a support for the broader interpretation of the *subsistit*, cautions that the Council's whole ecclesiological understanding must be considered in the examination of this controversial phrase. The Council's ecclesiological understanding, according to Willebrands, is based upon the special insight of *Mystici Corporis Christi*, that the church is the body of Christ. And thus:

We cannot fail to note that all this belongs in a "broadening" of Pope Pius XII's doctrine -- which nevertheless is not rejected as a whole -- thanks to a deeper grasp of the Pauline vision. A short phrase proposed by the German bishops and the Scandinavian episcopal conference gives the crux of the whole argument: "No one can be Christ's without belonging to the church." But the body of Christ is the church. The conclusion is that whoever belongs to Christ belongs to the church, and hence that the limits of the church are coextensive with those of belonging to

⁷⁷ See Leonardo Boff and Clodovis Boff, Liberation Theology: From Dialogue to Confrontation (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), p. 85.

⁷⁸ Johannes Cardinal Willebrands, "Vatican II's Ecclesiology of Communion," Origins 17 (1987), p. 28.

Christ. This seems to me the dogmatic reflection behind the transition from *est* to *subsistit in* as it emerges from the council itself.⁷⁹

An interesting support for the wider interpretation of the term "subsists in" is found in an examination of the Thomistic usage of the term "*subsistit in*". A perusal of the *Index Thomisticus*⁸⁰ garners one thousand six hundred and fifty-five references to the root word "*subsisto*", with fifty-three of those references to the term "*subsistit in*". Of those references, fifteen are to Aquinas' main writings, *Summa Theologiae* and *Summa Contra Gentiles*. In each of these fifteen cases the term "*subsistit in*" is used in the context of the Doctrine of the Incarnation, although sometimes in order to explain a related concept by analogy to the Incarnation.⁸¹ And yet, in none of these fifteen references is the implication given that the term implies exclusivity. While, obviously, the Incarnation is a singular event in the history of salvation, that exclusivity is not a result of the subsistence of the human and the divine natures in Christ.

The interpretation of Vatican II's "*subsistit in*" solely by Thomistic usage would involve applying an ahistorical approach to theology. One must be wary of such a pit-fall. However, while such a use of the term by Aquinas does not indicate that the Council Fathers necessarily understood the term in that specific sense, it is instructive to note that the expression "This Church ... subsists in the catholic Church [*sic*]" is found in the context of the church as the Body of Christ "which is comprised of a divine and a human element."⁸² It is no mistake that incarnational terminology is used with reference to the church in the papal encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*,

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 29

⁸⁰ *Index Thomisticus*, Roberto Busa, ed. (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1974-1980).

⁸¹ *Summa Theologiae* I q.3 a.4; q.29 a.2; q.45 a.7; I-II q.4 a.5; III q.2 a.1; q.2 a.4 & a.5; q.3 a.6; q.16 a.6 & a.12; q.24 a.1; q.50 a.5. *Summa Contra Gentiles* Bk.4, Ch.11, n.12; Ch.35, n.1; Ch.37, n.10.

⁸² *Lumen Gentium*, § 8.

and in other ecclesiological documents. The assumption must be that when such a term as "*subsistit*" is used in an ecclesiological context that it is to be interpreted in the context of the Incarnation.

It could possibly be argued that an "incarnational" interpretation necessarily implies exclusivity, however such a judgement would be stretching the case. While there is a necessary "exclusivity" implied in the Doctrine of the Incarnation, this exclusivity is due to the singular occasion of the Incarnation. Thus, while Christians understand that there is but one Jesus of Nazareth in whom is incarnated the divine and the human persons of the Christ, nonetheless, this exclusive reality is not a result of the terminology that has been chosen to explain this mystery.

Edward Schillebeeckx, in his recent book Church: the Human Story of God, agreeing somewhat with Ratzinger, contends that the term "*subsistit in*" has the sense of substance, but nonetheless does not imply exclusivity.

At all events ... it becomes clear that (in contrast to [Vatican] attempts subsequently to give the word "*subsistere*" a heavily ontological significance) this word is used because of its suggestive power, in which the *sub* is not without its explosive significance: "*sistit sub ...*". In other words, what the New Testament envisages with its biblical mystery of the church is present in the *Ecclesia Catholica* under all kinds of historical veils and distortions: the mystery is present, but ...! It is also present elsewhere, in other churches, but ...! In this formula the uncritical, almost exclusive, identification of the mystery of the church with the Catholic Church is put aside.⁸³

C. *Nostra Aetate* and *Dignitatis Humanae*

Originally, the two declarations *Nostra Aetate* and *Dignitatis Humanae* were chapters four and five of the conciliar draft document *De Oecumenismo*, which later became *Unitatis Redintegratio*. Both declarations are extremely significant in their own spheres, as each signalled

⁸³ Edward Schillebeeckx, Church: The Human Story of God, John Bowden, trans (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1990), p. 193. Originally published as *Mensen als verhaal van God* (Baarn: Uitgeverij H. Nelissen, 1989-90).

a sharp change in the Roman Catholic Church's attitude towards the documents' respective issues. *Nostra Aetate* is the Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, and *Dignitatis Humanae* is the Declaration on Religious Freedom. The latter is probably more significant to inter-denominational Christian relations, however even *Nostra Aetate* had some level of influence on the ecumenical movement.

In *Nostra Aetate* is found the Roman Catholic Church's charter document on the church's relations with non-Christians. With this document, the Council Fathers made clear that the Roman Catholic Church's teachings with regard to other religions had changed. They taught that God's will extends to all people.

For all people comprise a single community, and have a single origin, since God made the whole [human] race ... dwell over the entire face of the earth (cf. Acts 17:26). One also is their final goal: God. His providence, His manifestations of goodness, and His saving designs extend to all [people] (cf. Wis. 8:1; Acts 14:17; Rom. 2:6-7; 1 Tim. 2:4) against the day when the elect will be united in that Holy City ablaze with the splendour of God, where the nations walk in His light (cf. Apoc. 21:23 f.).⁸⁴

The impact of *Nostra Aetate* on Roman Catholic relations with other Christian churches has been somewhat limited. Since the document focuses on relations with non-Christians its relevance to other Christian groups is minimal, however there has been some level of influence. As the Roman Catholic Church has positively identified with non-Christians, it has followed that those more closely related to Catholic faith and practice - such as other Christians - have enjoyed a higher status in relations with the Roman Catholic Church. After all, if non-Christians are to be respected, other Christians must surely be respected.

Dignitatis Humanae expressed the Roman Catholic Church's commitment to the religious freedom of all, Christian and non-Christian.

⁸⁴ *Nostra Aetate* (Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, Oct. 28, 1965), § 1.

This freedom means that all [people] are to be free from coercion ... in such wise that in matters religious no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to [their] own beliefs. Nor is anyone to be restrained from acting in accordance with [their] own beliefs ... within due limits.⁸⁵

For, of its very nature, the exercise of religion consists before all else in those internal, voluntary, and free acts whereby [the person] sets the course of [their] life directly toward God. No merely human power can either command or prohibit acts of this kind.⁸⁶

For the Council Fathers this religious freedom applies not only in territory in which the Roman Catholic Church is a minority, but also in those places where it is the established church. It was on the latter point in particular where the declaration made its mark. Prior to Vatican II, in countries where the Roman Catholic Church was the established church -such as in Spain - other religious groups found themselves persecuted both by the civil and the ecclesiastical authorities. Such persecution was found occasionally, although far less extensively, in countries where other Christian churches were the established church. For obvious reasons then, the advent of religious freedom in Roman Catholic teachings encouraged ecumenical relations.

D. Post-Vatican II Roman Catholic Ecumenism

In accordance with a request of the bishops at Second Vatican Council, the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU) issued a two-part Ecumenical Directory in 1967 and 1970.⁸⁷ The first part of the Directory gives guidelines for Roman Catholic participation in the ecumenical movement, and the second part for Roman Catholic ecumenism in higher education.

⁸⁵ *Dignitatis Humanae* (Declaration on Religious Freedom, Dec. 7, 1965), § 2

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, § 3

⁸⁷ Ecumenical Directory, Part I (*Ad totam Ecclesiam*, May 14, 1967), *AAS*, v. 59, 1967, pp. 574-92. English translation available in *One in Christ*, v. 3, 1967, pp. 326ff. Ecumenical Directory, Part II (*Spiritus Domini*, April 16, 1970), *AAS*, v. 62, 1970, pp. 705-24. English translation available in *L'Osservatore Romano*, English weekly edition, no. 22, May 28, 1970, pp. 8-10.

The Directory moved further than the instruction *Ecclesia Catholica* in allowing for wider "*communicatio in spiritualibus*", and for limited "*communicatio in sacris*."⁸⁸ While the previous guidelines had allowed only for the common recitation of the Lord's Prayer, or another prayer that is common to the traditions of the participants, the Directory allows for limited liturgical worship in common with non-Roman Catholics and in extremely rare cases for participation in the sacraments of another church or ecclesial community.

While the Directory did not envision free inter-communion, it is aware of the pastoral necessity of receiving the sacraments in cases in which there is a "physical and moral impossibility of receiving the sacraments in a person's own Church for an extended period."⁸⁹ Thus the Directory authorizes limited sacramental sharing between Roman Catholics and Orthodox, on the condition that the celebrant of the liturgy authorizes the sharing prior to the service. In most cases this will involve requesting authorization from the local bishop of the respective church as well.

With respect to individuals belonging to the non-Roman Catholic Churches of the West, the Directory allows the reception of the sacraments of the eucharist, reconciliation (penance), and anointing of the sick in those cases where there is:

danger of death or in a case of pressing need (in persecution, in prisons), if such persons does not have access to a minister of their own Communion and if they voluntarily ask for the sacraments from a Catholic priest. The only conditions are some sign of a belief in these sacraments consonant with the faith of the Church and the individual's own right dispositions.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ "Under the name *communicatio in spiritualibus* should be understood all prayers offered in common, common use of sacred articles or places, and all *communicatio in sacris* properly so called ... *Communicatio in sacris* occurs when anyone takes part in liturgical worship or in the sacraments of another Church or Ecclesial Community." Ecumenical Directory, Part I, § 29-30.

⁸⁹ Ibid., § 44

⁹⁰ Ibid., § 55. Underlining added.

The Directory does not make allowances for the reception of the sacraments by Catholics in churches other than the Orthodox churches.

A concern that the Vatican has retained is that the non-Roman Catholic churches of the West have accomplished ecumenical rapprochement on thin, or non-existent, theological grounds. An example of this concern is seen in the apparent unwillingness of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to publicly comment upon the "trial inter-communion" between the Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (E.L.C.A.). The concern of the Vatican with respect to "inter-communion" is found expressed in *Unitatis Redintegratio*:

Communicatio in sacris may not be regarded [by Roman Catholics] as a means to be used indiscriminately toward restoring Christian unity. Such sharing is dependent mainly on two principles: the unity of the Church, of which it is a sign, and the sharing in the means of grace. Its function as sign often rules out *communicatio in sacris*; its being a source of grace sometimes favours it.⁹¹

With concerns about the theological grounds of recent ecumenical rapprochement, it is understandable (and regrettable) that the Vatican has taken a step back from its ecumenical commitment. Whether or not their concern is well placed is not a question that I will address at this point.

Following the Second Vatican Council, there were many who expected that the Roman Catholic Church would join the WCC as a member church. Although this did not happen, and has still not happened, the Vatican and the WCC did establish the Joint Working Group (JWG) mentioned above, and the Vatican agreed to name twelve individuals to the Faith and Order Commission who would serve on that body *in their own right*. In other words, the Roman Catholic members of the Faith and Order Commission are not delegates of the Roman Catholic Church,

⁹¹ *Unitatis Redintegratio*, § 8. Also Ecumenical Directory, Part I, § 38. This translation from Documents on the Liturgy: 1963-1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts, International Commission on English in the Liturgy, ed. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1982), § 38, p. 325.

although they are appointed by the Vatican and they are expected to express the Roman Catholic theological traditions in their participation in the Commission.

The Vatican has rejected invitations to join the WCC claiming that there is an incompatibility between the structures of the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church. The WCC is composed of member churches, each of which is territorially based. The Vatican claims that the Roman Catholic Church's structure as a world-wide church conflicts with the territoriality of the WCC member churches. Further, the Vatican claims that the WCC's structure as a council of independent churches is not compatible with the Roman Catholic Church's structure as a single church. Due to the problems associated with the differences in structures, the Vatican has given priority to bilateral dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the various Christian Communion. Roman Catholic participation in dialogue is generally found either at the local level between a parish and other local congregations, at the national level between a national Bishop's conference and the national office of another church, or at the international level on international bilateral commissions, such as the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC I & II).

As a result of the Second Vatican Council's opening of the doors to ecumenical dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the various other churches and ecclesial communities, a noticeable sense of ecumenical optimism swept the churches. This sense of optimism led to a certain relaxation, in some quarters, of what had previously been considered to be immovable barriers. From the perspective of the Vatican, there were widespread excesses in ecumenical sharing that resulted from this ecumenical optimism. Some of the "ecumenical excesses" that concern the Vatican include eucharistic sharing and the unflattering comparison of Roman Catholic structures and practices to their Protestant equivalents. It should be noted, however, that there is little indication that eucharistic sharing was ever as widespread as the Vatican thought it was.

The application of the Directory mitigated, to some extent, the excesses that the Vatican had been concerned about, although the Vatican remains reticent about encouraging greater ecumenical initiatives at the local level. In 1993 the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity issued a revised directory entitled: Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism (DAPNE). The 1993 Directory was issued in order to incorporate the changes that are found in the 1983 Code of Canon Law and the 1990 Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches. As well, it was published in light of the ecumenical dimensions of The Catechism of the Catholic Church which was issued in 1992. The 1993 Directory provides a more developed treatment of many of the issues within its scope, but its conclusions do not reach significantly beyond those of the 1967-70 Directory.

In some quarters, where there was a strong ecumenical enthusiasm in the aftermath of the Council, in the early 1980's there developed a partial backlash as the enthusiasm was not met with meaningful accomplishments. On the part of Roman Catholics there has been a general return to traditional attitudes regarding non-Catholics, and on the part of non-Roman Catholics there has been a sense of disappointment, and rejection. Ecumenists from churches that had been involved in the ecumenical movement prior to Vatican II had allowed their hopes for ecumenical rapprochement with Roman Catholics to be awakened, only to have their hopes left unfulfilled, or in some cases actually rejected. While the situation today is a far sight better than it was before the Second Vatican Council, the recent events can only be seen as disappointing by those for whom Christian unity is a passion.

The past-Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, coined the term "ecumenical winter" to describe the ecumenical forecast in the early 1980's. It is certainly clear that there has been a noticeable cooling of ecumenical enthusiasm in recent past, and not only on the Vatican's part. The Anglican Primate of Canada, Archbishop Michael Peers, has pointed out however that every winter ends eventually, and that when the spring comes there is new growth that would not have been

possible without the winter. Christians must look to the future with hope, and look to the present with a commitment to work to bring about an "ecumenical springtime."⁹² The "ecumenical springtime" is to be found -- I would suggest -- in the recently emerging ecclesiology of communion, or *koinonia* ecclesiology which I discussed in chapter one.

VI. IN CONCLUSION ...

In chapter one I attempted to present a working definition of the term "ecumenical ecclesiology", and to contemplate what would constitute unity in the churches. In chapter two I sketched the history of the divisions between the churches. And in this chapter I have outlined the ecumenical advances of the twentieth century. With this chapter I have completed the first part of this thesis, defining the scope of the issue. Not only have I defined several essential terms in the three chapters, I have also defined the issue and the context in which I intend to address it. Using the question framed in chapter one,⁹³ and on the basis of the history outlined in chapters two and three, in the remainder of this thesis I will discuss the issues of baptism; eucharist; and ministry, and the issues surrounding each of these major concerns.

⁹² Comments made at an open forum entitled "Episcopal Reflections on Christian Unity" with Archbishop Michael Peers (Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada), Archbishop Antoine Hacault (Roman Catholic Archbishop of St. Boniface), and Bishop Donald Sjoberg (Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada), January 22, 1992 at St. John's College, The University of Manitoba.

⁹³ "Can there be such a thing as an ecumenical ecclesiology? And if there can be, what would it entail?"

