

JOINT WORKING GROUP  
BETWEEN  
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

**THIRD OFFICIAL REPORT**

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### THIRD OFFICIAL REPORT

For the past five years there has been a development in relations between the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. The Joint Working Group, since its inception in 1965, has attempted to encourage this development and to search out and recommend to the responsible authorities on both sides areas and forms of cooperation. In two previous reports presented in February, 1966, and August, 1967, it reviewed the many fields of common study and action. The impressive range of common concern is clear evidence of the communion already existing among the Churches. Since the publication of the Second Report, there has been a marked increase in common programs for study and action. An account of these will be found in the attached survey of joint activity currently in progress (Appendix I).

The Joint Working Group is convinced that the work of the past five years has been worthwhile. At the same time a great many things remain to be done. The Lord's demand is clear: "that they may be one in order that the world may believe" (*John 17:21*). As we face this demand we are keenly aware of how much we still fall short of giving to the world the sign of communion which should arouse its faith in the love of the Father who sends his Son to save us.

A recognition of the contemporary situation calls for reflection on the foundations for future co-operation among Christians, and specifically between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches. If on the one hand the scandal of disunity is sharper and the task of overcoming our confessional differences becomes more imperative, on the other hand it becomes clearer that we are faced with the question of how to interpret the Gospel today so that we may respond more faithfully to God's call to give witness to him in a way which can be effectively heard by the world.

As one response to this double aspect of the ecumenical problem the Joint Working Group offers to its parent bodies two studies conducted under its initiative. The first is an effort to describe more completely the conditions under which common witness may be given as fully as possible in the concrete situation in which the Churches still find themselves divided (cf. Appendix II, *Common Witness and Proselytism*). Because there are certain fundamental elements which limit this common Witness through lack of full agreement as to its content, a second study is presented which seeks to open paths for a deeper consideration of the confessional differences which still divide us (cf. Appendix III, *Joint Study on Catholicity and Apostolicity*)<sup>1</sup>. The concepts of catholicity and apostolicity constitute a sensitive point in the ecumenical dialogue. The work done by the joint theological commission has made it possible to discover new areas of agreement which are much larger than had been imagined at the beginning of the work.

These two studies are interrelated. It is hoped that they can offer fresh impetus for study and action at various levels so that Christians may respond more fully to the ecumenical task in today's world.

As Christians strive for the coming of that unity which Christ wills for them, they seek to create in a certain way, while they are still divided, a community which will make it possible to begin to bear the common witness demanded of them. This desire led to the formation of the World Council of Churches and has animated its activity since its foundations. The increasing co-operation which has taken place in the past five years between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches has underlined the increased importance of this search. As a result the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Uppsala (1968) and Pope Paul VI during his visit to the Ecumenical Center in Geneva (1969) expressed the desire that a study be made of the advantages and disadvantages of various possible forms of collaboration or closer and more permanent association of the Roman Catholic Church with the World Council of Churches. The Joint Working Group is sponsoring a study of this question which it hopes to conclude within the next few months.

In reflecting upon the first five years of its mandate, the Joint Working Group recognizes that whatever may be the results obtained up to now, they are still quite small in relation to the urgent task which faces us today. Further progress calls for a more complete engagement of the Churches at all levels. What takes place in concrete situations can be of vital importance for a more universal response to the demand of the Lord, for unity among those who bear his name, to the call to bear a more perfect witness in common to the world and to serve mankind better as we listen attentively to what the Spirit is asking today of the Churches.

## APPENDIX I: REPORT ON ACTIVITIES

In recent years there has been a rapid growth in cooperation between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches. Joint studies and projects were initially still regarded as the exception and only proposed rather tentatively but joint planning has increasingly become the rule. A marked extension of cooperation to many new areas of activity followed the adoption of the first official report in 1966. This cooperation is now so varied and extensive that it would be difficult to give a complete survey.

The cooperation stimulated by the Joint Working Group forms only a limited section of the total field of ecumenical collaboration, and one which cannot be isolated from the work of the ecumenical movement as a whole. The present report, however, is restricted to the specific responsibilities of the Joint Working Group and deals with what has been achieved since the second official report, published in 1967.

### I. The Faith and Worship of the Churches

#### a) *The Commission on Faith and Order*

Roman Catholic theologians have increasingly participated as observer-consultants in the studies undertaken by the Commission both at a regional level and at a world level. A notable step forward was registered following the second official report in 1967. With the agreement of the Roman Catholic Church, the Uppsala Assembly of the World Council of Churches invited nine Roman Catholic theologians to become members of the Commission on Faith and Order. Among current studies in the general framework of Faith and Order the following examples may be cited:

##### 1. *Studies on the Authority of the Bible*

The 1967 report had stressed the importance of this theme. A document prepared by the Faith and Order Commission is now being studied by a number of regional groups, most of which have Roman Catholic members. Roman Catholic faculties and other similar centers have displayed special interest in the subject. At least three of the groups at work are predominantly Roman Catholic in membership (in Spain, France and Germany).

##### 2. *Worship Studies*

The World Council of Churches was invited to send observers to the meetings of the council set up to implement the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. Official links between this council and the Faith and Order Commission were established in the spring of 1968. It became clear in the discussions that even in this field joint study of many questions is possible.

In the course of the sixth and seventh meetings of the Joint Working Group, in December 1967 and May 1968, much time was devoted to the problem of intercommunion. The Joint Working Group looked at the theological and liturgical aspects of intercommunion. In December 1968 it decided to suspend its work in this field although keeping the subject on its agenda, since the Faith and Order Commission (now enlarged to include the participation of Roman Catholic theologians) was initiating a study of intercommunion. (A provisional study paper has since been published with the title "Beyond Intercommunion: On the Way to Communion in the Eucharist," in *Study Encounter*, 5, 3 (1969) 94 ff.).

#### b) *Joint Theological Commission on Catholicity and Apostolicity*

The second official report described the membership and first meeting of this Joint Theological Commission, which has pursued its work in two further meetings. The results of its discussions so far have been summarized in a report already published in French and English. This document seeks to define the two terms "catholicity" and "apostolicity" with a view to establishing the areas of agreement which could provide a starting point for future ecclesiological studies within the ecumenical movement. It also tries to determine which theological problems are in most urgent need of attention in view of the rapid development of both the ecumenical movement and theology, and the consequences of this development in the life of the churches.

With only fourteen members, the Commission could hardly claim to represent the whole spectrum of confessional traditions and theological trends. A much wider circle of theologians was therefore consulted before the document was given in its final form.

At its meeting in May 1970, the Joint Working Group agreed to adopt the report and recommended its publication<sup>2</sup>. It was hoped that this would ensure that the document was circulated in colleges, ecumenical groups and

institutions, the Faith and Order Commission, National Christian Councils, ecumenical and theological commissions of Episcopal Conferences and other similar bodies.

In August 1970 a consultation was held to draft a list of questions raised in the discussions to which the Faith and Order Commission should give priority in its future work. This 1970 consultation also prepared recommendations for presentation to the meeting of the Faith and Order Commission at Louvain in August 1971.

c) *The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*

The team of representatives of the Faith and Order Commission and of the Roman Catholic centers working in this field was set up in accordance with the recommendations made by the joint consultation held in October 1966, referred to in the second official report of the Joint Working Group. This team has met regularly since. As a result it has been possible to plan the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity jointly. The consequence has been a far greater measure of cooperation and common prayer in the actual celebration of the Week than ever before.

d) *The Date of Easter*

The Joint Working Group recognized in its second official report that there was no easy or speedy way to solid agreement between all the churches on the date of Easter.

To bring this agreement nearer, a consultation was organized by the Faith and Order Commission at the Orthodox Center at Chambésy, Geneva, from March 16-20, 1970. Three Roman Catholic observer consultants participated in the consultation, representing the Secretariat for Christian Unity.

The consultation felt that there were two possibilities:

1) Either to fix Easter on the Sunday following the first full moon after the spring equinox (employing the Gregorian calendar, which takes March 21 as the spring equinox and adopts scientific astronomical methods to determine full moon). This solution would respect the ancient rule as adopted by the Council of Nicea.

2) Or to choose a fixed Sunday in April. This solution, too, respects the wishes of the Council of Nicea in the sense that the main concern of the Council was to arrive at an agreed date, although, of course, it does not follow the strict letter of the decision usually attributed to the Council.

The consultation expressed its preference for the second alternative and suggested the Sunday following the second Saturday in April, though it had no objection to another Sunday being chosen if this would make the adoption of a common date for Easter possible for all Christians and in particular for all the Orthodox Churches<sup>3</sup>.

## II. Mission and Unity

a) *Common Problems*

Along the lines of the recommendations made in the second official report, an exchange of views took place between representatives of the World Council of Churches, the Secretariat for Christian Unity, the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, and other missionary bodies, in April 1963.

This was followed up in 1969 when six representatives of the World Council of Churches visited a number of the Vatican offices in Rome, particularly those concerned with missions.

Three Roman Catholics from the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, the Secretariat for Christian Unity, and SEDOS (a working party of various missionary orders) were appointed as consultants to the WCC's Division of World Mission and Evangelism. Roman Catholics have also participated in the work of the Department on Studies in Mission and Evangelism.

In its second official report, the Joint Working Group announced its decision to undertake "a joint study on the subject of proselytism," a question which it had been concerned with for some time. A document was sent to specialists by the World Council of Churches and the Secretariat for Christian Unity with a request for their comments. In May 1968, Roman Catholic experts considered the question from the standpoint of their Church. Next, a joint consultation was held at Arnoldshain, where the document was revised. The work of revision continued during 1969 until the September of that year when a consultation took place at Zagorsk. The document was then modified in the light of comments made at the

consultation.

In the course of this work the form in which the question was posed was changed. At first the emphasis had been on distorted forms of evangelism as contrasted with genuine Christian witness. The more the study proceeded the clearer it became that our real task was not simply to eliminate wrong methods of evangelism but rather to reach a position in which it would be possible to bear joint witness, within the limits imposed by our condition as still divided churches.

The final form of the document was submitted to the Joint Working Group at its meeting in May 1970. It was adopted not as a joint declaration but as a study paper for consideration by the churches in their respective local situations. The Joint Working Group recommended its publication as such<sup>4</sup>.

b) *Dialogue with Men of Other Faiths and with Non-Believers*

Contacts with the Secretariat for Non-Believers, mainly in the form of the exchange of observers, became more frequent and regular from 1967 onwards.

For its part, the World Council of Churches organized a consultation at Ajaltoun in the Lebanon in March 1970 which brought together scholars and others experienced in dialogue from the Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Muslim faiths. Of the twenty-eight Christian participants, six were Roman Catholic. Three Roman Catholics also participated in the consultation in Zurich arranged by the World Council of Churches in May 1970 to study the theological implications of the dialogue between men of living faiths.

c) *Christian Medical Commission*

The second official report of the Joint Working Group in 1967 expressed the desire for the establishment of closer relationships between the various church bodies engaged in medical work. In fact the cooperation already existing in this area in many countries makes organized coordination at the world level a matter of some urgency.

From its inception the Christian Medical Commission has worked closely with a number of Catholic hospitals, medical bodies and religious orders.

Three Roman Catholic observers attended the first annual meeting of the Christian Medical Commission in 1968. In June 1969, on the invitation of the Commission, the Secretariat for Christian Unity appointed seven Roman Catholic representatives who were coopted by the Commission as consultants ad personam. These seven representatives were coopted not in virtue of their membership of a particular organization but because of their qualifications. They were present at the Commission's second annual meeting. One of the decisions taken at this meeting was to call for the establishment of a joint committee to study possible future forms of Roman Catholic participation in the Christian Medical Commission. This resolution was conveyed to the Division of World Service, the bodies responsible for the Christian Medical Commission on the World Council side. It was also conveyed to the Secretariat for Christian Unity. The resolution was accepted and a joint committee duly set up, which met in Rome on March 23, 1970, in Geneva on June 9, and again in Rome of July 31, 1970. It considered a number of possible forms for cooperation between the Commission and the Roman, Catholic Church. It has submitted a report to the respective authorities and this is now under consideration.

d) *World Christian Handbook*

The call to cooperation between the churches would be greatly helped by the existence of a joint statistical work of reference. Such a reference book is in fact now being compiled and it is hoped that a World Christian Handbook will be published jointly in 1972, giving details of all the churches throughout the world. Conservative evangelicals are cooperating in this project.

