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OUTLINES

OF THE 16 DOCUMENTS

VATICAN II



NIHIL OBSTAT:

**Raymond E. Tortora
Censor Deputatus**

IMPRIMATUR:

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January 17, 1966

These outlines provide a convenient guide to the contents of the documents produced by Vatican Council II. They are not substitutes for the documents, but indices. Small numbers refer to the paragraph divisions in the English translations and the Latin texts.

The texts themselves are intended to serve as bases for the renewal of life at every level of sophistication in Christian community and in the world. To achieve this aim they must become familiar to everyone.

The Council Fathers condensed their meditations and debates into statements of three types. The Constitutions have the greatest importance, then Decrees, and Declarations. The Constitutions subdivide into dogmatic, ordinary and pastoral. The outlines are presented here in this order of importance, and chronologically within these divisions.

They will be known finally by the fruit they bear through the work of the Post-Conciliar Commissions, the corporate action of the local Churches and the initiatives of all the faithful and all peoples.

—Virginia Mary Heffernan



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OF THE 16 DOCUMENTS

VATICAN II

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INTRODUCTION

The Second Vatican Council has concluded and its Constitutions, Decrees and Declarations have been promulgated. Our task now is to apply them in all phases of Church life so that the aims of the Council may be effected not only in the institutional life of the Church but also in the hearts, minds and souls of all of the people of God.

These documents must be studied not only in regard to their wording but in the light of their history and background so that their full intent may be realized.

It is good that these outlines, prepared by and previously published in "The Long Island Catholic" (December 23-30, 1965), are now being made available in a permanent and more useful form. I am sure they will be of enormous assistance to those who wish to gain a useful, working knowledge of the meaning of the Second Vatican Council.

As the full text of the Documents — and the commentaries on them by the theologians — become more accessible to all, I am certain that these outlines will be of even much more usefulness.

God the Holy Spirit has moved us and given guidance and direction to our work in the Council. As it was said: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, Who has been given to us" (Romans 5,5). May this love become more ardent and bring zeal to the hearts of all through an intelligent understanding of the work of the Council.

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DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION

(Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Nov. 21, 1964)

Introduction

Because Christ is the Light of nations, the Council wants to bring this light to them:¹

The Church is in Christ as the means and sign:
of union with God.
of the unity of the human race.

Therefore the Church desires to unfold to the faithful and to the world its inner nature:
following previous Councils.
responding to present-day needs.

I The Mystery of the Church

*Thus, the Church shines forth as "a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."*⁴

The Father: ²

God the Father, in creating the world,
planned to raise men to share in the divine life.
offered helps, in view of Christ.

He planned to gather in the Church all who believe in Christ:

prepared in the history of Israel,
the Church of the present era was formed and made known by the Spirit,
to be completed at the end of time when all the just will be gathered with the Father in the universal Church.

The Son: ³

The Father sent the Son. In Him the Father chose us to become adopted sons.

Begun by Christ:

who revealed the mystery of the kingdom,
and by his obedience brought about redemption,

The Church (the kingdom of Christ now present in mystery) grows in the world.

So long as Mass is celebrated, the work of redemption is carried on,
and in communion the unity of believers is expressed and brought about.

All men are called to this union with Christ,
from whom we go forth,
through whom we live,
toward whom our life strains.

The Holy Spirit: ⁴

Was sent on the day of Pentecost to continually sanctify the Church:

The Father gives life through the Spirit until the resurrection of bodies.

the Spirit prays in the hearts of the faithful, witnessing to their adoption.

TION ON THE CHURCH

The Church

is guided by the Spirit in the way of truth, unified in communion and ministry, given hierarchic and charismatic (inspirational) gifts, and the fruits of the Spirit. The Spirit keeps the Church young, renews it and unites it with God.

The Church as the coming of the Kingdom of God: ⁵ Jesus set the Church on its course by preaching the coming of the Kingdom of God (the Good News):

those who hear the word of the Lord receive the Kingdom, to which the miracles of Jesus witness in the world, but which is most clearly seen in the presence of the Person of Christ.

The Church receives its mission from Jesus: who died, rose again, appeared as Lord, Christ, eternal Priest, and gave the Spirit to his disciples.

The mission of the Church is to proclaim and spread the Kingdom of God, and be its beginning on earth, seeking its completion in union in glory with its King.

The Kingdom is revealed in the Old Testament by metaphores and in the same way now its inner nature is made known by images: ⁶

The Church is a **sheepfold**.

The Church is the **land** to be cultivated by God.

The Church is the **building of God**, in which His family dwells, the holy **Temple**, the **Holy City**, the New Jerusalem.

The Church is the **spouse of the Lamb**, now journeying in exile.

The Church is the Body of Christ: ⁷

In the human nature united to Himself, the Son of God, by overcoming death through his own death and resurrection, redeemed man and transformed him into a new creation.

Christ made men mystically the components of His Own Body:

The life of Christ is given to believers through the sacraments, especially **Baptism**, and the **Eucharist**.

There is one spirit in the Body of Christ but different members and functions.

in a special place are the **Apostles**, to whom are subject even those with charisms (the prophetically inspired).

the Spirit produces and urges love among believers.

for if one member endures anything, all endure, if one is honored, all rejoice.

The Head of this Body is Christ, the image of the invisible God:

Christ is the Head of the Body which is the Church.

He rules all things.

He fills the whole Body with the riches of His glory.

The Members:

ought to be moulded in the likeness of Christ, for we (members) are caught up in the mysteries of His life, although we are still pilgrims, tracing the path of His earthly sufferings, that we may one day be with Him in glory.

Christ continually gives gifts in His Body, that is, in the Church. Thus we serve each other unto salvation.

He has **shared His Spirit** with His members in a way compared to the action of the soul in the human body:

the Spirit exists as one and the same being in Head and in members, giving life, unifying and moving through the whole body.

Christ loves the Church as His bride.

Christ, the one Mediator, established and sustains the Church on earth: ⁸

the community of faith, hope and charity, with visible forms through which truth and grace are communicated.

The hierarchical society on earth and the mystical body of Christ are not two realities, but form one complex reality which coalesces from a divine and a human element.

As Jesus' human nature serves the divine Word united with it, so the visible social structure of the Church serves the Spirit of Christ.

This is the one Church of Christ, holy, Catholic and apostolic,

of which Jesus made Peter shepherd, and with him the other apostles, to extend and direct with authority.

For all ages the mainstay of truth.

This Church, constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in union with the successor, although many elements of sanctification and of truth can be found outside of her visible structure.

The Church proclaims humility and self-sacrifice:

following Christ in poverty and oppression, although it needs human resources to do its work it seeks no earthly glory, but to encompass with love the poor and suffering, to relieve their needs and serve Christ in them.

The innocent Christ came to serve sinners, so the Church

embraces sinners.

Holy, yet in need of purification, it follows the ways of penance and renewal.

The risen Lord gives the Church strength to overcome,

to reveal, faithfully though darkly, the mystery of its Lord until it is shown in full light.

II On the People of God

At all times and among every people, God has given welcome to whosoever fears Him and does what is right (cf. Acts 10, 35). It has pleased God, however, to make men holy and save them not merely as individuals, without bond or link between them, but by making them into a single people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness. 9

God has chosen to bring men to Himself, not as isolated individuals, but bound together, knowing and serving Him as a people.⁹

He chose the race of Israel as a people to prefigure the new covenant:

making a covenant with,
teaching, and preparing the Jews.

Making Himself and His will known in their history.

Making their race holy.

This prepared for and prefigured:

the new covenant, ratified in Christ,
the fuller revelation given by the Word of God made flesh.

Christ instituted the new covenant (new testament):
in His Blood,

calling together a people made up of Jew and gentile,

making them one in the Spirit.

“This was to be the new People of God”

The new messianic people:

has Christ for its head.

Their state is that of the dignity and freedom of the sons of God,

in whom the Holy Spirit dwells as in His Temple.

Its law is the new commandment to love as Christ loves us.

Its end is the kingdom of God,

begun by God Himself on earth,

to be extended and perfected by Him until the end of time,

when Christ shall appear and all creation shall be delivered to Him.

That messianic people,

although it does not actually include all men, is nonetheless a lasting and sure seed of unity, hope and salvation for the whole human race.

Established by Christ:

as a communion of life, charity and truth,
it is His instrument for the redemption of the
whole world.

Israel, wandering in the desert, was already called
the Church of God.

The new Israel, wandering in this present age, is called
the Church of Christ,
bought with His Blood,
filled with His Spirit,
given means of visible and social union.

God gathered together as one all who have faith in
Jesus:

as author of salvation,
and source of unity and peace;

Establishing them as the Church,
the visible sacrament (sign) of this saving
unity,
transcending all limits of time,
transcending all limits of race.

*. . . the Church is destined to extend to
all regions of the earth and so enters into
the history of mankind.*

The Church:

moves forward in trial and tribulation,
strengthened by God's grace,
renewed by the Holy Spirit,
until through the Cross she arrives at eternal
light.

The Priesthood of the People of God: ¹⁰

The Baptized are consecrated as a holy priesthood:
by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy
Spirit,
in order that they may offer spiritual sacrifices
by their works as Christian men,
and proclaim the power of Him who has called
them out of darkness into light.

Therefore the disciples of Christ should:

persevere in prayer,
present themselves a living sacrifice,
bear witness to Christ,
and answer those who question them about their
hope of eternal life.

**The priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial
(hierarchical) priesthood:**

differ in essence and not only in degree;
are interrelated in that each is a participation in
the priesthood of Christ.

The ministerial priest:

teaches and rules the priestly people,
makes present the Eucharistic sacrifice,
offers the Eucharistic to God in the name
of all the people.

The faithful:

join in the offering of the Eucharist,
exercise their royal priesthood in receiving
the sacraments,
in prayer and thanksgiving,
in the witness of a holy life,
by self denial,
and active charity.

The priestly community is brought into operation:
through the sacraments, (divine act) ¹¹
and the exercise of the virtues. (response)

Baptism:

(act) consecrates the faithful to the worship of
the Christian religion,
(response) obliging them to confess the faith be-
fore men.

Confirmation:

gives Christians special strength,
to spread and defend the faith.

In the Eucharist, "which is the font and apex of the
whole Christian life:"

the faithful offer the Divine Victim to God,
and offer themselves along with it. They then
show in a concrete way that unity of the
people of God signified and brought about by
this sacrament.

Penance obtains pardon from the mercy of God and
reunites the sinner with the Church which he has
wounded by his sin.

By the Anointing of the Sick:

the Church commends the suffering to the Lord,
and asks them to contribute to the welfare of the
whole people of God by uniting themselves with
the passion of Christ.

Those in Holy Orders are appointed to feed the
Church in Christ's name with the word and grace
of God.

In Matrimony:

spouses share in the mystery of unity and fruit-
ful love which exists between Christ and His
Church,

and help each other to holiness and in the rear-
ing and education of their children.

They have special importance as perpetuating
the People of God. The family is the domestic
Church.

All the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are
called by the Lord to perfect holiness.

The Prophetic Office of the People of God: ¹²

The People of God give living witness to Him by
means of a life of faith, charity and praise.

*The entire body of the faithful, anointed
as they are by the Holy One, cannot err in
matters of belief.*

The inerrancy of the body of the faithful:

is shown by universal agreement in faith and
morals, aroused and sustained by the Spirit of
Truth.

It is exercised:

under the guidance of the sacred teaching
authority,

and accepted as the word of God.

The Holy Spirit also gives special graces among
the faithful of every rank (charisms):

charisms are to be accepted with thanksgiving for
they are useful to the Church.

Extraordinary gifts:

are not to be sought after,

and are subject to the judgment of the ap-
pointed Church leaders, not to extinguish the
spirit but as testing all things.

The Universal Kingship and the Pluralism of the Church: ¹³

All men are called to belong to the new people of God.

The People of God is to be spread **throughout the whole world** and must exist in all ages, in order to fulfill God's decree:

God made human nature **one**.

He decreed that finally all would be **gathered together as one**.

Thus He sent His Son to be teacher, **King and priest** of all the new and universal people of the Sons of God.

Thus He sent the Spirit as Lord and **Life Giver**, who brings together the whole Church and all believers.

Though there are many nations there is but one People of God, citizens of a heavenly rather than an earthly kingdom.

All the faithful scattered throughout the world are in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit.

This takes nothing away from, but advances the temporal welfare,

Strengthening and making holy the good in the customs the genius of each people has produced.

This universality is a gift of the Lord:

each part contributes its special gifts to the whole Church,

thus the whole and each part receive increase.

Not only is the Church composed of different peoples, but it is internally diverse:

by reason of duties such as those of the sacred ministry;

by reason of states of life, such as the religious state;

by reason of particular Churches which retain their own traditions.

. . . the Chair of Peter . . . presides over the whole assembly of charity and protects legitimate differences, while at the same time assuring that such differences do not hinder unity but rather contribute toward it.

All parts of the Church share mutually:

spiritual riches,
apostolic workers,
and temporal resources.

All men are called to this catholic unity of the People of God.

The promotion of universal peace is a sign of it.

The Catholic faithful belong to this unity and also,

all mankind, for all are called by God to salvation.

The Catholic Faithful: ¹⁴

Christ, present in the Church is the one Mediator and unique way of salvation;

whoever, knowing that the Church was made necessary by Christ, refuses to enter or remain in it cannot be saved.

How the faithful are fully incorporated in the Church:

they accept her entire system,
and are part of her visible structure through:
profession of faith,
sacraments,
and ecclesiastical government.

He is not saved, however, who, though part of the body of the Church, does not persevere in charity.

Catechumens are incorporated in the Church by their desire to be members.

Christians not in communion with the Pope. Those who share faith, many sacraments and gifts of the Holy Spirit are linked to the Church in many ways:¹⁵

the Spirit arouses the desire for union in all Christ's disciples.

Mother Church prays, hopes, and works so that this may come about, and asks her children to purify and renew themselves so that the sign of Christ may shine more brightly.

Those who have not yet received the Gospel are also related to the People of God:¹⁶

The Jews, once and forever chosen, remain dear to God.

The Musulmans with us adore the one God.

Those who seek the unknown God can be saved by their striving to do His will as it is known to them in conscience. What good and truth they have is a preparation for the Gospel.

Nor does divine Providence deny the help necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God and with His grace strive to live a good life.

Nonetheless there are some left in a state of hopelessness:

deceived by the evil one into serving creature rather than creator,
or living and dying without God.

Therefore, to save all, the Church fosters the missions.

The Church's Mission to proclaim the truth:¹⁷

Christ commanded the Apostles to make disciples of all nations.

The Holy Spirit compels the Church to play her part in the realization of God's plan:

preparing her hearers to receive the faith,
saving them from errors,
incorporating them in Christ so that they may grow in charity.

The Church perfects whatever is good in diverse religious practices and cultures.

The obligation of spreading the faith is imposed on every disciple of Christ, according to his state:

all the faithful can baptize,
the priest alone can complete the building up of the Body in the Eucharistic sacrifice.

The Church labors and prays that the entire world become the People of God.

III Hierarchical Structure and Episcopate

Christ instituted in His Church, a variety of ministries, which work for the good of the whole body and serve their brethren. ¹⁸

Jesus, who sent the Apostles:

willed that their successors, the Bishops, should be shepherds in His Church.

He united the Apostles by placing Peter over them: this is the meaning and reason for the primacy of the successor of Peter, the Roman Pontiff.

Continuing in the same task of clarification begun by Vatican I, this Council has decided to declare and proclaim before all men its teaching concerning bishops, the successors of the apostles, who together with the successor of Peter, the Vicar of Christ and the visible Head of the whole Church, govern the house of the living God.

The Episcopal College.

Jesus chose the Apostles and formed them after the manner of a college or a stable group, over which He placed Peter chosen from among them.¹⁹

He sent them to make all peoples His disciples,

to sanctify,

and govern them until the end of the world.

They were fully confirmed in this mission on Pentecost.

The Apostles gather together the universal Church, of which Christ Jesus Himself is the supreme cornerstone.

Since the divine mission will last until the end of the world, the Apostles took care to appoint men successors to themselves, from among their helpers in the ministry.²⁰

Among the various ministries exercised in the Church from earliest times, the chief is the office of the episcopate, running by direct succession to the Apostles.

The Role of Bishops:

Bishops, with their helpers, the priests and deacons: serve the community,

preside in place of God over the flock of which they are shepherd,

as teachers for doctrine,

and ministers for governing.

The Apostle's office, exercised by Bishops, is permanent and transmitted to successors, just as the office of Peter is.

Therefore, this sacred Synod teaches that by divine institution bishops have succeeded to the place of the apostles, as shepherds of the Church, and that he who hears them, hears Christ, and he who rejects them, rejects Christ and Him who sent Christ.

In the Bishops Christ is present: ²¹

the risen Christ, through their service, is preaching to all nations,

and administering the sacraments of faith.

By their paternal functioning He incorporates new members in His body, and by their wisdom He directs the people of the New Testament during their pilgrimage on earth.

These Pastors (Bishops) are servants of Christ.

The Apostles were enriched with a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which they transmitted by the imposition of hands, transmitted to us in Episcopal Consecration, in which:

the fulness of the sacrament of Orders is exercised only in hierarchial communion with the head and members of the College.

Bishops in a visible way act in the Person of Christ. The Bishops admit newly elected members to the episcopal body by means of the Sacrament of Orders. 22

Collegiate Power

As Peter and the Apostles constituted one Apostolic College, so the Pope and the Bishops are joined together:

Witnessed in history:

by their mutual communion and communication

by their occasional Councils, the ecumenical Councils, and joint ordinations (Consecrations of Bishops).

The College or Body of Bishops has no authority unless understood together with the Roman Pontiff.

The Pope's power of Primacy over all remains whole and intact. In virtue of his office the Roman Pontiff has full, supreme, and universal power over the Church, which he is always free to exercise.

The order of bishops, which succeeds to the college of apostles in teaching authority and pastoral rule, and gives this apostolic body continued existence, is also the subject of supreme and full power over the universal Church, provided this body acts together with its head the Roman Pontiff and never without this head.

The power of binding and loosing given Peter was granted also to the college of Apostles joined with their head.

The College expresses:

the variety and universality of the People of God,

but, assembled under one head, the unity of the flock.

The College exercises its supreme power in the universal church in an Ecumenical Council, convoked, presided over and confirmed by the Pope.

The power of the College can also be exercised when the Pope calls them, although scattered, to a collegiate act.

The Individual Bishop.

23

The individual Bishops are the visible principle and foundation of unity in their particular Churches: from which Churches the one Catholic Church comes into being.

the Bishops representing each his own Church.

The Bishops govern:
only their own Churches,
not others or the universal Church.
But they are concerned with the whole Church
and contribute to the welfare of the whole mys-
tical Body.

**The Proclamation of the Gospel is the task of the
Body of Bishops as a common duty:**

hence Bishops must work together,
supply workers and spiritual and material
aid to the missions,
and help needy dioceses.

Organically united groups of Churches, notably the
ancient Patriarchal Churches, have their own dis-
ciplines, liturgy, theological and spiritual heritage,
which is splendid evidence of the catholicity of the
undivided Church.

**(Regional) Episcopal Bodies are in a position to give
fruitful service today.**

The canonical mission of the Bishops may be based
on custom, Church law, or Papal decision; the
Pope can prevent Bishops from assuming any of-
fice.²⁴

The Teaching Authority. ²⁵

Bishops are authentic teachers of faith and morals:
the faithful are to accept their teaching and hold
it with religious assent,
especially that of the Pope, even when it is not
ex-cathedra.

Individual Bishops are not infallible, but when, in
communion with each other and the Pope, they
agree, they proclaim Christ's doctrine infallibly,
especially in an Ecumenical Council.

**The infallibility of the Pope does not depend on the
consent of the Church:**

infallibility extends as far as the deposit of Revel-
lation extends.

The Pope is infallible when by a definitive act
he declares a doctrine,
which cannot be changed since it was pro-
nounced with the aid of the Holy Spirit,
not by a private person, but by the person in
whom the charism of infallibility of the Church
is present.

**The infallibility of the Church also resides in the
body of Bishops when it exercises the supreme
teaching authority with the Pope.**

The Bishop among his People. ²⁶

The Church of Christ is truly present in all legiti-
mate local congregations.

in their locality these are the new People called
by God, in the Spirit,
in them the People are gathered by the preaching
of the Gospel and celebrate Mass,
and Christ is present.

Every legitimate Mass is regulated by the Bishop.

Bishops:

communicate God's power by the ministry of the
word, through the sacraments sanctify the faith-
ful, by their example are an influence for good,

and govern their particular Churches in Christ's name with proper, ordinary and immediate power.

They exercise authority, not as vicars of the Pope, but as proper to them.

Bishops must listen to their flocks, and the faithful must cling to them.

Priests: ²⁷

are dependent on the Bishops in the exercise of power,

but are united with them in sacerdotal dignity, partaking of the functions of Christ as the sole Mediator.

Priests associate with the Bishop in a spirit of trust, and make him present in the individual local congregations.²⁸

All priests are bound together in an intimate brotherhood.

Because the human race today is joining more and more into a civic, economic, and social unity, it is that much more necessary that preist, united in concern and effort, under the leadership of the bishops and the Supreme Pontiff, wipe out every kind of division, so that the whole human race may be brought into the unity of the family of God.

Deacons: ²⁹

At a lower level of the hierarchy are deacons ordained not to the priesthood but to a ministry of service.

It is the duty of the deacon, as assigned:

to administer baptism solemnly,
be custodian and dispenser of the Eucharist,
assist at and bless marriages,
bring Viaticum to the dying,
read the Sacred Scripture to the faithful,
administer sacramentals,
officiate at funeral and burial services,
and dedicate himself to charity and administration.

These duties, so very necessary for the life of the Church, can in many areas be fulfilled only with difficulty according to the prevailing discipline of the Latin Church. For this reason, the diaconate can in the future be restored as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy. It pertains to the competent territorial bodies of bishops, of one kind or another, to decide, with the approval of the Supreme Pontiff, whether and where it is opportune for such deacons to be appointed for the care of souls. With the consent of the Roman Pontiff, this diaconate will be able to be conferred upon men of more mature age, even upon those living in the married state. It may also be conferred upon suitable young men; for them, however, the law of celibacy must remain intact.

IV The Laity

Everything said concerning the People of God is intended for the laity, religious and clergy alike³⁰
The circumstances of our time require that the foundations of the mission of the laity, both men and women, be examined.

Pastors know:

that the laity contribute to the welfare of the entire Church,

that the clergy are not ordained to carry out alone the mission of the Church to the world,

but to shepherd and recognize the ministries and charisms of the faithful,

so that all may cooperate according to their roles.

The term 'laity' means here:³¹

all the faithful not in holy orders,

and the faithful not in canonical religious life.

The laity:

are by baptism made one body with Christ,

share in their own way in the priestly, prophetic and kingly functions of Christ,

and carry out for their part the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in world.

What specifically characterizes the laity is their secular nature.

Those in holy orders may have secular occupations but this is not their vocation.

Religious give testimony that the world can not be transformed without the spirit of the beatitudes.

But the laity specifically seek God by ordering temporal affairs according to the plan of God.

But the laity, by their very vocation, seek the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God. They live in the world, that is, in each and in all of the secular professions and occupations. They live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, from which the very web of their existence is woven.

The laity live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life,

to which they are called by God,

to work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven:

they make Christ known to others by the testimony of a life of faith, hope and charity;

throw light on the temporal affairs in which they are involved:

so that they are begun and developed according to Christ,

and to the praise of the Creator.

In the Church everyone does not go by the same path, but all are called to holiness and have an equal privilege of faith.³²

Hence, there is in Christ and the Church no inequality on the basis of race or nationality, social condition or sex, because "there is neither Jew nor

Greek: there is neither slave nor freeman; there is neither male nor female. For you are all 'one' in Christ Jesus''.

The distinction between the hierarchy and the rest of the People of God:

bears within itself the union of mutual need.

In diversity all bear witnesses to the unity in the Body of Christ,

diversity of graces, ministries and works are from the same Spirit.

The lay apostolate is a participation in the salvific mission of the Church itself. ³³

General mission of all the laity:

by baptism and confirmation all are commissioned to the apostolate by the Lord.

The sacraments nourish that charity toward God and man which is the soul of the apostolate.

Every layman, because of the gifts given him is witness and instrument, especially where the Church can be present only through the laity.

Special missions:

the laity can also be called in various ways to direct cooperation with the hierarchy.

The Priestly Function of the laity. ³⁴

Christ Jesus gives the laity a share in his priestly function:

all their works, if carried out in the spirit, are spiritual offering acceptable to God.

