



# APPROPINQUANTE CONCILIO

lotu Proprio of His Holiness, Pope John XXIII



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# Messages of His Holiness, Pope John XXIII ON THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

APPROPINQUANTE CONSILIO, Motu Proprio of His Holiness  
Pope John XXIII August 6, 1962

RESUME OF THE REGULATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL. Pre-  
pared by the Press Office of the Second Vatican  
Ecumenical Council

RADIO ADDRESS TO THE WORLD, given on September 11, 1962  
by Pope John

ADDRESS GIVEN ON JUNE 20, 1962 by His Holiness at the  
concluding meeting of the 7th and final session of the  
Central Preparatory Commission.

PENTECOST ADDRESS given in St. Peter's Basilica on June 10,  
1962

Translations provided by the NCWC News Service



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## APPROPINQUANTE CONCILIO

Motu Proprio of His Holiness, Pope John XXIII

August 6, 1962

With the advent of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Our soul is filled with a great joy thinking of the now close and marvelous spectacle which will be offered by the multitude of bishops gathered together in the beloved city of Rome, coming from all parts of the world to study, together with Us, near the tomb of St. Peter, the most grave problems of the Church.

Therefore We give deep thanks to God, not only because He has benevolently given Us the inspiration to initiate such important work but also because He has continually guided with His help the preparatory labors of the council. This confirms Us constantly more in the confidence that the abundance of divine blessings will not be wanting for the completion of the work begun, just as they were abundant at the happy beginning.

The Catholic Church expects multiple fruits from this great gathering. And she, who is the most holy spouse of Christ and the mother and teacher of all peoples, desires above all else that the light of truth reaches all her sons, including those who live far distant from her, so that they may always be more fired by the ardor of charity. It is, in fact, the heavenly values of truth and charity which help to the greatest extent in achieving peace and unity. That which the coming council proposes to achieve is found in that mandate which Jesus Christ entrusted to the Apostles and which echoes in all places and at all times: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you".(1) There are, therefore, three tasks which are expected of the Bishops, the successors of the Apostles, that is, teaching, sanctifying and governing. So that they might carry out this mandate in a worthy manner, Jesus Christ has benignly promised to be with them until the end of time.

Men must be taught that which concerns the true Faith and good morals, and there must always be remembered more what the intimate nature of the Church is and what are her tasks and her ends. In fact, the more radiantly the face of Mother Church

(1) *Matthew* 28, 10

shines, with so much more intense ardor will men love her, and with all the more docility of mind will they use the means of salvation offered by her and be obedient to her laws.

Moreover, new inventions have enlarged the dominion of men over nature, and since there is also in this, a similarity to the appearance of divine wisdom which "is the brightness. . .of eternal light and the unspotted mirror of God's majesty and the image of His goodness"(2), it is to be hoped that men may draw encouragement from this to improve with more attentive study their morals and to achieve that intimate perfection of life toward which the human mind tends by its nature.

The approaching ecumenical council, by virtue of the number of those who will participate in its meetings, evidently will be the greatest of the councils held by the Church thus far. And this fact, while a reason of comfort, engenders also in the mind worries and concern, since, as it is clear, it will not be an easy thing to store up wisely for use the counsels of an assembly so numerous, to follow the voice of so many speakers, to examine in depth the wishes and desires of all and to put into effect all that has been established.

What inspires confidence in Our mind is the certainty that the Fathers of the council, though they differ according to nation, race and language, are all Our brothers in Christ and all act in one single and similar spirit, so that truly according to the words of Jesus Christ they will be able to shine as the light of the world and will be able to produce fruits "in all goodness and justice and truth".(3)

In order that these fruits may be abundant, We will be helped above all by Almighty God, whom We have invoked with all Our prayers through Jesus Christ, the one and only Mediator between God and men, and through the Most Blessed Virgin Mary and her spouse, St. Joseph, under whose special patronage We have wished to place the council. The common work of all those who take part in the council will also help, so long as it is in harmony and proceeds according to the prescribed order. This is why We have deemed it opportune to establish certain norms which, taking into account the special nature and circumstances of this council, favor the beginning and the honest

(1) *Matthew* 28, 10

(2) *Wisdom* 7, 26

(3) *Ephesians* 5, 8-9

progress of the work of such a vast assembly and consequently "let all things be done properly and in order".(4)

Therefore, after mature reflection, through this *motu proprio* and on Our Apostolic authority, We decree and promulgate the following provisions and We order that they be observed faithfully by all at the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council.

We prescribe therefore that all that which is established in this Our *motu proprio* remain definitely established and be observed irrespective of any other provisions to the contrary, however worthy of special attention.

Given in Rome, at St. Peter's, the 6th of August, the feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, of the year 1962, the fourth of Our pontificate.

(4) *Corinthians* 14, 40

# RESUME OF THE REGULATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL

Prepared and distributed by the Press Office of the  
Second Vatican Ecumenical Council

The regulations which establish the norms for the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council consist of three parts: the first concerns the people who will participate in the council or who are engaged in work pertaining to its progress; the second establishes the rules which must be observed during the council; the third indicates the procedure for the meetings.

## PART ONE: The Participants

The first part is divided into nine chapters which are subdivided into 18 articles, including an introduction in which it is stated who are the council Fathers and their obligation, according to the Code of Canon Law, to have themselves represented by a deputy should it be impossible for them to attend personally. In the introduction there are also listed the people who perform tasks during the council: theologians, canonists, experts on different disciplines, the Secretary General, the under secretaries, the masters of ceremonies, those who assign the seats, the notaries, the promoters, the ballot examiners, the scribes-archivists, the readers, the interpreters, the translators, the stenographers, the technicians.

The first three chapters define the essential structural outline and duties of the public sessions, of the general congregations and of the council commissions.

The public sessions are presided over by the Pope and in his presence the council Fathers express their vote on the decrees and canons previously discussed and prepared at the general congregations.

The general congregation is presided over, in the name and with the authority of the Pope himself, by one of the 10 cardinals chosen and named by the Holy Father to form the Council of the Presidency.

The council commissions amend, and eventually prepare, according to the opinion expressed by the Fathers during the general congregations, the projects of the decrees and canons.



There are 10 council commissions and they are composed as follows:

- One cardinal president named by the Pope;
- One or two vice presidents elected by the president from among the members of the commission;
- One secretary chosen by the president from among the theologians or canonists or experts of the council;
- Twenty-four members, of whom 16 will be elected by the Fathers of the council and eight named by the Pope.
- The 10 council commissions are named according to the subjects they must examine:
  - 1) The Doctrinal Commission for Faith and Morals;
  - 2) Commission for Bishops and the government of dioceses;
  - 3) Commission for the Oriental Churches;
  - 4) Commission for the Discipline of the Sacraments;
  - 5) Commission for the Discipline of the Clergy and the Christian people;
  - 6) Commission for the Religious;
  - 7) Commission for the Missions;
  - 8) Commission for Sacred Liturgy;
  - 9) Commission for Seminaries, Studies and Catholic schools;
  - 10) Commission for the Apostolate of the Laity, for the Press and Entertainment.