### III. The Laity

Since the second official report of the Joint Working Group was published, the Third World Congress of the Laity was held in Rome in 1967. Its preparation occasioned several joint consultations and cooperation with a view to giving the Congress as ecumenical a character as possible. The churches and Christian confessions, as well as the World Council of Churches, were invited to send consultants. These were in sufficient numbers to have some influence on the discussions of the Congress. The World Council of Churches was consulted in the planning of the program. One of the closing addresses was entrusted to a consultant and it has already been suggested that in future the Congress might be made into a joint enterprise.

a) *Relations between the Division of Ecumenical Action and the Laity Council*

When the Laity Council was constituted in Rome in 1967, the Joint Working Group suggested that its partner in the World Council of Churches should be the Division of Ecumenical Action. This proposed collaboration was approved by the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Uppsala and by the Laity Council at its first meeting. Several joint consultations followed and the Laity Council sent representatives to meetings of the Committee of the Division of Ecumenical Action.

It is mainly in the field of studies that this collaboration has been developed. The Laity Council was associated with the study "Towards A New Style of Living," drafted in preparation for the Uppsala Assembly, and has also collaborated in the present program of the Division of Ecumenical Action on "Participation in Change," which is a follow-up to the Uppsala Section VI report "Towards New Styles of Living." The Division of Ecumenical Action will likewise be participating in the symposium which the Laity Council is planning on "Dialogue within the Church." Other fields of joint study have still to be explored.

At its meeting in May 1970, the Joint Working Group invited the Division of Ecumenical Action and the Laity Council to look together at the possible areas of ecumenical collaboration between lay people and also at the problems and concerns of young people. The information obtained in this way will be valuable for current studies on possible forms of cooperation between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches.

The Division of Ecumenical Action sent observer consultants to the preparatory meetings planning the Pan-African-Madagascar Laity Congress which is to be held in Yaoundé in August 1971.

b) *Women's Ecumenical Work*

The establishment of the Laity Council made it possible to put ecumenical cooperation between women on a more permanent basis. In 1968 the small, and more or less unofficial, group formed to continue the work of the 1967 Taizé Conference was replaced by the Women's Ecumenical Liaison Group. This group has a provisional mandate to operate experimentally until 1972. So far it has met three times. One of its decisions has been to undertake a study on "The Image of Woman in the Mass Media."

#### IV. Social Service and Service to Humanity

a) *SODEPAX*

Collaboration between the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace developed rapidly, as the second report of the Joint Working Group had hoped it would. The decision was taken to organize a conference on the problem of development. It was held in Beirut from April 21-27, 1968. The aim of the conference was to formulate common convictions and intentions based on as comprehensive and objective an analysis of the problems as possible. It was also intended to emphasize with some conviction the responsibility for human, social and economic development which accrues primarily to Christians but also to all men. Theologians and church leaders from developed and developing countries, representatives of international organizations and a number of leading experts in the development field took part in these discussions. The conference report was widely circulated and became a major factor in helping to establish cooperation both at the level of the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches and in the individual countries.

Since a joint structure was needed to organize a conference of such magnitude, a joint secretariat had been set up in Geneva and Father George Dunne, S.J. appointed secretary with responsibility for organizing the program. At the end of the conference it became clear that the program would become even more extensive and that the secretariat should therefore not merely continue but even expand. A more permanent structure was called for and agreed to by both parties on condition that its flexibility and task-centered existence should not be lost sight of. In the first instance joint work was to be planned for a period of only three years, i.e. up to the end of 1971. This would preserve its experimental character and it would still be possible, at the end of this period, to guide cooperation into a different direction or give it a different structural form. But even for this limited period an effective organization was essential. A meeting of the exploratory committee in May 1968 drafted suggestions for a Committee on Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX). The competent Roman Catholic authorities and the World Council of Churches' Uppsala Assembly approved these proposals in principle. The details were worked out in the following months.

The Rev. Dr. Roy Neehall of Trinidad was appointed associate secretary and in addition three other staff members were appointed with more specialized qualifications. The secretariat is responsible to the two co-presidents and to the

SODEPAX Committee, which consists of sixty experts and church representatives. This Committee also has a delegated authority in relation to the two bodies sponsoring SODEPAX. It meets annually, current matters being dealt with by a smaller steering committee which meets more frequently.

Major international consultations have been held: at Cartigny in Switzerland in November 1969 on the theology of development; at Driebergen in Holland in March 1970 on communications media in the service of development and peace; and at Baden in Austria in April 1970 on peace and the international community. A dozen smaller seminars have also been held, notably those in connection with the second development decade and with education for civic action.

In addition to international consultations to clarify the churches' motives for social action, a noteworthy aspect of the work of SODEPAX has been its local and regional activity. For example in several African and Asian countries SODEPAX groups have been formed. This advance was stimulated by the ecumenical conference on the churches' role in the development of Asia, held in Tokyo in July 1970. This was jointly organized by SODEPAX and the East Asia Christian Conference (EACC). Within this joint program, aimed at gathering and making available information about justice, development and peace, and at awakening Christians to a sense of their responsibility in this area, SODEPAX gives special attention to the whole range of questions in the field of education in the widest sense, to the mass media, and to cooperation with people of non-Christian religions and ideologies, as well as with secular institutions.

The question of the continuation of the SODEPAX experiment has, of course, been raised. It was considered at the meeting of the Joint Working Group in May 1970 and at the SODEPAX assembly held at Nemi in Italy in June 1970. There it was suggested that at this present stage SODEPAX had achieved its objectives and that its experimental thrust, its flexibility, and its educational scope might now be continued as part of some wider structure. This question was given added urgency by the World Council of Churches' decision to create a Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (CCPD). However, after a very full discussion of the matter, it was recommended during the Nemi meeting that SODEPAX should continue its activities for a further period of three years. This recommendation is subject to the approval of the bodies which sponsor SODEPAX. Obviously it is still a matter of urgency that the efforts of both parties in the field of development should be concerted.

#### b) *Church and Society*

While the joint studies and consultations on social issues between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches are for the most part conducted through SODEPAX, a close collaboration has developed on other problems between the Department on Church and Society, on the one hand, and the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace on the other. Four Roman Catholic observers attend meetings of the working committee of Church and Society, which has a total membership of twenty-five. These Roman Catholic observers are chosen by the Secretariat for Christian Unity in consultation with the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace.

Out of this has come substantial Roman Catholic participation in the World Council of Churches' new study on "Technology and the Future of Man and Society." Eighteen Roman Catholics took part in an exploratory conference on this theme in 1970 at which there were one hundred and three participants altogether. Four of the Roman Catholic participants were present as observer-consultants, the other fourteen as guest specialists. Collaboration in this study is expected to grow as the study progresses.

Certain public reactions, especially on the part of business people, to the encyclical *Populorum Progressio* and to the 1966 Church and Society Conference, led to collaboration in another field. A consultation was held in Rotterdam in June 1968 to discuss these Christian statements. It was attended by sixty business people. The consultation was jointly arranged by the Department on Church and Society and the International Christian Union of Business Executives (UNIAPAC), a Roman Catholic body having close but unofficial relationships with Vatican agencies, especially the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace.

A second conference was held at Vevey in November 1969 and a third is planned for May 1971 in London.

#### c) *Service and Aid*

Since 1967, Caritas Internationalis and the WCC Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service have held a third joint consultation. This took place from April 28-30, 1968. This consultation stressed, as the first joint consultation had done, the great variety of ways in which the relief organizations of the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches can be of mutual assistance in this field. Above all it emphasized the need for mutual exchange of information, for reciprocal consultation, and for the joint planning and coordination of church appeals.

Clearly the policy of holding such study conferences should continue to be encouraged. Contacts between the various sectors of the WCC Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service and Caritas Internationalis are now normal practice but everywhere the situation needs to be frequently reexamined. The inclusion of specialists in this field at such study conferences will be the best way of ensuring effective planning of direct cooperation.

In order to ensure wider and more effective cooperation, the Joint Working Group at its meeting in May 1970 “warmly welcomed the proposal of the Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service and Caritas Internationalis to hold a joint conference of representatives of the staff of the various bodies belonging to the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches which are concerned with relief, aid and development, for the purpose of establishing and extending ways and means of planning joint programs.”

#### V. National and Local Councils of Churches

Speaking at the Ecumenical Center in Geneva on June 10, 1969, Pope Paul VI mentioned the importance of ecumenical activity at the local level. Since the Roman Catholic Church decided to participate actively in the ecumenical movement, many national and local Christian Councils have invited the Roman Catholic Church to send observers or consultants to their meetings. In some places, the Roman Catholic Church is now a member of the National Christian Council. In a far larger number of cases, the Roman Catholic Church participates in Christian Councils at more than one level, parish, diocesan and provincial. Some of the questions which this development raises concern the Joint Working Group.

In view of the importance of this current development, the Joint Working Group at its meeting in May 1970 asked for a detailed report on the various National Christian Councils and Roman Catholic participation in or collaboration with these Councils to be presented to its next meeting.

## APPENDIX II: COMMON WITNESS AND PROSELYTISM (A STUDY DOCUMENT)

*The following document, prepared by a Joint Theological Commission, was received by the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches at its meeting in May, 1970, which recommended it for publication.*

*The document was elaborated by the commission on the initiative of the Joint Working Group. The commission held two full meetings (in Arnoldshain, Germany, in 1968, and in Zagork, USSR, in 1969). Various subsequent drafts were submitted to a wide group of consultants. The text being presented now has been formulated in the light of comments received.*

*The Joint Working Group, having examined it, recommends to its parent bodies that it be offered to the Churches as a study document for their consideration. Although there may not be complete agreement on everything contained in the document, it represents a wide area of consensus on the subject of common witness and proselytism which may guide the Churches in their mutual relations.*

*It is, therefore, suggested that the Churches in the same area study it together. The further examination of the theme of common witness will inevitably demand a fuller development of, and agreement on, the content of the witness Christians are bound to give to Christ and his Gospel.*

### Introduction

1. Unity in witness and witness in unity. This is the will of Christ for his people. The Lord has called all his disciples to be witnesses to him and his Gospel, to the ends of the earth (cf. *Acts 1:8*), and he has promised to be with them always, to the close of his age (*Mt. 28:20*). But for centuries, in their efforts to fulfil this mission, Christian Communion have borne the burden of divisions, even differing about the meaning of the one Gospel. They have not been a clear sign of the one and holy people, so it has been hard for the world to believe (cf. *Jo. 13:35; 17:21*).

2. Today, moved by the Holy Spirit, the various Christian Communion are seeking to restore the unity they have lost, in the hope that one day, when they are fully renewed and united in faith and charity, they may be better able to glorify God by bringing home to the whole world the hope of the coming kingdom. They are striving to overcome whatever indifference, isolation and rivalry has marked their relations to each other and thus has distorted Christian witness even to that unity with which God has already blessed them.

3. This document is an attempt to state the implications of the obligation:

- to bear common Christian witness, even while the Churches are divided;
- to avoid in their mutual relations and in their evangelizing activities whatever is not in keeping with the spirit of the Gospel;
- to provide one another, as far as possible, with mutual support for a more effective witness of the Gospel through preaching and selfless service to the neighbor.

4. This document is offered to the Churches. Its reflections and suggestions may serve as a basis of discussion among Christians in varied circumstances, in order to arrive at a line of conduct where they live and witness.

### Meaning of the Terms:

#### Christian Witness, Common Witness, Religious Freedom, Proselytism

5.1. *Christian Witness*<sup>1</sup>. Witness is taken here to mean the continuous act by which a Christian or a Christian Community proclaims God's acts in history and seeks to reveal Christ as the true light which shines for every man. This includes the whole life: worship, responsible service, proclamation of the Good News - all is done under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in order that men may be saved and be gathered into Christ's one and only Body (*Col. 1:8; Eph. 1:22-23*), and attain life everlasting - to know the true God and Him whom he has sent, Jesus Christ (cf. *Jo. 17:3*).

6.2. *Common Witness*. Here is meant the witness the Churches, even while separated, bear together, especially by joint efforts, by manifesting before men whatever divine gifts of truth and life they already share in common.

7.3. *Religious Freedom*. Religious freedom is not used here in the wider biblical sense (e.g. *Rom. 8:21*). It is pointing to the right of the person and of communities to social and civil freedom in religious matters. Each person or community has

the right to be free from any coercion on the side of individuals, social groups, or human power of any kind; so that no individual or community may be forced to act against conscience or be prevented from expressing belief in teaching, worship or social action<sup>2</sup>.

