

Vatican Council II

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Vatican Council

III

from John XXIII to Paul VI

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *Readers familiar with this pamphlet in an earlier version will recognize the following changes in this revised edition: 1) essays appearing for the second time have been shortened and updated; 2) one essay, that on the liturgy, has been dropped since its basic hopes found fulfillment in the action of the first session; 3) a lengthy analysis of the first session of Vatican II, by a Swiss Jesuit theologian-editor, now appears in full English text for the first time; 4) the bibliography has been revised to incorporate latest titles on the history of the first session.*

DONALD R. CAMPION, S. J.

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Vatican Council

II

First Session: October 11—December 8, 1962

Second Session: September 29, 1963—

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*The words of
Pope John XXIII,
echoed in turn
by Paul VI,
plot the course
of the Council.*

THE POPES AND THE COUNCIL

As regards the initiative for the great event which gathers us here, it will suffice to repeat as historical documentation our personal account of the first sudden welling up in our heart and lips of the simple words "Ecumenical Council." We uttered those words in the presence of the Sacred College of Cardinals on that memorable January 25, 1959, the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, in the basilica dedicated to him. It was completely unexpected, like a flash of heavenly light. . . . And, at the same time, it gave rise to great fervor throughout the world. . . .

In the daily exercise of our pastoral office, we sometimes have to listen, much to our regret, to the voices of persons who, though burning with zeal, are not endowed with too much sense of discretion or measure. In these modern times they can see nothing but prevarication and ruin. . . . We feel we must disagree with those prophets of gloom who are always forecasting disaster, as though the end of the world were at hand. . . .

The salient point of this Council is not, therefore, a discussion of one or another article of the fundamental doctrine of the Church. . . . For this a Council was not necessary. But from the renewed, serene and tranquil adherence to all the teaching of the Church in its entirety and preciseness, as it still shines forth in the acts of the Council of Trent and the First Vatican Council, the Christian, Catholic and apostolic spirit of the whole world expects a step forward toward a doctrinal penetration and a formation of consciences in faith-

ful and perfect conformity to the authentic doctrine. This, however, should be studied and expounded through the methods of research and through the literary forms of modern thought. The substance of the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another. It is the latter that must be taken into great consideration, with patience if necessary, everything being measured according to the forms and proportions of a teaching authority which is predominantly pastoral in character.

JOHN XXIII, *opening address of Council*, Oct. 11, 1962

The first session was like a slow and solemn introduction to the great work of the Council—a generous willingness to enter into the heart and substance of our Lord’s plan. It was necessary for brothers, gathered together from afar around a common hearth, to make each other’s closer acquaintance. . . . In such a vast gathering, it is understandable that a few days were needed to arrive at an agreement on a matter about which, in all charity, there existed with good reason sharply divergent views. But even this has a providential place in the triumph of truth, for it has shown to all the world the holy liberty that the sons of God enjoy in the Church. . . .

And now, Venerable Brethren, one’s glance turns trustingly to that phase of the work, seemingly silent, but none the less important, which opens up during these nine months of interval after your return to your sees. . . . Today’s celebration does not bring the work to an end; rather, the work that awaits all of us is of the greatest importance. . . . That activity will continue is made clear by the institution of a new commission composed of members of the Sacred College and of the episcopate and representing the universal Church. This commission’s duty is to pursue and direct the work during

these months and, along with the various conciliar commissions, to lay the firm foundations for the successful outcome of the ecumenical sessions. Thus, the Council really remains open during the next nine months of suspension of the ecumenical sessions properly so called.

JOHN XXIII, *address at close of first session*, Dec. 8, 1962

The pre-eminent part of our pontificate will be the continuation of the Second Vatican Council, on which are fixed the eyes of all men of good will. This will be the principal task for which we intend to spend all the energies which the Lord had given to us, in order that the Catholic Church, which shines in the world as the standard raised over far-off nations (Isaiah 5:26), may attract all men to itself, through the majesty of its organism, through the youthfulness of its spirit, through the renovation of its structure and through the multiplicity of its forces "out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation" (Apocalypse 5:9).

PAUL VI, *first public address as Pope*, June 22, 1963

We will resume, as already announced, the Ecumenical Council, and we ask God that this great event confirm in the Church its faith, refresh moral energies, rejuvenate and adapt its forms to the needs of the times, and so present the Church to the Christian brethren, separated from its perfect unity, in a way to make attractive, easy and joyous to them the sincere recomposition, in truth and charity, of the Mystical Body of the one Catholic Church.

We welcome with emotion . . . the heritage of our unforgettable predecessor, Pope John XXIII, who, filled with the Holy Spirit, brought about hopes that we deem it a duty and an honor not to betray.

PAUL VI, *homily at his coronation*, June 30, 1963

*This helpful
essay will inform
and orient
readers
about the meaning
of a council.*

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE COUNCIL

In the 1,600 years since Nicaea, the Catholic Church met in a general or ecumenical council 19 other times. The last of these meetings had been in Rome, December 8, 1869 to July 18, 1870, under Pope Pius IX. From the close of the last Council—hastened as it was by the outbreak of war in Italy at a time when the Pope and his fellow bishops had completed only a small portion of their scheduled program of action—almost a century would elapse before a similar event took place.

What Is a Council?

What is an ecumenical council? In general, a council is a meeting of clerics held under the authority of a prelate to transact business pertaining to the welfare of the Church. Such a meeting can take place at several levels. Here in the United States, for example, the American bishops gathered several times in the first half of the 19th century for a *provincial* council—an assembly of all the bishops in one ecclesiastical district or province—in this instance that of Baltimore, the mother archdiocese of the country. At a later date, when U. S. archdioceses had multiplied, the bishops and archbishops would meet for a *plenary* council—an assembly of all the

Drawing on the observations of American and European theologians, historians and sociologists, FR. DONALD R. CAMPION, S.J., an associate editor of AMERICA, here sketches the background to Vatican II.

bishops in one nation. Within recent years, plenary councils have been held, for the first time in each case, in the newly independent nations of the Philippines and India.

An *ecumenical* council, finally, is a meeting of the bishops and major prelates of the whole Church who are in union with the Holy See. It is one that is convoked by the Pope for the purpose of discussing and acting on matters of concern to the universal Church under the headship of the Roman Pontiff. There have been, in all, 20 such ecumenical councils in the 2,000-year history of the Catholic Church.

No council, it should be noted, is truly ecumenical unless it has been summoned by, or with the consent of, the Bishop of Rome. It is he, personally or through his representative, who presides at the council's sessions. It is he, too, who alone confers the necessary, final confirmation of any decrees passed by such an assembly. Thus, while it is true that an ecumenical council has supreme power over the entire Church, it exercises this power only in conjunction with the Pope. Its decrees, moreover, have no binding force unless they are confirmed by him and promulgated by his command.

The Pope is also the one who ultimately determines the agenda for a council. When a council is in session, however, any "Father" (a technical term meaning a major religious superior, bishop, archbishop or cardinal in attendance at the council with the right to vote in its deliberations) may, with the permission of the presiding officer, add questions to those proposed by the Bishop of Rome.

Why, indeed, did Pope John XXIII solemnly convoke this Council in the Apostolic Constitution *Humanae Salutis* of December 25, 1961? Why, the Catholic must ask himself, did all the prelates of the universal Church assemble in Rome as the meeting began in the Vatican on October 11, 1962? The answers to these and similar questions must be sought if a Catholic is to follow, as he should, the actual working of the

Council and participate in its spirit of inner renewal as a living member of the Church. Each Catholic likewise has a responsibility, in a time when so many outside the Church follow the affairs of the Council with remarkable interest and enthusiasm, to be ready to answer intelligently the questions of non-Catholics about this historic event.

Function of a Council

The basic function of a council is quickly defined. It is summoned to provide for the welfare of the Church. To spell out details of what a council can or actually will do is not so easy a task. Our most reliable guide in such a matter is history—and here the picture becomes complicated. Each council emerges from the records of the past with a distinct personality of its own. To quote from Msgr. Philip Hughes, the historian: “The history of the next council—how matters will go once the bishops meet—can never be foretold from the history of the past.”

It is true that the authority and basic function of a council will be the same as that of its predecessors. But, Msgr. Hughes reminds us, one thing “is never constant: the human reaction of the council’s component parts.” To understand why, one need only see the make-up and record of earlier councils.

One immediately evident division among the councils is that between the first eight and the twelve that came after them. The earlier group all took place in Eastern Europe or Asia Minor and were conducted by Greek-speaking ecclesiastics. The rest have been held in Italy, Germany or France, and their official language has been Latin.

Though laymen took an active part in the affairs of later councils, including that of Trent in the mid-16th century, it was in the East at the Third Council of Constantinople (680-81) that an Emperor presided at some of the sessions. It was

also in the East, at the Council of Chalcedon (451), that lay commissioners had to assist at the sessions to preserve order. (It must be remembered that the period of this council was one in which longshoremen in Mediterranean ports frequently ended their debates on whether Christ had one or two natures with a violent dockside brawl. So high did popular feelings run at the time.)

Even the frequency with which councils have been held has varied greatly over the centuries. Three took place, for instance, in the 70 years between 381 and 451; yet none was held for a period of 254 years from the Fourth Council of Constantinople (869) to the First Lateran Council (1123). Later on, an interval of 306 years elapsed between the closing session of the Council of Trent (1563) and the opening of the First Vatican Council (1869).

The 20 councils differ markedly also when one views the principal topics they dealt with and the patterns of organization and procedure they tended to adopt. The earlier or Eastern councils were made up mainly of bishops, though a few representatives of the Emperor might be present. They generally treated of theological or doctrinal questions, and their most notable products took the form of dogmatic definitions of Christian belief concerning the Trinity, Christology and the like.

Turning to the later councils, we find that a group of them, particularly those taking place in the three centuries from the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) to the Fifth Lateran Council (1512-17), dealt mostly with matters of ecclesiastical organization and the reform of canon law. Moreover, while some of them centered around the Pope as their guiding spirit and prime mover, others took on rather the appearance of what might better be described as an "Estates of Christendom." Thus, we note that only 183 out of the 600 active members of the Council of Constance (1414-18) were bishops; the re-

mainder included some 300 doctors of theology or canon law and a mixed assortment of lesser clerics and lay delegates. On the other hand, the records of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215)—often ranked as the greatest council prior to that of Trent (1543-63)—list 412 bishops in attendance, together with 800 abbots and priors of monastic orders and ambassadors from the Latin Emperor at Constantinople, the kingdoms of Germany, France, England, Aragon, Portugal, Hungary and Jerusalem, as well as from several of the then independent Italian states.

Coming down closer to modern times, one finds similar sharp differences between the two most recent councils, that of Trent (1545-63) and the First Vatican Council (1869-70). While the Council of Trent issued decrees on both doctrinal and disciplinary matters, the later council (because of the circumstances which brought it to an abrupt, premature halt) treated only of doctrinal issues. Moreover, though delegates of several secular powers took part in the earlier council, the First Vatican Council definitely rejected any intervention of princes, kings or even prime ministers. That some clearing of the air on this point was necessary seems evident when one recalls that Bismarck of Germany and Gladstone of England attempted at the time to influence the outcome of the deliberations.

Problems for the Council

For a clue to the main problems or topics which were most likely to win the Council's attention, we need only turn to the words of Pope John himself. A few months after his dramatic revelation of his plan for holding a council, he issued the encyclical *Ad Petri Cathedram* on June 29, 1959. In it, the Pope stated that "the most pressing topics will be those which concern the spread of the Catholic faith, the revival of Christian standards of morality and the bringing of

ecclesiastical discipline into closer accord with the needs and conditions of our times.”

