



bi-annual Bulletin

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A Center conducted by the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

RECEPTION, the subject of Cardinal Willebrands' text which we are presenting in this issue together with Fr. Kilmartin's related paper on Roman Catholic reaction to the BEM document, is one of those words which, from time to time, seem to take over theological discourse. I am happy to note however, that unlike some previous catch-words of fashionable pretensions, the whole content of the current discussion on reception is so rich and significant as to offer seemingly endless new insights into the dialogue between and even within the churches. We have entered that point of time in the history of the Church when the fruits of the dialogues increasingly clamour for some kind of authoritative response. There is a certain impatience afoot these days. Some theologians seem to feel that they have already settled our problems of division, and it is only this or that intransigent bureaucracy which stands in the way of reunion. Laity sometimes rebel against whatever denominational restraints their own churches seek to retain. Habitual pessimists constantly predict the death of ecumenism because twenty years after the early hopes aroused by the Second Vatican Council appeared, we find ourselves still far short of the goal. Yet surely the Church has never stopped caring for the poor although they still abound; never given up evangelism though there is still massive unbelief; never ceased to struggle for justice and peace in the face of continuing injustice and war. Why this "now or never" attitude towards ecumenism, that necessary quest of Christians to show forth that unity which Christ wills for his followers?

Impatience can be holy, and it can also be a sign of immaturity. My personal hope for us all as we grope towards unity is summed up in a personal recent experience. I participated recently as a consultant in a series of conferences which survey from time to time the progress of the various dialogues (the Fourth Forum of Bilateral Dialogues of the World Confessional Families). Held at Bossey this spring, the meeting brought together many of the theologians who have played so prominent a part in the multi and bilateral dialogues. (I hasten to add that I was honored with an invitation because of the work our Centro here does in regard to bibliographies on these dialogues, and not because I personally would be included as a peer of that distinguished group). The patient work of these people is showing fruit. Now there comes the even longer task of consciousness-raising among the churches. Cardinal Willebrands is kind enough to refer to this Centro's work in this field at the end of his talk. I submit that we all need this kind of encouragement, because I believe we are at the beginning, not the end, of a long reception process.

Reception works in two ways. When the stimulus coming to the churches from some ecumenical group or other, which thinks it has reached consensus, is referred to the highest ecclesial authorities for definitive action and movement, those same leaders need to test the consensus within their communities as to whether or not this new consensus represents a clear and adequate contemporary expression of the one apostolic faith which has been professed through the ages of the Church within that particular tradition. In other words, beyond particularity of confessional expression, is the subsisting apostolic faith (which all sincere Christians of whatever disparate communion seek to profess) adequately formulated therein? Reception involves an answer to this question. To ascertain the answer to that question takes time, patience and maturity. Anti-authoritarian frenzies, gnostic pretensions or atomistic polarizations will not help the dialogue at this point. What we need now is that prayerful discernment within all of our churches of what the One Spirit is saying to us.

Charles Angell, S.A.
Director

THE ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE AND ITS RECEPTION

A talk given at the Centro Pro Unione,
on Wednesday, March 27th, 1985

by Card. Johannes Willebrands*

1. We are in a year which is marked by a whole series of anniversaries. By summoning the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops to meet at the end of this year the Holy Father has reminded the whole Church that twenty years have now past since the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council. He has called the Synod to recapture something of the spirit of that great collegial assembly, to see the extent of the putting into practice of the Council's decisions, and to promote the ever fuller insertion of the Council's teaching into the life of the Church — the Church in the world of today, for we must not forget that the world has developed, for better and for worse, in the last twenty years; the 1980's are not the 1960's.

As you well know, one of the four great goals of the Council was "to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ" (*Sacros. Conc.* n. 1), and the present Pope incessantly reminds us that among the many duties incumbent on the Church in consequence of the Council, the ecumenical task has a priority of its own (cf. *es. Dives in Misericordia*, n. 13). The Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, of which I have the honour of being President, celebrates its twenty-fifth birthday this year; it was set up by Pope John XXIII with other preparatory bodies for the Council but was very soon made a permanent organ of the Roman Curia, a sort of First-fruits of the Council.

Such anniversaries bid us take stock. There can be an insidious temptation to sit back rather complacently and reminisce about what has happened — a comfortable process. That is not enough. We need to undertake the more disturbing task of seeing what we should learn from what has happened. When the Pope received

our Secretariat in audience last November he spoke of the Council's Decree on Ecumenism as "a decree which means even more to us after the rich experience of twenty years of these new relations with our fellow Christians, a decree which challenges us constantly to new and ever vigorous action at every level in the Church's life" (address of Nov. 16, 1984).

We have to learn from this rich experience, and one of the main ways we are learning today is through the process of what is called the 'reception' of ecumenical dialogue. This I have chosen as the theme for my address this evening.

2. But first we need to look for a moment at the wider scene. Dialogue, in the strict sense in which we use the term of our international theological dialogues, — dialogue of faith is a *sine qua non* if we and our fellow-Christians are to come to that unity of faith which is essential for the restoration of full communion. But, essential as it is, that theological dialogue does not and cannot exist in splendid isolation. It presupposes a whole network of relationships between the Churches at every level, and as it develops it also nourishes those very relationships.

I would like to take three examples — it would be possible to take many more, but there is not time in one lecture to speak of all the various dialogues in which we are currently engaged. So I shall simply draw your attention to certain aspects of three of the most significant dialogues.

It was not until 1980 that the Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church held its first meeting. Yet, over and above the years of technical preparation for

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such a meeting, the very emergence of the Commission would have been virtually impossible had it not been for that long "dialogue of love" between East and West which began when Pope Paul VI and the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras first met on the Mount of Olives in January 1964. Years later, when he was visiting Constantinople, Pope John Paul II summed up the importance of this "dialogue of love" in a happy phrase: "It was necessary to create again the context before trying to rewrite the texts together" (Address at Constantinople, Nov. 30, 1979).

But, as the texts are written or rewritten, they too have their effect on the development of the context. Thus the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission's work was followed with interest by many people for twelve years; but it was the publication of that Commission's *Final Report* in 1982 (in happy coincidence, it is true, with the Pope's visit to Canterbury) that brought the dialogue to a new level in both Churches. A stage of the work was done and now decisions had to be made; the time was coming that would lead from talk to action. Many Catholics and Anglicans began to look at one another with new eyes. The publication of the text itself did something to the context. To quote the Pope's address to our last Plenary once again: "Our words are beginning to find translation into deeds. Our dialogues and other contacts are meant to lead, in truth and love, to profound changes of relationships with our fellow Christians, and I thank God that through his grace such changes are now beginning to become manifest" (Address of Nov. 16, 1984).