8.4. *Proselytism*. Here is meant improper attitudes and behavior in the practice of Christian witness. Proselytism embraces whatever violates the right of the human person, Christian or non-Christian, to be free from external coercion in religious matters, or whatever, in the proclamation of the Gospel, does not conform to the ways God draws free men to himself in response to his calls to serve in spirit and in truth<sup>3</sup>.

## I. Common Witness

9. There is a growing recognition among the Churches that they must overcome their isolation from each other and seek ways to cooperate in witness to the world<sup>4</sup>. In face, however, of difficulties and obstacles, a clear basis and source of power and hope is needed if the Churches are to embark on this common witness.

10. This basis and source is given in Christ. He is sent into the world by the Father for the salvation of mankind. There is no other Name in which men may find salvation and life (*Acts 4:12*). Christian Churches confess Christ as God and only Savior according to the Scriptures, and most adhere to the ancient Creeds which testify to this central truth of faith.

11. Moreover, the Churches believe that they live only by the divine gifts of truth and life bestowed by Christ. Most Churches acknowledge that gifts of divine grace are a reality in other Churches which also provide access to salvation in Christ. Thus all Christian communions, in spite of their divisions, can have a positive role to play in God's plan of salvation.

12. The Churches have the privilege and the obligation of giving witness to the truth and new life which is theirs in Christ. Indeed both privilege and obligation are entrusted to the whole community of Christians to whom God gives a vital role in his plan for the salvation of the world.

13. Therefore Christians cannot remain divided in their witness. Any situations where contact and cooperation between Churches are refused must be regarded as abnormal.

14. The gifts which the Churches have received and share in Christ have demanded and made urgent a common witness to the world. The needs of men and the challenges of a broken and unbelieving world have also compelled the Churches to cooperate with God in deploying his gifts for the reconciliation of all men and all things in Christ. This common witness takes place in many areas of social concern, such as

- the development of the whole man and of all men;
- the defense of human rights and the promotion of religious freedom;
- the struggle for the eradication of economic, social and racial injustice;
- the promotion of international understanding, the limitation of armaments and the restoration and maintenance of peace;
- the campaign against illiteracy, hunger, alcoholism, prostitution, the traffic in drugs;
- medical and health and other social services;
- relief and aid to victims of natural disasters (volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, etc.).

15. Cooperation has also extended to include the production, publication and distribution of joint translations of the Scriptures. Moreover, an exploration is being made of the possibility of common texts to be used for an initial catechesis on the central message of the Christian faith. In this connection, cooperation in the field of education and in the use of communications media is already going on in some places.

16. The cooperation of the Churches in these varied fields is increasingly being accompanied by common acts of worship for each other and for the world. Of particular significance is the "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" which is now celebrated in many places around the world. This practice of common prayer and of acts of worship has greatly helped to create and develop a climate of mutual knowledge, understanding, respect and trust. The World Council of Churches

and the Roman Catholic Church have contributed to this improved climate by their studies and guides to common prayer. This fellowship in prayer, nevertheless, sharpens the pain of the Churches' division at the point of Eucharistic fellowship which should be the most manifest witness to the one sacrifice of Christ for the whole world.

17. The central task of the Churches is simply to proclaim the saving deeds of God. This then should be the burden of their common witness; and what unites them is enough to enable them in large measure to speak as one. Indeed all forms of common witness are signs of the Churches' commitment to proclaim the Gospel to all men; they all find in the one Gospel their motivation, their purpose and their content.

18. Whether in witness or service, the Churches are together confronted by the fundamental issues of the nature and destinies of men and nations; and while they face these questions they encounter men of other religions, or men who are indifferent or unbelievers who hold to a variety of ideologies.

19. But at this vital point of mutual engagement, the Churches become aware not only of their shared understanding of the Gospel but also of their differences. They all believe that Jesus Christ has founded one Church, and one alone; to this Church the Gospel has been given; to this Church every man has been called to belong. Yet today many Christian Communion present themselves to men as the true heritage of Jesus Christ, and this division among the Churches greatly reduces the possibilities of common witness.

20. In the context of religious freedom and the ecumenical dialogue, respect is due to the right of Churches to act according to convictions, which they believe should be held in fidelity to Jesus Christ:

1. While it is indeed aware of its pilgrim condition, a Church can be convinced that in it subsists the one Church founded by Christ, that also in it one can have access to all the means of salvation which the Lord offers, that its witness has always remained substantially faithful to the Gospel.

2. A Church can regard itself as bound in conscience to proclaim its witness to its own belief, which is distinct from that of the other Churches.

3. While the major affirmations of faith, such as those which are formulated in Scripture and professed in the ancient Creeds, are common to almost all the Christian confessions, different interpretations can sometimes call for reservations on this common character.

4. The teaching of certain Churches can place limits on cooperation in social concerns, for example, different positions on family ethics (divorce, abortion, responsible parenthood).

Nevertheless, it is not enough to know the limits which the division of Christians places on common witness. The more the need of common witness is grasped, the more apparent does it become that there is a need to find complete agreement on faith - one of the essential purposes of the ecumenical movement.

21. Differences about the content of witness, because of varied ecclesiologies, are by no means the only obstacle to cooperation between the Churches. The rivalries and enmities of the past, the continued resentments due to the memory of ancient or recent wrongs, the conflicts generated by political, cultural and other factors, all these have prevented the Churches from seeking to bear a common witness to the world. Only the willingness to extend mutual forgiveness of past offences and wrongs and to receive correction from each other will enable the Churches to fulfil their obligation to show forth a common witness to each other and to the world.

22. There is, however, an understandable hesitation of a Church to cooperate in witness where this may trouble and confuse its members. Among other reasons, it may be due also to lack of contact and mutual understanding between the clergy and the laity of Churches. In all such cases, a patient and determined effort should be made to create conditions which favor cooperation.

23. A further obstacle to joint action in witness derives from receiving and interpreting the Gospel in forms so exclusive as to lead to a refusal of all discussion and an unwillingness to recognize that the Spirit can operate in groups other than one's own. This attitude is generally labeled "sectarianism" and such exclusive and excluding groups are often called "sects." When faced with this situation, Churches should first of all recognize the challenge which these groups present to them and examine themselves as to their inadequacy in meeting the profound spiritual needs of their members and of those around them. They must also guard against the very spirit of sectarianism which they so rightly deplore in others. Rather should they strive to hear God's call to renewal and to greater faithfulness to his message of salvation.

24. Moreover, the Churches should pay particular attention to groups which seem open to receive those aspects of the Christian message which those communities have hitherto neglected. The Churches must thus always stand ready for dialogue and to seize every opportunity to extend a fraternal hand and to grasp the hand held out to them.

## II. Proselytism and Relations between Churches

25. Christian witness, to those who have not yet received or responded to the announcement of the Gospel or to those who are already Christians, should have certain qualities, in order to avoid being corrupted in its exercise and thus becoming proselytizing. Furthermore, the ecumenical movement itself had made Christians more sensitive to the conditions proper to witness borne among themselves. This means that witness should be completely

- conformed to the spirit of the Gospel, especially by respecting the other's right to religious freedom, and
- concerned to do nothing which could compromise the progress of ecumenical dialogue and action

### 1. Required Qualities for Christian Witness

#### A

26. In order that witness be conformed to the spirit of the Gospel:

- a) The deep and true source of witness should be the commandment: "you must love the Lord your God with all your soul, and with all your mind... You must love your neighbor as yourself" (*Mt.22:37 and 39, cf. Lev. 19:18; Deut. 6:5*).
- b) Witness should be inspired by the true end of the Church: the glory of God through the salvation of men. Witness does not seek the prestige of one own's community and of those who belong to, represent or lead it.
- c) Witness should be nourished by the conviction that it is the Holy Spirit who, by his grace and might, brings about the response of faith to witness.
- d) Witness respects the free will and dignity of those to whom it is given, whether they wish to accept or to refuse the faith.
- e) Witness respects the right of every man and community to be free from any coercion which impedes them from witness to their own convictions, including religious convictions.

#### B

27. Witness should avoid behavior such as:

- a) Every type of physical coercion, moral constraint or psychological pressure which would tend to deprive man of his personal judgement, of his freedom of choice, of full autonomy in the exercise of his responsibility. A certain abuse of mass communications can have this effect.
- b) Every open or disguised offer of temporal or material benefits in return for change in religious adherence.
- c) Every exploitation of the need or weakness or of lack of education of those to whom witness is offered, in view of inducing their adherence to a Church.
- d) Everything raising suspicion about the "good faith" of others "bad faith" can never be presumed; it should always be proved.
- e) The use of a motive which has no relation to the faith itself but is presented as an appeal to change religious adherence: for example, the appeal to political motives to win over those who are eager to secure for themselves the protection or favors of civil authority, or those who are opposed to the established regime. Churches which form a large majority in a state should not use legal methods, social, economic or political pressure, in the attempt to prevent members of minority communities from the exercise of their right to religious freedom.
- f) Every unjust or uncharitable reference to the beliefs or practices of other religious communities in the hope of winning adherents. This includes malevolent criticism which offends the sensibilities of members of other

communities. In general, one should compare the good qualities and ideals or the weaknesses and practices of one community with those of the others, not one's ideals with the other's practice.

## 2. Christian Witness and Relations between the Churches

28. The Lord has willed that his disciples be one in order that the world believe. Thus it is not enough for Christians to conform to the above. They should also be concerned in fostering whatever can restore or strengthen between them the bonds of true brotherhood. Proposed suggestions:

a) In each Church one is conscious that conversion of heart and the renewal of his own community are essential contributions to the ecumenical movement.

b) Missionary action should be carried out in an ecumenical spirit which takes into consideration the priority of the announcement of the Gospel to non-Christians. The missionary effort of one Church in an area or milieu where another Church is already at work depends on an honest answer to the question: what is the quality of the Christian message proclaimed by the Church already at work, and in what spirit is it being proclaimed and lived? Here frank discussion between the Churches concerned would be highly desirable, in order to have a clear understanding of each other's missionary and ecumenical convictions, and with the hope that it would help to determine the possibilities of cooperation, of common witness, of fraternal assistance, or of complete withdrawal<sup>5</sup>. In the same manner and spirit the relations between minority and majority Churches should be considered.

c) Particularly all competitive spirit should be avoided by which a Christian community might seek a position of power and privilege, and concern itself less with proclaiming the Gospel to those who have not yet received it, than with profiting by chances to recruit new members among the other Christian communities.

d) To avoid causes of tension between Churches because of the free exercise of the right of every man to choose his ecclesial allegiance and, if necessary, to change it in obedience to conscience, it is vital:

- that this free choice should be exercised in full knowledge of what is involved and, if possible, after counsel with the pastors of the two Churches concerned. Particular care is necessary in the case of children and young people; in such cases, the greatest weight and respect should be given to the views and rights of the parents and tutors;

- that the Church which admits a new member should be conscious of the ecumenical repercussions, and not draw vain glory from it;

- that the Church which has lost a member should not become bitter, or hostile, nor ostracize the person concerned; that it examine its conscience as to how it has done its duty of bringing the Gospel to that person. Has it made an effort to understand how his Christian convictions ought to affect his life, or rather was it content that he should remain . a nominal and official member of that community?

- that any change, of allegiance motivated mainly by the desire to secure some material advantage should be refused.

e) Some points of tension between the Churches are difficult to overcome because what is done by one Church in view of its theological and ecclesiological convictions is considered by the other as implicit proselytism. In this case, it is necessary that the two sides try to clarify what is really in question and to arrive at mutual understanding of different practices, and if possible, to agree to a common policy. This can be realised only if the carrying out of these theological and ecclesiological convictions clearly excludes every type of witness which would be tainted by proselytism, as described above. Some examples of such tensions:

- The fact that a Church which reserves baptism to adults ("believer's baptism") persuades the faithful of another Church, who have already been baptised as infants, to receive baptism again is often regarded as proselytizing. A discussion on the nature of baptism and its relation to faith and to the Church could lead to new attitudes.

- The discipline of certain Churches concerning the marriage of their members with Christians of other communities is often considered as proselytic. In fact, these rules depend on theological positions. Conversations on the nature of marriage and the family could bring about progress and resolve in a joint way the pastoral question raised by such marriages.

