

Si Si No No

THE ANGELUS ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ARTICLE REPRINT

Let your speech be, "Yes, yes," "No, no"; whatever is beyond these comes from the evil one. (Mt. 5:37)

• June 2005
Reprint #64



On the left side of the altar at the Oct. 31, 1999, service were four primary signers of the Joint Declaration on Justification between Catholics and Lutherans. They are (left to right), Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy; Rev. Christian Krause, Lutheran World Federation (LWF) president and bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Brunswick, Germany; Bishop Walter Kasper; General Secretary Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko.

The "Dogma" of Ecumenism



From November 11-13, 2004, at the "Better World" Center for Congresses and Spirituality in Rocca di Papa a congress was held with the title "Forty Years after the Decree on Ecumenism of Vatican Council II: Retrospectives and Lasting Significance—Development and the Current Situation—Future Prospects." The Conference was promoted by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Conciliar Decree *Unitatis Redintegratio*. Present at the conference were all the presidents of the ecumenical commissions of episcopal conferences throughout the world, representatives of the dicasteries of the Roman Curia and the pontifical universities, together with the representatives of various "churches" and communities engaged in dialogue with the Church. None other than His Eminence Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the council in question, was there to give his *imprimatur* to the proceedings.

Kasper's intervention was published in its entirety in *L'Osservatore Romano*¹ and stands for us as a precious document for identifying the theological outlook of the current ecumenical movement and its foundation in the theses of the Second Vatican

the return to the one true Church of Christ of those who are separated from it.”² The true “dogma” proclaimed by the Council is this new ecumenical path. More precisely, the new ecumenism is the premise that undeniably underlies the teachings proper to Vatican II and the theology of the current pontiff. The key texts of the Council were based on this premise. This is not our assertion: Cardinal Kasper himself demonstrates it with the texts of the Council and the encyclicals of John Paul II in hand. Since the new ecumenical path—the content of which we shall examine in a moment—is supposed irrevocable, it has been found necessary to re-examine and restructure Catholic ecclesiology in a non-Catholic manner. As has been observed:

*This a priori determination, which has no legitimate point of reference, is the heart of the Conciliar text that affirms that the Church of Christ “subsists in” the Catholic Church. This is in fact the only thing that the Council teaches in a clear manner: its ecumenical will. It is not ecumenical as an echo of the constant and universal teaching of the Church, but because it has established as the basis of its theories a clearly ecumenical will that lacks any foundation and that the entire prior Magisterium condemns.*³

The key elements of this *a priori* determination as inserted into the documents of Vatican II are essentially three, in Kasper’s reckoning: the eschatological perspective of the Church understood as the People of God; the well-known “*subsistit in*”; and the ecclesiology of communion.

Techniques of Persuasion

Before considering each of these elements analytically, it seems important to emphasize another point on which the cardinal repeatedly insists in his discourse. One should keep in mind the context in which the cardinal finds himself: it is a lecture, that is to say, an intervention that is meant to be heard before it is read. Therefore, probably aware of criticisms of the ecumenism inaugurated by the Council or, even more likely, in order to counterbalance the manifest contradiction of his ecumenical theses to the perennial Magisterium, Cardinal Kasper takes it upon himself to reassure his listeners. He does this with exhalations of *nolite timere*—have no fear—which represent an attempt at pre-rational persuasion (let us note that at the beginning of the Congress a film was shown, prepared by the Vatican Television Center, showing the “triumphs” of contemporary ecumenism: from the meeting of Pope Paul VI and Athenagoras, to the “restitution” of the icon of the Mother of God of Kazan in Moscow). We present in their order of appearance Kasper’s repeated assurances that the new ecumenism is in continuity with Tradition. Unable to make this point by means of arguments,

Council, as amply developed and applied during the papacy of John Paul II. In this regard one cannot fail to appreciate the great clarity of Cardinal Kasper. What the President of the Council for Promoting Christian Unity fails to do—what is in fact his duty—is to recognize the sometimes irrelevant, at other times contrasting relationship of the positions of the “Conciliar Church” to the universal ordinary Magisterium of the Catholic Church. On the contrary, as we shall see, the cardinal takes it upon himself to conceal this contrast.

