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Centro Pro Unione

A Ministry of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement



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Centro Pro Unione Bulletin

A semi-annual publication about the activities of the Centro Pro Unione

The Centro Pro Unione in Rome, founded and directed by the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, - www.atonementfriars.org - is an ecumenical research and action center.

Its purpose is to give space for dialogue, to be a place for study, research and formation in ecumenism: theological, pastoral, social and spiritual.

The Bulletin has been published since 1968 and is released in Spring and Fall.

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Letter from the Director

The activities of the Centro during this Autumn have been rich and diverse. It is with great pleasure that we can share some of the texts that were offered in our on-going series of Conferences.

The opening article is the first part of an afternoon celebrating the opening of the new Methodist Ecumenical Office in Rome entitled *Essential and Distinctive Aspects of Methodist Worship*. Its director Dr. Tim Macquiban's lecture entitled "Word and Hymn. Some thoughts arising from the Worship and Preaching of the Wesleys" presented the key features of Methodist worship which has a double foundation: the preaching of the Word and the singing of hymns. In fact much of Methodist theology is perceived through their hymns, most of which have been written by the two Wesley brothers, Charles and John. The second part of this afternoon's study will be published in our next *Bulletin*.

The **Centro Pro Unione** is most pleased to have been engaged in the five year dialogue of private theologians between Lutherans and Catholics that was sponsored by the *Fondazione di Farfa* of the Bridgettine Order. The theme of this dialogue was the *communio ecclesiarum* and the Petrine ministry. The book presentation of the results of this dialogue was presented at an afternoon of study with several interventions from both the Catholic and Lutheran sides. On Wednesday the dialogue group had the honor of presenting the results of their discussions to Pope Francis and then the following morning the group met with Cardinal Koch at the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity to discuss the results of the dialogue and to speak about a future continuation of the work of this group of theologians. We publish here the texts of the presentations.

The opening intervention was given by the Lutheran co-chair, Prof Peder Nørgaard-Højen, Professor Emeritus of dogmatics and ecumenical theology at the University of Copenhagen which was a summary of the document, *Communion of Churches and Petrine Ministry. Lutheran-Catholic Convergences*.

This was followed by two critical commentaries by theologians who were not engaged in the dialogue. The first by Prof. Kjetil Hafstad, Professor of systematic theology at the University of Oslo. In his "Critical Observations to the Farfa Report from a Lutheran Perspective" he considered some of the weaknesses and strengths of the Lutheran side as well as those of the Catholic side.

Sister Susan Wood, SCL, Professor of theology at Marquette University (USA) addressed the "Ecclesiological Issues in the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue. The Recognition of Lutheran Communities as Churches". From her perspective as a member of the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity she was able to offer a wide vision of the issues that still remain especially the non-recognition of Lutheran communities a full churches.

Lastly the Director of the Centro who was also the Catholic co-chair of the Farfa Group offered some brief concluding remarks drawing attention to the fact that the ecclesiological issues of this dialogue that dealt with the specific question of Petrine ministry still need to be centered on the fundamental one of the ministry and its recognition from the Catholic side. One enormous gain from this dialogue was the establishment of hermeneutical principles necessary for the reception of the teaching of Vatican I on the papacy. The future work will have to deal with the question of *defectus ordinis* of Lutheran ministry and its apostolicity.

I want to draw attention to some up-coming events at the Centro. The 18th lecture in honor of Fr. Paul and Mother Lurana, co-founders of the Society of the Atonement, will be given by Prof. Petros Vassiliadis, Professor emeritus of the Department of theology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Its title is "The Panorthodox Synod. Problems and Its Ecclesiological Significance" and will be held on Thursday, 10 December, 2015. In light of this important and historical event, this lecture is very timely.

The annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be celebrated by a lecture given by Bishop N.T. Wright on 21 January 2016 at the Centro and will be followed by an ecumenical prayer vigil organized by the Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas.

Remember to continue to look at our new website (<http://www.prounione.it>) for news and activities of the Centro Pro Unione.

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James F. Puglisi, SA
Director Centro Pro Unione

Word and Hymn — Some thoughts arising from the Worship and Preaching of the Wesleys as distinctive features of Methodism

Tim Macquiban - Director, Methodist Ecumenical Office, Rome
Co-chair of the Methodist-Baptist International Dialogue

Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione, Thursday, 22 October 2015



▶ Tim Macquiban

Introduction

I once asked a group of University students what they thought was distinctive about the Methodist brand of Christianity. They discerned three prominent features:

- Methodists have lots of committees
- Methodists don't drink
- Methodists sing a lot of hymns (loudly)

Maybe not all these points feature in Methodist church life today!

The British Methodist Church website lists ten features, each of which in themselves is not unique but together constitute what make Methodism distinct as a Protestant denomination within the wider Church. They are:

- All can be saved – God's prevenient grace
- The assurance of God's love – God's justifying grace
- Living the Holy Life – God's sanctifying grace
- A grassroots movement for renewal and making disciples
- Small groups – praying and reading the bible
- The Wesleyan Quadrilateral: Scripture, Tradition, Reason and Experience
- The Methodist concept of connexionalism as pattern for being Church
- Bong in Song – the place of hymnody
- The importance of communion and covenant with God

The fact that I've been asked as a Methodist to speak about what are the essential and distinctive features in the Methodist tradition of **worship** makes me rather a hostage to fortune as we are in an ecumenical climate where we borrow much from other traditions. And so it is not the elements of worship which are which are exclusive but the particular mix and emphasis, in prayer, praise and preaching.

Methodist/Wesleyan hymns

The late Raymond George, British Methodist historian and liturgist extraordinaire, has said that 'Wesley hymns and the Methodist way of using hymns in general are one of the greatest treasures which they (the Methodists) can contribute to the universal Church'. Prophets are not often recognized in their own country. There is a sense in which British Methodists have lost sight of the treasure which others prize so greatly. I find as many Anglicans and Roman Catholics loving and using Wesley hymns as I do Methodists! The weight of Methodist tradition has been regarded not as a pearl of great price but a millstone around the necks of those for whom the ecumenical imperative has been primary. For such persons the denominational distinctiveness has been an embarrassment. Yet the Methodist people have been formed down the ages by the vocabulary and poetic expression of the Wesleyan hymns, through which much of their tradition has been transmitted, the hymns acting as 'poems woven deeply into a man's consciousness' (D H Lawrence), teaching the people through the experience of hymn singing. Hymns, as Emeritus Professor Richard Watson reminds us, 'allow the preachers to supplement what they have to say ... which contain relevant statements of doctrines or ideas about belief'.¹ The hymns are ontologically grounded in our relationship with God, as expression of the movement of love and praise to the Creator². Hymns, far from being items of popular taste to relieve the tedium of the more didactic parts of services, are like creeds, 'first order expressions of religious faith, going beyond the purely rational and logical, and using figures and images too

1 J. R. WATSON, *The English Hymn. A Critical and Historical Study* (Oxford: OUP, 1999) 7f.

2 Ch. ROBERTSON, *Singing the Faith* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1990) 5.

daring for prose, celebrating paradox'.³ They are therefore to be regarded as fundamental to Methodist worship and spirituality. And those of us who lead worship should choose them with care for they transmit much of our tradition and sense of identity. How are we faithfully to use the heritage which is ours and the texts handed down to us as tools for the creation of Christians leading Christ-like lives in discipleship, worship and service of God?

Spirituality, Theology and Hymns

Spirituality is to do with the whole person of which prayer is an essential and central component. It therefore means that any renewed understanding of the essentially social nature of our human existence and our mutual interdependence leads us to a positive attitude towards the body and material things. There are those who in the past have driven theology and spirituality apart into what Sheldrake has called the 'schizophrenia of critical theology and uncritical piety', as if the two theologies, one theoretical and scientific, the other devotional and affective, were irreconcilable⁴. Dogma and belief are not to be wholly contained in the cerebral activities of church leaders and thinkers but must also be located in reading, prayer and worship, either individually or corporately. As Teresa Berger has argued in her book on *Theology in Hymns?*⁵ there is a strong indication that in the Wesley writings there was an attempt to marry the two - a restoration of the place of Experience, of feeling religion, alongside the triumvirate of Scripture, Reason and Tradition. A spirituality which is rooted in a doctrine of the Trinity, and its most powerful expression in the Eucharist at the heart of Christian worship, drawing on Protestant and Catholic understandings, is perhaps one of the Wesleys most enduring, but misunderstood, legacies to the Christian Church in England. I will leave my colleague Robert to comment further on this aspect of Methodist worship.

Ivor Jones in his *Music - a joy for ever?*⁶ demonstrates the importance of hymns in the formulation of spiritual

identity, of individuals and churches. Hymns relate theology and spirituality in a particular way; in hymns "we expose our beliefs by our choice of the words and our choice of the music and by the way we talk about them". Hymns and music offer an alternative model of time and space which put us in touch with eternal realities, transforming earthly transience by the beatific vision, 'transported with delight'. Hymns are narrative theology at its best, telling stories which betray beliefs by the material, the images and idioms chosen, and by the way we tell them. They are part of the process of *anamnesis*, setting forth not just a record of the past but the present and future ministry of Christ as represented by the worshipping community. Storytelling, whether in prose or in sung verse, relates the present reality to the future hope. Hymns are an important part also of the decision-making process of churches, in the material selected and arranged in hymn books authorised by the churches. Hymns are essential to liturgy and worship.

The Wesley hymns were a rich "tapestry of biblical allusions in the traditional language" in their own day, giving weight to Baumstark's maxim that solemnities demand the archaic. They are now under threat because they are seen to fail to deliver in contemporary idiom the vibrant access to metaphor understood by those steeped in the King James' or authorised Version of the Bible (1611). Berger describes Charles Wesley's biblicism as using the 'language of Scripture as if it were his own mother tongue'⁷. We today suffer from under-familiarity with such texts and an overabundance of translations which make the Bible no longer common currency in the English-speaking world. Ought not the hymns rather be allowed to speak as poetry which permits the singers and listeners to see them both as story and standard

- a story which enables the participant to enter in to the narrative through his/her experience
- a standard which reflects the Wesleys' own experience of the great theological themes which moulds belief in the worshipping community today

And yet, despite all the difficulties as Watson reminds us, the Wesley hymns can still enhance religious sensibility through skilful use of image, sound and sense, not forcing an interpretation, but offering through its language the opportunity to make meanings and create moments of perception⁸.

Ivor Jones suggests that despite the difficulties of needing to wrestle with texts which are not always transparent, there is still a possibility that hymns can "adjust to our story..they allow us room for reflection",

3 G.S. WAKEFIELD, *Methodist Spirituality* (Peterborough: Epworth Press, 1999) 19.

4 P. SHELDRAKE, *Spirituality and Theology. Christian Living and the Doctrine of God* (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 1998) 33-64.

5 T. BERGER, *Theology in Hymns? A Study of the Relationship Doxology and Theology according to A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists* (1780) (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995).

6 I. JONES, *Music – A Joy for Ever?* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991).

7 T. BERGER, *Theology in Hymns? ...*, *op. cit.*, 81.

8 J.R. WATSON, *The English Hymn...*, *op. cit.*, 5.

whether in prayer, meditation or in singing⁹. Some hymns rely, he says, on metaphors of clarity rather than allusion. Hymns of a particular poetic quality and character give us opportunities for re-interpretation and adjustment, especially within the theological re-ordering of the post-modern age. Hymns like *Wrestling Jacob (Come O thou traveller unknown)*, perhaps one of the greatest of the hymn-poems of the Wesleyan corpus, operates on three levels:

- on the level of biblical narrative, telling the story of God's acts in history
- on the level of Charles Wesley's own evangelical experience
- on the level of use of the hymn as a paradigm for all Christian experience

The same can also be said of that other great hymn "And can it be". In this way they move out of corporate worship and can be used in different contexts of personal and individual prayer.