- The Orthodox consider that the existence of the Eastern Catholic Churches is the fruit of proselytism. Catholics

level the same criticism against the way in which certain of these Churches have been reunited to the Orthodox Church. Whatever has been the past, the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church are determined to reject not only proselytism but also the intention even to draw the faithful of one Church to another. An example of this pledge is the common declaration of Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I, on October 28, 1967. The resolution of these questions, evidently important for the ecumenical movement, should be sought in frank discussion, between the Churches concerned.

#### Conclusion

29. These reflections and suggestions on common witness and proselytism will, it is hoped, offer the Churches an opportunity of moving more quickly along the way which leads to the restoration of complete communion among them. As they travel that path to unity the Churches realised that Christian witness can never be perfect. They can never cease to strive for a deeper realization and clearer expression of the Good News of the unfathomable riches of Christ (cf. *Eph.* 3:8), and for a more faithful living in accord with His one message. By fidelity to this striving the Churches will grow together in witness to Christ, "the Faithful and True Witness" (*Rev.* 3:14) in expectation of that day when all things will be perfectly reestablished in him (cf. *Eph.* 1:10; *Col.* 1:20).

[*Information Service* 14 (1971/II) 13-23]

#### ENDNOTES

##### Appendix I:

1. For text, see Appendix III and *One in Christ* 4, 3 (1970) 452-483 and *Ecumenical Review* 23, 1 (1971) 51-69.
2. See Appendix III. The text has been published in *Irénikon* 43, 2 (1970) 163-200 and in *One in Christ* 4, 3 (1970) 452-483.
3. The full text of this report will be found in the *Ecumenical Review* 23, 2 (1971) 176-181.
4. "Common Witness and Proselytism." See Appendix II. The text is published in the *Ecumenical Review* 23, 1 (1971) 9-20.

##### Appendix II:

1. Modern languages use several biblically derived terms which denote particular aspects of the announcements of the Gospel in word and deed: Witness, Apostolate, Mission, Confession, Evangelism, Kerygma, Message, etc. We have preferred here to adopt "Witness," because it expresses more comprehensively the realities we are treating.
2. Cf. *Christian Witness, Proselytism and Religious liberty in the Setting of the WCC*, of the Third WCC Assembly (1961); *Declaration on Religious Freedom*, of the Second Vatican Council (1965); *Universal Declaration on Human Rights*, of the United Nations (1948), esp. n. 18. Since the right to religious freedom operates in society, these documents also mention rules which modify the use of it.
3. In certain linguistic, cultural and confessional contexts, the term "proselytism," used without qualification, has acquired this pejorative sense. In those other languages and contexts in which the term still retains its more original meaning of "zeal in spreading the faith," it will be necessary always to use "proselytism in the pejorative sense" or some phrase which denotes defective attitudes and conduct.
4. Cf. Second Vatican Council Decree, *Ad Gentes*, 6 and 15; and the proposals for "Joint Action for Mission" formulated by the 1961 New Delhi Assembly of the WCC and affirmed by the Report of Section II of the 1968 Uppsala Assembly.
5. In speaking of Joint Action for Mission, the World Council of Churches distinguishes presently three degrees of missionary collaboration: surveying the possibilities of missionary action, joint planning; and joint action. The meaning of common witness is wider than that of joint action for mission.

### APPENDIX III: STUDY DOCUMENT ON CATHOLICITY AND APOSTOLICITY

*The following study document, prepared by a Joint Theological Commission on the initiative of the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches was received by the latter at its meeting in May 1970. The status of this document is expressed in paragraph 2: "This study document is not a joint statement, neither is it a doctrinal consensus nor a status quaestionis; it is essentially a tool in the service of joint research."*

*While noting the limited status which the document enjoys, the Joint Working Group considers it to be a real step forward in ecumenical discussion. It therefore recommends to its parent bodies that it be offered to the Churches for attentive consideration by competent theologians.*

#### **Preface**

1. In 1966, the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches decided that a Joint Theological Commission be formed "to study the fundamental issues that continually arise between the Roman Catholic Church and the other Churches" (first Report of the Joint Working Group, 7). It suggested that the Commission should examine the general theme "Catholicity and Apostolicity". The Commission was appointed in the following year. Its work has been organized by the Secretariat of the Commission on Faith and Order and by the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity in Rome.

The Commission consisted of the following members:

#### *World Council of Churches*

Prof. S.C. Agourides

Prof. Jean Bosc

Dr. J.N.D. Kelly

Prof. John Meyendorff

Prof. Paul Minear

Prof. Wolfhart Pannenberg

Rev. Dr. Lukas Vischer

Prof. Claude Welch

Dr. J.D. Zizioulas

#### *Roman Catholic Church*

Prof. Giuseppe Alberigo

Rev. Raymond Brown, S.S.

Rev. Fr. François Dreyfus, O.P.

Rev. Alexandre Ganoczy

Rev. Fr. Jérôme Hamer, O.P.

Dom Emmanuel Lanne, O.S.B.

Rev. Umberto Neri

Rev. Prof. Dr. R. Schnackenburg

Rev. Prof. Jan Witte, S.J.

The Commission has held three meetings (at Nemi, Rome, May 19-24, 1967; at Oud-Poelgeest, Holland, December 16-20, 1967; and in Rome, May 31 - June 5, 1968). The following papers were prepared and discussed:

Apostolicity – Present State of Studies (R. Schnackenburg)

The Catholicity of the Church (J. Bosc)

Historical Relativism and the Authority of Christian Dogma (J. Meyendorff)

Pluralism and Unity – Possibility of Different "Typologies" within the Same Ecclesial Allegiance (E. Lanne)

Ministry, Episcopacy, Primacy (A. Ganoczy)

Some Theses on the Sacramentality of the Church (in connection with Catholicity and Apostolicity) J. L. Witte)

Local Church: Catholicity and Apostolicity (E. Lanne)

The Role of Eschatology in Understanding the Apostolicity and Catholicity of the Church (W. Pannenberg)

"Catholic" and "Apostolic" in the Early Centuries' (J. N. D. Kelly).<sup>1</sup>

2. During its third meeting the Commission decided to suspend its work and prepare a study document for publication with a view to promoting continuation of the theological dialogue on these points. It is this document which is presented here.

This study document is not a joint statement, neither is it a doctrinal *consensus* nor a *status quaestionis*; it is essentially a tool in the service of joint research. This compilation deals with a series of important themes which it is

proposed that theologians should study in depth and examine critically. It has been put together by the above-named interconfessional team. No member of the team will identify himself with the entire document presented here in which widely-divergent views stand side by side, but all are fully agreed in commending it to the attention of competent theologians.

The compilation is in two parts. Part One gives a new description of the two concepts of 'Catholicity' and 'Apostolicity'. Part Two consists of a number of appendices dealing with certain special aspects of the general problem.

Part One seeks to focus attention on elements frequently neglected in theological discussion. While the old differences remain, it is possible today to see them in a new light permitting us to discern possibilities of progress.

With a necessarily limited time available for its work, the Commission devoted more time to Part One than to Part Two. Thus each of the appendices was entrusted to a single member. Its text was carefully discussed by the group but each author was responsible for embodying the result of this discussion in his own version. Thus, although anonymous, each of the appendices is 'personal'. In theological approach and in style, this Part Two, far more than Part One, bears the imprint of the authors who drafted the various fragments.

3. It should also be noted that this compilation was made before the Uppsala Assembly, Section I of which produced a report on 'The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church'. Some have pointed out that the two texts cannot be read independently and that it would be useful to compare them and at some time to integrate them. Quite clearly, however, they differ appreciably in character: one is the report of a full Assembly of the World Council of Churches, approved in substance by the Assembly and commended to the Churches for study and appropriate action; the other is a study document which the Joint Theological Commission on 'Catholicity and Apostolicity' was asked to produce by the Joint Working Group between the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church 'to study the fundamental issues that continually arise between the Roman Catholic Church and the other Churches'. It is still true that in studying the present compilation the Uppsala Section I report cannot be ignored.

## PART ONE

### New Description of the Concepts of 'Catholicity' and 'Apostolicity'

Each of the two concepts which have been the subject of our study, constitutes a sensitive point in the ecumenical dialogue. The term 'catholic' has been used, especially in recent centuries, to contrast certain Christian Churches<sup>2</sup> with certain others, while the term 'apostolicity' has fathered different interpretations which are deeply imprinted in the ecclesiologies of the various confessions.

Today it seems we must and can resume the study of these two concepts within the context of ecumenical research. The purpose of this study should be to rethink the problem of the interpretation of all four of the characteristics traditionally attributed to the Church in the creed and to consider the unity of the holy Church in a new light by making reflection on catholicity and apostolicity a new *way of approaching* the problem.

Catholicity and apostolicity can be looked at from fresh stand-points. The results of enquiries into the mission of the Holy Spirit and the catholicity of the Church as well as into the apostolic origin of the Church, the emphasis on Christology and Pneumatology, reflection on the sending of the apostles by the risen Lord and on the missionary vocation of the people of God, and finally the Churches' search for common witness and common service – all these are so many spurs to discover new approaches to the catholicity and apostolicity of the Church.

On the other hand, while some regard catholicity and apostolicity exclusively as dimensions of the Church which are already given in *principle*, others understand them rather as a *demand* for universality and fullness, for service and sanctification, which Christ the Savior of the world addresses in the Holy Spirit to his Church for the sake of the salvation of mankind.

But in order to find a fresh approach to the problem of ecclesial unity, it seems today that, beyond a catholicity and an apostolicity assumed by some as a principle and felt by others as a demand, we have to ask ourselves, in accord with the standpoint of the New Testament itself, in what way do catholicity and apostolicity express the mystery of the *communion (koinonia)* given by Christ to his Church? And in what way today does this gift continually renewed by the presence of the Spirit, call all the Churches to *renewal* and to *mission*? A new description of the concepts of catholicity and apostolicity should derive its inspiration from the strictly theological mystery of communion: the gift of God and the conversion of men.

### Catholicity

1. The Church is catholic in its *being*, because it is constituted by the gift of the Trinitarian communion which the incarnate Word makes to mankind; this communion is fullness of the Word (cf. John 1:16) and because of this the Church is 'his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all' (Eph. 1: 23).<sup>3</sup> The Church henceforth proves itself catholic in its action insofar as it is in communion with Jesus Christ present and active in its midst by the *power* of his Holy Spirit. Jesus the Christ is the Saviour of each man in his personal totality, of all men and of the whole creation. Sent into the world by the one God, he announced the kingdom, gave his life for all on the Cross and calls all to participate in his Resurrection. By him all things are to be reconciled to God for he has made peace by the blood of his Cross (cf. Col. 1:20). He is the Lord because he has been given 'the name which is above every name' (Phil. 2:9). It is he in whom the Father is revealed, he

who is 'full of grace and truth' (John 1:14), he in whom dwells 'the whole fullness of deity' (Col 2:9). He is the Head who gathers all humanity into his Body by the action of the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph. 1:1-4).

The Church lives and achieves its catholicity insofar as it exists through and 'in' Christ as his Body and expresses at every moment, in every Christian and in every step the whole truth of Jesus Christ to which the Holy Spirit ceaselessly leads (John 16:13). It is the community of those men and women who respond in faith to the calling of God the Father, are one in love and are constantly open towards all their brother men.

This is the standpoint from which we see catholicity. Trinitarian, Christocentric, Pneumatic, missionary and demanding a concrete engagement in the service of mankind.

2. The Gospel promises the full achievement of the unity of all in Christ only for the time of his return in glory. Then the universal communion of men will be realized, the final gathering of Israel and the nations (cf. Rom. 1:1). For Christ prayed the Father for the unity of all those who should believe in him (John 17:20 ff); this unity remains a goal which is never reached on earth, but one towards which we must always be moving, in order that the world might believe that God sent him. The full unity which should unite all men with God in Christ will only be attained at the end. While waiting for this future gift, the Church must become aware of all which is provisional in itself; it must have the courage to acknowledge what is lacking in its catholicity, and make its life and action more and more 'catholic'. Catholicity is thus an eschatological reality as well, for on the one hand, it is still not fully achieved nor fully manifested, but, above all, it already participates in the fullness of the coming kingdom in its first fruits.