Two and a half years later, when he announced in the Apostolic Constitution *Humanae Salutis* (December 25, 1961) that the Council would meet before the close of 1962, John XXIII also indicated the spirit in which the Church under his leadership would approach this labor:

The upcoming ecumenical council will be held . . . at a moment when the Church is caught up by an ever more consuming desire to restore and fortify its faith, to draw renewal of spirit from contemplating the image of its own remarkable unity. It likewise experiences a quickening sense of its duty not only to increase the efficiency of its life-giving efforts and advance the sanctification of its members, but also to further the diffusion of revealed truth and update all its other activities.

Clearly, the Holy Father here envisioned for the Council a task of breath-taking scope—the renewal or “reform” of the Church in our day.

What, specifically, are some of the critical issues confronting the Church in the world of the last half of the 20th century? Many of these are discussed by competent scholars elsewhere in this collection of essays. Here it will suffice to say that an ecumenical council meeting in our time cannot remain indifferent to the existence of ideological currents such as aggressive atheism or certain fatalistic and materialistic varieties of existentialism. Neither can it afford to hold aloof from the thrust of such popular movements of the century as decolonialization, socialization and the much-heralded “revolution of rising expectations.”

Within the Church, too, certain prevailing conditions must inevitably have their impact on the deliberation of the bishops

as they gather in the Vatican. It is not difficult to imagine, for instance, the range of questions that would be uncovered if the Council's attention should be directed to any aspect of certain current developments in the Catholic world. Three such would be the growth or expansion of Catholic populations in many lands; the tremendous upsurge of lay Catholic initiative in all areas of Church activity; the spread of multifaceted movements within the Church such as those commonly associated with the terms "worker priests," liturgical participation, historical and biblical research, missiological adaptation, catechetical techniques and religious sociology.

It seems unnecessary to cite any more statistics at this point in order to suggest the grave problems of pastoral care, organization and administration that face the Church in urban areas everywhere. When one further reflects on the uneven distribution of sacerdotal and religious manpower throughout the world, the enormity of these problems becomes increasingly apparent. To take only one index, we find that the ratio of priests to faithful in different lands varies from a high of one priest for every 500 Catholics in one area to a low of one for no less than 11,000 elsewhere.

Personnel of the Council

In size, the Second Vatican Council was clearly destined to make history. At the first ecumenical council, that of Nicaea (325), some 300 bishops were present. The Fourth Council of Constantinople (869-70), however, drew only 19 bishops—plus the papal legates—to its opening session; the number increased to 102—including 37 archbishops—at the final session.

The Fourth Lateran Council (1215), it will be recalled, stands out for its impressive total of 412 bishops and some 800 abbots and priors at its meetings, a figure that far surpassed that of the later Council of Trent (1545-63). That great

Council of the Counter Reformation started, in fact, with only 31 bishops and 48 experts in theology and canon law. It seems never to have attracted more than 400 members (including five generals of religious orders having the right to vote) to one or other of its sessions. Coming down to the last century, the First Vatican Council brought to Rome a total of 744 cardinals, bishops and major religious superiors out of a total of 1,050 individuals who had been invited to attend its meeting.

More interesting, and potentially more significant from a sociological viewpoint, than the phenomenal increase in number of participants attending Vatican II, was the prospect of an utterly unprecedented variety of racial and cultural backgrounds that would be present. We have already commented on the limited geographical and national representation at some of the early councils. The members, in those centuries, came almost entirely from the Middle East.

Later councils followed a similar pattern. Thus, while it is true that the Third Lateran Council (1179) counted among the bishops present some 19 who were German, 19 Spanish, 6 Irish, 6 English, and one each from Hungary and Denmark, most of the remaining bishops—out of 300 in attendance—came from France and Italy. The same was true of the Council of Trent (1545-63). Out of less than 400 active participants, almost 200 bishops came from Italy alone; there were, in addition, 31 from Spain, 26 from France and a thin handful from Germany.

Despite the amazing expansion of the Church to all corners of the world in the three centuries of exploration and colonization following on the Council of Trent, the make-up of the next council still presented an appearance of imbalance. More than 120 of the prelates at the First Vatican Council were English-speaking, though only 46 of these came from the United States. In all, about a hundred missionary bishops represented the Church in the vast new areas of Asia, Africa and

Oceania—but all of these were also members of the white race. We still find, moreover, that more than 200 out of the 643 residential bishops in attendance came from Italian sees.

The Second Vatican Council, by contrast with its predecessors, has offered an unparalleled image of the universality or catholicity of the Church. It became ecumenical in both the geographical and technical or theological sense of the term—representative of the entire inhabited world.

Using available statistics on the number of prelates actually eligible to attend the Council as a base, a breakdown of the potential membership of the Council—by continents—yields the following percentages: from Europe, 38 per cent; from North and South America, 31.5 per cent; from Africa, 10 per cent; from Asia and Oceania (including Australia and New Zealand), 20.5 per cent.

A comparison of the foregoing figures with percentages of the total Catholic population by continents reveals rather dramatically the shift that has taken place since the days of the First Vatican Council. The Catholics of the world are distributed in the following percentages: Europe, 47 per cent; North and South America, 43 per cent; Africa, 3 per cent; Asia and Oceania, 7 per cent. It is clear that the relatively new Catholic populations of Africa, Asia and Oceania have enjoyed a disproportionately large numerical representation in the latest Council. Despite the major shift this comparison reveals, one still encounters a notable imbalance also among the older Catholic peoples of Europe. Though Italy accounts for only 19 per cent of the total Catholic population of Europe, it has provided almost 40 per cent of the European “Fathers” of the Council.

Inevitably, in so vast an assembly outstanding personalities will tend in different ways to make their presence felt within and outside the Council’s formal meetings. We would not expect, it is true, a repetition of what Msgr. Hughes has called

“the stormy history of the first eight councils” within the walls of St. Peter’s in the 1960’s. Yet the facts of individual and group differences remain, and the elements of a dynamic human situation have been at hand in Vatican II.

There is, indeed, food for thought in Msgr. Hughes’ further comment on the meaning of those early contentions. One must recall, he suggests, who the actors in those bygone dramas were: “Greeks, Egyptians, Syrians.” These were men, the distinguished historian reminds us, whose “natural temperament and sense of nationality was not a whit less ardent than it can show itself to be in their descendants of the mid-20th century.”

Pope John and the Council

The Holy Father would have been the very last person to desire any such thing, yet it was impossible to suppose that the coming Council would not bear in large measure the stamp of Pope John’s own personality. Indeed, the creation of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, under Augustin Cardinal Bea, S.J., seemed evidence in advance that the workings of the Council would reflect the influence of the Pope’s spirit in a notable way. His words and actions after this Secretariat was established were to show again and again that John XXIII still cherished his initial hope that this Council would mark a significant step toward the holy goal of unity among Christians.

Another way in which one may expect to see the spirit of the late Pontiff mirrored in the affairs of the Council will be through the freedom with which the members go about their task of deliberating and acting on matters relating to the universal welfare of the Church. No words can better sum up the characteristic mentality of Pope John in this regard than the following passage from his encyclical of June 29, 1959, *Ad Petri Cathedram*:

“We can do nothing against the truth, but only for the truth” (II *Cor.* 13:8). But there are many points which the Church leaves to the discussion of theologians, in that there is no absolute certainty about them, and, as the eminent English writer John Henry Cardinal Newman remarked, such controversies do not disrupt the Church’s unity; rather they contribute greatly to a deeper and better understanding of her dogmas. These very differences shed in effect a new light on the Church’s teaching, and pave and fortify the way to the attainment of unity. . . . There is a saying attributed to various sources and sometimes expressed in different words, but it is none the less true and unassailable. It runs: “Unity in essentials, freedom in uncertainties, in all things charity.”

The more one meditates on these and similar expressions of the Pope, the stronger becomes one’s conviction that a key factor—under the movement of the Holy Spirit—in the workings of the Council was to be the mind and heart of this aged man summoned by God to initiate it in our day.

Anyone seeking a deeper insight into the spirit of John XXIII and its potential impact on the Council need only recall his words in the unexpected and wholly remarkable homily he preached at the Mass celebrated in St. Peter’s on the occasion of his coronation as Pope. He then observed that those who expected to find in him “a skilled diplomat and statesman” or “a scholar, an organizer of public life” would not “be on the right track.” For their ideal of a Pope “does not at all correspond to the true idea.” The new Pope, he advised his hearers that day, “has before his mind, more than all else, that wonderful Gospel picture which St. John gives, in the words of the Saviour Himself, of the Good Shepherd.”

Here, surely, we have a most helpful clue to understand-

ing the Holy Father's reasons for summoning the Church into an ecumenical council in our time. His conviction remained—as he subsequently stated in *Humanae Salutis*, the document of convocation issued on Christmas Day of 1961—that the event will yield three notable results.

The first of these, as Pope John envisioned it, will be a re-affirmation “of the Church, always living and always young, which feels the rhythm of the times and which in every century beautifies itself with new splendor, radiates new light, achieves new conquests.” Yet all the while, he continued, it remains “faithful to the divine image impressed on its countenance by its Spouse, who loves and protects it, Christ Jesus.”

Second, his prayerful hope was that the Council will respond to the thrilling challenge of “a time of generous and growing efforts . . . in different parts for the purpose of rebuilding that visible unity of all Christians which corresponds to the wishes of the Divine Redeemer.” This challenge, he suggested, will be met if the Council “should provide premises of doctrinal clarity and mutual charity that will enliven still more in our separated brothers a wish for the hoped-for return to unity and will smooth the way.”

Finally, with an eye to “a world which is lost, confused and anxious under the constant threat of new, frightful conflicts,” he held out the prospect that the Council by its labors will “offer a possibility for all men of good will to turn their thoughts and their intentions toward peace.”

The hopes that the pastoral heart of John XXIII entertained for the coming 21st Ecumenical Council of the Church of Jesus Christ were indeed ambitious. The outcome, of course, is in the hands of the Lord. But in the light of what one learns from the history of past councils and of what we can legitimately surmise about the distinctive character of the latest Council, it would be folly to despair of their fulfillment.

DONALD R. CAMPION, S.J.

*This balanced
report from Rome
clarifies
the true theological
issues at stake
in the first session.*

THE COUNCIL: FIRST SESSION

In the debate on the liturgy, there was much discussion of detail: the vernacular and to what extent it should be used; communion under both forms and in what circumstances; concelebration on every occasion when priests are together and pastoral considerations do not prevent, or only in common with the bishop and on very rare occasions. As for the breviary: how shall it be accommodated to the priest active in the ministry? Thus, for example, it was proposed that only three parts be left as a morning and evening prayer, suited to each day; in addition, a half-hour of reading from Scripture, the Fathers, and texts for meditation, each priest fulfilling this obligation when he has time. The evening prayer would truly be a prayer for the evening before retiring and not regarded as a midnight prayer. Or are there to be only minor changes, leaving untouched the present structure of this monastic prayer? Is the sermon at Mass on Sunday to be organically incorporated as a genuine part of the liturgy, with the obligation of hearing it as part of the Mass, or is it to be left as simply "desirable"?

In all these discussions, which were continued outside the

During the first session, the Swiss Catholic biweekly *Orientierung* carried regular "Letters" from its Rome-based editor FR. MARIO VON GALLI, S. J. These running comments on events as they unfolded in the Council remain permanently valuable because of the author's fair-minded judgments and his ability at each point to grasp the underlying theological issues. FR. MATTHEW J. O'CONNELL, S. J., professor of theology at Woodstock College (Md.), translated the following selections from three of these reports.