The Council’s *A Priori*

Before examining the content of Cardinal Kasper’s intervention it will be helpful to outline its structure. Cardinal Kasper insists repeatedly on certain statements, which he presents as evident and well-founded assumptions when they are not. In fact, at the beginning of his speech we find the following: “The pope has repeatedly confirmed that *the ecumenical path is irreversible* (*Ut Unum Sint*, §3 [hereafter referred to as *UUS*]).” And likewise in closing the cardinal sums up: “The decree [*Unitatis Redintegratio*; hereafter referred to as *UR*] gave the impetus to an *irrevocable and irreversible process, for which no realistic alternative exists*. The Decree on Ecumenism shows the path of the 21st century. It is the will of the Lord [*sic!*] that we undertake this path....” These two peremptory assertions, which open and close the speech, should not be dismissed with too much haste. They constitute the indispensable key to understanding the basis of the current teaching: they are the *alpha* and *omega* that illuminate the current crisis of the Church.

Let us recall the context in which the speech was delivered: the cardinal was addressing the principle “ecumenical agents,” Catholic and not. And what did he tell them? We have read it: the ecumenical path, as inaugurated by the Conciliar decree, is irrevocable; indeed, it is irrevocable and irreversible, which is to say that it cannot be changed in any way, nor can the direction it has taken be altered. In this way the cardinal would strangle at birth any attempted reorientation from a traditional perspective, stigmatizing it as *unrealistic*. The one solution that the popes had uninterruptedly proposed is absolutely banished and discredited: “The goal of ecumenism *cannot be conceived as a simple return* of others to the bosom of the Catholic Church.” Kasper’s affirmation is opposed to the universal magisterium of the Church *as its contradiction*: “There is but one way in which the unity of Christians may be fostered, and that is *by furthering*

Cardinal Kasper is constrained to resort to persuasive techniques:

It would, however, be mistaken to ignore this fundamental continuity and consider the Council as a radical rupture with Tradition and identify it with the advent of a new Church.... Nevertheless, with the Council something new has begun: not a new Church, but a renewed Church....The ecumenical movement did not discard anything that up to now has been precious or important to the Church and its history; it remains faithful to the truth that has been recognized and defined as such throughout history and adds nothing new to it.... As a spiritual movement, ecumenism does not uproot Tradition. On the contrary, it proposes a new and more profound understanding of Tradition....With it is being prepared...not a new Church, but a spiritually renewed and enriched Church. [And finally:] The Council affirms no new doctrine, but motivates a new attitude, it renounces triumphalism....

We now enter into the thick of the issue, in the content of the discourse, in order to verify, this time by rational means, the rupture of today's "ecumenism" with Tradition. It will be shown that it is not the development of "seeds" present within Tradition, but rather a "new doctrine" *sic et simpliciter*.

Dynamic Eschatology of the Church as People of God

Cardinal Kasper's introduction confirms our earlier reflections on ecumenism as the *a priori* foundation of the new ecclesiology of the Council: "The Council took up the ecumenical movement because it understood the Church as a movement, that is to say the People of God on a journey (*Lumen Gentium* [hereafter referred to as *LG*] §§2; end, 8, 9, 48-51; *UR* §2 end, *etc.*)" He elaborates:

In other words, the Council has revalorized the eschatological dimension of the Church, showing that it is not a static but a dynamic reality. It is the People of God on a journey between the "here" and the "not yet." The Council integrated the ecumenical movement in this eschatological dynamic. *Thus understood*, ecumenism is the way of the Church (*UUS* §7). It is not an adjunct, nor an appendix, but an integrating part of the organic life of the Church and its pastoral activity (*UUS* §20).

The Council, therefore, underlining the dynamic component of the



In 1999, the Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko and Cardinal Walter Kasper signed the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification.

Church, recovered the eschatological dimension of the Church. Eschatology is not here understood in the traditional sense, but as a tension between the "already" or the "here" and the "not yet," as a synonym for the essentially dynamic nature of the Church. Ecumenism is situated, however—here we underline Kasper's "thus understood"—in this dynamic-ecclesiological sense "as an integrating part of the Church." And, to make this concept better understood, Cardinal Kasper makes a parallel between ecumenism and mission:

Mission is an eschatological phenomenon thanks to which the Church assumes the cultural patrimony of peoples, purifies and enriches it, *thus enriching also itself and attaining the fullness of its Catholicity* (*Ad Gentes* §§1, 9, *etc.*). In the same manner, in the ecumenical movement the Church participates in an exchange of gifts with the separated churches (*UUS* §§28, 57), enriches them and *at the same time makes their gifts its own and, in so doing, fully realizes its own catholicity* (*UR* §4).