3. The Church in fact is founded on the Lord Jesus Christ. Living by the real presence of its Lord and quickened by the Holy Spirit, it announces and carries to fruition the coming kingdom and is itself the first fruits of that kingdom. It is thus, at the heart of mankind and for mankind, by faith in the gift of God and by the action of the Holy Spirit, the sign which manifests the presence of Christ, the promise and hope of the fullness which dwells in him (cf. Col. 1:19; Eph. 3:1-11). In a way which is imperfect – in respect of the response of believers – yet nonetheless real – according to the messianic gift of Pentecost, it bears the mystery of the Christ in whom all things have been summed up. This is why it is henceforth catholic.

4. Established on what it has received and receives, pressing on towards the full achievement of the salvation for which it hopes, the Church is called to realize its catholicity day by day. Not only must it be 'open' in proclaiming that it is without respect of persons, races, classes or culture, but also 'habitable' by all, the 'home' of all because it realizes in its structures and in its existence the whole variety of the gifts of the Spirit, the whole diversity of mankind purchased (redeemed) by Christ. It is sent to all the nations, to the very ends of the earth; it is called to be present to all the situations of man at each hour of history and to make itself all things to all men in the name of the Lord. It has received, insofar as it is catholic, power to express all the elements of the Gospel message and ceaselessly seeks to grasp in faith and to proclaim in its message and make fruitful in its life the infinite richness of the mystery of Christ.

5. Where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church (cf. Ign., *Smyrn.* 8, 2). Thus the Lord makes himself present there where in one place a community of believers, marked as his and committed to him by baptism and gathered in his name, 'hears his Word and receives it freely following the action of his Spirit, celebrates the eucharistic meal, perseveres in the confession of faith, in worship, in prayer and brotherly communion (cf. Acts 2:42). Thanks to the Lord who rules in it, the local community assembled around Christ's ministers, in the communion of saints from Abel, the just, down to the very latest of the elect and, therefore, in union with the Church of all times and places, is a real expression of the Catholic Church. Forming a universal *koinonia* the local communities are called to support one another and to act together for the glory of the Lord.

6. To the extent that the Church is mindful of the gift of Christ, it will be attentive to everything which can betray this gift. The gift of Christ can be betrayed in many ways. The most usual form of betrayal is that which adulterates the Gospel with false teaching. This is why the Church is catholic when it is orthodox. But since the truth of the Gospel is not merely speculative or something to be taught there are many ways in which it can also be betrayed in the life of Christians. We mention here four such ways.

The first lies in succumbing to the temptation of power, whether it be by adopting the ways which belong properly to political power, whether it be by conforming or submitting to the powers of this world in such a way that the Church keeps the poor at a distance and Christian brotherhood is restricted to members of the same race, nation, culture or class. The second would wish to justify the formation of sects or parties within the Church. The third makes people become proud of their own confession and despise others. The fourth, on the other hand, allowing itself to be seduced by temporal ideologies which assail it, consists in misusing the term 'catholic' and boasting of a tolerance which results finally in the disappearance of Christian identity. The catholicity of the Church cannot disown the Church's bond with Jesus Christ, in whom alone is there salvation for all men (Acts 4:12) and the forms of betrayal which we have mentioned cannot be avoided except by an obedience which is constantly renewed by the Lord, whose love makes his people capable of being open to all human conditions and whose truth enables it to realize its identity and its continuity throughout time, places and circumstances.

## **Apostolicity**

1. The Church is apostolic, according to the unanimous tradition of the Churches, because it is built upon the foundation of the apostles (Apoc. 21:14 and Eph. 2:20). Its very existence is continuously and necessarily related to the

person of the apostles and to the work which they accomplished once and for all and its action is identical with theirs. Nothing in the being and action of the Church permits it to disregard the mission given once and for all to the apostles by Christ in the Holy Spirit, nor the work which they accomplished in planting and building up the Church in the world.

2. But in calling the Church 'apostolic', Christians affirm their dependence on 'the glorious company of the apostles' as well as their solidarity with it, thanks to the continuing reality of the action of the Holy Spirit which the apostles received. The apostles were the witnesses of the Resurrection. They were commanded by the Lord to announce the kingdom which dawns, with its judgment and its pardon. They served it as fishermen and harvesters, sowers and builders, fathers and teachers teaching the faithful. In many ways, by word and by action, they witnessed to the presence of the crucified and victorious Lord and they called, gathered and founded the Churches to witness and prepare for his coming. Their preaching is fixed in the New Testament writings which for this reason are called apostolic. The continuity of their witness and their action in the Church from the beginning is the work of the Holy Spirit and makes the Church apostolic.

3. Both in Scripture and in tradition many different senses of the word 'apostle' can be found. We must willingly accept this diversity which imposes new perspectives on the theological consensus. It prevents theologians from putting too much reliance on ready-made notions and attributing to verbal formulae an exclusive and definitive character. Much more than by asking the letter of Scripture to give us a stereotype portrait of the apostle, it is by faithfully assuming the tasks entrusted by the Lord to his apostles that the apostolicity of the Church is made worthy of credence.

4. The Church is apostolic because it is 'sent, constituted by the *gift of the mission* which the Father entrusted to his Son, which Jesus Christ accomplished once for all and which the Holy Spirit completes in the last times (cf. John 20:21 f.). Sent by the Father, Jesus Christ gave to men the mystery of the kingdom (Mark 4:11), he called them to conversion, he pardoned sinners, he healed the sick and the possessed, he preached the Gospel to the poor, he participated in the death of men by his passion in order to make them participate in his life in his Resurrection. He called men to his Church and charged them to continue his mission. To his Church he gave authority (*exousia*) in the Holy Spirit to accomplish this mission and entrusted to certain men the exercise of this authority within the community. It is therefore in virtue of its *participation in the mission* of Christ in the mission of disciples that the Church is apostolic. For the Holy Spirit manifests this mission, realizes it and communicates it in a community 'consecrated and sent' like Christ (cf. John 17:18 f.).

5. Apostolicity includes an intimate and essential link with the final accomplishment of God's saving plan. By the announcement which the apostles made of the kingdom of God and by the role which they played in the advent of these new times (Matt. 10:1-15; 19:28; Luke 22:30; Rev. 21:14) each generation is linked to the gathering of nations and races in the Holy City. By transmitting to men the promise of this accomplishment, even more by giving them the first fruits of the blessings of the kingdom, the apostles by the power of the Spirit shed at Pentecost, awakened a lively hope of the approach of the renewal of all things. This time of waiting for the return of the Lord is also for the Church the time of mission, for the dynamic presence of the Spirit, pledge of this living hope, makes the Church apostolic.

6. Apostolicity also binds the Church of the present with all the previous generations of the people of God. The New Testament presents the apostles as having part in the accomplishment of promises made by God to Abraham (cf. Heb. 12:1) and to the twelve tribes (cf. Matt. 19:28). By this sole function of the twelve, the Church inherits a place in the life of Israel from the beginning. The truly apostolic Church will also be catholic, necessarily, in time as in space. Its memory embraces all the past which is constantly actualized in the Word and sacraments; and its hope already embraces all the future of which it carries in frail vessels the incorruptible pledge (cf. 2 Cor. 4:7).

7. When Christians profess apostolicity, they also draw attention to the permanent responsibility of the Church to transmit the living testimony of the apostles. This is the role of ministries in the various forms they have taken since the beginnings of the Church. Like the ministry of the apostles, the ministries of the Church are given and maintained by the power of the Holy Spirit. There has been a great diversity of forms in the ministries accomplished in the Spirit and made effective by his power, and Christians are far from being agreed in the way they evaluate them. But they believe that the Church is apostolic because it continues faithfully, by the grace of God, the mission, the preaching and the ministry which it has received from the apostles. For many Churches, this is the fundamental significance of the apostolic succession. Thus, from this fidelity there results a much broader view of the apostolic succession than that which confines itself to legal categories. New possibilities here take shape in the direction of a consensus between the Churches.

8. It is in fact in respect of various conceptions of the ministry that the contemporary Churches discover some of their most serious divisions. However, even in this domain, significant agreements can be found. Three examples of this are:

(a) The conviction that, in the life of the Church, the apostolic preaching transmitted by Scripture and Tradition, the apostolic ministry, and life in accordance with the Gospel are inseparable. All three are essential to its apostolicity.

(b) The conviction that in spite of many changes in the course of history in the conceptions and functions of ministry, these changes are not all necessarily prejudicial to the continuity of the Church with its apostolic origins. It must constantly affirm its responsibility in the continuation of the original mission of the apostles, within the unfolding design of God and in changing situations. It is by a greater fidelity to this mission that it will eventually be able to renew in a spirit of penitence its conception of its ministry.

(c) The conviction that one of the principal objects of the ministry is the accomplishment of the missionary vocation of the Church in submission to the Holy Spirit and in the expectation of the Lord.

9. From very earliest times the various conceptions of apostolicity have often expressed differences which were not only legitimate but also fruitful; sometimes, on the other hand, they were sources of division in the Church. Ecumenical discussions in the ordinary way uncover these variations. It will suffice to mention here the discussions on the relative importance of unbroken succession in the episcopal office, fidelity to the teaching of Scripture, the safeguarding of the Church's doctrine, the exercise of a charismatic power, the continuity of the apostolic faith. While mentioning these controversies (always more subtle and complex than their mere listing suggests) it should be remembered that from the beginning an important aspect of the apostolic vocation was the effort made to maintain unity (even between the apostles themselves) by overcoming their differences. The ecumenical labor of today is a sign that the Churches are pledged to go thoroughly into this aspect of apostolicity.

## PART TWO APPENDICES: AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

### Appendix I: 'Apostle' in the New Testament

The concept of 'apostolicity' is integrally related to the role of the apostle in New Testament times. The various Christian Churches have always appealed, in different ways, to the description given of the apostles by the New Testament. Such appeals are bound to feel the impact of recent exegetical studies of the 'apostle' in New Testament times, studies to which scholars from all Christian groups have contributed and which compel all Churches to examine their positions more thoroughly.

#### 1. *Results of Critical Study of the New Testament Description of the Apostles*

There is no consistent portrait of the apostle in the New Testament. Historians have discerned several aspects of the vocation of the apostles but have not settled the degree of importance to be attached to each aspect: the work of the apostles in handing on and preserving the teaching of Jesus; their function as bearers of an authority to preach the Gospel, exorcise evil spirits, forgive sins, celebrate the sacraments, settle disputes, discipline ministers and members; their presence in the Church as messengers of judgment and final salvation, as heralds and forerunners of the kingdom of God and, therefore, as mediators of the Holy Spirit of the last days.

This diversity of function and conception is to some extent the result of historical development. There is, moreover, striking unanimity on the point that the apostle is someone who has been *sent* as witness of the risen Jesus. Every New Testament view of the apostle and his function reflects some version of this idea of 'envoy', depending on the situation in which the New Testament writer lived and on his view of the question of the Church's continuity. Confining ourselves to two of the New Testament views, those known respectively as the Lucan and the Pauline views, we find that for Luke the apostles are the twelve (exclusively or *par excellence*?) and therefore those who were witnesses of Jesus' earthly ministry. Consequently the picture constructed by Luke stresses the role of the apostle as guarantor of the tradition about Jesus. Paul's view makes room for many other apostles apart from the twelve and does not include the idea of witness to the earthly ministry of Jesus. The Pauline view stresses more the missionary aspect of the apostle. (Scholars are not altogether in agreement how far these views are contradictory or complementary. Nor do they agree as to whether Luke's view is wholly a product of the second Christian generation or reflects an earlier, Jerusalem view of the apostle.)

The authority of the apostles is also the subject of discussion. Obviously they exercised authority over the communities but was this authority itself centralized in Jerusalem? In what way did the exercise of apostolic authority depend on the community's consent? The New Testament offers no clear answer to the question whether the apostles appointed other ministers or successors and if so, how. Nor are we certain that the same procedure was followed in all the Churches at the same time.

#### 2. *Problems Arising for the Churches from these Critical Studies*

(a) Given this diversity in presentation of the role of the apostles, how can a Church insist on one particular role as normative? Cannot more or less divergent views of apostolicity find support in the differences between the descriptions of the apostle given in the New Testament? By stressing one particular aspect have not the Churches failed in their duty to respect the fullness of the many-faceted apostolic ministry?