Prayer

It has been said that the 'chief object of all prayer is to bring us to God'. It is a 'Christian's vital breath' as Montgomery reminds us. It was, for the Wesleys, one of the principal means of grace (along with bible study, regular communion and conferencing). It is the way in which we approach God who has first made himself known to us.

Just as the Psalms are a corporate collection of expressions of worship and prayer for the people of faith, which began as individual responses to God, in thanks and

9 I. JONES, *Music...*, *op. cit.*, 132f.

praise, in frustration and despair, and became their public expression in the worship of temple and synagogue, so too hymns which began life as the expression of the faith of individuals in praise, adoration and thanksgiving, confession and supplication, become vehicles for the Church to do such.

Charles Wesley's hymns were very influential in early Methodism as teaching aids and as means of meditation for prayer and bible study in the class meetings. The hymns (7,000+) were much more likely to have been used in prayer and read rather than sung. They were for the underpinning of the theological framework of Methodism ie. Justification (repentance and the assurance of the forgiveness of sins e.g. *And can it be*) and sanctification (growth in holiness e.g. *Love Divine*).

The 1780 Hymn Book (*A Collection of Hymns for the People called Methodist*) was 'a little body of practical divinity' which acted as a 'handmaid of piety', for private reflection as much as for public worship. B.L. Manning in his *The Hymns of Wesley and Watts* wrote:

'If you are depressed, elated, energetic, enervated, full of doubt, secure in faith, you can find in Wesley's hymns as you find nowhere else but in the Psalms, the appropriate words in which to pour out your soul to God'¹⁰.

Preaching

John and Charles Wesley were both great preachers. More of John's sermons have survived because he chose to have them published in various volumes, as a standard for Methodist doctrinal content and praxis. They remain at the heart of what defines Methodist theology and practice and shape the people called Methodist to this day.

But we don't preach in the same way as the Wesleys. And our context is very different. But two characteristics perhaps define Methodist preaching.

First their sermons were saturated with scriptural references. At the heart of the Wesleys' preaching was the proclamation of a gospel offering the gift of salvation and the forgiveness of their sins. It was the gospel of mercy and grace. It was a means of conversion and renewal in the new evangelisation of the 18th century.

Secondly, they had a direct appeal to the simplicity of the language engaged with their hearers. A Swedish professor who heard John preach in 1769 wrote that his

10 B.L. MANNING, *The Hymns of Wesley and Watts. Five Informal Papers* (Peterborough: Epworth, 1942).



▶ Fr. James Puglisi, SA and Teresa Francesca Rossi welcome Rev. Dr. Tim Macquiban and Dr. Robert Gribben

sermon was “short but eminently evangelical” and that he spoke “clear and pleasant”. He had a “divine simplicity, a zeal, a venerableness in his manner” which endeared him to the crowds. John himself argued for “plain, sound English” rather than the classical niceties others engaged in.

I hope I have demonstrated the importance of hymns within the context of the preaching services of Methodism as the main legacy of the Wesleys.

Select Bibliography:

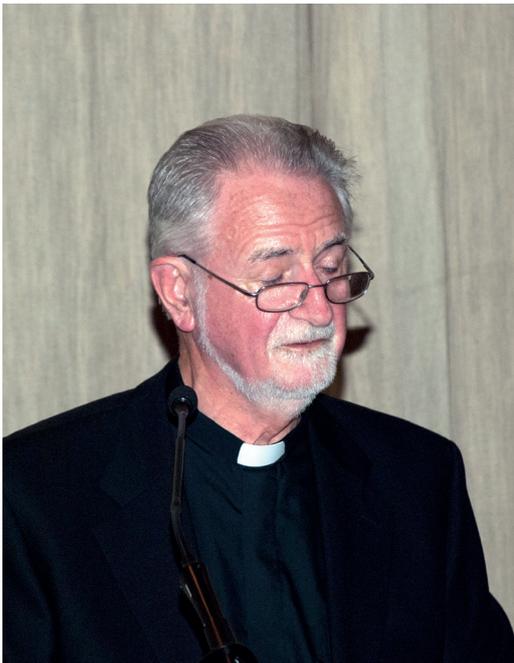
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Book Presentation

Communion of Churches and Petrine Ministry. Lutheran-Catholic Convergences

Peder Nørgaard-Højen - Emeritus Professor of Dogmatics and Ecumenical Theology, University of Copenhagen, Lutheran Chair of the Farfa Group

Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione, Thursday, 12 November 2015



► Peder Nørgaard-Højen

Introduction

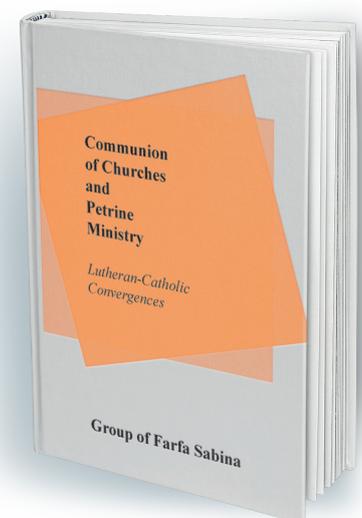
The Farfa Report on *Communion of Churches and Petrine Ministry. Lutheran-Catholic Convergences*, which we are today presenting for reactions and comments, focuses on the doctrines on papal primacy and infallibility as an ecumenical issue, one of the most severe impediments to Catholic-Lutheran approach since their promulgation at the First Vatican Council (1869-1870). The Second Vatican Council paved the way for a revised view of papacy, to which the ecumenical movement has responded constructively – not, however, by adopting the Roman understanding of papacy, but rather by acknowledging that, what is intended in the Catholic doctrine on papacy and even infallibility, is a common theological concern of all churches. In ecumenically open Lutheranism the object of disagreement is not *that* a ministry of unity is indispensable and that the

church is in need of an authoritative instrument to express the one, catholic and apostolic truth. What really separates us is the way, in which such a ministry is actually administered and exercised. This is the real and all important *quæstio disputata et postero tempore disputanda*.

Recognizing his call to exercise the office of unity in terms of “a brotherly fraternal communion of faith and sacramental life”,¹ as it had existed throughout the first millennium, the late Pope John Paul II in his epoch-making Encyclical Letter *Ut Unum Sint* (1995) took a remarkable and thus far unseen step to appeal to leaders and theologians of Catholic and Non-Catholic churches “to engage with [him] in a patient and fraternal dialogue” on “the forms in which this ministry may accomplish a service of love recognized by all concerned”.² At the same time the pope did not deviate from the basic Catholic principle that “the communion of the particular Churches with the Church of Rome, and of their Bishops with the Bishop of Rome, is – in God’s plan – an essential requisite of full and visible communion”.³ John Paul II was courageous enough to challenge his own church and other churches on a difficult, but necessary point, but he was also sufficiently honest to indicate the Roman Catholic point of departure. The papal concern is the search for new forms of

papal primacy without abandoning what has so far been regarded as essential.

We are still far from having given any conclusive answer to such crucial difficulties. This holds also, of course, true for the Farfa Report that should be understood as a response to the reflections of the Pope. The Farfa Study Group wanted to take the Pope at his word by responding to his encyclical and consider the possibilities of the Petrine office to serve the unity of the whole, all Christians encompassing *communio ecclesiarum*. This is the very concern. The group is no official bilateral dialogue commission, but basically and in principle a private study group – however with fruitful and inspiring connections with the Papal Council for Unity and the Lutheran World Federation, in particular the *Centre d’Études Œcuméniques* in Strasbourg. At the outset the group consisted of Lutheran theologians, who intended to investigate in depth the doctrines on papal primacy and infallibility, thereby requesting the help of Catholic colleagues.



1 Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium* 27.

2 Giovanni Paolo II, *Ut Unum Sint*, 96 and 95.

3 *Ibid.* 97.

The group was formed on an initiative taken by the Academic Committee of the then Bridgettine Centre in Farfa Sabina, where most of the group meetings have been held. The members (7 Catholics and 7 Lutherans from Italy, France, Germany, and Scandinavia) were not appointed by any ecclesial or university authority; they found together just as theologians and as committed and experienced ecumenists. Some of us have participated or are still active in official church dialogues, and an overwhelming majority of us have for decades been or are still involved in university teaching and research. I am convinced that such personal and professional skill and experiences will have shown fruitful for our deliberations, and I want – on behalf of the Chair – to thank every one of the group-members for their academic and theological contribution and Christian and ecumenical fellowship. Unfortunately, for various reasons not all the members could be present here today, but I have been asked to extend warm greetings from all absentees. In the meantime one of our colleagues, Professor Johannes Brosseder of Cologne/Germany, passed away. We will gratefully remember him for his never failing and contagious commitment to the ecumenical cause.

The *Fondazione di Farfa* generously took responsibility for supporting our work financially, and I do want at this occasion to explicitly thank the Bridgettine Order, not least its General Abbess and chairperson of *La Fondazione*, Most Rev. Madre Tekla Famiglietti and her sisters, for all her and their support and hospitality, from which we have profited so extensively throughout the years, not only in Farfa, but also in other houses of the Bridgettine Order (Napoli, Bremen, Maribo). Without this support we would certainly not have been able to realize our project in the way we have in the end succeeded to do.

The group participants met with a critical openness not only towards one another, but also towards their own traditions. This attitude allowed them to see their own teachings and traditional convictions in a new light, to revise and to adjust them to ever new situations and – not least to ecumenical necessities. Thus, ecumenical progress is supposed to be achieved through *relecture* and re-reception of the First Vatican Council and make the doctrines of papal primacy and infallibility appear in a new and critical light. This common interconfessional approach to allegedly well-known, but possibly biased and one-sided and in the course of time even misinterpreted positions became the hermeneutical tool for the interpretative procedure of the Group of Farfa Sabina. A *relecture* and, as a consequence, a re-reception does not question the validity of conciliar decisions and other normative statements, but interprets them anew, explores and opens thus far unknown avenues to renewed insights.

In detail the Report of Farfa Sabina deals with Martin Luther's scathing critique of the pope and papacy of his time and the century long Roman response (chapter 1) and gives an analysis of the Vatican doctrines on the infallible teaching office and universal jurisdiction of the pope (chapter 2). The Report emphasizes that Luther's critique of the papacy was based on his concern to be in continuity with Scripture and the

Early Church and directed against the medieval excessive claim of papal authority, whereas he did not in principle reject the Petrine ministry of the Roman Bishop as such. Furthermore, the dialogue has uncovered that both parties maintain the



► Sr. Elena Bosetti, Prof. Torleiv Austad and Prof. Peder Nørgaard-Højen.

normative precedence of Holy Writ while at the same time not underestimating the *viva vox traditionis*. Reverse, Lutherans (and Catholics too for that matter) realized that the traditional maximalistic interpretation of the Vatican dogmas was based on an one-eyed, anti-conciliaristic hermeneutics and thus does not necessarily need to be the only way of understanding the 1870 texts.