As one can see, the council commissions follow almost the same outline as the preparatory commissions, with the exception of the 10th which combines the preparatory Commission for the Lay Apostolate with the preparatory Secretariat for Press and Entertainment.

To these 10 commissions there are added moreover: a) a Secretariat for Extraordinary Questions of the Council. The duty of this secretariat will be to examine possible new problems of special importance proposed by the Fathers and, if need be, to refer them to the Holy Father. This secretariat is presided over by the Cardinal Secretary of State and its secretary is the secretary general of the council.

b) The Secretariat for the Union of Christians, c) the Technical-Organizational Commission and d) the Administrative Secretariat. The last three bodies continue to exist because they have not finished their task and they keep their characteristic nature and structure of the preparatory period.

The fourth chapter establishes the composition and the duties of the Administrative Tribunal. This was constituted with the duty of defining possible disciplinary questions. It consists of 10 members and is presided over by a cardinal. Both members and cardinal are named by the Pope.

The fifth chapter illustrates the qualifications and the duties of the council experts, that is, of the theologians, canonists and others. They are designated by the Pope. They take part in the general congregations but without right to speak or to be interrogated. They collaborate with the members of the council commissions, on the invitation of the individual presidents of these commissions, for the purpose of compiling and correcting the texts and of preparing reports.

The council Fathers can moreover make use not only of the official council experts but also of theologians, canonists and private experts who, though bound by secrecy regarding the questions discussed in the council of which they are informed, cannot however take part in the general congregations or in the meetings of the council commissions.

The sixth chapter, subdivided into four long articles, deals with the General Secretariat, directed by the Secretary General who is assisted by two under-secretaries. This secretariat is subdivided into four different offices:

- 1) The Office of Sacred Ceremonies, to which belong the the prefect of ceremonies, the masters of ceremonies and the people in charge of assigning the seats;
- 2) The Office of Juridic Acts, consisting of notaries, promoters and ballot examiners;
- 3) The Office for recording and preserving of the council acts, in which work the scribe-archivists, the readers, the interpreters, translators and stenographers;
- 4) The Office formed by all the people responsible for the technical equipment used for recordings, voting, etc.

All the members of these different offices depend on the secretary general and are named by the Holy Father. Their individual duties which are easily identified by the definition of their appointments, are subsequently clearly defined in the regulations.

The seventh chapter outlines the duties of the two custodians of the council, who are also named by the Holy Father.

The eighth chapter of the first part deals with the observers who are sent by the Christian churches separated from the Catholic Church.

They can attend the public sessions and the general congregations, with the exception of special cases indicated by the Council of the Presidency; they cannot, however, intervene in the discussions or vote. They cannot take part in the meetings of the council commissions without the permission of the lawful authority. They can report to their communities on the council meetings, but they are bound by secrecy regarding any other person. The Secretariat for Union is the official body of the council for the necessary contacts with the observers and it is the duty of the secretariat to make the necessary provisions enabling them to follow the work of the council.

## **PART TWO: The Norms Which Must Be Observed at the Council**

The second part consists of 12 chapters subdivided into 25 articles.

They contain first of all indications regarding the procedure for convoking council meetings, and establish that the public session and the general congregations will be held in St. Peter's, whereas the commissions will meet in premises as close as possible to the basilica.

At the public sessions all the Fathers having episcopal rank, as well as abbots and prelates, will wear a white cope and miter. But at the general congregations the cardinals will wear red or violet cassocks, according to the liturgical seasons, with rochet, short cape and mozetta; patriarchs will dress in violet with rochet, short cape and mozetta; archbishops and bishops will wear violet cassock with only the rochet and short cape; abbots, prelates nullius and the superiors of religious orders will wear their own choir dress.

Precedence is established as follows: cardinals, patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, abbots and prelates nullius, abbots primate, abbots superior of monastic congregations, the superiors general of orders and of the exempted religious clerical congregations. Procurators also have their special

place according to order of precedence; a special place is also reserved to the council experts.

The fourth and fifth chapters establish the norms for the profession of faith and for the oath of secrecy.

The sixth and seventh chapters prescribe that Latin is the only language which can be used at public sessions, at the general congregations, at the meetings of the Administrative Tribunal and for the compiling of the acts. The readers, interpreters, and translators are held at the disposal of the Fathers to make the use of Latin easier for them.

At the meetings of the council commissions modern languages can also be used in addition to Latin, but subject to immediate translation into Latin.

The eighth chapter provides indication of how the discussions in the council hall must proceed.

- a) Every question which is to be discussed must be presented and illustrated at the general congregation by a relator who is designated by the president of the commission involved;
- b) Every Father who intends to intervene in order to approve, reject or amend the text, must present a request to the presidency, through the general secretary, and, when his turn comes, he must clearly outline the reasons for his intervention, subsequently handing in writing the possible amendments he proposes. The Fathers are requested not to exceed, if possible, 10 minutes when they speak to illustrate their thought.
- c) The general congregation, after hearing the reply of the relator, will vote on the individual proposals and amendments, deciding on whether they are to be rejected or included in the project.
- d) If the amendments are accepted, the relator--once the text has been returned to the council commission for correction--will have to submit again the new formula for the examination of the general congregation.
- e) If the amended project is not approved in all its parts by the general congregation, the same routine will have to be followed again for its ultimate perfection.

Chapter nine indicates the formulae and the methods which must govern the ballots: *placet* (yes), *non placet* (no), at public sessions in the presence of the Holy Father; *placet*, *non placet*, or *placet justa modum* (yes, but with changes), at the general congre-

gations and at the commissions. Whoever casts a ballot *placet* *justa modum* must explain in writing the reasons for his reservations.

Ballots are cast with special cards, which will be examined by a new mechanical system unless the president of the assembly decides otherwise case by case.

There must be a two-thirds majority in the ballots taken at public sessions, general congregations and at meetings of the council commissions, unless special provisions to the contrary are decided by the Supreme Pontiff.

The 10th chapter deals with the possibility of new questions being presented for discussion by the council. In order that these may be examined by the Council of the Presidency, the person submitting them must present them in writing together with the reasons which justify his act. But they must always be questions concerning problems pertaining to public welfare and of such importance that they demand the attention of the council.

The last chapters of the second part forbid the Fathers explicitly--referring to Canon 225 of canon law--from leaving the council before it has ended. In the event that any one of them has to leave Rome for urgent reasons while the council is still meeting, the permission of the president will have to be requested; when one has to be absent from a meeting of the public sessions or of the general congregations, the Council of the Presidency in this case too must be warned through the secretary general.

## **PART THREE: Procedure of the Meetings**

The third part consists of only three chapters which are divided into 27 articles. This part envisages in all its details the procedure of the meetings of the public sessions, the general congregations and the council commissions.