Thus, as those everywhere who adore in holy activity, the laity consecrate the world itself to God.

The Prophetic Function of the Laity. ³⁵

Christ continually fulfills prophetic office:

not only through the hierarchy, but also through the laity:

whom He made His witnesses,

to whom He gave an understanding of the faith (*sensu fidei*),

and speech (in the Spirit).

The laity should speak up, even in the program of their secular life.

Evangelization by the laity, in word and life, has special force in that it is carried out in the ordinary surroundings of the world.

Married and family life has an especially important prophetic function.

All the laity must work for the evangelization of the world:

sometimes without ministers,

where there are none,

or in times of persecution.

Many devote themselves entirely to apostolic work, and all must:

cooperate,

and try to understand the revealed truth better, begging of God the gift of wisdom,

The Kingly Function of the Laity. ³⁶

Christ has communicated His royal power to His disciples:

- establishing them in royal freedom,
- to conquer sin in themselves by true penance and holy life,
- and by serving Christ in their fellow men, to lead them to the kingdom of truth, life, holiness, grace, justice, love and peace.

In this Kingdom, creation, itself will be delivered out of it slavery to corruption and into the freedom of the glory of the sons of God. Clearly then a great promise and a great mandate is committed to the disciples: "All things are yours, and you are Christ's and Christ is God's".

The faithful must learn the deepest meaning and the value of all creation. The laity have the principal role in the overall fulfillment of this duty:

- perfecting created goods by human labor, technical skill and civic culture for the benefit of all men,**
- distributing equitably the goods of this world among all men,**
- and contributing to universal progress in human and Christian freedom.**

The laity by their combined efforts need to remedy the customs and conditions of the world:

- in the interest of justice,**
- and to favor the practice of virtue.**

This will:

- bring genuine moral values to culture,**
- prepare for the word of God,**
- and open wider the doors of the Church by which the message of peace may enter the world.**

The laity should distinguish their Civil and Religious rights and duties:

reconcile them:

- temporal affairs should be guided by a Christian conscience,**
- since no human affair is outside God's dominion.**

The temporal sphere is governed by its own principles and is rightly concerned with the interests of this world.

Doctrine which attempts to build society with no regard whatever for religion, destroying religious liberty in its citizens, is to be rejected.

Relations of the Laity and the Hierarchy. ³⁷

The laity have the right to receive the spiritual goods of the Church from their pastors.

They should openly reveal their needs and desires.

An individual layman, by reason of the knowledge, competence, or outstanding ability which he may enjoy, is permitted and sometimes even obliged to express his opinion on things which concern the good of the Church.

When they express themselves let it be:
through organs erected by the Church for
this purpose,
in truth, courage, prudence, reverence and
charity

They should accept the decisions of Pastors since
they represent Christ and are teachers and
rulers in the Church.

They should pray for the hierarchy.

Pastors are obliged:

to promote the dignity and responsibility of the
laity,
use their prudent advice,
assign them duties with freedom and room for
action,
encourage lay initiative.

*A great many benefits are to be hoped for from
this familiar dialogue between the laity and their
pastors: in the laity a strengthened sense of per-
sonal responsibility; a renewed enthusiasm; a more
ready application of their talents to the projects
of their pastors. The latter, for their part, aided
by the experience of the laity, can more clearly
and more suitably come to decisions regarding
spiritual and temporal matters.*

Each individual layman stands before the world: ³⁸
as witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus,
and symbol of the living God.

**Individually and as a community the laity give the
world the fruits of the Spirit.**

V The Universal Call to Holiness

**The Church is believed to be indefectibly holy. In the
the Church everyone is called to holiness. This
Holiness: ³⁹**

is unceasingly shown in the fruits which the
Spirit produces,
expressed in many ways in individuals:
who in their walks of life tend to the perfec-
tion of charity,
and especially in the "evangelical" coun-
sels, lived privately or in a Church-ap-
proved state of life, which witnesses to
to and exemplifies holiness in the world.

The call to holiness is a call to everyone. ⁴⁰

The Trinity as source of holiness:

Jesus, author and fulfiller of holiness of life, calls
everyone,
to be perfect as the heavenly Father is perfect,
sending the Holy Spirit to all men, to inspire love
in them.

The followers of Christ:

are called by God according to His purpose.

They are justified and become sons of God in
Jesus.

They must hold on to God's gift, possessing the
fruit of the Spirit in holiness, begging God's
mercy and pardon.

By the fulness of the Christian life to which all are called, a more human manner of living is promoted in this earthly society:

to achieve this the faithful must use their strength,
follow Christ, becoming like Him,
devote themselves to the glory of God,
and the service of their neighbor.

The many and varied ways of practicing this holiness. ⁴¹

Every person should walk unhesitatingly according to his own personal gifts and duties in the path of a living faith which arouses hope and works through charity.

The Shepherds of Christ's Flock must fulfill the duties of their ministry in such a way that it is the principle means of their sanctification.

Priests, by the exercise of their office through Christ, the one Mediator, are living witnesses to God, and by their office rise to holiness.

Ministers of lesser rank, Deacons and Clerics, bring their hearts into accord with their offices.

Lay Apostles, appointed by Bishops, spend themselves in their apostolic labors.

Married couples and Christian parents should follow their own proper path to holiness by faithful love.

Widows and single people make great contributions to holiness and apostolic endeavor.

Those who labor should better themselves by their human labors in their daily work, and raise all of society to a better mode of existence.

Those who suffer are united with the suffering Christ in a special way for the salvation of the world.

In temporal service all Christ's faithful will show all men the love with which God loved the world.

The Way and Means to Holiness. ⁴²

The first and most necessary gift is love, by which we love God and neighbor:

each of the faithful:

must hear and accept God's will,
complete what God has begun by their actions:

the use of the sacraments,
participation in the liturgy,
prayer,
self-abnegation,
fraternal service,
and virtuous acts.

It is charity which guides us to our final end.

Martyrdom is an exceptional gift and the fullest proof of love.

Holiness is fostered by the observance of the counsels, especially virginity and celibacy:

which are gifts to certain souls,
by which they devote themselves with undivided heart to God.

The reason is that perfect continency for the love of God:

is an incentive to charity,
and a particular source of spiritual fecundity in the world.

Poverty is an imitation of and personal experience of what Jesus knew within Himself.

Obedience, beyond the measure of the commandments, is chosen in imitation of the obedient Christ.

All the faithful have an obligation to strive for holiness.

All of Christ's followers, therefore, are invited and bound to pursue holiness and the perfect fulfillment of their state. Hence, let them all see that they guide their affections rightly.

VI Religious

The evangelical counsels of chastity dedicated to God, poverty and obedience are based on the words and examples of the Lord: ⁴³

they are commended by the Apostles, Fathers of the Church and learned doctors.

They are a divine gift.

Church authority has the duty, under the Holy Spirit: of interpreting the counsels, regulating them, and building stable forms of living on them.

Thus many forms of solitary and community life, and religious families have developed:

advancing the progress of their members, and the welfare of the entire Church.

Religious families:

support the spiritual and material life of their members,

also offering fraternal support, and liberty strengthened by obedience.

The religious state is not somewhere between the clerical and lay states, but is a particular gift in the life of the Church and includes members of both clergy and laity.

The faithful bind themselves to the above counsels by vows or something similar. ⁴⁴

By vows a person is totally dedicated to God in a special way.

By baptism a person is consecrated to God, but by profession of the evangelical counsels he is more intimately consecrated to divine service, this consecration being more perfect as more stable.

Religious in the Church.

Since religious are joined to the Church in a special way, they should be devoted to the welfare of the whole Church:

they have a duty to strengthen the Kingdom in souls.

and extend it to every clime, according to their capacities and proper vocation:

of prayer,
or active works.

Therefore, the Church preserves and fosters the special character of her various religious institutes.

The religious state, which gives its members greater freedom from earthly cares, more adequately manifests to all believers the presence of heavenly goods already possessed here below. Fur-

theremore, it not only witnesses to the fact of a new and eternal life acquired by the redemption of Christ, but it foretells the resurrected state and the glory of the heavenly Kingdom.

Christ proposed to His disciples this form of life, which He accepted in this world.

The religious state shows that the Kingdom of God and its needs are raised above earthly considerations.

It shows men the strength of Christ and the power of the Spirit working in the Church.

Duties of the Hierarchy relative to Religious.

The hierarchy has the duty to regulate the practice of the counsels by law: ⁴⁵

it accepts the rules presented by men and women,

adjusts and approves them.

It helps communities grow according to the spirit of their founders.

Any institute of perfection and its members may be removed from the jurisdiction of local Bishops or Patriarchs, to that of the Pope alone. Religious show reverence and obedience to Bishops, because of their pastoral authority and the need for harmony.

The Church makes religious profession:

a canonical state,

shown by the liturgical setting of profession.

The Church's acceptance of vows,

appeal for religious in her public prayer,

and its blessing on them.

Religious must remember that the Church is present to the believer and non-believer in a striking manner daily, through them. ⁴⁶

The profession of the evangelical counsels, with its renunciation of certain values, does not detract from genuine development of the human persons, but is beneficial to that development, contributing to:

purification of heart,

spiritual liberty,

charity,

and the detachment exemplified by Jesus and Mary.

Religious, though sometimes not mingling with men, are spiritually cooperating with them.

The Council encourages monastic, teaching, medical and missionary men and women, Brothers and Sisters.

Let each of the faithful persevere and grow in whatever vocation God has given him. ⁴⁷

VII The Pilgrim Church

The Church will attain its full perfection only in the glory of heaven. At that time the human race and the entire world will be perfectly re-established in Christ. ⁴⁸

Christ:

having been lifted up has drawn all to Himself.

Rising from the dead:

He sent His Spirit upon the disciples,
established the Church, the universal sacrament (sign) of salvation.

He is:

sitting at the right hand of the Father
continually active in the world, through the
Church joining men to Himself.

Therefore, the promised restoration which we
are awaiting:

has already begun in Christ,
is carried forward in the Holy Spirit,
through the Spirit continues in the Church,
in which we learn the meaning of earthly
life in faith,
while working out our salvation in hope.

We are in the final age of the world, whose renovation
is already anticipated, for the Church is already
signed with a sanctity which is real though im-
perfect.

*Until there shall be a new heaven and a new earth
in which justice dwells, the pilgrim Church in her
sacraments and institutions, which pertain to this
present time, takes on the appearance of this pass-
ing world.*

Joined with Christ in the Church we are sons of God,
but we have not yet appeared with Christ in glory:
in which we shall be like God,
since we shall see Him as He is.

While we are in the body, we are exiled from the Lord.
We strive to please God in all things in view of the
future judgment.

We look forward to the refashioning of the body of
our lowliness, conformed to Christ's glory.

Until the Lord come in majesty, some of His dis-
ciples: ⁴⁹

are exiles on earth,
some having died, are purified,
others are in glory, beholding God.

All are in communion in the same charity of God and
neighbor:

union exists between those in exile and those
who have died,
by a communication of spiritual goods.

Those in heaven establish the whole Church
more firmly in holiness:

interceding for those on earth,
serving God,
and filling up those things which are lack-
ing of the sufferings of Christ for His
Body which is the Church.

Because of the communion of the whole Mystical
Body, the Church has cultivated the memory of
the dead, and offers suffrages for them. ⁵⁰

The Apostles and martyrs are closely joined
in Christ,

together with the Virgin Mary and the Angels,
imitators of Christ's virginity and poverty,
and others outstanding in virtue.

We look to the lives of those who have faithfully fol-
lowed Christ for inspiration and example.

Not only are the saints examples to us, but our companionship with them joins us to Christ.

Our union with the Church in heaven is effected especially in the Liturgy.

This Council confirms the ancient faith about the communion of saints and the dead being purified, urging: ⁵¹

that excesses and defects in devotion be corrected,

noting that the cult of the saints is not a matter of many external acts, but of love and the seeking of example, fellowship and aid, and that the communion with saints does not weaken but enriches the worship of God.

VIII The Blessed Virgin Mary

On the place of the Blessed Virgin in the Mystery of Christ. ⁵²

Wishing to effect the redemption of the world, God sent His Son, born of a woman, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

This divine mystery of incarnation by the Holy Spirit from the virgin Mary for our salvation is revealed to us and continued in the Church.

The faithful must in the first place reverence the memory of the Virgin Mary, Mother of our God and Lord Jesus Christ.

The Virgin Mary is acknowledged and honored as being truly the Mother of God and Mother of the Redeemer: ⁵³

She is Redeemed by reason of the merits of her Son, and united to Him by a close tie, given the high office of:

mother of the Son of God,
by which she is also:
daughter of the Father,
and temple of the Holy Spirit.

Because of this gift of sublime grace she surpasses all creatures.

She also belongs to the offspring of Adam, one with all those who need to be saved.

She is mother of the members of Christ, having cooperated by charity that the faithful might be born in the Church:

she is a preeminent member of the Church,
its type and exemplar.

The Catholic Church honors her as a most beloved mother.

The Council intends to describe her role in the mystery of the Incarnate Word and the Mystical Body. ⁵⁴

it does not intend to give a complete doctrine on Mary, nor decide theological questions.

Those opinions therefore may be lawfully retained which are freely propounded by schools of Catholic thought concerning her who occupies a place in the Church which is the highest after Christ and yet very close to us.

The Role of the Blessed Virgin in the Economy of Salvation. ⁵⁵

The figure of the woman, Mother of the Redeemer, is gradually brought clearer and prophetically foreshadowed in the Old Testament.

The new economy is established when the Son of God took a human nature from her, that He might in the mysteries of His flesh free man from sin.

The Father willed that her acceptance should precede the incarnation. ⁵⁶

He adorned her from her conception with unique holiness.

Replying to the angel messenger she consented to the divine Word, and became the mother of Jesus, the one and only Mediator.

She devoted herself totally to the person and work of of her Son, under Him and with Him.

She was used by God, not merely in a passive way, but as freely cooperating in the work of human salvation through faith and obedience.

The union of the Mother with the Son in the work of salvation is shown from the time of Christ's virginal conception up to His death. (Biblical incidents from the Visitation to the loss of the child in the Temple are cited.)⁵⁷

In the public life of Jesus, from the marriage feast at Cana until Jesus' death on the Cross, Mary makes significant appearances. ⁵⁸

We see Mary in the midst of the Apostles on the day of Pentecost. ⁵⁹

Finally, on the completion of her life, she was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory and exalted by the Lord as Queen of the universe.

On the Blessed Virgin and the Church. ⁶⁰

There is but one Mediator, the man Christ Jesus.

The maternal duty of Mary toward men in no wise obscures or diminishes this unique mediation of Christ, but rather shows His power. For all the salvific influence of the Blessed Virgin on Men originates, not from some inner necessity, but from the divine pleasure. It flows forth from the superabundance of the merits of Christ, rest on His mediation, depends entirely on it and draws all its power from it.

On earth the virgin mother of the Redeemer, in a singular way, cooperated in Jesus' work of giving back supernatural life to souls, hence she is our mother in the order of grace. ⁶¹

The maternity of Mary in the order of grace began with her consent to the incarnation and will last until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. ⁶²

In heaven she constantly intercedes to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation, and cares for the brethren of her Son who still journey on earth.

Therefore she is called Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix and Mediatrix.

The Church does not hesitate to profess this subordinate role of Mary.

By reason of her union with her Son, the Blessed Virgin is also intimately united with the Church.⁶³

She is a type of the Church in the order of faith, charity and perfect union with Christ.

In the mystery of the Church, itself called mother and virgin, Mary is an exemplar both of mother and virgin.

Her belief and obedience brought forth the Son, first born of many brethren in whose birth and education she cooperates.

The Church, receiving the word of God in faith, becomes the mother of sons born to eternal life in her, in baptism.⁶⁴

She is virgin in the integrity of her faith, hope and charity.

The followers of Christ, striving to increase in holiness turn to Mary as the model of virtues.⁶⁵

She calls the faithful to her Son.

The Church becomes more like her Type, and looks to her, in her apostolic work, as a living example.

The Cult of the Blessed Virgin in the Church.⁶⁶

Mary intervened in the mysteries of Christ and is justly honored by a special cult in the Church.

From earliest time she is honored as Mother of God.

Her cult increased after the Council of Ephesus.

The Cult of Mary differs essentially from the cult of adoration offered to the Incarnate Word, the Father and the Holy Spirit, being favorable to the adoration of the Godhead.

The Council teaches and encourages the Cult of the Blessed Virgin, especially the liturgical cult:⁶⁷

approving the cult of images of Christ, Mary and saints, warning about false exaggerations.

Following scripture let the duties and privileges of Mary:

look to Christ,

and avoid errors misleading the separated brethren in their understanding of the Church.

True devotion proceeds from true faith.

Mary, the Sign of Created Hope and Solace to the Wandering People of God.⁶⁸

Mary, in the glory she possesses, body and soul in heaven, is the image and beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected in the world to come.

It gives joy to the Council that even among separated brethren there are some who honor the Mother of the Lord.⁶⁹

The faithful pray that she intercede before her Son until all families of people are happily gathered together in harmony into one People of God, for the glory of the Trinity.

Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation

(Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Nov. 18, 1965)

PREFACE

The Council takes its direction from the words of St. John: 1
“We announce to you the eternal life which dwelt with the
Father and was made visible to us . . . so that you may have
fellowship with us and our common fellowship be with the
Father and his son Jesus Christ.”

Therefore this Council sets forth authentic doctrine:
on divine revelation,
and how it is handed on.

I Revelation Itself

2

God chose:

to reveal himself, and his hidden purpose:
by which, through Christ, man might in the Holy
Spirit have access to the Father,
and come to share in the divine nature.

Through this revelation God:

speaks to men as friends,
and lives among them,
so that he may invite and take them into fellowship with
himself.

This plan of revelation is realized by deeds and words having
an inner unity:

by deeds of God in the history of salvation, which confirm
teachings, and,
teaching and realities signified by words, which clarify
the mystery contained in the deeds.

The deepest truth about God and the salvation of man shine
out in Christ:

who is both the mediator, and the fullness of all revelation.

God, who creates all things and keeps them in existence, 3
gives men witness to himself in created realities.

Planning to make the way of salvation known, he went further:

After the fall he gave our first parents hope by his prom-
ise of redemption,
and kept the human race in his care.

He called Abraham to make of him a nation.

Through the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets:

he taught this people to acknowledge himself,
and to wait for the promised savior.

In this manner he prepared for the gospel down through
the centuries.

Then he sent his son, the eternal word: 4

to dwell among men,
and tell them of the innermost being of God.

Jesus Christ completes the work of salvation which his
Father gave him to do.

*To see Jesus is to see his Father . . . Jesus per-
fected revelation by fulfilling it through his whole
work of making himself present and manifesting
himself: through his words and deeds, his signs and
wonders, but especially through his death and glor-*

ious resurrection from the dead and final sending of the Spirit of truth.

Jesus confirmed what revelation proclaimed:

that God is with us to free us from sin and death,
and to raise us up to life eternal.

The Christian dispensation, as the new and definitive covenant:
will never pass away.

We now await no further new public revelation before
Christ's manifestation in glory.

The total commitment, called "the obedience of faith," 5
is to be given:

freely to God who reveals,
and freely to the truth revealed by him.

To make this act of faith:

grace and the interior help of the Holy Spirit precede and
assist.

The Holy Spirit deepens understanding and completes faith
by his gifts.

Through divine revelation, God chose: 6

to communicate himself,
and his decisions regarding the salvation of men;
sharing with men divine treasures which totally transcend
the understanding of the human mind.

The sacred Synod affirms, "God, the beginning and end of all things, can be known with certainty from created reality by the light of human reason" but the Synod teaches that is through His revelation "that those religious truths which are by their nature accessible to human reason can be known by all men with ease, with solid certitude, and with no trace of error, even in the present state of the human race.

II Handing on Divine Revelation

God has seen to it that what he had revealed for salvation: 7
would abide in its full integrity,
and be handed on to all generations.

Therefore Christ commissioned the Apostles:

to preach the gospel to all men,
and to impart heavenly gifts to men.

The apostles, by oral preaching and example, handed on
what they received:

from the lips of Christ,
from living with him,
from what he did, or
what they had learned through the Holy Spirit.

The commission was fulfilled also by those apostles and apostolic men who, inspired by the Holy Spirit, put the message of salvation in writing.

To keep the gospel forever whole and alive within the Church, the apostles handed over to bishops as their successors "the authority to teach in their own place."

And so the apostolic preaching, which is expressed 8
in a special way in the inspired books, was to be preserved by a continuous succession of preachers until the end of time.

What was handed on by the apostles includes everything which
contributes:

toward the holiness of life,
and increase in faith of the people of God:

TRADITION

This tradition which comes from the apostles develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit.

There is a growth in the understanding of the realities and the words handed down, through:

contemplation and study made by believers, and the preaching of bishops.

The **Fathers of the Church** witness to the presence of this living tradition.

Through tradition the Church's canon of the sacred books is known.

TRADITION AND SCRIPTURE

Hence there exist a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end. Both sacred tradition and sacred scripture are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of devotion and reverence. 9

INTERPRETATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

The task of authentically interpreting the word of God has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church: 10

This teaching office serves the word.

It draws from this deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed.

Sacred tradition, scripture and the teaching authority of the Church:

are so linked that one cannot stand without the other.

Together and each in its own way under the Holy Spirit contribute to the salvation of souls.

III Sacred Scripture, its Inspiration And Divine Interpretation

Those divinely revealed realities in sacred scripture were written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. 11

The Church holds that:

The books of both the old and new testaments are sacred and canonical because:

written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,
they have God as their author,
and have been handed on as such to the Church.

In composing the sacred books:

God chose and employed men,
making use of their abilities.

They, as true authors, wrote everything and only those things which he wanted.

Therefore the books of scripture teach solidly, faithfully and without error what God wanted put into sacred writings.

All scripture is divinely inspired.

However, since God speaks in sacred Scripture through men in human fashion, the interpreter of sacred Scripture, in order to see clearly what God wanted to communicate to us, should carefully investigate what meaning the sacred writers really intended, and what God wanted to manifest by means of their words. 12

To search out the intention of the sacred writers:
attention must be paid to literary forms,
and customs of expression at the time of the writing.
The content and unity of the whole of scripture must be
considered.
The living tradition of the whole Church must be taken
into account,
along with the harmony which exists between elements of
the faith.
All of what has been said about the interpretation of
scripture is subject to the judgment of the Church.
In scripture the words of God have been made like human 13
discourse, just as the word, when made flesh, was in every
way like men.

IV The Old Testament

God, in preparing the salvation of the whole human race, 14
chose a people to whom he would entrust his promises:
First he entered into a covenant with Abraham,
and through Moses, with the people of Israel.
Israel came to know by experience the ways of God with
men.
God himself spoke to them through the prophets.
The plan of salvation foretold is found in the books of the old
testament: **these books, written under divine inspiration, re-**
main permanently valuable.
The principal purpose of the plan of the old covenant 15
was directed to prepare for the coming of Christ:
to announce the coming by prophecy,
and indicate its meaning through various types.
Christians should receive the old testament books with
reverence.
God, inspirer and author of both testaments, arranged that 16
the new testament be hidden in the old and the old made
manifest in the new.

V The New Testament

The word of God is set forth and shows its power in a most 17
excellent way in the new testament.
Christ:
established the kingdom of God on earth,
showed his Father and himself by deeds and words,
and completed his work by his death, resurrection, as-
cension and the sending of the Holy Spirit.
He draws all men to himself.
This mystery was not shown to other generations as it was to
the apostles.
To these realities, the writings of the New Testa-
ment stand as a perpetual and divine witness.
Among scriptures and gospels have a special pre-eminence: 18
They are the principal witness for the life and
teaching of the incarnate Word, our Savior.
The Church holds that the four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke
and John) are of apostolic origin.
They are historical and hand on what Jesus Christ, while 19
living among men, really did and taught for salvation.

The sacred authors wrote the four Gospels, selecting some things from the many which had been handed on by word of mouth or in writing, reducing some of them to summaries, explaining some things in view of the situation of their churches, and preserving the form of proclamation but always in such fashion that they told us the honest truth about Jesus.

Besides the four gospels the canon of the new testament 20
contains the epistles of St. Paul and other apostolic writings
composed under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

Confirming matters which concern Christ,
more fully stating his teaching,
his saving power preached,
and the story told of the beginnings of the Church.

VI Sacred Scripture in the Life of the Church

After the ascension of the Lord, the apostles handed on what
he had said with that clearer understanding they had after
the descent of the Holy Spirit.