In continuation chapter 3 of the Farfa Report investigates possibilities of regaining the Early Church concept of ecclesial unity as a *communio ecclesiarum* (plural!) with the intention of modifying church centralism and further collegiality and synodality – thus reflecting ecclesiological thinking of the first millenium. Lutherans, in turn, will have to come to terms with the ancient idea that the Roman Bishop in a way still to be worked out could in future exercise primacy and preside over the fellowship of mutually reconciled churches. Chapter 4 debates both what can be seen as promising developments for and as challenges to this declared goal of the Farfa Group. Evaluating the results of the study process, the final chapter 5 concludes



▶ Pope Francis welcomes the Farfa delegation during the General Audience.

that provided Lutherans in the light of recent theological and ecumenical developments acknowledge that “papacy has lost its character as a necessarily invincible controversial issue between Lutherans and Catholics” (§ 266) and provided that under the influence from Vatican II the concept of *communio ecclesiarum* as the expression of church unity is further developed and promoted, things could hopefully move and give way for a common understanding of the Petrine ministry (§ 269 ff) – not, however (as already pointed out), in its present form, but in a future shape still to be evolved by Catholics and Lutherans in common. “A key inference of the *relecture* of the decrees of Vatican I in the light of Vatican II and in the light of the ecclesial reality of the first millennium is that church unity is to be understood as *communio ecclesiarum*.⁴ A *communio ecclesiarum* presumes, however, that the ecclesiality of the bodies that are to form this communion should not be in question. This

4 I.e. the fellowship of episcopally structured churches, in which ecclesial centralism is balanced in favour of collegial synodality (note PN-H).

requires on the Catholic side the recognition of the Lutheran Churches as churches, and conversely on the Lutheran side, recognizing that the shape of the Catholic Church is not contrary to the Gospel.” (§ 267) This key formulation of the Farfa Sabina Report underlines on the one hand the main achievement of the Farfa project, but demonstrates at the same time its critical limitation.

This is exactly *the* critical point, beyond which it has not so far been possible to advance, because an acknowledgement of the Farfa proposals presupposes clarity in ecumenically highly controversial *Vorfragen*, which in fact still seem far from clarification. There will be no *communio ecclesiarum*, unless the churches involved recognize each other as truly apostolic churches, and that again presupposes that we come to terms with the difficult and controversial issues of ordination and ministry (particularly the controversial question of the alleged Lutheran *defectus ordinis*). I am afraid that these and similar problems will require our full future attention. In addition, numerous other heavy questions still await their “konsensfähige” solutions, before we have realized, what the Study Group in relatively general terms described as *communio ecclesiarum*. We are still far from having reached our destination – also after Farfa. Still we hope that our modest attempt represents a useful contribution.



▶ Members of the Farfa delegation attending the General Audience of the Holy Father.



Critical Observations from a Lutheran Perspective on the Farfa Report
Communion of Churches and Petrine Ministry. Lutheran-Catholic Convergences

Kjetil Hafstad - Professor of Systematic Theology, University of Oslo

Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione, Thursday, 12 November 2015



▶ Kjetil Hafstad

Let me say something briefly about my own story with ecumenism. In my youth, the renowned Norwegian Dominican pater, Hallvard Rieber-Mohn, visited my home every week, and discussed the stimulating news with my father, a Lutheran pastor and journalist, coming from the Vatican Council going on in Rome. Later in life, I was member of the Theological Committee of the Norwegian Lutheran Church and for some years also member of our National dialogue group between the Lutheran Church of Norway and the Norwegian Catholic Church, until 1989. We even made a common statement on the Ministry in the Church, which Pope John II cited during his visit in Norway in 1989.

When I received the document from the Farfa Group and read your deliberate work, I started to read the Lutheran presentation and remarked that the discussion still is at a familiar place. I thought to myself: “is it such a good idea to go to Rome for a discussion on these topics since in the meantime I have changed, due to developing contextual theology and having many students from different parts of the world, especially from different nations in Africa?” Studying and promoting women’s theology has also prompted concerns asking whether the ecumenical discussion has been in line with recent developments in theological discussion. I have seen the need for theology to cooperate with social sciences and to be informed of the consequences of new knowledge from science such as brain research, psychology and sociology for human understanding in theology. Theology cannot any more stand completely on its own sources and forget about contemporary common knowledge when interpreting Christianity today.

Realizing changes in the Catholic understanding of tensions in ecclesiology

Then I read the Catholic presentation especially sections on “*Communio ecclesiarum* and the service to Unity in the Catholic Church” (§§140-181, pp 65-84) and was amazed and impressed. I got interested. You clearly state that you are not aiming “to present any comprehensive ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council”, only “some points of view... that would be worth developing in ecumenical dialogue with a view to the restoration of the *koinonia* of the churches” (§141, p 65). This is a modest and, in my view, profitable way of putting it. You are then shortly summing up the history of ecumenism in the Catholic debate with a special focus on *Lumen Gentium* and its opening towards other Christian churches as *media salutis* and also underlining “the sacramental union of all baptized and the many features that all Christians have in common”. You also underline clear correction of the Tridentine “divinely instituted hierarchy” through the Second Vatican Council’s phrasing “the divinely instituted ecclesial *ministry*” (§144, p 67).

The most clear cut and, in my view, most fruitful observation is what Catholics write on the evident tensions at the Vatican II:

“In spite of numerous perspectives for the renewal and reform of the church, Vatican II was unable to develop *a uniform ecclesiology*. Within a single text it juxtaposed *two ecclesiologies* that cannot be brought into harmony. We find them placed side by side, unconnected in *Lumen Gentium*: on the one hand, the ecclesiology of *communio* of the early church, which acknowledges a theologically founded and canonically structured collegiality of the bishops, as well as the real *communio ecclesiarum*, without the subordination of all churches to one church in particular; and on the other, a Roman centralist ecclesiology that defines itself starting from papacy” (§145, p 68).

Against this background you discuss frankly the problems this causes for renewal of canon law and you underline Pope John Paul II’s awareness of this, speaking about “old and new elements in the Council as he promulgated the 1983 Code of Canon Law. He stated the newness of the Council had to determine the newness of the Code” (§152, p 72). In spite of this evident need of *aggiornamento* (updating) of Canon Law, you propose however that you may read Vatican II as “a correct reading of Vatican I” and *this* is “not prohibited by the current law” – which in my understanding means that *you propose to let go of the centralist understanding* one also can find in *Lumen Gentium*, and chose the communion-reading, stating that “this could indeed pave the road to a new modality as *ius sequitur vitam*” (§156, p 74).

I have not heard this way of speaking in ecumenical debate before, and I find it most promising. Here and now, we cannot hope for quick institutional changes in the relations between our churches, but a more deep understanding of the interior problems that both families of churches have to deal with “back home”. And still: there is room and opportunity for developing fruitful exchanges that deepen the bonds between the churches, fully aware of the intrinsic problems.

Luther on the pope

So, I will congratulate the Farfa Group with its informed and informative study. Now I will more critically look at the problems I see from my point of view, in the presentation from the Lutheran church. As far as I can see, this new development that I have mentioned on the *Catholic* side of the document is only *partly* taken into view from my Lutheran colleagues.

The Lutheran side is collecting and analyzing briefly the relevant documents from the rich process of ecumenical exchange of the last 50 years, while not overlooking the obstacles, points to literally a *bridge* of

understanding. This bridge consists of two main pillars, firstly “an analysis of the judgements of Luther and the Lutheran reformation regarding the papacy and, on the other, that of the doctrine of the First and Second Vatican Councils”. The *connecting* span of the proposed bridge is however the mentioned newer understanding at the Second Vatican Council of the church “as *communio ecclesiarum*” (§257, p. 115). The concept of communion is, in my view, fruitful indeed, but perhaps not completely in line with the actual presentation from my Lutheran colleagues.

I must admit, that after my 8 years of ecumenical discussion during which I learned a lot, I also got somewhat tired of so many discussions and so few results: both sides returned to the circumstances when the churches parted and we were, on both sides, happy to find substantial insights in our own tradition, eager to share it with the other party. The result was at the end that *we were quite happy with our own tradition* and would defend it! Therefore I welcome the optimistic spirit that pervades this new reconciled text.

If we consider this image of a bridge, I may observe the following. In my view, the *Lutheran* pillar is not so strong. The fact that the Farfa Group referenced more *friendly quotations from Luther on papacy*, while at the same time he also *condemns the Pope as Antichrist* is in my view stretched out of proportions. As is seen from the text, Luther is *literally* saying so, but at the same time he lists the *precondition* that the Pope must give the Gospel full freedom – *then* and only then – is the papacy no longer a problem. Luther was well aware that the pope would *not* accept that, consequently it is a contra factual argument. This line of argument we also find in *Confessio Augustana* 28 on church power, which can only legitimately be a power of the *Word* exclusively (not by sword, not forcefully compelling to subordinate), and, in Luther’s view, if any church authority speaks against the *Word*, they are out of business, – just as the pope had done.

Luther’s argument on the pope is interestingly in line with his arguments on the *Jews*, where we find some rather friendly quotations on the Jews in the early 1520’s. But the *precondition* for acting friendly towards the Jews is that they *convert* to Christianity – and in a convincing way. Otherwise, the Jews should be punished and expelled from the German-Roman Empire. I know that this parallel is disturbing, but the similarities are so evident to my mind, as found in the recent study of Thomas Kaufman on Luther and the Jews.¹

Now, for me this is *not* the most compelling argument for the proposed Lutheran pillar for a bridge between our churches. Luther may have thought whatever

1 T. KAUFMANN, *Luthers Juden* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2014).

he would about the papacy. What is important for *us*, living in a Lutheran tradition today, is to see and discuss how and if papacy could be a resource for ecumenical studies? We are not obliged to make the foundations of our understanding of Christianity solely by referring to what *Luther* said or meant about papacy. Therefore, I miss better arguments from the Lutheran side for being in communion than those coming from a narrow, and in my mind, questionable reading of Luther.

Pontifex Maximus

Let me comment on a point that might seem random, but is not so, in my view. Against the background of the Second Vatican Council, the document presents some possible changes in the present understanding of the Petrine ministry. Very carefully it is pointed out that one needs to differentiate between the various titles attributed to the person of the pope, such as Bishop of Rome and Pastor of the Universal Church (these are the important functions discussed in the report) and the title of “Sovereign of the Città del Vaticano” (as found on so many on buildings and monuments such as *Pontifex Maximus*). For many Protestants, me included, it seems unrealistic even to discuss accepting the primacy of the pope, without confronting this strange phenomenon reminiscent of *monarchy* derived from a State Church.

In the secular variety of monarchies, the Vatican as it is now, is governed completely outside and mostly over against modern democratic societies. Having lived in Italy for periods over the ten last years, I mean this anachronism with an omnipotent monarch should be addressed and then changed. This is also noted by Pope Francis at the recent Synod, as he was reported to say: “Il Papa non sta, da solo, al di sopra della Chiesa, ma dentro di essa come battezzato tra i battezzati e dentro il Collegio episcopale come vescovo tra i vescovi”.² Here the Pope breaks with the view of having this monarchic power – and even, more interesting, he points to the community of all Christians as *baptized*.

The last point of view is missing in the Lutheran statement that we are discussing, but as mentioned, not in the Catholic statement.