CHAPTER 4

FAITH IN CONVERGENCE

The inability of the churches mutually to recognize their various practices of baptism as sharing in the one baptism, and their actual divideness in spite of mutual baptismal recognition, have given dramatic visibility to the broken witness of the Church ... The need to recover baptismal unity is at the heart of the ecumenical task as it is central for the realization of genuine partnership within the Christian communities.¹

Baptism is the sacramental initiation of the faithful into the Christian faith community. Baptism presupposes faith, both of the initiate and of the community. In those churches which practice infant baptism, the presumption is made that the child is baptized into a community of faith with the community accepting the obligation of the baptismal vows on behalf of the child. In those churches which practice believer's baptism, the act of baptism is seen as the formal acceptance of a faith already active in the life of the initiate and which is to be lived in the community which baptizes.

The prevailing logic of the ecumenical movement is thus: each person called by the name of Christian is baptized in, and by, the Christian community in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Further, each community calling itself Christian bears witness to the gospel as expressed in the Scriptures and in the life of the church. The fact that some Christians and Christian communities fail to recognize other Christians and Christian communities as Christian is a scandal (I Cor.), and is contrary to the will of Christ (Jn. 17; Eph. 4). The goal of full and visible unity, then, is more than a dream -- it is a divine prerogative.

At the personal level, Christian faith is expressed within a community. The community offers baptism to those who profess a faith in Jesus Christ, and celebrates and strengthens this faith

¹ World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission (Lima, 1982) Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, Faith & Order Paper No. 111 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1982), Section I: Baptism, Commentary (6), p. 3.

with a process of initiation and Christian education. Baptism, then, serves both a communal and a personal role in the life of faith. While faith is ultimately an act of commitment to an ongoing conversion or *metanoia*, faith is celebrated and lived in the context of a faith community.

The ecumenical movement has made an instinctual recognition that ecumenical conversion occurs first and foremost at the level of personal faith, and only after does it move to the communal level. For this reason, the earliest dialogues were based on an implicit and mutual acknowledgment of each others' baptism. The next step of dialogue was thus to make this implicit acknowledgment explicit. This was the work of the WCC's Faith and Order Commission, which began an examination of the meaning of baptism in 1952 at the Faith and Order Conference at Lund. The study moved through a number of stages, each marked by the publication of an agreed statement. Following the Edinburgh statement: One Lord, One Baptism, the dialogue moved from considering the mutual recognition of baptism to considering the meaning that such mutual recognition gives. As a result, the Accra, Ghana statement in 1974: One Baptism, One Eucharist and a Mutually Recognized Ministry, the Loccum, Germany statement in 1977: Towards an Ecumenical Consensus on Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry and the Lima, Peru statement in 1982: Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry. These statements represent the work of the theologians, ministers, church leaders and lay people delegated to the Faith and Order Commission, but do not represent the official positions of the churches from which the participants come. Nevertheless, the statements involve a significant step forward in theological understanding and agreement. The responses to the statements, both official and unofficial, have been extraordinarily positive.

As I have noted, even the most cursory examination of the history of ecumenism will show that the earliest issues considered in ecumenical dialogues concerned the nature of Christian faith, and of the personal response to faith. Within such broad boundaries, issues such as baptism, justification by faith, and the creeds have been examined. As some level of agreement was found in these matters, the focus moved to a second stage in which questions of sacraments, rituals, and

Christian behaviour are being examined. Eventually, however, the dialogue must move to a third stage, the consideration of ecclesial structure, authority, and other questions of ministry. Chapters five and six will deal with these subsequent stages.

It is not my intention in this chapter to attempt a point by point examination of the baptismal agreement found in the Lima document. Instead, I will examine some of the essential elements of ecumenical theology that are highlighted by the baptismal agreement. Particular emphasis is of course placed on those matters which relate to ecclesiology. The issues dealt with in this chapter relate to the first stage of dialogue described above.

I. BAPTISM

The Roman Catholic Church defines a sacrament as "an outward sign of inward grace, ordained by Jesus Christ, by which grace is given to the soul."² Bernard Leeming prefers to refine that definition as:

an effective sign of a particular form of union with the Mystical Body, the Church, instituted by Jesus Christ, which gives grace to those who receive it rightly.³

While Leeming's definition does not truly differ from the understanding of sacrament above, it does highlight a few interesting problems. Leeming's definition quite concisely makes the following points: 1) a sacrament effects that which it signifies; 2) each particular sacrament effects a union with Christ's Mystical Body; 3) Christ's Mystical Body is the church; 4) each sacrament was instituted by Jesus Christ; 5) each sacrament imparts grace freely to those who receive it; and 6) grace is effective in those who receive the sacrament rightly. Leeming appropriately insists that the connection between the sacraments and the Mystical Body of Christ is essential.

² Bernard Leeming, S.J., Principles of Sacramental Theology (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1956), p. x. Leeming suggests that the "Anglican Catechism" gives the same definition.

³ Ibid.

For to think of sacraments without thinking of the living union between Christ and the Church is to think of Hamlet without thinking of the Prince of Denmark. The principal minister of sacraments is Christ, who lives still in that extension of himself which we call his Mystical Body; the power of sacraments lies in the vital and vitalizing action of Christ in that Body; and the effect of sacraments -- provided they are sacraments and not empty shadows of sacraments -- is to make those, who through them communicate with Christ, special cells in the organism of his Body.⁴

The celebration of baptism is, as I noted earlier, an initiation of the faithful into the Christian faith community. A number of important codicils are added to that description in Catholic theology, of primary importance is the fact that baptism is a sacrament. In addition, Catholic theology holds that the sacrament of baptism can only be received once, and that through baptism the Christian is made part of the Mystical Body of Christ.

It would probably be overly cautious to say that *most* Christians agree that baptism can only be rightly received once. It is more probable that *all* Christians believe this. It should be remembered that not all Christians celebrate baptism. However, even those who do not celebrate baptism -- such as the Quakers and the Salvation Army -- do not question the restriction on only receiving baptism once. The dispute over baptism does not involve the number of times in which one can be baptized, it involves the age of the initiate and the form in which the baptism is celebrated. It is also generally agreed that baptism is an incorporation into Christ's family. However, many Christians may take exception to the description of Christ's family as His Mystical Body. At their most generous, many Christians will only accept such a description in its metaphorical sense. It is this point that ecumenical dialogue has reached and is attempting to surpass with the new dialogue on ecclesiology.

The insistence in Catholic theology on the connection between baptism and the Mystical Body of Christ -- in fact between every sacrament and the Mystical Body -- is due to the understanding that all Christian faith is rooted in Christ.

⁴ Ibid., pp. ix-x

Christian baptism is rooted in the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, in his death and in his resurrection. It is incorporation into Christ ... it is entry into the New Covenant between God and God's people. Baptism is a gift of God, and is administered in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.⁵

Each sacrament connects the individual to Christ who is the union of divinity and humanity. The church -- that is, the true Church -- is the human community in all its humanity expressed in the sacred, and vice versa -- the sacred expressed in the human community.

Catholicism is a hearty, human, and fleshy expression of Christianity. It is a Mediterranean spirituality. The central icon of Catholic spirituality is the church itself. Through the church, Catholics see themselves as they truly are -- simultaneously human and called to be divine. Jesus -- the incarnate Son of God -- incorporates the human and divine in a form which is recognizable and to which frail humanity can relate.

Each sacrament is a physical sign made with natural and plentiful elements: i.e. water, oil, bread and wine, man and woman, the laying on of hands. In their reception of the sacraments, Catholics are reminded of the humanity of Christ by the natural elements. It would not be enough to say: "I baptize you, *N.* in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." The sprinkling, pouring, or immersion in water is also essential to the sacrament.

In an interesting way, each sacrament serves as an icon through which the community shares in the divine. Through direct contact with the physical signs, the community apprehends some measure of the divine. The water used for baptism reminds the community of the cleansing grace of God given in this sacrament. The oils of confirmation and ordination anoint the confirmand and ordinand for lives of discipleship. The conjugal act serves to make the married couple one.

Another essential aspect of Catholic theology as it relates to the celebration of the sacraments is the role of the community. Catholic theology insists that the community is more than

⁵ B.E.M., Baptism, § 1, p. 2

a passive observer in the celebration of the sacraments. The community does not merely observe the baptism of children, rather each and every member of the congregation present at a baptism renews their baptismal vows and vows to support the newly baptized in Christian education and formation. The congregation, in turn, is made a community by its common celebration of the sacraments and its consequent living of the life of faith. A similar commitment is made by the congregation at the time of the celebration of the sacraments of confirmation, the eucharist, marriage, and ordination.

The long-standing dispute over infant or believer's baptism represents an interesting ecclesiological perspective on the part of those who celebrate infant baptism. The baptism of children who are too young to comprehend or desire baptism is supported on the basis that baptism is an inclusion in the Christian community and is a commitment of the parents, god-parents, and wider community to undertake the Christian education of the child. Thus the child is baptized not on the basis of its own faith but on that of the parents and community, as many in that community were themselves baptized when they were children.

The ecumenical consensus does not provide a definitive solution to the infant / believer's baptism dispute, but it does settle many other issues related to baptism. B.E.M. and other dialogues have led to a nearly universal recognition of baptism as celebrated in the various churches provided that water and the Trinitarian formula are used. It is also generally agreed that baptism constitutes inclusion in Christ's community and sets one free from sin. Most churches as a result of this agreement no longer re-baptize those who convert from other Christian communities. The only remaining issues relate to the infant / believer's dispute. However, until this dispute can be resolved, believer baptizing churches cannot recognize the baptisms of those churches who baptize infants.

II. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

In 1965, the Lutheran World Ministries,⁶ and the U.S. Roman Catholic Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs appointed scholars to a joint committee for the purposes of dialogue between the Lutheran and Roman Catholic churches in the United States. Over the years since 1965 the dialogue has discussed many important issues of dispute between the two churches.

Starting in 1978, the dialogue focused upon the issue of justification, both in an historical light, and as a focus for rapprochement. An agreed statement entitled Justification by Faith⁷ was published in 1985, making it the seventh in a series of ad-hoc statements between these two groups. After outlining the historical issue of justification, the report moves into a discussion of the contemporary understanding of the issue by either church, and the degree of compatibility that might be found between them. Having discussed the churches' historical positions with regard to justification and sanctification in chapter two, we can now move directly to a consideration of the contemporary developments in these two theological traditions.

According to the agreed statement, some of the most important growths in Roman Catholic understanding of justification are:

to look upon conversion as a conscious response of the whole person to God's gracious call in Christ; to view grace primarily as the loving self-communication of the triune God; to stress that in sacramental worship the faithful share in the communal life of Christ's mystical body; and to regard merit and satisfaction as

⁶ USA National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation

⁷ Lutheran World Ministries & Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB), Justification by Faith, Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue, v.7, H. G. Anderson, T. A. Murphy, and J. A. Burgess, eds. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985).

features of the pilgrim existence of believers as they are drawn by God to eternal life.⁸

A further development pinpointed by the agreed statement is Karl Rahner's view of grace "as God making himself personally present in the Spirit in merciful love, (and thus as "uncreated grace")."⁹

Freedom does not abolish the absolute gratuity of salvation, and the doctrine of grace intends to say nothing else but that by an act of God, by a free act of God that cannot be coerced, a person really and truly is changed interiorly from being a sinner to being justified. He is a justified person who can never judge about this justification because it is constantly threatened, and because it is a hidden reality in him. To this extent even as justified he cannot assume an autonomous position in relation to God.¹⁰

On the basis of the Rahnerian formulation of the doctrine of grace, the Lutheran and the Roman Catholic can mutually affirm that:

Inssofar as the human subject is never fully delivered from the deleterious effects of the fall, there is a sense in which one may speak of the justified as *simul iustus et peccator*.¹¹

Perhaps the most exciting recent development in Roman Catholic theology is its treatment of the communal aspects of justification. This treatment is found in a variety of new theological movements, particularly in liberation theology.

The Uruguayan liberation theologian, Juan Luis Segundo, warns that a paralyzing concern for one's personal justification could distract from the communal task of building the kingdom.¹²

⁸ Justification by Faith, § 78, p. 43

⁹ *Ibid.*, § 79, pp. 43-4. See Karl Rahner, S.J., "Questions of Controversial Theology on Justification," ch. 8 of Theological Investigations, vol. 4 (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1966), pp. 189-218.

¹⁰ Karl Rahner, S.J., Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity (New York: Seabury Press, 1978), p. 360.

¹¹ Justification by Faith § 79, pp. 44. See also Hans Küng, Justification: The Doctrine of Karl Barth and a Catholic Reflection (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1964).

"Liberation" refers to the same reality as "justification" as Leonardo Boff explains, but "now elaborated in terms of its dynamic, historical dimensions."¹³ Now, rather than the process being a dyadic relation between the sinner and God, the process becomes a triadic relation between the individual, the community, and God. The individual seeks justification through the task of liberating the community.

There is an ecclesiological and an ecumenical implication of liberation theology's understanding that justification is found in the common pursuit of justice in the community. The ecclesiological implication is that the community which toils together, "building the kingdom," is understood by liberation theologians to be the church. Hence, the ecumenical implication is that the community is made up of individuals who belong to a variety of denominational backgrounds and yet feel that they are called to be church! Working together, in the common pursuit of justice, the community begins to disregard its denominational divisions.

The recent developments in Roman Catholic theology "converge ... with the stress on corporate service in certain recent Lutheran theologies of justification,"¹⁴ as the dialogue statement Justification by Faith observes. Contemporary Lutheran theological development on the issue of justification has focused on the declaratory nature of justification. Just as the Father sends the Son, the Word made Flesh, so too does God send grace by which he declares humanity to be justified. God's proclamation of the justification of humanity is made through the gospel and the sacraments.

¹² Ibid., § 81, p. 44. See Juan Luis Segundo, "Capitalism-Socialism: A Theological Crux," in The Mystical and Political Dimension of the Christian Faith, Claude Geffré & Gustavo Gutiérrez, ed., Concilium 96 (New York: Herder & Herder, 1974), p. 122.

¹³ Ibid. See Leonardo Boff, Liberating Grace (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979), pp. 151-2.

¹⁴ Ibid.

The central point is that the proclamation of God's grace in word and sacrament is itself the saving event in that it announces the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ ... God's word accomplishes what it says in the very act of being proclaimed.¹⁵

The role of faith is renewed. In answer to the Catholic criticism of Luther, that for Luther faith is a subjective state of confidence in one's own salvation, the emphasis on the declaratory nature of grace implies that faith is the inevitable result of receiving the free gift of grace. "Justification is unconditional in the sense that the justifying word *effects* its own reception."¹⁶ Faith is both a gift of God's grace, and the necessary condition for receiving God's grace. Nonetheless, this does not reject the role of faith, faith prepares the individual for the justifying promise of the new covenant. The free gift of grace, received in faith, leads to justification. The word and sacraments too, are not excluded since it is by way of them that the proclamation of humanity's righteousness is offered.¹⁷

III. APOSTOLIC CREEDS AND PROFESSIONS OF FAITH

Professions of Faith have always played an important role in the contact between different Christian communities. The earliest divisions in the post-apostolic church related to the divinity of Christ and were to some extent solved by the development of a profession of faith at the First Nicene Council. This Creed then became the standard of orthodoxy which subsequent generations have attempted to uphold. As we saw in chapter two, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed has itself led to some division due to the Western church's development of the *filioque*. There were later professions of faith as well. For example, as we shall see in the next chapter, Berengarius was forced to recant his position relating to the eucharist and to sign a document known as the "Oath of Berengarius." During the Reformation, Lutheran reformers led by Philip Melancthon

¹⁵ Ibid., § 88, p. 47

¹⁶ Ibid., § 89, p. 47. Italics are mine.

¹⁷ Ibid., § 92, p. 48

wrote and submitted a confession of the faith of the reformers to the Diet of Augsburg. This confession became known as the Augsburg Confession or the *Confessio Augustana*.

In the contemporary era, ecumenical strategists have strongly avoided the development of a new confession of faith for fear that it will simply become cause for further division. Instead, ecumenists advise, dialogue between the churches must come to terms with the divisions that do exist. Orthodox and Roman Catholic must come to some consensus on the *filioque* that allows both Orthodox and Roman Catholic to express their faith using a creed which has a place in the apostolic and conciliar traditions of either church. Lutherans and Catholics must similarly come to terms with the Augsburg Confession so as to allow Lutherans and Catholics to jointly profess their faith without rejecting a historically and theologically significant in their traditions.

In 1898 at the first Lambeth Conference, the assembled Anglican church leaders approved what is known as the Chicago or Lambeth Quadrilateral.¹⁸ The Quadrilateral is a description of the essentials on which Anglicans would consider establishing a greater level of unity with other churches. This Quadrilateral is: a common baptism; the Apostle's Creed as a baptismal formula and the Nicene Creed as an elaboration of the faith; the eucharist; and the historic episcopacy. As an expression of the necessary conditions for unity, the Quadrilateral is remarkably efficient. Not only does it largely avoid making obligatory matters which are clearly of a purely Anglican concern, but it also expresses this in a manner which can be affirmed by most, or all, episcopally-ordered churches.