Council meetings, I have the impression that, fundamentally, there is a head-on meeting of two views of one and the same Church. You've perhaps been surprised that thus far nothing properly "theological" has appeared in the conciliar debates. Many feel uneasy at this. A great theologian and "expert" told me that he would attend no more public debates on the liturgy but prepare himself for the properly dogmatic themes which would sooner or later come up. I believe that, despite all appearances, he is making a mistake. For it is quite clear that the difference between the two parties on liturgical particulars really stems from their dogmatic concerns.

Behind the Liturgy Debate

For one group it is a matter of "concessions" to be made to a "movement" which is abroad and has, through the pushing of the "liturgists," gotten down among the laity. Where does this movement come from? Perhaps from a certain kind of community-think with its roots probably in the loneliness of modern man; perhaps simply from the general unification of the world; perhaps from a new acquaintance with the Eastern Churches and their stirring rites—but certainly not from dogmatically founded motives. Consequently, this group is certainly ready to make some concessions, but it retreats precipitately before every direct difficulty of any size (e. g., hygienic difficulties in granting the chalice to the laity).

For the other group, the active participation of the laity is a matter of life and death. These bishops are not looking for "concessions," but for the place of the Mass in the world of faith. Thus, there is passion in their struggle. If the Church cannot succeed in making sacramental rites and symbols, especially the Mass, transparent once again and a matter of living experience for every Catholic (the Catholic of *today*), then in their view their pastoral efforts have been crippled.

How have such opposed views arisen? I think that the difference is a deeply dogmatic one. For the first group, the Church is a primarily juridical structure, comparable to a pyramid. The topmost stone is the Pope, who contains all hierarchic power in himself. From this pinnacle there is a series of descending steps—bishops, priests—down to the broad foundation which is the faithful, whose task, really, is devoutly to assist at the prayer of the Church, offered in the name of all by consecrated persons. With this outlook goes a view of the sacraments that is concerned primarily with “validity.” Grace is regarded almost as an indeterminate, neutral (though supernatural) power. In this view, a certain active participation of the faithful is, of course, necessary. But since the sacrament is an *opus operatum*, a minimum of intention and an absence of fully frustrating obstacles suffices. A more intensive participation of the believer is fitting, indeed, given the dignity of the sacrament, but it ought not to be overly stressed.

This outlook has a tinge of nominalism to it; nominalism disliked organic conceptions and preferred to make everything depend on special decrees of God. Even Trent, which wished to favor no “school,” identified itself in effect with the practically minimalizing school. Later it was often believed, though wrongly, that Trent’s decrees contained the total truth about the Church and the sacraments.

The second group sees the Church differently. For it, the Church is in the first place the People of God, made one from within by the grace of God, and the dwelling place of the Trinity. This is the true essence of the Church. In the people that thus form one Body, some are to exercise a special function of authority, of sanctification, and are especially consecrated for this purpose. But they remain believers like all other members, even if they have a special task. Those thus commissioned are the college of bishops, which itself is not simply a crowd of men, but an organism, and thus more than

the sum of its parts; the Pope is the head of the college.

In this view, the Church is being approached from within and organically. Sacraments and especially the Mass are correspondingly (and without any derogation of the office of the ordained priest) a concern of the whole Church. The baptized and confirmed are all of them factors in liturgical action; this latter, for its part, is primarily a dialogue with God, and demands that all understand what is said. For this group in the Council, it is therefore of vital importance, not that there be simply a concession on this or that point, but that the character of the People of God, which speaks to God as a people, as His community (and not as muted believers), should find clear expression in symbolism and participation.

In this description I have, of course, oversimplified. I have done so deliberately, in order to make the contrast clear. By all reports, the tone of the liturgy schema clearly springs from the second conception, and thus it complements and broadens the views of Trent, which did not, of course, deny all this but did not, either, bring it to the fore.

As you can see, there is question of accent, but it is a theological accent. If many Catholics today find in the Mass not the vital center of their piety but a pure duty, that is perhaps due to a nominalistically narrowed view of the Mass. The task of the Council is not to work out in detail a new form of the Mass, but to sketch out basic principles and to give an emphatic push in the direction to be followed. The details will demand adaptation to local conditions and thus will be a matter for the episcopal conferences and for the guidance of the Holy See, in the form of a permanent international pontifical commission that is independent of the Curia (in the latter's present form).

The scene has changed somewhat since the days of the debate on the liturgy. At that time a small group stood over against an overwhelming majority. The little flock defended

itself energetically, but it knew that the cause was lost. "I chirp here like a lonely sparrow on the rooftop," one bishop supposedly said, remembering his Psalms. He was in fact right, though at the time this was not entirely clear. It was the vote on the basic principles of the liturgy schema, called for by Cardinal Tisserant on his own authority on November 14, that brought clarification: only 46 were opposed.

Choosing Up New Sides

Things are quite different now. If you look only at the speeches made in the debate on revelation, you might think things were just as they were in the liturgy debate. The "great" men, the cardinals (with the best theologians in the background, or upstairs in the tribune), were doubtless mainly on the side of those who wanted to reject the schema. Again, it seems that only a curial group were making a bitter stand against rejection. Again, one of them began his speech: "I stand here like Daniel in the lions' den, but. . . ." It looks as though the only change was that, whereas in the liturgy debate the majority were in favor of the basic ideas of the schema, here they were opposed to the basic conception of the schema "On the Sources of Revelation" (Cardinal Tisserant supposedly insisted on speaking always of "the Source of Revelation").

By the time you get this letter, certainly before it is printed, the numbers will show you that this was not the situation. [*In fact, common report had it that the result of the balloting showed: 1368 Fathers favored removing the schema in its present form from the agenda; 822 were against removal; 19 votes were invalid.—ED.*] I can tell this already from the discussions of the bishops outside the Council. I have the impression that the two sides are fairly evenly balanced. In favor of rejecting the schema (but not the subject itself, ex-

cept in isolated instances) are, almost unanimously, the Germans, Dutch, Belgians, Austrians and, surprisingly, the great majority of the Africans and the Chileans. Divided, it seems, are the Americans (they are not, as the newspapers and many press agencies are erroneously writing, closing ranks to keep the schema), the English, the French.

In favor of keeping the present schema is the very great majority of Italians and Spaniards. Undecided are, above all, the Central and South Americans (except for the Chileans). You may find one of them stopping you here and asking: "Can you please explain what reasons the Germans have for such strong opposition to the schema?" The Asians are either for the schema or undecided. This is, of course, a rough outline of the situation. It does not claim balance and completeness, nor is it drawn on the basis of a scientific poll. It simply expresses an impression, hardly mistaken, that the lineup of forces is different than in the previous debate.

Disciplinary vs. Doctrinal

But let us dig a little deeper and look for the fundamental reasons for the split. In this matter something far more serious was at stake than in the matter of the liturgy schema. As regards the liturgy, discipline was the primary concern. The question of discipline had a theological background, indeed, as I pointed out in my previous letter. Many were doubtless conscious of this background; others were not. I heard lectures and interviews by bishops who were urging, for example, rites more suited to mission countries, the vernacular, a greater popular participation, freedom of local decision for episcopal conferences, etc., but they were urging these reforms purely for pastoral reasons, and seemed not to have had the slightest consciousness that a special "idea of the Church" was also involved.

Bishops who thus argued for liturgical reform on pastoral grounds were, it is clear, not necessarily opposed to the schema on the sources of revelation. There were, in fact, I was told, definitely "curial" prelates who had not the slightest objection to liturgical reform, though they set no great store by it. They said to themselves: "All that is a matter which, in the last analysis, the Pope could just as well bring about through purely administrative channels without any need for a council; it does not touch faith or morals, which are the bony structure of the Church. Liturgical reforms come and go. Let us be broadminded and show ourselves sympathetic."

Now, however, it is a quite different situation: matters of faith are directly concerned. The result of the debates will be a dogmatic constitution and consequently unchangeable. Later on, additions and supplements can be made; what is here formulated may later on be better expressed. But no contradictions can ever be tolerated of the substance of what is here said.

At the very beginning of the debate this fact was solemnly stressed. The word "heretic" was never spoken but it was in the air. You could see that responsibility weighed heavier now on men's shoulders! Now there could be no haste. In dealing with the liturgy, Cardinal Suenens could say ironically: "If we dawdle along like this much longer, this Council will be known to history not as Vatican II but as Trent II" (Trent lasted, with rather lengthy intermissions, for eighteen years), and in order to bring the Fathers at last to a vote, he added: "Many Fathers of the Council are speaking here, but the Council itself is mute." In dealing with the schema on revelation, no one could think of making such a remark; all are afraid of hasty decisions. Both sides speak more seriously and more urgently. There is no more laughing, no more gossiping. There is silence among the "tribunes of the people,"

as a number of rhetorically brilliant speakers in the liturgy debate were jokingly called. It is chiefly the cardinals who speak—strongly and objectively on both sides.

Precisely because the question is one of doctrine, the earlier Councils are heard of more and more, for the final formulations of these Councils cannot be contradicted. Both sides appeal to Trent, with the intention of prolonging and complementing it, though in directions which are in large measure opposite. Trent left open the question whether Scripture and tradition stand side by side as two parallel parts, whether truths are contained in tradition which are not to be found in Scripture. It spoke not of two sources, but of two "streams," in which divine revelation flows down to us.

This image of the two streams certainly ought not to be pressed. But it seems to suggest that we have two separate media of knowledge of revelation, connected with each other only inasmuch as they both flow (to keep the image) within the same garden, the Church. Progress and development would consist in closing, in this direction, the question which Trent left open. Justification for this could be found in an appeal to the current catechisms and to all sorts of post-Tridentine textbooks which show no remembrance of the fact that Trent wanted to leave the question open. Discussion with the Protestants contributed to this state of affairs. The Protestants relied on Scripture alone, and, in the post-Reformation period, they stressed this exclusive reliance more than the Reformers did, with the intention of thereby clearly and sharply distinguishing themselves from the Catholics.

However, another development has been taking place in this matter of Scripture and tradition, in those countries where, under the influence of the ecumenical movement, men have been looking not for what divides them but for what they have in common.

On the Catholic side, increasing stress has been laid on the

idea that even if Scripture and tradition are of equal dignity (“to be given equal reverence”), as Trent says, they need not be of the same kind. Scripture and tradition have not been given us that we might grasp some truths here, others there; rather, they are interconnected so that the one supports and complements the other. They must therefore be seen as a totality, and only thus can they be correctly understood. Scripture came forth from the life of the Church as its expression, and the living Church is needed if Scripture is rightly to be read and understood. In this perspective the nature itself of God’s revelation will be better understood, for revelation is not simply a collection of truths but contains both doctrine and deeds.

The group which thus views Scripture and tradition refuses to speak of “sources” (for then tradition and Scripture would be made to appear, more thoroughly than ever, as two wholly separated things), but speaks of one revelation of God. It does not deny tradition, but wants to see it in unity with Scripture. For this group, theological progress demands that what 400 years ago, in the polemical atmosphere of Trent, was put in the background, should now be recovered. Otherwise, what was proposed at Trent will lead, in the new non-Tridentine situation, to a misleading and even false conception of Scripture and tradition.

Significance of the Observers

An additional factor is that not a few Protestants, on their part, understand Scripture within their faith in Christ. They complement the “Scripture alone” principle with the “grace alone” and “Christ alone” principles, as, in fact, the Reformers themselves did. One might easily find oneself therefore in an interconfessional discussion in which both parties would like to discard the polemically influenced views of the past in

favor of a more vital and less purely rational conception.