My third illustration is of another form of interaction. The context is necessary for the text. The text has its effect on the context. And also the texts of the various dialogues are beginning to have an effect on each other. For, though each dialogue between two or more Churches has its own particular starting point — the particular questions most at issue between those Churches — all must in the end come to face together certain fundamental questions, not least that of the mystery of the Church and of her Sacraments. If you read the Lutheran/Catholic texts on Eucharist and Ministry you will find reference to, even explicit quotation from the ARCIC texts on these same themes. And now ARCIC-II in its study of the Church and Salvation is being greatly helped by the good work done on Justification by Faith by the Catholic/Lutheran dialogue in the United States. Again, many of the bilateral dialogues have made a contribution to the long process that led to the multilateral Lima text on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*; and the discussions within and between Churches as they prepare their responses to Lima will

surely have further effects for the development of the bilateral dialogues.

3. These examples from the road we have covered in these last twenty years of re-encounter — and how relatively short a period this is when we compare it with our centuries of separation — illustrate the undoubted fact that *dialogue* has become an ecclesial fact of great importance. Not only has it had a far-reaching impact on our mentalities; it also affects the practical life of the Churches. The fact that we are today engaged in a dialogue "where each can treat the other on an equal footing" (*Unit.Red.* n. 9) is already admirable in itself, for we are meeting again after a time of growing apart. By our meeting we are already giving a common witness to God's will for unity. It should not surprise us that our joint road is strewn with difficulties, both ones that we expected and also some that nobody foresaw. Yet, thank God, the process has led us also to "theological convergences often as unexpected as they were happy" (Common Declaration of Paul VI and Archb. Coggan, 1977, n. 3).

If we think of the efforts we have all had to make to come out of our inherited shells, to discard our historically formed consciousness and to penetrate so deeply into the awareness of our partners as to lay the basis for a true and profound understanding of each other, we begin to feel our dependence on the Spirit of God and to know that we have to rely on prayer. For prayer is the spiritual nourishment of dialogue: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in their midst", says the Lord (Mat. 18:20).

In the ecumenical dialogue we are concerned with the faith, with God, and with the Church of Christ. We have come to see each other again as brothers and sisters in Christ, as baptized who have been born to new life in Christ and who are incorporated in his body, the Church. The words of Saint Paul, "Be eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism (Eph. 4,3-5) are surely addressed to us. In dialogue we learn or, rather, the Spirit reveals to us how greatly we are one and where we are still separated, but also and above all how great a common hope is given us by our calling.

4. The ecumenical movement, i.e. "the initiatives and activities encouraged and organised according to various needs of the Church and as opportunities to promote Christian unity" (UR 4), should be accepted, confirmed and "received" by all Christians. This applies to the ecumenical movement as such and also to everything it has already produced by way

of concrete, positive results.

"Reception" is a word and, indeed, a concept that has assumed a new meaning and a new urgency in the ecumenical movement. The word has its origin in the field of jurisprudence. In theology it is now used to designate the acceptance of a doctrinal statement or a council decision by a local Church or by the Universal Church. But in the ecumenical movement reception now has a new meaning, especially as regards the results of a dialogue between two Churches. In the narrower sense it refers to the formal decision of the competent Church authorities, though in the wider sense it embraces all the phases and aspects of the process by means of which a Church adopts the results of such a dialogue (cf. *The Three Reports of the Forum on Bilateral Conversations*, Faith and Order Paper 107, Geneva 1982, p. 17). Reception today also assumes a new urgency because the very nature of the rich fruit of the dialogues calls for a critical reception.

On the occasion of the Second Vatican Council the Catholic Church receives the ecumenical movement as such. Her reception was not confined to general words, for she also developed her principles and methods for participating in the movement, at the same time formulating her theological understanding both vis-à-vis the Orthodox Church and the Church that sprang from the Reformation. This conciliar reception had been long prepared in theology, in the Christian life of the faithful, and also in the often hesitant statements of the magisterium. The last of these statements was the "Instructio" about the ecumenical movement published by the Holy Office in 1959, i.e. shortly before the Council.

As witnessed by numerous theologians and even saints of the preconciliar period, ecumenical concern matured in the various layers of the People of God and made its official breakthrough under Pope John XXIII on the occasion of the Second Vatican Council, almost as if to confirm a phrase used by the Council itself, which had said: "By this sense of faith which is aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth, God's people accepts not the mere words of men but truly the very Word of God" (cfr. *Thess.* 2,13; LG 12). The leading spirits in the ecumenical movement influenced each other. What has been done by our brothers and sisters in other Churches and communities is also quite unmistakable, and this is particularly true as regards the World Council of Churches and of our other main partners in dialogue.

When we speak of reception, we must above all be conscious of an obvious danger that we are facing today. Reception cannot and must not be understood as a purely technical or instrumental concept. Is reception a sociologi-

cal process? Can it be understood in a purely numerical or quantitative manner, that is to say, in the sense of statistical majority convictions? We are surely agreed that one cannot speak of true reception in a case where only a few faithful accept and confirm the result of a dialogue. And we are surely equally agreed that faith and insight into the faith are a gift of God. If we speak about the faith in an ecumenical dialogue and arrive at a joint understanding of the faith, does this not mean that the Spirit of God is at work within us and is going to ensure reception? This is surely as true for individual Christians as it is for the Church as a whole: "The Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send you in my name, he will teach you all things" (Jn. 14,26). This is also why the Second Vatican Council has gone on record as saying: "The body of the faithful, anointed as they are by the Holy One (cfr. 1 Jn. 2,20 and 27) cannot err in matter of belief" and, further: "Thanks to a supernatural sense of faith which characterizes the People as a whole" (LG 12).

Just as the faith of the individual Christian is a supernatural gift of God, not some purely human knowledge, so too is this true of the "sense of faith" of the Church as a whole. The Council used a quotation from Saint Augustine to circumscribe the People of God as "from the bishops down to the last member of the laity" (LG 12). The People of God is thus understood not in a quantitative manner, but rather qualitatively in the hierarchical sacramental structure given it by the Lord. The Spirit of God enriches the entire People with his different gifts, the charisms, "he distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank" (LG 12) and these, depending on the particular mission, go to the benefit of the whole. The apostle Paul speaks of the different services, relating them to the different members of the one body, and the various gifts of grace correspond to these services (cf. 1 Cor. 12). They include the gift of government and teaching authority, which in the Catholic Church is known as the magisterial or doctrinal ministry. This is why the Council says: "All this the People of God does under the lead of a sacred teaching authority to which it loyally defers" (LG 12).