With the Quadrilateral, the Anglican Communion does not discard the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, but it does place them in their appropriate context. The Thirty-Nine Articles are an historic expression of Anglican faith, while the Apostle's and Nicene Creeds are timeless

¹⁸ The Quadrilateral was first approved by the U.S. Episcopalian General Synod in 1894, meeting in Chicago.

expressions of the universal Christian faith. A problem does however exist with the Quadrilateral, there is not yet complete agreement on the meaning and use of the Creeds. We must not forget that the disagreement over the filioque, and the varying understandings of many of the doctrines found in the Creeds have led to many of the divisions which we experience today. The World Council of Churches' Faith and Order Commission has addressed the question of the Creeds in its ongoing programme study "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today," and the study document Confessing the One Faith.¹⁹ In the following pages, I will briefly examine the two major disagreements relating to the Creed which have led to schism: the *filioque* and the dispute over the nature of Christ.

A. The *Filioque*

In chapter two, I discussed the development of the *filioque* and its role in the schism between the Eastern and Western churches. I also discussed the attempt at the Councils of Ferrara and Florence to repair the schism. In brief, the dispute focused on the Western church's inclusion of the term "and the son" following the affirmation "the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father" in the Nicene Creed.²⁰ There were, of course, other underlying factors to the dispute which contributed to the enmity that developed over the *filioque*. If the *filioque* itself and the mutual excommunications of 1054 can be discarded or satisfactorily dealt with, the opportunity will develop for an attempt to settle the underlying factors as well.

As Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I expressed in their common declaration removing the mutual excommunications of 1054:

¹⁹ Confessing the One Faith, An Ecumenical Explication of the Apostolic Faith as it is Confessed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (381), Faith & Order Paper No. 153 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1992).

²⁰ See chapter two, II:A. The *Filioque* Controversy

this gesture of justice and mutual pardon is not sufficient to end both old and more recent differences between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, those differences will be overcome through cleansing of hearts, through regret for historical wrongs, and through an efficacious determination to arrive at a common understanding and expression of the faith of the apostles and its demands.²¹

What is truly needed, as Pope and Patriarch acknowledge, is an ongoing personal and ecclesial commitment to overcome the factors that led to schism and which have developed through nine-hundred-and-forty years of separation.

Pope John Paul II has, since the first day of his pontificate, expressed a commitment to the ecumenical movement in general and to the search for unity with the Orthodox churches in particular. This commitment has been kept even through the difficult times of the break-up of the Soviet Union and the re-awakening of the Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant churches in Eastern Europe.

While the mutual excommunications of East and West have been discarded -- and largely forgotten -- the *filioque* remains as a source of contention. Many Western churches no longer use the *filioque* on the occasions when they use the Nicene Creed. In 1978, the Lambeth Conference requested that all Anglican Provinces consider omitting the *filioque* from the Nicene Creed. The Anglican Church of Canada has deleted the *filioque* from its eucharistic liturgy in the 1983 edition of the Book of Alternative Services.²² The Roman Catholic Missal has not been revised since the dialogue on the Creed began, and thus the *filioque* is still officially retained. In Canada, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) advises the substitution of the Apostle's Creed

²¹ Pope Paul VI - Patriarch Athenagoras I, "Common Declaration" (Dec. 7, 1965) in The Documents of Vatican II, Walter M. Abbott & Joseph Gallagher, eds. (Piscataway, N.J.: New Century Publishers, 1966), p. 726.

²² Anglican Church of Canada, Book of Alternative Services (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1985), p. 176. The 1962 text of the eucharistic liturgy is included as an optional text, and includes the *filioque*.

in regular Sunday worship and many parishes omit the *filioque* when the Nicene Creed is to be used in worship.

The WCC's Faith and Order Commission has affirmed the meaning behind the *filioque* clause while recommending its exclusion. Arising from the programme study, "Towards a Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today," the Faith and Order Commission issued a study document entitled Confessing the One Faith in 1992. With respect to the procession of the Holy Spirit, the document says:

The Spirit in the breathing forth and as breathed forth is always in relation to the Son. Therefore, the communion and unity of the Spirit with Christ in the economy of salvation is indissoluble.²³

However, the document steps away from suggesting that the use of the *filioque* should continue.

Rather, the document confirms that:

both [Eastern and Western Christians] agree today that the intimate relationship between the Son and Spirit is to be affirmed without giving the impression that the Spirit is subordinated to the Son.²⁴

Many Western churches have come to the same perspective as the Faith and Order Commission and therefore have begun to omit the *filioque* as mentioned above. It remains to be seen whether a time will come when the *filioque* will be unknown except as an historical footnote in theology textbooks.

In 1992, the Council of Christian Churches in France asked a commission of twenty-four Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox theologians to develop a new French translation of the Creed from the original Greek. Completed in 1994, this work has not been approved by the churches as it is only seen as a working document. However, the text is extremely interesting in its treatment of the *filioque*. The text referring to the Holy Spirit is rendered as such:

²³ Confessing the One Faith, § 209, p. 78.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, § 210, p. 78.

*Je crois en l'Esprit saint
qui est Seigneur et qui donne la vie;
du Père il tient son origine ...²⁵*

which translates as:

I believe in the Holy Spirit
the Lord, the giver of life
of the Father, He holds his origin ...²⁶

The traditional French text of the Nicene Creed used the form: "*qui procède du Père et du Fils ...*" which is the same as the English: "who proceeds from the Father and the Son." In this new French translation, the verb "*procéder*" -- to proceed, to come from -- has been replaced with the verb "*tenir*" -- to hold, or to keep. The sense of the new translation implies the origin of the Holy Spirit in the Father. The traditional translation had included that implication but also carried an implication about the path of that origin. When the term "proceeds" is used with the *filioque*, the Western church has suggested that it means that the origin is the Father but through the Son. Rather than simply removing the translated *filioque* and giving rise to speculation that the procession through the Son is denied, a wholly new verb is used to translate the Creedal affirmation that the Holy Spirit originates in God the Father. The original text of the Creed from which the translation is derived remains the text of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan from 381. As it remains to be seen whether the time will come when all Western churches will have removed the *filioque*, so to it remains to be seen whether any churches will adopt this new translation.

B. The Nature of Christ

The Monophysite Schism pre-dates the Eastern Schism by many centuries and so has affected all churches arising from subsequent schisms. The Oriental Orthodox churches derive

²⁵ Conseil d'Eglises chrétiennes en France, in Foyers Mixtes 106 (October/December, 1994), p. 10.

²⁶ This translation is my own.

from the Patriarchates of Alexandria and Antioch. These venerable churches are found today as the Coptic, Ethiopian, Armenian, Malankara (Indian), and Syrian churches throughout the Middle East, India and the Far East. At the Council of Chalcedon in 451 C.E., the theological definition that Christ is of two natures -- human and divine -- was finally established. Throughout the oriental church -- Coptic and Syrian -- the new definition was rejected. The non-Chalcedonian churches held that Jesus Christ is two persons -- the human and the divine -- united in the one nature of God. The rejection of Chalcedon resulted in a schism between the Alexandrian and Antiochan churches on the one hand and the churches of Rome, Constantinople and Jerusalem on the other.

This schism continues in part to the present day. The Roman Catholic Church has established over the centuries a number of churches in the liturgical rites and geographic territory proper to the Eastern churches. Such churches are called uniate, but have not contributed as greatly to the union of East and West as was originally hoped. I will discuss this further below. Of more significance, both the Eastern Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches have established theological dialogues which have led to greater understanding of the dispute at the Council of Chalcedon. The Roman Catholic - Coptic Orthodox dialogue led in 1973 to the Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and Pope Shenouda III, Patriarch of Alexandria, that the Roman Catholic and Coptic Orthodox churches confess a common faith in the indivisible union of humanity and divinity in Jesus Christ.²⁷

Essentially, scholars have agreed that the Oriental Orthodox used the term "person" to refer to the reality which Chalcedon expressed with the term "nature", and that correspondingly, the term "nature" had been used to refer to that which Chalcedon expressed with the term "person."

²⁷ Pope Paul VI - Pope Shenouda III "Common Declaration" (May 10, 1973), in Doing the Truth in Charity, Ecumenical Documents series, v. 1, Thomas F. Stransky, C.S.P. & John B. Sheerin, C.S.P., eds. (New York: Paulist Press, 1982), pp. 246-8.

Thus, where the Oriental Orthodox have said that after the union of humanity and divinity in Christ there is only one nature, they have expressed a faith which corresponds to the Chalcedonian formula which says that there is one person following the union.

The Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox are close to a similar agreement in their own dialogues. Furthermore, these two foci of Orthodoxy have acknowledged that in the centuries of division, each has maintained the faith of the apostles and that each expresses and teaches an orthodox faith.

We recognize in each other the one Orthodox faith of the church. Fifteen centuries of alienation have not led us astray from the faith of our fathers... On the essence of the the Christological dogma we found ourselves in full agreement. Through the different terminologies used by each side, we saw the same truth expressed.²⁸

With this recognition, the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox have been able to establish a joint commission responsible for the theological dialogue eventually leading to full communion.²⁹

In September of 1994, representatives of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches issued an agreed statement on Christology. In this statement, the two traditions took as a starting point the Formula of Reunion of 433.

It emphasizes the oneness of Christ, while at the same time confessing him as being both "perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity." True, this supposes that in Christ there are "two natures"; yet the main point is that a union of the "two natures" has taken place so that we confess one Christ, one Son, one Lord.³⁰

In November of 1994, a similar agreement was reached between the Assyrian Church of the East and the Roman Catholic Church. The Assyrian Church is not a result of the Monophysite Schism

²⁸ K. M. George, "Oriental Orthodox - Orthodox Dialogue," Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement, Nicholas Lossky, et al., eds. (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), p. 758.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 759

³⁰ Karel Blei, "A Step Forward: Reformed/Oriental Orthodox Dialogue," WARC Update 4 (1994), p. 4.

begun at Chalcedon in 451, instead, it has followed the Christological doctrine of Nestorius. As we discussed in chapter two, Nestorius was deposed by the Council of Ephesus in 431, and this was confirmed at the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

Nestorius' followers rejected the decisions of Ephesus and Chalcedon and eventually became isolated in what is now Iraq. On November 11, 1994, Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha of the Assyrian Church of the East issued a common declaration of faith in which they said "the humanity to which the Blessed Virgin Mary gave birth always was that of the Son of God himself." Furthermore, Christ's divinity has been "indissolubly united" with his human nature since the moment of conception. Therefore, Pope and Patriarch express the opinion that:

whatever our Christological divergences have been, we experience ourselves united today in the confession of the same faith in the Son of God who became man so that we might become children of God by his grace.³¹

IV. UNIATISM

Uniatism is the term used to refer to the process whereby the Roman Catholic Church has established a hierarchy responsible to Rome in the various Eastern and Oriental Rites. The most notable example of uniatism is the Ukrainian Catholic Church. This church was established when a majority of the Orthodox hierarchy in western Ukraine declared their allegiance to Rome in 1595 with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. This church continued to use the Byzantine Rite in Old Church Slavonic until their suppression by Stalin. Outside of the Ukraine, Ukrainian hierarchy have been established in most Western countries, including Canada, the United States, Australia, and France. In 1929, following the suppression of the indigenous Ukrainian Catholic Church by Stalin, the diaspora church was restricted by Rome from ordaining non-celibate clergy.³² This restriction still holds, though it is increasingly being challenged. In the Ukraine, the church was forcibly

³¹ Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, in Origins 24 (1994), p. 402.

³² Prairie Messenger (Dec. 19, 1994), p. 2.

amalgamated into the Russian Orthodox Church along with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, although it continued to maintain an exiled hierarchy.

With the advent of *glasnost* in the former Soviet Union, and the subsequent independence of the Ukraine and other former Soviet republics, the indigenous Ukrainian Catholic Church was once more able to publicly serve its members. The Russian Orthodox Church, inevitably, saw this as an incursion by Rome into its own territory. Harsh feelings between Rome and Moscow were exacerbated by the return of confiscated church buildings to the Ukrainian Catholic Church to the exclusion of the Orthodox. While subsequent dialogue has been able to settle much of the dispute, a sense of distrust still pervades much of the relations between Catholic and Orthodox in the Ukraine.

Similar problems have been encountered elsewhere in the former Soviet Union, and in many other areas where uniate churches had earlier been established. Another source of tension has been the establishment of Latin-Rite Roman Catholic parishes and dioceses in Moscow and parts of Siberia. While these parishes and dioceses were provided to serve existing Latin-Rite Roman Catholics who had been displaced during the Soviet era, many Orthodox did not distinguish between these pastoral provisions and the new evangelism of many Western Evangelicals in traditionally Orthodox populations.

The tensions that developed with the renewed religious freedom throughout Eastern Europe resulted in a suspension of the Orthodox - Roman Catholic dialogue at the request of the Orthodox churches. The Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue Between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church meeting at Balamand, Lebanon in June of 1993 examined the problems outlined above. In an agreed statement issued following this meeting, the Joint International Commission condemned further proselytism in Eastern Europe while acknowledging the freedom of individuals to choose their own spiritual path. As well, the Commission described uniatism as a form of proselytism. While acknowledging the historic

character of the existing uniate churches, the Commission expressly rejected the development of any future uniate churches.³³

In this chapter, I have examined the issues arising from the dialogues which relate to a recognition of a common baptism. The nature of baptism has itself been a subject of dialogue in the past, as has justification by faith, the apostolic creeds, and uniatism. On the face of it, one would not necessarily see uniatism as related to baptism any more than it is related to the eucharist, or to ministry -- the subjects of the two remaining chapters of this thesis. However, the heart of the debate over uniatism is based on a common recognition of baptism and of the faith that corresponds with it. Implicit in the Orthodox perspective on uniatism is a recognition that if Orthodox and Catholic baptismal faith are equally apostolic, then the existence of two eucharistically exclusive churches is scandalous, particularly in the same region. This perspective is the basis for all ecumenical activity, and the Joint International Commission's response to uniatism is the only practical response to the status quo. Of course, the time may some day come when the uniate churches return to their Orthodox origins.

³³ Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue Between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, Origins 23 (1993), pp. 166-9.

CHAPTER 5

THE EUCHARIST IN DIALOGUE

Reformation and Counter-Reformation polemics present a sharp distinction in the Protestant and Roman Catholic stereotypical understandings of the eucharist. As with many other Reformation disputes, the dispute over the eucharist has involved as much misunderstanding and ill-will as actual difference of belief. The debate has involved such curious concepts as "transubstantiation," "con-substantiation," and more recently "transignification." The dispute has seen many stages as well. In the period following the Reformation, Catholics were accused of not receiving the eucharist often enough. The sacrament was -- in effect -- reserved for the clergy. And yet, in the period following Pope Pius X's exhortation for Catholics to receive the sacrament more frequently, Catholics have been accused of receiving the sacrament too frequently, and of making the act of receiving the sacrament more important than the actual faith of the individual. With the advent of the ecumenical movement and of liturgical reform in many mainline churches, many Protestant churches have begun to emphasize the eucharist in their congregational life. In a recent statement, the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, has called for a more frequent celebration of the eucharist in the Church of England, primarily so as to return the eucharist to its central role in the life of those Anglicans who are only able to attend church on weekdays.¹

Ad hoc liturgies -- such as the so-called "Lima Liturgy" to be discussed presently -- have been developed in the World Council of Churches so as to respond to the perceived need of the member churches to share in the eucharist during ecumenical gatherings. At the same time, with the Second Vatican Council and other movements for reform, the Roman Catholic Church has begun to emphasize the proclamation of scripture without diminishing the central position of the eucharist in the life of the church. In this chapter, I will explore the issues involved in the

¹ Ruth Gledhill, The Times (May 26, 1994), p. 1.

ecumenical dialogues on the eucharist. Once again, the issues that I have chosen to explore in this chapter are related to the development of an ecumenical ecclesiology.