Not the least source of excitement in the Council is the fact that the observers are sitting up there above the Council Fathers. They cannot directly intervene in the discussion. But they are there! This very presence is already a conciliar discourse. Never have I realized so clearly as here that the sheer presence of another can decisively influence a situation. The observers are there, and everyone knows that they are listening intently. Expectation and apprehension are struggling in their hearts. They yearn for each successive step toward possible understanding, they are afraid that doors may be closed. Behind them stand millions of men and Christ's words on unity, His testament before his death. This stirs me far more deeply than Masses in various rites, however much this latter shows unity in multiplicity, as Pope John said. An observer commented: "You can feel in the very air how the ecumenical concern has today touched all Catholics. No single discourse in the present discussion has failed to take a position on the separated brethren." Indeed—but how divergent the positions! The defenders of the revelation schema said: "The two-source view is a part of our faith. This truth cannot be pushed out of sight on grounds of ecumenical charity. This would not be true charity, and the evangelical world is waiting for us to state our faith in clear and unequivocal terms. Truth of its nature is also love." The objectors to the schema countered: "Our polemical attitude to the Protestants has brought us to the point that if it hardens any further it means error." You realize, of course, that I am citing no one, but simply describing attitudes.

It might seem that the two attitudes are diametrically opposed. If they are considered in isolation, they may well be. But there is some consolation in observing that the two can be viewed as two steps on the same stair or two sections of road lying one beyond the other. How do I come to such a

comparison? Well, I think it suggests itself rather readily. Those sections of the world which have, in fact, no Protestants or at least only a small, almost invisible group of them, stand on the first step. The problem of unity has finally been brought home to them. They know they must come to grips with it, and they are ready to do so. But they lack entirely the living experience necessary for this. Therefore their speeches on the subject are purely abstract, their argumentation entirely conceptual.

Of course, truth in itself and by its nature is love! In the abstract, this is unquestionably true. But the question whether, in living converse with others, another side of the truth may not come to light has never arisen in their minds. Understandably so, for they have no experience of this converse with others. The views expressed by opponents of the schema seem to them "half-Protestant," "a blurring of the truth out of false charity," as they say indulgently. That cardinals in crimson, divinely appointed shepherds of the Christian people, should express such views fills them with fear. They are worried about the orthodoxy of the Church.

The other group stands on the second step. They have reached it almost without realizing it. The attitude of the first group is known to them almost exclusively from books; they are inclined to judge that their polemical ancestors were lesser men, narrow men, men far removed from the true spirit of Christianity. Now they see these very men before them, they speak with them, have experience with them. The experience cannot harm them; it will humble them, make them less unjust in their judgment and even cautious in evaluating their own position.

Let us return to the debate on Scripture and tradition, and note a further point of essential importance that has occupied the Council in this area. I mean the invasion of biblical criticism by modern historical scholarship. The schema on this

point is very negative, bent upon condemnations that are hardly compatible with the biblical encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu* of Pius XII (1943). There is hardly any appreciation of, for example, the work of the Roman Biblical Institute and of the exegetes who, laboriously and without harm to the faith, in fact to the faith's advantage, have applied to Scripture the historical sciences.

Biblical Controversy

The major stress is on the dangers of accepting these modern methods. Sharp words are directed against those who scrutinize the historicity of events related in Scripture, especially in the New Testament (for example, the narratives about Jesus' infancy, the promise of primacy to Peter, the death and resurrection of Jesus). Italian weekly newspapers, e.g., *Vita*, carry long reports on the threat to faith. Now it cannot of course be denied that a solid historical basis is indispensable to Christian faith. If Christianity were reduced to an ethical teaching, its essence would have disappeared. God has indeed dealt with the world and acted in the world. This is a matter of life and death to us. But on the other hand it would be folly and equivalent to suicide if we were to forbid a solidly grounded science to investigate the Scriptures according to its own proper methods.

The same basic problem confronts us today that confronted the Church in the Galileo case centuries ago. The methods of historical science have been immensely refined, and their application shows the Gospels to be far more "human" than we had thought. Purely human factors play a far greater role than the dogmatic theologians were willing to concede, even up to a few years ago. This new knowledge, if thoughtlessly and imprudently brought to bear, can in fact shatter faith. If the application is worked out prudently and without hasty

generalizations, it can serve to deepen faith. We will, for example, achieve a better insight into the mystery of the Incarnation with all the consequences that flow from it. The Catholic world is doubtless waiting in this area for a word from the Church. Mounier wrote years ago that we had lost the key to the thinking and questioning of modern man; that we are speaking in a language that he does not understand. The Council must again find the key!

But once again the Fathers of the Council are divided. Some wish to emphasize the positive values that can come from such effort in behalf of the faith; others fear a corruption of the faith and therefore they insist on pointing out dangers. According to the attitude chosen, entirely different pictures emerge. The one has the features of a joyful message, the other conjures up a fearful vision of judgment.

Once again, a sociological fact underlies each of the attitudes. One of them is congenial to countries in which a great part of the people is alienated from Christianity. The Church in these countries wants to be a missionary, to penetrate into the masses she has lost, and she knows she can do this only if her message is one of blessing. The other attitude is prevalent in areas where the Church indeed clearly feels a falling away from the faith (especially among educated men), but believes the movement can still be checked by leading those still loyal (especially the mass of the people) away from the track, as it were, on which the train roars on its way.

How will this discussion end? Any answer would require the balancing of many factors. Perhaps I shall write on this the next time. For the moment I would like to make one point. An opinion of the schools has never been canonized by a Council. In the present matter each side objects to the other that it is defending the opinion of a theological school. But can a theological opinion never become something more than that? Indeed it can. It does so when it becomes clear to

all that the opinion is really a part of revelation. It remains the opinion of a school only as long as such clarity has not been reached.

Legally, it can be said, this Council *can* promulgate a text when a two-thirds majority has been reached. This is the norm which the Pope has set down in general for all the conciliar schemata. But many, among them Prof. Hubert Jedin, have rightly insisted that in this matter of a required majority both the nature of things and conciliar history demand that distinction be made between disciplinary and dogmatic decrees. For disciplinary decrees a two-thirds majority can be regarded as quite high. Trent was content with a much smaller majority (e.g., on the duty of bishops to reside in their dioceses). But in dogmatic matters moral unanimity has always been sought.

This unanimity was only formally present at Vatican I in the question of papal infallibility, because those opposed to the definition simply left the Council before the vote was taken. This was certainly not an ideal case of a conciliar dogmatic decree! No one today questions the validity of the definition, but all are aware of the shock that this lamentable action caused in the Church. There is every intention in the present Council that this should not happen again (pre-scinding from the fact that neither side in the present debate looks as if it could get a two-thirds majority).

What, then, is to be done? The attempt will be made, initially, to rework the present schema into a form satisfactory to both sides. At some point, I think, all will see that this is a tremendously time-consuming process and will produce a result that pleases neither side. Since men (even bishops) are made the way they are, they must undergo this experience before they grasp it. Improvements of one or another part of the schema will be of little help. The point at issue is the basic outlook of the document.

Perhaps the end of this week will find matters at this new stage of insight. Then a commission of theologians will have to be set up, probably composed of members of the Theological Commission and of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity in equal numbers. This group will formulate a new schema satisfactory to all. The new schema will leave many questions open, and, in its attitude, will have to combine the seriousness of the Cross with the confidence of the Resurrection. I am told that in conversations a high-ranking defender of the present schema has been saying: "The other group is always talking of the spirit of the Resurrection, of the perspective of world-transfiguration. But what is needed today is the spirit of penance and the Cross, the consciousness that the devil goes about like a roaring lion."

Admittedly, Christianity is a paradox. Without grace, no one can live amid the sparks that fly from one pole of the paradox to the other. They would burn him to a crisp! But despite all the seriousness of evil, Christianity is not a preservation, but a liberation, from evil! In this lies the inner dynamism of the Christian reality, the assistance of the Holy Spirit even beyond the strict promises upon which we may and are determined to rely.

Outcome of Revelation Debate

You're doubtless somewhat confused that the subjects for discussion during the present session of the Council have suddenly become quite numerous. Well, here in Rome, too, we were rather puzzled to learn of this multiplication of themes. And it wasn't easy to get a reliable account of how this situation arose.

First of all—and here my prophecy was essentially correct—the debate on the source of revelation was cut off. The great majority were for substituting an entirely new docu-

ment, but the necessary two-thirds majority was lacking. Had it been reached, a joint commission (consisting of the Theological Commission and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity) would have had to work out a new schema with perhaps a new title and, possibly, a completely new theme.

It is usually said that the intervention of Amleto Cardinal Cicognani, Secretary of State, who got the Pope to end the discussion and to appoint a joint commission, led in fact to precisely the result described above. This is, however, not quite the case. The joint commission has the task of improving the old schema, not of substituting an entirely new one. This explains how Giuseppe Cardinal Siri, who warned the Conference of Italian Bishops (he is its president), before the close of the debate, to oppose the rejection of the schema (because it was a question of defending the faith against creeping heresies), could, after the close and after the intervention of the Pope, nonetheless speak of a victory of the Italians in the defense of the faith. The old schema will have to submit to radical improvements and additions, omissions and changes, but it remains the point of departure for the work of the newly formed commission.

Perhaps the difference may seem slight. But if you reflect on the vehemence with which Joseph Cardinal Frings and a whole group of bishops rejected the schema as beyond salvage, you may feel some doubt whether the joint commission can succeed where such a large majority of the Fathers thinks it impossible.

Archbishop René Louis Stourm, of Amiens, who presented to the Fathers the schema on mass media of communications, obviously regarded it as impossible that any further schema should be submitted to the Council before the end of the first session. He began his exposition by saying: "It is a pleasure for me, Reverend Fathers, after the vehement debates of recent days, to be able to propose to you a more

entertaining theme that will occupy us until the end of this session.”

The schema clearly has a twofold purpose: it seeks to show 1) that in the modern age the mass media (press, film, radio and television) are indispensable means of an up-to-date pastoral activity, and 2) that for the proper use (active and passive) of these instruments which form and guide public opinion, a positive education and formation of conscience is necessary, even—and perhaps especially—where there is question purely of entertainment. Both purposes certainly correspond to the intention of the Pope and the direction he wished to give the Council.

Two Views on Mass Media

But objections were raised against the reason given for the Church's intervention in this area and against the methods to be followed. In offering grounds for the Church's action, the accent is strongly on the right of the Church to use these means and to establish norms in this area. Many were of the opinion that, considering the pluralistic character of our modern society, emphasis ought to be placed, in presenting the Church's message to the world, not on the rights of the Church, but on the character of service that is inherent in her action. The Church can do a service to men today and feels that her mission obliges her to this service which no one else can render as she can. The pluralistic state will accept such an offer, whereas an appeal to rights whose basis it does not recognize will seem to it an invasion of its proper sphere of authority and a quest for power. Here once again we glimpse the opposition of attitudes which has marked the entire Council.

As for methods of carrying out the two purposes, the proposed plan was so centralized as really to be disconcerting.