Do these Council statements mean that "reception" is the exclusive prerogative of the official magisterium? Their purpose is rather to explain the spiritual nature and the complex process of "reception" as understood in Catholic ecclesiology. Reception is and remains a process of the entire People of God and in this sense it also has certain aspects of a sociological process.

Perhaps we should examine the concept of reception in greater detail. In *Catholic*

understanding reception can be circumscribed as a process by means of which the People of God, in its differentiated structure and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, recognizes and accepts new insights, new witnesses of truth and their forms of expression because they are deemed to be in the line of the apostolic tradition and in harmony with the *sensus fidelium* of the Church as a whole. Because such witnesses of new insights and experiences are recognized as authentic elements of apostolicity and catholicity, they basically aim at acceptance and inclusion in the living faith of the Church. The Decree on Ecumenism of Vatican II says that divisions among Christians make it more difficult for the Church to express in actual life her full catholicity in all its aspects (UR 4). In its full form reception embraces the official doctrine, its proclamation, the liturgy, the spiritual and ethical life of the faithful, as well as theology as systematic reflection about this complex reality. Reception therefore involves the *kerygma*, the *didaché*, and the *praxis pietatis*. Inasmuch as the entire People of God partakes in the search for and the unfolding of the truth of God's word, all the charisms and services are involved according to their station: the theologians by means of their research activities, the faithful by means of their preserving fidelity and piety, the ecclesial ministries and especially the college of bishops with its function of making binding doctrinal decisions. One can also say that ministry and charism, proclamation and theology, magisterial ministry and sense of faith of the People, all act together in the reception process. The Church and all her members are therefore involved in a learning process that by its very nature is not exclusively concerned with theological documents, but also considers developments in the domains of liturgy, pastoral care, canon law, discipline, forms of piety, etc. It is an important task of the bishops to ensure that all domains and levels of Christian ecclesial life participate in this process in depth.

I think I can say that in the postconciliar period several reception processes have already taken place between the Churches and Ecclesial Communities. In this connection one may recall, *inter alia*, recognition of baptism, common exegetic insights, use of each other's liturgical prayers and hymns, and a joint understanding of some central truths of the faith. To take an example from the Catholic/Lutheran dialogue, the recent rapprochement in the assessment of the Augsburg Confession and the historical judgement on Martin Luther is certainly not without importance. By the grace of God, this first brief history of reception in the ambit of Catholic/Lutheran relations is going to have its sequel both in the present and in the

future.

The numerous bilateral dialogue documents are primarily theological labours intended to further develop the witness of the Christian faith in fidelity to the revelation and Church traditions; the work being done at the official behest of the Churches (cf. UR 9). Their elements of consensus, convergence and unsolved differences do not claim any normative character, but represent questions put to the participating Churches and partly also a real challenge. There arises the problem how *theological* consensus and convergences can become *ecclesial* consensus and convergences. The process presupposes a serious examination and critical discussion of the substantive results. As I have described the process, each part of the People of God has to play a specific part before there can be any binding reaction by teaching authority, be it a Council or the Pope. In this connection it will be of decisive importance that the openness with which the Church entered the dialogue should inspire also the subsequent stages of reception and that the spirit that prevailed in the dialogue commissions and made these results possible should somehow or other continue when these texts are studied by others. The texts are the fruit of a long and dynamic process of question and counter-question, of critique and desire for reconciliation, of doubts and confidence. They will be understood properly only if one consistently applies the hermeneutical rule of reading them in the same spirit in which they were written.

Some time ago the Secretariat for Christian Unity sent the dialogue documents that represent a certain arrival point (for example, the Faith and Order papers "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry", and the Final Report of ARCIC-I) to the episcopal conferences with the request for a critical evaluation. In the meantime numerous theological colleges and university faculties have also submitted their written comments and reactions. The evaluation of these reactions in the next few years will show to what extent the results of the dialogues are being accepted. Such steps form part of the promotion of the reception process.

On several occasions already the Pope has spoken of ecumenism as a pastoral priority. There can be no doubt that some of the results of interconfessional dialogues are already finding their way into theological literature, and that here and there they even manifest themselves in proclamation, preaching and catechesis, and even in attitudes of piety. On the other hand, *the difficulties* involved in this process have also come to the fore. Evaluation of the reactions to individual dialogue results have shown that criticism is sometimes levelled against the technical language used by the theologians and that, consequently,

they and the Church authorities are often held to be solely responsible for the ecumenical dialogue. It is said that the texts are dominated by particular thought patterns that cannot easily be transferred into other cultural contexts. Other voices can be heard complaining about a lack of unity as regards the faith of one or other of the dialogue partners, and in some cases opposition to the documents is prompted by the fear that they may lead to a loss of identity or simply inspired by resistance at the level of feeling, the direct result of not yet having come to terms with the past. There are problems deriving from the majority or minority situation of the dialogue partners in individual countries. Lastly, a low level of information and knowledge in matters of faith at times also presents an obstacle that prevents people from tackling these documents.

These considerations readily illustrate the great importance that attaches to an *all-embracing ecumenical spirituality and ecumenical formation*. Awareness of the guilt and failure of Christians, readiness for kenosis and metanoia, as well as prayer of penitence and supplication, must first smoothe the way.

Our Joint Working Group with the World Council of Churches has agreed that *ecumenical education* should constitute one of the focal points of future programmes. If reception has to be understood as an organic process, then it is undoubtedly our task to persevere in inspiring this goal and bringing it closer.

Next month, here in Rome, our Secretariat is organising a meeting of delegates of the National Ecumenical Commissions of Episcopal Conferences. Something over 60 such Commissions will be represented. From the beginning of our planning of this meeting it was clear that one of its major themes must be "Ecumenical Formation in the local Church", and this has been amply confirmed by reports we have received from national Commissions as the meeting draws nearer. It is dangerously easy to take it for granted that everyone nowadays has already imbibed the ecumenical spirit of Vatican II. Yet the very fact that we are now celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the Council should remind us that today's young priests and teachers, today's young parents, were little children at the time of the Council and could not share in its experience in the way their elders did. Yet that spirit of the Council has to be more and more deeply inserted into the life of the Church if the work of the dialogues is to be evaluated and received as it should be.