I. THE REAL PRESENCE: ECUMENICAL ROADBLOCK?

In the popular understanding, the Reformation polemic defined two sharply distinguished positions related to the eucharist. The first, the traditional Catholic and Orthodox position, holds that the true Body and Blood of Christ are present in the consecrated elements of bread and wine. This position is erroneously referred to as "transubstantiation". The opposing position, holds that the consecrated elements only symbolically represent the Body and Blood of Christ. The term transubstantiation, as used at the Council of Trent, properly refers to the process of change whereby the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ are joined to the elements of the bread and wine. Roman Catholic doctrine teaches two things related to the presence of Christ in the eucharist. The first is that the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ are truly present. This is the doctrine of the real presence. The second doctrine is that the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ are present in their "substance", and joined to the "accidents" of the bread and wine. The distinction between the two doctrines has perhaps not always been clear in Roman Catholic apologetical writings. The doctrine of transubstantiation was officially proclaimed at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215:

... Jesus Christ, whose body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the species of bread and wine; the bread (changed) into His body by the divine power of transubstantiation, and the wine into the blood, so that to accomplish the mystery of unity we ourselves receive His (nature) what He Himself received from ours.²

The doctrine of transubstantiation was confirmed by the Council of Trent:

² Denzinger, § 430, p. 169

by the consecration of the bread and wine a conversion takes place of the whole substance of bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His blood.³

As Teresa Whalen has noted, the term "accidents" -- the scholastic corollary of "substance" -- did not appear in the official decree. Instead the term "species" is used. As a result, Whalen argues:

any suggestions of systematic philosophy were denied... [and thus] any implications that Aristotelian philosophy must necessarily be used to explain the change of substance of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ were thereby avoided.⁴

Whalen has identified a very narrow basis for re-interpreting Trent in an ecumenical spirit. Nevertheless, it is not immediately clear that such an interpretation would be acceptable without the ecumenical spirit that has largely dispelled the earlier polemics. It is, however, an ecumenical "window of opportunity." The doctrine of the real presence does not, necessarily, rest upon the doctrine of transubstantiation. Therefore, ecumenical dialogue can affirm the real presence of Christ's Body and Blood without discussing how the change takes place. If the ontological approach to the eucharist is disputed by some, then perhaps there is another means of understanding the eucharist which affirms the presence of Christ and which refrains from affirming or denying the ontological understanding. Whalen points the way to this other approach, which I will discuss in the next section. There are however, some ecclesiological concerns that must be addressed at this point.

Although it was not proclaimed until 1215, the doctrine of transubstantiation has a history in the theological tradition of Western Christianity dating back to the 11th Century dispute with Berengarius of Tours. The decrees from Lateran IV are directed against certain heretical positions held by the Albigensians, Joachim, the Waldensians, and others. It is somewhat problematic that

³ Denzinger, § 877

⁴ Teresa Whalen, The Authentic Doctrine of the Eucharist (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1993), p. 25.

transubstantiation was decreed by a Council which is only recognized as "ecumenical" by the Roman Catholic Church. Lateran IV is recognized by the Orthodox churches as a synod of the Western church and thus as non-binding upon the East, and is not recognized as binding by the Reformation churches. This in itself presents an interesting ecclesiological problem, the status of the Ecumenical Councils following the seventh Ecumenical Council, the Second Council of Nicaea in 787. Can an ecclesiological model be found which both allows for the Roman Catholic Church to view the sixteen councils since Nicaea II as binding with the same status as the first seven councils, and also allow the Orthodox and Reformation churches to view these councils as non-binding? While many non-Roman Catholics may be willing to view the Second Vatican Council as "significant", "inspiring", and "insightful", can there be any hope that it will ever be received as binding by non-Roman Catholics? This is a question which cannot be answered here but which underlies the dialogue on every doctrinal issue that is not addressed in the first seven Ecumenical Councils, including the real presence of Christ in the eucharist.

The ecumenical dialogues have not settled the question of the nature of the real presence of Christ in the eucharist. The Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry document produced by the WCC's Faith & Order Commission leaves the matter open.

The decision remains for the churches whether this difference can be accommodated within the convergence formulated in the text itself.⁵

Nevertheless, while leaving the subject of transubstantiation open to debate, the B.E.M. document affirms unequivocally the fact of the real presence of Christ in the eucharist.

⁵ B.E.M., Eucharist, Commentary (13), p. 12

The eucharistic meal is the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, the sacrament of his real presence ... Jesus said over the bread and wine of the Eucharist: "This is my body ... this is my blood ..." What Christ declared is true, and this truth is fulfilled every time the Eucharist is celebrated. The Church confesses Christ's real, living and active presence in the Eucharist.⁶

The Roman Catholic Church has responded to the B.E.M. document quite positively, suggesting that:

If all the churches and ecclesial communities are able to accept at least the theological understanding and description of the eucharist as described in B.E.M. and implement it as part of their normal life, we believe that this would be an important development.⁷

However with regard to the debate over the mode of Christ's presence in the eucharist, the Roman Catholic response was somewhat less enthusiastic.

the conversion of the elements is a matter of faith and is only open to possible new theological explanations as to the 'how' of the intrinsic change. The content of the word 'transubstantiation' ought to be expressed without ambiguity ... Thus it would seem that the differences as explained here cannot be accommodated within the convergence formulated in the text itself.⁸

The Roman Catholic position is supported by the Orthodox churches. Thus the Russian Orthodox Church responds:

According to St. John of Damascus, 'the body is truly united with the Godhead; themselves the bread and wine are transubstantiated into the body and blood of God.'⁹

On the other side of the issue, the Presbyterian Church of Wales responds that the B.E.M. text:

⁶ B.E.M., Eucharist, § 13, p. 12.

⁷ Roman Catholic Church, Churches Respond to B.E.M., Max Thurian, ed., v. 6 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1986-88), p. 38.

⁸ Ibid., p. 22.

⁹ Russian Orthodox Church, Churches Respond to B.E.M., v. 2, p. 8.

does not give sufficient weight to the position that excludes certain modes of presence in the eucharist ... We would firmly resist any suggestion of a change in the essential elements of bread and wine.¹⁰

The Church of North India -- striking a compromise -- assert that they:

appreciate ... this statement for its careful avoidance of such controversial terms as 'transubstantiation,' 'transignification,' etc., and focuses attention on the central significance and experiential aspect of the eucharist in terms of the 'real presence' of Christ in this sacrament.¹¹

It is clear from the responses to the eucharist section of B.E.M. that while some real convergence may be noted in regards to the meaning of the eucharist, the disagreement over the mode of the real presence will continue to hinder closer convergence at this time.

The ARCIC I Final Report directly tackles the dispute over the term transubstantiation in the following way:

The term should be seen as affirming the *fact* of Christ's presence and of the mysterious and radical change which takes place. In contemporary Roman Catholic theology it is not understood as explaining *how* the change takes place.¹²

In an elucidation responding to concerns raised by the original statement on the eucharist, ARCIC continues:

Becoming does not ... imply material change. ... What is here affirmed is a sacramental presence in which God uses realities of this world to convey the realities of the new creation: bread for this life becomes the bread of eternal life. Before the eucharistic prayer, to the question: 'What is that?,' the believer answers: 'It is bread.' After the eucharistic prayer, to the same question he answers: 'It is truly the body of Christ, the Bread of Life.'¹³

¹⁰ Presbyterian Church of Wales, Churches Respond to B.E.M., v. 2, pp. 169, 171.

¹¹ Church of North India, Churches Respond to B.E.M., v. 2, p. 72.

¹² ARCIC I, The Final Report, footnote no. 2, p. 14.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Elucidation § 6, p. 21.

II. THE EUCHARISTIC ENCOUNTER WITH CHRIST

In a very real sense, one could say that the eucharist is the analogue of the one and only sacrifice of Calvary. Roman Catholic doctrine affirms the uniqueness of the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross but sees this same sacrifice as sacramentally present in the eucharist celebrated in the church. Thus, the eucharistic liturgy is sometimes referred to as the sacrifice of the Mass. As the B.E.M. document witnesses, Roman Catholics are not alone in affirming this twofold reality of the uniqueness and eucharistic presence of the sacrifice of Christ:

Christ himself with all he has accomplished for us and for all creation (in his incarnation, servanthood, ministry, teaching, suffering, sacrifice, resurrection, ascension, and sending of the Spirit) is present in this *anamnesis*, granting us communion with himself.¹⁴

To concentrate on the presence of Christ in the eucharistic elements is not sufficient to capture the whole breadth of the wonder that the sacrament presents us with. Through the sacrament of the eucharist, the Christian enters into the presence of Christ and ingests that very presence, not only physically but spiritually. The grace of Christ's self-offering on the Cross for our salvation is offered sacramentally to each of us when we receive the sacrament.

In the eucharist the human person encounters in faith the person of Christ in his sacramental body and blood. This is the sense in which the community, the body of Christ, by partaking of the sacramental body of the risen Lord, grows into the unity God intends for his Church.¹⁵

In the Latin-Rite of the Roman Catholic Church, the consecrated bread is reserved in the tabernacle of distribution to those who are unable to participate in the Mass, or who for some reason have a deep need to receive the sacrament at some other time. Individuals in hospital and elderly care homes who are unable to travel to the church for Mass are regularly visited by

¹⁴ B.E.M., Eucharist, § 6, p. 11

¹⁵ ARCIC I, The Final Report, Elucidation § 6, p. 22.

eucharistic ministers who bring the consecrated bread for distribution in a short prayer service.

ARCIC I suggests in their elucidations on their statement on the eucharist that:

the whole eucharistic action is a continuous movement in which Christ offers himself in his sacramental body and blood to his people and in which they receive him in faith and thanksgiving.¹⁶

In addition to reserving the eucharist for distribution outside of Mass, the eucharist is also reserved for the purpose of veneration. Particular devotions and liturgies have developed for the purpose of eucharistic adoration. However, as ARCIC I observes, a tendency to stress the eucharistic adoration has at times been exaggerated.

In some places this tendency became so pronounced that the original purpose of reservation was in danger of becoming totally obscured. If veneration is wholly dissociated from the eucharistic celebration of the community it contradicts the true doctrine of the eucharist.¹⁷

Many of the churches with whom the Roman Catholic Church is in dialogue have serious reluctance about the practice of reserving the eucharist. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches have corresponding concerns about the practices of many of the churches who do not reserve the eucharist. While many Protestants are concerned that Roman Catholics have more regard for the presence of Christ in the consecrated elements than they do for the presence of Christ in the proclaimed Word, Roman Catholics are concerned about the degree of reverence which many Protestants have for the elements following the conclusion of a eucharistic service. However the dialogues have addressed these issues. ARCIC I observes that:

... communion administered from the reserved sacrament to those unable to attend the eucharistic celebration is rightly understood as an extension of that celebration.¹⁸

¹⁶ Ibid., Elucidation § 8, p. 23.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

ARCIC I insists that eucharistic adoration be regarded as an extension of the eucharistic celebration as well, and offers as a source for this position the 1967 Instruction *Eucharisticum Myterium* of the Vatican's Sacred Congregation of Rites.¹⁹ Thus they say:

Any dissociation of such devotion from this primary purpose, which is communion in Christ of all his members, is a distortion in eucharistic practice.²⁰

III. THE EUCHARIST MAKES THE CHURCH

According to Roman Catholic theology, the church is the community gathered around the eucharistic table. While Roman Catholics may elaborate on this description as Vatican II did by describing the episcopacy as an essential character of the eucharistic community, the central characteristic of the church is always the eucharist. Each of the seven sacraments -- according to the Roman Catholic count -- are appropriately understood as sacraments of initiation. Reconciliation, Sacrament of the Sick, Marriage, and Ordination are sacraments which either renew the baptismal promise, or initiate a new stage of life. Baptism, confirmation, and the eucharist are, however, appropriately called sacraments of initiation because through these sacraments the individual Christian enters into the fullness of his or her Christian ministry. I will discuss the nature of Christian ministry in chapter six, but for the moment, it suffices to say that through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and the eucharist the individual enters into the fullness of the Christian vocation which Christ ordained for us.

Through the sacrament of baptism, the Christian enters into the Christian community, and in a certain sense already belongs to the community of saints. Through the sacrament of confirmation the baptismal vows are renewed and the promise sealed. The celebration of baptism as an infant does not allow the individual to personally choose to accept those baptismal vows at

¹⁹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Eucharisticum Myterium* (Instruction on the Eucharistic Mystery, 1967), § 49, in *Acta Apostolic Sedis* 59 (1967).

²⁰ ARCIC I, The Final Report, Elucidation § 8, p. 24.

that time. At an older age, the teen-ager or adult may choose to belong to the Christian community through a personal commitment. Finally, through the sacrament of the eucharist, the Christian shares in Christ's promise of salvation. Christ died on the Cross for us, and in the days prior to his Passion, he gave us the eucharist as a sign of his love for us. When we share in the sacramental sign of Christ's Passion, the promise of salvation is renewed and God's grace gives us the strength with which to respond to the demands our faith places upon us.

Our calling to a Christian life, initiated in the sacrament of baptism, is fulfilled in the Sacraments of confirmation and the eucharist. Our common call to Christian discipleship which is initiated in baptism is given new focus by the communal celebration of the eucharist. While baptism brings us into the spiritual "community of the saints" -- past, present and future -- the eucharist brings us into the incarnated community of Christ's disciples. Through the eucharist we enter into and become in a true sense, the church. When we as individuals gather around the altar to celebrate Christ's death and resurrection, we truly become Christ's body. As the ARCIC I Final Report explains:

The ultimate change intended by God is the transformation of human beings into the likeness of Christ. The bread and wine become the sacramental body and blood of Christ in order that the Christian community may become more truly what it already is, the body of Christ.²¹

A. *The Lima Liturgy*

Through the many bilateral dialogues and the deliberations of the Faith and Order Commissions of the WCC and various regional and national councils of churches, the eucharistic consensus outlined above has developed. As a result of this developing consensus and the mutual recognition of baptism and -- in many cases -- of ministry, many ecumenical participants have felt that the time has come to develop some form of eucharistic liturgy that expresses the substantial

²¹ *Ibid.*, Elucidation § 6, p. 22.

agreement achieved thus far. In 1982, the Faith and Order Commission meeting in Lima, Peru approved the B.E.M. document, which has subsequently been dubbed the "Lima document." Arising from that agreed statement, a eucharistic liturgy was developed and celebrated publicly at the close of the meeting in Lima.²²

As an intellectual exercise, the "Lima liturgy" is extremely interesting. Perhaps the most surprising aspect of the liturgy is its close similarity to the eucharistic liturgies of the Roman Missal, the Anglican Book of Alternative Services, and the so-called "liturgical service" of the Lutheran Book of Worship. The modern liturgical renewal has clearly influenced each of these churches and their eucharistic liturgies. The Lima liturgy is not a liturgy which borrows from each of these traditions, instead it is a wholly new liturgy which draws its prayers and structure from ancient sources similar to those of the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran liturgies. Rather than being a transitional liturgy, sitting somewhere between these other traditions, the Lima liturgy provides a fourth alternative which bears great similarity to each of the three traditions.

Three items must be noted, however. Firstly, the Lima liturgy is a Western liturgy. By this I mean that it has the structure of a Western liturgy and only bears a passing resemblance to a Byzantine liturgy in its use of certain Patristic sources. This is not surprising, having been written for an ecumenical movement which has been dominated by Western voices and concerns.

Secondly, while it does not present itself as such, the Lima liturgy provides an excellent opportunity for non-liturgical churches to re-acquaint themselves with liturgical tradition without adopting the liturgy of another church. There are no reports of churches adopting this liturgy to the exclusion of other worship practices, although it is used quite frequently at ecumenical

²² The "Lima Liturgy" can be found in Baptism and Eucharist: Ecumenical Convergence in Celebration, Max Thurian & Geoffrey Wainwright, eds. (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1983), pp. 241-55.

gatherings, and I am aware of some United Church of Canada congregations which have used this liturgy extensively.

Thirdly, and most importantly for the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, is the fact that the Lima liturgy is more than an intellectual exercise. This liturgy is celebrated frequently in the context of ecumenical gatherings. For the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches the celebration of the eucharist by members of more than one church constitutes a problem. That the Lima liturgy is not even the liturgy of a particular church makes it all the more a problem. Roman Catholics and Orthodox have thus far ignored the WCC's promotion of the Lima liturgy. While many individuals from these two churches have participated in or observed the Lima liturgy, the great majority have simply dismissed the liturgy as a non-event. A concern, however, lingers as to whether the churches which choose to participate in the Lima liturgy truly understand the nature of the eucharist in the way in which the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches do. The Lima liturgy, thus, serves to undermine the emerging consensus on the eucharist. As a measure of the extent to which our eucharistic dialogue has progressed, the Lima liturgy is a reminder of how much further dialogue is necessary.