The Council Fathers touched on only one aspect of the problems raised by such a proposal. A Council should, in disciplinary prescriptions, show a certain flexibility. Its ordinances ought to retain their validity 50 years from now. If it were to go into great detail in matters still in course of development, it could easily turn out that what the development seems to demand at this particular moment would in 10 years' time be a great obstacle. At the suggestion, therefore, of a German Bishop, Wilhelm Kempf of Limburg, practical prescriptions were left to the Pontifical Commission for Film, Television and Radio (the press ought also to be included), which is to work up a readily updatable pastoral instruction. Meanwhile, the conciliar commission will gather up into a short schema the basic lines of the doctrinal section, with the corrections mentioned above; this will later be proposed to the Council itself. In all honesty, the debate was rather dull. The bishops felt themselves on somewhat unfamiliar ground, and after two days the debate was closed by unanimous vote.

Representatives of the Mass-Media Commission admitted to me that they were concerned lest the bishops simply turn this whole matter of mass media over to laymen, and possibly even incorporate the whole schema into the chapter on the laity in the schema on the Church. For this reason the commission stressed strongly the whole of the hierarchic Church. It felt that the bishops themselves were involved here and that many of them did not appreciate this fact. Well, in this respect the commission got what it wanted. The episcopate has committed itself to a role. On the other hand, one must admit that mass media are primarily an area of lay activity. By nature the mass media are suited to communication of information and to entertainment. The specifically ecclesiastical area is only a sector of the whole and by no means the largest sector, and it must accept being incorporated into the whole. In my opinion, it would not be a good idea to seek

to have priests made directors of diocesan radio programs or film or TV producers. Taken as a whole, all this too is work for laymen, with the clergy in a primarily subsidiary role. It is certainly good and indeed necessary that priests in increasing numbers should become familiar with the techniques of modern mass media, but, except in special cases (e.g., Vatican Radio), with a view to playing a subordinate, not a leading part.

Here the question broadens out to a more general one: Is the Church to incorporate itself into the modern societal structure, or is it to form, in a pluralistic society, a sort of "society within society," a state within a state? The question is, of course, connected with the position of the laity in the Church. Is the layman really considered an active member with his proper area of responsibility in the total Church, or is he purely an object of paternal care?

This broader question, of course, could not be gone into in this discussion; it belongs to the schema on the Church. But the example of the liturgy schema could have been followed, for there the dogmatic place of the layman in the Church was already anticipated in very happy fashion, whereas in the mass-media schema an almost contradictory view of the layman could be glimpsed in the background.

Considering the shortness of the debate, I have given disproportionate space to the mass media. I did so deliberately. For if we look at the importance of the theme and the possible results, we are not dealing with a subject to be dispatched in a relaxed mood over coffee. In any case, the theme will recur when the schema is improved; perhaps when it does recur it will be better situated than it was on its first appearance. For at that time the attention of all was already turned to the chief subject of the Council, which was making its approach felt. This demands some explanation.

For three weeks there had been ferment among the Council

Fathers. They had all come with the expectation that the question of the Church would be the chief theme of conciliar deliberations. When the first schemata delivered to the bishops did not include one on the Church, the bishops calmed themselves by telling one another that the schema was not yet ready. I can say for certain that such was indeed the case. Much that today seems unpardonable neglect, or for which all sorts of ulterior motives are invented, is really to be explained by the fact that the opening of the Council was set for an earlier date than had been anticipated. Many, and these very influential, churchmen regarded 1963 as the earliest date that could seriously be considered. It was the Pope himself—in many matters a very independent man, who makes his surprising decisions like one led by an invisible hand—who threw off this calculation. The “Council better prepared for than any other” really does not deserve this description—at least not in every respect. I write now in order to scotch certain legends; I do not deny, of course, that this precise lack of preparation proved, after the event, to be a genuine piece of good fortune. In any event, the schema on the Church was not ready at the opening of the Council.

Why the Crowded Agenda?

But when, after a month, the schema had not yet been put into the bishops' hands, they became seriously disturbed. Was the first session to be allowed to pass without the main discussions being begun? The unrest became visible to the journalists when, about three weeks ago, the Secretary General, Archbishop Pericle Felici, announced that during that week, or at latest during the next week, the bishops would have the schema on the Church. It turned out to be the next week. But what they received was a volume containing two schemata: the schema on the Church and a

schema on the Blessed Virgin Mary. The latter contained only six pages, the former about eighty.

In Rome one must always ask the question: Why? In every event an ulterior motive is at least possible. So also here. Why was the schema on Mary put in with the one on the Church? The answer is easy and was given to me by a very authoritative source.

The heads of the Theological Commission knew, of course, of the bishops' desire to begin dealing with the schema on the Church before the first session ended. They also knew (from the progress of the debates on the liturgy schema) that the discussion would be difficult and protracted. In fact, Alfredo Cardinal Ottaviani later began his presentation of the Church schema thus: "This schema is ecumenical, it is pastoral, it is positive. Yet I know that the batteries are already drawn up and that the attack will be: the schema is not ecumenical, not pastoral, not positive. I know further that other documents are already prepared and are circulating among the Fathers, which are to be substituted for the one I am presenting. I ask you at least to read the schema before condemning it."

The intention, thus, was as follows: In order to give some satisfaction to the bishops' sense of urgency, the schema "On the Unity of the Church," concerned exclusively with the Eastern Churches, was first to be dealt with. It was composed, not by the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, but by the Preparatory Commission for the Eastern Churches, of which Cardinal Cicognani was president.

The hope was to secure the schema's acceptance in perhaps two days. For in all practical matters it showed the greatest openness to the separated Eastern Churches, it spoke of them with great respect, and it contained a sort of confession of guilt in regard to the past. It solemnly declared that in church law, liturgy and customs every possible liberty was guaran-

teed; that in any reunion no abjuration would be required but only a simple profession of faith; that a lively spiritual interchange with the spiritual treasures of the Eastern Churches was envisaged; that in addition to the two octaves (in January and at Easter), an annual day of unity was to be celebrated; that the Eastern Churches were to be regarded not as museum pieces but as living sectional Churches which had the right to develop further. The schema was to be presented as the promising opening of the whole question of the Church. In addition, the Fathers were to be given the great schema on the Church as they desired. Thus—this was the hope—their hunger would be allayed for the moment and, in view of the short time remaining, they would willingly accept by an overwhelming majority the very sober schema on the Blessed Virgin.

This was the attitude of one group. But it in no way corresponded to the views of the majority. Even at the table of the ten presidents of the Council differences arose; for the result of the discussion in this presidium was the enigmatic statement that the schema on the Church and the schema on Mary would be handled “at the same time.” How was such a decision possible? There can be but one explanation: the presidium, divided in itself, wanted to leave to the Council the decision about which schema was to be discussed first.

Schema on Unity

But first the schema on unity was presented for debate. It soon became evident that it must undergo radical change. There could be no thought of its quick acceptance. It was only natural that the Eastern Churches in union with the Holy See had the greatest interest in the document. The Melchite Patriarch Maximos IV made his appearance, a man already well-known through his spirited speeches delivered

in French (though he is a master of Latin, he used French to show that the "Latin" Church is in principle only a sectional Church within the whole Catholic Church).

Unfortunately, the Eastern Churches are involved in unpleasant disputes whose roots often lie in remote history. Only the Melchites, under the leadership of the commanding personality of Maximos IV, form a unified group. As you know, each Father may speak only ten minutes. But Maximos knew how to get around this. He announced that he had distributed his criticism of the schema among himself and his four suffragans. In approximately fifty minutes they could make all the necessary points. More than one Latin bishop said to me later: "That was one of the most interesting meetings. We got an insight—and it was revelation to us—into a situation that had lasted from the early Church to our time."

I shall here mention only the most important point made and save the rest for the time when the revised schema is returned for judgment. The Eastern Churches are very conscious that they were immediately founded by the Apostles. This was the starting point of their development, liturgical, canonical and theological. They insist strongly that "they owe nothing" to the Latin Church, while not denying, of course, that the Latin development, too, is a legitimate unfolding of the same deposit of faith. They are simply defending themselves, but with passion, against the claim of the "Latins" to be the only legitimate manifestation of the Catholic faith. They can view the Pope only as the head of the college of bishops.

New light from very ancient tradition was here cast on Fr. Karl Rahner's recent studies of this subject, such as *The Episcopate and the Primacy* (Herder and Herder, 1962). This did not go unnoticed. Thus the naked, isolated setting of the papal primacy at the head of the schema proved to be a serious mistake. The revised version must avoid this blunder.

It took the discussion right into the debate on the Church schema. It was impossible to approve here a conception of the primacy which would later be effaced in the schema on the Church.

The desire of the bishops for the debate on the Church was thus not stilled; in fact, it had now been aroused more fully. When, therefore, toward the end of the debate on the unity schema, Cardinal Ottaviani proposed that the Council should turn next to the schema on the Blessed Virgin, his suggestion fell upon poorly disposed ears. To no avail he enthusiastically reminded each country of its Marian shrine; to no avail he insisted on the moderate character of the schema, on its clear avoidance of any maximalism or minimalism, on its emphatic placing of Mary among the redeemed.

I have read the criticism of one of the conciliar "experts" on this schema. Its fundamental objection is that Mary is considered in isolation, instead of being seen in the context of the Church. The question arises: If there is no intention of saying anything new about Mary, why should this precise point of Catholic faith be treated in a separate document? No schema was prepared on the Trinity or on Jesus Christ! Would not such isolated treatment of the Blessed Virgin give the impression that in practice more stress is laid on Mariology than on the more central dogmas of Christianity? But Mary could well be considered in the context of the schema on the Church, for many Catholics have no clear idea of her place in the Church; at the same time, this would be the best way to make the Evangelical (Protestant) Christians understand Catholic devotion to Mary.

The situation was so clear that the Council immediately accepted Cardinal Ottaviani's suggestion to leave to the presidium (the ten presiding cardinals) the decision on which schema should be treated first. The presidium, which a few days before had wanted to leave the decision to the Council

as a whole, now decided to postpone consideration of the Marian schema and to turn to the discussion of the great schema on the Church.

I shall not go into the details of the very interesting debates held during the last few days, for they came to no conclusion. One point, however, did emerge clearly: the schema on the Church will not indeed be replaced by an entirely new one, but it will have to undergo radical revision. The debate on the schema in its over-all character—which is as far as things got—showed immediately that an overly juridical conception of the Church had found expression in the document; the mystery of the Church was left in the background, and the image of the Mystical Body of Christ was not adequately complemented by the images of the People of God and the Bride of Christ.

Summing Up the First Session

If we glance back over the events sketched here, we can see, even more clearly than in the conflict over “Revelation” (as the former schema “Sources of Revelation” is already being called), that there is still no unity of minds on the meaning of the papal directives given at the opening of the Council. What does it mean to speak “ecumenically, pastorally and positively”? Everyone wants to do that; this universal desire is questioned by no one. But the interpretations vary widely.

The point came up for renewed discussion apropos of every schema. The particular subjects of debate were in fact only instances that brought to the fore this same divergence. It is easy here to see the confusion of language that besets us today. This does not consist simply in the fact that we and the totalitarian states use words like “freedom,” “democracy,” “people,” in entirely different senses. Even in the Catholic

Church, which not without reason prides itself on unity of doctrine, there are words which among Catholics themselves are ambiguous. The Council had to spend two months becoming conscious of this fact.

At the beginning of the Council I often heard the statement: We know there are tensions between the "center" of the Church (Rome and Italy) and the "periphery." Such a statement contained a clear value judgment: the "center" was being regarded as orthodox; the "periphery," as at least infected by suspect views. Those who spoke in this fashion were convinced that the Council would make it clear to everyone that only the "center" represented the pure teaching of the Christian faith.