Preceded and accompanied by special liturgical ceremonies, the public sessions are presided over by the Holy Father. After reading from a special pulpit the prepared decrees and canons, the secretary general asks for the vote of the Fathers, the result of which is immediately communicated to the Pope.

If the Supreme Pontiff approves in his turn these decrees and canons, he pronounces the solemn formula: "The decrees and canons just read are pleasing to the Fathers (without exception, or with the exception of--votes to the contrary.)"

And We also, with the approval of the sacred council, decree, establish and promulgate them as they have been read."

The general congregations are held on the basis of a precise calendar, which is communicated beforehand to the Fathers. Every day work begins with the Holy Mass which is celebrated by a council Father who is designated by the president and with the prayer of the "*Adsumus*"; it ends with the prayer of the "*Agimus*". According to the procedure outlined in the second part, every project is examined and perfected. When the time of its final compilation is reached, the president submits it to the Holy Father, to permit him, if he deems it opportune, to accept it for approval at the public session.

In their turn, the council commissions base the procedure of their meetings on the general congregations, with the exception of the special and individual needs of the task entrusted to them: that of preparing the projects which are to be discussed, presenting them to the general congregations, amending them according to the proposals expressed by the Fathers during the joint meetings in the council hall.

# DIAMO IL TESTO

## Radio Address of September 11, 1962

The great anticipation of the ecumenical council, just a month away from its official opening, is shining in the eyes and the hearts of all the children of the holy and blessed Catholic Church.

In the course of three years of preparation, an array of chosen minds assembled from all parts of the world and of every tongue, united in sentiments and in purpose, has gathered together so abundant a wealth of doctrinal and pastoral material as to provide the episcopate of the entire world, when they meet beneath the vaults of the Vatican basilica, themes for a most wise application of the Gospel teaching of Christ which for 20 centuries has been the light of humanity redeemed by His blood.

We are therefore, by the grace of God, proceeding satisfactorily.

The prophetic words of Jesus, pronounced in view of the final consummation of the world, inspire the good and generous dispositions of men--especially at certain periods in history--to a fresh start towards the highest peaks: "*Levate capita vestra, quoniam appropinquat redemptio vestra*" [Lift up your heads, because your redemption is at hand.] (1)

Considered in its spiritual preparation, the council which is to meet in a few weeks, seems to merit that invitation of Our Lord: "*Videte omnes arbores cum iam producant ex se fructum. Ita et vos.. scitote quoniam prope est regnum Dei*" [Behold the fig tree, and all the trees. When they put forth their buds, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things coming to pass, know that the kingdom of God is near.](2)

(1) Cfr. *Luke* 21, 20-33

(2) *Ibid.*

This phrase, "*Regnum Dei*," (The Kingdom of God) expresses fully and precisely the tasks of the council. *Regnum Dei* signifies and is in reality the Church of Christ: one, holy, catholic and apostolic.

Just as Jesus, the Word of God made man, founded her, for 20 centuries He has preserved her, and still today vivifies her by His presence and His grace. Through her, He is continually renewing the ancient miracle which during successive ages, at times harsh and difficult, bore her in adversity and in prosperity, thus multiplying the victories of the spirit: Victories of truth over error, of good over evil, of love and peace over divisions and opposition.

### The Terms of the Contradiction

Good and evil are with us still and will remain with us in the future. This is because the free will of man will always have the freedom to express itself and the possibility of going astray. But the final and eternal victory will be with Christ and His Church in every chosen soul and in the chosen souls of every people.

It seems happy and opportune to Us here to recall the symbolism of the Easter candle. At one point in the liturgy, see how His name resounds: "*Lumen Christi*." The Church of Christ, from every point of the earth, responds, "*Deo gratias, Deo gratias*," as though to say: "Yes. *Lumen Christi; Lumen ecclesiae; Lumen gentium*."

What else has a council ever been, in fact, but a renewal of this meeting with the countenance of the risen Christ, glorious and immortal King, radiant for the whole Church, for the salvation, the joy and the splendor of mankind?

It is in the light of this apparition that the ancient psalm comes very seasonably: "*Extolle super nos lumen vultus tui Domine. Dedisti laetiviam in cor meum*." [O Lord, let the light of your countenance shine upon us! You put gladness into my heart.](3)

A true joy for the universal Church of Christ is what the ecumenical council intends to be. Its reason for existence is the continuation, or better still the most energetic revival, of the response of the entire world, of the modern world, to the

(3) Cfr. Ps. 4



testament of the Lord, formulated in those words which He pronounced with divine solemnity and with hands stretched out towards the farthest ends of the world: "*Euntes ergo—docete omnes gentes—baptizantes eos in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti—docentes eos servare omnia quaecumque dixi vobis.*" [Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.](4)

The Church wishes to be sought again as she is, in her internal structure--vitality in her own behalf--in the act of presenting anew, above all to her children, the treasures of enlightening faith and of sanctifying grace, which take their inspiration from those final words of Christ. They are words which express the preeminent task of the Church, her titles of service and of honor, namely, to vivify, to teach and to pray.

Considered in the relations of her vitality in her own behalf, that is, in face of the needs and demands of peoples--those human circumstances which turn them towards the esteem and enjoyment of earthly goods--the Church considers it her sacred duty to live up to her teaching: "To pass through earthly goods in such a way as not to lose those which are eternal."(5)

It is from this sense of responsibility before the duties of the Christian called to live as a man among men, as a Christian among Christians, that so many others, who although not Christians, in reality ought to feel themselves drawn by good example to become Christians.

This is the door that leads to that so-called activity, exterior yes, but entirely apostolic, of the Church, from which those words take their vigor and radiating power: "*Docentes eos servare omnia quaecumque mandavi vobis.*" [Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.]

The world indeed has need of Christ, and it is the Church which must bring Christ to the world. The world has its problems and it is with anguish at times that it seeks a solution. It goes without saying that the busy preoccupation to solve them with timeliness, but also with rectitude, can be an obstacle to the spread of the whole truth and of that grace which sanctifies.

Man seeks the love of a family around the domestic hearth. He seeks daily bread for himself and for his dear ones, his wife and his children. He aspires toward and feels the duty to live in

(4) Cfr. *Matt.* 28, 19-20

(5) Cfr. Third Sunday After Pentecost; Collect.

peace both within the national community and in relation with the rest of the world. He is aware of the attractions of the spirit which leads him to educate and raise himself. Jealous of his liberty, he does not refuse to accept its legitimate limitations in order to correspond more fully with his social duties.

These most grave problems press ever upon the heart of the Church.

Hence, she has made them an object of attentive study. The ecumenical council will be able to present, in clear language, solutions which are demanded by the dignity of man and of his vocation as a Christian. Here are some of them: The fundamental equality of all peoples in the exercise of rights and duties within the entire family of nations; The strenuous defense of the sacred character of matrimony (which imposes upon the married couple an understanding and generous love, from which results the procreation of the children), considered in its religious and moral aspect, within the framework of the gravest responsibilities of a social nature, in time and for eternity.