5. It is in the nature of the ecumenical process as an ongoing and dynamic happening that the guiding idea of "successive steps" should be proposed more strongly. The Catho-

lic/Lutheran Malta Report of 1972 spoke even then about "a process of gradual rapprochement ... in which various stages are possible" (n. 73). Even earlier, in 1968, another Malta Report, that between Catholics and Anglicans, spoke of stages on our path to unity. Such intermediate stages are honest and valid, always provided that the intermediate results of the dialogue have really been accepted in our Churches. For then they are the expression of that real, even if imperfect, communion that has been granted to us in baptism, a communion that is meant to grow, to become more perfect, until it reaches fulness. Thus the common measure of valid insights and convictions constitutes the foundation for joint ecclesial action. I believe that even today we are already in a position to weave a dense tissue of joint witnesses. It will fall primarily within the competence of the authorities of the Churches and ecclesial communities in the countries involved to explore all the fields and possibilities that seem suitable and promising for a growing togetherness of our Churches and Communities. "We must endeavour to do together everything that we can do together. We are called to give the greatest possible measure of witness to the gospel in all fields of life", as the Pope put it on the occasion of his pastoral visit to Switzerland (Kehrsatz, June 14, 1984).

We all feel the drive inherent in the dialogues, which derives from our common baptism and urges us to be together in receiving the Body and the Blood of our Lord. Here, as you know, we come up against "asymetric" convictions regarding *the eucharist* or, put more clearly, as yet unsolved differences in the way our faith sees the mystery of the eucharist and its relationship to the mystery of the Church. The practice of so-called "open communion", which is regarded in some confessions as a "small step", represents an exceptionally great step as far as Catholic understanding is concerned. Celebration of the eucharist represents a tangible confession of the Church's faith. It is the most profound and intense expression of faith and Church communion. The longing for joint communion as the ultimate goal is therefore present in all dialogues in either an explicit or implicit form. "The pain of separation can be removed only if we seek to heal its cause" said the Pope recently (Kehrsatz, June 14, 1984).

Even though it is not yet possible for us to celebrate the holy eucharist at the same table, our joint prayer is yet possible and necessary. We must pray together more often and more intensely, because the primacy for all initiative and progress rests with God.

The burden of our separation becomes increasingly unbearable. *Evangelization* suffers untold harm. For the sake of men and mankind

we are called to greater communion, to greater unity. Let me close therefore with the words used by the Pope on the occasion of his visit to the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva: "The creative and redemptive work of God cannot be swallowed up by all that sin kindles in the human heart, nor be definitively blocked. But that leads us to a keen perception of our own responsibility as Christians facing the future of humanity and also to awareness of the gravity of our divisions. To the extent that they obscure our witness in a world tempted by suicide they are an obstacle to the proclamation of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ"

(Geneva, June 12, 1984).

Now it only remains for me to thank you for coming on this occasion, and to thank the Atonement Friars here at this "Centro Pro Unione" for inviting me to speak here. Their commitment to the work of ecumenism is well known; through publications and bibliographical aids they are assisting in the reception of the dialogues; and later this year their Centre at Graymoor is offering hospitality to the third meeting of ARCIC-II. I am happy to have this opportunity of thanking them for their work.

A CATHOLIC RESPONSE TO LIMA 1982

A talk given at the Centro Pro Unione,
on Tuesday, March 5th, 1985

by Edward J. Kilmartin, S.J.*

At Lima, Peru, in early 1982, the Faith and Order Commission (FO) of the World Council of Churches (WCC) completed its work on the text *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM).¹ The members of FO unanimously agreed that the statement provides an accurate summary of a significant convergence, regarding the subject, which developed over many years of dialogue. The WCC, through FO, has requested the Christian churches to engage in a process of "reception" of the document. It calls for responses to the following questions: 1. To what extent can the apostolic faith be recognized in the text? 2. What practical consequences can be drawn for the life of the churches? 3. What suggestions can be made for improving the text in the interest of promoting a common expression of apostolic faith?

In this lecture attention is focused on the first question. I confine my remarks mainly to certain areas of agreement and tension

between BEM and Catholic theology.

I. *Baptism*

The first of the three parts of BEM outlines central aspects of a theology of baptism. Reflection is confined mainly to the rite of water baptism. The post-baptismal rite of confirmation is treated only marginally. The point of departure for the discussion is the New Testament witness and not the traditional liturgical rite of baptism.

1. *Agreement with Catholic Theology.* BEM outlines a theology of water baptism which incorporates key elements of Catholic tradition. The points of agreement on basic issues can be summarized under four headings.

1) *Dialogue Structure.* According to BEM baptism has a dialogue structure. The active participants are God through Christ in the Spirit, the liturgical assembly and the adult candidate. This dialogue structure features

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God's activity and that of the liturgical assembly. The candidate is inserted into this dialogue.

Baptism is said to signify incorporation into the new covenant. Therefore it ultimately signifies an action of God. At the same time it signifies a response of faith and commitment of the candidate "to the Lord who bestows his grace on his people"(1).² A response of faith is necessary for the reception of the salvation which is "embodied and set forth in baptism"(8).³

2) *Mystery of Baptism.* Baptism is described as an event in which the subject is integrated into the mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ⁴ and graced with the bestowal of the Spirit. The pneumatological aspect is set in the context of salvation history. A comparison is made between the coming of the Spirit on Christ at his baptism, on the apostles at pentecost and on the candidate in baptism.⁵

3) *Ecclesiological Aspect.* From the fact that baptism incorporates the candidate into Christ, BEM draws the logical conclusion that this always entails incorporation into the body of Christ. While baptism establishes a bond of unity between the baptized and the local community, a broader unity is implied. Therefore BEM concludes that churches should seek to express the unity of baptism at the level of the visible communion of all Christian churches (6).⁶

4) *Necessity of Response of Faith.* BEM underscores the necessity of a response of faith "for the reception of the salvation" signified by baptism (8). A free, personal response is required on the part of the adult candidate. This is made possible by the Spirit who is at work "in the lives of people before, in and after their baptism"(5). This response includes a "personal commitment necessary for responsible membership" in the Church (10).