That the "periphery" might manifest a unified conception of certain problems never entered the heads of the representatives of the "center." They thought they would encounter a multiplicity of conflicting opinions. But the Council brought to light quite a different situation. The "periphery" in fact possessed a unified basic outlook, one that could be summed up precisely in the words "ecumenical, pastoral, positive."

This change and shift within the Church is the great and even astounding result of the first session. Many feel that it is of epochal significance, even if the tangible results of the first session seem slight.

MARIO VON GALLI, S. J.

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August 16, 1963

A learned
Dominican
theologian
answers questions
about some
topics for
Vatican II.

PERSPECTIVES FOR THE COUNCIL

Père Congar, distinguished French theologian, was a consultant to the Theological Commission preparing for Vatican II. Among his many significant books, *Lay People in the Church* (Newman) is perhaps best known to the English-speaking world as an outstanding contribution to the theology of the laity. For a quarter of a century Fr. Congar has been in the forefront of the ecumenical movement in European circles. His pioneer book of the mid-1930's *Chrétiens désunis*, is still cited as a great leap forward in Catholic thinking about the separated brethren.

In 1961, this gracious and very busy man invited the interviewer to the Dominican House in Strasbourg, France, to discuss some of the salient problems facing the Church at this turning point in its history. The astoundingly rapid change in all fields today compels us to reconsider the role of "the little Church in a vast world." The quest for the most effective ways of witnessing to the truth that is in us forms the supreme challenge for Catholics who live in this new age just being born.



Q *You have mentioned in your writings that the coming Ecumenical Council should rethink the*

The reputation of FR. YVES M.-J. CONGAR, O.P., as a theologian rightly won him a role in the Council's preparatory labors and admirably qualifies him to answer questions put by FR. EUGENE BIANCHI, S.J., now an assistant editor of AMERICA and also the interrogator of a noted layman, JOSEPH FOLLIET (p. 63).

role of bishops in the Church. Would you like to develop this idea?

CONGAR: I think many bishops desire that the Roman Curia be more international, with better representation in Rome for the various national churches. One could imagine a number of ways of achieving this, for example, enlargement of the College of Cardinals, or perhaps the setting up of a new permanent commission.

Even more important is the question of the theology of the episcopal college. You are aware that, from a theological point of view, the bishops are successors of the apostles, not in the sense that each bishop succeeds a determined apostle, but in the sense that the college of bishops as such succeeds the college of apostles as such. This is important, because the apostles had a universal jurisdiction; thus, the college of bishops has in itself a universal jurisdiction in the Church.

Each individual bishop is limited *de facto* in his authority to a determined territory, but as a member of the episcopal college he possesses a certain power and obligation in regard to the whole Church. This power and duty to the whole Church is exercised mainly in an ecumenical council. The Council is the perfect realization of the episcopal college. When the bishops are dispersed in their own dioceses, each bishop individually is not infallible. But when the bishops universally preach a doctrine, it becomes a matter of faith, a matter of infallible teaching. This was the chief argument of Pius XII for declaring the dogma of the Assumption.

Furthermore, each bishop in his individual diocese should show an interest in the universal Church. He shows this interest, first, in the administration of his own diocese.

A diocese is only part of the whole Church, but it carries within itself the nature of the whole Church. Thus, for a diocese to be truly catholic, its bishop must govern it, not as

an independent unit, but rather as a portion of the universal Church. This implies that the bishop actualize in his diocese all the great causes of the universal Church.

Moreover, a bishop should interest himself in questions that are distant from his proper domain. Pius XII strongly underlined this in his encyclical *Fidei Donum*, in 1957, when he said that bishops are missionaries for the whole world. You have a good example of that in Louvain, where you studied. Cardinal Suenens and the Belgian bishops conduct there a seminary for Latin America. The Belgian bishops believe they have a certain charge of South America, where, as you know, the pastoral needs are very great. Of course, the Belgian bishops will not intervene in the diocesan affairs of Brazil or Chile, but they are pastorally interested in these dioceses, as the creation of this seminary signifies.

Q What attitudes do you think the Council will take regarding the mission countries?

CONGAR: I feel that the Church of the 20th century has already begun to have a completely new outlook on the missions. This is to be understood in two ways.

First, the Church today understands better that it is missionary by nature, missionary in all the aspects of its life. There is no role or position in the Catholic Church that is not missionary. This should be strongly marked in the Council. And when I say that the Church is missionary in all its members, I am thinking especially of the laity. Recent pontifical documents and the recent conventions of laymen in Rome have all expressed this thought.

Second, the Church has had to revise its attitude toward the missions because of the gradual collapse of colonialism. The 19th century was the most glorious missionary epoch of history, but it was also a century of colonialism. It was the

century of the geographical discovery of the world, of Africa and Oceania in particular. Missionaries were sent on the heels of the explorers, and under the protection of Western governments. This protection seemed necessary at the time. But it linked the missions to the West, to colonial interests and to a certain form of imperialism. Today this is absolutely impossible. Wherever the missions are tied to Western powers, they are meeting serious obstacles. The missions remain alive and vigorous only in places where for at least a decade they have separated themselves from too much dependence on Western powers.

Today there are native hierarchies and native clergies. Of course, these indigenous churches have not been very active in theology, but I think they will bring to the Council their authentic problems. Instead of being represented at the council by Western powers, as was the case in 1869, the mission countries will be represented by men who have firsthand knowledge and intense interest in the evangelization of their own lands. This should bring to the Council an extraordinary broadening of perspective in matters of canon law, Catholic Action, liturgy, and maybe even in the formulation of certain doctrines.

Q *What position do you think the Council can take on the thorny question of non-Catholic groups evangelizing the previously Catholic areas?*

CONGAR: I do not believe that the Church can directly declare the right of non-Catholic Christians to evangelize in already Catholic areas. After all, the Church must be honest with its own conscience; it must be loyal to its most profound beliefs. What it can do, and should do, I feel, is to make a firm declaration of tolerance, of respect for the religious liberties of other consciences.

In place of bitter rivalry, a disagreeable and very negative thing, the Church should seek an amicable understanding with the separated Christians, especially in missionary areas. Such understanding, I am happy to say, is coming more and more into evidence.

This question of tolerance is very important. The World Council of Churches in Geneva expressly requests that we take up the subject. In May of 1961, we brought together 12 Catholic and 12 non-Catholic theologians (appointed by the WCC). This semiofficial meeting was to discuss religious tolerance and freedom of conscience.

Today this problem of tolerance must be seen as forming an indivisible unit in the world. I mean that it is impossible to demand tolerance in one country and not practice it in another. The question cannot be divided like that. A few years ago the Catholic Church in a certain country desired that Protestant citizens support the Catholic stand for religious liberty in Hungary. The Protestants did not want to co-operate; they said that they suffered from injustices in Catholic countries—Spain and areas of Latin America. This was not overly generous on their part; it would have been better had they not raised that matter. But one can certainly see their point of view. The example shows that this question of religious liberty must be viewed on an undivided, world-wide basis.

Q *You have said that a whole new chapter on the laity could be written today, that the Church must go beyond the canonical notion of the laity and see the place of laymen in the sacred order of the Church. Would you like to comment on this?*

CONGAR: Yes. When the word "layman" is used, it makes some theologians think of a canonical distinction which says

that a layman is neither a cleric nor a monk. Actually there is much more to it than that.

The laity would be very disappointed if the Council just says that laymen are neither clerics nor monks. They already know that. They want to know just what they are, and this in a positive way, not only as regards their rights, but also concerning their duties. The laymen are anxious to take on the responsibilities of the Church, but they ask to know just how intimately they belong to the Church and form the Church.

On these points we have reached a sort of consensus since 1950, thanks to two world congresses of the lay apostolate, to the discourses of the Pope, and to a number of books. I think it is quite possible today to determine the ecclesiological role of lay people in a positive and constructive way.

Of course, there are some delicate points, such as the obligations of married people and the role of spouses in the Mystical Body (which is not made up of individuals but of families). Marriage must be seen as a Christian state in and of the Church. Pius XII, you know, speaks of such a state in his encyclical *Mystici Corporis*.

The role of lay people in the liturgy constitutes a considerable problem. First, there is the question of a more active lay participation in the liturgy as it is today. Much good work has been done. We have just recently celebrated the Holy Week and paschal ceremonies. I found them very impressive when the lay people had been properly prepared. But, in my opinion, there is a much more fundamental problem facing our liturgy. I doubt whether the Council will be able to take it up, since it will demand much time, work and gradual experimentation. I refer to the problem of a less clerical or monastic liturgy than our present one.

Let me give an example. Take the "Exsultet" preface of the Paschal Vigil. As a cleric who knows Latin, who has an ecclesiastical, patristic and monastic background, I find myself rel-

actively at home in this prayer. I recognize a quantity of poetical and biblical and traditional allusions in the song. It says something to me; it profoundly touches my religious spirit. But I imagine that for laymen, who have none of this Latin, traditional, clerical formation, it must have much less meaning. Many of the images say nothing at all to them; their formation has in many cases been just the opposite of a Greco-Latin traditional schooling.

I really think that this is *the* liturgical problem for some time to come. The difficulties will first present themselves in the far-off mission lands, like India and Africa, which totally lack the Western tradition. It is evident that in France our whole culture has a Latin foundation; the problem is, therefore, somewhat less urgent here than on the missions. But this liturgical "gap" will become more and more pronounced even in Western Europe. It will be necessary to envisage forms of expression that are more accessible to the laity, if we do not want to see the liturgy restricted to a specially trained elite. Such a liturgy would have no contact with the masses.

I am very much impressed, having followed closely the French liturgical movement, by the fact that the liturgy did not really become popular until the singing of psalms in the vernacular was introduced, thanks to the translation of the Bible of Jerusalem and to the melodies of Père Gelineau. The movement is encouraging, but it is not an ideal solution. It is rather a paraliturgical, or peripheral, solution. I regret that in our student Masses we do not sing the Mass itself but, instead, various psalms distributed throughout.

Q *In your major work on the laity you explain how lay people participate in the priestly, prophetic and royal roles of the Church. Which of these functions do you think is the most important for the layman?*

CONGAR: I would hesitate to say that one of these roles is more important than another. I think that the priestly function of the layman is the most comprehensive, that is, if one understands it, as I did, in conformity with the text of the Epistle to the Romans: "... offer up your bodies as a living sacrifice, consecrated to God and worthy of his acceptance; this is the worship due from you as rational creatures" (12:1). All the life of a layman is included in this complete and total offering to God.

The prophetic role is also very important. This is what the apostle Peter underlines in his first letter: "... that you may declare the virtues of him who has called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (2:9). It is the prophetic people of God, the Church, like Israel of old, giving witness before the world of the existence of God, of His greatness and the need for serving Him.

And concerning the interior life, the royal role is very important. It is the domination of one's self, the conquest of one's liberty. I think that we could formulate all of Christian morality in terms of the conquest of liberty. It would then appear as a baptismal and paschal morality, that is, the escaping from the slavery to sin to live in the spiritual liberty of the sons of God.

Q I noticed in one of your articles that you hoped the Council would refrain, in the interests of Church unity, from making any Marian declarations. Why do you feel this way?

CONGAR: I think that if the Council made some of the Marian declarations that are talked about in various theological publications and congresses, it would constitute an almost definitive obstacle to the unity of Christians.

It is a fact that the definition of the Assumption has created

a new obstacle that is very difficult to overcome not only for Protestants—that's too clear—but even for the Orthodox, who nevertheless admit the Assumption. From the very day that it was dogmatized unilaterally by Rome, the Orthodox said: Ah no, we can't go along with that; it's not the same thing.