The Church receives and offers life to the faithful: 21
both from the word of God, the scriptures,
and the body of Christ in the liturgy.

Like the Christian religion itself, all the preaching of the
Church must be nourished and regulated by sacred scrip-
ture.

*“For the word of God is living and efficient” and
is “able to build up and give the inheritance among
all the sanctified.”*

Easy access to scripture should be provided for all the 22
Christian faithful.

The Church from the beginning accepted the Greek trans-
lation of the old testament called the septuagint,
and honored other translations, especially the vulgate.
The Church is always concerned that translations be made
into different languages.

*And if, given the opportunity and the approval of
Church authority, these translations are produced
in cooperation with the separated brethren as well,
all Christians will be able to use them.*

The Church also encourages: 23
study of the Eastern and Western Fathers and liturgies,
and scriptural studies by Catholic exegetes and other
students of theology, working together under the care of
the Church.

*Sacred theology rests on the written Word of God,
together with sacred tradition, as its primary and
perpetual foundation.*

The same word of scripture is the basis of:
pastoral preaching,
catechetics and Christian instruction, in which the
liturgical homily has first place.

All clergy, catechists and other teachers must study scrip- 25
ture.

The Council also urges the Christian faithful to learn to know Jesus through scripture:

by reading, or,
through the liturgy,
and instruction.

Prayer should accompany the reading of scripture so that God and man may talk together.

It is the responsibility of bishops to give instruction to their faithful in the right use of the divine books.

Editions of scriptures should be prepared for and distributed to non-Christians.

Just as the life of the Church is strengthened by more frequent celebration of the Mass, similarly we may hope for a new stimulus for the life of the Spirit from a growing reverence for the word of God.

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy

(Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Dec. 4, 1963)

INTRODUCTION

Aims of the Vatican Council which are reasons for this reform 1
of the liturgy:

To give vigor to the Christian life of the faithful.
To adapt what is changeable to the needs of today.
To promote union among all who believe in Christ.
To strengthen the Church's mission to all mankind.

The liturgy, "*through which the work of our re- 2
demption is accomplished,*" is the means:

For the faithful to express the mystery of Christ and the
Church, and,
To show it to others.

The principles here decreed apply to all rites. All lawful rites
are of equal dignity. 3-4

The practical norms, which follow, apply only to the Roman
rite.

I General Principles

I — Nature and Importance of the Liturgy 5

What is the liturgy?

God sent His Son:

Through Him we are reconciled with God, and,
The fulness of divine worship is given us.

The Son, Christ, sent the apostles, filling them with the 6
Holy Spirit and founding the Church on the day of Pentecost:

To proclaim this reconciliation.

To realize it sacramentally (this is the core around which
liturgical life revolves).

And to worship God through the power of the Holy Spirit.
Christ is always present in His Church, especially in its 7
liturgical celebrations.

The liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy the sanctification of man is betokened by signs perceptible to the senses, and is effected in a way which is proper to each of these signs; in the liturgy full public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members.

Therefore liturgical celebration surpasses all others in holiness and effectiveness because it is an action of Christ the priest and His Body which is the Church. In the liturgy we on earth share in the heavenly celebration.

Activities of the Church other than the liturgy: 9

Preaching to unbelievers.

Preaching to and teaching believers.

Inviting believers to works of charity and the apostolate.

Why is the liturgy important? 10

It is important:

As the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed.

As the *'fount from which all her power flows'*.

The liturgy moves the faithful to unity and love.

It is a source of grace.

For the liturgy to be effective: 11

The faithful must be well disposed.

Know what they are doing.

Participate.

Non-liturgical spiritual life is also necessary: 12

Individual:

Private, unceasing prayer.

Bodily witness to the death of Jesus.

Popular and local devotions: these must however derive from the liturgy. 13

II — Instruction and Participation 14

In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else.

Liturgical instruction of the clergy (prerequisite to participation by the people).

Priestly formation:

Sacred liturgy is to be compulsory major course in seminaries.

Taught by well prepared specialists. 15

Under its theological, historical, spiritual, pastoral and juridical aspects. 16

In other courses the connection to the liturgy is to be brought out.

Future clerics shall be given a liturgical formation in their spiritual life. 17

Priests now working in the Lord's vineyard are to be given deeper understanding. 18

Pastors must promote:

The liturgical instruction of the faithful. 19

Active internal and external participation.

Radio and television broadcasts of the sacred rites: 20

Shall be discrete and dignified.

Supervised by a qualified person appointed by the Bishop.

III — The Reform of the Liturgy 21

The liturgy is made up of unchangeable elements divinely instituted, and elements subject to change.

The latter not only may but ought to be changed with the passing of time if features have by chance insinuated themselves which are less harmonious with the intimate nature of the liturgy, or if existing elements have grown less functional.

A — General Norms

22

Who regulates the sacred liturgy?

The Apostolic See.

The Bishop.

Territorial bodies of Bishops.

The way in which revision is to be carried out:

23

After careful theological, historical and pastoral study.

Considering the laws of meaning of the liturgy, with the experience of recent reforms.

And the needs of the Church. Reforms should grow organically from existing forms.

Large differences between rites in adjacent areas should be avoided.

Sacred scripture:

24

Is the fundamental source of liturgical expression and meaning.

Therefore, a warm and living love for scripture is to be promoted.

Timing: as soon as possible, with quality.

25

B — Hierarchic and Communal Considerations

Liturgical services are **not** private functions, but are celebrations of the whole Church:

26

Each person, minister or layman, should perform all, and only, his own part according to the nature of the rite.

28

With devotion and correctly.

29

Whenever rites, according to their specific nature, make provision for communal celebration involving the presence and active participation of the faithful, this way of celebrating them is to be preferred.

The people should be encouraged to respond, to sing, act and be reverently silent at the proper times.

30

Books must provide rubrics for the people's parts.

31

No honors are to be given private persons in the liturgy apart from persons in sacred orders and civil authorities.

32

C — Pastoral and Teaching Functions of the Liturgy

The Liturgy teaches:

33

The gospel to the people.

The people how to rationally express their faith and minds to God.

Therefore, rites should be:

34

Of noble simplicity. Short and clear.

Understandable without much explanation.

That the connection between words and rites may be apparent:

35

More, and more varied, scripture readings are to be used.

An integral sermon is generally required.

Directions should be discretely given within the rite itself.

Bible services should be encouraged.

Latin:

Is to be preserved.

36-37

But the use of other languages may be extended, as territorial ecclesiastical authorities decide, with the confirmation of the Apostolic See.

Translations must be approved.

D — Adaptation to Various Cultures

The Church respects the genius of the various races:

39

She does not wish to impose a rigid uniformity.

But studies and preserves what is not basically wrong.
And admits to the liturgy what harmonizes with its spirit.

Provided that the substantial unity of the Roman rite is maintained, the revision of liturgical books should allow for legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions, and peoples, especially in mission lands.

Within limits territorial authorities shall adapt:

The administration of the sacraments.

Sacramentals. Processions. Language. Music. The Arts.

Where more radical adaptations are needed:

Territorial authorities shall submit recommendations to the Apostolic See.

Experiment over a fixed period of time.

Employ experts to formulate changes.

IV—Liturgical Life in Diocese and Parish 41

The bishop is to be considered the high priest of his flock. In a certain sense it is from him that the faithful who are under his care derive and maintain their life in Christ.

Liturgical life in the diocese:

Is centered around the bishop. 42-43

Who of necessity forms lesser groups where the pastor takes his place.

Efforts also must be made to encourage a sense of community within the parish, above all in the celebration of the Sunday Mass.

V—Steps to Promote Pastoral-Liturgical Action

Territorial ecclesiastical authorities: 44

Shall set up a liturgical commission, with experts in different fields.

And an Institute for Pastoral Liturgy (including laity).

The bishop of every diocese (or of groups of dioceses):

Is to have a commission on the sacred liturgy. 45

And as far as possible for sacred music and sacred art.

All working, or fused, together. 46

II The Eucharist

Our Savior instituted the eucharistic sacrifice of His Body and Blood at the Last Supper' 47

To perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross through the centuries.

And entrust to the Church a memorial of His death and resurrection:

Sacrament of love. Gift of grace.

Sign of unity. Pledge of future glory.

Bond of charity.

The Church desires the faithful at Mass: 48-49

To take part in the sacred action:

Conscious of what they are doing.

With devotion.

And full collaboration.

To be instructed by God's word.

Nourished with the Lord's body.

Giving thanks

Not only through the priest,

But also with him.

Offering themselves, through Christ.

Steadily perfecting their union:

With God.

With each other.

The rite of the Mass is to be revised in such a way 50 that the intrinsic nature and purpose of its several parts, as also the connection between them, can be more clearly manifested, and that devout and active participation by the faithful can be more easily accomplished.

- Therefore the rites are to be:
- Simplified. 52
 - The Bible is to be more fully used.
 - A homily is to be integrated within the liturgy. 53
 - The prayer of the faithful is to be restored:
 - With the people taking part.
 - Interceding for the Church.
 - For civil authorities.
 - For those in need.
 - For all mankind and universal salvation.
 - The vernacular is to be used in part. 54
 - And the faithful enabled to say or sing together their Latin parts.
 - Communion is strongly commended; it may be under both species on special occasions. 55-56
 - Concelebration is to be extended to:** 57
 - Holy Thursday.
 - Masses during councils, synods, etc.
 - Mass for the blessing of an abbot.
 - Also when opportune:
 - At conventual Masses when more priests are available than needed to serve the faithful.
 - At priest's meetings.
 - Concelebration is subject to the regulation of the bishop and may not (with two exceptions) infringe the right of the priests to celebrate individually.
 - A new rite for concelebration is to be drawn up. 58

III Other Sacraments and Sacramentals

- Purpose of the sacraments:** 59
 - To sanctify men.
 - To build up the body of Christ.
 - To give worship to God.
- They also:
 - Instruct.
 - Strengthen and express faith.
 - Impart grace.
- Therefore, it is important that the faithful understand the sacramental signs.
- The sacramentals signify effects of the Church's intercession. 60
 - They, with the sacraments, sanctify daily events. 61
- Changes designed to make sacraments and sacramentals more understandable:**
 - The vernacular language may be used. 62
 - New rituals shall be prepared.
- Baptism:**
 - The catechumenate for adults is to be restored. 64
 - Elements of initiation rites may be admitted to the ritual (in mission lands). 65
 - Rites for the baptism of adults are to be revised. 66
 - The baptism rites for infants is to be revised. 67
 - Variant baptismal rites provided. 68

A rite shall be drawn up for converts already validly bap- 69
tized.

Baptismal water may be blessed within the rite of baptism, 70
excepting during Eastertide.

Confirmation:

The rite is to be revised and more closely related to Chris- 71
tian initiation.

Confirmation may be given within the Mass.

Penance: Both rite and formulas are to be revised. 72

Anointing of the Sick: (Extreme Unction): 73

Is not only for those in danger of death, but should be
given when sickness or old age approach.

A rite continuous with viaticum shall be prepared. 74-75

Ordination rites: to be revised. 76

Marriage rite:

To be revised. 77

May be adapted to local customs. The only requirement
which may not be changed, is that the priest ask for and
obtain the consent of the contracting parties.

Marriage is normally celebrated within the Mass: the
prayer for the bride, amended to remind both spouses of
their equal obligation, may be in the vernacular.

In marriage outside Mass, the epistle and gospel of the
Mass, and the blessing, are to be included. 78

The sacramentals: 79

To be revised.

Reserved blessings limited.

Some sacramentals may be administered by qualified lay
persons.

The consecration of virgins: rite to be revised. 80

Religious profession: a rite to be drawn up.

Burial of the dead: rite to be revised. A special Mass for the 81
burial of infants should be provided. 82

IV Divine Office

The priestly Christ, through the agency of His Church, praises 83
and intercedes with God, not only in the Mass, but also in
other ways, especially by praying the **divine office:**

Which goes back to early Christian times. 84

Makes the whole day and night holy with the praises of God.

Is the prayer which Christ, together with His body, ad-
dresses to the Father.

Those who say office stand before God in the name of the
Church. 85-86

Therefore, reform of the divine office (already begun by the
Apostolic See): 87

Shall restore the traditional relation to the time of day, to
sanctify the day. 88

Take modern conditions into account.

In particular:

Lauds (morning prayer) and Vespers (evening prayer) are 89
to be considered the chief hours.

Compline is to be drawn up suitably to close the day.

Matins shall we adapted to any hour, with fewer psalms
and longer readings.

Prime is suppressed.

- Terce, Sext and None are retained in choir, but otherwise only one of these hours is to be said.
- The divine office, as the public prayer of the Church: 90
 Requires understanding through study.
 Revision to make it more profitable.
 In particular:
 The psalms shall be redistributed. 91
 Readings from scripture, the Church fathers, lives of saints, etc., are to be better chosen and historically valid. 92
 Hymns are to be freed of mythology and improved. 93-94
 (Those obliged to choral office are enumerated, with the obligations of clerics, lay brothers, etc., and provision for substitutions and dispensations.) 95-98

Since the divine office is the voice of the Church:

Those not obliged to office in choir are encouraged to say at least a part together (for example, priests living together). 99

All should perform it perfectly, internally and externally. It should be sung when possible.

The chief hours, especially Vespers, shall be celebrated in parish churches on Sundays and solemn feasts. 100

And the laity, too, are encouraged to recite the divine office, either with the priests, or among themselves, of even individually.

Latin is to be retained but provision is made for uses of the vernacular 101

V The Liturgical Year

Holy Mother Church every week, keeps the memory of His resurrection. In the supreme solemnity of Easter she also makes an annual commemoration of the resurrection, along with the Lord's blessed passion. Within the cycle of a year, moreover, she unfolds the whole mystery of Christ. 102

The Church year:

Recalls the mysteries of redemption, the life and resurrection of Our Lord. Honors Mary, the Mother of God. 103

Remembers the martyrs and other saints. 104

Completes the formation of the faithful with pious practices, instruction, prayer, works of penance and of mercy. 105

Therefore the Council decrees that:

The Lord's day, Sunday, is the original and primary feast day, and has precedence over most other feasts. 106

The sacred seasons shall be preserved but adaptations made to modern conditions. 107

The proper of time (cycle of Our Lord's mysteries) shall be preferred to the feasts of saints. 108

The twofold character of Lent shall be emphasized: 109

The preparation for baptism.

The preparation, by penance, to celebrate the paschal mystery. Penitential practices shall be both private and public, and be adapted to place and conditions. 110

While the saints, their relics and images, are to be venerated, more of their feasts shall be confined to local areas. 111

VI Sacred Music

The musical tradition of the Church is more rich than that of any other art, because music is integral to the liturgy. 112

Sacred music is more holy as it is more closely connected with the liturgical action.

The Church approves all forms of true art.

The Council decrees:

Liturgical worship is more noble when sung, with the active participation of the people. 113

Language follows norms given above for the Mass, divine office, etc.

Choirs are to be promoted but the whole body of the faithful shall participate in sung services. 114

Music shall be well taught by experts in all Catholic institutions, from seminaries and convents to schools. 115

Higher institutes of sacred music founded. 116

Composers and singers given liturgical training.

Other things being equal, Gregorian chant is preferred. 117

Other kinds of music, especially polyphony, are approved.

Religious singing by the people is to be skillfully fostered . . . 118

Music traditions of different peoples: 119

In instrumental music:

The pipe organ is invaluable. 120

But other instruments may be admitted.

Composers: 121

Shall be encouraged in their vocation.

Produce works for varied needs.

Using texts from scripture and liturgical sources.

VII Sacred Art

The fine arts turn men's minds to God. The Church has always: 122

Encouraged art. Judged art.

Therefore the Council Fathers decree:

That the Church admits all styles of art. 123

Beauty is preferred to sumptuous display.

Mediocre art works are to be removed from Churches and sacred places. 124

Care for the liturgical services shall guide Church construction.

Images are to be retained in Churches but with moderation and order. 125

Bishops shall consult their art commissions and art experts. 126

Art schools shall be founded. 127

Architectural norms are to be revised.

Territorial authorities may adapt the things of worship to the needs and customs of different regions. 128

Clerics shall be taught art appreciation. 129

Appendix

Revision of the Calendar

There is no objection to assigning Easter to a fixed date, if those not in union with Rome give assent.

If civil society revises the calendar, there is no objection so long as the seven day week, and the succession of weeks, is retained.

PASTORAL CONSTITUTION MODERN

(Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Dec. 8, 1965)

(NOTE: Since this constitution is much longer than the other Council decrees, space does not permit as complete an outline as given for the others.)

Preface

1

The joys and hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ.

In this constitution the Second Vatican Council engages the 2 whole of humanity in conversation about its problems, bringing to mankind light kindled from the Gospel.

The world: the whole human family with the sum of those realities in the midst of which it lives — theater of man's history — heir of his energies, his tragedies and triumphs — which the Christian sees as created and sustained by its Maker's love — fallen — emancipated by Christ.

The focal point of our total presentation will be man. 3

Introductory Statement: The Situation of Men in the Modern World.

We must look at the signs of the times and understand the world in which we live:

Today the human race is going through a crisis of growth.

Human experience is increasingly polarized:

with more knowledge — greater uncertainty

with wealth — hunger and poverty

with freedom — social and psychological slavery

with unity — conflict and bitter division

search for a better world — without spiritual advancement

Science and technology are changing the face of the 5 earth.

The human race has passed from a static to a dynamic concept of reality.

Traditional social groups, families, clans, villages, are 6 changing:

industrial and urban living is increasing,

communications, migrations, "socialization" change the ties among men.

These changes in human structures call accepted values 7 into question. The impact on religion:

more vivid sense of God—no religion

Contradictions and imbalances intensify for the individual, 8 the family, for social groups, nations and international bodies.

The conviction grows that man should control creation 9 and establish a social order which will affirm human dignity. Still, nations desiring progress fall behind.

The subordinated—the hungry, women, laborers—seek to develop the gifts of their personality.

ON THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD

Now, for the first time in human history all people are convinced that the benefits of culture ought to be and actually can be extended to everyone.

Nonetheless:

. . . the modern world shows itself at once powerful and weak, capable of the noblest deeds or the foulest.

The imbalances under which the modern world labors are 10 linked with that more basic imbalance which is rooted in the heart of man.

Nevertheless, in the face of the modern development of the world, an ever increasing number of people are raising the most basic questions or recognizing them with a new sharpness: What is man? What is this sense of sorrow, of evil, of death, which continues to exist despite so much progress? What is the purpose of these victories, purchased at so high a cost? What can man offer to society, what can he expect from it? What follows this earthly life?

The Church firmly believes that Christ, through His Spirit, can offer man the light and the strength to measure up to his supreme destiny. In Christ can be found the key, focal point and goal of man as well as of all human history.

Part I

The Church and Man's Calling

The People of God, led by the Spirit of the Lord, Who fills 11 the earth:

labors to decipher the signs of God's presence and purpose in the happenings, needs and desires of men of our age.

The People of God and the human race in whose midst it lives render service to each other.

I The Dignity of the Human Person

All things on earth should be related to man as their center 12 and crown, but what is man?

Sacred Scripture teaches that man was created "to the image of God,"

capable of knowing and loving his Creator, and master of all earthly creatures.

By his innermost nature man is a social being.

But man is split within himself, caught in a struggle, both 13 individual and collective, between good and evil.

Made of body and soul, man is one. 14

Man shares in the light of the divine mind: 15

his intelligence is not confined to observable data alone, but can with genuine certitude reach reality as knowable.

The intellect is perfect by wisdom; the future of the world stands in peril unless wiser men appear.

It should also be pointed out that many nations, poorer in economic goods, are quite rich in wisdom and can offer noteworthy advantages to others.

Through the gift of the Holy Spirit man by faith sees the divine plan.

In his conscience man finds a law which he does not impose on himself but which holds him to obedience. 16

Conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of a man. There he is alone with God.

Only in freedom can man direct himself toward goodness; authentic freedom is an exceptional sign of the divine image within man. 17

All the useful works of technology cannot calm man's anxiety about death. The Church, taught by divine revelation, teaches that man has a blissful purpose beyond earthly misery and that bodily death was vanquished by Christ. 18

The root reason for human dignity lies in man's call to communion with God. 19

Atheism.

The denial of this, atheism, is among the most serious problems of this age.

Atheism has many forms and sources including the deficiencies of believers.

Modern atheisms take on systematic expression: some making an end in itself of human freedom, others, seeking economic and social emancipation, see religion as a deception and fight against it. 20

The Church repudiates these doctrines and actions. 21

Conscious of the weight of the questions which atheism raises, the Church believes these questions ought to be examined more profoundly.

Meanwhile every man remains to himself an unsolved puzzle.

The remedy to atheism is to be sought in:

proper presentation of the Church's teaching, the integral life and the mature faith of the Church and its members.

What does the most to reveal God's presence is brotherly charity and unity.

While rejecting atheism, root and branch, the Church sincerely professes that all men, believers and unbelievers alike, ought to work for the rightful betterment of this world in which all alike live; such an ideal cannot be realized, however, apart from sincere and prudent dialogue.

Only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light. 22

By His incarnation the Son of God has united Himself in some fashion with every man.

The Christian receives "the first-fruits of the Spirit."

Since Christ died for all men and the ultimate vocation of man is one and divine, the Holy Spirit, in a manner known only to God, offers to every man the possibility of being associated with the paschal mystery.

II The Community of Mankind

The growing independence of men is chiefly due to technical advances, but its perfection is on the level of interpersonal relationships. 23

Christian revelation contributes to this interpersonal communion,

God has willed that all men be one family. Love for God and neighbor is the greatest commandment: 24

Love of God cannot be separated from love of neighbor.

To a world becoming more unified this is of paramount importance.

Jesus even implied that the union of men is like the union of the divine persons.

Man cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself.

The progress of the human person and the advance of society hinge on one another. 25

The human person is the beginning, subject and goal of all social institutions.

Some social ties needed by man, like the family and political community, relate to his nature, others begin from free decisions.

Today both public and private ties and mutual dependencies resulting in various organizations are increasing:

this is called socialization and is, on the whole, an advantage.

On the other hand men are often diverted from the good by the social circumstances in which they live.

Interdependence is increasingly universal, involving rights and duties with respect to the whole human race. 26

There must be made available to all men everything necessary for leading a truly human life.

The social order must work to the benefit of the human person.

The social order requires constant improvement.

This Council lays stress on reverence for man: everyone must consider his every neighbor without exception as another self, actively helping him, 27

whether old and abandoned,

a foreign laborer unjustly looked down upon,

a refugee,

child born out of wedlock,

or hungry person.

Whatever is opposed to life itself, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, whatever insults human dignity, poisons human society and dishonors the Creator. (Note: Text gives examples.)

Respect and love ought to be extended also to those who think or act differently than we do in social, political and even religious matters. In fact, the more deeply we come to understand their ways of thinking through such courtesy and love, the more easily will we be able to enter into dialogue with them. 28

It is necessary to distinguish between error, which should be rejected, and the person in error, who never loses the dignity of being a person.

Further, Christ requires that we forgive injuries and love our enemies.

The basic equality of all men must receive increasingly 29 greater recognition.

... every type of discrimination, whether-social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, color, social condition, language or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent.

Some fundamental personal rights are still not honored such as the right of a woman to choose a husband freely, choose a state of life, and acquire education or cultural benefits equal to those of men.

Excessive economic and social differences between members of families and population groups is contrary to social justice, human dignity and social and international peace.

Human institutions:

must minister to man,

especially to the highest of all realities, spiritual ones.

No one may content himself with a merely individualistic 30 morality:

Each person must promote and assist private and public institutions that better human life,

and obey all social laws,

being honest, paying just taxes,

and obeying norms of social life such as speed limits.

Individuals of every social background have to be well 31 educated.

Living conditions must be such as to allow men to rise to their destiny of spending themselves for God and others.

Praise is due to national procedures which allow the largest possible number of citizens to participate in public affairs with genuine freedom.

The communitarian character of man was shown by God: 32

when he made a covenant on Sinai with His chosen people,

by Jesus' life of human fellowship,

by the preaching of Jesus,

and by the founding of the brotherly community,

the Church, where everyone, as members of one another,

would give mutual service.

This solidarity must be constantly increased.

III Man's Activity Throughout the World

With the help of science man has extended his mastery 33 over nearly the whole of nature, and now asks why, and how to use the things he has gained.

As guardian of God's word the Church desires to throw light on the path of humanity,

although she does not always have at hand the solutions to particular problems.

Christians are motivated to build the world for by their 34 labor they are unfolding the Creator's work.