Infant baptism is defended on the basis of the longstanding practice of many churches. A theological argument is introduced to show that the dialogue structure of baptism is maintained despite the infant's inability to respond. Both adult and infant baptism "embody God's own initiative in Christ and express a response of faith made within the believing community"-(12C). The necessary divine and ecclesiastical aspects of all baptism are found in infant baptism. All that is lacking is the personal response of faith of the candidate. But God's choice of the infant for baptism is assured because he or she is born into a responsible Christian family or has guardians who give the reasonable hope that the child will be nurtured to mature

faith. This argument is seen by BEM to offer grounds why those who practice only adult baptism should be able to admit the alternative practice (12C).⁷

2. *Points of Tension Between BEM and Catholic Theology.* Some Catholic theologians have enumerated several difficulties with the text on baptism. They are related to ambiguity of terminology and descriptive expressions. However I do not agree that there are real problems in these areas when the whole context is taken into account. For example, BEM describes the efficacy of infant baptism in this way: "Through baptism, the promise and claim of the Gospel are laid on the child"(12C). I suggest that one should sympathize with the authors' attempt to distinguish between infant and adult baptism. The personal, free appropriation of the grace of baptism occurs only in the case of the adult. However BEM states clearly enough that infant baptism is baptism in the full sense. In other words, there is a real synergism between the working of God and the co-working of the Church in infant baptism. Of course Catholic theology will want to say that the infant receives the grace of regeneration — and this means that the infant is an inchoative believer endowed with the gift of faith.

One might also object to the comparison made between the bestowal of the Spirit on Christ at his baptism, on the apostles at pentecost and on the baptized (5). The places where the analogy limps are not indicated. But it would be wrong to draw the conclusion that a certain type of pneumatological reduction is intended in the case of baptism; for the ecclesial aspect is sufficiently stressed elsewhere in the text. It is presupposed just as the christological aspect of the bestowal of the Spirit on the apostles. To be more precise, however, Catholic theology will want to introduce the notion of the "ecclesial Spirit;" for after pentecost the Spirit has a new form of presence in the world, i.e., in the Church. In other words, the Spirit works through the structures of the Church which the Spirit himself has established, and this includes baptism.

A more serious problem occurs for Catholic theology in the remarks on the rite of confirmation. BEM observes that the rite was in use "in the early centuries." This corresponds to what we know about the addition of a rite of bestowal of the Spirit in Christian initiation within the so called Western Church in the 3rd century and by the so called Eastern Church in the 4th and 5th centuries. If one asks about what practice is in direct continuity with primi-

tive Christianity, the answer seems clear. The omission of the rite of confirmation in the Syrian Church: to the end of the 4th century in West Syria and Palestine; up to the 5th century in East Syria, corresponds to earliest practice.

BEM does not recommend a return to the earliest usage. Rather it suggests that some appropriate rite, expressive of the gift of the Spirit, be introduced by the churches which lack this aspect of Christian initiation (19). Now this recommendation seems to imply that the rite of confirmation is a purely "relative" development, i.e., dependent on an arbitrary decision of the Church and not precisely relational to the influence of the Spirit who structures ecclesial institutions. According to Catholic theology the rite of confirmation is of divine institution. To the extent that BEM favors the rite of confirmation as a viable option but not a theological necessity *ex divina institutione*, it takes a stand against official Catholic theology.

BEM's treatment of the rite of confirmation touches on a fundamental ecumenical problem: The assessment of the normative value of institutions which relate to essential expressions of the nature of the Church and which only developed after the earliest stages of the existence of the Christian Church. Are all of these developments merely relative, i.e., in the sense of dependent solely on concrete historical circumstances and so subject to change. Are some of the developments irreversible? What theological principles furnish the basis for an ecumenical discussion of this problem?

3. *Additional Comments.* By way of additional comments, I have two remarks to make on the text of *Baptism*. One concerns the problem of infant baptism and the other, the efficacy of baptism.

1) *Theological Arguments in Favor of Infant Baptism.* We have seen BEM's argument in favor of infant baptism. It responds to one objection: Is there a response of faith, which is required by the will of Christ? The answer of BEM corresponds, in part, to the teaching of St. Augustine. He explains that the requirement of a response of faith is satisfied by the profession of faith made by the *offerentes* (those who present the child for baptism) who serve as the tongue of *mater ecclesia*. This profession of faith is seen to penetrate to the invisible level of the mystery of baptism because of the intimate union between Christ and "the society of the saints and faithful." It reaches its goal when integrated into the sacramental action; for, as Augustine says: The infant is born "of water and the Holy Spirit." The water bath supplies the sacramental sign

of the Spirit who works interiorly. Therefore the infant is born anew, becomes a believer.

This argument of Augustine in defense of the practice of infant baptism has proved to be more enduring than the argument in favor of the necessity of infant baptism based on a particular theology of original sin and its consequences. However it answers only one specific objection. Moreover it is not the grounds for the practice.

The practice of infant baptism arose from some original insights which cannot be determined. It was widespread in the antenicene Church and went, for the most part, unchallenged by serious theological debate within the orthodox Church. This fact gives us the basis for the presumption that it was recognized as corresponding to a global perception of the life of faith. It was retained as orthopraxis because it was understood to correspond to the experience of the life of faith which impregnates and structures the existence of believers.

This doing of the faith reflects a global perception of the faith. It is not reducible to the practical application of an abstract truth; it cannot be captured by a rational synthesis completely. Consequently a rational explanation of a practice of the faith, such as infant baptism, can never suffice to provide a completely satisfactory answer to what is recognized as orthopraxis by the more original experience of the life of faith.

2) *Efficacy of Baptism.* Both BEM and Catholic theology ground the efficacy of baptism on the promise given through institution and the correct placing of the rite according to the traditional practice of the Church. When the sacrament is properly placed, it is a firm offer of grace. This presentation tends to give the impression that the essential rite is exclusively katabatic, i.e., from God to us.

From the standpoint of the liturgy itself, it seems clear that the "sacramental word" should be viewed as an intercessory prayer of the Church which is inscribed into the "eternal intercession" of Christ. Even in the indicative form, the "sacramental word" of all sacraments is a word of faith of the Church and essentially epiclesis. It is efficacious because it is made "in the Spirit" whom Christ possesses in fullness and shares with his Church. Consequently it is made in union with Christ's eternal, once-for-all and so not to be repeated, intercession, which is always heard.