B. Inter-Communion

The mutual reception of the eucharist by Christians of more than one church has become a substantial problem. There are a variety of terms regularly used to refer to the reception of the eucharist in a church other than one's own. In chapter two, the WCC's Faith and Order Commission's definition of "full communion" was quoted. This term is used to refer to the relationship between two churches who allow their members to receive the eucharist in either church, and who allow their ministers to officiate sacramentally in either church.²³ The term "inter-communion" is also used to refer to this situation. "Eucharistic hospitality" is the term used

²³ See footnote number 4

to refer to the practice of one church allowing members of another church to receive the eucharist. This term does not necessarily imply that the other church reciprocates. Each of these three terms describes a part of the dynamic nature of ecumenical agreement on the eucharist.

As churches recognize their common agreement on the nature of the eucharist, as in the B.E.M. statement, some churches feel that it is appropriate to extend eucharistic hospitality to other churches who share the same theological understanding of the eucharist. As a result the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada are currently in a trial stage of inter-communion, and expect to formally initiate full communion in the near future. A similar agreement is in place in the United States between the Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In Europe, the Church of England and the Scandinavian Lutheran churches have established the Porvoo Agreement which establishes full communion between their churches. The Churches of Estonia and Norway have approved the agreement, and the remaining churches are expected to approve it in 1995.

The Roman Catholic Church has been extremely reluctant to consider inter-communion for the reasons outlined above. The Vatican believes that the common celebration and reception of the eucharist is not to be used as a means to achieve unity, but rather is an expression of unity that has already been achieved. Orthodox churches are in agreement with this perspective. As a result, Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, though in extremely close agreement on most substantial issues, do not receive the eucharist in each others churches. The Vatican has approved an exception in cases where "it is physically or morally impossible to approach" a minister of their own communion.²⁴ While this has been approved by the Vatican, it has not been approved by the

²⁴ DAPNE, § 123. See also the Code of Canon Law (CIC), can. 844, 2 and the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches (CCEO), can. 671, 2.

Orthodox churches. Nevertheless, Eastern Christians may receive the eucharist and the sacraments of reconciliation and the anointing of the sick when this condition has been met.

The 1993 Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism (DAPNE) does approve of limited eucharistic sharing with other Christian churches as well. As in the 1967 Ecumenical Directory, the revised directory sets forth four conditions which must be met in order for a baptized Christian of another church or ecclesial communion to receive the eucharist, and the sacraments of reconciliation and anointing of the sick. These conditions are as follows: firstly, the person must be unable to have recourse to a minister of his or her own church; secondly, must ask for the sacrament of his or her own initiative; thirdly, must manifest a Catholic faith in this sacrament; and fourthly, must be properly disposed.²⁵ The fourth and final condition applies to all who receive the eucharist, Roman Catholic or otherwise. The third condition is the condition required of children prior to first communion.

The third condition does not require that the prospective communicant express an understanding of the eucharist with the term "transubstantiation." Children at ages as young as seven years old receive the eucharist without ever hearing the term "transubstantiation." Catechists and pastors are required to prepare the children so that they can express in simple terms the nature of the eucharist: that the bread and wine have become the body and blood of the Lord, Jesus Christ. As Theresa Whalen has pointed out above, this is the essence of Catholic faith as it applies to the eucharist. Certainly, no greater condition should be set for an adult of another church than is set for a child of Roman Catholic parents.

The first and second conditions are much more difficult to meet however. In some situations, such as frontier regions of northern Canada, many Christians do not have recourse to a minister of their own church, and thus this condition is quite easily met. However, in metropolitan

²⁵ DAPNE, § 131. See also CIC, can. 844, 4 & CCEO, can. 671, 4.

areas, it is usually considered unlikely that someone not have access to a minister of their own church. There are cases in which this condition can be met which need consideration. One of those cases is that of inter-church families.

C. Inter-Church Families

Inter-church families are those in which the parents belong to two different churches and continue to participate in the life of their churches following their marriage. Many of these families attend church services at both churches each week, or alternate between the two churches. Other families do not worship together so as to allow each to worship in their own church. In many cases, in the interests of maintaining family unity, some mixed marriages result in the newly married couple attending a third church, or not attending church at all. This final result is not considered acceptable by any of the churches, and so efforts are being made at the pastoral level to accommodate these situations.

Statistics collected in 1986 by the Roman Catholic Church indicate that sixty percent of marriages in Roman Catholic parishes in English Canada involve one non-Roman Catholic individual.²⁶ There are, of course, many marriages in which one party is Roman Catholic that do not occur in Roman Catholic parishes. Many occur in other Christian churches or are purely civil ceremonies, and a few occur in other religious traditions altogether. Of those marriages that do occur in Roman Catholic parishes, many involve a partner who is not Christian -- either coming from another religion or secular -- but a significant number involve a person from another Christian church. It is in these cases where the Vatican's first condition can be met if pastoral concern is allowed to take priority over canonical veracity.

²⁶ Cristine Bye, "Ecumenism, family-style," United Church Observer (November 1994), pp. 44-46.

It has been argued that the family constitutes the "domestic church." Though the locus of the church is -- according to Vatican II -- the diocesan church, the Christian family shares in that to some extent, particularly in the manner in which the family incarnates the unity that is desired of the church. If this can be accepted -- it is not currently accepted widely enough -- then the argument can be made that a "genuine spiritual advantage" exists and that it is morally imperative that the married couple and their children regularly receive the eucharist together.

DAPNE -- the revised ecumenical directory -- suggests that where a "genuine spiritual advantage" exists, Roman Catholics and Eastern Christians might share the eucharist.²⁷ In the case of inter-church families, there is a pressing need and "genuine spiritual advantage" for access to the sacrament of the eucharist. Associations of inter-church families have been formed around the world to encourage the churches to ensure that pastoral provision is made for inter-church families.

These inter-church family associations have also become involved in marriage preparation and limited forms of marital counseling. In these cases, these associations are moving into the realm of ecumenical ministry. In chapter six, I will discuss ministry from an ecumenical perspective.

²⁷ DAPNE, § 123

CHAPTER 6

MINISTRY IN ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE

The ministry of Christ is the norm of all doctrine and all practice of the Christian ministry -- a ministry which in all its variety of institutional forms, demands a constantly renewed fidelity to Christ's example. "Yet here I am among you as one who serves," says Jesus (Luke 22: 27); "I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you" (John 13: 15); and again: "If a man serves me, he must follow me; wherever I am my servant will be there too" (John 12: 26).¹

As the Groupe des Dombes has pointed out, Jesus is the norm of Christian ministry. In other words, all ministry is modeled upon the ministry of Christ, is directed towards Christ, is commissioned by Christ, and is in Christ. Other than the historical Jesus, the apostles are the earliest models of Christian ministry. According to the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC I):

It is difficult to deduce ... a precise portrait of an apostle, but two primary features of the original apostolate are clearly discernible: a special relationship with the historical Christ, and a commission from him to the Church and the world (Matt. 28:19; Mark 3:14).²

The manner in which this commission from Christ is given and lived is the ecumenical question. While numerous traditions have developed with respect to the practice of Christian ministry, the ecumenical challenge is to identify the essentials of the apostolic ministry and encourage each church to reassess its own traditions in light of the apostolic ministry. In this chapter, I will explore the ecumenical dialogues and the ecumenical issues relating to ministry. A number of ecumenical dialogues have identified the essentials of ministry. By examining the ecumenical

¹ Groupe des Dombes, "Towards a Reconciliation of Ministries: Points of Agreement between Roman Catholics and Protestants," § 6, p. 94, Pamela Gaughan, trans., in Modern Ecumenical Documents on the Ministry (London: S.P.C.K., 1975).

² ARCIC I, The Final Report (London: SPCK & Catholic Truth Society, 1982), p. 31.

issues in the context of these essential elements of ministry, I hope to identify a considerable level of consensus.

I. ORDAINED MINISTRY

Not only do [Christian Ministers] share through baptism in the priesthood of the people of God, but they are -- particularly in presiding at the Eucharist -- representative of the whole Church in the fulfilment of its priestly vocation of self-offering to God as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1). Nevertheless their ministry is not an extension of the common Christian priesthood but belongs to another realm of the gifts of the Spirit. It exists to help the Church to be a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, to declare the wonderful deeds of him who called (them) out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Pet. 2:9).³

There are very few churches today in which certain individuals are not distinguished with particular responsibility for their community. Even the most elementary forms of contemporary Christian community such as base communities and house churches have developed -- deliberately or organically -- a distinct leadership role. The apostolic churches of the first Century were no different.

The early churches may well have had considerable diversity in the structure of pastoral ministry, though it is clear that some churches were headed by ministers who were called *episcopoi* and *presbyteroi*.⁴

The apostles themselves clearly exercised a leadership, teaching, and governance role in the churches which they established, and their successors enjoyed a similar role.

Just as the formation of the canon of the New Testament was a process incomplete until the second half of the second century, so also the full emergence of the threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter, and deacon required a longer period than the apostolic age. Thereafter this threefold structure became universal in the Church.⁵

³ ARCIC I, p. 36

⁴ ARCIC I, p. 32

⁵ Ibid.

In the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches this apostolic role has been preserved through a continuous succession of episcopal ordinations known as the apostolic succession.⁶ The tradition of these churches is that these individuals, known as bishops, are the true successors of the apostles and thus are commissioned by Christ to lead, teach, and govern his church.

An essential element in the ordained ministry is its responsibility for "oversight" (*episcopo*). This responsibility involves fidelity to the apostolic faith, its embodiment in the life of the Church today, and its transmission to the Church of tomorrow.⁷

According to the WCC's Faith and Order Commission:

the term *ordained ministry* refers to persons who have received ... the gifts of the Holy Spirit ... for the building of the community and the fulfillment of its calling ... and whom the church appoints for service by ordination through the invocation of the Spirit and the laying on of hands.⁸

In this way, the ministry of those who are ordained is placed in the context of the ministry of all of the people of God -- the ministry of the church. Roman Catholics in the pews have traditionally considered the church's ministry to be synonymous with the ministry of the clergy and those with religious vows. The Second Vatican Council affirmed the concept of a royal priesthood of all believers.⁹ However -- for Vatican II -- the diaconate, priesthood, and episcopacy are set apart from the general ministry that all Christians are called to.¹⁰

⁶ Other churches including the Anglican Communion claim to have maintained the apostolic succession as well. The Roman Catholic Church *currently* only recognizes the validity of its own succession, and those of the Orthodox churches and the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht.

⁷ ARCIC I, p. 33

⁸ B.E.M., Ministry, §§ 7c & 7a, p. 21

⁹ *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, Nov. 18, 1965), in Abbot & Gallagher, Documents of Vatican II, § 2, p. 491.

¹⁰ *Presbyterium Ordinis* (Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, Dec. 7, 1965), in Abbot & Gallagher, Documents of Vatican II, § 3, p. 536

The Roman Catholic Church -- in common with the Orthodox churches, the Anglican Communion and some Protestant churches -- maintain all three levels of ordained ministers: deacons, priests, and bishops. The Roman Catholic Church reinstated the permanent diaconate following Vatican II. Prior to this, the diaconate functioned only as a stage towards the priesthood. The reinstatement of the permanent diaconate represents Vatican II's re-emphasis of service (*diakonia*) as the function of ministry.

Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox churches have consistently taught that the three levels of ministry are sacramental in nature. The Anglican Communion -- which shares the episcopal model -- acknowledges only two sacraments: baptism and the eucharist. They do, however, teach that ordination is sacramental in character.¹¹

Two divergent views of the connection between the episcopacy and the apostolic community are evident in the tradition of the church. The first is that of Clement of Rome.

Clement of Rome linked the mission of the bishop with the sending of Christ by the Father and the sending of the apostles by Christ (Cor. 42:44). This made the bishop a successor of the apostles, ensuring the permanence of the apostolic mission in the Church. Clement is primarily interested in the means whereby the *historical* continuity of Christ's presence is ensured in the Church thanks to the apostolic succession.¹²

Clement's view in its full expression in medieval Catholicism is the jurisdictional view inherited by the episcopal churches in the West. As Allen Brent has pointed out, ordained ministry since Pope Gregory VII (c. 1020-1085) has been viewed in a jurisdictional manner.

¹¹ According to ARCIC I, The Final Report, footnote no. 4, p. 37: "Anglican use of the word 'sacrament' with reference to ordination is limited by the distinction drawn in the Thirty-Nine Articles (Article 25) between the two 'sacraments of the Gospel' and the 'five commonly called sacraments'. Article 25 does not deny these latter the name 'sacrament', but differentiates between them and the 'two sacraments ordained by Christ' described in the Catechism as 'necessary to salvation' for all men."

¹² B.E.M., Ministry, Commentary (36), p. 29

We see ... historically from Gregory VII onwards a jurisdictional view of Order which distorted the sacramental and representative character of Order found in one strand of the Fathers.¹³

According to Brent, the jurisdictional view of Order places the authority of the bishop in the commissioning by the Bishop of Rome. The Commission of Peter -- and thus universal jurisdiction -- reside in the Bishop of Rome as successor of Peter. He delegates this jurisdiction to other bishops, who thereby are commissioned to serve in Christ's name.

The opposing view is represented by Ignatius of Antioch.

For Ignatius of Antioch (Magn. 6:1, 3:1-2; Trall. 3:1), it is Christ surrounded by the Twelve who is permanently in the Church in the person of the bishop surrounded by the presbyters. Ignatius regards the Christian community assembled around the bishop in the midst of the presbyters and deacons as the *actual* manifestation in the Spirit of the apostolic community. The sign of apostolic succession thus not only points to historical continuity; it also manifests an actual spiritual reality.¹⁴

This model appropriately places the apostolicity of the community in the episcopacy as an expression of the immanent presence of the Spirit in the community. This is the view associated with the Eastern churches, and which is re-emphasized by the Second Vatican Council.

In the bishops, therefore ... our Lord Jesus Christ, the supreme High Priest, is present in the midst of those who believe. For sitting at the right hand of God the Father, He is not absent from the gathering of His high priests, but above all through their excellent service He is preaching the Word of God to all nations, and constantly administering the sacraments of faith to those who believe.¹⁵

The episcopally ordered churches, such as the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox churches, do not generally recognize the validity of the ordinations performed in the congregationally ordered churches. As well, many episcopally ordered churches do not recognize

¹³ Allen Brent, Cultural Episcopacy and Ecumenism (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), p. 184. The Church Fathers referred to are Ignatius of Antioch, Tertullian, and Augustine.

¹⁴ B.E.M., Ministry, Commentary (36), p. 29

¹⁵ *Lumen Gentium*, § 21

the validity of ordinations performed in other episcopally ordered churches.¹⁶ Frequently, this condemnation is based upon this jurisdictional view described above, the assumption being that the apostolic succession is broken when a bishop is consecrated outside of the jurisdiction of the condemning church.

Interestingly, however, the judgment regarding the invalidity of ordinations performed in other churches does not always entail a rejection of the ministry performed in those churches.

Undoubtedly, in ways that vary according to the condition of each Church or Community, these actions can truly engender a life of grace, and can be rightly described as capable of providing access to the community of salvation.¹⁷

Quite frequently, churches engage in cooperative ministry, such as campus or hospital ministry. A significant new development is the shared ministries in many rural communities in Canada. In each of these three cases, ministers of the participating churches frequently offer their ministry beyond their own denominational barriers in an *ad-hoc* manner.

The ecumenical dialogues have maintained a consistent principle derived from the WCC Central Committee meeting in Toronto in 1950: no church can be obligated to adopt an ecclesiastical model foreign to their tradition.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the dialogues call upon the churches to recognize the threefold ministry as a guarantee of apostolicity.

¹⁶ An exception is the above mentioned mutual recognition of Roman Catholic and Orthodox Orders. As well, some Anglican and Lutheran churches recognize each others Orders.

¹⁷ *Unitatis Redintegratio*, § 3

¹⁸ "Membership in the World Council of Churches does not imply that a Church treats its own conception of the Church as merely relative ... Membership in the World Council of Churches does not imply the acceptance of a specific doctrine concerning the nature of church unity." WCC Central Committee (Toronto, 1950), "The Church, the Churches and the World Council of Churches: The Ecclesiological Significance of the World Council of Churches," §§ III:4-5, in G.K.A. Bell, Documents on Christian Unity: Fourth Series, 1948-1957 (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 218.