Baptism uniting

This is for me neither a random remark, but rather a pointer to the important theological heritage from my Lutheran old mentor, Gustaf Wingren, professor in Lund, who stated that the *combination* of baptism and Eucharist is the main point in the teaching of the Sacraments – and should be regarded a resource for ecumenical work. I appreciate that the Pope indirectly touches upon this,

and the Catholic statement underlines the corresponding wording in *Lumen Gentium*.

Homogenous, pluralistic – enriching differences?

Let us now consider a question that seems to be a point of departure for the Farfa group, namely that plurality in modern societies undermines the churches’ credibility. But *is* the pluralistic society such a problem for the church and for the credibility of the Gospel upon which the church is founded? The document states at the outset “if the churches wish to make the *biblical witness* present and audible in all its unmistakably specific character *to a world becoming more and more pluralistic*, they will have to *provide this witness and this ministry together and in communion with one another, simply for the sake of the credibility of the message*” (§1, p. 1). This is further developed under §252, pp. 113f. If we keep the ideal image of a homogenous, universal church in mind as Innocent III dreamt of, but of course never was able to realize, then the *varieties* of Christianity in different parts of the world and in different parts of our very own countries, pose a problem. – And I have through the years read a lot of this rhetoric from sources in the Vatican, reading the daily report on the church in *La Repubblica*.

I am not sure that these differences, this plurality are the deepest problem for the credibility of the Gospel. Diversity, multiplicity are on the contrary also *qualities* of church and society. Since people live different lives in a plurality of contexts and traditions, the Gospel must be understood and shared in different ways, in my opinion. Simple evaluation of the preconditions for hermeneutics makes that clear. But when it is possible to live peacefully with such diversities, there are then problems for people to see how Christians live by the Gospel under different conditions. So therefore, we need every form of ecumenical dialogue, every form of doing things patiently together, so as to demonstrate that differences and commitment are not incompatible with living peacefully together.

Let me put this in context: if the ideal is a universal church under the leadership of the monarchic bishop of Rome, that would guarantee the credibility of the Gospel then I do have doubts of inviting anyone to go in this direction. When we turn our attention from the dogmatic ruling, which is mostly in theory, we can also see *in the political perspective* a church in Rome and Italy, *building on a distant political arrangement* which in many ways is prolonging the concordat with the fascists as in the early thirties, like in Germany. In itself, this is not the problem, but these concordats have been used to *conceal the economy* of the church and the other vital decisions of the church kept *secret* and not transparent in public. Pope Francis has been addressing this problem vigorously in his public statements and attempts to change the manner of

2 *La Repubblica* 18.10.15.

working in the curia. In addition we have heard through the last years, a steady critique of democratic decisions from the curia. The Church in Italy seems to be partly in opposition to the development of the democratic state form, whereas the countries in the North have struggled for openness in government on every level and economic transparency. This has been and still is a hard work, and when the Church doesn't see the qualities in this, the Church seems often to side unsuspecting with the strong forces of the Mafia and similar tendencies in Italy. I hope that Pope Francis will succeed in his efforts in this field.

Women and children

In addition we have the imperative question of *equal rights* for children, women and other disadvantaged groups, like homosexuals living in cohabitation. I will of course not say that the efforts of our churches are not present in these struggles. But I would like that these questions are addressed publicly and not pushed away from scrutiny, and then indirectly regarded as irrelevant for the theological debate of church leadership.

Monarchic governed – and without women in leadership?

This presents a problem for me, to even imagine the idea of papacy as the uniting symbol of the community of churches worldwide. Knowing the history of the church, this has worked in some respects in earlier time. But now both Lutherans and Catholics have knowledge – through research in social sciences, history and other human sciences – of governing, and the results of governing, that earlier generations only could imagine. Monarchic governing without transparency does not seem a good way to go.

In addition we have a white elephant in the room: There is no



▶ Students exchange their talk and discussion in the post conference convivial meeting.

relevant place for the women in ecclesial ministry.

I know that this is a tense question. But I think it must be raised and faced. Some years ago, I had the pleasant experience to live and work in a Catholic community in Tübingen, and we talked from time to time about the question of women's priesthood. The colleagues admitted that there were no sincere theological arguments to be found against women's ministry in the Catholic tradition. The same understanding seems to be held by Harvey Legrand, with whom I also discussed the matter some years ago. He also contended that this question is not permanently decided upon and should be regarded as a question worthy of continuing and open discussion. I cannot in anyway represent the Catholic position here. However from a Lutheran point of view, this is a major impediment for even considering a way to unity with our separate brethren in the Mother Church, where communion with the bishop of Rome should be one important step. Seen from the North, we have a problem also in the world community with how women and children and cohabitating homosexuals are regarded and treated in many other parts of the

world. The world's religions are mostly not helpful here, being male-dominated.

Church indefectible

At the outset of the report it is supposed that the Lutheran and Catholic churches "share a common concern about truth and *ecclesial indefectibility* that may turn out to be a common platform from which a future agreement about the Petrine ministry may develop" (§1). I share the idea that the common concern about the truth may help both churches, on their own and in community, to meet the challenges of today.

I am however not convinced that we together should presuppose any sort of *ecclesial indefectibility*. This is one of the very questions that we still have to address critically together, and not suppose that we have in common. One *can* refer to Luther who said that the church is the greatest sinner and in need of divine mercy. *Sancta ecclesia est peccatrix maxima*. The church should avoid setting herself as an absolute.³

3 Cfr. E. JÜNGEL, "Til ekklesiologien. Tesser": *Menneskeverd. Festskrift til Inge Lønning* (Oslo: Forlaget Press, 2008) 304.

I mean that from a Lutheran perspective, the church is and will remain a spiritual enterprise when siding with the Gospel but in any other respect, the church is and remains a *human* institution, led by human beings with all the limitations human leadership entails.

I am tempted to use Immanuel Kant here. He distinguishes between natural religion and Christianity. As natural religion, there will always be need of an organization, a church, with *organization and rules*. On the other hand, we have the church understood as a *religious* community. If these dimensions in the church are confused or merged, we get what Kant calls “*Religionswahn*”. His reflections are evidently an example of Protestant enlightenment.⁴ I still find this structure of thought useful. The church is and remains as a *human* enterprise and should therefore be very interested in how the human community improves government in recent time.

The church should also learn from what *ordinary* people and *experts* already know. Theology cannot be practiced any more as only an inherent, theological enterprise. What we seek to know theologically has to deal with and, possibly not to contradict, established knowledge in natural science, in social sciences and other sources of knowledge but rather learn from what people already know.

At this point my critique raises the question whether the Lutheran members of the group are really representative of contemporary Protestantism, or are they more of a group with common ideas. Nothing is wrong with that! But when broad church traditions meet, they do well to present their respective rich variety. I wish to observe that the members of the Lutheran side seem closer to high church Anglicanism and the Catholic Church – thereby leaving out important ideas in contemporary theology and in our tradition. As a starting point, this is OK. Then we need to face exactly the differences within our respective traditions which also are to be addressed.

Stellenwert der Rechtfertigung

A last critical point I want to mention is how the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* is treated. Here the Farfa Group only comments: “the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church declared that ‘a consensus in the basic truths of the of justification exists between Lutherans and Catholics’, and then only states that the “question of the sacraments

4 I cite this from the eminent book of A. A. FELDTKELLER, *Umstrittene Religionswissenschaft. Für eine Neuvermessung ihrer Beziehung zur Säkularisierungstheorie* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2014) 44. Feldtkeller refers to Immanuel Kant’s, *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1914) 168.

and especially of the ministry, the joint Declaration did not lead to a *communio ecclesiarum*” (§139, p 64f). This is more a shortened version, as one knows well since this consensus on justification was strongly contested on the basis of different “*Stellenwert der Rechtfertigung*” from prominent Lutheran theologians, such as my teacher and lifelong friend Inge Lønning, Eberhard Jüngel, Dorothea Wendebourg and Ingolf Dalferth.⁵ I don’t intend to reopen this discussion but find it strange to be overlooked in the report.

Starting with lived life

At the end of this short comment, I still believe that the most fruitful part is to be seen in the comments with which I began. The Catholic side proposes to let go of the centralist understanding also found in *Lumen Gentium*, and chose the communion-reading, stating that “this could indeed pave the road to a new modality as *ius sequitur vitam*” (§156, p 74).

I also like that the Catholic group touches on the ecumenical resources in our common understanding of baptism much in the way that the Pope also indirectly touches upon it by underling the corresponding wording in *Lumen Gentium*. Both our churches struggle with complexity from within. This may be seen as a problem in ecumenical exchange. I will also underscore the inherent values in these differences.

Discussion with Hervé Legrand

I was happy and honored that the prominent member of the Catholic side in the Farfa Group during the seminar at November 11th also raised the question of how the Lutheran Church can solve the problem of *structure*. Even if there are bishops in the Lutheran churches, they cannot present any structure that binds these churches together. The Lutheran World Federation does not have any authority here, even if it has happened that churches behaving badly have been expelled from this federation, as in the days of apartheid.

I said that I do not see any answer to this question. I tried however to point to the different orientations in the churches regarding the final authority in the church. The strength of the Catholic church, in my mind, is that the hermeneutics proposed by the Farfa Group, (reading Vatican I in the light of Vatican II, and choosing the ecclesiology of communion) ends with the authority in the church founded in the community of bishops. Intellectually this is a clear and understandable way of posing the

5 See E. JÜNGEL, *Das Evangelium von der Rechtfertigung des Gottlosen als Zentrum des christlichen Glaubens. Eine theologische Studie in ökumenischer Absicht* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998).

problem and a possible solution. The remaining problem is with the concept of infallibility: human decisions can hardly bind God's judgement – in spite of the hope conveyed by covenant that both churches of course share. The structure may not achieve what is the purpose.

In the Lutheran tradition the authority is not in the church's structure. This structure is and remains a human structure as mentioned. The Gospel is the authority for the Lutheran church. But how can then God's authority through the Gospel be thought of within the church? I tried to point to Karl Barth's understanding of homiletics:

how can human words become God's word? In the outset: it is impossible. But humans can make the experiment, try to give voice to the gospel – and then God *may* use these words and talk through them to the hearts of people. The Reformation's setting of the Gospel as last authority is admittedly a fragile structure.

Both structures have their inherent and, in principle, insolvable problems. Standing side by side, understanding these problems may be a way to closer community.



Ecclesiological Issues in the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue The Recognition of Lutheran Communities as Churches

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The project of the Group of Farfa Sabina on the Petrine ministry resides on a model of church unity understood as a *communio ecclesiarum* with the corresponding presupposition that “the ecclesiality of the bodies that are to form this communion should not be in question”.¹ This in turn requires from Catholics the recognition of the Lutheran churches as churches, which is arguably the primary ecclesiological

issue between Catholics and Lutherans. This recognition is not only foundational to the project of the Group of Farfa Sabina, but a topic inseparably interwoven with the mutual recognition of ministry.² In the remarks that follow, I propose some reconciling considerations for resolving this impasse. The vexed question, of course, is how much institutional and juridical parity must be achieved between Lutherans and Catholics before Catholics recognize Lutheran communities as churches.

Apostolic Succession

Traditionally, apostolicity was tied to the historic apostolic succession of ministers supposedly unbroken since the time of the apostles. Thus the apostolicity of the church was linked to the apostolicity of the minister. The Farfa Sabina group observes that “the ancient church episcopal ministry expresses the apostolicity of the church, but it does not constitute it”.³ To this I would add, neither does it guarantee it, despite language to the contrary in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* claiming that communion “is both signified and guaranteed by apostolic succession”.⁴ One only has to point to the example of schismatic bishops in apostolic

succession to refute such claims. An individual bishop in apostolic succession has no guarantee that he will not either lapse into error or break communion with the episcopal college.