This *personal* explanation of the efficacy of the sacraments corresponds to the intention of Catholic theology's teaching about the efficacy of sacraments *ex opere operato*. But it penetrates more deeply into the ecclesiological-christological-trinitarian structure of all liturgy,

and especially of the sacraments. While BEM leaves open the question of a theological explanation of the efficacy of baptism, it is not opposed to this viewpoint: Baptism is a firm offer of grace made to the candidate on the ground of the eternal intercession of Christ, together with the prayer of the Church, made in the one Spirit, and the promise given through institution.

II. *Eucharist*. The authors of the text on the eucharist take the liturgical tradition as the point of departure for the exposition of the long section on its meaning. The structure of the development is based on that of the classical eucharistic prayers of the East and West. This exposition corresponds to the more modern Catholic systematic theology of the eucharist which begins with sacrifice and concludes with the sacrament of the body and blood.

I confine my remarks on Lima's theology of the eucharist to three aspects where substantial agreement with Catholic theology seems to exist. One important area of tension is also discussed.

1. *Agreement with Catholic Theology*

1) *Sacrifice*. BEM describes the eucharist as a rite in which Christ is the chief celebrant. In the prayer of praise and thanksgiving the community is united by faith to Christ and makes intercession through him for all humanity.⁸ In this perspective the Catholic concept of "propitiatory sacrifice" is explained. The concept is interpreted as containing the idea that the one expiation of the cross is made actual in the eucharist and presented before the Father in the intercession of Christ and the Church.⁹

This presentation conforms to the general outlook of Catholic theology. But the notion of "propitiatory sacrifice" needs to be nuanced. According to the Council of Trent, the Mass is a propitiatory sacrifice because the one expiation of the cross is applied in and through the Mass. However the Mass is not a propitiatory sacrifice because it is a new offering of the sacrifice of the cross in the Mass. It is made by the Church in the eucharistic liturgy. It is liturgically expressed in the so called *anamnesis prayer* which follows the narrative of institution in the Roman eucharistic prayers. Here the Church, through the prayer of the priest, affirms that it offers Christ's sacrifice to the Father. The clearest expression of this is found in the Fourth Eucharistic Prayer of the New Roman Missal of Paul VI: "...we offer to you his body and his blood..." This offering of the sacrifice of Christ to the Father in the prayer of praise and thanksgiving has one fundamental meaning: It is the expression

of thanksgiving for the gift of the Father in Christ which always remains the gift on which we depend. Unfortunately BEM does not refer to this prayer which, according to Reformation theology, makes the Mass a human work, but according to its original intent is the liturgical expression of justification by faith alone.

2) *Communion of the Body and Blood*. BEM explains that Christ is actively present in the eucharistic celebration and gives himself in bread and wine as the sacrament of his body and blood. The uniqueness of the presence of Christ in relation to the bread and wine is affirmed on the basis of the narratives of the institution of the Lord's Supper.¹⁰ At the same time the problem is noted that some churches have a difficulty with linking Christ's personal presence "so definitely" to the eucharistic food and drink.¹¹

Traditional Catholic theology also affirms that the communicant receives Christ's body and blood, i.e., himself as crucified and risen Lord, from his own hands. But there remains the problem of formulating an approach to the explanation of how Christ can be said to be both active dispenser of the sacrament of his body and blood and the sacramental food and drink which is given.

If I am not mistaken BEM favors a modern approach to the sacramental presence of Christ in bread and wine which finds many adherents among Catholic theologians. According to this explanation, one must distinguish between the physical dimensions of bread and wine and the anthropological, i.e., their meaning for human beings. Since Christ himself changes the meaning of the bread and wine by placing them in the relation between himself and his community, the bread and wine are given a new meaning and hence change of their being takes place. All being, it is argued, is essentially relational and attains its full meaning and fullness of being when it is fully related to God and humanity. The bread and wine obtain their fullness of being when Christ relates them to himself as the one given for many and so employs them as sacramental signs of his self giving. Here a unity of being between the sign and the signified is attained which is not possible in the realm of purely human communication.

This approach finds support in the old patristic view of reality and its relation to God. In this perspective the essence of a thing is determined by the power by which it is possessed. A change of being is the effect of a change of the relation of possession taking place in a thing. In this viewpoint the Spirit is the one who enables the relationship between the risen Lord and the bread and wine of the Church to be realized in the historical Church's eucharist in such a way that the elements

are the body and blood of Christ and yet remain elements of this earth. Whether this approach to the problem of Christ's active and somatic presence will receive further support within the dialogue between the Church remains an open question.

3) *The Role of the Holy Spirit.* The role of the Holy Spirit in the eucharist is explained by BEM in connection with the activity of the risen Lord.¹²

In the Spirit the Church recalls the promise of the Last Supper; the risen Lord relates his presence to the eucharist. In the Spirit the Church relates the bread and wine to the promise of the Last Supper; the risen Lord relates the bread and wine of the Church to that of the Last Supper. What the Spirit does through the expression of the faith of the Church corresponds to what Christ does because of the union between Christ and the Spirit.

Because the Spirit, who works through the faith of the Church, relates the bread and wine of the Church to Christ's self-offering, they become realizing signs of it; because Christ gives himself in bread and wine to the community, the elements become realizing signs of his self-gift. But Christ gives himself in bread and wine to the community as the giver of life. Hence the sharing of the bread and wine is sacrament of the communication of the Father's love in Christ. The Father, in turn, communicates the Spirit to the communicants of the sacrament and the believers receive a deeper share in "the new life of the kingdom."

This presentation corresponds to the role of the Spirit which is expressed in the new eucharistic prayers of the Roman Missal of Paul VI.

2. *Tension Between BEM and Catholic Theology.* BEM stresses the role of the Church gathered for the eucharist. On the one hand it observes that Christ's eucharistic presence does not depend on the faith of the individual.¹³ On the other hand, it implies that Christ's presence depends on the presence of a community of faith. According to Catholic theology, Christ's eucharistic presence is dependent on, or conditioned by, the intention of the community of faith to assemble for the memorial under the command of Christ. But there is more. Christ unites the community to his once-for-all offering and gives himself in the sacrament of the body and blood through the one who is qualified by ordination to act as his official minister. This aspect of the celebration of the eucharist is not mentioned in the text *Eucharist*.