When a man works he not only alters things and society, 35

but develops himself as well. The norm of human activity is the genuine good of the human race.

Created things and societies have their own laws which **36**
must be gradually deciphered and put to use. **Science does not**
conflict with faith, for earthly matters and the concerns of
faith derive from the same God.

Human progress can serve man's true happiness, yet **37**
dangers exist:

"Be not conformed to this world"—world here meaning
self-interest, vanity, malice and sin.

All human activity must be purified by the power of Christ.

*For God's Word. . . dwelt on the earth of men.*³⁸
Thus He entered the world's history as a perfect
man, taking that history up into Himself and sum-
marizing it. He Himself revealed to us that "God is
love". . . He gives assurance that the way of love
lies open to men and that the effort to establish a
universal brotherhood is not a hopeless one.

Charity must be pursued in the ordinary circumstances of life.

The Spirit calls some:

to witness to the desire for a heavenly home,

and others to dedicate themselves to the earthly service of
men.

We do not know the time, nor how, but all things will be **39**
transformed:

the expectation of a new earth should stimulate our concern
for cultivating this one where the body of the new human
family is growing.

Earthly progress is distinct, but related to the growth of
Christ's kingdom.

On this earth the Kingdom is already present in mystery.

IV The Role of the Church in the Modern World

What has been said about the **dignity of the human person: 40**
lays the foundation for the relationship between the Church
and the world,
and provides the basis for dialogue between them.

We must now consider **the Church** inasmuch as she exists, **living**
and acting in the world.

The Church has an eschatological (having to do with last
things and heavenly destiny) purpose,

but is also a visible society, with members, in this world
where she serves as a leaven and as a kind of soul for
human society as it is to be renewed in Christ.

It remains a **mystery of human history that the earthly and**
heavenly city penetrate each other.

The Church communicates divine life to men,

and can make the family and history of man more human.

The Church also values what other religious groups are doing,
and is helped by the world.

Man is on the road to a more thorough **development of his 41**
own personality, and cannot be altogether indifferent to re-
ligion.

The Church anchors the dignity of human nature,

proclaims the rights of man and values the way these rights
are being developed today.

The Church recognizes that worthy elements 42 are found in today's social movements, especially an evolution toward unity, a process of wholesome socialization and of association in civic and economic realms. The promotion of unity belongs to the innermost nature of the Church.

The Church is not bound to any particular culture, political, economic or social system but asks her sons to overcome all strife between nations and races.

The split between faith and daily life is an error. 43

. . . let there be no false opposition between professional and social activities on the one part, and religious life on the other.

Secular duties belong properly, but not exclusively, to the laity.

The layman may not imagine that priests can solve or should solve, every problem, or that honest disagreements will not arise as to the Christian solution of specific issues.

Bishops and Priests should bring the light of the Gospel to earthly activities by their preaching and lives, and do their part in establishing dialogue with the world.

The Church should be conscious of the judgment and experience of history.

The experience of past ages, the progress of science, and 44 treasures hidden in culture profit the Church.

The Church needs to express herself appropriately, needs the help of those in the world,

ought to be enriched by the development of human social life,

and has and does profit from the antagonism of those who persecute her.

The Church has the single intention that God's kingdom 45 may come and that the whole human race be saved.

. . . the Church is "the universal sacrament of salvation," simultaneously manifesting and exercising the mystery of God's love for man.

Part II

Some Problems of Special Urgency

The Council now directs attention, in the light of the Gos- 46 pel and of human experience, to a number of urgent needs of the present age.

I Fostering the Nobility of Marriage and the Family

The well-being of the individual and of society is intimately 47 linked with the healthy condition of that community produced by marriage and the family.

It is marred by:

polygamy, divorce and free love,
and by excessive self-love, the worship of pleasure
and illicit practices against human generation.
and further disturbed by modern economic conditions,
social, psychological and civil influences, and in
some parts of the world by problems resulting from
population growth.

**The Council wishes to support Christians and others who
care for the holiness and the natural dignity of marriage.**

God is the author of matrimony, 48
which is rooted in irrevocable personal consent.

The existence of the bond, once mutually accepted, no
longer depends on human decisions alone.

Christ blessed the lives of married Christians through the
sacrament of matrimony.

*Authentic married love is caught up into
divine love . . .*

By virtue of this sacrament:

spouses fulfil their conjugal and family obligations,
advance the perfection of their own personalities,
guide their children to human maturity, salvation, and
holiness.

Children contribute in their own way to making their parents
holy.

Married love: 49

involves the good of the whole person, enriching the ex-
pressions of body and mind with a unique dignity.

The actions within marriage by which the couple are
united intimately are noble ones.

The unity of marriage radiates from the equal personal
dignity of wife and husband.

Christian couples ought to witness to love, concern for
children and bring about cultural renewal of marriage.

Marriage and conjugal love are by their nature ordained 50
toward the begetting and educating of children.

The mission of parents is:

to transmit human life,
and educate those to whom it has been transmitted.

They will make decisions by common counsel and
effort,

considering their personal and social circumstances,
divine law and the Church's interpretation of that law.

Marriage does not exist solely for procreation but as a whole
manner and communion of life.

The Council realizes that some couples find themselves in 51
circumstances where the size of their families should not
be increased, and, therefore, love is hard to maintain.

Some offer dishonorable solutions, even taking life,
but contradiction cannot exist between divine laws about
the transmission of life and those about authentic con-
jugal love.

The harmonizing of conjugal love with responsible trans-
mission of life must be determined by objective stand-
ards.

. . . sons of the Church may not undertake methods of birth control which are found blame-worthy by the teaching authority of the Church in its unfolding of the divine law.

(NOTE: The footnote to this section refers to past Church statements developing policy on birth control and the present commission for the study of population, family and births, remarking that the Council "does not intend to propose immediately concrete solutions.")

Human life and its transmission are **not** realities of this world alone.

The family is a school of deeper humanity: 52

the active presence of the father is highly beneficial.

Children, especially the younger ones, need the care of their mother at home, whose domestic role must be preserved though the legitimate social progress of women should not be underrated on that account.

Children should be prepared for adult independence:

to choose their state of life.

No pressure, direct or indirect, should be put on the young to make them marry or choose a specific partner.

Public authority should favor the prosperity of home life.

Natural and social scientists can advance the welfare of marriage especially by pooling efforts to explain the conditions regulating births.

Priests, organizations, especially family associations, and the married themselves can contribute to the sanctification of families.

II The Proper Development of Culture

Man comes to a true and full humanity only through culture, that is, through the cultivation of the goods and values of nature.

Human culture has an historical and social aspect, a sociological and ethnological sense.

There are many cultures.

Section I: The circumstances of culture in the world today.

We can speak of a new age of human history, marked by: 54
critical judgment developed by the exact sciences.

psychological explanations of human activity,

appreciation of change in history,

industrialization, urbanization and mass-culture,

new uses of leisure,

and more universal human culture.

From day to day, in every group or nation,⁵⁵ there is an increase in the number of men and women who are conscious that they themselves are the authors and the artisans of the culture of their community. Throughout the whole world there is a mounting increase in the sense of autonomy as well as of responsibility. This is of paramount importance for the spiritual and moral maturity of the human race. This becomes more clear if we consider the unification of the world and the duty which is imposed upon us, that we build a better world based upon truth and justice. Thus we are witnesses of

the birth of a new humanism, one in which man is defined first of all by this responsibility to his brothers and to history.

Man asks:

56

How can intercultural exchanges be made fruitful rather than destructive?

How is the dynamism of the new to be harmonized with tradition?

How can increasingly specialized studies be synthesized and wisdom preserved?

How can all men gain cultural values, when the advanced cultures are constantly becoming more complex?

How is cultural autonomy to avoid being merely worldly and irreligious humanism?

Section 2: Some principles for the proper development of culture.

When man develops the earth he carries out:

57

the command of God that he subdue the earth, perfect creation and develop himself,

and the commandment of Christ that he serve his brethren.

Through knowledge and the arts mankind may know God better, and be freer of material things.

There is a danger in the scientific emphasis on observable data with agnosticism about everything else, that man may think himself self-sufficient, but this is neither a correct nor necessary result.

God has spoken according to the culture proper to each people and time.

58

The Church:

has used the discoveries of different cultures,

but is not bound to any race, nation, or culture, recent or ancient.

The Gospel of Christ enriches every culture.

59

Culture is to be subordinated to the perfection of the human person, the good of the community and of the whole society:

man must grow in contemplation, judgment, moral and social sense.

Culture requires liberty for its development.

There are two orders of knowledge, **faith** and **reason**;

the Council affirms the legitimate autonomy of human culture, especially of the sciences, freely available to all men.

The function of **public authority** is not to determine civilizations, but to establish conditions favorable to the life of culture among all, including minorities.

Section 3: Some more urgent duties of Christians in regard to culture.

It is now possible to free most of humanity from the misery of ignorance: it is the duty, especially of Christians, to work for the economic and political decisions, national and international, which will bring culture in conformity with human dignity to all without discrimination.

60

Despite the complexity of knowledge and art today, it remains each man's duty to retain an understanding of the whole human person in which are the values of intellect, will, conscience and fraternity.

61

It is sometimes difficult to harmonize culture with Christian teaching: every effort must be made to do so today.

62

(Note: There follows a summary of many ways in which the growth of knowledge and the arts should be encouraged and related to the Church.)

. . . *all the faithful, whether clerics of laity, possess a lawful freedom of inquiry, freedom of expressing their mind with humility and fortitude in those matters on which they enjoy competence.*

III Economic and Social Life

Man is the source, center and purpose of all economic and social life. 63

Like other areas of social life, economics is marked by:
man's increasing domination over nature,
closer and more intense relationships between citizens,
groups and countries and their mutual dependence,
and by the increased intervention of the state.

Progress has made the economy an instrument capable of better meeting the intensified needs of the human family.

However, there are reasons for anxiety:
many people seem to be ruled by economics,
economic life is often made to embitter inequalities,
extravagance and wretchedness exist side by side
and multitudes live and work in sub-human conditions.
There are many imbalances.

The Council here sets forth guidelines to justice and equity in economic matters.

Section 1: Economic development.

Technical progress and production must be promoted, **64**
for the service of the whole man.

Economic power should not be in the hands of the few **65**
but of as many as possible:

private and public undertakings should be coordinated,
and control of growth should not be left either:
to the mechanical course of individual activity,
or to government.

Justice and equity demand: 66

the removal, as quickly as possible, of the immense economic inequalities which now exist and in many cases are connected with discrimination. Farmers especially need help.

**humane regulation of mobility and better treatment of migrants,
and care for the human dignity of those, especially the aged, displaced by automation.**

Section 2 : Certain principles governing socio-economic life as a whole.

Human labor is superior to the other elements of economic life, which are tools. 67

By his labor a man ordinarily supports himself and his family, is joined to his fellow men and serves them, and can exercise genuine charity and be a partner in the work of bringing divine creation to perfection. Indeed, we hold that through labor offered to God man is associated with the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, Who conferred an eminent dignity on labor when at Nazareth He worked with His own hands.

Therefore:

every man has the duty to work faithfully and the right to work,
society must help citizens find sufficient work,
and pay and conditions must be adequate.

Any way or organizing and directing work which is harmful to men and women is wrong and inhuman. **Work must be adapted to the needs of the person, his way of life and his domestic life.**

The active sharing of the administration and profits of business is to be promoted, also,

workers should have a share in the decision making, often on a level beyond the business itself, which effects them, be free to found unions, and to strike although negotiation is preferred.

The use of property:

69

should be for the good of all, although all have a right to sufficient share.

If one is in extreme necessity, he has the right to procure for himself what he needs out of the riches of others.

The Council urges all, individuals and governments, to feed the many hungry in the world and aid them to help themselves.

Family and social services should be promoted.

Investments should be directed:

70

toward full employment and sufficient income for people, not forgetting the needs of the underdeveloped countries,

Private ownership of property is to be safeguarded.

71

The right of private ownership is not opposed to various forms of public property.

Large unused landholdings in underdeveloped countries may be expropriated, with compensation, and other reforms are necessary to end the servitude of the poor.

Those who take part in socio-economic development and fight for justice and charity can make a great contribution to mankind and to world peace.

IV The Life of the Political Community

Today changes are taking place in the structures and institutions of peoples which influence the life of the political community:

in many parts of the world the rights of the person in public life are being better protected, and people desire to take greater part, seeking, rights of minorities, respect for the opinions and religion of others, and the practical guarantee of personal rights to all.

Those political systems which hamper civic or religious freedom, victimize large numbers through avarice or serve factions rather than the common good are reprovod.

The political community exists . . . for the sake of the common good, in which it finds its full justification and significance, and the source of its inherent legitimacy. Indeed, the common good embraces the sum of those conditions of the social life whereby men, families and associations more adequately and readily may attain their own perfection.

Authority is necessary to resolve divergent views:

but its form and the choice of rulers is left to the free will of citizens, and it acts

within the limits of the moral order, directed to the common good.

Citizens may protect themselves against the abuse of authority.

Citizens have the duty to use their vote for the common good.

The relations between socialization and the autonomy and development of the person can be understood in different ways according to various regions and the evolution of peoples.

Citizens should be patriotic without being narrow-minded, being primarily concerned with the good of the whole human race.

Christians must give an example of responsibility and service in the political community.

Care must be taken in civic and political formation.

The relationship of the Church and the political community must be clearly understood. 76

The role and competence of the Church being what it is, she must in no way be confused with the political community, nor bound to any political system. For she is at once a sign and a safeguard of the transcendence of the human person.

The Church and the political community in their own fields are autonomous and independent:

both are devoted to the same men,
and need to cooperate.

V The Fostering of Peace and the Promotion of a Community of Nations

In our generation with its wars and threats of war 77
the whole human family faces an hour of crisis:

it cannot construct a more human world unless each person devotes himself to the cause of peace.

The Council points out the meaning of peace and condemns the frightfulness of war,

asking Christians to cooperate with all men in securing peace based on justice and love,

and in setting up the instruments of peace.

Peace is not:

mere absence of war,

nor balance of power between enemies,

nor brought about by dictatorship.

Peace results from that harmony built into human society by its divine Founder, and actualized by men as they thirst after ever greater justice. Peace is never attained once and for all, but must be built up ceaselessly. Peace cannot be obtained on earth unless personal values are safeguarded and men freely and trustingly share with one another the riches of their inner spirits and their talents. A firm determination to respect other men and peoples and their dignity, as well as the studied practice of brotherhood are absolutely necessary for the establishment of peace. Hence peace is likewise the fruit of love, which goes beyond what justice can provide.

Section 1 : The avoidance of war.

Savage warfare goes on in the present world. 79

The Council:

recalls the principles of natural law; actions in conflict with these principles are criminal.

Blind obedience is no excuse,
and the courage of those who resist commands, especially to the horrendous crime of genocide, is praiseworthy.

International agreements that make the conduct of war more humane should be honored and improved.

Laws should make humane provision for conscientious objectors, provided they agree to serve the human community in some other way

As long as there is danger of war and no powerful international body, governments cannot be denied the right to legitimate defense once every means of peaceful settlement has been exhausted.

Those in the military service of their country should see themselves as the agents of security and freedom of peoples, and as making a genuine contribution to peace.
Because of the scientific weapons now existent, war has to be re-evaluated.

The Council condemns total war, declaring:

“Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation.”

Many regard deterrence as a method of maintaining peace. The arms race is not a safe way to maintain peace, neither is the resulting balance authentic peace.

while extravagant sums are spent on weapons, adequate remedy cannot be provided for misery, and the infection of disagreement is spread.

Therefore, it must be said again: the arms race is an utterly treacherous trap for humanity, and one which injures the poor to an intolerable degree. It is much to be feared that if this race persists, it will eventually spawn all the lethal ruin whose path it is now making ready.

We must work for the complete outlawing of war by international consent.

Some universal public authority is required, but until it is set up, the existing international centers must seek international security.

Efforts now under way to eliminate war should be supported,

and the leaders of these efforts supported also,

There is a pressing need for a renewed education of attitudes and for new inspiration in public opinion.

Now is the time for a change of heart.

Section II : Setting up an international community.

In order to build peace the causes of war, especially in-justice, must be rooted out:

excessive economic inequalities,

the desire to dominate and contempt of persons,

envy, distrust, pride and other egotistical passions.

It is necessary for countries to organize international bodies.

The common good requires that the community of nations organize itself in a manner suited to its present responsibilities:

already existing international organizations are first efforts laying foundations for the community of all men.

The Church takes joy in the brotherhood between Christians and non-Christians.

A revival of international cooperation is needed in the economic field: 85

some peoples are still unduly dependent, or have internal difficulties.

The aid given by foreign specialists should be given as from fellow-workers, and other aid unselfishly.

Radical changes are needed in the procedures of world commerce if the poor nations are to develop.

An end must be put to:

profiteering,

national ambitions and the appetite for political supremacy,

militaristic calculations

and machinations for the sake of imposing ideologies.

The followings norms seem useful for cooperation: 86

a) Developing nations should seek total human fulfillment for their citizens, utilizing their own resources and valuing their own cultures.

b) The advanced nations have a duty to help the developing nations develop themselves, making spiritual and material readjustments on the home front, and respecting the business profit of the weaker nations.

c) The international community must promote development with as much equity as possible.

d) There is a need to revamp economic and social structures, but not with solutions that provide material conveniences but are contrary to man's spiritual nature.

Each branch of the human family possesses in itself and its worthier traditions some part of the spiritual treasure entrusted by God to humanity, even though many do not know the Source of this treasure.

International cooperation is especially needed to help those who, besides other difficulties, are having rapid increase in population: 87

means to supply the necessities of food and education must be sought,

governments helped to solve the problems in their competence,

guarding against solutions contrary to the moral law, and the right of parents to decide how many children they should have.

Christians should cooperate in establishing the international order: 88

ending the scandal of countries where the majority are Christians, having abundant wealth while others lack necessities and are tormented with hunger.

Christians who volunteer their services to help other men and nations are to be supported.

The collection and distribution of aid should be carried on in dioceses, nations and the world, Catholics doing this where possible in union with other Christian brothers, in an orderly manner with properly trained professionals.

The Church contributes to peace on earth, collaborating with all Christians for the service of all. Cooperation would be more effective if the faithful exerted their influence in their own milieu in favor of cooperation with the international community. 89

The work of Christians in international organizations, and 90
the various Catholic organizations on the international level
should be strengthened:

in membership,
and resources.

Catholics should also cooperate with their separated brethren,
and all men seeking true peace.

The Council considers it opportune for the Church to set up
an organization to promote progress in needy regions and in-
ternational social justice. (Commission on World Justice
and Development)

The Council looks to all men, believers and non-believers to 91
promote the aims here expressed.

That the Church may stand as a sign of brotherhood, 92
there must be respect, reverence, harmony, the recognition
of diversity and dialogue within her: unity, freedom and
charity.

*Christians cannot yearn for anything more 93
ardently than to serve the men of the modern world
ever more generously and effectively.*

Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication

(Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Dec. 4, 1963)

Introduction

The Church welcomes and promotes the technological devel- 1
opments which have led to new means of communicating
news, views and teachings:

principally the press, movies, radio and television.

These reach and influence, not only individuals, but the
whole of human society.

They can be called the media of social communication.

The Church sees that these media can be of great service to 2
mankind:

they contribute to men's entertainment and instruction, and
to the support of the Kingdom of God.

But they can also be employed contrary to the plan of
God and do harm to society.

Therefore, the Council gives the following teaching on the prin-
ciple questions linked with the media of social communi-
cation:

in order to promote the welfare of Christians, and the
progress of all mankind.

I On the Teaching Of the Church

The Church must preach the Gospel:

with the help of the media of social communication,
and also instruct men in the proper use of these media.

*Therefore the church claims as a birthright the
use and possession of all instruments of this kind
which are necessary or useful for the formation
of Christians and for every activity undertaken
on behalf of man's salvation.*

Pastors must guide the faithful so that, with the help of these media, they advance in perfection.

The laity need to instill a human and Christian spirit into these media.

Morality and the media: 4

All who use these media need to know and put into practice in this area the norms of morality.

They must look to the nature of what is communicated, aware of the powerful, sometimes unconscious influence, the circumstances of time, place and persons, and the precise manner in which a given medium achieves its effect.

Its power may be so compelling that people, especially if they are caught off guard, may scarcely be able to appreciate it, to moderate it, or, when necessary, to reject it.

With respect to "information" or news: 5

it is both useful and necessary to the common good.

In society men have a right to information about matters concerning individuals or the community.

The news that is communicated should always:
be true and complete,
within the bounds of justice and charity,
and given in a decent manner.

Morality, legitimate rights and the dignity of the individual must be fully respected:

both in the search for news,
and in reporting it.

Art and Morality: 6

The Council asserts that the primacy of the objective moral order demands absolute allegiance, for this order alone excels and rightly integrates all other fields of human concern, including art.

This is because the moral order alone affects the entire being of man. 7

In the portrayal of moral evil,

which can deepen knowledge of humanity and reveal truth, restraint needs to be used to avoid harmful rather than good results.

All must strive through these media to form and spread sound public opinion. 8

Consumers: 9

those who freely use communications media — readers, viewers, or listeners:

must choose presentations outstanding for goodness, knowledge and artistic or technical merit.

They should avoid what is harmful,
and not reward those who use the media only for profit.

Users of social media should inform themselves as to the judgements of competent authorities,

and follow them according to the norms of conscience.

It is their responsibility to have the consciences instructed.

People, especially the young, need to develop moderation 10
and self-control in the use of the media.

*Their goal should be an ever more discerning grasp
of what they see, hear and read. Discussions with
educators and appropriate experts will school them
to make mature judgments.*

Parents have a duty to keep what is morally harmful out of
their homes and their children's circumstances.

Producers: 11

The principal moral responsibility for the media of social
communication falls on newsmen, writers, actors, design-
ers, producers, displayers, distributors, operators, sellers,
critics and all others who have to do with production
and transmission.

They are in a position to lead the human race to good
or to evil by informing or arousing mankind.

**They must adjust their economic, political or artistic and
technical aspects so as never to oppose the common
good.**

For this purpose they ought to join professional asso-
ciations,

and, if necessary, set up codes of sound moral practice.

They need to remember that their young audiences
need decent amusement and cultural uplift.

Religious matters should be handled with skill and
reverence.

Public Authority: 12

The public authority has the responsibility of safeguarding
true and just **freedom of information.**

*The progress of modern society utterly depends
on this, especially as regards freedom of the press.*

It ought also to encourage spiritual values, culture and
fine arts.

On the other hand,

the public authority should protect public morals and the
welfare of society by law,

with special care to safeguard young people.

II On the Pastoral Activity of the Church

*With common heart and mind, let all the sons of the 13
Church strive immediately and most energetically
to use the instruments of social communication
effectively in the many fields of the apostolate, as
circumstances of time and place require.*

For pastors this communications work is linked with their
ordinary preaching responsibility.

Those of the laity involved in production witness to Christ:
by the expertness and apostolic zeal with which they do
their job,

and by the help they give to the pastoral activity of the
Church.

A truly Catholic press should be encouraged.

A Catholic press worthy of the name should also be established and supported. Whether it is published or run by direct ecclesiastical authority or by Catholic laymen, let it be clearly edited with this goal: that it may form, strengthen, and spread public views which are in harmony with the natural law, and with Catholic teachings and precepts.

It should spread news about the life of the Church.

The faithful ought to be told of the need to use the Catholic press to form their Christian judgments.

Positive Approach to Films, Radio and TV

The encouragement of worth-while films should be done by:
supporting projects for the production and distribution of films,
through critical approval and awards,
and patronizing responsible theaters.

The same applies to radio and TV. Catholic programs and stations should be promoted, with care taken for standards of excellence.

The drama should also serve the cultural and moral betterment of audiences.

Implementation

15

Priests, religious and laymen equipped with the proper skills for adapting these media to the objectives of the apostolate should be appointed promptly.

The laity ought to be given technical, doctrinal and moral training, for which purposes special schools should be set up.

Critics also need to be prepared both in the skills of their crafts and Christian judgment.

16

Instruction for the consumers of the communications media should be organized,
according to their diverse needs in Catholic schools, seminaries and lay apostolate groups,
and through catechisms.

Lest the message of salvation be thwarted by expense, the

17

Council advises Catholics that they have a duty to maintain Catholic newspapers, periodicals, film programs, radio and TV programs and stations whose principal objective is to spread the truth and Christian influence in human society.

Specific Directions

18

Each year every diocese in the world is to celebrate a day of prayer, instruction and fund raising for the work of the Church in this area of social communications.