The threefold pattern thus raises questions for all the churches. Churches maintaining the threefold pattern will need to ask how its potential can be fully developed for the most effective witness of the Church in this world. In this task churches not having the threefold pattern should also participate. They will further need to ask themselves whether the threefold pattern as developed does not have a powerful claim to be accepted by them.¹⁹

The dialogues have refrained from asking that the episcopally ordered churches recognize the apostolic guarantee of the congregationally ordered model. This has led the United Church of Canada to respond to the B.E.M. document with the following statement:

We are not persuaded ... that there is a "need" of a minister of unity in the church. Nor do we see grounds for the assertion that the threefold order of ministry has a "powerful claim" to be accepted by churches which, like ours, do not have a threefold ordering of ministry as traditionally understood ... We cannot accept what seems to us to be the implication of the text that churches lacking an episcopal office are subtly deficient in their orders of ministry.²⁰

II. PETRINE MINISTRY AND PAPAL PRIMACY

One of the most interesting issues arising from the Reformation is the role of the Pope in the church. The subject of an unceasing polemic since the Reformation, the Pope has recently become the subject of ecumenical dialogue. For churches which value the apostolic succession, the paradox must be faced: some Western churches -- other than Rome -- value the apostolic succession and find in it the validity of their own hierarchy and other ministry and yet at the same time reject the ministry of the Bishop of Rome who belongs to the same line of succession. Some of the churches are facing this paradox, and some very interesting ecumenical developments are slowly occurring as a result.

It is extremely important to distinguish between papal primacy and the petrine ministry. Though primacy is -- Roman Catholics and some others believe -- an essential characteristic of the

¹⁹ B.E.M., Ministry, § 25, p. 25

²⁰ United Church of Canada in Churches Respond to B.E.M.: Official Responses to the "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" Text, Max Thurian, ed., v. 2, Faith & Order Paper No. 132 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1986), p. 283.

papacy, there are other characteristics of the papacy which are historically acquired and possibly dispensable. On a cautionary note, however, it is not widely agreed amongst Roman Catholics about which characteristics of the papacy are actually dispensable.

As the late Peter Hebblethwaite has pointed out, the papacy has seen some significant changes in the recent past. Albino Luciani, elected as Pope John Paul I in 1978, refused to be crowned with the papal tiara, choosing instead to be inaugurated to his ministry as supreme pastor.²¹ John Paul II was also not crowned with the tiara. Although he was pope for only thirty-three days, John Paul I's successors will find it extremely difficult to reinstate the papal coronation. With one single act, Luciani reoriented the papacy from a monarchical government to a pastoral ministry. While the papacy had always involved a pastoral ministry, it had frequently been overshadowed by the political, diplomatic, and governance roles of *Pontifex Maximus* and the Vatican City State. By defining his ministry primarily as Bishop of Rome, Luciani had identified the nature of the papacy with pastoral ministry. John Paul II has continued this emphasis with his pastoral visits to many parts of the world.

When one talks about the papacy there are a variety of concepts that are involved; apostolicity, episcopacy, patriarchy, primacy, authority, unity, and others. To different people of different Christian backgrounds, varying weights may be given to each of these charisms or characteristics, and value judgments may be made accordingly. It is important, from a Roman Catholic perspective, to distinguish between these characteristics. In ecumenical dialogue each of these characteristics will play a part. In the next few pages, I will expand a little on what is meant by the terms "petrine ministry" and "papal primacy".

²¹ Peter Hebblethwaite, "John Paul I," in Modern Catholicism, Adrian Hastings, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 444-6. See also Peter Hebblethwaite, The Year of Three Popes (New York: Collins, 1978).

In essence, petrine ministry is the role of the Bishop of Rome insofar as he is the successor of the apostle Peter. Roman Catholics argue for the centrality of this notion on the basis of Jesus' commission of Peter:

Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.
(Mt. 16: 17-19)

According to Roman Catholic doctrine, the Bishop of Rome is the direct successor of Peter, who was martyred in Rome. Jesus' commission to Peter is passed to his successors, the bishops of Rome. This commission took upon itself the character of the contemporary papacy quite slowly, but even in the earliest testimony of Clement of Rome -- the first known successor of Peter -- the claim to a certain apostolic authority and primacy was made on the basis of the petrine succession. The acceptance of this claim in the subsequent doctrinal and structural developments of the early church has assured the strict association between the petrine succession and the primacy of the Bishop of Rome. As I will demonstrate below, the nature of that primacy must be determined before any rapprochement on the subject of the papacy is possible.

In the early fourth Century, with the conversion of the Emperor to Christianity and the widespread conversion of much of the empire to Christianity, disputes which developed within Christianity took on a political character and threatened the unity of the empire. One such dispute occurred when Arius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, began to promote the view that Jesus Christ had only one nature -- divinity. This challenged the perspective of much of Christianity that held that Jesus was both human and divine. As a result, the Emperor took the initiative to convene a council at Nicaea to settle the dispute. Convocation of an "Ecumenical Council" by our political leadership today would clearly be unacceptable. However, in the Fourth Century, there were no such concerns. The Nicene Council was followed by further Councils through the next centuries.

Following the splintering of the Roman Empire, the responsibility for convening ecumenical councils was not clearly inherited by anyone in particular. The Popes have historically argued that the role was reserved to Rome as first among equals -- *primus inter pares*. The Eastern bishops did not agree with the West on this matter. Eastern Christianity has relied on the concept of a *pentarchy* in which the Bishop of Rome is *primus inter pares*, but only in the collegial context of the *pentarchy*.²² The *pentarchy* is made up of the five patriarchs: Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria. During the years of separation between East and West, new Patriarchates have been developed, including one in Moscow. An interesting ecumenical problem has developed due to the establishment of Patriarchates in a number of locations during the years of schism. With the apparent absence of Rome from the pentarchal system, both Constantinople and Moscow have vied for the position of "new Rome," Moscow on the grounds of being the centre of the Pan-Slavic world, and Constantinople on the grounds of being the second amongst the original five patriarchates -- the so-called second Rome.

In the Roman Catholic Church, the Pope has the responsibility for convening Ecumenical Councils, although the "ecumenical" status of these councils is questioned by many who are not Roman Catholics. I will discuss this in greater detail later in this chapter. In the East, in the absence of the Roman exercise of primacy, the Patriarch of Constantinople has become the "Ecumenical Patriarch" with a certain resulting primacy. In recent years the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox have managed to convene a Pan-Orthodox synod, and to make breakthroughs in understanding the Chalcedonian schism. The Eastern churches have never made the pretense to suggest that these synods have the authority of an "ecumenical council."

²² see Steven Runciman, The Eastern Schism: A Study of the Papacy and the Eastern Churches during the XIth and XIIth Centuries (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 66.

With respect to the question of papal primacy, there has not been as great a convergence between the various dialogue partners as there has been with respect to other issues. Papal primacy is rarely discussed in dialogues in which the Roman Catholic Church is not a participant. The prospect for movement on the subject is, however, limited. The Roman Catholic Church has consistently maintained the validity of the canonical responsibilities and privileges currently exercised by the Pope.²³ Rome's dialogue partners have given a number of different responses to the papal claims. For example, as discussed below the previous Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, has indicated a willingness to consider a modified form of papal primacy. On the other hand, other churches in dialogue with Rome have generally been less enthusiastic about Roman claims. There is a wide spectrum of different positions held by different churches at different times. The U.S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue has stated that:

Lutherans have held ... that the papacy was established by human law, the will of men, and that its claims to divine right are nothing short of blasphemous.²⁴

The Orthodox churches have traditionally supported the position that the Bishop of Rome has a certain primacy of honour as *primus inter pares*. The Orthodox churches have, however, consistently denied the ordinary and universal jurisdiction that is currently exercised within the Roman Catholic Church by the Pope. The various patriarchs and metropolitans of the autocephalous Orthodox churches recognize a certain primacy of the Ecumenical Patriarch as the patriarch of the second Rome: Constantinople. This form of primacy is one of honour rather than jurisdiction, and serves as a focus for collegial action on the part of the whole of Orthodoxy. All of the thirteen Eastern Orthodox churches in communion with the Ecumenical Patriarchate have a

²³ see *Lumen Gentium*, §§ 22-29

²⁴ Papal Primacy and the Universal Church, Paul Empie and T. Austin Murphy, eds., *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue*, v. 5 (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1974), § 7, p. 13.

canonical relationship that places their patriarchate in an order of primacy with the Ecumenical Patriarch at the top.²⁵ Presumably, should the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches enter into full communion at some time in the future, the Pope would be re-inserted into the top position in that order of primacy. It is this role that many Anglicans and Orthodox would envision for Rome.

In the future, should any particular level of structural rapprochement with Rome become possible, some model of primacy will undoubtedly be necessary -- if for no other reason than that Rome is unlikely to sacrifice this tradition wholesale. The current model of papal primacy, as exercised in the Roman Catholic Church, will definitely be unacceptable to the other ecumenical partners in dialogue. The U.S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue has suggested that:

there is a growing awareness among Lutherans of the necessity of a specific Ministry to serve the church's unity and universal mission, while Catholics increasingly see the need for a more nuanced understanding of the role of the papacy within the universal church.²⁶

However, the collegial model of primacy as exercised by the Patriarch of Constantinople -- and presumably originally exercised by the Bishop of Rome -- may be a suitable model for many churches with an episcopal tradition. The question then is whether Rome can accept such a role. Given an appropriate ecclesiological understanding, perhaps a model of unity can be formulated which incorporates this opportunity. As the U.S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue discovered:

Melanchthon held that "for the sake of peace and general unity among Christians" a superiority over other bishops could be conceded to the Pope.²⁷

²⁵ "The Canonical Structure of Eastern Orthodoxy," The Word (Jan., 1995), p. 27.

²⁶ Papal Primacy and the Universal Church, p. 10.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, § 5, p. 12. Reference is made to The Book of Concord, T. G. Tappert, ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), pp. 316-17.

Many non-Roman Catholics have recently been willing to identify the Bishop of Rome as a focus of Christian unity. The four recent Archbishops of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey, Donald Coggan, Robert Runcie, and George Carey have made the relationship with Rome a central theme of their Archiepiscopal ministry. Clearly, each of them has given a different weight to the issue -- George Carey probably gives it the least weight -- but the strong support of ecumenical approaches to Rome that has come from Lambeth Palace since the meeting between Michael Ramsey and Paul VI at St. Paul Outside the Walls in 1966 has infused the Anglican Communion. For many Anglicans, the willingness has increased to acknowledge the role of the Bishop of Rome as a centre of Christian unity. Statements by Robert Runcie in his last years as Archbishop of Canterbury perhaps epitomize this attitude.

We [Runcie and John Paul II] spoke about it in our private conversations. It was also raised during his recent visit to Scandinavia by the Lutheran bishops. He was fascinated that other Christians should be looking to the Bishop of Rome for this ecumenical leadership. It must be for ARCIC to continue to explore how future unity can best be served by what I call the recovery of an earlier Primacy. I look for a Primacy to serve mission and unity rather than an office dependent on ultra-montane centralism.²⁸

What is missing, however, is the acceptance of the universal and ordinary jurisdiction of Rome.

Margaret O'Gara, a Canadian Roman Catholic ecumenist and Professor of Theology at the University of St. Michael's College in Toronto, has addressed the problem of the petrine ministry in the context of an ecumenical gift exchange.²⁹ According to O'Gara, the process of dialogue involves a sharing of perspectives, and a reception of each others' strengths. Each church brings to the dialogue table various gifts, and one of the gifts of the Roman Catholic Church is the papacy

²⁸ Robert Runcie, Archbishop of Canterbury, "Anglican-Roman Catholic Relations Today," The Heenan Memorial Lecture 1989, in The Month, v. 251 (1990), p. 5.

²⁹ Margaret O'Gara, "The Petrine Ministry in the Ecumenical Gift Exchange," Grail 6(1990), pp. 51-71.

"and a conviction that a petrine ministry is part of God's design for the Church."³⁰ However,

O'Gara cautions that:

reception of a petrine ministry requires the shaping of petrine ministry in such a way that it could actually serve again today and for the future as a ministry of unity in the one Church of Christ.³¹

As O'Gara observes, the shape of such a petrine ministry is one which is hinted at in the documents of Vatican II.

Vatican II marks a shift from [a hierarchical] model of ecclesiology into another, older model that is an ecclesiology of communion. Vatican II emphasized the local church in its celebration of the eucharist as the locus of the Church, and it saw the communion within God shared with those in the Church binding them into one.³²

This "ecclesiology of communion" is the same ecclesiology which we identified in chapter one -- a *koinonia* ecclesiology. The shape of the papacy in such an ecclesiology needs to be examined however.

In the U.S. Lutheran - Roman Catholic dialogue, it was agreed that:

a petrine ministry serves the oneness of the church 'by symbolizing unity, and by facilitating communication, mutual assistance or correction, and collaboration in the Church's mission.'³³

The Lutheran participants in the same dialogue further expressed that they "increasingly recognize the need for a ministry serving the unity of the Church universal."³⁴ However a renewal of the papacy in view of an ecclesiology of communion could serve as such a ministry for them. Specific principles are specified, such as: legitimate diversity; collegiality; and subsidiarity. The

³⁰ Ibid., p. 53

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., p. 54

³³ Ibid., p. 55, quoting from Papal Primacy and the Universal Church, § 4, p. 12.

³⁴ Ibid., quoting from Papal Primacy and the Universal Church, § 28, p. 21.

ecumenical gift exchange passes in two directions, however, as Roman Catholics must in turn receive the concern that the petrine ministry "not subvert Christian freedom."³⁵

Recent statements from Rome regarding the ordination of women in the Church of England indicate the limited extent to which the Lutheran concerns regarding the papacy have been received in Rome. Recent usage of papal authority by Pope John Paul II has clearly moved the Roman Catholic Church away from the collegial model of Vatican II -- which was taken for granted in the U.S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue -- and toward a more juridical and hierarchical model. Such a move can only serve to concern Lutherans, Anglicans, and Orthodox who were beginning to accept a modified form of collegial primacy. In the following pages I will discuss some of the issues relation to ministry which ecumenical dialogue has not yet concluded.

III. CONCLUDING ISSUES

If the Roman Catholic Church can recognize the Orthodox churches as "sister churches" despite the absence of the petrine office, and accept the validity of Orthodox Orders and other sacraments, despite the non-celibate status of Orthodox priests, does this not make a fundamental statement about the provisional nature of the petrine office and celibacy? It is challenges such as these that have enlivened the internal debate within the Roman Catholic Church.

A. The Question of Anglican Orders

In chapter three, I spent some time describing the first hesitant contacts between Anglican and Roman Catholics in the late years of the 19th Century. Specifically, I described how the efforts of the Abbé Portal and Viscount Halifax to seek the Vatican's judgment on the validity of Anglican Orders had led to the disastrous papal letter *Apostolicae Curae* in 1896. This document

³⁵ Ibid., quoting from Papal Primacy and the Universal Church, § 30, p. 22.

expressed Pope Leo XIII's judgment that "ordinations enacted according to the Anglican rite have hitherto been and are invalid and entirely void"³⁶

According to Leo XIII, the defect of Anglican Orders springs from the loss of apostolic succession in the years following the adoption of the Book of Common Prayer in 1549. The first Book of Common Prayer was introduced in 1549 during the reign of Edward VI. Although subsequent revisions were made in 1552, 1559, 1604, and 1662, the section of the Prayer Book relevant to Leo XIII's judgment is the Ordinal, which remained largely unchanged until 1662.

Leo XIII's judgment is based on a single moment in the rite at which the assembled bishops lay their hands upon the individual being ordained and intone the prayer:

Take the Holy Ghost, and remember that thou stir up the grace of God, which is in thee, by imposition of hands: for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love and of soberness.³⁷

In itself this prayer and imposition of hands bear a great resemblance to the Roman rite. However, Leo XIII judged that the absence of the phrase "for the office and work of a priest", or "for the office and work of a bishop" following upon the phrase "Take the Holy Ghost" consisted of a defect in both form and intent.³⁸ This was sufficient, in the papal judgment, to render the ordinations of all bishops consecrated according to this rite invalid and thus render all subsequent ordinations by these bishops invalid as well.

The Anglican Ordinal was revised, as Leo XIII points out, in 1662 to include the absent phrases. However, in Leo XIII's judgment, the hierarchy in England was by this time extinct.

³⁶ Denzinger, § 1966, p. 497.

³⁷ The First Prayer Book of Edward VI compared with the Successive Revisions of The Book of Common Prayer, 2nd ed. (London: Parker & Co., 1883), § 459, p. 465.

³⁸ Denzinger, § 1964-66, pp. 496-7.

Thus, although the Ordinal subsequent to 1662 may in fact be accurate in form and intent, the lack of a valid apostolic succession renders ordinations which spring from this source invalid.