Apostolic succession is today understood to involve a number of possible components: the succession of individual bishops, the succession of the college of



▶ Susan Wood

bishops, and the succession of the whole church in the entirety of its teaching, life, and worship. While in the past, an evaluation of apostolicity emphasized the succession of individual bishops, today within an ecclesiology of communion, more attention has been turned to apostolicity in the life of the church.⁵

The church is “apostolic” because it is “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets” (Eph. 2:20) and proclaims the gospel as they did (1 Cor 1:17; Acts 9:15). In 1972 the statement *Gospel and the Church* gave this understanding of apostolicity: “The church is apostolic insofar as it stands on this foundation [the apostles]

1 GROUP OF FARFA SABINA, *Communion of Churches and Petrine Ministry*, trans. Paul Misner (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2014) § 267.

2 Ibid., § 249.

3 Ibid., § 251.

4 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, § 1209.

5 Much material for this presentation is taken and reframed from a forthcoming book, S.K. WOOD & T. WENGERT *A Shared Spiritual Journey: Lutherans and Catholics Traveling Toward Unity* (New York: Paulist Press, forthcoming 2016).

and abides in the apostolic faith. The church's ministry, doctrine, and order are apostolic insofar as they pass on and actualize the apostolic witness".⁶ In other words, "the Church is apostolic because the gospel that she hears in faith and to which she gives witness is apostolic".⁷

The Dogmatic Constitution on Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, states, "the expression 'what is handed down from the apostles' includes everything that helps the people of God to live a holy life and to grow in faith".⁸ The church transmits and perpetuates this "in its teaching, life and worship".⁹ This reflects the theology of Acts 2:42, in which the first community of believers "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers", arguably the constitutive elements of the church according to Luke.¹⁰ The apostolic ministers of the church are charged with the preservation and transmission of the apostolicity of the church in sound doctrine, but this very apostolicity is also embedded in all the church's life, prayer, and teaching. As the Study Document of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity *The Apostolicity of the Church* (2006), puts it, there is a "*depositum fidei* [deposit of faith], but it [the apostolic legacy] also comprises a *depositum vitae* [deposit of life], inviting the community to imitate the apostolic life in its spiritual discipline and practices".¹¹

Ministerial Apostolicity

Even though much progress has been made on the recognition of the church bearing apostolicity, Lutherans and Catholics should not be too quick to simply dismiss any equivalency to the episcopacy among German Lutherans at the time of the Reformation. Historically, Luther never challenged the office of bishop, largely on account of the biblical evidence for the office, and did not object to episcopal oversight on the condition that it conformed to the gospel. He even tried to maintain an episcopal

leadership of the church in vacated sees, even though this did not finally succeed.¹²

The Augsburg Confession affirms the desire of the Lutheran reformers to preserve, if possible, the episcopal polity inherited from the past.¹³ Here it can be observed that some non-German Lutheran churches, most notably the Nordic churches, did preserve their episcopacies.¹⁴ In lands comprising the Holy Roman Empire, however, the role of *episkopé* was not abandoned but taken over by superintendents (the Latin equivalent of the Greek *episkopos*), who were considered to be episcopal in terms of responsibilities.¹⁵ Moreover, the evangelical prince assumed a certain responsibility for many of the bishop's juridical duties. Luther called these "emergency bishops", (*Notbischöfe*) and considered them to be a temporary measure.

One additional historical note, for which I am indebted to Timothy Wengert, shows that Lutherans were much closer to Catholic understandings about bishops than their descendants have come to imagine. Part of it has to do with the Latin word, *superintendentes*, translated generally as "superintendent".¹⁶ Since the word "bishop" designated not simply an ecclesiastical office, but also a

12 The two bishops he consecrated (the archbishop of Cologne having been put under house arrest) were stripped of their offices in the wake of the Smalcald War of 1547-48, with the defeat of the elector John Frederick of Saxony. Attempts to work with the Roman bishops who took their place came to naught with the revolt of the princes in 1551-52 and the consequent Treaty of Passau (1552) and Peace of Augsburg (1555), which made it illegal for a bishop to become Lutheran.

13 *Confessio Augustana*, 28; *Apology* 14.1.

14 Denmark, which ruled Norway and Iceland, retained the episcopal office, but lost episcopal succession when the Roman Catholic bishops were dismissed and replaced by bishops consecrated by Johannes Bugenhagen, an associate of Luther and General Superintendent from Wittenberg, who was a priest, not a bishop. Sweden, which ruled Finland, preserved both the episcopal office and the succession of bishops. Swedish and Finnish emigrants to North America did not preserve these. See M. ROOT, "The Lutheran Churches", in P. AVIS (ed.), *The Christian Church: An Introduction to the Major Traditions* (London: SPCK, 2002) 198-199, 206.

15 See *Church as Koinonia of Salvation* § 67.

16 See Augustine's commentary on Psalm 126, par. 3 (*Patrologia Latina* 37: 1669): "*Nam ideo altior locus positus est episcopis, ut ipsi superintendant et quasi custodiant populum. Nam et graece quod dicitur episcopus, hoc latine superintendentor interpretatur; quia superintendit, quia desuper videt*".

6 *The Gospel and the Church* (The Malta Report) § 52.

7 *The Apostolicity of the Church*, Study Document of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2006) § 75. Hereafter, *Apostolicity*.

8 *Dei Verbum* § 8.

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Apostolicity* § 73.

11 *Apostolicity* § 62.

princely dominion—the only bishops Luther knew were “prince-bishops”—the Lutherans could not use the term (especially after 1555) and thus, to designate the people with oversight in the church, they called these people superintendents—borrowing the word from Latin into German and, eventually, English. Thus it can be posited that even German Lutherans never practiced presbyteral ordination, but rather ordination by superintendents, that is, by ecclesiastical (and not princely) bishops.¹⁷ In any case, a Lutheran understanding of the office of oversight, *episkopé*, was originally far closer to current Roman Catholic practice than anyone 50 years ago could have imagined.

Regarding the ordering of ministry, Lutherans do not reject the division of the one office into different ministries that has developed in the history of the church. Catholics and Lutherans agree that the ministry is exercised both locally in the congregation and regionally.¹⁸ Both accept that the distinction between local and regional offices in the churches is “more than the result of purely historical and human developments, or a matter of sociological necessity”, but is “the action of the Spirit”.¹⁹ Regarding the regional office, *Apostolicity of the Church* concluded that since “the supra-local visitations of the Reformation era did not happen by chance but emerged out of inner necessity, Lutheran churches, too, have always been episcopally ordered in the sense of having a ministry which bears responsibility for the communion in faith of individual local congregations”.²⁰ *Apostolicity* concludes that “Catholics and Lutherans are in greater agreement on ecclesial apostolicity than is ordinarily supposed”.²¹

Nevertheless, since the presence or absence of the episcopacy does not affect the mutual recognition of ministry with other traditions for Lutherans, the Lutheran position is that episcopal succession represents an ecclesial good, but not a necessary one for the recognition

of authentic ministry.²² While questions of church order remain intensely discussed, there is no expectation of a single proper form given the varied experiences of the church between the Reformation and now.²³ This raises the question of how much institutional and juridical parity must be achieved between Lutherans and Catholics for Catholics to recognize Lutheran communities as churches.

Any evaluation of Lutheran apostolicity must take into account the aim of the Reformation to preserve the apostolicity of the church by a new reception of the apostolic gospel and associated ecclesial practices along with a corresponding rejection of misconceptions of the gospel and deformations of ecclesial practice. For Luther, the marks of the apostolic church by which the Holy Spirit creates faith and the church were “continuity in proclaiming the same message as the apostles, continuity in practicing baptism, the Lord’s Supper, the office of the keys, the call to ministry, public gathering for worship in praise and confession of faith, and the bearing of the cross as Christ’s disciples”.²⁴ Thus the Lutheran position has been that the coherence of teaching with the gospel message rather than the rank or role of the person teaching legitimates teaching.²⁵

The Priority of the Community in Preserving Apostolicity

Where previously the reconciliation of church communions followed the recognition of ministries, today within an ecclesiology of communion the reverse is the order of preference. As early as 1972, the Catholic-Lutheran joint statement, *The Gospel and the Church*, stated, “In the New Testament and the early fathers, the emphasis was obviously placed more on the substance of apostolicity, i.e., on succession in apostolic teaching. In this sense the entire church as the *ecclesia apostolica* stands in the apostolic succession”.²⁶ The document *The Ministry in the Church* also refers to the apostolicity of the entire

17 See T. J. WENGERT, *Priesthood, Pastors, Bishops: Public Ministry for the Reformation and Today* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008) 57. The exception might be Luther’s consecration of the prince, Georg von Anhalt, to be the actual bishop of Merseburg, but he only did it because the bishop of Brandenburg had recently died and the Archbishop of Cologne was too far away.

18 *Apostolicity* § 280.

19 *Ministry* § 45.

20 *Apostolicity* § 279.

21 *Apostolicity* § 69.

22 Lutherans, for example, are in communion with Reformed churches in Europe (through the *Leuenberg Agreement* of 1973) and in the United States (through the *Formula of Agreement* of 1997) that do not have an episcopal structure. On the other hand, they are in communion with Anglicans in Europe (through the *Porvoo Common Statement* of 1993) and in the United States (through the *Called to Common Mission* of 1999), which committed Lutheran to entering into episcopacy in apostolic succession. Not all Lutheran churches, however, have an episcopal ministry.

23 *Apostolicity* § 265.

24 *Apostolicity* § 95.

25 *Apostolicity* § 97.

26 *The Gospel and the Church* (The Malta Report) § 57.

church saying that while apostolic succession is “normally taken to mean the unbroken ministerial successions of bishops in a church”, it is “also often understood to refer in the substantive sense to the apostolicity of the church in faith”.²⁷ The document notes that Lutherans speak of this in connection with a *successio verbi* and that present-day Catholic theology is increasingly adopting the view “that the substantive understanding of apostolicity is primary”.²⁸ Since the gospel has been entrusted to the church as a whole, “the whole church as the *ecclesia apostolica* stands in the apostolic succession. Succession in the sense of the succession of ministers must be seen within the succession of the whole church in the apostolic faith”.²⁹ The document *The Ministry in the Church* concludes the section on the apostolicity of the church by observing that since Catholics hold that “the episcopate as a whole is kept firm in the truth of the gospel, . . . Catholic doctrine regards the apostolic succession in the episcopal office as a sign and ministry of the apostolicity of the church”.³⁰

In John Burkhard’s view, these first two documents, that is, *The Gospel and the Church* and *The Ministry in the Church*, failed to develop adequately the underlying ecclesiology of the claim for the apostolic succession of the church as a whole.³¹ He finds a remedy in the ecclesiology of communion found in *Facing Unity* (1984)³² and in *Church and Justification* (1994).³³ An ecclesiology of communion views the one church as a “communion (*communio*) subsisting in a network of local churches”.³⁴ *Facing Unity* notes that the bishop’s vigilance with regard to the apostolicity of faith “is bound up with the responsibility for the faith borne by the whole Christian people. Episcopal succession is not the succession of

one individual to another, but “rather as a succession in the church, to an episcopal see and to membership in the episcopal college, as shown by the lists of bishops”.³⁵ The office of episcopé is exercised not in isolation, but “in concert with the community of believers”. Thus *Facing Unity* describes the church as a communion and situates the bishop’s ministry within that communion, the communion itself being in succession with the apostles in faith, sacraments, and service.