He concludes with a very illuminating affirmation: "Mission and ecumenism are the two forms of the eschatological path and the eschatological dynamic of the Church."

In what then, does the eschatological dynamic of the Church consist for Kasper? It does not mean that the Church, although human because of the members who make it up, is supernatural in its origin, its means, and its purpose,⁴ and nevertheless will manifest itself in all its fullness only when the Son of Man will return and put an end to history. Nor is its dynamic nature conceived in the sense conveyed by the Gospel parable of the king who sends his servants out to call his subjects to the wedding feast of his son, because those who stay outside are doomed to "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (cf. Luke 14:15-24; this parable unequivocally indicates the necessity of conversion and

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entry into the Catholic Church to escape eternal damnation). Cardinal Kasper does not understand the eschatological dimension of the Church in the sense of a projection towards eternity, nor does he see its dynamic nature as connected to its task of proclaiming and calling all peoples to salvation. The Church, on the contrary, is for Kasper eschatological in the sense that it must activate that which it already is potentially: "It is on a journey," the cardinal affirms, "towards fully and concretely realizing its nature in life." The Church is already Catholic, but not yet fully so. It becomes concretely and fully Catholic only by enriching itself with the cultural patrimony of peoples (mission) and the gifts of the "separated Churches" (ecumenism) and enriching them in turn.

Conversion to the Catholic Church is not in question because, for the ecumenists, all the "churches" and separated communities and all peoples are already in some manner in communion with the Catholic Church. What is lacking is the reciprocal enrichment, more or less profound, that will emerge from dialogue, as the fulfillment of what is already realized in a mysterious way by virtue of the fact that the Church of Christ is already united to every man. Missions and ecumenism have the purpose of revealing "in a visible manner, the hidden but radical unity that the divine Word... has established with the men and women of this world."⁵ The ecumenical journey is thus the process of becoming aware of a unity that already exists; it is, at the same time, a reciprocal enrichment in order to arrive at full unity. The expression "Church, People of God" conveys an identity between the Church and the human race, an identity that needs only to become conscious, in the manner of Hegel's dialectic.

All this was expressed very clearly by Cardinal Wojtyla in his theological study on Vatican II, *At the Sources of Renewal*: "The mission of the divine Persons towards humanity is not only a revelation, but equally the salvific action that **makes of the human race the People of God.**" In the same study Cardinal Wojtyla developed the theme of the relations between the Church as the People of God and the human race:

God does not form his People except by choosing, calling, bringing all men to Himself, each as an individual, in the manner that is proper and unique to him...the reality of the People of God is contained in the project of God and in its realization, the origin of which, it might be said, is common to the vocation of man as a person....Only God knows the link that unites men in the community of his People. Vatican II affirms that such a bond is fuller than that of mere "ecclesial" communities....Thus it is explained,

how the consciousness of the Church as the People of God can be both *ad intra* and *ad extra*. In this Vatican II admits that there is a difference between "belonging to" and "being ranked among" the People of God. Behold that which indicates and determines the degrees of the communion of God with men.⁶

That this was not only the personal opinion of Cardinal Wojtyla is confirmed by the fact that, during his pontificate, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith expressed itself in even stronger terms: "In its invisible reality, [the Church] is the communion of each man with the Father, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, and with other men who participate in the divine nature."⁷

We have thus a first sphere of communion, namely that of all men "chosen and called by and conducted to Him," which includes another, composed of all the Christian "churches." This is the "now" which mission and ecumenism take as their point of departure. The "not yet" is, on the contrary, the process of becoming aware of such bonds and of the mutual exchange of gifts, a process that has as its purpose the full communion of everyone, a communion that already exists if only partially. That the aforesaid fundamental unity of all men is the most important foundation that prevails over every division has been openly proclaimed by Pope John Paul II in his discourse to the cardinals and the curia with regard to the interreligious meeting at Assisi:

In the light of this mystery [of the unity of the human race] differences of all kinds, first of all religious differences, to the degree that they limit the plan of God, show themselves as in effect belonging to another order. If the order of unity is that which leads to Creation and Redemption and if this is therefore, in this sense, 'divine,' the differences and the divergences, even the religious ones, have more to do with a 'human element' and ought to be surpassed within the progress towards the realization of the grandiose plan for unity that presides over creation.⁸

To summarize:

- 1) Today's ecumenism is possible only within the context of the ecclesiology of the "People of God."
- 2) The "People of God" coincide with the whole of humanity.
- 3) The Church itself embraces all of humanity, not in the sense that it is sent to humanity to call them to conversion, but in the sense that all men already belong to the People of God, that is, the Church, even if in different degrees and in an incomplete manner.
- 4) Ecumenism consists of two moments: first, the Church enriches the separated "Churches" with the gifts they lack to arrive at full communion; second, the Church is enriched by their gifts, and in this reciprocal exchange realizes the fullness of its own catholicity.
- 5) The same may be said of the missions.



The annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is held from January 18-25. In recent years in Rome it has become a tradition for the Pope to preside at an ecumenical celebration of Vespers on the last day of this week at the ancient Basilica of St. Paul's Outside the Walls, built not far from where St. Paul was martyred for his faith and where he is buried. In 2005, Pope John Paul II asked Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity to represent him at the service. (Agenzia Fides 19/1/2005—Righe 18; Parole 244)

How far this position is from the traditional teaching of the Church is shown by the following teaching of the Holy Office:

Catholic doctrine ought thus to be proposed and set forth totally and in its entirety: *one ought not to pass over in silence or cover with ambiguous words what Catholic truth teaches* on the true nature and means of justification, on the constitution of the Church, on the primacy of jurisdiction of the Roman pontiff, *on the only true union which is achieved by the return of dissidents to the one true Church of Christ.* It is taught that they, by returning to the Church, do not lose any part of the good that, by the grace of God, has up to now been born in them, but that with their return this good is rather completed and perfected. *There is no need to discuss this subject as though these people should believe that by their return to the Church they should bring it some essential element that they have lacked up to now.*⁹

The Catholic Church has no need of receiving anything that it has not already received from its divine Founder. It is those who unite themselves with or return to the Church who receive that life that they can attain nowhere else.

The “*Subsistit In*”

“The eschatological and pneumatological dynamic had need of conceptual clarification. This clarification was provided by the Council in its Constitution of the Church with the much-discussed formula ‘*subsistit in*’: the Church of Jesus

Christ subsists in the Catholic Church (LG §8)”: here Cardinal Kasper introduces the second pretext for contemporary ecumenism.

This amounts to further confirmation that the “*subsistit in*” is not simply synonymous with “*est*.”¹⁰ The official voice of the Holy See, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, affirmed this clearly in an article of December 5, 1987, by Fr. Giandomenico Mucci, S.J.:

There is no doubt that among the formulations of the reality of the Church offered by the two documents [*Mystici Corporis* of Pius XII and *Lumen Gentium*] there is *a manifest discrepancy*. It is one thing to establish a pacific identity between the Mystical Body of Christ and the Catholic Church and by a necessary corollary affirm that the Roman Catholic Church is the unique Church of Christ; it is something else to say that the Church of Christ subsists in the Catholic Church. The original Vatican II schema for *Lumen Gentium* redacted by Msgr. Philips (February, 1963) and then distributed to the Fathers (April-July of the same year) still identified the one Church of Christ with the Catholic Church, in such a way that the use of *est* prevented the application of the concept and nature of the true Church to other Christian churches....*The passage from est to subsistit happened for prevailing ecumenical reasons.... Lumen Gentium* certainly renounced the formal identification of this reality [Church of Christ and Catholic Church] in order to explain the “numerous elements of sanctification

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and of truth” that exist in other Christian Churches, but it also intended to profess that only the Catholic Church fully realizes the Church of Christ, even if not in its totality.¹¹

Cardinal Kasper confirms this orientation of the Council and elaborates:

The Council was able to take a notable step forward thanks to the *subsistit in*. It wanted to do justice [?!] to the fact that, outside the Catholic Church, there are not only individual Christians but also “elements of the Church” and even Churches and ecclesial Communities which, while not in full communion, **belong by right to the one Church and are means of salvation for their members** (LG §§8,15; UR §3; UUS §§10-14)....As a consequence, **the question of the salvation of non-Catholics is no longer relegated to the individual level** starting from the subjective desire of an individual, as indicated in *Mystici Corporis*, **but is put on the institutional level** in an ecclesiological objective way.