The judgment issued by Leo XIII implies a defect of intent as well as of form. And yet the case has not been made for the defect of intent. The mere lack of the phrase "to the office of Bishop" does not necessarily imply that the intent to ordain someone as a bishop was lacking. In fact, it appears ludicrous to suggest that the remainder of the prayers of the Ordinal, as well as the Royal warrant, could refer to the role of the bishop and the intent to ordain to the office of bishop³⁹ and yet the intent is still judged to be absent only moments later when the bishops lay hands upon the candidate.

Francis Clark, an English Jesuit, has presented the position whereby the defect of intention is based upon the supposed rejection of the sacrificial nature of the priesthood. According to Clark, the bishops who consecrated Archbishop Parker in 1559 -- in the reign of Elizabeth I -- had two intentions, the first was "to act as Christ's ministers to confer the ministry instituted by him". The consecrators had a second intention however, to exclude "the power of the consecrating and sacrificing priesthood."⁴⁰ In Clark's view this second intention was "*a positive exclusion of what Christ instituted.*"⁴¹ As A. R. Vidler states in his review of Clark's Anglican Orders and Defect of Intention:

³⁹ First Prayer Book of Edward VI, §§ 447-449, 451-453.

⁴⁰ Francis Clark S.J. as quoted by John Jay Hughes, "Recent Studies of the Validity of Anglican Orders," Concilium 31 (1968), pp. 139-40.

⁴¹ Francis Clark, S.J., Anglican Orders and Defect of Intention, London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1956, p. 163.

It seems probable that Father Clark has succeeded in his principal object, i.e. in showing what the Bull was designed to mean, though it is unlikely that Leo XIII knew as much about what he meant to say as Father Clark does!⁴²

Despite Leo XIII's depth of understanding of the sacramental theology involved -- or that of the actual author of the Bull -- the Bull must be read in light of the sacramental theology and the traditional teaching of the church relating to the issues at hand. As John Jay Hughes has pointed out:

The "principle of positive exclusion," according to which two conflicting intentions in the will of the minister automatically cancel each other out and render the sacrament null, without any examination of which intention was in fact predominant, is itself seriously questionable ... Moreover it is not clear that Parker's consecrators really had the second limiting intention upon the existence of which the argument of *Apostolicae Curae*, as interpreted by Clark, is based.⁴³

One argument that might be postulated for the defect of intent is that the intent was to ordain the candidate for the office of bishop in a church separated from Rome. From the perspective of Rome this would imply the lack of catholicity intended in the consecration. In Roman Catholic understanding, bishops are consecrated in communion with Rome. However, each of the Anglican candidates is ordained in and for the Church of England. Furthermore, each bishop is ordained according to a Royal warrant. Thus, *de facto* the candidate is ordained to the office of bishop in a diocese separated from allegiance to Rome. In consequence, it is Rome's view that Anglican Orders also lack the petrine ministry.

It is at this point that ecumenical dialogue is actually in a position to achieve some consensus. When we consider Orthodox Orders, the lack of the petrine ministry and of communion with Rome does not constitute a defect of intent or form, and the Orders are considered valid.

⁴² A. R. Vidler, Review of Anglican Orders and Defect of Intention, by Francis Clark, S.J. In Journal of Ecclesiastical History 8 (1957), p. 122. In fact as John Jay Hughes points out, the text of *Apostolicae Curae* was probably written by Merry del Val.

⁴³ Hughes, Anglican Orders, p. 140.

Surely then, what is not required of the Orthodox should not be required of the Anglican Communion or of other separated churches of the West.

Furthermore, a closer look at the Acts of Uniformity of 1549, 1552, and 1559, and the Act of Supremacy of 1559 indicate that in fact the understanding of the Church of England -- and of the Parliament that assumed the role of the Pope in English ecclesiastical matters on behalf of the Crown -- was that the Church of England remained an integral part of the universal church. The Church of England has never claimed for itself the status of universal church, only that the church in England was to be subject to the Crown in matters of ecclesiastical polity. Anglican churches outside of the United Kingdom have grown out of the missionary movements, and are generally limited to the spread of the British Empire.⁴⁴ Just as the Church of England sees itself as merely the church of Christ *in situ*, so too -- it could be argued -- the other Anglican provinces historically understood themselves in this way. Thus it does not seem likely that Anglican orders could be judged by Rome to have a "defect in intent" on these grounds.

What about the judgment of Leo XIII on the defect of form? Does the mere difference of form from the Roman rite imply a defect sufficient to invalidate the ordination? Returning to the papal Bull, I would point out that the judgment with respect to form is not based on the use of a different Ordinal. Rather, the judgment is made on the actual content of the Ordinal. This may come as a surprise to Roman Catholics who have come to assume that deviation from the approved rubrics is somehow illicit, possibly sinful, and definitely invalid. However, once again the standards applied to the Orthodox should also apply to the Anglicans. The essential form of the sacraments consist not in the use of the approved liturgical books, but in certain elements contained in the rite. Conceivably then, the presence of these elements elsewhere in the rite are sufficient.

⁴⁴ Exceptions to this general rule would be the Anglican parishes in continental Europe and the Holy Land. Even these, however, historically were intended to serve British subjects abroad rather than to evangelize the people of those regions.

I am not convinced that Anglican Orders have received a fair hearing. Numerous scholars have pointed to the secrecy maintained by the Vatican to this day regarding the work of the commission advising Leo XIII in 1896.⁴⁵ As well, the intrigue described by many historians, and the great animosity of figures such as Cardinal Vaughn give little reassurance that the Vatican officials were willing or able to provide an objective judgment to the Pope. The studies of Anglican Orders since the papal Bull have scarcely been objective either, most Catholic commentators have taken as a given that assenting to the papal judgment is obligatory for faithful Catholics. Furthermore, many commentators take it as a given that the fact of separation between the Church of England and that of Rome necessitates an exactitude in the ordination rite found in the Anglican Ordinal which has not always been found in the Roman Pontifical. It almost appears as if Anglicans somehow have to prove themselves to Rome, whereas Roman Catholics are assumed to have a valid succession even though some elements which are declared to be deficient in the Anglican Ordinal are also not found in every Roman ordination rite prior to the Council of Trent. Specifically the example of the sacrificial character of ministerial orders is mentioned by Hughes. Prior to the Council of Trent, it is very unclear as to whether there was a widespread understanding or acceptance of the sacrificial character of Holy Orders.⁴⁶

The necessary elements in the consecration of bishops is the laying on of hands by validly consecrated bishops in apostolic succession, and the intonation of a prayer for the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the candidate. The lack of the words "for the office and work of a bishop" following upon the words "Take the Holy Ghost" is no more a defect of form than it is a defect of

⁴⁵ see Bernard C. Pawley & Margaret Pawley Rome and Canterbury through Four Centuries (New York: Seabury Press, 1975) and Geoffrey Curtis Paul Couturier and Unity in Christ (London: S.C.M. Press, 1964).

⁴⁶ Hughes, Anglican Orders, p. 145-46.

intent, so long as the intent to ordain to the office of bishop is clear in the other prayers of the rite. These other prayers themselves constitute the missing element in the form.

Perhaps one way to bypass the impasse created by *Apostolicae Curae* is to consider the new situation created in recent decades by the participation in Anglican episcopal consecrations of bishops whose orders are recognized by Rome.⁴⁷ The recent case of Graham Leonard, retired Anglican bishop of London, is an excellent example. Leonard, who recently sought reception into the Roman Catholic Church following the ordination of women in the Church of England, was only "conditionally ordained" as a priest on the twenty-third of April, 1994 by Cardinal George Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, due to the "prudent doubt" which in Rome's judgment exists regarding the invalidity of his episcopal ordination. Apparently, the episcopal ordination of Leonard involved the participation of a bishop of the Old Catholic Church of the Union of Utrecht, and this was identified by Rome as the cause of their "prudent doubt."⁴⁸ While this may reassure those who are unable, or unwilling, to accept the validity of Anglican Orders on any other grounds, it does a disservice to the Anglican claim to an uninterrupted succession.

Whether the Roman Catholic Church will be able to recognize the validity of Anglican Orders in the future depends upon a variety of issues other than those raised by Leo XIII in *Apostolicae Curae*. Issues such as clerical celibacy and the ordination of women -- which is now widespread in the Anglican Communion -- must be resolved before the Vatican is likely to modify its judgment on Anglican Orders.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 146

⁴⁸ see "Anglican Bishop Becomes Roman Catholic Priest," a statement by Cardinal George Basil Hume (Archbishop of Westminster), *Origins* 23 (1994), pp. 793-5.

B. Clerical Celibacy

The issue of mandatory clerical celibacy is perhaps one of the most misunderstood and contentious issues in the Roman Catholic Church. Although the proposed ordination of women is an equally contentious issue, it has the virtue of being quite clearly understood by those who have or have not taken a stance. The issue of clerical celibacy is quite different. Although celibacy is part of the so-called "liberal agenda", the issue nonetheless seems to cross "party lines."⁴⁹ However, from the ecumenical point of view -- interestingly enough -- the issue is moot. For the sake of clarification, I will take a moment to explain.

The Roman Catholic Church only ordains celibate males to the priesthood. While many Roman Catholics disagree with this policy, it is the *status quo* with which ecumenical dialogue must deal. Protestant churches and the Anglican Communion generally ordain both married and single men -- and women in most cases -- and do not normally restrict the future marriage of those who are ordained while single. Orthodox churches ordain both married and single men, but restrict marriage after ordination, and bar married clergy from the episcopacy. On the face of it, these dissimilar policies would appear to be problematic. However, Roman Catholic reflection on the subject of clerical celibacy has consistently placed the subject of celibacy at the level of a disciplinary policy rather than of a doctrinal understanding of the nature of ministry.⁵⁰ The Eastern-Rite Catholic churches follow the Orthodox norm in ordaining married men, although this

⁴⁹ The terms "liberal agenda" and "party lines" are used in an analogical sense. There is however, a strong tendency toward the development of ecclesiastical parties which cross denominational lines. Should this happen, the ecumenical fallout -- or potential benefit -- is difficult to imagine.

⁵⁰ The obligation of clerical celibacy is found in the Code of Canon Law, Can. 277, § 1. See *Presbyterium Ordinis*, the Vatican II Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, § 16. For commentary, see The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary, James A. Coriden et al, eds. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), pp. 209-11.

practice has been restricted in the United States and Canada since 1929.⁵¹ Thus, the Roman Catholic Church can acknowledge the validity of Orthodox Orders, even though Orthodox clergy are not required to be celibate. As well, though the Roman Catholic Church has numerous concerns regarding the validity of Protestant and Anglican Orders, the absence of mandatory clerical celibacy does not of itself inhibit the validity of these Orders. Although an underlying fear of the disintegration of clerical celibacy may strengthen Vatican inhibitions regarding ecumenism, there is no real doctrinal issue for ecumenists to respond to.

C. Inclusive Ministries

The so-called "scandal" (stumbling block), as some people regard it of women's ordination could be described as the base rather than the tip of an iceberg which threatens to impede the future progress of the ecumenical vessel. It raises issues of fundamental importance to the credibility of our witness to the gospel, which came as good news for women as well as for men ... Discrimination brings violence and death in its train. But the Holy Spirit promises life as she wings us forward into a new united humanity, prefigured in the unity of the one, holy, catholic church.⁵²

The question of the ordination of women has become an ecumenical issue only in the modern era. With the decisions in the past half century to admit women to ministerial ordination in most Protestant churches and in many Anglican provinces a new and serious ecumenical roadblock has been erected. Of course, the question of the validity of women's ordination cannot be settled here. Nor is it the purpose of this thesis to do so. It is only intended that the effect upon the ecumenical movement by the churches' actions in this regard be noted.

⁵¹ Prairie Messenger (Dec. 19, 1994), p. 2.

⁵² Pauline Webb, She Flies Beyond: Memories and Hopes of Women in the Ecumenical Movement, Risk Book series (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1993), pp. xi-xii.

The recent decision by the Church of England to ordain women⁵³ compounds the problem that resulted from the similar decisions of the Episcopal Church in America and the Anglican Church of Canada in the mid 1970's. This departure from a tradition which Rome views as irreformable has clearly had an ecumenical impact. Pope John Paul II has recently issued a statement which reiterates the Vatican's position:

Priestly ordination, which hands on the office entrusted by Christ to his Apostles of teaching, sanctifying and governing the faithful, has in the Catholic Church from the beginning always been reserved to men alone. This tradition has also been faithfully maintained by the Oriental Churches.⁵⁴

As a result of the view that "the exclusion of women from the priesthood is in accordance with God's plan for his Church,"⁵⁵ the Pope feels obliged to:

declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church's faithful.⁵⁶

Although a certain degree of rapprochement has been found on the subject of ministry and the meaning of the ordained ministry, following the decisions to ordain women there is some question as to whether Rome will ever consider reversing the negative judgment of Anglican Orders expressed in the 1896 papal Bull *Apostolicae Curae*.

The Final Report of ARCIC I implies that the two participating churches have reached significant consensus on the meaning of ordination -- though not of the whole meaning of ministry -

⁵³ The first 32 women priests in the Church of England were ordained on March 12th, 1994 in Bristol Cathedral. The Church of England expects to ordain 1,200 women as priests in 1994. See Prairie Messenger, March 28, 1994.

⁵⁴ John Paul II, "*Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*" (Apostolic Letter on Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone, May 22, 1994), Origins 24 (1994), § 1, p. 49. See also One in Christ 30 (1994), pp. 273-5, or Ecumenical Trends 23 (1994), pp. 81 & 91.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., § 4. Emphasis is mine.

- and that the ordination of women in some provinces of the Anglican Communion does not affect that consensus. The argument presented by ARCIC is that:

the principles upon which its [ARCIC's] doctrinal agreement rests are not affected by such ordinations; for it [the doctrinal agreement] was concerned with the origin and nature of the ordained ministry and not with the question of who can or cannot be ordained.⁵⁷

The Vatican's Response to the Final Report "observes that the question of the subject of ordination is linked with the nature of the sacrament of orders."⁵⁸ To avoid the Vatican's confusing phraseology I would rephrase it: the question of whom the sacrament may be administered to is intimately linked with one's understanding of that sacrament. Turning the Vatican's statement back upon itself though, I would question whether the Roman Catholic Church as a whole has a clear understanding of ministry if so many Roman Catholics can advocate the ordination of women. If one considers the number of Roman Catholics -- bishops, theologians, religious, and laity -- that argue in favour of a gender inclusive clergy, one might wonder whether the Anglican position is not a more accurate representation of the prevailing Catholic opinion. Of course, theology is not a matter of democratic consent, but the Vatican's position still threatens to back-fire upon them. When a significant number of Roman Catholics applaud the Church of England decision to ordain women, one must wonder at the effect that this has on internal morale and respect for authority.

⁵⁷ ARCIC, "Ministry and Ordination: Elucidation (1979)," The Final Report (Cincinnati: Forward Movement Publications, 1982), § 5, pp. 44.

⁵⁸ Kevin McDonald, p. 132

Let us look for a moment at the impact of the 1993 decision of the Church of England to ordain women.⁵⁹ A number of Church of England members have publicly indicated their intention to seek membership in the Roman Catholic Church on the grounds that the Church of England has made a doctrinal break with tradition which it had no authority to make. In addition to those who have publicly indicated their intention to leave the Church of England, there will undoubtedly also be an even larger silent migration. This is a sad event in the life of both of the churches for two very profound reasons. Firstly, it is an unfortunate that people would wish to join a religious community in rejection of another community rather than in a positive affirmation of the community they seek to join. This is a problem that will plague the Roman Catholic Church in England for decades if the prospective members are not treated carefully -- and maybe even screened!⁶⁰ Secondly, the individuals who leave the Anglican Communion are almost exclusively of a conservative Anglo-Catholic persuasion. With a large exodus from the Church of England, it will lose its delicate balance between Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals. While this will most likely have positive benefits for the Church of England because of the reduced tensions and the revitalization that will inevitably occur, it is an unfortunate occurrence for the ecumenical relations between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. A reduced Anglo-Catholic voice

⁵⁹ I am using the Church of England as an example, although it is not the first episcopally structured church to ordain women. The reason for this is that the Anglican Communion as a whole derives from the Church of England, which in turn derives from the mission of Augustine of Canterbury, who was sent to evangelize the English by Pope Gregory the Great in 596 A.D. Thus the faithfulness of the Church of England -- in the Vatican's limited perspective -- is a test case for the faithfulness of the whole Anglican Communion.