This perception of apostolicity as being predicated of the church as a whole should help Catholics recognize how the essential continuity of church and ministry can be preserved even when a succession of episcopal consecration is broken. The absence of an episcopal ministry in apostolic succession need not in itself preclude the recognition of Lutheran communities as apostolic and therefore as properly churches.

The Communal Aspect of Communion

Vatican II developed a communal aspect of apostolicity, teaching that the primacy of the bishop of Rome is exercised within the episcopal college of which he is a member. The college as a body is the successor to the apostles as a group. This communal dimension of ministerial succession requires more ecumenical attention. Although many Lutheran churches have engaged the theology and practice of an episcopacy in apostolic succession, the implications of a communion ecclesiology in terms of the relationships among churches remain rather nascent in Lutheranism. Nor has a communion ecclesiology extended to either a theology or a practice of a corporate episcopacy. The international study on apostolicity noted that episcopal office is exercised “not only in personal contact with the congregation (personal dimension), in which it is essentially rooted (communal dimension), but also requires communion with the other bishops (collegial dimension)”.³⁶ Thus a more collegial understanding of episcopal relationships by Lutherans is very desirable from an ecumenical point of view.

Since the communion of Lutheran churches in a worldwide framework is developing, the competency of leadership bodies above the level of the individual churches and the binding force of their decisions for these churches is variously regulated and insufficiently clarified. Views differ among Lutherans with regard to whether there ought to be an institutional exercise of a universal ministry of unity or how it should be structured. Furthermore, “there is a dispute about what intensity and what structure this relation to the universal church must have for the worshipping congregations and individual

27 ROMAN CATHOLIC/LUTHERAN JOINT COMMISSION, *The Ministry in the Church* (Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 1982) § 59.

28 Ibid., § 60.

29 Ibid., § 61.

30 Ibid., § 62.

31 J. J. BURKHARD, *Apostolicity Then and Now: An Ecumenical Church in a Postmodern World* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2004) 182.

32 ROMAN CATHOLIC/LUTHERAN JOINT COMMISSION, *Facing Unity* (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1985).

33 ROMAN CATHOLIC/LUTHERAN JOINT COMMISSION, *Church and Justification* (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1994).

34 *Facing Unity*, § 5.

35 Ibid., § 110.

36 *Apostolicity* § 19.

to be in accord with their apostolic mission".³⁷ Thus, *Apostolicity* suggests that Lutherans need to explore "whether the worldwide koinonia of the church calls for a worldwide minister of unity and what form such a ministry might take to be truly evangelical".³⁸ Catholics need to explore "how the universal ministry of the bishop of Rome can be reformed to manifest more visibly its subjection to the gospel in service to the koinonia of salvation".³⁹ The contribution of the Farfa Sabina group represents a significant exploration of both of these issues.

Both historical considerations of the circumstances and intentions at the time of the Reformation as well as current ecclesial practices suggest that the differences in Catholic and Lutheran polities should no longer be church-dividing. Much Lutheran polity distinguishes between bishops and pastors in terms of responsibilities of oversight and in terms of who is considered to be the appropriate minister of ordination. On the Catholic side, the question remains open as to whether the distinction between bishops and priests is of divine law. Thus, the beginning of canon 7 from the Council of Trent, "If anyone says that bishops are not of higher rank than priests, or have no power to confirm and ordain, or that the power they have is common to them and the priests" should be declared as non-applicable to Lutherans today.⁴⁰

A Correlation of the Recognition of Ecclesial Communion and Recognition of Ministry

Topics of consensus regarding the church, including the issue of apostolicity, but also potentially the issue of the communion of churches, should be correlated with discussions of ministry. Ecumenical advances in ecclesiology invite analogous advances in the mutual recognition of ministry. A theology of the communion of churches raises the question whether recognition of ministries could also be achieved at least incrementally along the lines of an ecclesial recognition of imperfect communion.

The U. S. document, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation: Its Structures and Ministries*, using this kind of argumentation asserts that "Catholic judgment on the authenticity of Lutheran ministry need not be of an all-or-

nothing nature". Commenting on *Unitatis Redintegratio* § 3, that many sacred actions celebrated by our separated brothers and sisters engender a life of grace capable of giving access to that communion which is salvation, the dialogue concluded, "Lutheran churches cannot be said simply to lack the ministry given to the church by Christ and the Spirit".⁴¹ Significantly, the dialogue tied this conclusion to communion ecclesiology and the correlation between the communion of churches and their ministries asserting, "In acknowledging the imperfect koinonia between our communities and the access to grace through the ministries of these communities, we also acknowledge a real although imperfect koinonia between our ministries".

If Lutherans and Catholics are in a real, but imperfect communion ecclesially, and if for Catholics the communion of churches is inseparable from the collegiality of bishops, does this not mean that Lutheran and Catholic ministers, especially bishops, are in a relationship of imperfect communion with each other ministerially? Is there an imperfect implicit communion of Lutheran ministers with the episcopal college if the college is considered to be one as the church is one, a theological and spiritual reality, and not merely an administrative and juridical entity? Such recognition necessitates moving beyond categories of validity for a Catholic evaluation of Lutheran Eucharistic celebrations, or at least reframing the juridical notion of validity within other theological categories such as communion and ecclesial apostolicity.⁴²

The Hermeneutic of "Churches" vs. "Ecclesial Communities" at Vatican II

A final consideration with regard to the recognition of Lutheran churches as churches resides in the hermeneutic of "churches" vis-à-vis "ecclesial communities" in the Vatican II documents, namely whether the expression "ecclesial community" was intended to exclude those communities from the designation "church" or whether the expression was meant to be inclusive of Christian groups who do not self-designate as churches. The use of the expression "churches and

37 *Apostolicity* § 287.

38 U. S. Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue, R. LEE & J. GROS, FSC, (eds.), *Church as Koinonia of Salvation: Its Structures and Ministries, Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue X* (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005) § 120.

39 *Church as Koinonia of Salvation* § 117.

40 COUNCIL OF TRENT, Twenty-Third Session, 15 July 1563, canon 7.

41 *Church as Koinonia of Salvation* § 107.

42 Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, prefect of the Congregation on the Doctrine of the Faith, stated the need to move beyond categories of validity in his 1993 letter to Bavarian Lutheran bishop Johannes Hanselmann: "I count among the most important results of the ecumenical dialogues the insight that the issue of the eucharist cannot be narrowed to the problem of 'validity.' Even a theology oriented to the concept of succession, such as that which holds in the Catholic and in the Orthodox church, need not in any way deny the salvation-granting presence of the Lord [*Heilschaffende Gegenwart des Herrn*] in a Lutheran [*evangelische*] Lord's Supper". Cited in *Church as Koinonia of Salvation* § 7.

ecclesial communities” excluded none of the communities associated with the World Council of Churches. Documents from the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith since the Council, namely *Dominus Iesus* and *Responses to Some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine on the Church*, have hardened the exclusionary interpretation.⁴³ Nevertheless, it is probably more accurate to conclude that the Council itself left open the theological question of which of the separated Churches of the West could claim the name “church” in order to avoid a purely juridical concept of “church” based solely on institutional criteria when large numbers of separated Christians are led to a living faith in God and his presence in Jesus Christ and to community in the Holy Spirit, even though they lack some of the institutional means “fully” present in the Catholic Church.⁴⁴ Pope Paul VI did not distinguish between churches and ecclesial communities when he addressed

the representatives of the separated churches with the cry: “*O Ecclesiae*”.⁴⁵

A question Catholics need to ask themselves is what at stake in denying the designation of “church” to Lutheran communities. Reconciling considerations for the recognition of Lutheran communities as churches include a broadening of the concept of apostolic succession, which gives attention and priority to the succession of churches in apostolicity, the intention of the Lutheran Reformers to preserve apostolicity, the continuity of the exercise of episcopate by the Reformers despite changes in ecclesial polity, the relationship between a recognition of ecclesial communion and ministerial communion and recognition, and a hermeneutic of Vatican II according to which the distinction between churches and ecclesial communities was more open than it was later interpreted. These considerations would seem to indicate that the designation of “church” for Lutheran communities is not unwarranted.

43 CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, *Dominus Iesus*, “*On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church*”, 6 August 2000, § 17, and *Responses to Some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine on the Church*, 29 June 2007, Fifth Question.

44 O. H. PESCH, *The Second Vatican Council: Prehistory-Event-Results-Posthistory*, trans. Deirdre Dempsey (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2014) 212-213. In this respect see the intervention of the Italian Bishop Andrea Pangrazio, cited by Pesch on page 213, who identified Christ as the bond and center of the *elementa* of the church present in separated communities.

45 PAUL VI, Discorso di Paolo VI per l'inaugurazione della Terza Sessione del Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II, Festività della Esaltazione della Santa Croce, Lunedì, 14 settembre 1964. <http://goo.gl/7kLMZE> (URL Retrieved: January 10, 2016).



Communion of Churches and Petrine Ministry Some Concluding Remarks

James F. Puglisi, SA - Director, Centro Pro Unione, Rome

Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione, Thursday, 12 November 2015



The five year experience of the Farfa discussion illustrates that with patience, openness and solid scholarship very complex issues can be dealt with in a fashion that is acceptable to both sides of the discussion without compromising the truth.

What arises from the Farfa conversations is the importance of having a correct epistemological approach to documents of the past that enables arriving at the hermeneutical principles necessary for a re-reading of those historical conciliar texts permitting a wider reception of conciliar teaching. At the heart of those principles lies a basic one: only the Council interprets the Council. Hence the necessity to return to the *acta synodalia* to listen again to the debates and historical context that produced the conciliar texts. Each declaration of the Council is a conclusion of a very profound debate among the Council members. In order for the whole picture to be presented and understood it is necessary to return to these debates and to hear them once again with fresh ears and open minds.

Important for the Farfa document is the fact that a new hermeneutic allows for the insertion of the teaching on primacy and infallibility in an ecclesiology of communion, namely that the unity of the *Catholica* does not exclude the diversity of local churches but rather requires it. This perspective paves the way to a common understanding of a ministry to universal ecclesial unity. During the five year discussion it was amazing to learn that the Lutheran partners did not fully understand the import of the teaching of Vatican I. Re-hearing the debates of Vatican I and studying the reception process of the very important teaching on papal authority and teaching enabled the Catholic members to situation that teaching within the Council's ecclesiology debates and especially the concern for the preservation of the very Word of God and the freedom of the Church to be able to defend it.

Against the background of the last session of the Synod of bishops on the family recently held in Rome we may acknowledge already at work one of the implications stemming from the Farfa document which said:

“...a proposal of interest of ecumenism follows: namely, that the pope might declare that he and his successors would in the future normally make dogmatic decisions only after a broad public discussion, and in cooperation

with the bishops, the representatives of other churches, and after having consulted experts in the field in question...”¹

The process at the synod was a long protracted experience with consultation among bishops, clergy and laity and with the active presence of fraternal delegates from other ecclesial traditions. In spite of the apparent tensions among the members of the synod a fruitful discussion was able to be had and a conclusion which respected the differences expressed was able to be arrived at. This experience of



▶ Fr. James Puglisi, SA

¹ GROUP OF FARFA SABINA, *Communion of Churches and Petrine Ministry. Lutheran-Catholic Convergences* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2014) 121.

synod in the Catholic church is still at its beginning phases but Pope Francis invited all the local churches to continue with this synodical model to deepen the consensus arrived at and deal with the “contextualization” and reception of that decision.