Rereading the two texts just cited together with the Conciliar texts LG §8 and UR §3.2-4, certain passages seem anything but defensible.

1) Outside the Church “salvific elements” can be found; they are interior gifts, such as grace and the theological virtues. Such a statement, if it means “outside the *visible* confines of the Church,” agrees with Tradition, which speaks of the possibility of a supernatural desire (explicit or implicit), infused by God, to belong to the Catholic Church, which desire can be sufficient for obtaining salvation.

2) Outside the Catholic Church there are external and visible elements common to the Catholic Church and the schismatic churches (for example, Sacred Scripture.) This is true if it regards simply the material existence of these elements. It is false, however, if by this it is alleged that such elements cause salvation on their own.

3) Outside the Catholic Church—this is the key point—**there are churches and ecclesial communities that possess the means of salvation.** This is false in every sense, because only the Catholic Church possesses such means. He who separates himself from the Church retains only the fact of being separate; even the valid sacraments that remain belong to the Catholic Church:

There is only one Church called Catholic, and it is she who, in those communities separated from her unity, acts in those things which, within these sects, **remain her own property, whatever they may be.**¹²

The distinction between the means of salvation which belong to the Catholic Church and salvific effects which may extend themselves even beyond her visible confines is the patrimony of the traditional teaching of the Church, well expressed

by the letter of the Holy Office to the archbishop of Boston:

Not only did the Savior command that all nations should enter the Church, but He also decreed **the Church to be a means of salvation**, without which no one can enter the kingdom of eternal glory.

In His infinite mercy God has willed that **the effects, necessary for one to be saved**, of those helps to salvation which are directed toward man’s final end, not by intrinsic necessity, but only by divine institution, can also be obtained in certain circumstances [this is the point!] when those helps are used only in *desire* and *longing*.¹³

4) The last point maintained by Kasper: the other Churches and ecclesial communities, since they have the means of salvation—a statement that we have shown to be false—**are themselves means of salvation.** The logical transition here is simply embarrassing: “Does saying that a piece of gold has fallen into the mud authorize one to say that this piece of gold belongs to the mud? Or, even more, that the mud has become gold?”¹⁴ Furthermore, even supposing that schismatic communities possessed the means of salvation, this does not mean that they themselves would be means of salvation.

The expression “*subsistit in*” was inserted in the conciliar text to make possible such readings as these; passages that betray Tradition in serving the cause of ecumenism. In vain does Cardinal Kasper affirm that “the Council does not affirm any new doctrine, but motivates a new attitude, renounces triumphalism and formulates the traditional understanding of its own identity in a realistic, historically concrete, and, one could say, even a humble manner.” In fact the Council and the cardinal of the Rota maintain what the Church has never taught, but what she has emphatically rejected in every way. If it is permitted to say so, Cardinal Kasper hides a patent betrayal of the Magisterium behind a false humility and an assertion of realism that, as we have seen, is itself an *a priori* supposition. And in fact Kasper himself, in note ten of his intervention, is obliged to admit that this new concept of “elements of the Church” outside of the Catholic Church has as its progenitors...Calvin and Congar!

The Ecclesiology of Communion

At this point it should not be difficult to understand the third element of the new conciliar ecclesiology, namely the ecclesiology of “communion.” Let us hear Cardinal Kasper:

The fundamental idea of Vatican II, and in particular of the Decree on Ecumenism, can be summarized in one word: communion. This term is important for correctly understanding the question of the “*elementa Ecclesiae*”.... The Decree on Ecumenism considers the Church and the separate ecclesial Communities **not as entities that have**

conserved a residual of elements, of diverse consistency depending on the case, **but as integral elements** that retain these elements as part of their overall constitution.

Thus it is not simply a matter of noticing elements of the Catholic Church that are also present in schismatic communities (those elements that we have up to now classified as external and visible elements); it is rather a question of re-evaluating these communities as “integral elements,” that is, as bodies enlivened by grace (note that the cardinal is here speaking of entire communities and not of individuals) and therefore capable of becoming instruments of salvation. How so? Because these communities participate

in the goods of salvation, the *sancta*—the sacraments. Fundamental in all this is baptism. This is the sacrament of the faith, through which the baptized belong to the one body of Christ that is the Church. Non-Catholic Christians are therefore not outside the Church but, on the contrary, already belong to it in a fundamental way (LG §§11, 14; UR §22).