⁶⁰ The Roman Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have determined that the R.C.I.A. process may be adapted to ensure that "for those who have been accustomed to regular, if not daily, holy communion in the Church of England ... the period between their decision to leave the Church of England and their reception into full communion need not be lengthy." Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, "On Receiving Anglican Clergy Into the Catholic Church," *Origins* 23 (1994), p. 796.

in the Church of England will change the ecumenical course from Rome to the Anglican Communion's other dialogue partners; the Lutheran, Reformed, Methodist, and Baptist world communions. Indeed, this has already been seen to some extent in North America since 1976, and has already been seen with the Porvoo Agreement between the Church of England and the predominantly Lutheran churches of Scandinavia.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this thesis, I have restricted my reflections to those churches who are actively involved in the ecumenical movement. I have used the churches' own statements, or the written opinions of their church members, to give insight into the variety of perspectives that each church brings to the ecumenical movement. I have placed particular importance on the statements arising from the official dialogues between the churches. In chapter one, as a preliminary to the bulk of the thesis, I examined what is meant by the terms "unity" and "church," as well as associated concepts. In chapters two and three, I examined the breaking of communion between the churches, and the beginnings of the movement to bring the churches back into communion. The final three chapters dealt with the dialogues and the issues outstanding between the churches which are related to the WCC's Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry dialogue statement.

In the introduction, I examined the subject of dialogue as an ecumenical method. In light of the material examined in the above chapters, I wish to make a further observation. Dialogue is, of course, a necessary aspect of the ecumenical endeavour. Opening oneself to hear and understand another's expression of their faith is essential to any rapprochement. However, openness does not require endorsing or accepting the perspective or the position expressed by the other. Acceptance of diversity does not mean that all diversity is legitimate. Each church -- and each Christian in their personal reflection -- must determine the essentials of their faith and the limits of diversity. No single church or individual Christian should oblige another to accept any doctrine, dogma, or principle which the other finds to be un-Christian.

This being said, each church and individual Christian -- in the interests of furthering Christian unity -- must refrain from explicitly rejecting or anathematizing the doctrines, dogmas, and principles of other churches unless these are found to be beyond the boundaries of legitimate diversity. In other words, they should refrain from condemning any of another church's

expressions of faith unless they find them to violate some principle of their own denominational self-understanding.

In the past, most churches condemned various positions expressed by other churches. An eirenic spirit will allow each church to re-evaluate those condemnations and repent where they have failed to adequately understand the perspective of the other churches. Where churches find the condemnations to have continuing validity, the response should not be one of triumph or self-satisfaction, but rather of failure for allowing Christ's Church to be divided. If the churches fail to bring about unity amongst Christians, even if it is for sincere reasons, they must never accept this as an acceptable *staus quo*. Christians must always continue to work for unity. This is a gospel imperative.

This principle of dialogue, which I have sketched, has motivated the ecumenical movement from its inception. Although not all churches have been consciously aware of this principle, all churches participating in the ecumenical movement have accepted that dialogue is a necessary precondition to rapprochement, and a natural corollary to Christian unity.

In each chapter above, I have attempted to show the opening window of opportunity for rapprochement. Invariably, I believe, this window of opportunity is related to the ecclesiological self-understanding of each church. As the churches have slowly developed mutual affirmations regarding baptism, eucharist, ministry, the creeds, justification and sanctification, authority, scripture, tradition, and apostolicity, they have also developed a nascent ecclesiology which may be called ecumenical. This ecclesiology is built upon the concept of unity found in Jesus' high priestly prayer: "that they all may be one. As you, Father, are in me, and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (Jn 17:21). This concept of unity is at the heart of *koinonia* ecclesiology as discussed in chapter one. Related to this concept of unity is the principle of legitimate diversity discussed above.

This ecclesiology is not, however, complete. As dialogue has progressed numerous proposals have been suggested as to how this unity will find itself tangibly expressed. Models such as corporate unity, concords and covenants, conciliar fellowship, and unity in reconciled diversity have been added to the traditional models of organic unity, sister churches, and uniatism. Each of these models has been proposed and examined by scholars and by church commissions as a possible basis for future union agreements. While none of these models is universally acceptable, some models are more amenable to particular churches than others. Churches with an episcopal tradition will find a conciliar fellowship model possible with other episcopally structured churches. Other unity agreements will find other models more congenial. Eventually, if rapprochement is to lead to a formal unity agreement, one of these models will have to be adopted or another model developed to suit the distinctive needs of the participating churches.

In chapter one, I proposed the following question: "Can such a study" of the ecclesiological aspects of the churches' ecumenical positions "lead to the development of an ecumenical ecclesiology, that is, an ecclesiology that points the way towards unity, and that the churches recognize as being consonant with their own faith experience?" Certainly *koinonia* ecclesiology fulfills the criteria as one which points the way towards unity, and certainly most churches will recognize this as being consonant with their own faith experience. Where then is the next step?

The next step is to broaden the rapprochement. There are many churches and traditions for whom the ecumenical movement is a threat rather than a beacon of hope. No further progress is possible until such churches and traditions include their perspectives in the wider ecumenical reflections on unity. In the epilogue below, I will discuss the beginning of the next step.

EPILOGUE

There remains one matter which has not yet been discussed but which completes the puzzle that the contemporary ecumenical movement presents. In this thesis, I have deliberately avoided discussion of the nascent dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Evangelical

churches because of a methodological problem discussed in the introduction. While this matter does not fall within the scope of this thesis as delineated in the introduction, it is my hope that a thumbnail sketch of dialogue will show the inter-locking relationship between these issues and the issues arising from the Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry dialogue.

In recent years we have begun to see the beginnings of an unofficial dialogue between Evangelical churches and the Roman Catholic Church. A difficulty arises when one tries to distinguish what is meant by the term "evangelical" or to identify which churches one refers to with that designation. A considerable amount of discussion has surrounded the issue, and many evangelical theologians have felt obliged to offer a definition of the term as a preliminary to substantive statements regarding evangelical theology. As one who would not normally be identified as evangelical, I would not wish to contribute to the debate. Donald G. Bloesch, in his Essentials of Evangelical Theology, presents a thought-provoking chapter on the meaning of the term "evangelical."¹ However, he defines evangelicalism in contrast with Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and liberal Christian theology, but avoids a single clear statement of the meaning of the term "evangelical". Samuel S. Hill, in his revision of Frank S. Mead's Handbook of Denominations in the United States, offers an interesting appendix on the various terminology used in describing different denominations,² but disappointingly defines evangelicalism only by citing examples of theological positions and the churches which hold such positions. David Bebbington, George Rawlyk and Mark Noll have suggested that "evangelicalism" has four characteristics: a stress on

¹ Donald G. Bloesch, Essentials of Evangelical Theology, 2 vols. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982).

² Frank S. Mead, Handbook of Denominations in the United States, New 9th Edition, revised by Samuel S. Hill (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990).

conversion, a great respect for the Bible, the centrality of the Cross, and activism -- particularly evangelism.³ John G. Stackhouse Jr. has defined evangelical as follows:

this group looks back to the Protestant Reformation for its emphasis upon the unique authority of Scripture and salvation through faith alone in Christ. It adds to these convictions concern for warm piety in the context of a disciplined life and for the evangelism of all people.⁴

In chapter two, I drew a distinction between the medieval and Reformation ecclesiologies as being either "evangelical" or "structural." The meaning of the term "evangelical" in chapter two was carefully nuanced. By "evangelical" I refer to the principle highlighted at the Reformation that places Christ at the centre of theological understanding. Contemporary Evangelicals insist on this very same principle, as we have seen above. However, although the Reformation churches, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Orthodox churches have all insisted on this principle as well, at times the principle has been obscured somewhat by some or all of these churches, resulting in more recent protest movements within the context of Protestantism. Many of these protest movements -- in combination with revival movements -- have developed into churches and spread around the world. The churches which I am referring to include the Methodist, Baptist, Pentecostal, Covenant, Alliance, and Brethren churches. Many of these churches would call themselves "evangelical" and with the Mennonite churches have become involved in the ecumenical movement in the past few years.⁵

³ Mark A. Noll, David W. Bebbington, & George A. Rawlyk, eds., Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700-1990 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 366.

⁴ John G. Stackhouse, Jr., Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century: An Introduction to Its Character (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), p. 7.

⁵ It would not be completely true to say that all of these churches have been absent from ecumenical dialogue. Individual congregations of some, or all, of these churches have been involved in dialogue for many years, both with each other and with the historic churches.

The interesting aspect of the advent of mainline - evangelical ecumenism is that the agenda is completely different. Not so surprisingly, with a different agenda there are also different dynamics to the ecumenical discussions. There are very few formal dialogues of the traditional ecumenical format, however, there is an increasing level of contact and cooperation on activities such as the Week of Prayer, the March for Jesus, the Prayer Summit movement, and the Graham Crusades. There has also been -- for a considerable time -- some contact between the charismatic movement in the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches and some of the Evangelical churches.

In chapter three, I briefly discussed the common concern of Orthodox and Evangelical participants at the WCC's Canberra Assembly regarding the marginalization of "the confession of the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour"⁶ within the WCC's agenda. I also discussed the beginnings of an unofficial dialogue between the Orthodox and Evangelicals.⁷ In addition to these small advances another small but significant advance has developed with the publication of a dialogue statement entitled "Evangelicals and Catholic Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium." This statement makes very clear that it does not speak on behalf of the respective communities, but that it "does intend to speak responsibly from our communities and to our communities."⁸ The statement was signed by a number of prominent figures from either community. The document was composed by a group of eight Protestants led by Charles Colson, and seven Roman Catholics led by Richard John Neuhaus, a well-known Roman Catholic

⁶ see chapter three, p. 79. See also Signs of the Spirit, Official Report of the Seventh Assembly of the WCC, Canberra 1991, Michael Kinnamon, ed. (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), pp. 280-3.

⁷ "A Newly Discovered Affinity: Report of the Orthodox-Evangelical Meeting at Berhauser Forst, Stuttgart, Germany (8-12 February 1993)," Catholic International 4 (July 1993), pp. 343-4.

⁸ "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium," Ecumenical Trends 23 (1994), pp. 83-90. Abbreviated as ECT.

theologian of Lutheran background. The statement was subsequently signed by twelve more Protestants and thirteen more Roman Catholics.⁹

In the document "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" (ECT), the writers affirm the centrality of Christ:

Jesus Christ is Lord. That is the first and final affirmation that Christians make about all reality. He is the One sent by God to be Lord and Savior of all. "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4).¹⁰

In addition the writers affirm that:

All who accept Christ as Lord and Savior are brothers and sisters in Christ. ... However difficult the way, we recognize that we are called by God to a fuller realization of our unity in the body of Christ.¹¹

Therefore:

The love of Christ compels us and ... we are therefore resolved to avoid such conflict between our communities and, where such conflict exists, to do what we can to reduce and eliminate it.¹²

However this common resolve is not simply a result of a wish for harmony: "We reject any appearance of harmony that is purchased at the price of truth."¹³ J. I. Packer -- one of those who endorsed the finished text -- has identified, in a thought provoking article, a number of reasons for Evangelical concern regarding the Roman Catholic Church. Nevertheless, Packer points out, the Evangelical community does share a great deal of faith in common with individual Roman Catholics -- if not the institution itself. Therefore:

⁹ J. I. Packer, "Why I Signed It," Christianity Today (Dec. 12, 1994), p. 34.

¹⁰ ECT, p. 84.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

Where there is fellowship in faith, fellowship in service should follow, and the cherishing of standoffishness and isolationism becomes sin. So togetherness in mission is appropriate.¹⁴

According to Packer, the deepest division of our era is not between Protestants and Roman Catholics, but between theological conservatives and theological liberals. For Packer, theological conservatism has all the virtues of Christianity, and liberalism has apparently none of them. This division, in Packer's view, crosses denominational and historical boundaries splitting all, or most, Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. "Since it is essentially the same battle that has to be fought across the board, a coalition of evangelical and Catholic resources for the purpose would surely make sense."¹⁵

The participants in the dialogue addressed ecclesiological questions briefly, indicating that:

The church is by nature, in all places and at all times, in mission. Our missionary hope is inspired by the revealed desire of God that "all should be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2.) The church lives by and for the Great Commission (Matthew 28).¹⁶

Despite the general agreement regarding the nature of the church's mission, there is no agreement on the form in which the church should be ordered. As such the document confirms that:

Whatever the future form of the relationship between our communities, we can, we must, and we will begin now the work required to remedy what we know to be wrong in that relationship.¹⁷

Thus the document notes some of the differences and disagreements that must be addressed in order to strengthen the relationship between Evangelicals and Roman Catholics. The differences and disagreements between Evangelicals and Roman Catholics include:

¹⁴ Packer, p. 35

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 35-6

¹⁶ ECT, p. 84

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 85.

- The church as an integral part of the Gospel or the church as a communal consequence of the Gospel.
- The church as visible communion or invisible fellowship of true believers.
- The sole authority of Scripture (*sola scriptura*) or Scripture as authoritatively interpreted in the church.
- The soul [*sic*] freedom of the individual Christian or the Magisterium (teaching authority) of the community.
- The church as local congregation or universal communion.
- Ministry ordered in apostolic succession or the priesthood of all believers.
- Sacraments and ordinances as symbols of grace or means of grace.
- Remembrance of Mary and the saints or devotion to Mary and the saints.
- Baptism as sacrament of regeneration or testimony of regeneration.¹⁸

These differences and disagreements -- amongst others -- must form the focus of concerted dialogue as an Evangelical - Roman Catholic dialogue begins. This dialogue must, like all dialogue, occur at both a local congregational level as well as at a regional, national, and international level.

The ECT document includes a number of significant concerns of a uniquely American concern, such as the separation of church and state and America's role in world affairs. There are other public policy concerns addressed in the document as well, which have a more global relevance, such as the protection of the unborn, the strengthening of the family, and responsible public education. The document contends that Christians and the church have an obligation to address issues of public concern.

In the exercise of these public responsibilities there has been in recent years a growing convergence and cooperation between Evangelicals and Catholics. We thank God for the discovery of one another in contending for a common cause. Much more important, we thank God for the discovery of one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.¹⁹

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 86.

The growing convergence between Evangelicals and Roman Catholics would however be meaningless if it did not include an acceptance of the legitimacy of living a Christian life in the other community. Thus the document rejects any proselytism between Christian communities.

There is a necessary distinction between evangelizing and what is today commonly called proselytizing or "sheep stealing." We condemn the practice of recruiting people from another community for purposes of denominational or institutional aggrandizement.²⁰

The document further affirms that:

Christian witness must always be made in a spirit of love and humility. It must not deny but must readily accord to everyone the full freedom to discern and decide what is God's will for his life.²¹

While affirming that Roman Catholics and Evangelicals have differed -- and will continue to differ -- the document confirms the willingness of at least part of each community to be Christians together. Thus, the writers confess:

that we have sinned against one another and against God. We must earnestly ask forgiveness of God and one another, and pray for the grace to amend our own lives and that of our communities.²²

It is in light of this recognition of a common Christian character and mission that Packer states:

ECT, then, must be viewed as fuel for a fire that is already alight.... It can be argued that, so far from running ahead of God, as some fear, ECT is playing catch-up to the Holy Spirit, formulating at the level of principle a commitment into which many have already entered at the level of practice.²³

The ECT document is not the only dialogue statement that represents the views of Evangelicals. Many of the ecumenically-involved churches would have significant numbers of

²⁰ Ibid., p. 89.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Packer, p. 36

members who call themselves "evangelical" in precisely the way in which this document describes the evangelical community. For example, George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, describes himself in this way to the consternation of the Anglo-Catholic community. The distinguishing feature of the ECT statement is that it purports to speak from the perspective of a trans-denominational Evangelicalism. No other statement, to date, would fit that category. Those churches who are both evangelically and ecumenically minded, such as the Evangelical Lutheran churches, when in dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church concentrate on the historical points of division rather than the contemporary points of commonality.

If I might be excused a little unsubstantiated speculation, I would suggest that the door which has recently been opened between the Evangelical and the Roman Catholic communities is a historic period of grace. There is an opportunity, at this time, to breach much of the gap between these communities. Should we be hesitant, the opportunity may disappear. In chapter three I reported Archbishop Michael Peers' comments regarding the notion of an ecumenical winter. Peers reminded his audience that every winter is followed by a spring. We must not forget, however, that during the winter there has been growth beneath the snow. I would hazard to suggest that the so-called ecumenical winter has given the churches the opportunity to rethink their historic positions. For the historic churches of the Reformation, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Orthodox churches, this period of reflection has given the opportunity to begin a new phase of dialogue on ecclesiology. This period of reflection has also given an opportunity for the beginning of a dialogue between the historic churches and the Evangelical churches.

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