The official position of the Catholic Church on the ministry of the eucharist is this: The community qualified to celebrate the eucharist must be able to call itself a church commissioned

by Christ to remember him and his redemptive work in the eucharist. Hence there is the problem of the constitutive structure of the Church which can mediate the commission of Christ through history. If Christ, in the Spirit, commissions official representatives through ordination by those who have received the same sacramental commissioning to act as ministerial hosts at his table, then only those communities which have such officers are assured that the relation between Christ as host and the community as guests is realized.

But this does not mean that a community which gathers in faith and love for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, though lacking a ministry which is essential according to the will of Christ, is not subject of the grace of the eucharist. In accord with the dialogue structure of all Christian worship, Christ in the Spirit is present and active from the outset in the Lord's Supper of such communities. He supplies what is wanting, and this means that there is the offer of the full grace of the Eucharist in its individual and social dimensions. These eucharists must be said to serve the building up of the Church even if the lack of the full incarnation of the structures of the Church willed by Christ and formed by the Spirit has a negative effect on the life of the community seen in its totality.

III. Ministry

This last observation brings us to BEM's text on *Ministry*. The best way of discussing the points of contact between BEM's presentation on ministry and the position of Catholic theology is to introduce a comparison with II Vatican's Constitution on the Church: *Lumen gentium*, chs. I-IV, especially ch. III. Undoubtedly the dogmatic constitution was influenced, in its presentation on the subject of ordained ministry, by documents of the Faith and Order Commission which served as background for the Lima text. At the same time *Lumen gentium* certainly played a role in the formulation of the Lima text.

1. *Agreement Between BEM and Lumen Gentium.* The points of agreement between BEM and *Lumen gentium* can be quickly summarized.

1) Ordained ministry is placed in an ecclesiological setting. The Church of the Triune God with the mission to preach and represent the kingdom of God is the starting point for BEM's consideration of ordained ministry.¹⁴

2) Office, in accord with the threefold function of Christ, has the task of preaching, administration of sacraments and leadership of the community.¹⁵

3) Office originated in the primitive apostolate and is a constitutive element of the

Church.¹⁶

4) Office represents the authority of Christ and so is exercised properly according to the model of Christ: service based on love.¹⁷

5) The form of installation of officers is ordination.¹⁸

6) Office took on a tripartite form from earliest times: episcopate, presbyterate and diaconate.¹⁹

7) Office stands in apostolic succession and is a pointer to the apostolicity of the Church which it serves.²⁰

2. *Tension Between BEM and Lumen Gentium.*
What are the basic differences between the approach of BEM and *Lumen gentium* to the ordained ministry?

To grasp the basic difference between the approach of BEM and *Lumen gentium* one must bear in mind a distinction which had to be expressed somehow in a document which would be acceptable to the FO Commission, composed of members of the old church tradition and the variety of Reformation traditions. On the one hand, the Catholic tradition recognizes a real distinction between two forms of sacramental personal ministry in the Church ordered to the same end: the building up of the body of Christ. One is based on baptism and is differentiated according to the charisms given to each one by the Spirit. The other is grounded on the sacrament of orders which equips the ordinand personally and exclusively for the exercise of certain ministries in the area of liturgy, teaching and governing (LG 10). On the other hand, certain Reformation churches interpret ordained ministry as pertaining to the *bene esse* of the Church and not as an essential structural element. Accordingly this ministry is understood as exclusively functional. A functionary is one who can be replaced as occasion demands it. A personal-sacramental understanding of ordained ministry excludes this.

When office is defined as purely functional,

the officer is not conceived as one who mediates the identity and continuity of the Church in history. Succession in office through ordination is not an essential aspect of the apostolicity of the Church.

1) *The Option of BEM.* BEM describes two models of office and it attributes the sacramental-personal model to *I Clement*, the functional model to Ignatius of Antioch (36C). On the other hand, *Lumen gentium* thinks that the understanding of office in these two sources is the same.²¹ It is possible that both BEM and *Lumen gentium* over-interpret these sources.²² In any case, it seems to me that BEM thinks along the lines of the "Ignatian model," which cannot be harmonized with the Catholic understanding of office.

The Catholic position is this: The saving presence of Christ is bound to the apostolic Church and in it to office standing in apostolic succession through the sacrament of ordination. This is a consequence of the divine plan of salvation by which the Father sends the Son in the incarnation. He has determined to work in and through history in concrete times, places and situations in the Word made flesh. After the glorification of Christ, the concrete times, places and persons which the risen Lord opens to his presence pertain to the apostolic Church and its ordained ministry. Ecclesiastical office represents Christ in the community. Hence the traits of ecclesiastical office are: sacramental ordination; collegiality of the office of bishop; primacy of the head of the college of bishops; apostolic succession of office; sacramental character of the exercise of office; episcopal constitution of the Church.

The specifically Catholic traits of office are integrated into BEM description. However this is done in such a way that the theological import of character, episcopal constitution, collegiality of ministry, ordination are interpreted in the direction of the Ignatian model. This can be shown from the following comparison:

	<i>BEM</i>	<i>Lumen Gentium</i>
<i>Character</i>	Reduced to unrepeatable ordination (48)	Viewed as personal and permanent ministerial relation to Church (21)
<i>Episcopal Constitution of Church</i>	Recommended (22)	Divine Institution (20)
<i>Collegiality</i>	Capability and preparedness of office bearers to cooperate with one another (44)	College of bishops pertains to essential constitution of Church (22)
<i>Ordination</i>	Ordination by office bearers is appropriate (39C)	Ordination is a sacrament conferred by bishops who have fullness of sacrament of orders (21)

Both BEM and *Lumen gentium* stress the presence of Christ in the exercise of official ministry of the Church. BEM provides an opening for the reception of elements which traditionally belong to the apostolicity of office. *Lumen gentium* presupposes that these elements are constitutive of the apostolicity of office which is able to act *in persona Christi* in the exercise of certain ministries.

BEM tends to look on the formation of the concrete forms of office solely from the viewpoint of the historical development and so to consider them contingent, relative to historical contexts.²³ *Lumen gentium* recognizes that the development of the episcopal constitution of the Church took place gradually. Yet it affirms that this constitution is a theological necessity. Why? The history of the formation of the constitution of the Church is seen as that of a community continually realizing itself more fully and so obtaining world-wide dimensions under the influence of the Spirit. The institutions which the Church developed in the course of history are those which it needs to manifest and realize its essence as grounded on Christ. The canon of Scripture developed in a historically contingent situation but was a theological necessity. The episcopal constitution is needed for the life of the Church and understood, beyond historical facticity, to be theologically necessary and so *ex institutione divina*.