The Council requests that the competence of the Papal "Sec-19 retariate for the Supervision of Publications and Entertainment" be extended to include all media, with experts from various countries, including laymen, named to it.

The bishops have the responsibility to guide and promote such works in their own dioceses.

The Council directs that national offices for affairs of the 21 press, films, radio and television be established which have the responsibility for the instruction of the consciences of the faithful, and help whatever is done by Catholics in these areas.

A bishop, or a committee of bishops, with lay experts, should direct these offices.

Because of the international scope of the media the national offices should work with the appropriate international associations. 22

These latter are approved by and depend solely on the Holy See.

Appendices:

23

The Council instructs the Papal Secretariate for the Supervision of Publications and Entertainment to issue a pastoral instruction.

The Council further entreats all men of good will, especially those who control these instruments, to strive to apply them solely for the good of mankind. The fate of humanity grows daily more dependent on the right use of these media.

Decree on Ecumenism

(Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Nov. 21, 1964)

Introduction

The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican council. ¹

Christ founded one Church and one Church only.

But many Christian Communions, differing in mind, present themselves to men as the true inheritors of Jesus Christ:

Such division:

openly contradicts the will of Christ,
scandalizes the world,
and damages the holy cause of preaching the Gospel to every creature.

In recent times the Lord has been rousing divided Christians to remorse over their divisions and to a longing for unity.

This movement toward unity is called "ecumenical".

Those belonging to the ecumenical movement:

invoke the Triune God and confess Jesus as Lord, not merely as individuals but also as corporate bodies, longing, in different ways, for the one visible Church of God, truly universal and in the world that it may be converted to the Gospel.

The Council, having declared its teaching on the Church, and desiring for restoration of unity among all Christians, here sets before all Catholics the ways and means by which they may respond to the divine ecumenical call.

I Catholic Ecumenical Principles

The Unity of the Church.

God the Father sent His Son to give new life to the entire human race and unify it: ²

Christ prayed "that they all may be one . . ." He gave the Eucharist by which the unity of His Church is both signified and made a reality.

He commanded His followers to love one another,
and gave the Spirit:

through Whom He has called together the people of the New Covenant into a unity of faith, hope and charity.

The Holy Spirit, in believers and in the Church as a whole, brings about the communion of the faithful:

He brings them into intimate union with Christ, so that He is the principle of the Church's unity,

Distributing graces and functions in the Church for the building up of the body of Christ.

To establish the Church everywhere until the end of time Christ gave

the College of the twelve the task of:

teaching,
ruling,
and sanctifying.

From among them He selected Peter as head. He willed that the successors of Peter and the Apostles should continue their work of preaching, administering the sacraments and ruling the Church in love.

And that His people, under the action of the Holy Spirit, increase and grow in unity.

The Church, then, God's only flock, like a standard lifted high for the nations to see, ministers the gospel of peace to all mankind, as it makes its pilgrim way in hope towards its goal, the fatherland above.

This is the sacred mystery of the unity of the Church:
in Christ and through Christ,
the Holy Spirit energizing its various functions.

The highest exemplar and source of this mystery is the unity, in the Trinity of Persons, of one God, the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit.

Divisions in the Church.

Even in the beginnings there were rifts in the Church, strongly condemned by the Apostle. ³

Later more serious dissensions led to the separation of large communities from full communion with the Catholic Church:

men of both sides were to blame,
but their descendents are not to blame.

One cannot impute the sin of separation to those who at present are born into these Communities and are instilled therein with Christ's faith. The

Catholic Church accepts them with respect and affection as brothers. For men who believe in Christ and have been properly baptized are brought into a certain, through imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church.

**The differences which exist in varying degrees:
do create obstacles to full ecclesiastical communion; the ecumenical movement is trying to overcome these obstacles.**

Partial and full participation in the Church.

Some, even most, of the significant elements which together build up and give life to the Church can exist outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church:

the written word of God,
the life of grace,
faith, hope and charity,
gifts of the Holy Spirit,
and visible elements.

All of these:

come from Christ,
lead back to Christ,
belong by right to the one Church of Christ.

The liturgical actions of the Christian religion used by the brethren divided from us:

can truly engender a life of grace, in ways that vary with each Church or Community.

These liturgical actions must be regarded as capable of giving access to the community of salvation.

Separated Churches, though we believe them deficient in some respects:

have been by no means deprived of significance and importance in the mystery of salvation.

The Holy Spirit:

uses them as means of salvation,
effective due to the fullness of grace and truth entrusted to the Church.

The separated Churches lack the unity Christ wished to give the members of His body.

Only through the Catholic Church can they benefit fully from the means of salvation.

It was the apostolic college alone, of which Peter is the head, that we believe our Lord entrusted all the blessings of the New Covenant, in order to establish on earth the one Body of Christ into which all those should be fully incorporated who belong in any way to the People of God.

The Ecumenical duties of Catholics. ⁴

The Council urges Catholics to recognize the signs of the times and to take an active and intelligent part in the work of ecumenism.

Initiatives and activities of the ecumenical movement: avoid expressions, judgments and actions which do not represent the condition of our separated brethren with truth and fairness.

“Dialogue” between competent experts from different Churches, that is, meetings:
organized in a religious spirit,
in which each participant explains the teaching of his Communion.
Thus everyone gains truer knowledge and just appreciation of both Commu-
nions.
and the way is prepared for cooperation for the common good of humanity.
At such meetings there is prayer in common,
all examine their own faithfulness to Christ’s will,
and accordingly undertake renewal.

When such actions are undertaken prudently, with attentive guidance from bishops, they promote justice, truth and unity.

All Christians will be gathered, in a common celebration of the Eucharist, into the unity of the one and only Church, which Christ bestowed on His Church from the beginning. This unity, we believe, dwells in the Catholic Church as something she can never lose, and we hope that it will continue to increase until the end of time.

When individuals wish for full Catholic communion, their conversion is distinct from, and not opposed to, ecumenical action.

Self-reform among Catholics.

The primary duty of Catholics is to make a careful and honest appraisal of whatever needs to be done or renewed in the Catholic household itself:

The Church has divinely revealed truth and all means of grace, yet members fail to live by them:

hence the sign of the Church is less visible
and the growth of God’s kingdom is delayed.

All Catholics must aim at Christian perfection and play his part that the Church may be more purified and renewed.

Unity in essentials and proper freedom for diversity of gifts, spiritual life, liturgy and theology, all in charity, best expresses the authentic catholicity and apostolicity of the Church.

Catholics must see the Christian virtues found among separated brethren, and even learn from them.

Whatever is truly Christian never conflicts with what genuinely belongs to the faith; indeed, it can always result in a more ample realization of the very mystery of Christ and the Church.

The divisions among Christians hurt the Church, preventing the fullness of Catholicity, and its expression in actual life.

The council is pleased by the growing Catholic participation in ecumenical work and asks the bishops everywhere to vigorously stimulate and guide it.

II The Practice of Ecumenism

The attainment of union is the concern of everyone in the whole Church. ⁵

Every renewal of the Church essentially consists in an increase of fidelity to her own calling. Undoubtedly this explains the dynamism of the movement towards unity.

The Church is always in need of reformation in so far as she is an institution of men here on earth.

Deficiencies can and should be set right:
in moral conduct,
Church discipline,
even in the formulation of Church teaching, distinct from the deposit of faith itself.

Church renewal is of ecumenical importance.

It is already taking place:
in Biblical and liturgical movements,
in preaching and catechetics,
the apostolate of the laity,
new forms of religious life,
the spirituality of married life,
and the Church's social teaching and activity.

There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart: ⁷

a renewal of the inner life of our minds,
self-denial and unstinting love,
and gentle service of others.

For our sins against unity we humbly beg pardon of God and of our separated brethren, just as we forgive them that trespass against us.

The faithful should remember that the more effort they make to live holier lives according to the Gospel, the better will further Christian unity and put it into practice.

The soul of the ecumenical movement, or "spiritual ecumenism" is this: ⁸

change of heart and holiness of life,
public and private prayer for unity.

Pray, in the words of Our Lord, "That they all may be one."

On certain special occasions Catholics should join their separated brethren in prayer.

Common worship is governed by two principles:

witness to the unity of the Church, which in most circumstances is not served by common worship,
and the sharing in the means of grace, which sometimes favors common worship.

Local bishops or other authorities must judge what is best with regard to the circumstances of time, place, and persons.

We must get to know the outlook of our separated brethren: ⁹

by study, pursued with realism and good will,
of:

the doctrines of our separated brethren,
their history,
spiritual and liturgical life,
religious psychology and background.

Meetings for this purpose are most valuable.

Theology must be taught with due regard for the ecumenical point of view, and correspond more exactly with the facts: ¹⁰

this is especially important in the formation of
priests, and missionaries.

The way the Catholic faith is expressed should be clear and entire, profound and precise, not clouded by false peace efforts, but in terms separated brethren can really understand. In the Catholic doctrine there exists a "hierarchy" of truths. ¹¹

Let all Christians, united in their efforts, and with mutual respect, bear witness to their faith in God. ¹²

Since in our times cooperation in social matters is very widely practised, all men without exception are summoned to united effort. Those who believe in God have a stronger summons, but the strongest claims are laid on Christians, since they have been sealed with the name of Christ.

Cooperation among all Christians vividly expresses that bond which already unites them, and it sets in clearer relief the features of Christ the Servant.

Christian cooperation should contribute:

to a just evaluation of the dignity of the human
person,

to peace,

to the application of Gospel principles to social
life,

to the advancement of the arts and sciences;

to the relief of affliction, illiteracy, poverty,
housing shortages and the equal distribu-
tion of wealth,

and to a better knowledge of each other.

III Churches Separated in Rome

Two chief divisions exist in the seamless robe of Christ:

the ecclesiastical division between the Eastern
Patriarchates and the Roman See,

and the division in the West stemming from
'The Reformation' (Protestantism)

The Special Position of the Eastern Churches. ¹⁴

Before separation the Church of the East and that of the West followed separate ways with mutual accord for centuries:

disagreements were arbitrated by the Roman
See by mutual consent.

Many Eastern Churches trace their origins to
the Apostles,
and have mutual family ties.

The West has drawn on the East:
in liturgy, spiritual tradition and law,
in doctrine, especially from the Councils
held in the East.

The origins and growth of the Eastern Churches must
be well understood.

The love of the Christians of the East for the liturgy
and for Mary contributes to the growth of the
Church. ¹⁵

*Although these Churches are separated from us,
they possess true sacraments, above all — by apos-
tolic succession — the priesthood and the Eucharist,
whereby they are still joined to us in a very close
relationship. Therefore, given suitable circum-
stances and the approval of Church authority,
some worship in common is not merely possible
but is recommended.*

The riches of monastic spirituality came to the West
from the East. The rich spiritual heritage of the
Eastern Churches should be known, cherished,
and recognized as important:

to the fulness of Christian tradition,
and for bringing about reconciliation.

The Churches of the East, while remembering the
necessary unity of the whole Church, have the
power and duty to govern themselves according
to the disciples proper to them: ¹⁶

as better suited to their faithful,
and more for the good of their souls.

This principle is an essential prerequisite for any res-
toration of unity.

The various theological expressions of East and West
are mutually complementary rather than con-
flicting. ¹⁷

*This entire heritage of spirituality and liturgy, of
discipline and theology, in their various tradition,
belongs to the full catholic and apostolic character
of the Church.*

For the restoration or maintenance of unity and com-
munion it is necessary to impose no burden be-
yond what is essential.

Every effort should be made to gradually real-
ize unity.

Closer relations are encouraged with Eastern
Catholics living in the West.

Separated Churches and Communities of the West.¹⁹

The variety of different convictions that developed in
the West defy description:

There exist important differences from the
Catholic Church,

and also among the separated brethren.

The following are considerations intended to serve as
a basis and encouragement for dialogue.

We rejoice that our separated brethren look to Christ,
despite differences in doctrine concerning Him,
as the source and center of Church unity. ²⁰

Sacred Scripture, loved and meditated on by sepa-
rated brethren, although they differ with us on
the relationship of Scripture and Church, pro-
vides an instrument for dialogue. ²¹

Baptism establishes a sacramental bond of unity, envisaging: ²²

a complete profession of faith,
incorporation in the system of salvation,
and the unity of Eucharistic communion.

While we believe they lack the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fulness, they commemorate the Lord's Supper, and also have other sacraments, worship and ministry.

The **daily Christian** lives of these brethren are nourished by their faith in Christ, bearing fruit, ²³

in prayer,
meditation on the Bible,
family life,
communal worship,
thanksgiving to God,
justice, and charity,

Also in,

relief works,
education,
the improvement of social conditions,
and the promotion of world peace.

While often disagreeing on moral issues, they seek to do all in the name of the Lord. Therefore, ecumenical dialogue might start with the **application of the Gospel to moral conduct.**

We look with confidence to the future: ²⁴

avoid superficial zeal,
be sincerely Catholic,
seek the fulness our Lord wills for His Body.

This most sacred Synod urgently desires that the initiatives of the sons of the Catholic Church, joined with those of the separated brethren, go forward without obstructing the ways of divine Providence and without prejudging the future inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches

(Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Nov. 21, 1964)

Preamble

1

The Catholic Church values the institutions, liturgy and traditions of the Eastern Churches, part of the undivided heritage of the universal Church. Therefore, the Council here gives a few principles in support of renewal.

The Individual Churches or Rites

2

The Catholic Church is made up of the faithful who are united in the Holy Spirit:

by the same faith, sacraments and government,
and who, in groups, held together by a hierarchy, form separate Churches or Rites.

This diversity within the Church manifests its unity.

These individual Churches are:

3

entrusted to the pastoral government of the Roman Pontiff.

They are of equal dignity.

Hierarchs of different Churches in the same places should work together.

Clerics and laity should be educated about different rites.
Each Catholic must hold and cherish his own rite.

Preservation of the Spiritual Heritage of the Eastern Churches

This sacred Synod declares that the Churches of the East, as much as those of the West, fully enjoy the right, and are in duty bound, to rule themselves. Each should do so according to its proper and individual procedures. 5

Members of the Eastern Rite should: 6
preserve, improve and know better their liturgy and way of life.

Religious and associations of the Latin Rite working among Eastern faithful should found houses of the Eastern Rite.

Eastern Rite Patriarchs: 7

The patriarchate has existed in the Church from the earliest times.

The Eastern patriarch is the bishop with jurisdiction over all bishops, metropolitans, clergy and people of his own territory or rite, in accordance with canon law and without prejudice to the primacy of the Pope.

All the Eastern patriarchates are of equal dignity. 8

The rights and privileges of patriarchs should be re-established: 9

in accord with ancient traditions and councils, being those of the time of union between East and West, with adaptation to modern conditions.

The patriarchs with their synods are the highest authority for all business of the patriarchate.

The same is true of major archbishops. 10

New patriarchates should be begun where there is need 11 either by an ecumenical council or by the Pope.

The Discipline of the Sacraments:

The Council confirms the ancient discipline of the sacraments existing in the Oriental Churches. 12

With respect to **Confirmation**, the Eastern Church practice 13 whereby priests confer this sacrament should be restored.

Either with baptism or separately they can validly confer this sacrament on the faithful of any rite including the Latin. 14

Priests of the Latin Rite, in accord with their faculties can validly administer confirmation to the faithful of Eastern Churches.

In both cases rules regarding licitness are to be observed.

The faithful are bound to take part in the **Liturgy** according 15 to the customs of their own rite.

The Sunday and feast day precept extends from Vespers of the Vigil until the end of the Sunday or feast day.

The faithful are encouraged to receive communion, even daily.

Unless the hierarch has expressly forbidden it, priests of any rite can hear confessions of people of any rite in the same area. 16

Where the office of the permanent 'diaconate has fallen into 17 disuse, it should be restored.

Marriages between Eastern Catholics and baptized Eastern 18 non-Catholics are valid if a minister is present, the canonical "form" being of obligation only for liceity.

Divine Worship:

Feast days common to all Eastern Churches can be 19
changed by an ecumenical council or the Apostolic See.

Feast days of individual Churches are within the competence
of the patriarchal synod.

Until all Christians are agreed on a fixed day for the cele- 20
bration of **Easter**, it is left to the patriarchs to come to an
agreement for their areas.

Faithful living outside the area of their rite may follow 21
the customs of the place where they live.

In families of mixed rite it is permissible to observe the law
according to one and the same rite.

Eastern clerics and Religious should celebrate **Divine** 22
Office according to their traditions, the faithful assisting as
occasion allows.

The patriarch, with his synod and reference to the Apostolic 23
See, regulates the use of language.

Relations with the Brethren of Separated Churches: 24

*The Eastern Churches in communion with the
Apostolic See of Rome have a special role to play
in promoting the unity of all Christians, particu-
larly Easterners, according to the principles of
this sacred Synod's Decree on Ecumenism: first
of all by prayer, then by the example of their lives,
by religious fidelity to ancient Eastern traditions,
by greater mutual knowledge, by collaboration, and
by a brotherly regard for facts and feelings.*

If any separated Eastern Christian should join the Cath- 25
olic Church, no more should be required of them than a bare
profession of what the Catholic faith demands.

Eastern clerics are permitted to use the Orders that they
have on joining the Catholic Church.

Common participation in worship which harms Church unity 26
or causes error is forbidden.

However, where the unity is not hurt, the Catholic Church
adopts a mild policy.

*Eastern Christians who are separated in good 27
faith from the Catholic Church, if they ask of their
own accord and have the right dispositions, may be
granted the sacraments of penance, the Eucharist,
and the anointing of the sick. Furthermore, Catho-
lics may ask for these same sacraments from those
non-Catholic ministers whose Churches possess
valid sacraments, as often as necessity or a genuine
spiritual benefit recommends such a course of ac-
tion, and when access to a Catholic priest is physi-
cally or morally impossible.*

Common participation by Catholics with their Eastern sep- 28
arated brethren in sacred functions is allowed for a just
cause.

The local hierarchs are to control participation in things 29
sacred.

Conclusions: 30

All these directives are temporary in anticipation of complete
unity. Meanwhile all Christians, Eastern and Western, are
asked to pray fervently that all may become one. Let all
pray for those who are suffering for Christ. Love one
another.

Decree on the Bishop's Pastoral Office in the Church

(Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Oct. 28, 1965)

PREFACE

Christ the Lord, sent by the Father, Himself sent His 1,2
Apostles to build the Church. In this Church, the Roman
Pontiff, as successor to Peter has supreme authority and
primacy. Bishops, as successors of the Apostles are true
teachers of the faith, pontiffs and pastors.

*Bishops exercise this episcopal office of theirs, re- 3
ceived through episcopal consecration, in commun-
ion with and under the authority of the Supreme
Pontiff. All are united in a college or body with
respect to teaching the universal Church of God
and governing her as shepherds.*

Bishops each take care of a particular church, although they
sometimes work jointly. The Council issues this decree to
determine more exactly the pastoral office of bishops.

I The Relationship of Bishops To the Universal Church

I. The Role of the Bishops 4

Bishops are members of the episcopal body, successor with-
out break of the college of the Apostles:

The episcopal body, with the agreement of its head the
Roman pontiff, has full power in the universal Church,
which is solemnly used in an ecumenical council, where
all bishops have the right to be present.

The collegiate power of bishops, in union with the Pope,
can be exercised even when they are not physically to-
gether.

*Bishops from various parts of the world, chosen 5
through ways and procedures established or to be
established by the Roman Pontiff, will render espe-
cially helpful assistance to the supreme pastor of
the Church in a council to be known by the proper
name of Synod of Bishops.*

The bishops should have universal outlook: 6
promote evangelization,
send priests, religious and laity to the missions,
help other dioceses than their own financially,
give relief in disasters,
and take an active interest in imprisoned or slandered 7
bishops.

II. Bishops and the Apostolic See

To bishops, in their dioceses, belongs all the ordinary, 8
proper and immediate authority for the exercise of their
pastoral office.

not infringing on the Pope's authority.

Diocesan bishops grant non-reserved dispensations.

In the exercise of his authority the Pope makes use of the 9
departments of the Roman Curia, which acts in his name,

The Council desires that these departments be reorgan-
ized, and the office of Papal legate be clearly defined.

It is also desirable that papal officials come from 10
different parts of the world.

that some diocesan bishops be made department members,
and that these departments listen more attentively to lay-
men.

II Bishops and Their Particular Churches or Diocese

I. Diocesan Bishops

11

A diocese is that portion of God's people which is entrusted to a bishop to be shepherded by him with the cooperation of the presbytery. This portion constitutes a particular church in which the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative.

Individual bishops:

**teach, sanctify and govern their flocks,
and also look after those who have strayed and those who
don't know Christ.**

As teachers, the bishops announce the Gospel:

12

**show that earthly goods and human institutions can con-
tribute to man's salvation,**

**the value of the human person with his freedom, family,
children and civil society, with its laws, professions, la-
bors, leisure, arts, technology, poverty and affluence,
and set forth means of social justice and peace.**

**They present Christian doctrine in a manner adapted to 13
the needs of the times, also using modern media.**

Since it is the mission of the Church to converse with the human society in which she lives, bishops especially are called upon to approach men, seeking and fostering dialogue with them.

**Bishops should take pains about giving catechetical 14
instructions,**

about its content,

the training of catechists,

and the renewal of the instruction of adult catechumens.

**Bishops enjoy the fulness of the sacrament of orders; both 15
presbyters and deacons are dependent on them.**

**Bishops lead others to the paschal mystery and to per-
fection.**

**They stand in the midst of their people as those who 16
serve, to whose divinely conferred authority all gratefully
submit.**

In order to be able to consult more suitably the welfare of the faithful according to the condition of each one, a bishop should strive to become duly acquainted with their needs in the social circumstances in which they live. Hence, he ought to employ suitable methods, especially social research. He should manifest his concern for all — preserve for his faithful the share proper to them in Church affairs; he should also recognize their duty and right to collaborate actively in the building up of the Mystical Body of Christ.

**Bishops should deal lovingly with the separated brethren and
non-baptized and urge the faithful to do likewise.**

They should regard the priests,
as sons and friends,
be ready to listen to them,
and hold institutes and meetings for them.

Various forms of the apostolate, undertakings and organiza- 17
tions should be encouraged and coordinated by the bishop.

The faithful should be urged to assume their duty of carrying on the apostolate,

They should aid and participate in lay works and Catholic action.

Religious and social research is highly recommended.

Special concern needs to be shown to those not reached by 18
ordinary pastoral care: migrants, refugees, seafarers, air
travelers, gypsies and others.

In discharging their apostolic office, bishops enjoy freedom 19
and independence from any civil authority.

They may not be hindered,
nor prevented from communicating with the Holy See or
with their subjects.

Bishops are to collaborate actively with the public authorities to promote social and civil progress.

The right of nominating and appointing bishops belongs ex- 20
clusively to the ecclesiastical authority. Civil authorities 21
are asked to voluntarily renounce such rights if they have
them.

II. Diocesan Boundaries 22

Diocesan boundaries shall be revised as soon as possible:
re-dividing present dioceses, or uniting them,
determining better places for see cities,
and in the case of dioceses in larger cities, by providing
new internal organization.

Organic unity should be aimed for: 23

- 1) Consideration should be given variety in composition of the people, but natural population units and civil jurisdiction should be preserved. The diocesan territory should be continuous.
- 2) The extent should be such that the bishop himself can officiate and be known to everyone, however, the area should be sufficient to fully occupy the bishop and clergy.
- 3) There should be sufficient clergy to minister to the people of God, and the offices, institutions and organizations necessary for the apostolate. Provision is to be made for faithful of different rite and language groups.

Episcopal conferences — leaving the Oriental Churches un- 24
touched — shall examine these questions.

III. Assistants in the Pastoral Office of the Diocesan Bishop

1. Coadjutor and Auxilliary Bishops: 25

should be appointed as the good of souls demands,
with full faculties for effective functioning.

They should work in agreement with the diocesan bishop.

The powers of auxiliaries does not end when the office of 26
the diocesan bishop does.

(a number of other details are given).

2. The Diocesan Curia and Commissions 27

The most important office in the diocesan curia is that of vicar general, or generals.

Other collaborators in diocesan government are the presbyters in the senate, or council, or cathedral chapter, the board of consultors and other committees. These institutions should be reorganized wherever necessary.

It is greatly desired that in each diocese a pastoral commission be established over which the diocesan bishop himself will preside and in which specially chosen clergy, religious, and lay people will participate. The function of this commission will be to investigate and weigh matters which bear on pastoral activity, and to formulate practical conclusions regarding them.