Those doctrines which favor religious indifference or denial of God and of the supernatural order and those doctrines which ignore Providence in history and exalt out of all proportion the person of the individual man, with the danger of removing him from his social responsibilities, should hear again from the Church those courageous and sublime words already expressed in the important document *Mater et Magistra*. in which is summed up the thought of two thousand years of the history of Christianity.

### Another Point of Enlightenment

Where the underdeveloped countries are concerned, the Church presents herself as she is. She wishes to be the church of all, and especially the church of the poor.

Every offense against and violation of the Fifth and Sixth Commandments of the Holy Decalogue; the neglect of tasks which flow from the Seventh Commandment; the miseries of social life which cry for vengeance in the sight of God; all this must be recalled and deplored.

The duty of every man, the impelling duty of the Christian, is to look upon what is superfluous in the light of the needs of others, and to see to it that the administration and distribution of created goods are placed at the advantage of all.

This is called the spread of the social and community sense which is innate in true Christianity. And this is to be energetically put into action.

What is to be said concerning the relations between the Church and civil society?

We are living in the midst of a new political world. One of the fundamental rights which the Church can never renounce is that of religious liberty, which is not merely freedom of worship.

The Church vindicates and teaches this liberty, and on that account, she continues to suffer anguishing pain in many countries.

The Church cannot renounce this liberty, because it is inseparable from the service she is bound to fulfill. This service does not stand as the corrective or the complement of what other institutions ought to do, or have appropriated to themselves, but it is an essential and irreplaceable element of the design of Providence to place man upon the path of truth and liberty which are the building stones upon which human civilization is raised.

The ecumenical council is about to assemble seventeen years after the end of the Second World War. For the first time in history, the Fathers of the Council belong, in reality, to all peoples and nations. Each of them will bring his contribution of intelligence and of experience, to cure and heal the wounds of the two conflicts which have changed profoundly the face of all countries.

The mothers and fathers of families detest war. The Church, mother of all without distinction, will raise once more that plea which rises from the depth of the ages and from Bethlehem and from there on Calvary, in the hope that it may spread abroad in a prayerful precept of peace: a peace that prevents armed conflicts; peace which should have its roots and its guarantee in the heart of each man.

It is natural that the council in its doctrinal structure, and in the pastoral action it promotes, should wish to express that yearning of peoples to travel upon the path which Providence has assigned to each one; to cooperate in the triumph of peace and to render it more noble, more just and more meritorious for all this earthly existence.

The bishops, pastors of Christ's flock, "*ex omni natione quae sub coelo est*" [Devout men from every nation under heaven](6) will recall the concept of peace, not only in its negative aspect, which is the detesting of armed conflicts, but even more in its positive demands which require from every man a knowledge and constant practice of his own duties: hierarchy, harmony and service of spiritual values open to all; possession and use of the powers of nature and science, use which is directed only and exclusively to the aim of elevating the standard of the spiritual as well as the economical welfare of all nations.

Living together, coordination and integration are the noblest of ideals which echo in the international gathering, bringing hope, instilling courage.

The council desires to exalt, in a holier and more solemn form, the deeper application of fellowship and love which are natural needs of man and imposed on the Christian as rules for his relationship between man and man, between people and people.

O mystery of Divine Providence, by which the imminent celebration of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council once again uncovers and exalts, in an incomparable light, the duty of service and spiritual dominion of the apostolic chair, a duty which embraces the destiny of all humanity!

Rightly did Prudentius, the ancient Christian poet, sing in his day of the triumph of the Divine Redeemer in the act of designating Rome the center of the new era in the history of the world, an era which had taken its inspiration and name from Christ.(7)

During this preparation for the council, it has been possible to prove this.

The precious links in the chain of love, which already from the first centuries of the Christian era, the grace of Our Lord had forged with the different countries of Europe and of the then-known world for the perfection of Catholic unity, and which through various circumstances seemed, later on, to grow weak and in fact to break, now attract the attention of all those who are not insensitive to the new breath which the project of the council has aroused here and there, in anxious desire of fraternal reunion in the embrace of the ancient common mother, *Sancta et universalis mater ecclesia*.

(6) Cfr. Act. 2,5

(7) Cfr. Prud. Peristeph. Hymn. II, VV 461-470: P.L. 60, Col. 324.

Here is the reason of Our serene joy which surpasses the first spark which We had when We first began the preparation of this world gathering.

O the beauty of the petition in the liturgy: "*Uno cuncto populo Christiano pacem et unitatem largiri digneris.*" [Deign to grant peace and unity to a united Christian people.]

O the overflowing joy of the heart on reading the 17th chapter of St. John: "*Ut omnes unum sint.*" [That all may be one.] *Unum*: one in thought, in word and in work.

The ancient bard of the glorious deeds of Christendom(8) returning to his stimulating motive for universal cooperation in justice and fellowship among all the nations, with telling force loves to recall to all the children of the Church that at Rome the two princes of the apostolate, Peter and Paul, are always in attendance.

Paul, is the great vessel of election specially reserved to announce the Gospel to those who have not yet received it and Simon Peter, who for twenty centuries, seated in the first chair, is ready to open and to shut the door of Heaven: to open, you understand, dear children, to open the door in this life and for eternity.

With forceful words, he addresses the pagan idols--begone from your places, leave the people of Christ in perfect liberty. It is Paul who drives you out. It is the blood of Peter and Paul which cries out against you.

In milder tone, the humble successor of Peter and Paul in the government and apostolate of the Catholic Church, on this vigil of the council, loves to address all his children throughout the world, *ex oriente et occidente* (from the East and the West), of every rite, of every language, with the prayer of the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost.

It would not be possible to find a happier expression more in accord with the individual and collective preparation for the success of the ecumenical council.

We desire all throughout the world to repeat and to get others to repeat with insistence this prayer during these weeks from September 11 to October 11, the opening day of that great conciliar assembly. These words seem to come from Heaven.

They give the note to the choral chant of the Pope, the bishops, the clergy and the people. One canticle alone rises up,

(8) Cfr. Prud. *Ibid.*

mighty, harmonious, penetrating: "*Lumen Christi, Deo gratias.*" This light shines and will shine throughout the ages. Yes, *Lumen Christi, Ecclesia Christi, Lumen gentium.*

*Almighty and merciful God, through whose grace your faithful are able to serve you with dignity and joy, grant, we beseech you, that we may run without any hindrance towards the attainment of your promises. We, from all parts of the earth and from Heaven, thus implore you. Through the merits of Jesus Christ, Master and Saviour of all. Amen."*

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# SEPTIMO HOC CONVENTU

## Address of June 20, 1962

With this seventh session of the components of the central commission, the period of preparation of our Second Vatican Ecumenical Council draws to a close in great joy and common satisfaction.