Conclusion

BEM thinks sacramentally. It stresses the active presence of Christ in the Spirit in the case of baptism, eucharist and ordained ministry. Two theologies concerning the subject of baptism are contrasted. BEM favors the retention of infant baptism on the basis of the experience of faith which structures the lives of believers of many churches. The global perception of the faith of these churches is adequate basis for considering infant baptism to be orthopraxis.

Two theologies of confirmation are set side by side. BEM suggests that churches which lack the rite should introduce it. Two theologies of ordained ministry are also introduced. BEM seems to favor a more functional view of office in the Church. But it recommends the introduction of an episcopal constitution in churches which lack it. I believe that it would be wrong to judge this to be a naive suggestion. The

FO Commission undoubtedly does not expect that the mere introduction of a rite of confirmation or an episcopal constitution would solve dogmatic problems on the road to visible communion.

In my opinion these suggestions reflect the FO Commission's conviction that agreement on the theology of confirmation and episcopal constitution of the Church can never be attained by theoretical discussion. Rather practice will finally decide what must be done. Practice of the faith is not a mere pragmatic application of pre-established directives. Rather practice arises from a global perception of the faith and is known to be orthopraxis because it corresponds to the experience of the faith which impregnates and structures the lives of believers. Orthopraxis is the discovery of the behaviour which corresponds to the nature of the Church willed by Christ. Practice, not theoretical schemes, decides what must be done.

Churches which do not practice confirmation or have an episcopal constitution are asked to introduce these practices which are recommended by early church usage. Only by the experience of these practices can it be hoped that these churches will come to an understanding of their meaning which corresponds to that of churches which account them to be willed by Christ.

If I am not mistaken the FO Commission is asking these churches to take upon themselves an enormous challenge, at least with respect to episcopal constitution. The idea of introducing a rite of confirmation offers less difficulty for churches which accept the sacramental nature of baptism and so recognize that it includes the gift of the Spirit.

Does this challenge have no correspondence in churches which are episcopally constituted? Can these churches, which are asked to introduce the episcopacy, come to a correct experience of an episcopally constituted church without experiencing in practice communion with episcopally constituted churches, even before they have accepted this constitution as pertaining to more than the *bene esse* of the Church? Could the Catholic Church go along with the recommendation of episcopal constitution for churches which lack it without supporting their experience by concrete visible expressions of communion on the way to full communion?

Footnotes

1. Faith and Order Paper, no. 111 (Geneva: WCC, 1982).

2. The dialogue structure proposed by BEM corresponds to the Catholic position regarding all sacraments which is expressed in the formula: *ex opere operato* - *ex opere operantis*. But a part of the Catholic tradition so stresses the *ex opere operato* dimension that it allows for the existence of an *ex opere operantis* aspect in the case of an unconscious subject of the ground of an habitual disposition to "receive a sacrament." Thus it favors administration of the sacraments of baptism, penance and the sacrament of the sick to unconscious subjects in cases of "urgent necessity" where a habitual disposition for the sacraments can be presumed.

3. According to BEM the response of faith implies confession of sin and conversion on the part of the adult candidate (4). But BEM 8 does not identify response of faith simply with that of the personal response of the candidate. Elsewhere it distinguishes between a response made within the assembly and the adult subject's personal response. Both "believers" and infant baptism "embody God's own initiative in Christ and express a response of faith made within the believing community" (12C).

4. BEM 2-3.

5. BEM 5.

6. The eschatological aspect of the incorporation of the baptized into the "community of the Spirit" is also discussed. Baptism initiates the life to be fulfilled in the kingdom. In the measure that baptism becomes a reality in the life of the Christian, he or she becomes a sign of the kingdom (BEM 7).

7. BEM accepts the practice of infant baptism on the basis of the traditional practice of many churches. But it offers a theological argument based on ecclesiology: "The corporate faith and the faith which the child shares with the parents" is the reason why infant baptism contains the necessary response of faith. The fact that the infant lives in an environment which gives reasonable hope that the child will receive Christian upbringing is a sign that God calls the child to baptism (BEM 12, 12C, 16).

8. BEM 4.

9. BEM 8C.

10. BEM 13.

11. BEM 13C.

12. BEM 14, 14C.

13. BEM 13.

14. Church is grounded on the Trinity (BEM 1-3; LG 2-5). It is God's chosen people (BEM 1; LG 9) and has the mission of preaching and representing the kingdom as the pilgrim people on the way to the promised land (BEM 4; LG 42). All members have responsibility to witness to the gospel (BEM 5; LG 10-12).

15. A traditional teaching about the threefold office of Christ: prophet priest and king, is used to support the idea that the office bearer is preacher, leader of liturgy and administrator of the community (BEM 11-14; LG 25-27). This raises a question about how the priestly function of office should be discussed (BEM 17; LG 26).

16. In connection with the New Testament witness to the apostolicity and normativity of the position and function of office (BEM 9-11; LG 19-20), it is concluded that office is a constitutive element of Church (BEM 8; LG 8; 20-21).

17. The origin of authority is the Trinity (BEM 15; LG 21). It is exercised according to the model of Christ: service of love (BEM 16; LG 24; 27).

18. The form of installation is ordination (BEM 15; LG 21).

19. The threefold office is an early church development (BEM 22); it existed "ab antiquo" as distinguished from office itself which is *ex institutione divina* (LG 28; cf. 20).

20. Apostolic succession of office is an element of the comprehensive apostolic succession of the Church (BEM 34; LG 20); cf. *Dei Verbum* 7-8, where II Vatican Council develops the manifold dimensions of apostolicity.

21. LG 20, n.13. According to LG 21: "In the bishops Christ is present in the midst of the faithful" (Ignatian-vertical model); "in order to fulfill their tasks" the apostles received from Christ the bestowal of the Spirit and handed on the Spirit "through the imposition of hands...to their co-workers" (Clementine-horizontal model).

22. It must be admitted that Ignatius

describes the bishop as representative of Christ and less as representative of the apostles, while I Clement reverses the accent.

23. BEM discusses a threefold structure of ecclesiastical office: personal (=episcopal), presbyteral (=collegial) and congregational. It highlights the personal structure, but always in relation

to presbyteral and congregational elements (26; 26C). The traditional threefold office is preferred on the basis of historical data, systematic and practical considerations (19-33). But while the argument in favor of the tripartite scheme comes to the foreground in the explanation of its advantages (22), it is always presented as a relative good (19-22).

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