(b) Sent out to bear witness to the world — witness of the risen Jesus — the apostle is oriented both to a present and future situation and to the past. This same tension is evident in the Lucan and Pauline views. In order to claim apostolicity a Church should, in the same way, have both an anamnestic or conservative element looking back to the heritage received by the apostles from Jesus, and an eschatological element prepared to meet new situations with new responses. Which of these elements takes priority? By what rules should a Church combine loyalty to the tradition with the obligation to be flexible in its missionary role?

(c) If the apostles had authority to govern, how is this authority to govern exercised in the structure of the Churches today? Churches which hold that the apostles received their authority independently of the consent of the community must ask themselves whether the visible expression which this authority must have had is also of divine institution and how such authority can be exercised *in the service* of the communities thus governed. Churches which hold that the authority of the apostles to govern depended on the consent of the community must ask themselves how then in

practice Christianity can avoid becoming a mere matter of majority opinion.

(d) How are we to understand the normative character of the apostolic teaching or doctrine? On the one hand, the apostles were men of their time, with a view of the world which is not ours. There is, therefore, in their teaching an element which is relative in value. On the other hand, one function of the apostles was, by the power of the Spirit, to unmask and oppose false apostles and, even today, fidelity to their teaching should still be a criterion for unmasking error. Have some Churches made the apostolic teaching so rigid a norm as to stifle new points of view which are vital to a living Christianity? Have other Churches been so precipitate in accepting such deviations from the apostolic teaching that they have become incapable of recognizing false apostles?

(e) If it is impossible to be sure that offices such as the episcopate were directly established by the apostles or that those holding this office were appointed by the apostles, what implications does this have, in questions about the union of Churches, for relations between, and perhaps for the union of Churches some of which have the 'apostolic succession' and others do not, or else hold only a minimizing view of it? The existence in the New Testament of other ministries besides that of the apostles should face modern Churches which have an episcopal structure with the question of how the episcopal function is related to the other ministries. Churches which do not have an episcopal structure, on the other hand, should ask themselves how far the apostolic authority is in practice safeguarded in their structures.

## **Appendix II: Identity, Change and Norm**

How can any Church today, of any kind, be identical, particularly in structure and doctrine, with the Christianity of the early centuries and, above all, with primitive Christianity? For a Church today to claim to be in some sense or other the same as that of primitive Christianity, it must surely conform to that Church, not in every respect of course but certainly in essential characteristics.

To minds specially aware of what history and historicity means, such material identity has become extremely problematical.

This is not a confessional problem in the sense of being peculiarly Protestant or Catholic; it is a problem facing all confessions. It would seem that no Church has frankly faced this problem, indeed, the very reverse; it is often evaded in the manner in which appeal is made to Scripture or Tradition.

From the second century at the latest, the identity of the later Church with the Church of the apostles whom Jesus Christ himself called was tested by the criterion of the apostolicity of its institutions and forms of life, in particular its ministry and doctrine. The Church of the apostles as well as the apostolic teaching and institutions served as the norm for all subsequent periods in the history of the Church.

This was what the Scripture principle or the notion of Tradition, was intended to express. This at once raises two questions: (1) Within the framework of such a perspective can the inevitability and the importance of the modifications undergone by the Church in the course of its history be evaluated precisely? (2) If we adopt this view of Christian identity as conformity with the Church of the apostles, do we have enough information available to fix a norm for the inevitable changes taking place in the Church?

Modern research into 'the history of the Church has shown clearly how, from the third and fourth centuries and still more in the middle ages and the modern period, the form and life of the Church and the manner of presenting its doctrine have differed from those of primitive Christianity. How far can these changes be regarded as an organic development of primitive Christian elements? Some modern accounts of the Church's history have made considerate use of the key idea of organic growth; others, on the contrary, have either rejected this as quite unacceptable or else greatly restricted its use. But, if we have to abandon the view that major changes are an organic development of primitive elements, can we nevertheless continue to speak of their Christian legitimacy? Do not these changes simply amount in fact to a departure from apostolic times and therefore from the Christian norm? This seems to be the inescapable conclusion unless we distinguish between what is apostolic, regarded as a norm, and features peculiar to the apostolic age, including even some features of its ecclesiastical institutions and creedal formulas. Is there any room for a normative notion of what is apostolic, one which would not interpret the Church's history in terms of the ideal of a transformation of both the world and the Church which is progressive and from the Christian standpoint inevitable? For the mission of the apostles develops in the Church beyond what the apostles themselves did and is directed to a fulfillment which the Church and all mankind is still traveling towards. It would be necessary to verify the extent to which the idea of mission justifies the actual changes which have taken place in the course of history and, at the same time, ask whether it provides us with a criterion by which to distinguish between changes in line with the valediction of the risen Lord and those which deviate from this Christian mission and so obscure this mandate and the nature of the Church.

The identity of the Church in spite of and through all changes is to be found, basically, in the faith of its members, a faith which in all ages conforms to the unique and comprehensive truth of God in Jesus Christ. If God revealed himself in Christ, then the knowledge Christians have of their faith can never depart from the truth either completely or in all the Church's members, however far these may be from its fullness and however many the deviations resulting from this. It can sometimes happen, however, that the majority of Christians may be mistaken in their understanding of the faith. Here again, therefore, the problem arises of a criterion by which to determine the true understanding of the Church's living unity and identity, as presupposed by the content of the faith.

The traditional norms for understanding the faith — Scripture, creed, the magisterium of bishops in the apostolic

succession—have themselves undergone changes in the course of history; in the evolution of biblical exegesis, in the history of dogmas, in the origin and development of the episcopal function and its exercise. Can these norms be regarded as unchangeable and set them over against historical development? If not, can the norm itself and the knowledge one has of it be thought of as subject to historical change? If we are to avoid an absolute relativism, where are we to find a norm for this evolutionary process itself?

The universal saving truth of Jesus Christ, accessible to us in the apostolic writings, is able to govern the course of the Church's history because it is itself the starting point for the apostolic mission and for the transformation which this mission accomplishes and will accomplish in the world and in the people of God. In fact this basic Christian norm seems to include an element of historical change. Christ not only came once; he is to come again in even greater majesty. This surely points to a change which, far from disintegrating the reality of Christ, is directed on the contrary to its fulfilment. How far does this permit the changes which have taken place in the history of the Church to be integrated within the tension between Christ's first coming and his return (a tension which underlies the dynamic of the Church's mission)?

The one and the same Christ Jesus is present to the circle of believers by the gift of the Holy Spirit who gives life to the tradition of the Church in the communion of faith and the sacraments and, at the same time, in the community which these believers together constitute. It is he who is the unity of his Body through the centuries and in every place in the world; through the presence of his Spirit there exists a 'communion of saints'. It is he too who is the norm of the understanding of faith; his Spirit, the Spirit of truth, leads into all truth (John 16:13). It is Jesus Christ who, in this twofold way, is the guarantor of the Church's identity. But can the one Christ be designated the norm of the understanding of faith in a uniform and definitive manner? However essential the effort to arrive at a common knowledge and confession of the saving faith may be to ensure the only salvation of mankind in the one Christ, it might well be that the definitive knowledge of how Jesus Christ is the only norm of the Church cannot be achieved by the Church during the time of its pilgrimage because, even for the Church which has received the first fruits, the glory of Christ in his second coming and, therefore, his final revelation still belong to the future. Does this approach merely make possible an openness to historical changes and to ecumenical diversity or does it also permit us to understand the unity of the Church as something which is expressed in this historical process in a catholicity opposed to all unilateral uniformity, open to diversity and precisely in this way comprehensive? Do we not have to understand historical changes and plurality of forms of Christian faith and life as essential marks of Christ's presence as the one Savior of the multitude in the time between his first coming and his parousia?

### **Appendix III: Ministry and Episcopate**

1. The Church of God is not simply the eschatological assembly of believers in Christ but is also sent by Christ to gather all those whom God calls to salvation. This Church is catholic and apostolic in essence. It has therefore to act in a catholic and apostolic way.

The Holy Spirit has been given to the Church in order that it may serve the sole Mediator and his work of salvation achieved once and for all, for all men of all times (catholicity). The Church is totally ministerial. The way in which it fulfills its *diakonia* must be determined in accordance with the original mission and ministry of the apostles (apostolicity).

2. Considerable differences emerge at once in the view taken by the various Churches and their theologians of the essential elements in the ministry of the apostles. It is above all in the New Testament that the Churches engaged in the ecumenical dialogue seek the light they need to interpret or surmount these divergences. But what is striking in the New Testament is that it presents at the heart of the first Christian communities a great variety of ministries which were formed around and following the apostles. Whether these ministries were spontaneously charismatic or institutionally established as 'authorities', they all appeared in close conjunction with a gift of the unique Spirit, the Holy Spirit, which makes them different but *complementary*. It is together that they serve to 'build up' the Body of Christ.

3. In the course of its historical development, the episcopate seems to have been understood first of all as a function of pastoral 'supervision' within certain communities. Many historians think that this function was then exercised by several ministers together, doubtless by colleges of presbyters. It is at the beginning of the second century, in the letters of Ignatius of Antioch, that the episcopate appears clearly as a well-defined office entrusted to a single minister who in presiding at the Eucharist embodies the ecclesial unity. This universal structure which comprises the three ranks of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, gradually consolidated itself and soon became general. Primarily pastoral and liturgical at the beginning, it increasingly assumed juridical powers. The question arises as to the extent to which (particularly in the Churches of the West) categories borrowed from civil Roman law influenced a certain conception of the episcopate and of the hierarchical structure of the Church.

At present agreement between the Churches on the question of the episcopate is proving difficult. The first thing which seems to be needed is for the Churches to know precisely what the positions taken by each other are in this matter of ministerial structure.

4. In the *Orthodox Church* the idea of 'apostolic succession' is fundamental. Yet all ministry, including the episcopate's ministry, is inseparably bound up with the people of God assembled and united in each community. Great importance is also attached to ordinations being performed only within the setting of the Eucharistic assembly. The episcopate itself owes its central position to the fact that each bishop is the head of his community and it is he who presides at the eucharistic celebration. Episcopal ordinations—although they are the business of the entire Church in virtue of the

participation of at least three bishops at these ordinations — do not create an *ordo in absoluto* but an *ordo* within and related to a particular local church. It is only through the medium of this community that each bishop is linked inseparably to the other bishops, to the entire Church and to the line of the apostles. It is in this way that their ministry is catholic and apostolic.

5. The *Roman Catholic Church* teaches that the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are essentially different (*essentia*) and not simply in degree. But they are reciprocally directed the one to the other, and — the one and the other, each in its way — participate in the unique priesthood of Christ. On the subject of the ministerial priesthood the Councils of Trent, Vatican I and Vatican II have defined the following points:

The hierarchy has been instituted in the Church by a divine disposition. Order is a true sacrament and properly so called. The bishops who succeed to the apostles, belong to the supreme degree of hierarchical order. They are superior to presbyters and to deacons and possess a power of jurisdiction which is ordinary and immediate: a gift made them by the Holy Spirit in ordination.

The Second Vatican Council teaches in particular that the fullness of priesthood is conferred by episcopal consecration and that this consecration with the *munus* of sanctifying also confers that of teaching and of governing. But these *munera* by their very nature cannot be exercised except in hierarchic communion with the head of the (episcopal) college and with its members. This episcopal college, of which the pope is the head, is charged with a universal ministry and enjoys for its exercise a full and supreme authority. Each bishop is equally the principle and the foundation of unity at the heart of the local Church where he exercises the ministry of the Word, of sanctification and of government, assisted by his presbytery and by his ministers. Finally, the bishops as members of the episcopal college, should provide together the concern of the universal Church, in particular that of missions.

6. The *Churches of the Reformation* were led to interpret the ministry from the standpoint of the preaching of the Gospel: ministers should serve in preaching the Gospel and in administering the sacraments. According to the sixteenth-century Reformers, the hierarchy of the Roman Church, in its entirety, was not proclaiming authentically the Word. The uninterrupted succession of its bishops since the time of the apostles, which it asserted, had therefore proved ineffective and even debatable. In the notion of succession, the theologians of the Reformation had emphasized rather continuity in the proclamation of the Word and in the teaching of sound doctrine. Many of them also underlined the pastoral function of bishops and hoped to re-establish this function by reforming it. If then a large number of Protestant Churches seem no longer to have an episcopal ministry, this is still no reason why they should not be able to have one. Some of them are showing today that they are in fact ready to reintroduce such a ministry for the pastoral organization of a particular district. Others consider it as a structure which has definitely had its day, incompatible with a conception of the Church in which pride of place belongs to the believing people. In any case, the uninterrupted succession as an essential element of the ministry is felt to be called in question by the very experience of the Reformation. So too with the sacramental character of ordination and the inherent difference between the function of ministers and that of simple believers.