It is a source of consolation to the humble Servant of the servants of the Lord to recall the first and spontaneous flicker of the small flame which animated the ecumenical council as it was made known to your eyes and hearts. We conveyed it in fraternal confidence to the Lord Cardinals there in that Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls near the tomb of the Apostle of the Gentiles on the feast of his conversion, January 25, 1959.

Three years of good labor and of faithful cooperation have passed. They have been three years--from the constitution of the antepreparatory commission (May 17, 1959) to the constitution of the ten commissions and the three secretariats (June 5, 1959)--persevering and silent but very prodigious labor during all of 1960, until the advent in its turn of the noble service of the great and superior Central Preparatory Commission under the presidency of the Pope, beginning on June 12, 1961, and continuing until today.

Truly, We are pleased to repeat, they were three years of magnificent, devoted, ardent and edifying activity. A few hours still remain. Tomorrow during the solemnity of the feast of Corpus Christi we will again see the flame which once humbly appeared at the tomb of St. Paul.

We will see it grown now into a great blaze in the splendid vastness of St. Peter's Square, where an immense throng will take it up like a torch, chanting the praise of Jesus Christ in the glory of the august Sacrament, invoked here in this chosen place on earth as the "mystery of faith--mystery of unity--mystery of peace."

The celebration of these days, namely, the completion of the three years, beginning at the Temple of St. Paul, first preacher of the Gospel, and brought to the Basilica of St. Peter,

Prince of the Apostles and head of the Universal Church, could not be more happy nor more solemn.

The first and most important undertaking for the success of an ecumenical council is in its detailed and accurate preparation. Therefore, let these words flow constantly from our lips: "Let us bless the Lord and give thanks to God." For what better could we have expected in the measure of human possibility? We thank the Lord abundantly for it.

After having arrived at this point in the official and final preparation, three months of recollection will follow. In that time many tasks must be performed by the Office of the General Secretariat and by the Technical Commission to prepare all things and set them in right order.

The particular cooperation of the individual Fathers of the council scattered through the world will be even more intense and lively. Furthermore, they will have time to dispose their minds, reading, meditating and annotating the projects which will be sent to each of them shortly.

No more welcome service than this could be rendered for the full success of the council in its solemn deliberation from October 11 onward: namely, that whatever any of the Fathers may consider opportune should be carefully noted and made known by transmitting it to the new General Secretariat--or to the person of the Cardinal Secretary of State of His Holiness--by means of a private letter.

Let all these things, however, contribute toward a measured wisdom and a spirit of clarity, and let them be done with the best possible dispositions, so that difficulties may be overcome and everything be dealt with in a spirit of greatest peace.

During these last meetings, projects prepared by the preparatory commission have been examined which deal with important theological problems: relations between Church and State; the needs of the Church; ecumenism; ecclesiastical discipline; relations between bishops and Religious; the formation of clerics; Catholic schools; Catholic associations; and the apostolate.

The subcommissions for amendments and for interrelated material are working to perfect the projects discussed at this last session of the Central Commission. The subcommission for regulations has also reached its last phase.

Following the complex work of the past three years, Our spirit has experienced so much joy and serenity in seeing and daily admiring the intelligent, fervent and joyful effort of all the



lord cardinals, bishops, general moderators of orders and religious congregations, rectors of universities and of ecclesiastical atheneums, prelates and members of the secular and regular clergy--and personalities of the laity to a certain extent--who have shared in the constructive preparation of this "mystical tower" which is worthy of the wish of peace and abundance expressed in psalm 121.

Our intentions are forthright and clear.

This Holy Church, founded by Jesus as a City of God, rises peacefully among the towers built by men. The latter do not tend to seek the glory of the Lord--which We say without taking away from personal and perhaps good intentions--and they tend instead to become a source of anxiety and permanent danger for the peace of the world.

But We intend to continue in Our good work, with all the more enthusiasm now that We see the elements designed to assure its definite success being drawn up and composed with decision and joy.

According to a dictum of ancient wisdom, "a work well begun is completed by half." We are still at the beginning, to tell the truth, but the excellent performances which have been multiplied through the works and discussions of these past three years, first by the individual commissions and then by the great Central Commission, all have given the whole world an edifying spectacle of great living devotion to the Holy Church.

Therefore We harbor the hope that God in the abundance of His blessings will deign to reward the fraternal accord and sincere will which demonstrate the exceptional forces in the Church, the heritage of Jesus Christ, which still now exists, visible and invisible, natural and supernatural, temporal and eternal.

Now that we have arrived at the point of your departure, venerable brothers and beloved sons, each of you to your own diocese or to the different forms of your own episcopal and priestly ministry, and also as a kind of rest from your prolonged efforts and as a preparation for the new work which awaits you, We ask you to kindly transmit, above all to the souls with whom you will come in contact, not only the excellent impressions of all that which your eyes have seen, and of the contribution which each one may have given toward the preparation of the council here in Rome, but also of the clear light--a light, We say, not of a peaceful twilight, but of a happy dawn--which has

been announced for the coming October under the auspices of the Mother of Jesus and our Mother.

Admonish all that prayers be said in union with Us in greater number and more zealously in these days. Urge prayers in the different forms which your pastoral care will suggest to you as being most fitting.

This contribution of prayer on the part of the priests and the faithful, whether said in private or in common, is of substantial importance for the council. May it be welcomed by all if to the frequent communications already made We add invitation upon invitation. The Holy Mass, the Breviary, the Rosary: these are great resources for nourishment in which religious fervor is promoted in Christian people, souls are confirmed and stimulated to pious joy.

Venerable brothers and beloved sons, We ask you in conclusion to accept another paternal suggestion. The imminent ecumenical council continues to enrich a literature which We like to consider as its own, and which is pleasing to the spirit and worthy of respect. We follow it with great pleasure as much as Our circumstances allow.

But We would like to see you join Us in placing a splendid crown upon these writings, as a daily reminder of the great and providential event which is about to take place and as a special preparation for it.

We refer to the pages of the Gospel of St. John. Read these and meditate upon them. Read chapter one, where the heavens are opened, as it were, and the mystery of the Word of God is exposed to contemplation. Read there also where John the Baptist, the Precursor of the Lord, makes the earth tremble and shake with the sound of his preaching. See how the testimony of his personal austerity, his word and his blood accompany and enliven the whole narration of the evangelists.

Read also the tenth chapter of this Gospel with its parable of the Good Shepherd, from which We summarized the hopes of Our pontificate in the discourse of November 4, 1958, the day of Our solemn coronation in the Vatican basilica.

And, finally, read the last discourses of the Lord, which are contained in chapters 14, 15, 16 and 17; above all the great prayer of Jesus which is in chapter 17, "That they all may be one."

Allow Us a short memory which is a moving reference to Our humble person. At the beginning of Our supreme pontificate

We decided to call Ourselves John, a name which had been almost completely ignored for the past six centuries (1316-1958).

We decided on this name, which is very dear to Us and to the whole Church, because it was the name of two personalities who were and who are closest to Christ, the Divine Redeemer to mankind and the Founder of the Church.