If we were to make dogmas of subjects not yet mature in the conscience of the Church, such as the co-redemption or the universal mediation of Mary, I think it would create an almost insurmountable obstacle to unity. Fr. Robert Leiber, S.J., as you know, was a close adviser of Pius XII. In his memoirs of Pius XII, he stated that the Pope considered these questions not yet mature in the conscience of the Church, not sufficiently clear to be the subjects of a dogmatic declaration. I would ask those who want to make a dogma out of the co-redemption of Mary to give me first a good theology of the redemption. I'm sure they would have to admit that it is not easy to do.

Q There seems to be a desire among many Christians to see a greater simplicity and modernity in the Church's modes of expression and in the ways of her ecclesiastics. What is your thought on this?

CONGAR: I think the Council must express itself in language that will be understood by the men of today, that is, in clear, pastoral and nonacademic words which have a truly evangelical and religious tone. As far as I can see from my personal contacts, this is the formal desire of the bishops. They absolutely do not want to propose to the world a theological dissertation. They want to address a pastoral message. The Church must become more and more aware that it is speaking not only to a believing but also to an unbelieving world.

On the question of external forms of clerical life in the Church, yes, it would be well if we simplified our ways. But what is of much more importance, and I say this from personal

experience, is that men be able to express themselves freely. Men are not happy unless they can express themselves. In fact they do express themselves. But where? In their family lives, their diversions, their work—not in church.

Now it seems to me that because of the pomp that surrounds and imprisons them, bishops and cardinals are practically never at occasions and places where men freely express themselves. They are with men, but in formal ceremonies where men do not express themselves, where they enter into a ready-made rite that is perhaps too solemn. These high dignitaries have a certain contact with men, but this contact is fenced around with protocol and the marks of respect. In these circumstances men are careful not to say too much.

Thus, members of the upper hierarchy generally encounter artificial rather than real situations. One would wish that they had contact with men in those domains in which the latter express themselves freely. How to achieve such contact practically, you ask. One suggestion would be that members of the upper hierarchy four times a year take a workers' train for half an hour during the rush period. Of course, they would have to present themselves in a way that would not obstruct the liberty of expression of the men around them.

God calls
the modern layman
to an important
rendez-vous
with many new
responsibilities.

THE LAITY AND THE COUNCIL

Without waiting for more developments, we can safely assert that the Second Vatican Council will mark an historic turning point in the apostolic life of the Church. The relatively untapped energies of the lay Catholic will be channeled at last into the main stream of the Church's apostolate. Pope John XXIII indicated as much when receiving the permanent Committee of the International Congresses for the Lay Apostolate on February 8, 1961. He said that this question will be "an object of vital concern and special study." Later, in the publication *Activities of the Holy See in 1960*, the Central Preparatory Commission stated categorically that the nature, prerogatives and limitations of the lay apostolate will be studied in detail at the Council, on the level of both theory and practice, with special reference to its relations with the hierarchy.

Such authoritative forecasts reflect the virtually unanimous wishes of the bishops of the whole world. The age of the lay apostolate is arriving. To speak more accurately, that day has already arrived. It remains only for the Fathers of the Council to give its formal recognition.

The Council's concern with the apostolic possibilities of the layman is nothing else than a response to the growing ground swell that has been sweeping the Church for many years. One would have to go back to the 13th century and the popular

Long a student of Vatican affairs in his capacity as an associate editor of AMERICA, FR. ROBERT A. GRAHAM, S.J., followed closely the preparatory phases of the Council and was in Rome during the first session.

revival aroused by St. Francis of Assisi to find a comparable grass-roots upsurge of lay religious zeal. It seems as though the more society becomes secularized, the more pronounced becomes the spiritual outlook of individual Christians in the face of their environment. The evolving world circumstances also suggest that Providence itself is kindling this fire to coincide with the advent of a revolutionary era.

In the newly developing countries, where Christianity's roots are still tender, unprecedented opportunities are opening at the very moment when, as in Africa and Asia, political independence has tolled the bell for the 19th-century missionary methods which depended so largely upon the prestige of the colonizing power. As if these political and social changes were not enough, rapid technological advances put a premium on specialists trained as no priest or religious can be trained. Even if the shortage of priests were not felt in the former mission-sending countries, many of the works now indicated in the apostolate can be performed better, if not exclusively, by laymen.

The needs and the opportunities are evident. Why must we wait for an ecumenical council in order to get the lay apostolate moving? How is it that the recent decades have witnessed so much backing and filling, such unmistakable experimentation and, most of all, such prolonged and indecisive theoretical discussions?

The nub of the difficulty lies precisely in the apostolic nature of this lay action. The layman is doing the work of the Church. Yet, by the will of Christ and the constitution of the Church, the preaching of the gospel and the sanctification of souls are entrusted directly to an order of priesthood, with the bishops at the head. Without abolishing the distinction between clergy and laity, it seems difficult, if not impossible, to conceive of a lay apostolate in the strict sense.

If "apostolate" were understood only in a generic or meta-

phoric sense, there would be no perplexity. Every Christian, by the fact of his baptism and confirmation, is called to some expressions of apostolic zeal, through prayer, good example and the conscientious fulfillment of the duties of his state in life. A faithful Catholic working in an office, a factory or the Peace Corps with the right motivation can find ways of bearing witness to the faith that is in him. But this work is his own personal testimony and not part of the apostolate of the Church.

A wider radius of action, however, is envisaged in the lay apostolate. To use the words of Pius XII when he spoke to the Congress of the Lay Apostolate on October 5, 1957, this apostolate is "the assuming by laymen of tasks deriving from the mission which Christ confided to His Church." Those called to this role are expected, not to supplement the work of the bishops, priests and religious in a marginal way, but to work alongside of these and even to supplant them in certain areas. Whence arise the still unanswered problems of organization, canon law, theology and spirituality which the Council must now confront.

A Trend Over Two Centuries

A résumé of the stages through which what we now call the lay apostolate has passed will help put today's issues in perspective. The problem is relatively new, at least in its contemporary expression. The Church has known an apostolic laity as far back as Joseph of Arimathea and the Women of Jerusalem; but a lay apostolate is something else again. As a body, the laity have not been invited to participate in the Church's sacerdotal mission in the ministry of the word.

At the high-water mark of Catholic Europe, the "laity" was the civil power itself, as personified in the Emperor or prince. With the French Revolution and its aftermath, when the

Catholic princes lost their crowns, or at least their real power, if not their faith, the "laity" signified more and more the individual Catholic in relation to his Church. By reason of personal rather than hereditary status, some Catholics became conspicuous as loyal defenders of the Church's interests and ideals. Hence there arose, in the early decades of the 19th century, what is known, for want of a better word, as the Catholic Movement. The first half of the past century is remarkable for the names of such able and devoted Catholic laymen as de Bonald and de Maistre in France, von Stolberg and Goerres in Germany, Donoso Cortés in Spain, Daniel O'Connell in Ireland and others. By their energies and talents they supplied as best they could for the moral and political decline of the traditional Catholic ruler.

Organizationally, this action of individuals soon gave way to national unions or congresses for the defense of the Church. A notable initiative of this kind was the *Katholikentag*, an annual event in Germany, the first of which was held in 1848. In Belgium, the *Assemblée générale des catholiques* first met in Malines with a similar purpose in 1863. In Italy, the *Opera dei congressi e dei comitati cattolici* was founded in 1874. As the Industrial Revolution progressed, bringing with it the problem of socialism, Catholic laymen found an additional outlet for their zeal. The predominantly lay group who created the Union of Fribourg (1884) laid the groundwork for *Rerum Novarum*. In connection with this social action the name of Toniolo in Italy and Harmel in France, of course, deserve special mention.

During the critical years of the 19th century the Church had reason to be consoled in her sons and daughters. In the parliamentary eloquence of a Montalembert, the charity of an Ozanam, the alms-collecting of a Pauline Jaricot, the polemics of a Veuillot, the swords of the Zouaves who came from all over the world to fight for the Pope, the attachment and

generosity of the Catholic faithful were impressively evident.

But this zeal, once on the march, was not destined to stop at that point. A more intimate participation of the laity in the apostolate of the Church was bound to grow from these beginnings. The Church began to call for lay action on an ever broader front. One of the earliest invitations was that of Leo XIII, who in his encyclical *Sapientiae Christianae* of January 10, 1890, said: "No one . . . must entertain the notion that private individuals are prevented from taking some active part in this duty of teaching, especially those on whom God has bestowed gifts of mind with the strong wish of rendering themselves useful."

But the same Pope soon learned that Catholic organizations could provide anxiety as well as comfort and strength. By the turn of the century he was having difficulties because of the political orientation of some movements which wished to serve the Church in their way, without reference to the wishes of the bishops.

Freewheeling by overzealous organizations continued, none the less. In 1904, Pope St. Pius X suppressed the *Opera dei congressi* after it had repeatedly acted in opposition to the Pontiff's known wishes. (As it so happened, the chief troublemaker was not a layman, but a priest, Don Romolo Murri, a modernist who later left the Church.) In a letter of June 11, 1905, *Il fermo proposito*, the Pope created a new lay organization, the *Unione popolare*, which would avoid the pitfalls of the past. Those works "known by the name of Catholic Action," said the Holy Father, "cannot be conceived as existing in independence of the counsel and sovereign direction of the ecclesiastical authority, especially insofar as they must all be governed by the principles of Christian teaching and morality; still less possible is it to conceive them as existing in opposition, more or less open, to the ecclesiastical authority." Movements which carry the Catholic banner, observed the Pope

in words still true today, should act in a Catholic manner.

The use of the phrase "Catholic Action" by Pope St. Pius X was an abrupt change in terminology. Contemporary observers noted that, as though on purpose, the Pontiff had used this term wherever his predecessor would have spoken of "Christian Democracy." The older term, they commented, had become too ambiguous to be useful. It had taken on both a political and a social (as well as religious) meaning. And so it came about that from this time on, Catholic Action, though not used for the first time in 1905, entered into the language of the Church to designate lay action which is nonpolitical, apostolic and completely subordinated to the hierarchy.

Catholic Action and Lay Apostolate

When Pius XI began his pontificate in 1922, he thus found himself in possession of an idea and a name. He proceeded to give concrete organizational form to Catholic Action. Under his impulsion, lay activists of all sorts sprang up. Of these, the model form of Catholic Action was the Young Christian Workers (*Jocistes*), founded by the famous Canon Cardijn. It would be difficult to overestimate the profound influence of this form of "specialized Catholic Action," which has so many imitators.

To this Pontiff is due the definition of CA as "the participation of the laity in the apostolic mission of the hierarchy." A key device, called "mandate," was developed in order to assure full episcopal control at all times. Only those movements could be regarded as forming Catholic Action which had received a formal commission from some bishop. The mandate or license could be given or withdrawn at discretion.

The formula of Pius XI, theoretically sound, proved impractical. Subsequent reversals of official policy imply this clearly enough. The remedies for old ills generated new maladies. For

instance, the preoccupation with insuring subordination to the bishop often succeeded in chilling lay initiative. The bishops inclined to deal with the laity as they did with their own priests and religious, in disregard of the whole idea of the lay apostolate and its responsibilities. The method of the mandate also induced confusion and a spirit of rivalry through lack of uniform application from one diocese to another. Furthermore, a sort of superapostolate was created, since Catholic Action appeared to be above older works which, though approved by the Popes and bishops, did not possess the treasured mandate.