3. The Diocesan Clergy

28

All presbyters, both diocesan and Religious, participate with the bishop in the one priesthood of Christ.

In the care of souls, first place is held by the priests attached to a particular church.

Anything limiting the bishop's freedom to bestow offices should be suppressed.

The relationships of bishops and priests rest on supernatural charity.

The bishop should regularly call his priests into dialogue.

Priests who have supra-parochial offices are closer collaborators of the bishop.

Pastors are cooperators of the bishop in a very special way.

- 1) They should so teach, sanctify and govern that the faithful will realize that they are members both of the diocese and of the universal Church.

—— the care of souls should always be infused with a missionary spirit so that it reaches out in the proper manner to everyone living within the parish boundaries. If the pastor cannot contact certain groups of people, he should seek the help of others, including laymen, who can assist him in the apostolate .

Community life is recommended for priests.

- 2) Pastors preach God's word so that the people will grow in Christ and as a Christian community bear witness to charity.

In teaching pastors should seek not only the assistance of religious but the cooperation of the laity and establish C C D.

Pastors should make the mass the center of the life of the Christian community.

They should make themselves available to hear confessions. Pastors should take pains to know their own flock, visiting homes and schools.

- 3) Between assistant pastors and pastors there should be fraternal association.

Bishops should be unhampered in appointing good pastors, and pastors enjoy stability of office. The transfer of pastors is to be reformed.

Pastors incapacitated by age or some other reason should resign, and be provided for by the bishop.

Concern for souls shall underlie erection and suppression of parishes.

4. Religious

33-34

Religious have the duty to build up the Mystical Body of Christ. Religious priests in a real sense belong to the clergy of the diocese, and other religious, men and women, also.

Religious community — diocesan relations:

35

- 1) Religious, in keeping with their constitutions and particular character, are obliged to carry out what the bishop calls on them to do.
- 2) They must remain faithful to their own rule and superiors.

- 3) "Exemption" refers chiefly to the internal order of communities and does not put religious outside the jurisdiction of bishops.
- 4) Religious are subject to the local ordinary in all that has to do with worship, teaching, decorum and works. The right of religious to direct schools remains intact.
- 5) Religious communities and diocesan clergy are to cooperate.
- 6) Bishops and religious superiors should have regular meetings to discuss the apostolate.

III Concerning Bishops Cooperating for the Common Good of Many Churches

- I. Synods, Councils and Episcopal Conferences** 36
 Such meetings were an ancient practice which the Council wishes to see revived. 37
 People cannot work effectively today unless they work together.

Concerning episcopal conferences: 38

- 1) An episcopal conference is a council in which the bishops of a given territory jointly exercise their pastoral office to promote the greater good which the Church offers mankind.
- 2) All local ordinaries and titular bishops, except papal legates, are members.
- 3) Each conference is to draft its own statutes.
- 4) Decisions, voted by two-thirds of the bishops, "are to have juridically binding force only in those cases prescribed by the common law or determined by a special mandate of the Apostolic See, given either spontaneously or in response to a petition of the conference itself."
- 5) Where needed, bishops of many nations can have a single conference.
- 6) Prelates or Oriental Churches ought to exchange views at inter-ritual meetings.

II. Boundaries of Ecclesiastical Provinces

Not only dioceses but ecclesiastical provinces need boundaries. 39

Therefore: 40-41

- 1) Present boundaries are to be reviewed.
- 2) As a general rule all dioceses should be attached to provinces, subject to an archbishop.
- 3) Provinces should be grouped into regions.

III. Bishops Having an Inter-Diocesan Office.

Offices serving many dioceses are necessary today. They can be filled by bishops who relate harmoniously to diocesan bishops and episcopal conferences. 42

Spiritual care of military personnel requires that every nation have a military vicariate. Diocesan bishops should release priests for this work. 43

General Directive

This decree and the observations of commissions and Council Fathers are to be followed in the revision of canon law. 44
 General directories shall be prepared for the use of bishops and pastors in the care of souls.

There shall also be particular directories for special groups, and another on catechetical instruction.

Decree on Priestly Formation

(Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Oct. 28, 1965)

The desired renewal of the Church depends greatly on its priests, who must all be well trained according to the principles of this decree.

I. Bishop's conferences in each country and rite will prepare specific training programs, revised from time to time, adapting universal laws to particular circumstances. 1

II. **Vocations are to be fostered:** 2
by families, parishes, teachers, priests, bishops and associations,
by Christian example,
by prayer, penance and preaching,
and planned campaigns.

Minor seminaries develop the seeds of vocations: 3
in accord with the adolescent age of the students,
including social, cultural and family contacts,
so arranged that students who leave can transfer.

Schools for those with belated vocations are to be developed.

III. **Major Seminaries.** 4

In major seminaries (portrait of the priest):

The whole training of students ought to provide for the development of true shepherds of souls after the model of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was Teacher, Priest, and Shepherd.

Let these students, then, be readied for the ministry of the WORD, so that they may always grow in their understanding of God's revealed word, may know how to grasp it through mediation, and express it through word and conduct.

Let them be readied for the ministry of WORSHIP and sacrifice, that by their prayers and participation in sacred liturgical ceremonies, they may know how to exercise the work of salvation — Let them be readied for the PASTORAL MINISTRY, so that they may know how to represent Christ before men. He did not "come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many". Becoming the servants of all, let them win over that many more.

Great care is to be taken in the selection and preparation of seminary administrators and faculty members. 5

They are to form among themselves and with the students, a unified family.

The bishop should be a true father to the students. All priests are to look on the seminary as the heart of the diocese.

The candidates' freedom of choice and personal qualities must be well appraised. Firmness is to be shown and the unqualified directed early to other tasks and the lay apostolate. 6

Dioceses may set up together regional or national seminaries, taking care for the personal formation of students by dividing them into small groups. 7

VI. Spiritual Training:

8

Training should be doctrinal and pastoral, helped by a spiritual director, and aimed at union with the Trinity.

Students should accustom themselves to life long conformity and friendship with Christ, taught to see Christ in all men, and venerate Mary.

The students should be:

9

saturated by the mystery of the Church, united in priestly obedience, given over totally, not to domination, but to service. No problem of the priestly life is to be concealed from the students.

Students are to be thoroughly prepared to appreciate and live in celibacy. 10

By it they renounce the companionship of marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven; they devote themselves to the Lord with an undivided love which is profoundly proper to the new covenant; they bear witness to the state which the resurrection will bring about in the world to come; and they gain extremely appropriate help for exercising that perfect and unremitting love by which they can become all things to all men through their priestly ministration.

Human maturity is to be developed. 11

The discipline of the seminary is to be integral to the formation of maturity and self-direction within authority.

Bishops shall consider: 12

the interruption of studies, or suitable introduction to pastoral work. The age of ordination might be extended. The order of deacon might be exercised for a time before promotion to the priesthood.

V. The Revision of Ecclesiastical Studies: 13

Seminarians should have the humanistic and scientific foundation general in their society, be competent in Latin, the language of each rite and the languages of the Bible and tradition.

The aim of revision should be to relate philosophy and theological disciplines so as to open minds to the mystery of Christ. 14

Philosophy should lead students to a coherent knowledge of man, the world, and God. 15

Theology should relate Catholic doctrine and revelation. The Bible ought to be the soul of all theology. 16

Teaching methods are to be revised, and able students sent on to higher studies. 17, 18

VI. The Promotion of Strictly Pastoral Training: 19

Pastoral concerns ought to permeate the entire training.

In general, there should be developed in seminarians the abilities most appropriate to the promotion of dialogue with men, such as a capacity to listen to other people and to open their hearts in a spirit of charity to the various circumstances of human need.

Priests should be taught to use the help of pedagogy, psychology, and sociology, 20
to foster the apostolic activity of the laity and promote various
and more effective forms of the apostolate.
Their spirit should be universalistic: not confined to diocese,
nation or rite.
In order that the studies be practical, students should be 21
initiated into pastoral activities during their schooling and
vacations.
After ordination provision must be made for continuing 22
education.

Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life

Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Oct. 28, 1965

The Constitution "On the Church" showed the origin, in 1
Christ, of the religious life. This decree is concerned with
the general principles of the life and discipline. Particular
norms will be determined after the Council is over.

Renewal of the religious life includes: 2
return to the sources of Christian life,
return to the original spirit of the institutes,
and their adaptation to the changed life of our time.

Renewal must advance according to these principles:

- a) The following of Christ as set forth in the Gospels is the highest rule of all institutes.
- b) The Founder's spirit and aims must be held in honor.
- c) All institutes should adapt as their own the Church's aims in matter biblical, liturgical, dogmatic, pastoral, ecumenical, missionary and social.
- d) Institutes should promote in their members adequate knowledge of the social conditions of the times they live in and of the needs of the Church.
- e) Even the best adjustments must be animated by a renewal of Spirit.

The manner of living, praying and working should be adapted: 3
to the modern physical and psychological circumstances of
the community members, and,
to the necessities of apostolate, culture, and social and
economic circumstances.
let constitutions, custom books, prayers, etc. be re-edited,
superseding obsolete laws.

**Effective renewal demands cooperation of all members of the 4
institute.**

Experimentation belongs only to competent authorities,
but superiors should consult members.

Advice, for nuns, may also be gotten from the meetings of
federations.

Hope of renewal lies more in faithful observance of rules
than in multiplying laws.

Members of institutes, who have dedicated their lives to the 5
service of God, should join contemplation with apostolic love.
Members of religious communities should cultivate the spirit 6
and practice of prayer.

meditating on scripture,
celebrating the sacred liturgy with lips and heart,
loving Christ's members as brothers,
honoring and loving their pastors as sons,
dedicating themselves wholly to the mission of the Church.

No matter how pressing the needs of the active apostolate, 7
completely contemplative communities

have an honorable place in the Mystical Body of Christ.
Nevertheless they should reform their life according to the
norms listed above.

Apostolic (Active) Communities, not neglecting their union 8
with Christ, should adjust their rules to fit demands of the
apostolate to which they are dedicated. Their renewal will
be diverse and require special provisions.

**The monastic life should be preserved with care in the East 9
and the West.**

The principal duty of monks is to offer service to God
within the monastery walls.

Those who join apostolic life to choir unity should adapt
to the apostolate in a way appropriate to their observ-
ance of monasticism.

**The Council confirms the religious life undertaken by lay 10
people** as complete in itself, asking them to adjust to
modern needs.

Some members of communities of brothers may be ordained to
serve in their own houses, provided the lay character of the
community remains unchanged.

Secular Institutes are recognized, and should preserve their 11
proper secular character. Their superiors should give serious
attention to the spiritual training of members.

The Three Vows.

Chastity "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" is an 12
outstanding gift of grace.

Religious should trust in God, practice mortification,
and use the natural means to promote health of mind
and body.

Chastity is guarded where brotherly love lives in a
community.

Candidates should be well tested and instructed rela-
tive to celibacy.

Poverty: 13

Religious should practice poverty, if need be in
new forms.

Use of goods as superiors direct (permission) is not
enough: members must be poor in fact and spirit.

Religious communities should offer quasi-collective
witness to poverty,

using their goods for other needs of the Church,
and for the poor.

Provinces and houses should share temporal goods.

Communities have the right to possess what is required
for their work but should avoid the appearance of
luxury.

Obedience: 14

Religious, under the Holy Spirit, subject themselves
in faith to their superiors who hold the place of God.

Superiors should act out of a spirit of service, and re-
spect the human dignity of subjects.

Common life should continue to be lived in prayer and com- 15
munion of the same spirit.

Lay brothers should be drawn closely into community life.

Sisters should normally all be of one class.

No distinction of persons should be retained except that
which corresponds to diversity of works.

Papal cloister should be maintained for: 16

nuns in exclusively cloistered life,

- adjusted however, with obsolete practices suppressed.
 Other nuns are exempt.
 Cloister is maintained according to their constitutions.
 The religious habit should be: 17
 simple and modest, poor and becoming,
 suited to health and circumstances.
 Renewal depends greatly on the education of Religious. 18
 Apostolic works should not be assigned immediately after
 the novitiate,
 but religious and secular education should be continued.
 Religious should continue throughout their lives to perfect
 their culture.
 Superiors must see that directors, priests and professors
 are carefully chosen.
 New communities should not be needlessly founded. New 19
 forms of religious life should take into account the way of
 life of the inhabitants of the region in which they are es-
 tablished.
 In view of the needs of the Universal Church, religious com- 20
 munities should:
 maintain their works, employ new programs and,
 abandon what is less relevant to their authentic nature.
 Some communities and monasteries should be closed. 21
Independent institutes and monasteries should: 22
 when opportune and permitted by the Holy See, form fed-
 erations.
 Others, practically identical, should unite.
 Those who share the same work should become associated.
 The Council favors conferences of major superiors, establish- 23
 ed by the Holy See. Similar conferences should be establish-
 ed by secular institutes.
 Priests and Christian educators should foster vocations. 24
 The religious state should be preached about more often.
 Parents should nurture vocations.
 Religious communities have the right to make themselves
 known.
 Religious themselves should attract candidates by their
 example.
 Religious institutes should respond generously to the spe- 25
 cific vocation given them by God as well as to their work
 in the Church today.

Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity

Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Nov. 18, 1965

INTRODUCTION

The Council addresses itself to the laity in order to intensify 1
 the apostolic activity of the people of God. The apostolate of
 the laity derives from their Christian vocation and the Church
 can never be without it.

Our own times require of the laity no less zeal. In fact, modern conditions demand that their apostolate be altogether broadened and intensified. The constant expansion of population, scientific and technical progress, and the tightening of bonds between men has not only immensely widened the field of the lay apostolate, a field which is for the most part accessible only to them.

Many areas of human life have become autonomous, involving a degree of departure from the ethical and religious order.

In many places priests are few or deprived of freedom; the Church could scarcely exist without the laity.

In this decree the Council seeks:

- to describe the nature, character, diversity and basic principles of the lay apostolate,
- and give pastoral directives,
- to be regarded as norms when canon law is revised.

I The Vocation of the Laity To the Apostolate Objectives

The **apostolate** is all activity directed to the goal for which 2
the Church was founded:

to spread the kingdom of Christ for the glory of God,
enabling all men to share in redemption,
and enter into a relation with Christ.

The Christian vocation, by its very nature is also a vocation to the apostolate.

The **diversity of ministry** in the Church:

Christ gave the apostles and their successors the duty of teaching, sanctifying and ruling.

But the laity likewise share in the priestly, prophetic and royal office of Christ.

They exercise a genuine apostolate by their activity on behalf of bringing the gospel and holiness to men, and on behalf of penetrating and perfecting the temporal sphere of things through the spirit of the gospel.

The laity are the leaven in the world.

The right and duty of the laity to the apostolate derives: 3
from their union with Christ, and
their baptism and confirmation.

They are assigned to the apostolate by the Lord Himself.

The sacraments nourish that charity which is the soul of the apostolate.

One engages in the apostolate:

through faith, hope and charity,
which the Holy Spirit diffuses in the hearts of all members of the Church.

The responsibility of working to make the message of salvation known and accepted is laid on all Christians.

For the exercise of this apostolate, the Holy Spirit gives the faithful special gifts, called charisms:

Each believer has the right and duty to use them in the Church,

and in the world for the good of men and the building up of the Church,

in the freedom of the Holy Spirit.

This should be done by the laity in communion with their brothers in Christ,

especially their pastors, who are not to extinguish the Spirit but to test all things and hold for what is good.

SPIRITUAL PREREQUISITES

The success of the lay apostolate depends on the laity's 4
living union with Christ:

nourished by spiritual aids, especially active participation in the liturgy.

but not separating union with Christ from their ordinary conditions of life.

Neither family concerns nor other secular affairs should be irrelevant to their spiritual life.

Only by the light of **faith** and meditation on the word of God: can one always and everywhere recognize God, seek his will in every event, see Christ in everyone, relative or stranger, and make correct judgments about temporal things.

In the pilgrimage of this life those with faith live in **hope**: hidden with Christ, free from enslavement to wealth, dedicated to the improvement of the temporal order in a Christian spirit.

Impelled by **charity**:

they do good to all men, express the spirit of the **beatitudes** in their lives, neither depressed by the lack of the temporal goods, nor inflated by their abundance, in humility seeking to please God rather than men, ready to leave all things for Christ's sake, and suffer persecution for justice sake.

The **spiritual life of the laity** should take its particular character:

from their married, family, single or widowed state, their health, and, their professional and social activity.

They should develop their qualities and talents and use the gifts received from the Holy Spirit.

The **laity who are members of associations or institutes**:

should adopt the special spiritual life proper to them as well.

They should value:

professional skill, family and civic spirit, and the virtues of honesty, justice, sincerity, kindness and courage.

The perfect example of lay spiritual and apostolic life is the most **Blessed Virgin Mary**.

II Objectives

Christ's redemptive work, while essentially concerned with 5 the salvation of men, includes also the renewal of the whole temporal order.

The Christian laity fulfill this mission:

both in the Church, the spiritual order, and in the world, the temporal order.

The spiritual and temporal orders are so connected that God himself intends:

to raise up the whole world again in Christ, and to make it a new creation.

In both orders the laity should be led by the same Christian conscience.

THE MISSION OF THE LAITY IN THE SPIRITUAL ORDER.

The apostolate of the Church, to bring Christ's message 6 and grace to the world:

is done mainly through the ministry of the Word and the sacraments by the clergy, but the laity also have roles to fill.

On this level the apostolate of the laity and the pastoral ministry are mutually complementary.

The laity have many opportunities for evangelization: the testimony of life and good works draws men to God. An apostle looks for opportunities to speak of Christ to non-believers, to instruct and encourage the faithful. The Council urges the laity to do more to explain, defend and apply Christian principles to the problems of our era.

THE MISSION OF THE LAITY IN THE TEMPORAL ORDER.

7

Many elements make up the temporal order: namely, the good things of life and the prosperity of the family, culture, economic affairs, the arts and professions, political institutions, international relations, and other matters of this kind, as well as their development and progress. All of these not only aid in the attainment of man's ultimate goal but also possess their own intrinsic value. This value has been implanted in them by God, whether they are considered in themselves or as parts of the whole temporal order.

God saw that all he had made was very good:

this natural goodness of things has further dignity as meant to serve the human person, and as united in Jesus Christ.

This destination in Christ does not take away the independence and proper meaning of the temporal order, but perfects it in its own intrinsic worth, and puts it on a level with man's whole vocation on earth.

The use of temporal things has been marred:

by original sin leading to the corruption of morals, of human institutions and to contempt for the human person.

In our time progress has led to an idolatry of temporal things.

The whole Church must work vigorously so that men may become capable of correcting the distortion of the temporal order and direct it to God.

Pastors must explain the purpose of creation.

The laity must take up the renewal of the temporal order as their own special obligation:

they must act directly and in a definite way in the temporal sphere, cooperating with other citizens, seeking the justice of God's kingdom.

Outstanding among the works of this type of apostolate is that of Christian social action. This sacred Synod desires to see it extended now to the whole temporal sphere, including culture.

THE MISSION OF LOVE.

While every act of the apostolate should be motivated by charity, some works: 8

can become vivid expressions of charity.

These works are signs of the messianic mission of Christ.

The greatest commandment in the law is to love God with one's whole heart and one's neighbor as oneself. Christ made this commandment of love of neighbor His own and enriched it with a new meaning. For He wanted to identify Himself with His brethren as the object of this love when He said, "As long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me .

Christ established love as the mark of his disciples:

By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another

In the early days the Church added the agape (love banquet) to the Mass.

In every era it is recognized by this sign of love, and claims the works of charity as its duty and right.

Today, with distances reduced, charitable activities and works have become more **urgent** and **universal**.

Christian charity should seek, find, and help people:

in need of food, drink, clothing, housing, medicine, employment and education,

those who lack the facilities necessary for living a truly human life,

or afflicted with distress, illness, exile or imprisonment.

This obligation is imposed above all upon prosperous person and nation.

One should consider in one's neighbor:

the image of God in which he has been created,

and Christ to whom is offered what is given to a needy person.

It is imperative that the freedom and dignity of the person being helped be respected with the utmost consideration,

that motives be pure,

The demands of justice should first be satisfied, lest the giving of what is due in justice be represented as the offering of a charitable gift.

Not only effects but causes of ills must be removed, and recipients gradually made self-sufficient.

Therefore the laity should value and aid:

works of charity and projects for social assistance, public or private,

including international programs.

III The Various Fields of the Apostolate

Both in the Church and in the world there are various 9 opportunities for lay apostolic activity.

Since women have an ever more active share in the whole life of society, it is very important that they participate more widely also in the Church's apostolate.

CHURCH COMMUNITIES.

The activity of the laity is so necessary within the Church 10 communities that without it the apostolate of pastors is often unable to achieve its full effectiveness:

the laity supply what is lacking to their brethren,

refresh the spirit of pastors and faithful,

bring to the Church people far removed from it,

cooperate in presenting the word of God, especially by catechetical instruction;

and offer special skills to make the care of souls and the administration of the temporalities of the Church more efficient and effective.

parish as a community brings together many human differences:

the laity should accustom themselves to working in the parish in union with the priests, bringing to the Church community their own problems, and the world's problems as well, examining and resolving them by deliberating in common (group discussions), and support apostolic and missionary projects sponsored by their local parish.

They should constantly foster a feeling for their own diocese, of which the parish is a kind of cell, and be ever ready at their pastor's invitation to participate in diocesan projects. Indeed, if the needs of cities and rural areas are to be met, laymen should not limit their cooperation to the parochial or diocesan boundaries but strive to extend it to interparochial, interdiocesan, national, and international fields,

THE FAMILY.

Since God made conjugal society the beginning and basis of human society, the apostolate of married persons and families is of unique importance for the Church and civil society.

Christian husbands and wives:

are cooperators in grace and witnesses of faith for each other, their children and household.

They first educate their children by word and example for Christian and apostolic life,

helping them choose their vocation and promoting any sacred vocation they note.

They witness to the indissolubility of the marriage bond, affirm the right of parents to educate children in a Christian manner.

They cooperate with men of good will to protect family rights in civil legislation,

and make sure governments give due attention to the needs of the family regarding housing, education, working conditions, social security and taxes,

and that in policy decisions affecting migrants see that their right to live together as a family be safeguarded.

The family will fulfill its mission if it appears as the domestic sanctuary of the Church:

with mutual affection and prayer,

family participation in the liturgical worship of the Church,

active hospitality, and the promotion of justice and

good works for the needy.

Among the multiple activities of the family apostolate may be enumerated the following: the adoption of abandoned infants, hospitality to strangers, assistance in the operation of schools, helpful advice and material assistance for adolescents, help to engaged couples in preparing themselves better for marriage, catechetical work, support married couples and families involved in material and moral crises, help for the aged not only by providing them with the necessities of life but also by obtaining for them a fair share of the benefits of economic progress.

It can be useful for families to get together as groups.

YOUTH

In modern society there has been a radical change in the 12 life circumstances, mental attitudes and family relationships of youth:

frequently they move too quickly into new social and economic status.

Their social and political importance is growing but they seem unable to cope adequately with their new responsibilities.

The heightened influence of youth in society demands of them proportionate apostolic activity:

if full of the spirit of Christ, their zeal and zest for life can be very fruitful;

they should be first to carry the apostolate directly to other youth.

Adults ought to have friendly discussions with young people and the age groups become better acquainted and share their benefits.

Adults should be examples in the apostolate and, opportunity arising, offer youth advice and help.

Young people need to respect and trust adults and appreciate praiseworthy traditions.

THE APOSTOLATE IN THE SOCIAL MILIEU.

The effort to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, 13 customs, laws, and structures of the community in which one lives, is so much the duty and responsibility of the laity that it can never be performed properly by others.

here the laity work like-toward-like, where they practice their profession, study, live, and spend their leisure time.

the laity fulfill this mission:

by the example of their lives,

honesty in all their dealings,

fraternal charity which presses them to share the living conditions, labors, sorrows and hopes of others,

performing domestic, social and professional duties with such Christian generosity as to penetrate the whole world of life and labor.

This apostolate should reach out everywhere to all spiritual and temporal benefits.

Many persons can hear the gospel only through the laity who live near them.

Children also are true living witnesses of Christ among their companions.

THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS.

Loyally and faithfully fulfilling civic obligations to their 14 country, **Catholics should:**

make their opinion felt in order that civil authority act with justice,

and laws conform to moral precepts and the common good.

Catholics skilled in public affairs and Christian doctrine should not refuse to administer public affairs:

Catholics should try to cooperate with all men and women of good will,

hold discussions with them,

and initiate research on social and public practices which should be improved in line with the spirit of the gospel.