John the Precursor of the Lord, We repeat, offers the testimony of true light. He offers it still and sounds loudly the eternal testimony of justice and truth--to the clergy, to the people, and to the whole world.

May this most holy prophet also assist us in the carrying out of the Vatican council, and may he give a worthy contribution to it, that a perfect people may be prepared for God, that straight paths be opened and the rough ways be made smooth, by which to reach Christ the King, that all mankind may see the salvation of God.

To the other John, the beloved disciple, fell the task of reviving forever the great confidences which Jesus made to His apostles. The whole evangelical message breathes in those sublime pages.

It is Jesus who in the hour of separation wishes to perpetuate the great teaching with His intimates. At that last point of His earthly life, before pronouncing the "Arise, let us go" which opens the way to Calvary, the Master reviews the fundamental lines of the divine plan by which men should recognize in themselves their dignity as sons of God and turn with determined will toward perfection of life and works.

At this point, which is the highest in the evangelical narration, between the institution of the Most Holy Eucharist and the Sacrifice of Golgotha, the Church, humble and sublime, draws those characteristics, almost as a reflection from the face of its Divine Founder, which mark it and accent in it the mandate to enlighten nations, save men and sanctify society.

From this simple reference you can draw good inspiration; truth and charity shine in all its pages. They are the indispensable elements for a holy and sanctifying priestly life, and are the same for every good Christian.

Whoever trusts in the Lord Jesus receives this light, this comfort, this tender exhortation, in the assurance of the victory of His Church, one, holy, catholic and apostolic, here on earth and for endless ages.

To all of you: greetings, blessings and peace. Amen.

# Pentecost Address

Following is the text of an address on Pentecost,  
June 10, 1962 in St. Peter's Basilica

"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be witnesses for Me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the very ends of the earth"(1)

Venerable brothers and beloved sons:

The last meeting of the risen Jesus with His apostles and disciples was truly a banquet of grace and of joy. The words of St. Luke, "*Convalescens,*" "*loquens de regno Dei,*" sum up all its beauty and delight.

A command was given to those close to Him not to leave the city but to remain on Zion, to await the Holy Spirit whom the Father would send, "whom the Father will send in My name"(2); the assurance of the testimony they would render to the Divine Rabbi, the Victor over death and the Ruler of the future. "You shall be witnesses for Me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the very ends of the earth"(3).

Oh, what words! What words these were that were spoken by Jesus to the first confidants of His thoughts and of His heart. What a bright and colorful insight into the future of His Church:

"You shall be My witnesses": words pronounced in a tone of prophecy and of solemnity, as an investiture for the continuation of the apostolate which He entrusted to His own, for the coming of His kingdom of redemption and of salvation among all nations and throughout the centuries.

## THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST AND THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

The kingdom of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Word Incarnate, the Lord of the universe, began in fact then. It was the starting point for the testimony of history of the Catholic Apostolic Church, one and holy.

(1) Acts 1,8

(2) John 14,26

(3) Acts 1,8

Twenty centuries have elapsed. Grave and dangerous events created by human weakness have often threatened, here and there, the consistency of this noble institution. The difficulties of its progress, the trials and uncertainties created by the dispersal of some peoples, have sometimes seemed to threaten seriously the seal of its unity.

But the apostolic succession was never broken. The robe of Christ has remained seamless, even though the anxiety of a few dangerous rents have not been wanting in difficult times.

The fact is that the word of Jesus is still life-giving in the Church. The miracle is repeated through a constant beneficial outpouring of grace on each individual member of the faithful, and sometimes in a mysterious and grandiose manner on the entire social group.

Beloved sons. It is again the reassuring words, "you shall be witnesses for Me" which harmonize with divine tones the chords of the whole living substance of the two Testaments: the mysterious successions of the past, present and of the future. Jesus, the Divine Rabbi, is in the center and combines in His person, in His teachings, in His blood, the glory of His kingship.

"You shall be witnesses for Me," a twofold testimony. That of Christ toward those closest to Him: always the Lord and Master, as shown by the sublime teaching, by the succession of miracles performed, by the cruel sacrifice, by the victorious Resurrection, by the constant profusion of grace and of love, by the forgiveness of man, by the whole of humanity, redeemed and raised again to the level of divine kinship, "born of a Virgin, He has given to us, that is to the world, His divinity."

### TWOFOLD TESTIMONY OF ELEVATION AND SALUTATION

The other testimony is that of the disciples of Jesus and of their successors, rendered to the Divine Master through the centuries, for the continuation of His work of redemption, from Jerusalem to the most distant boundaries of the world.

Yes, "you shall be witnesses for Me" are still the words and the sublime tones which harmonize the chords of the Old Testament with all of the New Testament.

And it is to these words that, as in a divine and human poem, there responds in echo the apostles and evangelists, the popes and martyrs, the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, the

holy heroes and virgins, the young people and those more experienced, both of ancient and recent times, the sons of every race and color, of every social and ethnical origin, all singing the praise of Christ, Who had announced "with His lips the promise of the Father," which was to give to His Church, by means of the Holy Spirit, every grace of the apostolate "to the end of time."

This first Pentecost, which We commemorate today, behold it spreading its light over our heads still after twenty centuries, kindling in our hearts the same flame in which the first disciples of the Lord rejoiced at even the announcement of the Holy Spirit, which the Father was to send, responding to the prayers which rose from the Cenacle, together with the prayer of Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

Yes, venerable brothers and beloved sons, (the words) "you shall be witnesses for Me" are about to assume a new and more solemn application of the promise made by Jesus to His disciples who, after 2,000 years, are more alive than ever before, who are more numerous than ever before and whose hearts still throb with tenderness and apostolic enthusiasm around Him.

Today's liturgical gathering--the sight of which delights the eye and gladdens the heart--is, through the presence of venerable elders and of young people, engaged in practicing the duties of the priestly ministry, representative of the whole world.

It is barely the outline and the first hint of the spectacle which the grace of the Lord intends to gather together on this Vatican Hill on October 11, in order to promote here a new spur for the sanctification of the hierarchy, of the clergy and of the people, for the enlightenment of people and as a life-giving breath for the whole of humanity.

### THE REDEEMER, THE LIGHT OF ALL PEOPLE

It will soon be possible for the world to see with its own eyes what the council is. It will be able to see the wonders that the Holy Catholic Church can offer in the light of Jesus its Divine Founder, as He wanted it, as He made it, and to which He has continued to give life through the centuries for the salvation of all souls and of all peoples, radiating the splendor of heavenly teaching and the treasures of grace and, through

sacrifice, the beginnings of peace on earth and of immortal glory for the eternal centuries.

Allow Us, dear sons, to refer further to these relations between the Holy Church and Christ who preserves it as He founded it, in order that Our words may serve the purpose of mutual edification, and at the same time, for individual and collective preparation for the great event, which is awaited with such joy and eagerness.