7. The *Anglican Communion* affirms as a fact of history that the threefold ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons has always existed in the Church from apostolic times. At the time of the Reformation, the Church of England took great care to maintain the principle of the apostolic succession of bishops. A certain number of theologians maintain that the episcopate belongs to the *esse* of the Church; others, doubtless the majority, are content to affirm that it belongs simply to the *bene esse* of the Church. The present trend emphasizes the pastoral aspect of the episcopal office.

8. All the views outlined here contain a more or less explicit reference to the fundamental *mission* of the apostles by Christ and the authority which they received from him. It is therefore by starting from this mission and considering the way in which the Church should fulfil it in order to meet the needs of each period and of each place that an ecumenical study of the ministry seems to become possible. It would also seem that an episcopate regarded as a pastoral function of *unity* and of ecclesial co-ordination should be studied, in particular from the standpoint of the Church's *catholic action*.

9. It would be useful in any case for the Churches engaged together in the ecumenical dialogue to try to answer together the following questions:

(a) How can an institutional pastoral ministry be justified and co-ordinated taking into account the royal priesthood of believers and charismatic vocations?

(b) What is the criterion which allows us to discern in the ministry of the apostles that which is absolutely inalienable and specific from that which is transmissible to ministers who continue certain of their functions?

(c) Does not the local character of the ministry conceived in this way impede the missionary task which falls to the Church?

(d) To what extent can the episcopate as it has been defined in the Roman Catholic Church be justified by the New Testament message and by a historical evolution (hierarchical nature, sacramentality, priesthood, jurisdiction, etc.)?

(e) Does such an episcopate express or cloud the catholic and apostolic being of the Church? Does it favor or thwart its catholic and apostolic action?

(f) How do the Churches of the Reformation manage to manifest their ecclesial continuity throughout the ages?

(g) How do they avoid the extremes of spiritualism or of individualism?

(h) How do they reconcile the authority of preaching and the fundamental equality of all members of the community?

(i) By what means do they wish to preserve the episcopate which they would be prepared to reintroduce from

the risk of being absorbed in administration and thus losing its spiritual character?

#### **Appendix IV: The Sacramental Aspect of Apostolicity**

The foundation of the Church's apostolicity is the mission given to Jesus Christ, namely, to accomplish the eternal design of God for the salvation of mankind, 'to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad' (John 11:52).

1. Christ Jesus is the sign of the Father's love; he is both the proclamation and the implementing sign of salvation (cf. Tit. 2:11; Phil. 2:8-9). As the one who implements the saving design of God, he is called by Paul: the '*Mysterion tou Theou*' (Col. 2:2, 4:3). The mystery of God's salvation is not a system of truths, but Christ himself, accomplishing the eternal design of God in the history of mankind. The most important events in this accomplishment of God's design—the death and Resurrection of Christ—should be proclaimed by the apostles to every creature.

2. With reference to the '*mysterion tou Theou*' sacramentality means the presence in the Church, by the power of the Holy Spirit, of the eschatological salvation of Christ. It is by this presence that the Church proclaims the death and Resurrection of Christ so that this proclamation always has a sacramental aspect.

This proclamation at each moment of history does not simply point back to these past events in the life of Jesus, it is communion in the *mysterion* and it also announces the future *parousia* when the risen Christ, by the Holy Spirit, will have completed his mission (cf. 1 Cor. 15:24-28): to gather all mankind—so far as men receive him in faith—and the whole cosmos, into himself and therefore both into the Father. But there is more. In his death and Resurrection, Christ is the sign which accomplishes this eschatological completion (cf. 1 Cor. 1:4-9). He fulfils this role of implementing sign of the *parousia* in the entire history of salvation although in a variety of ways each of which expresses his personal presence among us. Where two or three are gathered in the name of Christ (cf. Matt. 18:20) there is already a personal presence of the risen Christ. Where the holy Scriptures are read in the Church, there is his personal presence since it is he himself who speaks to us in his Word. He is equally present in the sacraments.

3. The sacraments demonstrate visibly to believers how the essence of the universal apostolic task is precisely the proclamation of the death and Resurrection of Christ. Paul explains baptism by using the image (Rom. 6:4-5) of our union with the death and Resurrection of Christ. And Christ on the eve of his Passion instituted the Eucharist as a sign which, by representing (actualizing) his death, also proclaims the fulfilment in the *basileia tou Theou* (Mark 14:25 and 1 Cor. 11:26). In other words the eschatological situation has *already* entered into the history of mankind, although under the limiting sign of death, but a death overcome in the victory of the Resurrection of Christ.

But the sacraments were instituted by Christ as a realization, in the earthly 'aeon' a provisional and veiled realization of the eschatological salvation; in this sense the eschatological state has not *yet* been realized.

4. The sacraments thus at the same time symbolize and effect a union with the death and Resurrection of Christ. It is by this union that, where the Gospel is 'purely' preached and the sacraments 'rightly' administered, the communion of believers is constituted as *the holy Church*.

It thus becomes clear that the fact of proclaiming the death and Resurrection of Christ points back to these past events and announces the *parousia*, but furthermore represents (actualizes) the personal presence of the risen Lord. It is precisely this task which Christ has entrusted to his apostles and through them to his Church.

#### *Conclusions and Questions*

We are all agreed that the apostolicity of the Church consists in fidelity to the proclamation of the death and Resurrection of Christ, in the faithful continuation of the universal mission given first of all to the apostles.

1. We are thus agreed that the apostolicity of the Church includes not only the faithful preaching of the Gospel but also the communication of the 'Pneumatic' presence of Christ in other ways, in particular through the sacraments. But we must not forget that the preaching of the Gospel, the response of faith and the sacraments are inseparably united: all the sacraments are sacraments of faith, born of the Word and nourished by the Word. All the Churches should ask themselves whether, in the light of the *mysterion tou Theou* they have respected the true balance between Word and sacraments. And this not only in their doctrine but also in their worship: prayers, hymns, litanies, and in the central act, namely the Eucharist. The Churches should also ask themselves whether the sacramental aspect of their apostolicity necessarily implies that the apostolic succession in the ministry can only be assured by a sacrament of ordination.

2. Does not the personal presence of Christ sanctify the communion of believers in their totality by the union of this communion with Christ in his Body? The Churches should ask themselves if their essential sanctity does not then imply that they should show themselves distinct from the world even while professing their solidarity with the world? On the other hand are the Churches really aware of the fact that their sanctity (like their unity, their catholicity, and their apostolicity) will never be perfectly realized in this *aeon*? That in them sanctity coexists with sin, cause for *skandalon* and hindrance to the Gospel? Are they aware of needing to beg incessantly, as Churches, God's pardon, of always needing constantly to be converted to him?

#### **Appendix V: Conciliarity and Primacy**

The Church is a community, a communion. It has to achieve and express this unity both at the universal and local levels. It expresses its catholicity first of all by constantly founding in all places in the hearing of the Word and in the celebration of the Eucharist new particular communities. But it expresses it equally in knowing itself to be in all places one

and the same people which as such grasps and announces the truth of the Gospel and which constantly overcomes the conflicts which threaten to divide it.

The New Testament shows us clearly that the communities consulted one another and took responsibility for one another. We need only recall the activity of the apostles, of the prophets (cf. Agabus), the exchange of messengers, etc. The epistles which have come down to us in the New Testament are themselves evidence of this sense of universality. This accord between the communities covers not only major declarations having creedal status but even rules of behavior. 'We recognize no other practice, nor do the Churches of God' (1 Cor. 11:16).

The Church imperatively needs conciliar forms if it wishes to maintain and constantly renew this universal communion. The word 'conciliarity' is used here to denote the communion in which the different local Churches are joined. It is an essential feature of the Church; this term has always been kept for representative assemblies which examine problems and deal with them with the claim to be heard by the Church. The Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) is an example. Examples of conciliarity are found in various forms throughout the entire history of the Church.

In what structures should the universal community be expressed? Answers vary. Whereas on the one hand primary emphasis is placed on the constant freedom of the Church to provide itself with structures in accordance with a just appreciation of the existing situation and of missionary needs, on the other hand, it is argued that the foundations of a fixed structure are given in the New Testament, that they were developed in the ancient Church and that they remain obligatory for the Church in every age: the Church can only demonstrate her catholicity if it adheres to the structures established by Christ. Neither of these points of view is held in an exclusive manner. Even the Churches which are in principle in favor of freedom to develop new structures regard it as important to conform to the basic affirmations of the New Testament on the essence of the Church. And where stress is laid on fidelity to established structures room still remains for adaptations and recognition even of their necessity.

The structure established by Christ in the apostolate is variously interpreted. What role has the group called the twelve? In what sense did they form a college? What was Peter's place within the twelve? Whereas on one side it is held that Peter must have presided over the college and that in this role he must have had a line of successors namely bishops of Rome, on the other hand it is thought that it was in all bishops that Peter had a successor or again that the promises made to Peter hold good for the whole college and that the totality of bishops or even the entire people must be regarded as the successors. These differences and others lead to different conceptions of the way in which the community which the Churches form between themselves should be expressed.

Although these divergences have far from been surmounted, there is nevertheless agreement that they appear in a new light when discussed within the framework of recent redefinition of catholicity and apostolicity. The decisive question must be this: how is the conciliarity of the Church to be expressed *today*? The historical development has broadened the horizon to include mankind as a whole; the totality of men begins to become a quantity which can be grasped as a whole. How can the Church in this situation not only ensure conformity with its origins but, more than that, as a whole continue the mission of the apostles?

At the Second Vatican Council the Roman Catholic Church tried to answer this question by setting in the forefront of ecclesiology the communion of the people of God and by completing the traditional doctrine of the primacy by the notion of collegiality. Collegiality, a more restricted notion than conciliarity, means the common responsibility, falling on those who preside over the local Churches, to represent the people of God and to take the necessary decisions. It is common knowledge that many other Churches are beginning to adopt conciliar forms of a more universal kind. This twofold movement prompts the following questions:

1. The notion of conciliarity shows that representative assemblies are necessary in order to tackle problems arising in the life of the Church. The important thing is that the whole people of God should be represented by these assemblies.

(a) To what extent is it necessary for there to be a function restricted to one person alone in order that the people should be represented as constituting a whole? The Second Vatican Council speaks unequivocally of the dependence of the college in relation to the primacy but not vice versa of the dependence of the primate in relation to the college. Does not the notion of collegiality presuppose a reciprocal dependence?

(b) How are conciliarity and collegiality related?

(c) How can the voice of the whole people be made effective over and above the representation assured by the bishops?

(d) What is the role of prophetism in the universal community?

(e) What importance attaches to the reception by the people of God of conciliar decisions?

2. What role is attributed to Peter in the New Testament?

(a) What constitutes Peter's special and unique role? To what extent is he set above the other apostles?

(b) To what extent can one speak of a successor of Peter?

(3) 'The Spirit will lead you into all truth.' How is this promise fulfilled?

(a) What precisely does it mean to say that Christ does not abandon his people to error?

(b) Can the Church live as one and the same people in the truth of the Gospel without a central authority?

Without such an authority can it ever arrive at a conciliar practice?

(c) Can conciliar assemblies such as synods speak with the same authority when they are not derived from an authority given in the apostolic structures?

- (4) Does the Church need a geographical center?
  - (a) What relation is there between Jerusalem and the heavenly Jerusalem?
  - (b) Importance and meaning of fixed places in the life of the Church?
  - (c) Why Rome? And why not Rome?
- (5) When the Church manifests its universality today, what is the relation between this universality and the efforts made by men to manifest the universality of mankind? How can the service rendered by the Church in the demonstration of its inherent universality be made to be felt?

## Appendix VI: Unity and Plurality

If in the design of God the Church should be one in Christ through the action of the Holy Spirit, this unity can be understood in a variety of ways all of which affect the idea of catholicity and that of apostolicity. Too often the tendency has been to identify catholicity with uniformity in geographical expansion and to reduce apostolicity to the simple common denominator of a ministry deriving from the apostles; or else to regard the plurality and variety of ecclesial forms as the very essence of catholicity and the diversity of New Testament charisms transmitted through the centuries by the Holy Spirit as the only basis of the Church's apostolicity.