The increasing sense of the solidarity of all peoples is among the signs of our times:

it is a function of the lay apostolate to promote this awareness and transform it into genuine love.

the laity should be aware of international questions and solutions:

doctrinal and practical,

with special reference to the developing nations.

All who work in or give help to foreign nations must remember that relations among peoples should be a genuine fraternal exchange in which each party is at the same time a giver and a receiver.

Travellers should remember they are itinerant heralds of Christ, and act accordingly.

IV The Various Forms of the Apostolate

The laity can engage in their apostolic work either as individuals or in groups. 15

THE INDIVIDUAL APOSTOLATE.

This is the origin of the whole lay apostolate for which there is no substitute. All lay persons are called to it. 16

A sign suited to our times is the testimony of the whole lay life arising from faith, hope and charity:

by the spoken and written word lay people announce Christ.

Collaborating as citizens of this world, the laity must seek in the light of faith loftier motives of action in their family, professional, cultural and social life,

vivify their life with charity and express it in works.

They can reach all men and contribute to the salvation of the whole world by public worship and prayer, by penance and the voluntary acceptance of the labors and hardships of life.

Where the freedom of the Church is infringed there is very urgent need for the individual apostolate: 17

there the laity do what they can to take the place of priests,

risking their freedom and sometimes their lives:

to teach Christian doctrine,

way of life, and

lead people to receive the sacraments.

The individual apostolate has a special field where Catholics are few and widely dispersed:

here the laity usefully simply gather for conversation, giving spiritual help to one another by friendship:

THE GROUP APOSTOLATE.

The group apostolate corresponds to human and Christian need: 18

The faithful should be apostles in their local communities, family, parish and diocese,

as well as in informal groups.

The group apostolate is very important:

because the apostolate must often be performed by way of common activity,

associations sustain their members,

form them,

and organize and regulate their apostolic work.

In the present circumstances it is necessary that the united and organized form of apostolate be strengthened.

There are a variety of associations in the apostolate: 19
some promote closer unity between concrete life and faith.
The global nature of the Church's mission calls for more
developed organized forms in the international sphere.
Maintaining proper relationship to Church authorities,
**the laity have the right to found, join and control such
associations.**

Dispersion of effort must be avoided,
neither can forms used in one nation always be fittingly
transferred to another.

CATHOLIC ACTION.

Of great value are the organizations with these marks: 20

- a) The immediate aim of the organization is the Church's apostolic aim, evangelization and sanctification.
- b) Cooperating with the hierarchy, the laity direct these organizations.
- c) The laity act together.
- d) The laity function under the higher direction of the hierarchy.

The Council earnestly recommends these associations.

All associations, especially international ones, must be 21
valued and promoted by priests, religious and laity.

Those lay people who devote themselves to the service 22
of associations are deserving of special honor.

The pastors of the Church should gladly and gratefully welcome these lay persons and make sure that their situation meets the demands of justice, equity, and charity to the fullest possible extent, particularly, as regards proper support for them and their families.

V External Relationships

Whether the lay apostolate is exercised by the faithful 23
as individuals or as members of organizations, it should
be incorporated into the apostolate of the whole Church ac-
cording to a right system of relationships:

union with those whom the Holy Spirit has assigned to
rule his Church is essential,
cooperation is necessary among various projects,
and unity, witness to fraternal charity.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HIERARCHY.

The hierarchy: 24
should promote the apostleship of the laity,
provide it with spiritual principles and support,
direct conduct,
and attend to doctrine and order.

The lay apostolate may have different types of relationships
with the hierarchy, some being established and run by the
free choice of the laity; however, no project may claim the
name "Catholic" unless it has obtained the consent of lawful
Church authority.

**The hierarchy can select and promote some of the associations
and projects:**

yet their distinctiveness must be maintained,
and the laity must not be deprived of the possibility of
acting on their own accord.

This procedure of the hierarchy is called a **mandate.**

The laity are fully subject to the hierarchy:
in the teaching of Christian doctrine,
certain liturgical actions and care of **souls**.

The role of the hierarchy with respect to temporal works is
to teach and interpret moral principles.

Bishops, pastors and other priests: 25
should work fraternally with the laity.

Priests should be selected and trained to promote particular forms of the apostolate.

Religious should also value and promote lay works.

Diocesan councils:

Councils to assist the apostolic work of the Church should 26
be established on the parochial, interparochial, diocesan,
inter-diocesan, national and international level.

A special secretariate should be established at the Holy See
for the service and promotion of the lay apostolate:
as a center of information about various programs,
to promote research into modern problems, and
to assist hierarchy and laity with advice.

The various movements and projects of the apostolate of
the laity throughout the world should be represented in
this secretariate.

Catholics should cooperate with other Christians and those 27
who do not profess Christ's name but have common human
values.

VI Formation for the Apostolate

The apostolate can attain its maximum effectiveness only 28
through a diversified and thorough formation:

in addition to the formation common to Christians,
many forms of apostolate require specific formation.

Lay formation is distinctively secular and has its own 29
form of spiritual life.

It presupposes a certain human and well-rounded formation,
but is based on belief in the mystery of creation and redemption,

sensitive to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

Solid training is required in theology, ethics and philosophy.

*By way of cultivating good human relations, truly
human values must be fostered, especially the art
of living fraternally with others, cooperating with
them, and initiating conversation with them.*

The unity and integrity of the human person must be kept in
mind at all times.

APOSTOLIC TRAINING

The training for the apostolate should start with the chil- 30
dren's earliest education:

adolescents and young people should be imbued with its
spirit,

which those who provide Christian education are obliged
to give.

Parents have the task of training Children to see God's
love for all men.

Children should be so involved in the local community
that they are conscious of being living and active mem-
bers of the people of God.

Schools, colleges and other Catholic educational institutions

also have the duty to develop Catholic sense and apostolic activity in young people.

Lay groups promote formation in line with their purpose, Formation should be total.

- a) In regard to the apostolate for evangelizing and sanctifying men, the laity must be specially formed to engage in conversation with others, believers or non-believers. 31

Since in our times, variations of materialism are rampant everywhere, even among Catholics, the laity should not only learn doctrine more carefully, especially those main points which are the subjects of controversy, but should also provide the witness of an evangelical life in contrast to all forms of materialism.

- b) In regard to the Christian renewal of the temporal order: the laity should learn the true meaning and value of temporal things, and the principles and conclusions of social doctrine.
- c) Apostolic formation should lead to the performance of works of charity and mercy.

There are many aids for lay persons: study sessions, congresses, periods of recollection, spiritual exercises, meetings, books, periodicals and centers or higher institutes. 32

Furthermore, centers of documentation and study not only in theology but also in anthropology, psychology, sociology, and methodology should be established for all fields of the apostolate, for the better development of the natural capacities of laymen and laywomen, whether they be young persons or adults.

Exhortation

The Council entreats all the laity in the Lord to answer gladly, nobly, and promptly the more urgent invitation of Christ in this hour and the impulse of the Holy Spirit. 33

Decree on the Ministry and Life of the Priests

(Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Dec. 8, 1965)

Preface.

In the renewal of the Church, tasks of the greatest importance and ever increasing difficulty are given to priests, of whom the Council now speaks. 1

I The Priesthood in the Ministry of the Church

Jesus made His whole Mystical Body a sharer in the anointing of the Spirit with which He Himself is anointed, but also established ministers among His faithful:

to unite them in one body in which not all the members have the same functions.

These ministers are enabled by the power of orders to offer Sacrifice and forgive sins, performing their priestly office publicly for men in the name of Christ.

The bishops are sharers in Christ's consecration and mission, their ministry handed down in a lesser degree to priests, co-workers for the fulfillment of the apostolic mission.

The office of priest shares the episcopal authority by which Christ builds up, sanctifies and rules.

The priesthood is conferred by a special sacrament.

Through the ministry of the priests, the spiritual sacrifice of the faithful is made perfect in union with the sacrifice of Christ.

The purpose which priests pursue is to procure the glory of God the Father in Christ.

Priests, although taken from among men, nevertheless live on earth with other men as brothers.

II The Ministry of Priests

Section 1 : Priests' functions.

Priests have the primary duty of proclaiming the Gospel of God to all:

often very difficult in the modern world.

The word of God needs to be applied to the particular circumstances of life.

Preaching of the word is needed for the ministering of the sacraments since they are sacraments of a faith born and nourished by the word.

God consecrates priests to act as His ministers in performing sacred functions:

the liturgy,

baptism, penance, anointing the sick,

celebrating Mass and administering all sacraments.

Also they make the bishop present in every congregation.

The Eucharistic Action over which the priest presides is the heart of the congregation.

Priests must instruct their people to offer God the Divine Victim in the Mass,

and offer their own lives with Him.

Priests themselves extend the action of the Mass to the whole day in praying the Divine Office.

Priests care for the house of prayer and foster knowledge of and facility in the liturgy.

Priests gather the family of God together as a brotherhood. Spiritual power is given them for the building up of the Church,

they are educators in the faith,

with obligations toward all men but especially toward the poor and weak,

giving attention to youth, married people and parents,

with special care for the spiritual progress of religious,

and finally visiting and strengthening the sick and dying.

The office of pastor is not confined to the care of the faithful as individuals, but also in a true sense is extended to the formation of a genuine Christian community . . . (embracing) not only the local church, but also the universal Church.

The Holy Eucharist is the basis and center of the Christian community:

its celebration, to be genuine and complete, should lead to charity and mutual help, as well as to missionary activity and Christian witness.

The Christian community is the path to Christ for non-believers.

Priests are never to put themselves at the service of some human faction or ideology but to spend themselves for the spiritual growth of the Body of Christ.

Section 2 : Priests' relationships with others.

Relationships with bishops:

7

The closeness of the communion of priests and bishops is sometimes shown by concelebration.

Bishops regard priests as necessary helpers and counsellors, as brothers and friends,

and care for their spiritual well-being since they are responsible for the sanctity of their priests, and should provide them continual formation.

There should be a body or senate of priests representing all the priests to give the bishop effective assistance in the administration of the diocese.

Priests must respect and stand by their bishops,

especially today when undertakings extend beyond the boundaries of parishes and dioceses.

No priest can accomplish his mission in a satisfactory way on his own.

Relationships among priests.

8

By virtue of their ordination, priests are united among themselves in an intimate sacramental brotherhood,

in individual dioceses they form one priesthood under their own bishop.

It is important that all priests, diocesan or religious, help one another.

Older priests should receive younger priests:

help them in their first undertakings,

try to understand their mentality and follow their projects with good will.

Young priests should respect the age and experience of their seniors:

seek their advice,

and willingly cooperate with them in the care of souls.

Priests should extend hospitality, cultivate kindness, share their goods in common living together where possible or meeting in some way.

Priests have an obligation to their fellows who labor under certain difficulties.

Priests among the laity.

9

Priests are brothers among brothers with all reborn at the same baptismal font:

they must take the lead in seeking the things of Jesus Christ,

work together with the lay faithful,

acknowledge and promote the dignity of the laity,

willingly listen to the laity,

and entrust to the laity duties in the service of the Church, allowing them freedom and room for action,

and inviting them to undertake works on their own initiative.

Priests have been placed in the midst of the laity to lead them to the unity of charity.

Priests should not forget those not in full communion with us, nor the non-Christians.

The Christian faithful should follow their priests as pastors and fathers.

Section 3 : The distribution of priests, and vocations to the priesthood.

The spiritual gift which priest received at their ordination prepares them not for any limited and narrow mission but for the widest scope of the universal mission of salvation "even to the very end of the earth". For every priestly ministry shares in the universality of the mission entrusted by Christ to His apostle. The priesthood of Christ, in which all priest truly share, is necessarily intended for all peoples and all times. It is bound by no limits of blood, nationality, or time.

A better distribution of priests should be brought about?

International seminaries should be set up.

Priests should not be sent singly to a new field of labor, but two or three together.

Works favoring vocations are recommended to priests. 11

III The Life of Priests

Section 1 : The vocation of priests to the life of perfection.

Priests, called to perfection like all other Christians by 12 baptism, are bound, however, to acquire perfection in special fashion,

consecrated living instruments of Christ the Eternal Priest to carry on His work of making the entire family of man whole by power from above,

they are enriched with special grace to act in place of Christ Himself.

Every priest in his own way represents the person of Christ Himself, he is also enriched with special grace thus serving the people committed to him and the entire People of God, he can more properly imitate the perfection of Him whose part he takes.

Priests are directed to perfection in their lives:

by their daily sacred actions,

and the entire ministry they share with the bishop and their fellow priests.

God could use unworthy ministers but usually he uses those who are open to the Holy Spirit and in whom Christ lives.

The Council urges all priests to strive to grow in holiness become better instruments in the service of the whole people of God.

Priests who perform their duties in the Spirit of Christ 13 arrive at holiness by this very fact:

ready to receive themselves the word of which they are ministers,

taking example from Christ in whose person they act, with bodies free of lust since they celebrate the mystery of the Lord's death.

The daily celebration of Mass is strongly urged.

Even if a number of the faithful cannot be present it is still an act of Christ and the Church.

Available when the faithful seek penance.

They offer the voice of the Church in Divine Office.
Like the Good Shepherd priests should be ready, as some have been even in our day, to give their lives for their sheep.

As leaders of the community they renounce their personal convenience for what is useful to many.

Problems being as they are in the present day: 14
there is danger of dissipating energy,
and priests are hard put to coordinate interior life with feverish activity.

Priests can achieve unity of life by a complete gift of themselves to their flock.

By assuming the role of the Good Shepherd, they will find in the very exercise of pastoral love the bond of priestly perfection which will unify their lives and activities. This pastoral love flows mainly from the Eucharistic Sacrifice, which is therefore the center and root of the whole priestly life. The priestly soul strives thereby to apply to itself the action which takes place on the altar of sacrifice. But this goal cannot be achieved unless priest themselves penetrate ever more deeply through prayer into the mystery of Christ.

Let priests examine all their works and projects.
Pastoral charity requires that priests avoid operating in a vacuum.

Section 2 : Special spiritual requirements in the life of a priest.

Obedience: priests must be ready to do the will of Him 15 who sent them and not their own will.

For the divine work which the Holy Spirit has raised up to fulfill transcends all human energies and human wisdom.

The true minister of Christ:

**works in humility guided by the Holy Spirit,
waiting upon all God has sent him to serve.**

The priestly ministry, ministry of the Church itself, can only function in the hierarchial union of the whole body:

let priests receive and execute the orders of the holy father, bishop and other superiors,
their obedience designed to promote the mature freedom of the children of God.

By humility and willing responsible obedience priests conform themselves to Christ.

**Celibacy is to be embraced and esteemed as a gift. 16
Perpetual continence for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven is held by the Church to be of great value in a special manner for the priestly life:**

a sign and stimulus for pastoral charity, and special source of spiritual fecundity in the world.

Celibacy is not demanded by the very nature of the priesthood:

The Council commends it but in no way intends to alter the discipline of the Eastern Churches,
exhorting those who have received the priesthood in marriage to persevere in their holy vocation.

Celibacy has a many-faceted suitability for the priesthood, and is approved and confirmed by the Council for the Latin Church.

Relationship to the world and temporal goods, and voluntary poverty: 17

Let priests use the world as those who do not use it, achieving freedom, docile to the voice of God in everyday life, using goods in response to God's will and rejecting what is harmful to their mission.

Ecclesiastical goods should be administered by priests with the help of capable laymen as far as possible:

for the purposes of divine worship, sustenance of the clergy, works of the apostolate and charity, setting aside excess.

Priests are invited to embrace voluntary poverty.

Common use of goods is an excellent means of pastoral charity.

Priests should avoid anything which in any way turns the poor away, and arrange things for approachableness.

Section 3 : Aids for the life of priests.

Aids to encourage spiritual life: 18

Priests are sanctified by scripture and the Eucharist, spiritual reading, devotion to Mary, a daily visit with Christ in the Eucharist, retreats and spiritual direction.

Study and pastoral knowledge: 19

Priests must know well the doctrines of the magisterium, councils, popes and theologians, and also be able to discuss human affairs. Institutes, centers of pastoral studies and libraries are needed, and bishops should provide courses frequently for those already ordained, seeing to it that some dedicate themselves to deeper theological studies.

Providing equitable remuneration for priests: 20

The faithful are obliged to provide an honorable and worthy life for the priests. Bishops should establish norms for the support of those with special offices, remuneration being fundamentally the same for all, and allow the priest a suitable vacation each year. The system of benefices should be given up.

On setting up common funds and establishing a system of social assistance for priests: 21

Offerings for the needy should be collected by a diocesan institution under the bishop, and wealthier dioceses help the poorer. Where social security is not established the bishops conferences should make provision for health, sickness and old age.

Conclusion and exhortation.

The council is aware that today priests and even the faithful sometimes feel like strangers in this world, anxiously looking for ways to communicate with it, and favors adaptations.

Priests are never alone; the leaders of the People of God must walk by faith.

Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity

(Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Dec. 8, 1965)

The Church exercises its mission to all mankind as the "all-embracing sacrament of salvation" by striving to proclaim the Gospel message to all men.

The Apostles followed in their Master's footsteps: preaching the message of truth, and creating new Churches.

I Doctrinal Principles

Their successors continue this work.

This Council intends to outline the principles of missionary activity and consolidate the efforts of all the faithful.

The Church is missionary by its nature according to a 2 plan of God the Father's love:

God wills to invite men to share His life, not merely as individuals but as people.

This plan of God for the salvation of mankind is realized 3 in the secrecy of the human mind, especially in man's religious efforts to seek God.

God decreed a new event in the history of mankind: He sent His own Son in a human body:

to achieve a union of peace with Himself, and brotherhood among men.

Christ Jesus was sent into the world as the true mediator between God and men:

to make men shareres of the divine nature.

He did not come to be served but to serve and give his life to redeem everyone.

Everything the Lord said or did for man's salvation is to be proclaimed and disseminated to the ends of the earth. What was once accomplished for the salvation of all, should in time have effect for everyone.

Christ sent the Holy Spirit from the Father: 4

to continue the work of salvation in the hearts of men, and to animate the Church's growth.

Doubtless, the Holy Spirit was already at work in the world before Christ was glorified. Yet on the day of Pentecost, He came down upon the disciples to remain with them forever. On that day the Church was publicly revealed to the multitude, the gospel began to spread among the nations by means of preaching and finally there occurred a foreshadowing of that union of all peoples in a universal faith.

Jesus "called to Himself men of His own choosing," the 5 Apostles:

forefathers of the new Israel, and origin of the hierarchy.

The Lord founded His Church as the sacrament of salvation, and sent His apostles into all the world just as He Himself had been sent by His Father. He gave them this command: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” ”

The duty of spreading the faith and doctrine of salvation is imposed on the Church:

by Christ's explicit command,
and by reason of the life Christ bestowed on its members.

The Church fulfills its mission when it becomes actively present to all men and all peoples to bring them to the faith, liberty and peace of Christ by:

living example, preaching, the sacraments.

The Church must use the same means that Christ used:

poverty,
obedience,
service and self-immolation even to death.

This missionary duty is to be exercised:

6

by the order of bishops governed by the successor of Peter, with the prayers and cooperation of the whole Church.

At all levels it is the same function: differences in the activity of the Church do not come from the nature of the mission but from conditions of its exercise.

The particular efforts of the Gospel preachers sent⁷ by the Church throughout the whole world, to announce the Gospel message and plant the Church among the peoples and groups which do not yet believe in Christ, are commonly called "Missions."

sions.

Missionary activity is:

in geographic units determined by the Holy See.

Its aim is to plant the Church where it has not yet been established, as a seed.

The principle means is the preaching of the Gospel.

In the Church's mission work there are various stages:

the initial stage, the planting of the Church followed by a period of youth,

the duty of continuing falls on the Churches set up.

Then the Church must see if new conditions require its missionary activity once more.

Where the preaching of the Gospel is impossible, missionaries bear witness as a preparation,

Missionary activity among non-Christians differs from:

pastoral activity among the faithful,

and from efforts to regain Christian unity.

The division of Christians is detrimental to the preaching of the Gospel.

All baptized persons are called to participate in re-uniting the flock to give unanimous witness.

The reason for missionary activity is found in God's will that all men be saved and know the truth:

everyone must be converted.

and incorporated by baptism with Him and the Church which is His Body.

Whosoever, therefore, knowing that the Catholic Church was made necessary by God through Jesus Christ would refuse to enter her or to remain in her could not be saved.

Even though God can bring men who are ignorant of the Gospel to the faith in ways known only to Himself, the necessity of the Church is still imposed.

By missionary activity, the Mystical Body of Christ:
consolidates and coordinates its energies,
fully glorifies God,
and fulfills God's plan.

Missionary activity is connected with human nature: 8
the Church reveals to men their true condition and complete vocation.

Everyone has need of Christ the exemplar, teacher, liberator, savior, vivifier.

The time for mission work: 9

is between the first and second coming of the Lord.

Missionary activity is nothing else and nothing less than a manifestation of epiphany of God's will, and the fulfillment of that will in the world and in world history.

In history God openly concludes the story of salvation through mission work.

Thus mission work tends to an eschatological fulness: the Mystical Body is increased to the measure of the fulness of Christ.

II Mission Work Itself

Sent by Christ to reveal and to communicate the love of God to all men and nations, The Church is aware that there still remains a gigantic missionary task for her to accomplish. For the gospel message has not yet been heard or scarcely so by two billion human beings, and their number is increasing daily. These are formed into large and distinct groups by permanent cultural ties, by ancient religious traditions, and by firm bonds of social necessity. The Church must become part of all these groups for the same motive which led Christ to bind Himself, in virtue of His Incarnation, to the definite social and cultural conditions of these human beings among whom He dwelt.

Article 1: Christian witness. 11

The Church be present to these groups of persons who do not know Christ through her sons who live among them or are sent to them.

In order to witness fruitfully:

the faithful must acknowledge themselves as members of the groups in which they live,

participate in their cultural and social life through the various contacts and affairs of human life,

be familiar with their national and religious traditions, joyfully and reverently uncovering the seeds of the Word in these traditions,

at the same time trying to transform them profoundly.

Christ Himself searched the hearts of men, and led them to divine light through truly human conversation. So also His disciples, profoundly penetrated by the Spirit of Christ, should know the people among whom they live, and should establish contact with them.

The presence of the faithful in non-Christian communities 12
must be animated by love:

Christian charity extends to all without discrimination of nation, social condition, or religion,

and expects neither reward nor gratitude.

The faithful must work in collaboration with everyone else for

social and economic improvement, joining forces with public and private institutions, government and international organizations, Christian and non-Christian religious groups.

Article 2: Preaching the Gospel and assembling the People of God.

With the Holy Spirit opening their hearts, **non-Christians may believe and be freely converted.** 13

Because the Lord is a sign of contradiction:

the newly converted often experience disruption,
but also joy.

The Church forbids anyone to be forced.

Those who accept the faith are to be admitted to the catechumenate in liturgical ceremonies. 14

The catechumenate:

involves the formation of the whole Christian life,
during a long period of learning experience.

It is desirable that catechumens be baptized in the restored
Lenten and Easter liturgies.

Christian initiation is the work not only of priests, but of
the whole community, especially sponsors.

The juridical status of catechumens will be stated in the
revised canon law.

Article 3: Forming the Christian community.

Missionaries must establish congregations of the faithful: 15
in which they exercise the threefold role: priestly, prophetic
and royal,

being signs of the presence of God in the world.

The Christian community, from its beginnings:

should supply its own necessities,
and be deeply rooted in the cultural riches of its own
nation.

New Christians should have the ecumenical spirit,

and be good citizens of their nations,

Special care should be given the laity.

The Christian community is established and is present in order
to announce Christ to its fellow non-Christians by word and
action.

Priests, deacons, catechists, religious and apostolic laity are
to be drawn from the congregation of the faithful itself.

Priestly vocations should come from among the members 16
of the newly converted.

Priestly training:

shall be scriptural,

develop minds to judge the values of their own culture,
relate the traditions and religions of their countries to

Christianity,

consider the pastoral necessities of their region,

the economic and cultural condition of their people,

and be marked by the ecumenical spirit.

Studies should take place in the country of the student
as far as possible, with a few selected for higher
studies abroad.

If it is considered useful by the conference of bishops the
diaconate should be restored.

The work of the **catechist** is of the greatest importance: 17
as many diocesan and regional schools as possible are to be
set up to train future catechists,
with their sustenance sufficiently provided for.

A 'Pontifical Society for Catechists' may be established.