In a spontaneous manner and with very vast applications, the Second Vatican Council seeks to succeed in expressing that which Christ still represents, that which He represents today more than ever before, as light and as wisdom, as guidance and encouragement, as comfort and as merit for human suffering in this life and as an assurance for the life to come.

The testimony of the Universal Church seeks to turn to Jesus, as to the "Lord and Master" of each individual and of all people; as to the "Good Shepherd," always supplying His flock with the food of grace, the spiritual bread and protection against dangers and, finally, as to the "Priest and Host" as a reminder and continuation of His sacrifice, for humanity and for the sufferings of life, which are grave in every age, but which are still more grave when they are the cause or consequence of oppressions of the human being and of fundamental and inalienable freedom.

It is in this light of teaching, of certainty and of merit that the perfect fidelity of the Christian to his profession of sincere faith and of absolute coherence between thought and action is encouraged and through which there is touched the heart of Him who aspires to dignified conduct of life, for the defense of common ideals, for the achievement of lawful aspirations.

This threefold ray of heavenly light, which Jesus Christ--Master, Shepherd and Priest--reflects on the face of His Church, has a significance which escapes no one and which can indeed be an invitation to all to place themselves in the proper perspective to understand, according to the most reliable hierarchy of values, what life is worth to man, even to the ordinary man, and more than to man, what it is worth to perfect Christians.

### CONFIDENT ANTICIPATION OF HUMANITY

With a sense of confident anticipation, We are witnessing today new phenomena. It is certain, that, with distance almost

eliminated, with the road open to the conquest of space, with the progress of scientific research and the advancement of technical production, We perceive now in man an unexpected and truly surprising state of mind.

We believe that We can say that the man of study and of action of this afflicted century--afflicted by two world wars and by innumerable other conflicts of other types--is not so confident in himself and in his conquests. He is not so certain as he was in the 18th and 19th centuries of being able to achieve happiness on earth.

He is still less confident of being able, through his genius and through his energies alone, to allay the anxieties, to disperse the fears and to overcome the weaknesses which constantly threaten to overpower him.

We say more specifically that there is something like a lament that rises out of practically all the manifestations of contemporary literature. We say that the powerful ones of the earth admit that they do not know how to raise man up and transport him to that condition of happiness and prosperity which continues to be the goal of his tireless research.

The Catholic Church has never told humanity that it wishes to protect it against the painful law of sorrow and of death. And it has not tried to deceive humanity, neither has it administered to it the painful drug of illusion.

It has continued to say instead that life is a pilgrimage and it has taught its sons to join in the hymn of hope which echoes, nevertheless, in the world.

Now that man, almost dismayed by the scientific progress achieved, is finally conscious that no conquest can give him happiness; now that those people who promised in vain eternal youth and easy prosperity follow one on the other, alternating and eliminating each other, it is providential and quite natural that the Church should raise its solemn and persuasive voice and should offer to all men the comfort of that doctrine and of that Christian coexistence which is the preparation for the splendors of eternal joy for which man was made.

Not in the least intimidated by the difficulties encountered by its sons which interfere in the service it seeks to render to truth, justice and to love; always faithful to the commandments of its Divine Founder, the Church seeks to speak again to humanity about Him, about Jesus Christ the Master, about Him the Shepherd, about Him the Victim and Sacrifice of expiation and of redemption.



Not all the points of Catholic teaching will be illustrated again, one by one, at the forthcoming council. But special attention will be given to those points which refer to the fundamental truths, which are contested or which are in conflict with the contradictions of modern thought, the results of old errors, but which are now expressed differently.

The man who scrutinizes the innermost recesses of science and seeks the point of contact between heaven and earth knows that the apostolic teaching leaves no question unanswered. He knows that no solution is offered with polemical intentions or with presumptuous ease. Truth shines from above, but to reach its summit there is not entailed a great effort for the person who is animated by a determined will and who is free from oppressive bonds.

Continuing to render testimony to Jesus Christ, the Church does not wish to take anything away from man. It does not deny him the possession of his conquests and the merits of the efforts he has made.

But it wishes to help him to find himself again and to know himself; to achieve that fulness of knowledge and of conviction which has always been the aspiration of wise men, even when not part of divine revelation.

In this immense sphere of activity which opens before it, the Church embraces every man with maternal solicitude and seeks to persuade him to welcome the divine Christian message which gives secure guidance to individual and social life.

Twenty ecumenical councils, innumerable national and provincial councils as well as diocesan synods have made valuable contributions toward making known one or more truths of a theological and moral nature.

The Vatican council presents itself to catholicity and to humanity in the steadfastness of the apostolic creed proclaimed by an immense assembly, with the experience of a doctrinal illustration which is almost universal, and in a vision of the whole ensemble (of Catholic teaching), responding more to the spirit of modern times.

And this will be a happy testimony of the teaching of Christ recalled by the Church in the special tradition, particularly of the First Vatican Council, of the Council of Trent, the Fourth Lateran Council, the eminent glory of Innocent III (1215); in the tradition of all the councils that marked the triumph of truth

which has been profoundly examined and made to penetrate energetically the social body.

## CHRIST, THE SHEPHERD

We can assure you, beloved sons, that this, Our Second Vatican Council, is intended above all to be a great testimony to and for the search for the characteristic traits of the Good Shepherd.

The immense Christian and Catholic flock has never lacked the sustenance which the Divine Founder provided for the crowds: prayer, liturgy, evangelical teaching, the sacraments and manifold manifestations of pastoral activity.

The invitation to live a Christian life, and through it the divine life, which consists in the penetration of grace, is addressed to all.

Christ, through the services of the Apostle Peter and of his successors and collaborators, the bishops and clergy, still raises men to the dignity of adopted sons of God. The sources opened by Him are inexhaustible; the means of communication with the individual souls are sometimes inscrutable.

He who wishes to direct the desires of his intellect, knows that he can rest in the contemplation of eternal truths; but he who feels the need for expressing the feelings of the mind, pours them forth in prayer and song.

May he who really hungers and thirsts for justice turn with serene confidence toward the sacraments, which are the visible signs which produce grace. Through them everything is sanctified, that is, man, from the beginning to the end of his earthly pilgrimage in all his individual and collective aspects.

The Church follows in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd in His mystic pilgrimage from village to village and from home to home.

It emerges from the enclosed confinement of its cenacles and, in imitation of its Divine Founder and bearing witness to Him, it travels all the roads of the world. And it cannot contain the fervor of the unending Pentecost, which pervades it and leads it to guide the flock toward the fertile pastures of eternal life.

This is the duty of the Catholic and Apostolic Church: to gather together men who, through selfishness and weariness, could remain scattered; to teach them to pray; to lead them to repent their sins and to forgiveness; to nourish them with the

Eucharistic bread; to strengthen reciprocal union through the bond of charity.

The Church does not expect to witness every day the miraculous transformation which was performed in the apostles and in the disciples on the first Pentecost. It does not expect it, but it works for this and prays God constantly for a renewal of that remarkable event.