Another example of this type of synodality this time from the context of the Anglican Communion that could prove helpful is the Primates meeting with the Archbishop of Canterbury to help resolve some of the tensions existing within that Communion. What jumps out of the pages of the Farfa Group’s text is the importance of synodality in relation to the question of papal ministry and collegiality. Synodality needs to be the *modus vivendi et agendi* of the Church. It needs to be stated however that the pilgrim path of the church is one that needs to be taken together and this is most clear when the Churches decide together, when they teach together and when they celebrate together. It must be recognized that not every problem or issue needs to have a synodical experience but certainly all that touch the lives of the churches together does. No one church should act independently of the others on matters that touch the lives of all.

While the Farfa experience is a contribution to the resolution of some of the more difficult issues raised at the time of the Reformation, it still leads us to the question of “what next?” Already the overcoming of a major obstacle with the declaration on the doctrine of the justification still leaves us with the questions of recognition of the full ecclesial nature of the Lutheran churches, the *defectus ordinis* and the existence of a mutually recognized ministry. While these issues were not directly the task of the Farfa conversations, they certainly remained in the background of our discussions. The day is coming when we need to tackle the fundamental question

of the reception of Lutheran orders in order to recognize fully the apostolic nature of the Lutheran communion. The humble contribution that the Farfa discussions makes to our journey together deals with the answer it seeks to give to the question of how the Petrine ministry may be of service to the unity of the universal church?² A question that John Paul II raised in his encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* and which Pope Francis has also raised at the conclusion of the synod. What needs to be emphasized is the way in which we were able to propose a way forward in the localization of the issue of the petrine ministry clearly in the context of the communion of local churches which itself is understood from a Trinitarian context of the Church as People of God, Body of Christ and Temple of the Holy Spirit.

Let me conclude by adding a word of since gratitude to the Farfa Foundation of the Bridgettine Order for their financial support during the 5 years of our meetings. These meetings were held in the Monasteries of the Sisters especially at Farfa Sabina. The Sisters welcomed us with joy into their home and we were nourished both materially with our meals and spiritually in the chapel. Lastly we remember a member of our group, Prof. Johannes Brosseder, who did not see the English publication realized and who worked on the final draft with passion and conviction. Our hope is that this text will help move the dialogue between our churches one step closer to our full visible communion.

2 The Farfa conversations were preceded by a series of lectures attempting to answer this question and which have been published: James F. PUGLISI, ed., *How Can the Petrine Ministry Be a Service to the Unity of the Universal Church?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).



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(cfr 1 Pietro 2, 9)



Mosaic della Cattedrale di Monreale - La creazione del mondo (part.1)

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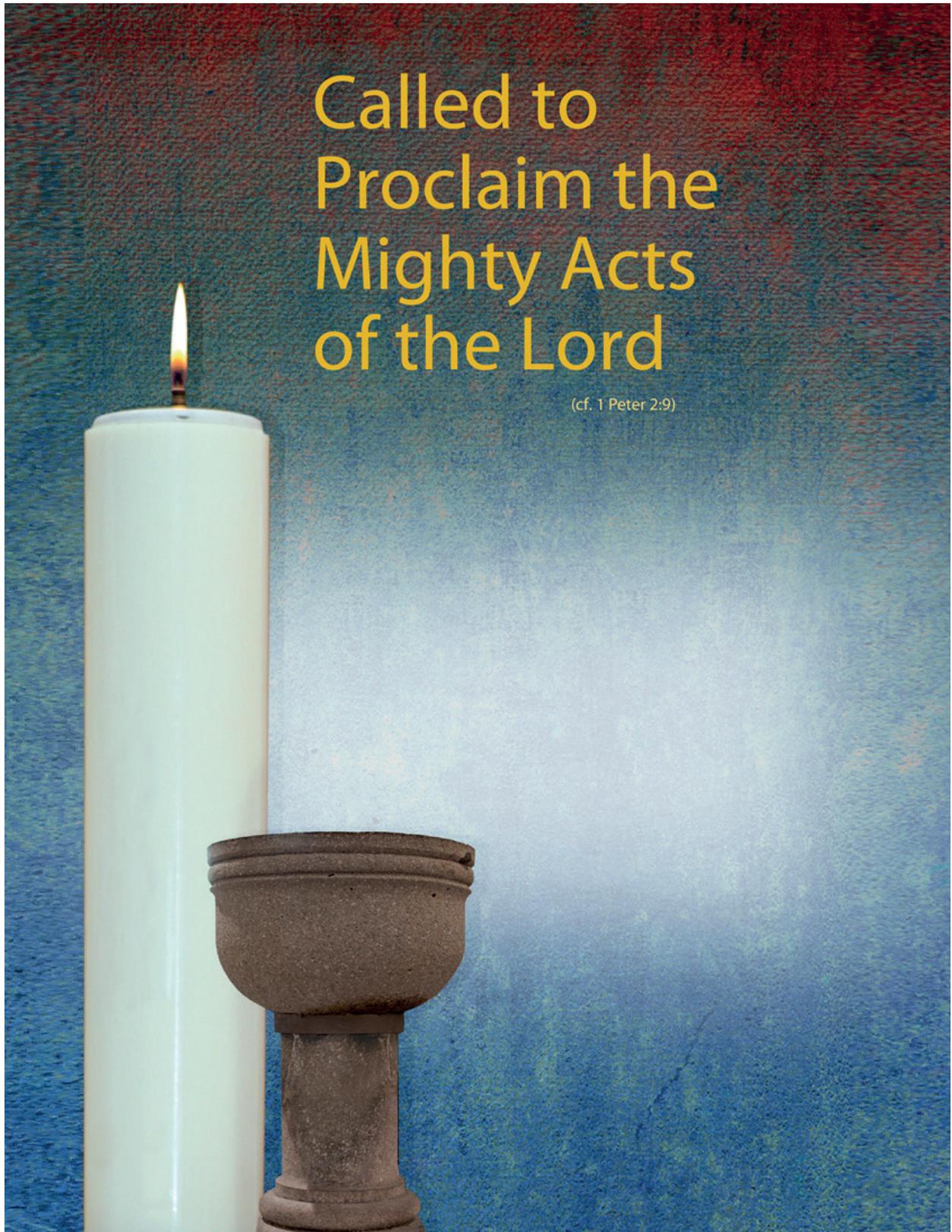


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XVIII Annual Conference Wattson-White

Historical note

Society of the Atonement

In 1898, the Spirit of God inspired Sister Lurana White and Father Paul Wattson to establish a religious community to be called the *Society of the Atonement*.

The Founders had the vision of a religious congregation dedicated to the unity of Christians and to reconciliation in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi. Since the Founders were Episcopalians, the roots of the Society were implanted in that eclesial communion until 1909, the year in which the Friars and Sisters of the Atonement entered into full communion with the Catholic Church. This was the first time that a corporate reunion with Rome took place since the Reformation.

Among the various activities of the Society of the Atonement, special mention needs to be made of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begun by Fr. Paul in 1908 and celebrated today throughout the world.

From the humble beginnings in an abandoned church, St. John's-in-the-Wilderness, in an area called Graymoor (New York), the Society of the Atonement has dedicated its efforts for the unity of the Church and reconciliation in several countries: the United States, Canada, Japan, England, Ireland, Brazil and Italy.

Yearly conferences honoring the memory of Fr. Paul Wattson were begun in 1974 at The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, then, in 1980, at the University of San Francisco. To these were added in 1995, the *Paul Wattson Lectures* at the Atlantic School of Theology, Halifax and in 1996 at the Toronto School of Theology. The *Paul Wattson Lectures* are given by international experts in the field of ecumenism and interreligious dialogue.

In 2013 the cause for the canonization of Fr. Paul of Graymoor was introduced in the Archdiocese of New York.

Since 1998, the Centro Pro Unione organizes lectures each year in December to honor Fr. Paul Wattson and Mother Lurana White, co-founders of the Society of the Atonement. Earlier lecturers were Enzo Bianchi, Sarah Anne Coakley, Archbishop Bruno Forte, Anna Marie Aagaard, Robert Taft, SJ, Dame Mary Tanner, Angelo Maffei, Msgr. Eleuterio Francesco Fortino, Gillian Kingston, Timothy Radcliff, OP, Dr. Jane Williams, Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald, M. Afr., Turid Karlsen Seim, Kurt Cardinal Koch, Hervé Légrand, OP, William Henn, OFM Cap and Walter Cardinal Kasper.

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Petros Vassiliadis**

**on the theme
The Panorthodox Synod - Problems
and Its Ecclesiological Significance**

**Thursday,
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Speaker

Petros Vassiliadis

Petros Vassiliadis (born in Thessaloniki, 1945) is a Greek biblical scholar, Professor Emeritus of the Department of Theology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH); founding member and President of the Center of Ecumenical, Missiological and Environmental Studies "Metropolitan Panteleimon Papageorgiou" (CEMES). Honorary President of the World Conference of Associations and Theological Institutions and Educators (WOCATI); a founding member and Vice-president of the Society for Ecumenical Studies and Inter-Orthodox Relations (SESIOR).

Studies and Career

Prof. Vassiliadis started his academic career in 1974 as Assistant Professor at the Theological School of the University of Athens; between 1982 and 1985 he was elected Lecturer, Assistant and then Associate Professor at the Department of Theology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, where he became full Professor in 1989, teaching New Testament and Interfaith dialogue, as well as courses of Missiology, Liturgics and Ecumenical Dialogue. He has been Visiting professor at various institutions, universities and colleges of USA, Europe and Asia.

He is member of the Q International Project of the Society of Biblical Literature, as well as of the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas (SNTS), and among the coordinators of the regular conferences of Eastern and Western N.T. Scholars.

From 1986 he is co-editor of the Greek biblical series "Hermeneia of the New Testament" (EKA) and "Bibliotheca Biblica" (BB), editor of the ecumenical series "Ecclesia-Koinonia-Occumene" (EKO), and of the CEMES series, editor-in-chief for East and South Europe of the "International Studies in Formative Christianity and Judaism" of the University of South Florida, and editor of the Great Orthodox Christian Encyclopedia (MOXE) in its early stages and one of the translators of the New Testament into Modern Greek (1977-1989). Other editorial and publishing work include the Orthodox biblical journal (Bulletin of Biblical Studies), the Regnum Edinburgh 2010 Mission Series as well as nearly 20 books, and 300 articles in scientific journals, conference proceedings, and collective volumes, both in the conventional and electronic press.

He has served the ecumenical movement in different capacities: as an Orthodox commissioner of CWME of the WCC (1998-2006); as chief organizer or lecturer in various ecumenical meetings (2005 World Mission Conference in Athens, 1989 World Mission Conference in San Antonio (Texas), 1998 WCC General Assembly



Photo | <http://blogs.auth.gr/moschos>

in Harare (Zimbabwe); and, since 2006, as member of the WCC Program on Poverty-Wealth-Ecology [PWE].

In addition, he served in various Synodical Committees of the Church of Greece (of Liturgical Renewal, and of Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Christian Relations), consultant of the United Bible Societies, institutional coordinator of the Forum Mediterranean, dealing with issues pertinent to faith, history of religions, and cultural anthropological research on the three monotheistic religions of the Mediterranean sea.