Thus communion already exists, if only partially; this is why one should no longer speak of an “ecumenism of return,” as did all the popes up to Vatican II! Those who belong to schism should not return to the Catholic communion, because they are already in it (which invalidates the very word “schism,” which indicates a separation, just as it invalidates the concept of “excommunication,” which asserts the privation of communion):

The Catholic [!] understanding of ecumenism presupposes **that which already exists**, or rather the unity in the Catholic Church and **partial communion with the other churches and ecclesial communities**, in order to achieve, starting from this incomplete communion, a full communion (UUS §14), which includes unity in faith, sacraments, and ecclesiastical ministry (LG §14; UR §2). Thus, [concludes Cardinal Kasper], the contribution of *Unitatis Redintegratio* to the solution of the ecumenical problem is not the “ecclesiology of elements” but **the distinction between full communion and communion that is not yet full** (UR §3).

This, therefore, is the true novelty of the conciliar decree, which serves as a foundation for all the inanities which have followed! But Pius XI has



Photo by Mike Watson, The Lutheran Magazine

Cardinal Walter Kasper (third from left), the Vatican’s senior ecumenical officer, visited the churchwide offices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Oct. 1-2, 2004. He preached at a “Solemn Evening Vespers” service Oct. 1 at St. Luke’s Lutheran Church, Park Ridge, Illinois. Kasper visited the ELCA in recognition of the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification in Augsburg, Germany.

already uprooted any discourse that could lead to an erroneous “communion that is not full”: “Whosoever therefor is not united with the Body **is no member thereof, neither is he in communion** with Christ its Head.”¹⁵ There are no gradations of communion! Communion either exists or it does not.

A further consideration may be added to these reflections on full communion. The cardinal says that,

Unity in the sense of full communion does not mean uniformity, but unity in diversity and diversity in unity....We can also say that the essence of unity conceived as communion is catholicity in its original sense, which is not confessional but qualitative. It signifies the realization of all the gifts that the individual churches and confessions can contribute.

The mark of catholicity thus surpasses confessional unity.... Thus are legitimized not only the diversity of liturgical and spiritual sensibilities, but also doctrinal differences! Cardinal Kasper had already expressed this concept: “Ecumenism is not achieved through renunciation of our own traditions of faith. **No Church** can make such a renunciation.”¹⁶

Here we are at the antipodes of the traditional teaching of the Church, well summarized by Fr. Billot, S.J.:

If indeed the baptismal character is in itself sufficient to incorporate a man into the Catholic Church, nonetheless this effect in an adult depends on a double condition. The first is that **the social bond of unity in the faith be not hindered by heresy**, whether formal or merely material.¹⁷

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The *conditio sine qua non* is precisely confession of the same integral faith excluded by Kasper.

The other condition for adults is that the *bond of communion not be hindered or undermined*, a bond that may be destroyed in two ways. The first...*through schism*.... The second by sentence of the ecclesiastical authority, that is to say *by excommunication*, when there is full and perfect grounds for excommunication.¹⁸

In such cases the bond of communion is destroyed and not merely attenuated! One belongs to the Catholic Church, however, not merely through baptism, but also by confession of the true Faith and recognition of the authority of the Church; otherwise one does not belong to the Church.

The distinction between full communion and less than full communion can claim no Catholic origin. The source of this doctrine is the Dominican Congar:

There is perfect belonging to the Church—and thus to Christ—when it is lived according to all the principles of the new life and of reconciliation with God, the fullness of which Christ has placed in the Church; there is an imperfect belonging to the Church—and thus to Christ—when one lives only according to one or the other principle of new life....¹⁹

The Church has always taught that even non-Catholics can be in communion with her, if animated by the Holy Ghost with an explicit or implicit desire and intention to adhere to the true Faith and to enter into the Catholic communion. But this does not apply to separated communities as such, but only to some members of these communities (known only to God). The teaching of the Council in this regard is a departure from the Magisterium.