The Church is not surprised that men do not understand immediately its language; that they may be tempted to reduce the perfect code of individual salvation and of social progress to the narrow outline of their lives and of their personal interests, nor that they sometimes slacken in their strides forward. It continues to exhort, to implore and to encourage.

The Church teaches that there can be no lack of continuity, no break between individual religious practice and the events of social life.

As the depository of truth it seeks to penetrate everything and to obtain the grace of sanctifying everything in the domestic, civil and international spheres.

One reason which gives comfort to the humble successor of St. Peter in these months of preparation for the council is that he has been able to notice the festive welcome with which the whole world continues to pay tribute to the encyclical *Mater et Magistra*.

The encyclical can indeed be considered a wealthy and valuable sample of moral and pastoral teaching and an excellent introduction to those precepts which are addressed to Christian consciences in matters of economics, based on principles of human and evangelical justice and charity.

The Holy Church justly asks its sons not to withdraw from their grave obligation of cooperating in the establishment of this brotherly coexistence for which the Divine Savior, the Good Shepherd of souls, provided teaching and examples of incomparable significance.

### CHRIST, THE PRIEST AND HOST

Beloved sons! Our pious talk has allowed Us to look forward from the brilliance of Pentecost toward the threshold of the council's convocation next October.

The mind, which is happy in feeling united with Christ in remembering the good and faithful apostolate which, like the passing of Jesus through the streets of Jerusalem, corresponds

to the crowds which cheered Him for His teaching and His miracles, must turn unfortunately to feelings of sadness which are created by other spectacles from which one's eyes cannot turn away and which move the heart to pity.

Let us consider the topographical names in the words of Jesus with reference to present day conditions: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria "and even to the very ends of the earth"(4).

Palestine, where His voice was heard, has barely a trace of His earthly passing. His teachings spread from there and the Book of the two Testaments still resound throughout the world with the names of those places which never belonged to Christ or which no longer belong to Him.

Jerusalem, the holy city of divine promises, and those regions which surround it and the territories bordering on it, still remain to a great extent as alien to the sacred call as when it was first announced to them.

The great mystery, which afflicts Our soul, is contained therefore in the history of the people who welcomed and then repudiated Christ, in the history of some where Christ and His doctrine are denied the right of citizenship because of state laws which have never been revoked, not even now that the respect of all liberties is proclaimed in international agreements.

And what can be said of those nations where the apostolate has been reduced or is being reduced to a plaintive memory, where discouraged spirits dare not soon expect the success of a renewed movement of pastoral action for the illumination of souls, the guidance of families and of nations?

This throws light on the significance of another truth which the disciples of Christ do not wish to forget: that is that true joy for a Christian, even when joined to wise intentions, easily finds its answer in sadness and contradictions.

It is written in the Holy Book that Jesus, contemplating Jerusalem from above, felt His heart and eyes dissolve in tears.

How many cities and nations, looking back through the pages of their history and in the light of the wonders of the past, wonders of sanctity and of heroism, of religious piety and of triumphant charity, which made them famous, recall in an echo of sadness the words: "there was darkness . . . and the curtain of the temple was rent"(5).

(4) *Acts* 1,8

(5) *Luke* 23,44,45

You understand, venerable brothers and beloved sons, the meaning of the painful reality which these grave words still have. And the Catholic Church extends the law of forgiveness, applied as an expression of expiation, of mercy and of hope to all this, as a perfect testimony of the example of Christ.

### THE VISION OF THE CENACLE WITH MARY AND WITH THE APOSTLES

There is renewed today the vision of the Cenacle, where Mary prayed and waited for the Holy Spirit along with the Apostles and disciples. It is this touching reminder of the Holy Book which leads us to seek throughout the world, and particularly in the Christian East, the churches erected in the name and honor of the Mother of God.

Whether they be open or closed to worship, these churches contain in their stones the prayer of centuries, the heartrending prayer of our times, asking God to grant that men may continue to or may again raise their eyes to heaven. And they await from heaven the blessing and the consecration of their work and progress here on earth, following in the footsteps of the great ancient traditions which are still imprinted in the heart.

Just think, beloved sons, Christ, the Word of God made man, announced words of truth and of love to the world. And this blessed Christ, who spread His love and dispensed the gifts of heavenly grace, this same Christ is reduced to silence through the denial and the sins of men and of nations.

This silence which recalls the loftiest moment of the liturgical rite of the Eucharist, is sometimes a heartrending prayer and at other times a discipline and prudence.

The third testimony of Christ, to be taken to "even the very ends of the earth," corresponds to this sorrow which is made acute and speakable through the entwining of many causes which are often alien and contradictory among themselves.

There is no need for any other explanation. We are called upon, therefore, to render testimony to Christ, who renews the sacrifice of Calvary in the sacrifice of the Eucharist.

The devotion to the Cross and to the cruel and mystical sacrifice is also to be confirmed through the celebration and success of the council. In this way our testimony to the Divine Master will assume its proper place.

Having reached this point, venerable brothers, there remains for Us to unite with you the holy poetry of Pentecost, the

heartbeats felt for the forthcoming council and the reminder of the threefold testimony which must be rendered to Jesus Christ.

We wish to communicate these sentiments particularly to you, young candidates for the priesthood and newly ordained priests, whose hearts responded with joy to His voice, which called on you to take part in His apostolate and in His sacrifice.

Representing all peoples, how bright is your beautiful youth offered as sacrifice to Him, the Word of God, the glorious and immortal King of centuries and nations. The words of the Lord are: "You shall be witnesses for Me" and are therefore addressed to you.

May you be blessed, may you be welcomed well by your brothers and may you show the world, through your immaculate stole (of innocence) the most lofty and expressive nature of your consecration in life and beyond, for the salvation of souls.

Our prayer to the Holy Spirit wishes to join now in the prayer of Our heavenly Mother Mary, who witnessed the joys of the childhood of Jesus and the sorrows of His sacrifice. In this the prayer acquires value and assumes a note of enthusiasm.

#### PRAYER

Oh, Spirit of the Holy Paraclete, perfect in us the work begun by Jesus. Make strong and constant the prayer which we raise in the name of the whole world. Give drive to our apostolate which seeks to reach all men and all nations, all those people redeemed by the Blood of Christ, all of them His heirs.

Mortify in us natural presumption and raise us to the regions of holy humility, of real fear of God, of generous courage. May no earthly tie prevent us from doing honor to our vocation. May no interest impair, through our laziness, the requirements of justice. May no calculation reduce the immense regions of charity to the narrowness of petty selfishness.

May everything in us be great: the search for and worship of truth, the readiness to bear sacrifice even to the extent of the Cross and death.

And finally, may everything correspond to the supreme prayer of the Son to the heavenly Father, and to that effusion which, Oh, Holy Spirit of Love, the Father and the Son wishes you to spread over the Church and its institutions, over individual souls and over nations.

Amen, amen, alleluia, alleluia.

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