Furthermore, he was awarded with the highest honour of the municipality of Neapoli, Thessaloniki and Edessa.

His contribution to the Biblical studies, Theological and Missiological reflection

In the field of biblical literature his scholarly speciality was mainly the Sayings of the Historical Jesus, the Q-Document, the Pauline theology, and the theology of Liturgy and Eucharist. His contribution to the Synoptic (Q) scholarship was mainly his widely accepted and used procedural principles for the reconstruction of the Q-Document and the consequences of the Q Hypothesis.

He attempted in many of his works a creative encounter between the later development of the ecclesial tradition and the modern theological problematic with the foundational biblical tradition. Basing his theological endeavour on the foundational, yet marginalized, incarnational Christian doctrine, and maintaining the overcoming the traditional patristic "exclusivity" of modern Orthodox theology, and in addition promoting the necessity of the biblical foundation of the Eucharistic ecclesiology, he adamantly promotes the Prophetic theology, above and beyond the contemporary classical "theologies", which dominated his country since the decade of the '60s, i.e. the Eucharistic and the therapeutic.

From the mid-80s he promotes a new "paradigm" of Christian witness (mission) in the post-modern era, being at the same time systematically engaged with the Orthodox understanding of the ecumenical theology, underlining the Christian witness as the real Liturgy after the liturgy and insisting on the necessity of the inter-Christian and inter-faith dialogue, and especially the biblical and liturgical renewal. He is specialized and practically engaged in the alternative (to the neo-liberal economic globalization) Christian proposal. His engagement with the interfaith dialogue, and his position for an encounter between Christianity and modernity (and post-modernity) made him aware of the need of a legally established and internationally binding Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities, along with the Human Rights.

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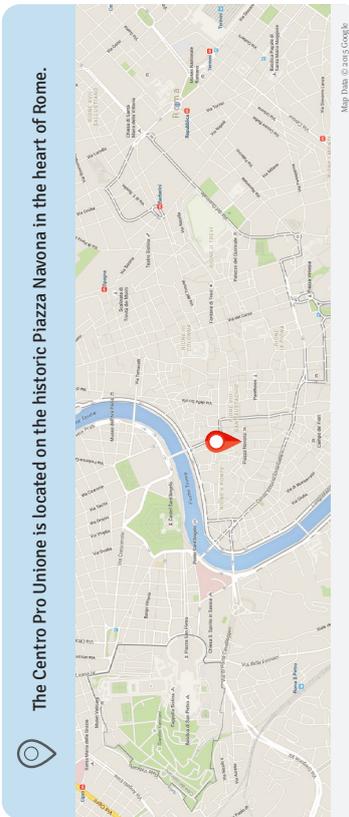
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The year 2015 celebrates the 20th Anniversary of St. John Paul II's Encyclical "Ut Unum Sint", a key-document for understanding the commitment of the Catholic Church to Ecumenism...

The **Final Report** of the II phase of the International Baptist-Catholic **theological conversations** has been published. Would you offer a comment on it?

Thank you! To our WebTV visitors from 27 localities



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"Sin" is a key-concept in the Bible; however, people seem to have difficulties today in accepting and understanding such concept. Do you see in this challenge a common call for **Judaism and Christianity**?

Pentecostals and Neo-Charismatics are often said not to be interested into the search for **visible Unity**: is such portray a **stereotype**?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE INTERVIEWS

- ▶ Fr. **JAMES PUGLISI, SA** | Direttore Centro Pro Unione — Prof. of Sacramental Theology and Ecumenism, Pontifical Atheneum St. Anselm and Pont. Univ. St. Thomas Aquinas, Rome
- ▶ Msgr. **PETER HOCKEN** | Historian and Theologian
- ▶ Msgr. **JOHN RADANO** | Adjunct Professor, School of Theology, Seaton Hall University, South Orange, NJ / USA — Former Official and Head of Western Section of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
- ▶ Rav. **BURTON L. VISOTZKY** | Appleman Professor of Midrash and Interreligious Studies, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York / USA
- ▶ Prof. **STANLEY BURGESS** | Professor Emeritus at Missouri State University, Missouri — Distinguished Professor of Christian History at Regent University, Virginia / USA
- ▶ Rev. **JAMES LOUGHRAN, SA** | Director, Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute, New York / USA
- ▶ **DOROTHY GARRITY RANAGHAN** | Founding member of the *People of Praise* covenant community
- ▶ Rev. **KENNETH HOWCROFT** | Co-Convenor of the Joint Implementation Commission for the Covenant between the Methodist Church in Great Britain and the Church of England
- ▶ Most Reverend **MICHAEL BURBIDGE** | Bishop of Raleigh, North Carolina / USA
- ▶ Dr. Rev. **DIANE KESSLER** | A minister in the United Church of Christ — Executive Director of the Massachusetts Council of Churches now retired
- ▶ Rev. Dr. **CECIL M. ROBECK** | Professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA / USA — Member of the Global Christian Forum Committee

ITALIAN LANGUAGE INTERVIEWS

- ▶ Fr. **JAMES PUGLISI, SA** | Direttore Centro Pro Unione — Ordinario di Sacramentaria ed Ecumenismo, Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo e Pont. Univ. San Tommaso d'Aquino, Roma
- ▶ Prof. **ALBERTO MELLONI** | Ordinario di Storia del cristianesimo, Università di Modena-Reggio Emilia — Direttore, Fondazione per le scienze religiose Giovanni XXIII, Bologna
- ▶ Prof. **GIOVANNI CERETI** | Docente di Ecumenismo — Fondatore della Sezione Italiana della *World Conference of Religions for Peace*
- ▶ Prof. **JOSEPH ELLUL, OP** | Docente di Ecumenismo e Dialogo Interreligioso presso la Pontificia Università San Tommaso d'Aquino, Roma — Docente di Filosofia Islamica presso il PISAI, Roma
- ▶ Prof. **ANGELO MAFFEIS** | Docente di Storia della Teologia moderna presso la Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Settentrionale — Membro del dialogo teologico internazionale cattolico-luterano
- ▶ Prof.ssa Suor **MARGARET CARNEY** | Rettore della *St. Bonaventure University*, New York, USA
- ▶ Prof. **MICHAEL FUSS** | Docente di Missiologia, Pont. Univ. Gregoriana e Docente di Dialogo Interreligioso, Pont. Univ. San Tommaso d'Aquino, Roma
- ▶ Prof. Rav. **JACK BEMPORAD** | Direttore, The Center for Interreligious Understanding, Englewood, New Jersey, USA
- ▶ Direttore, Pope John Paul II Center for Interreligious Dialogue, Roma
- ▶ Prof. **FRANCESCO COMPAGNONI, OP** | Professore Emerito di Teologia Morale presso la Pontificia Univ. San Tommaso d'Aquino, Roma; Docente presso la LUMSA; Direttore della Rivista on-line *Oikonomia. Journal of Ethics and Social Sciences*
- ▶ Dr. **VALDO BERTALOT** | Segretario Generale della Società Biblica in Italia
- ▶ Elena **BOSETTI** | Bibliista

▶ 2015 Season / Episodes

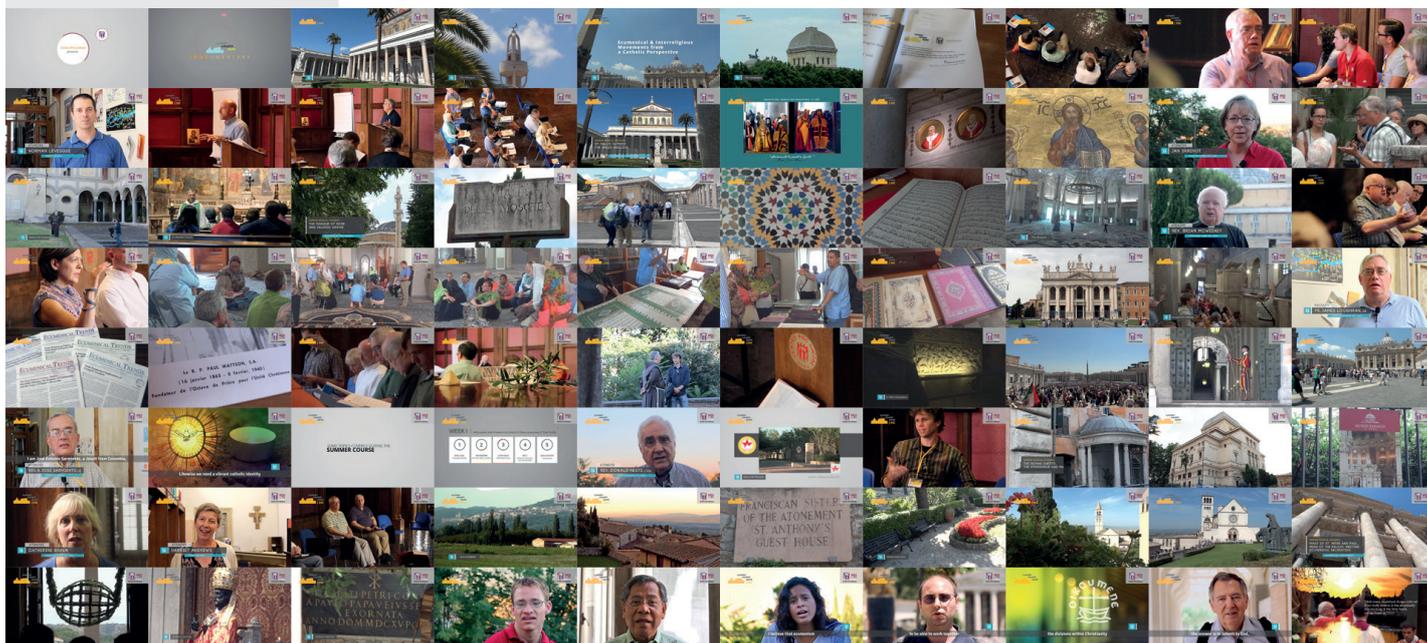
New Documentary

Ecumenical & Interreligious Movements from a Catholic Perspective

A 24' minutes Doc history showing the unique experience lived in learning and participating in the program of the annual Summer Course: "Introduction to the Ecumenical & Interreligious Movements from a Catholic Perspective".



<https://webtv.prounione.it>



50 frames from the Documentary "Ecumenical & Interreligious Movements from a Catholic Perspective"



The Centro Pro Unione opens its historic lecture room in the heart of Rome to students from many geographic places and backgrounds to follow an intense schedule including classes and ecumenical on site visits. This documentary will show images taken during the visits to main places of the Christianity in Rome:

Basilica of St. Paul's outside the walls, St. Peter's Basilica and Excavations, St. John Lateran, Cathedral and Baptistery, Basilica of St. Clement, and the Church of St. Onofrio.

In addition there are pictures taken during the visits to the Jewish and Islamic places of worship and their museums: the Synagogue and the Mosque of Rome.

Participants and faculty also offer their reactions and comments in the documentary. They share their experience of the accomplishments of the three week Summer program and what they take away from it for their journey back home.

Faculty involved in the Summer course includes members of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, the Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute (GEII) in New York. The Centro Summer program may receive graduate credits from the Graduate Theological Foundation (GTF: the Centro is an approved program of the GTF) and the Center for Faith and Culture at the University of St. Thomas in Houston, Texas.



www.prounione.it/webtv/doc-ministryedu



Enjoy the video!



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