It remains to reiterate another point that distinguishes traditional doctrine from conciliar teaching. Those who may belong to the Catholic Church *in voto* and not *in re* are in a state dangerous to their salvation. Thus Pius XII exhorted such people

to correspond to the interior movements of grace, and to seek to withdraw from that state in which they cannot be sure of their salvation. For even though by an unconscious desire and longing they have a certain relationship with the Mystical Body of the Redeemer, they still remain deprived of those many heavenly gifts and helps which can only be enjoyed in the Catholic Church.²⁰

Conclusion

As Catholics we have the duty to reject these new teachings, which would see a degree of communion where communion has objectively been broken. The Catholic Church is the Church of Christ, outside of which there is no salvation; any other teaching distances itself fearfully from Catholic

teaching. The warning of Pius XII addresses those who would embark on these new paths: “Some say they are not bound by the doctrine, explained in Our Encyclical Letter [*Mystici Corporis*] of a few years ago, and *based on the sources of revelation*, which teaches that *the Mystical Body of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church are one and the same thing.*”²¹

Lanterius

Translated exclusively for Angelus Press from *SiSiNoNo*, January 15, 2005. All emphasis added by the author.

- ¹ Cf. *L'Osservatore Romano*, November 12, 2004, pp.8-9.
- ² Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos*, January 6, 1928, §15.
- ³ Fr. de La Rocque, “Le presupposé œcuménique de *Lumen Gentium*” in *Penser Vatican II quarante ans après: Actes du VI Congrès Théologique de si si no no, Rome, January 2004* (Publications Courrier de Rome, 2004), pp.307-08.
- ⁴ Cf. Leo XIII, *Satis Cognitum*, June 29, 1896.
- ⁵ John Paul II, “The Situation of the World and the Spirit of Assisi: Address to the Cardinals and Curia on Dec. 12, 1986,” *Documentation Catholique*, No. 1933, Feb. 1, 1987, p.134, cited in the document of the FSSPX, *From Ecumenism to the Silent Apostasy* (2004).
- ⁶ Karol Wojtyła, *At the Sources of Renewal: Study on the Application of Vatican II*, p. 170, cited by J. Dörmann, “Vatican Council II and the Theology of John Paul II” in *Église et Contre-Église au Concile Vatican II: Actes du II Congrès Théologique de si si no no, Albano Laziale, January 1996* (Publications of Courrier de Rome, 1996), p.178.
- ⁷ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on certain aspects of the Church understood as communion, cited in J. Dörmann, *op. cit.*, p.179.
- ⁸ John Paul II, “The situation of the world and the spirit of Assisi, discourse to the cardinals and the curia of December 22, 1986,” cited in Fr. Pierre-Marie, “L’unité de l’Église,” in *La tentation de l’œcuménisme: Actes du III Congrès Théologique de si si no no, April 1998* (Publications of Courrier de Rome, 1999), p.22.
- ⁹ Pius XII, Instruction of the Holy Office, Dec. 20, 1949.
- ¹⁰ On the Protestant origins of the “*subsistit in*” see *si si no no*, May 15, 2001, p.5.
- ¹¹ Cited in *si si no no*, March 31, 1988, p.1.
- ¹² St. Augustine, *De Baptismo contra Donatistas*, I.X.14, cited in Fr. de La Rocque, “Le présupposé œcuménique de *Lumen Gentium*,” in *Penser Vatican II*, p.307.
- ¹³ Pius XII, Letter to the Archbishop of Boston, August 8, 1949.
- ¹⁴ Fr. de La Rocque, *op. cit.*, p.303.
- ¹⁵ Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos* Jan. 6, 1928, §15.
- ¹⁶ *Documentation Catholique*, No. 2220, Feb. 20, 2000.
- ¹⁷ L. Billot, S.J., *De Ecclesia Christi* (Rome, 1927), Thesis xi, p.296.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Thesis xii, p.310.
- ¹⁹ Yves Congar, O.P., *Chrétiens désunis: Principes d’un “œcuménisme” catholique, Unam Sanctam* No. 1 (Paris: Cerf, 1937), pp.283-84, cited by Fr. Pierre-Marie, “L’unité de l’Église” in *La tentation de l’œcuménisme*, p.27.
- ²⁰ Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, June 29, 1943, §103.
- ²¹ Pius XII, *Humani Generis*, August 12, 1950, §27.

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