Religious life is to be promoted from the time of planning of 18
the Church, adapted to each country.

III Particular Churches

The work of planting the Church in a given human community reaches a kind of milestone when the congregation of the faithful, already rooted on social life and considerably adapted to the local culture, enjoys a certain stability and firmness. 19

In the young Churches, the People of God:

must mature in all phases of their lives, renewed, they should live and feel with the entire Church.

Since these local Churches are often poor they need the continuing missionary activity of the universal Church, which is also needed by local Churches which are losing ground.

The local Church is also sent to the non-Christians of its area. 20

The bishop must understand conditions among his flock.

Local priests must close ranks with the foreign priests.

The conference of bishops shall see to continuing education for their clergy.

Ecclesiastical personnel must be properly trained:

plans drawn up for dialogues with each group among the people.

Individual bishops shall call for missionaries, and the young Churches try to send missionaries.

The Church is not truly established unless there is a working laity: 21

bearing witness to Christ, in their society and culture, in a spirit of charity.

IV Missionaries

Although it is the duty of every Christian to spread the faith, 23

Christ inspires the missionary vocation in individuals and brings missionary institutes into being.

When God calls, man must answer in such a way that he is devoted totally to the work of the Gospel. 24

The missionary is to be given special spiritual and moral training: 25

he must be a man of prayer, with zeal to spend himself for souls.

From the very beginning, their doctrinal training should be so planned that it takes into account both the universality of the Church and the diversity of the world's nations. 26

The training shall be pastoral.

As many Brothers and Sisters as possible are to be well trained in catechetics.

Training shall be completed in the countries to which the missionaries are sent, with some given more training in Institutes for Mission Science.

Regional conferences of bishops should have experts available. Since experience teaches that mission work cannot be done by individuals, common vocation gathers them into institutes: pooling resources, providing adequate training, these institutes have borne the brunt of mission work for centuries and remain very necessary. 27

V The Organization of Mission Activity

All the Christian faithful should work together for the 28 Gospel, each according to ability, charism (inspirational gift) and appointed task.

The bishops are primarily responsible for preaching every- 29 where:

for all missions and missionary activity there should be one decision-making body, 'The Propagation of the Faith:'

to stimulate missionary vocations,

distribute mission news,

recruit and distribute missionary personnel,

propose over-all plans and provide leadership,

and originate and unify the raising of funds.

With the Secretariate for the Promotion of Unity among Christians it should collaborate with other Christian communities.

In the direction of this decision-making body, representatives of those who collaborate in mission work shall have deliberative votes, including:

bishops from around the world,

Religious superiors and head of pontifical mission societies.

Experts shall be at the service of this body.

Religious women should be properly represented.

The bishop must foster, govern and coordinate mission 30 activity:

all missionaries are subject to his authority,

He should establish a pastoral council of elected clerics, religious and laity.

Episcopal conferences should coordinate activities. 31

In a territory committed to a certain institute: 32

the goal is the growth of the Christian community,

in time to have its own pastor and clergy.

When the territorial commission ceases the conference of bishops and the institutes need to reorganize to provide for continued growth.

Institutes working in the same regions should coordinate 33 their work, with conferences and unions of the religious. The same applies in home countries.

Mission workers require scientific preparation. 34

VI Cooperation

Since the whole Church is missionary, and the work of evangelization is a basic duty of the People of God, this sacred Synod summons all to a deep interior renewal.

All the Church's children should have a living awareness 36 of their responsibility toward the world:

demonstrated first by their thoroughly Christian life.

Mission news should be preserved through modern means of social communication.

Coordination with national and international agencies is necessary.

The People of God bear witness as communities. 37

The grace of renewal cannot flourish in communities unless each of them extends the range of its charity to the ends of the earth.

Bishops are consecrated, not only for a certain diocese, 38
but for the salvation of the whole world:

the bishop should rouse his people to work for the spread of the Gospel in the world,
and assign some of their better priests to dioceses in need of clergy.

The episcopal conferences shall supervise:

transfer of priests for this work,
assigning a fixed percentage of each diocesan budget each year for the missions, and other assistance.

Let **priests understand that their life has also been conse- 39**
crated for the service of missions.

Religious institutes which have had the greatest share of 40
the work of spreading the Gospel in the world should continue:

Contemplative life plays an important role in the conversion of souls.

Institutes of the active life should see if they can leave some of their ministries to others to work more for missions, adapting if necessary, their constitutions.

Secular institutes should continue their work under the direction of bishops.

The laity shall cooperate by: 41

increasing their knowledge and love of missions,
teaching and other activities in the missions,
offering economic-social cooperation to developing peoples,
and advancing knowledge of peoples and religions.
The laity require technical and spiritual training in specialized institutes.

May all nations soon acknowledge the truth and the glory 42
of God which shines in the face of Christ Jesus, and through the Holy Spirit sheds light upon all men.

Declaration on Christian Education

Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Oct. 28, 1965

The Council has noted how important and influential education is in the life of man:

Circumstances of our time make it easier and more urgent:
to educate young people
and continue the education of adults.

Men, more aware of their dignity, want an active part in social, economic and political life,
and see an opportunity offered by technology, science and new means of communication, for mutual cultural and spiritual fulfillment

Therefore:

attempts are being made everywhere to promote more education:

the rights of men to an education are being proclaimed on public documents,
schools are multiplied

new experiments are conducted in methods of education and teaching.

Even though vast numbers of people are still deprived, attempts are being made to obtain education for all. To fulfill her divine mandate to proclaim salvation and restore all things in Christ, **the Church has a role in the progress and development of education.**

The Council declares certain fundamental principles of Christian education, especially in schools.

These principles will be developed by a special post-Conciliar Commission, and applied by Episcopal Conferences to varying local situations.

The Meaning of the Universal Right to an Education 1
All men since they enjoy the dignity of a human being, have an inalienable right to an education, in keeping with their ability, sex, the culture and tradition of their country, and brotherly association with other peoples.

For a true education aims at the formation of the human person with respect to his ultimate goal, and simultaneously with respect to the good of those societies of which, as a man, he is a member, and in whose responsibilities, as an adult, he will
Young people must be helped toward mature responsibility, with the aid of the latest advances in psychology and the art of teaching.

Let them be given positive and prudent sexual education, trained to take their part in social life, participate actively in community organizations, open to discourse with others, willing to promote the common good.

The Council asks Catholics to pay attention to the entire field of education, especially the need to extend education to everyone in all parts of the world.

THE AUTHORS OF EDUCATION

Its principle aims are these: that as the baptized person is gradually introduced into a knowledge of the mystery of salvation, he may daily grow more conscious of the gift of faith which he has received; that he may learn to adore God the Father in spirit and in truth, especially during liturgical services; that he may be trained to conduct his personal life in righteousness and in sanctity of truth.

Further they strive for the growth of the Mystical Body, witness to their hope, help in the Christian formation of the world.

Pastors have a serious obligation to see that the faithful have this Christian education.

*Since parents have conferred life on their children, they have a most solemn obligation to educate their offspring. Hence, parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children.*³

Parents: must create an atmosphere of love and respect for God and man, it is the first school.

In the Christian family, enriched by the sacrament of matrimony: children should be taught to know and worship God and love their neighbor

Here they find their first experience of wholesome human society, and of the Church.

Through the family they are led to companionship with their fellow men.

The family needs the help of the **whole community**. The role of civil society is to direct what is required for the common temporal good:

protecting and aiding parents and other educators,
when parents and other societies are lacking, to carry out
the work of education in accordance with the wishes of
parents,
and to build schools and institutions.

The Church is bound to give her children an education by which their whole life can be imbued with the spirit of Christ, and promote for all peoples:

perfection of the human person,
the good of earthly society, and,
the building of a world that is more humane.

Aids to Christian Education:

Foremost is **catechetical instruction:**

which enlightens and strengthens the faith,
leads to intelligent, active participation in the liturgy,
and motivates apostolic activity.

Also the Church thinks highly of and seeks to ennoble:

media of communication,
groups for mental and physical development,
youth associations, schools.

The Importance of Schools:

The School is an especially important instrument of 4
education, designed to:

develop the intellect, and
the ability to judge rightly.

Hand on the cultural legacy,
foster a sense of values, and
prepare for professional life.

It promotes friendship among pupils of different talents
and backgrounds,

And establishes a center whose work must be shared
together by families, teachers, associations that
foster cultural, civic and religious life, the civil
society and entire community.

The teaching vocation is beautiful, and demands:

special qualities of mind and heart,
careful preparation

continuing readiness to renew and adapt.

Parents must enjoy true liberty in their choice of schools. 5

The public power must see to it that public subsidies are
paid out in such a way that parents are truly free to
choose according to their conscience the schools they want
for their children.

The State must see to it that all citizens are able to come
to a suitable share in culture and are prepared for civic
duties and rights:

protecting the right of children to an adequate school
education,

checking on the training and ability of teachers,
looking after the health of pupils, and,
promoting the whole school project.

There is **no kind of school monopoly**.

The Council asks the faithful to aid:

in finding suitable methods of education,
programs of study,
and in the forming of teachers.

Parents associations should help all the work of the school, especially its moral education.

The Church must be present for the great number who are 6
being trained in schools that are not Catholic, by,
the witness and lives of teachers and directors,
the apostolic action of fellow students,
especially by the ministry of priests and laymen who provide doctrinal and spiritual aid.

It is up to the parents to arrange and demand that their children have these aids.

For this reason the Church gives high praise to those civil authorities and civil societies that show regard for the pluralistic character of modern society, and take into account the right of religious liberty, by helping families in such a way that in all schools the education of their children can be carried out according to the moral and religious conviction of each family.

Catholic Schools

7

The influence of the Church in the field of education is shown in a special manner by the Catholic school.

No less than other schools the Catholic school pursues cultural goals.

But its proper function:

is to create a special atmosphere animated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity,

to help youth grow as the new creatures they were made by Baptism.

and to order the whole of human culture to the news of salvation.

The Catholic school, open to the contemporary world, promotes the good of the earthly city, and prepares students for service in the spread of the Kingdom of God.

Since the Catholic school can foster the dialogue between the Church and mankind, to the benefit of both,

The Council proclaims the right of the Church to conduct schools of every type and level.

Let teachers recognize that the Catholic school depends on them to fulfill its goals:

they must be prepared in secular and religious knowledge, and in pedagogy in keeping with contemporary standards, bear witness by their lives,

work as partners with parents

give due consideration for the difference of sex,

stimulate students to act for themselves

and assist them after graduation with advice, friendship and by establishing associations.

As for Catholic parents, the Council calls to mind their duty to entrust their children to Catholic schools, when and where this is possible, to support such schools to the extent of their ability, and to work along with them for the welfare of their children.

To this concept of a Catholic school

8

all schools dependent on the Church must conform as far as possible,

though the Catholic school is to take on different forms in keeping with local circumstances.

The Church holds dear those Catholic schools attended also by students who are not Catholic.

Though primary and secondary schools must still be fostered, importance needs to be given to:

professional and technical schools,
centers for educating adults,
and promoting social welfare,
for the retarded,
schools for preparing teachers for religious
instruction and other types of education.

Pastors and the faithful are asked to spare no sacrifice in helping Catholic schools to fulfill their functions more perfectly, and especially,

in caring for the poor and those without family,
and those who are not Catholic.

Catholic Colleges and Universities: 9

In schools of a higher level, the Church intends that individual subjects be pursued according to their own principles, method and liberty of scientific inquiry.

As new questions are raised, investigations should be carefully made according to the example of doctors of the Church, especially of St. Thomas Aquinas, so that the harmony of faith and science may be more deeply realized.

In Catholic universities where there is no faculty of Theology an institute or chair should be established, with lectures suited to lay students.

Special attention should be given the development of scientific research.

Catholic colleges and universities should be located in different parts of the world,

outstanding not for numbers, but for the pursuit of knowledge,

open to students of promise without means,
and to students from newly emerging nations.

The destiny of society and the Church is intimately linked with the progress of young people in higher studies, therefore

pastors and bishops must see to it that there are associations and centers at non Catholic universities

at Catholic and other universities students capable of teaching or research should be helped to undertake teaching careers.

Faculties of Sacred Sciences: 10

The Church entrusts to faculties of sacred sciences the responsibility of preparing: priests,

teaching in the seats of higher ecclesiastical studies,
promoting learning on their own, or

undertaking the intellectual apostolate. and

deepening understanding of Revelation,

developing the legacy of Christian wisdom,

fostering dialogue with separated brethren and non-Christians, and answering doctrinal questions.

Therefore, ecclesiastical faculties should reappraise their own laws.

Cooperation is the order of the day: 11

between Catholic schools,

between Catholic and other schools.

Within universities let faculties work together,
and let universities cooperate by promoting

international gatherings, sharing scientific inquiry, communicating discoveries and exchanging professors.

Conclusion

The Council asks young people themselves to become aware of the importance of education, and consider being teachers, The Council thanks the priests, religious men and women, and the laity for their work of education and asks them to advance the renewal in the Church and enhance its influence especially in the intellectual world.

Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions

Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Oct. 28, 1965

*In our times, when every day men are being drawn 1
closer together and the ties between various peoples
are being multiplied, the Church is giving deeper
study to her relationship with non-Christian religions.
In her task of fostering unity and love among men,
and even among nations, she gives primary consideration
in this document to what human beings have in common
and to what promotes among them an identification of interest.*

Men are drawn together:

In the community of all peoples,
by their origin in God,
and their final goal in God.

God's providence, goodness and saving design extends to all men.

Men expect answers to the unsolved riddles of the human condition from religion:

What is man?
What is the meaning and aim of life?
What is moral good, what sin?
Whence suffering, what is its purpose?
Which is the road to happiness?
What are death, judgement and retribution after death?
Whence do we come and where are we going?

**A profound religious sense is found in the lives of various 2
peoples, from ancient times to the present.**

**However, religions bound up with advanced cultures have
struggled to answer the same questions by means of more
refined concepts and more developed language.**

In Hinduism men:

contemplate the divine mystery
express it: through myth, and philosophy. .

They seek freedom from the anguish of the human condition
in ascetical practices,
profound meditation,
or flight to God with love and trust.

Buddhism:

realizes the radical insufficiency of this changeable world,
and teaches a way
to gain perfect liberation
or supreme illumination

Other religions propose "ways", rules of life and sacred rites.

The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions.

The Catholic Church:

respects these views, different from her own, which often reflect a ray of the Truth which enlightens all men, and ever must proclaim Christ,

“the way, the truth and the life,”

in whom men may find the fulness of religious life, in whom God has reconciled all things to Himself.

Therefore:

The Church asks her sons:

through dialogue with the followers of other religions, to recognize and promote the good things and socio-cultural values they have.

The Church also has esteem for the Moslems:

3

who adore the one God

take pains to wholeheartedly submit to His decrees, as did Abraham.

Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God they revere Him as a prophet.

They also honor Mary

await the day of judgement of the resurrected,

and value prayer, almsgiving and fasting.

Although in the course of the centuries many quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems, this most sacred Synod urges all to forget the past and to strive sincerely for mutual understanding. On behalf of all mankind, let them make common cause of safeguarding and fostering social justice, moral values, peace, and freedom.

A spiritual bond ties the people of the New Covenant to Abraham's stock (the Jews). 4

The Church of Christ sees that:

the beginnings of her faith are found among the Patriarchs, Moses and the prophets.

All who believe in Christ are included in the same Patriarch's call,

and that the salvation of the Church is foreshadowed by the exodus of the chosen people.

The Church received the revelation of the Old Testament through the Jews,

and draws sustenance from this root.

Indeed, the Church believes that by His cross Christ our Peace, reconciled Jew and Gentile, making them both one in Himself.

St. Paul said:

theirs is the sonship and glory of the covenants, the law, worship and promises, from them is Christ according to the flesh.

The Apostles and most of the early Christians were from the Jewish people.

Jerusalem did not recognize the time of her visitation nor did many Jews

and some opposed the spread of the gospel

Nevertheless,

God does not repent of His gifts and holds the Jews most dear.

With the Prophets and St. Paul the Church awaits the day when all peoples will address the Lord in a single voice.

Therefore the Council,

wants to foster mutual understanding and respect, fruit of biblical and theological studies,

and brotherly dialogues.

True, the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ; still, what happened in His passion cannot be blamed upon all the Jews then living, without distinction, nor upon the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if such views followed from the holy Scriptures.

Preaching and teaching should conform to the truth of the Gospel and the Spirit of Christ.

The Church rejects every persecution against any man: moved, not by political reasons, but by love she decries anti-semitism at any time by anyone.

Christ died freely

because of the sins of men, out of infinite love, that all may reach salvation.

Therefore,

The Church proclaims the Cross of Christ as sign of God's all-embracing love and source of every grace

We cannot truly call on God if we refuse to treat in a brotherly way any man.

The ground is therefore removed from every theory or practice which leads to a distinction between men or peoples in the matter of human dignity and the rights which flow from it.

The Church opposes any discrimination or harassment of men because of race, color, condition of life or religion.

And urges Christians to live in peace and good fellowship with all men.

Declaration on Religious Freedom

(Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Dec. 8, 1965)

Introduction.

1

Conscious of the dignity of the human person, contemporary men demand:

responsible freedom, and,

limitation of the power of government, so that it may not encroach on the freedom of the person, or of associations.

Freedom:

in the quest for values proper to the human spirit, primarily, the free exercise of religion in society.

The Vatican Council proposes to declare these desires to be in accord with truth and justice.

God Himself has made known to mankind the way in which men are to serve Him and thus be saved in Christ.

We believe that this one true religion subsists in the Catholic and Apostolic Church, to which the Lord Jesus committed the duty of spreading it abroad among all men.

It is upon the human conscience that the obligation to seek and hold the truth falls.

Religious freedom has to do with immunity from coercion

in civil society.

It leaves untouched traditional Catholic doctrine on the moral duty of men and societies toward true religion and the one Church of Christ.

The Council also intends to develop the doctrine of recent popes:

on the inviolable rights of the human person, and the constitutional order of society.

The meaning and basis of religious freedom. 2

The human person has a right to religious freedom, which means:

all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals, social groups and any human power, and no one is to be forced to act contrary to his own beliefs, privately or publically,

alone or in association with others, within due limits.

The right to **religious freedom is founded in the dignity of the human person, known**

through revelation, and by reason.

This right is to be recognized in law as a civil right.

It is in accordance with their dignity as persons—that is, beings endowed with reason and free will and therefore privileged to bear personal responsibility—that all men should be at once impelled by nature and also bound by a moral obligation to seek the truth, especially religious truth.

Men cannot responsibly relate themselves to truth unless they are: **immune from external coercion, and have psychological freedom.**

Therefore,

the right to religious freedom lies in the nature of the person independent of his subjective response, and remains a right regardless of his response.

The right of the individual. 3

Man has been made by God to participate in the divine law: **everyman has the duty and therefore the right to seek truth in religious matters in order to form for himself true judgments of conscience,**

seeking truth according to his human dignity and social nature, through instruction, and discussion.

When truth is discovered it is held by personal assent.

Man is bound to follow his conscience in order to come to God.

He cannot be forced to act contrary to his conscience, nor restrained from action according to it.

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

The social nature of man requires that he give external expression to his internal acts of religion:

He is injured if the free exercise of religion is denied in society.

The religious acts of men transcend by their very nature the order of worldly affairs.

Since the function of government is to provide for common welfare, it transgresses its limits if it inhibits acts that are religious.

Communal expression of religion. 4

Freedom in matters religious is also to be recognized as a right when people act in community.

Religious communities are a requirement of the social nature of man,
and of religion itself.

Within the just demands of public order, religious communities may govern themselves according to their own norms.

Religious communities have the right not to be hindered:

in selecting, training, appointing and transferring their ministers, communicating across boundaries, building, or seeking and using funds or property.

Also:

in public teaching and witnessing, which cannot be coercive or dishonorable.

Religious communities may show the value of their doctrine for the organization of society and the inspiration of human activity,

and be free to hold meetings and establish organizations under the impulse of their religious sense.

The family. 5

The family has the right freely to live its own domestic religious life under the guidance of parents.

Parents may determine the kind of religious education their children are to receive.

Government must see that the use of this right is genuinely free.

The rights of parents are violated if children are forced to attend lessons not in agreement with their religious beliefs,

or if a single educational system excluding all religion is imposed.

Safeguarding religious freedom. 6

The right to religious freedom as part of the duty of all men

to the common welfare is the care of: the whole citizenry, social groups, government,

the Church and other religious groups.

Government in particular:

is to help create conditions favorable to the fostering of religious life.

If, in view of particular circumstances, special civil recognition is given to one religious community, it is imperative that the right of all citizens and communities to religious freedom be recognized and made effective in practice.

Equality before law may not be violated for religious reasons,

nor is there to be discrimination among citizens.

... a wrong is done when government imposes upon its people, by force or fear or other means, the profession or repudiation of any religion, or when it hinders men from joining or leaving a religious community.

It is a violation of the will of God, of the rights of persons and of the family of nations when force is used to destroy or repress religion.

Public order and religious freedom. 7

Social responsibility in the use of religious freedom:

requires respect for the rights of others, and,

duties toward others and toward the common welfare.

Society has the right to defend itself against abuses committed on the pretext of freedom of religion.

Government is to provide this protection,
impartially and objectively,
according to judicial norms.

The freedom of man is not to be curtailed except when necessary.

... this Vatican Council urges everyone 8 especially those who are charged with the task of educating others, to do their utmost to form men who, on the one hand, will respect the moral order and be obedient to lawful authority, and, on the other hand, will be lovers of true freedom—men, in other words, who will come to decisions on their own judgment and in the light of truth, govern their activities with a sense of responsibility, and strive after what is true and right, willing always to join with others in cooperative effort.

Religious freedom therefore ought to have this further purpose and aim, namely, that men may come to act with greater responsibility in fulfilling their duties in community life.

Revelation and religious freedom. 9

This doctrine of freedom has roots in divine revelation:

Revelation does not affirm in so many words the right of man to immunity from coercion in matters religious, but it does show the dignity of the human person in its full dimensions.

Christ showed respect toward the freedom with which man is to fulfill his duty of belief in the word of God.

Man's response to God must be free. 10

The act of faith is of its very nature a free act.

Religious freedom contributes to that environment in which men can be invited to the Christian faith.

Men cannot be compelled to belief. 11

God calls men to serve Him in spirit and truth:

they are bound in conscience,
but stand under no compulsion.

Christ sought to rouse and confirm faith but used no coercion:

He did not denounce unbelief, but said,
the cockle should be left to grow with the wheat.

The servant of God does not break the bruised reed.

He acknowledged the power and right of government, warning that the higher rights of God were to be kept inviolate.

He bore witness to the truth, completing revelation on the cross, but He refused to impose truth by force on those who spoke against it.

Not by force of blows does His rule assert its claims. It is established by witnessing to the truth and by hearing the truth, and it extends its dominion by the love whereby Christ, lifted up on the cross, draws all men to Himself.

The Apostles followed Christ's example:

bearing witness to the truth of God,
speaking the word with confidence, and
rejecting all "carnal weapons."

They recognized legitimate civil authority,
but did not hesitate to speak against governing powers
which set themselves against the will of God.

Apology for historical errors.

12

Although in the life of the Church in history ways of acting opposed to the spirit of the Gospel have appeared the doctrine of the Church that no one is to be coerced into faith has always stood firm.

Through the leaven of the Gospel, and increased recognition of the dignity of persons, the conviction that the person must be free of coercion in matters religious has grown stronger.

The freedom of the Church.

13

The Church claims freedom for herself:

in her character as a spiritual authority,
and as a society of man.

Where the principle of religious freedom is honored, the Church is in a stable situation of right and independence appropriate to her mission.

This independence is what Church authorities claim in society.

The Christian faithful, like all men, have the civil right to live according to their consciences.

The Church asks its children:

14

in the formation of their consciences to attend to the doctrine of the Church, teacher of truth,
to walk in the wisdom of the Spirit,
and spread the light of life.

The disciple is bound to ever more fully understand, proclaim and defend — in the spirit of the Gospel — the truth received from Christ,
having love and patience with those who err or are ignorant regarding the truth.

The present situation.

15

The fact is that men of the present day want to be able freely to profess their religion in private and in public.

This is among the signs of the times.

Forms of government still exist in which the powers of government:

deter citizens from the profession of religion,
and make life difficult for religious communities.

This is, with sorrow, denounced and deplored by the Council.
In view of the greater unity of mankind, it is necessary that religious freedom be everywhere provided with effective constitutional guarantees.

May all the human family be brought to the "glorious freedom of the sons of God."



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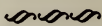
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