The following points an unity and plurality in God's design can be found in the Bible:

In the Old Testament, by a series of covenants, particularly that made with Abraham and that of Sinai, God chose for himself a people. But in Abraham *all* the peoples of the earth are to be blessed. And it is the *twelve* tribes which are the object of the unique Sinaitic covenant, several of these tribes having a special destiny in the one design of God. The pluralism found throughout the Old Testament can only be understood in terms of the gathering into unity, both for the people of Israel and for mankind as a whole. The Old Covenant already has an eschatological catholic dimension and presupposes that communion which means primarily obedience in a multiplicity of ways to the one saving design of God.

In the New Testament even greater stress is placed on the unity of God's design; unity through Jesus Christ, the one Mediator; a unity which is the work of the Spirit who gathers all the nations into a single people. Clearly this does not exclude real diversity. On the contrary, the working of the Spirit is shown in the freedom of all in Jesus Christ and in the variety of callings and charisms. Such diversity already emerged: (a) In the choice of the twelve and in the special apostolic mission of some; there are apostles who are the special ministers of this gathering into unity – Peter; Peter and the eleven; Peter, James and John; Peter and John; Peter and Paul. (b) At the theological level: Jewish-Christians and Gentile Christians; plurality of Gospel traditions; Paul, the Synoptics, and John do not have identical standpoints. (c) At the sociological and ecclesiological level, the multiplicity of local communities: Jerusalem, Antioch, the Churches founded by Paul. This multiplicity is also symbolized by the seven Churches of the Apocalypse, sign of completeness and of unity in diversity. The difficulty for each community is to discern what really comes from the Spirit of God and all the possible forms of false prophecy. For this reason, the apostolic witness has constantly to take its bearings from the design of God revealed in the risen Lord. It is the one Gospel *kerygma* which is the theme of the multiform announcement of Jesus as Lord; it is the Holy Spirit who, in the multiform announcement and in freedom, gathers a single people in different places and in different ways. The communion of one and all with Jesus in the Holy Spirit is expressed in concrete forms of which baptism, the Eucharist, the ministries, hospitality, the collection are the most obvious examples.

Mission commits the Church to show its apostolicity and its catholicity in various forms appropriate to the places and times in which it embodies the Gospel message. But its goal is the unity of all in Christ, as Christ is one with the Father, and ultimately it is the Spirit who is the agent and guarantor of this unity.

This plurality of forms of ecclesial life finds expression at the very threshold of the Church's history. No longer is Jerusalem the center of the communion, as in the time of Paul. A multiplicity of local Churches clustered around other larger local Churches (whether because of their true or supposed apostolic origin, or because of the political importance of the cities in which they were located, or for both these reasons). All these local Churches took pains to maintain among themselves communion of faith and sacramental life and to attest their agreement. agreed canon of Scriptures, mutual aid, hospitality, and, as far as possible, unanimous decisions about doctrine and discipline: local councils and, later, ecumenical councils. But at the same time, we find a certain variety of ecclesiastical organization (liturgical and disciplinary) and above all of theological outlook between the Churches. In practice the principal Churches served as centers of reference and tended to impose their views. Among them Rome occupied a special place, but there was no uniform interpretation of its role neither in Rome itself nor in the West nor the East. Rome was not alone in seeking to impose some sort of uniformity in every sphere of ecclesial life.

On the other hand, very early in the history of the Church, there were those who claimed a freedom to manifest charisms which could collide with institutional forms. In the second century the Montanist crisis broke; later on certain monastic and spiritual movements showed the same tendency (cf. Messalianism) which reappeared at a much more recent period, opposing freedom of the Spirit to institutional norms.

Moreover, although almost all accepted more or less consciously a certain liturgical, spiritual and disciplinary plurality, the same did not apply to pluralism in doctrinal formulation of the mystery of faith. It was found difficult to distinguish between the substance of the mystery of faith, identical everywhere and always, and the possible diversity of verbal formulation or of theological approaches (cf. the classic instance of the Antiochene and Alexandrian Christologies). This difficulty, which also involves the question of liturgical rites and formulas and the question of different spiritualities, is felt in all periods (East and West; problems of grace; relation of faith and works; problems of ministries; epiclesis; criteria of dogmatic orthodoxy). The various possible approaches to the mystery of the faith have often been confessionalized by an exclusivist attitude and this has frequently resulted in atrophied views of unity. Sometimes the desire to eliminate differences of approach has led to artificial simplifications and forced syntheses.

If we are to respect the catholicity and apostolicity of the Church which proclaims 'one sole Gospel in a plurality of forms and in the freedom of the Spirit, then all Churches today must consider the following problems.

- (1) Is it possible, in respect of the mystery of faith, to distinguish between the formulas and their content?
- (2) In respect of the unique communion in Jesus Christ, what significance has a hierarchy of truths of faith, all

of which have to be held in reference to Jesus Christ and are therefore incapable of being reduced to a least common denominator?

(3) Is it possible to distinguish between a common theological utterance and a variety of spiritual, liturgical and canonical traditions? Is the whole life of a Church expressed in its theology? Are the various traditions in some sense complementary?

(4) What relation is there between the real life of Churches in worship, preaching and spirituality and the common formulations they must hold in order to bear united witness in the world?

(5) What are the essential ecclesial structures (ministries) which correspond to what Christ willed so that, by the work of the Spirit, might be manifested that community of salvation which is intended to incorporate all men into Christ as one single people?

(6) Are there instances where rebellion against institutional structures can be an authentic expression of the freedom of the Spirit?

(7) Are there instances when the unity of the mission to the world requires us to rethink and reformulate dogmatic statements of the common faith? How can such instances be recognized?

(8) Have our Churches kept the complete, freedom which can be found in the Scriptures as one of the essential features of ecclesial life in Jesus Christ?

## Appendix VII: The Local Church and the Universal Church

According to Scripture there is only one people called by God, only one Church, Christ's Body, Christ's Bride. By the work of the Holy Spirit given by Christ, this people is destined to embrace all mankind, all creation, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Deriving from the proclamation of the Good News at Jerusalem, it is founded on the apostles and prophets, but it has also to carry this Gospel *to the whole universe*.

Each local community gathers together those whom God calls, in a particular place, and for this reason is also called Church. Wherever the Word is proclaimed and received in faith, wherever the Lord's Eucharist is celebrated, wherever the ministers serve the flock of God, there too the one Church of God is present.

By their very nature, the local Churches are open to the fullness of the mystery of Christ and to all men, irrespective of the differences of race and social class. Each local Church thereby shares already in the growth of all mankind to fullness in Christ. The universality of the Church is manifested in the communion of the local Church with all other Churches by the same faith, the same sacraments, the action of the same Spirit. This communion is also expressed by the concord between ministers of the different Churches who govern them in the name of the Lord and are mutually recognized by the different Churches as ministers of the Word and sacraments for the one people of God. This communion finds expression, for example, in hospitality, in the collection for the 'saints' in Judea and Jerusalem.

The history of the ancient Church is somewhat reticent about the origins of the episcopate but it is fairly certain that it was early established almost everywhere, so that from the middle of the second century one finds an identical conception of the pastoral ministry in the community and of the role of the bishop in the maintenance of communion with other Churches.

In the course of the second century we encounter two complementary affirmations of this kind: where the bishop is, there is the catholic Church (cf. Ignatius); 'Where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God and where the Spirit of God is there is the Church and all grace' (Irenaeus, *AH*, III, 24). The one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church was thus present and manifested in the local Church united to the person of its bishop; it was at the same time present and active wherever the Spirit of God was. Today, in contrast, the different confessions discuss to what extent the union of the local Church with the person of the bishop or of the legitimate ministry is a manifestation of the one Church in a particular local Church.

Nevertheless, the local Church is the visible 'place' where the people of God is gathered together by the Word and sacrament, guided by the Spirit of Christ present invisibly in the service of his ministers and led to attest to the world the salvation accomplished in Jesus Christ.

Each local Church, on the other hand, by its very nature, is both linked historically with the apostles and set within a sociological context in which the Gospel is 'incarnate' in a culture, at a particular time and place. It therefore has its own lineaments: liturgical, spiritual, and theological, but also sociological. In the context of modern civilization, however, it is more and more the case that the traditional structure of the local Church no longer corresponds to the given sociological facts of today. Thus the local Church, in practice, finds itself centered more on the celebration itself than on its own geographical character.

In the life of the local Church, the celebration of the liturgy, and in particular the Eucharist, holds an important place as constituting it the Body of Christ and demonstrating it to be the Church of God. Through the Eucharist, all members of the people of God are in communion with each other, since they partake of one loaf, the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 10:27) and all the local Churches are only one and the same Church of God.

This is why excommunication and the breaking off of communion (which are firstly sacramental acts and only then have canonical implications) express the extremely serious position in which an individual or a community finds itself. Deprivation of eucharistic communion is intended to lead the member concerned, or the community subjected to it by other local communities, to repentance and to conduct worthy of their calling, to action becoming a child of God and a Church of God.

On the other hand, to bear clear witness to men, the local Church needs to give concrete form to its solidarity with the other local Churches; whence the need for regional organizations, councils, or a world organization which manifests this common mind in communion. But these sporadic forms (councils) or permanent forms (organizations) should not obscure the eschatological significance of catholicity. The fullness of catholicity will only be fully expressed in the eschatological future. The universality of a council and the catholic significance of a regional or world organization ought also to be related to the eschatological anticipation of the fullness of catholicity expressed by them in various degrees of completeness.

In practice there are many factors which reopen the question of the meaning of the local Church and open the way to find new dimensions for it.

(1) There seems to have been on the part of Churches have become strongly centralized in the course of history a rediscovery of the significance of the local Church as the highest expression of the Church of God (for the Roman Catholic Church, cf. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of Vatican II, no. 41). On the other hand, Churches which have undergone a kind of confessional fragmentation seem to be rediscovering the need for a certain expression of catholicity at the world level. Are these two movements, apparently in opposite directions, complementary and making for the same goal, namely, the expression of catholicity as anticipation of the eschatological fullness?

(2) If the local Church in its celebration of the Eucharist (Word and sacrament) is the highest expression of the

one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, what is the meaning of a universalist conception of the Church which regards local Churches merely as parts of the whole?

(3) What is the relation between the local Church, on the one hand, and the diocese and the parish, on the other? If in fact we define the local Church in terms of the place where the Word is preached and heard in faith and the sacrament celebrated in a given community, what possible ecclesiological significance can the modern diocese and the modern parish have? To what extent are they bound up with the old conception of the *polis* and of the village? What in future gives the local Church stability and continuity as an expression of the catholicity and apostolicity of the Church?

(4) Have the liturgical communities which are bound up with sociological stratifications different from those of the past a new importance in this expression of catholicity and apostolicity – cultural and professional groups, etc.? In that case would the stability and continuity of the local Church in these new forms be even more dependent on large ecclesiastical organizations for expressing the Church's catholicity and apostolicity?

(5) Who has authority to pronounce excommunication as defined above? Those with pastoral charge of the local Churches? Or is the consensus of the whole community needed for the sentence of excommunication? Does an excommunicated individual or community have a right of appeal to a higher court? What is the role of the collegiality of pastors in pastoral charge of the Churches? Possible role of a primate? Of an ecumenical council as representing the consensus of the whole people of God?

(6) Can two local Churches exist in one and the same place without schism in the ecclesiological sense? Here the problem of personal dioceses and various jurisdictions and 'rites' in one place within one communion arises. It is right to distinguish this problem without detaching it, however, from the problem of the presence of two or more 'Churches' of different communions in one and the same place.

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### ENDNOTES

1. Most of these papers appear in English in *One in Christ* 6, 3 (1970) 243-451; they have appeared in French in *Istina* 31, 1 (1969) 1-190; they will also be published in German in *Kerygma und Dogma*.
2. In the present section of our report we have been able to make certain common statements about the catholicity and apostolicity of the Church. We have, however, left aside the problem of defining the relation which exists in this context between 'the Church' and the different ecclesiastical bodies to which we belong. This relationship remains to be determined. Although we have not studied this matter in detail, we expect difficulties to arise which it will not be easy to resolve.
3. *Translator's Note:* The French original cites this New Testament text of Eph. 1:23 from the Jerusalem Bible. The English version used here is that of the Revised Standard Version.