Another complication arose from the growth of Catholic Action in the interwar period. The lay apostle, normally, is married; the couple would probably be engaged in Catholic Action together. Spiritual writers, accordingly, set about to develop a lay spirituality for married apostolic couples. Their efforts were not always satisfactory, inasmuch as the impression was created, contrary to the long-standing ascetical teaching of the Church, that marriage and virginity are states equally favorable for the attainment of sanctity. No doubt many vocations were decided on this basis. It seems probable that the drop in priestly and religious vocations in Europe is traceable to the high praise of sanctity in the married state current in the 1930's. In his encyclical *Sacra Virginitas* of March 25, 1954, Pope Pius XII corrected the errors and exaggerations that arose in this connection. The existence of such a problem illustrates some of the unsuspected doctrinal and pastoral implications in the field of the lay apostolate.

After World War II a new period of development set in. The two world congresses of the lay apostolate summoned by Pius XII in 1951 and 1957 aided in crystallizing further the data of experience. The most striking sign of a change of approach occurred when Pius XII finally resolved the perennial and often sterile dispute over the definition of Catholic Ac-

tion by the simple process of extending it to embrace every approved Catholic lay activity of an apostolic nature. The term "lay apostolate" is now current; it is the term most likely to get the sanction of official use in the decrees of the Ecumenical Council.

The transitions in vocabulary (Catholic Movement, Christian Democracy, Catholic Action, Lay Apostolate) mark the four phases in the apostolic evolution about to culminate at the Council. The pattern of issues to be met is now clear. The bishops want the laity to join with them in the work of the Church. They are careful at the same time to safeguard the God-given constitution of the Church, according to which the power of teaching and governing resides in the bishops alone. But this vigilance has led the clergy to control the lay apostolate from the outside almost at every turn and, too often, even to do with their own hands what the laity should do. Whence the witty and not quite inaccurate description of Catholic Action as "the organized interference of the clergy in the apostolic mission of the laity." The delicate balance between lay responsibility and episcopal control is yet to be created.

There seem to be reasonable grounds for hoping that the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council will be able to settle what several Popes have vainly striven to resolve. By their unique prestige, the bishops at the Council can at least widen the range of possible solutions in a number of areas. Pastorally, the Council can make its own the earlier calls of modern Popes inviting generous lay men and women to a more direct participation in the work of Christ. (It can set the example itself by finding some form of lay consultation at the Council.) Canonically, the Vatican synod can give the laity some formal status in ecclesiastical legislation. Such recognition is presently lacking. According to one standard canon law textbook, the laity are simply "those who do not have the power either of order or of jurisdiction."

Theologically, the Council can render a more profound service. Lack of adequate theological perspective is part of the reason for the past setbacks of the lay apostolate. At bottom, what is needed is a recasting of the terms in which the Church is presented. Ecclesiology, as many writers point out, has been up to now primarily a hierarchiology. The main stress has been on the teaching and governing of the episcopacy. Familiar to every laymen is the distinction, so often insisted upon in sermons, between the Church Teaching and the Church Taught. At times, the very word "Church" is used as synonymous with "Church Teaching," as though the hierarchy is *the* Church. What is true of the magisterium is also true of the ruling power as embodied in the symbol of the shepherd. Pope St. Pius X expressed a characteristic churchman's attitude when on February 11, 1906, he declared to the French Catholics: "The one duty of the multitudes is to allow themselves to be led and, like a docile flock, to follow the shepherd." Such exhortations to passivity are hardly a favorable starting point for great endeavors in the Lord's vineyard.

The modern awareness of the Mystical Body has done much to center differently the axis of our thinking. We are here reminded that the head, important as it is, is not the body; that the body has other members whose functions are different and whose work cannot be done by the head; and that all members, the greater and the lesser, must contribute their separate part "to the building up of the Body of Christ."

Pius XII indicated the mind of the Church in seeking to redress the balance when he told the 1957 lay congress: "It would be a misunderstanding of the real nature of the Church and her social character to distinguish in her an active element, the ecclesiastical authorities, and a purely passive element, the laity." These are surprising words, in view of earlier statements not only by Pope St. Pius X but also by Pius XII himself. That the Holy Father felt able to make such an utter-

ance without fear of being misunderstood is perhaps possible only because of our newly awakened consciousness of the Mystical Body.

Another doctrinal contribution of the Council could be a clarification of the idea of the royal priesthood of the laity. Today, in contrast to former times, the Church willingly associates the faithful with the divine liturgy and freely speaks of the priesthood of the laity—again without fear of being misunderstood. This mutual partnership of both sides of the altar rail in the public liturgical prayers is bound to have its natural correlative in the field of action. At the same time the liturgical life may help provide the basis of the lay spirituality, which is as yet in its primitive form.

The Second Vatican Council, by throwing light on these and other as yet obscure doctrinal corners, by setting in a new framework the apostolic outlook of the Church, by codifying the lessons of the past 150 years of trial and error and by giving timely impetus to worthy tendencies, can earn for itself the title of "Council of the Lay Apostolate." To the timorous (clergy or lay), some aspects of this change may appear revolutionary and dangerous to the essential clergy-lay distinction. But the lay apostolate exists only to energize the strength of the Mystical Body, not to reorganize the constitution of the Church. Those who enter upon this new-style vocation will need more, not less, love and knowledge of the Church; they will need more, not less, loyalty and devotion to the Holy Father and their bishops. The clergy, for their part, will learn how to exercise better their unique and irreplaceable prerogatives of preaching and sanctification. The end-product will be a mighty union of hearts in the Christian community. The zeal of the first Christians brought Christ's gospel only to the limits of the Roman Empire. It may be this age's privilege to extend that Kingdom, in a great leap forward, to the ends of the earth.

ROBERT A. GRAHAM, S.J.

*The layman's role
in the Church
is explored by
a layman
of international
renown.*

PROBLEMS OF THE MODERN CHURCH

Today there is much discussion about fuller participation of the layman in the life of the Church. The feeling is abroad also that the layman himself is not sufficiently consulted about his function in the Mystical Body of Christ. This interview which Fr. Bianchi had with M. Joseph Folliet in Lyons, France, presented a lay intellectual's views on some of the vital issues before the Church on the eve of the Second Vatican Council.

Joseph Folliet is well known in Western Europe as a Catholic thinker, editor and writer. One of his recent books, *World Catholicism Today* (Newman), reviews some of the modern Church's problems. M. Folliet has a doctorate in social and political science, another in Thomistic philosophy and a licentiate in theology. He holds honorary degrees from the University of Montreal and Columbia University. For many years he has been professor of sociology at the Institut Catholique in Lyons and editor of the periodical *Chronique Sociale de France*.

* * *

Q Monsieur Folliet, how would you describe in general terms the situation of the Church at this turning point in her history?

FOLLIET: Such a large question can only suppose a very broad and incomplete response. The first vital problem facing the Church is the existence and activity of world communism, which has already established itself throughout one-third of

the earth and is assiduously preparing for conquest of the remaining two-thirds. For the Church, communism presents a problem without precedent.

The Church is not faced with another heresy or schism like those of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Schism and heresies undid Catholic unity, but at least some religious element remained common to Catholics, schismatics, and even heretics. The Church does not have to contend with a rationalist mystique like that of the Enlightenment, nor does she have to oppose a 19th-century brand of materialism and positivism. These latter, without perceiving their interior contradiction, professed belief in objective truth and universal morality.

Communist neopaganism, the secular religion of collective man, is also a religion of history and, in a certain sense, a complete pragmatism. Not only does it deny God and the spirit, as we understand these words, but it rejects all objective truth and universal morality—truth and morality being identified with the interest of the revolution and its official interpreter, the party.

There is an essential and irreducible opposition not only between Christianity and communism, but between normal paganism and the Communist neopaganism. This is why Catholicism must say no to communism in general, even though certain economic accomplishments of the system are worthy of interest.

Now, because of this categorical refusal of communism, another danger, almost as serious as communism itself, looms before the Church: that of practically degrading Catholicism into pure and simple anticommunism. And we will perforce succumb to this temptation if we content ourselves with a posture of defense and of sentimental reactions.

The inevitable reactions of the Counter Reformation weighed a long time on the life and progress of the Church.

The effects of a similar reaction of strict defense against communism would be even more grave and lasting. Such tactics would, on the one hand, deprive the social doctrine of the Church of its most original and positive contributions. On the other hand, it would enroll the Church in a crusade against communism conducted in the name of political ideologies and economic interests which have little or nothing to do with the permanent and superior preoccupations of the Catholic religion.

Thus the Church would find herself oriented toward some sort of totalitarianism of the national-socialist variety, or aligned with certain capitalist systems, or wedded to the more reactionary elements of every society. The latter don't want change, because any change would diminish their wealth, authority and prestige. In this way the Church would be fettered to temporal causes in a temporal battle which has, perhaps, been lost in advance.

Regardless of the perversity of the Communist system, Communists are men redeemed by the blood of Christ, and the Church must put the message of salvation at their disposal. Therefore, I think that in her struggle with communism the Church must not close in on herself nor be content to gaze backward at the past.

On the contrary, she should insist on the most positive aspects of her doctrine and life, showing the relationship between the divine and the human, and how the former protects the latter. She should set her face toward the future, anxious to make the Christian hope which she embodies shine before the eyes of all men. Finally, the Church should develop an apologetic and a catechetical teaching for use with Marxists—for those behind the Iron Curtain and, especially, for those in the uncommitted countries. The implementation of this apologetic would probably fall to the layman, whose contacts with Marxists would be more numerous and uninhibited.

Q *It seems that the Church is faced with moral and intellectual crises that are intimately linked to the rapid change of modern civilization. How do you understand this situation?*

FOLLINET: The whole world is undergoing a great crisis of civilization and culture, a transformation more rapid and universal than any that history has yet recorded. Western civilization, which stemmed from Europe and is reflected in the United States and the USSR, is gradually spreading throughout the world. But, at the same time, this civilization finds itself in a state of full change and interior crisis.

Our civilization is technical, industrial, urban and massive; it is opposed to the old traditional civilizations which, with their artisan economies of small or medium-sized groupings, are predominantly rural. And from a cultural point of view, I would add that while remaining a civilization of the written word, it is becoming more and more an audio-visual civilization through the newer means of mass communication. The evolution is having important consequences on individual and collective psychologies.

Up to now our contemporary civilization has not succeeded in raising its sights to an order of goals. It resides, rather, in an order of means: comfort and technical efficiency. Communism, by historical necessity, places the transcendental in front of man instead of above him. But this provides no more than an illusory solution whose insufficiency is revealed once man has attained certain of his immediate material needs.

Old-time socialism has pretty well spent itself, and it offers little promise. Nationalism is a heady tonic in the new nations drunk with independence. But the older nations have the dark feeling that even independence can do no more than furnish the awakening countries with a motive for self-defense. It does not provide a vision by which to live and die. I have the im-

pression that the development of the new civilization has made most of the 19th-century ideologies obsolete.

Although it is in full expansion, our technological civilization is a long way from being firmly implanted around the globe. Take, for example, the problem of the working classes. It is not at all the same problem in the industrially advanced countries as it is in the underdeveloped nations. In the latter, those basic injustices that victimize the laboring classes are still vigorous and urgently crying for solution. Communism often seems to be the only doctrine capable of resolving the plight of these unfortunates.

In the wake of this sweeping revolution of modern civilization, old moral and intellectual patterns have been abandoned, but nothing has renewed or replaced them. In the present moral crisis the Church has a magnificent opportunity to make her voice heard. Hers is not a closed and dated morality that is unsuitable to an ongoing civilization. Rather, it is a truly human and evangelical morality, the only one which is apt to provide interior discipline for persons and societies. Of course, the moral and spiritual message of the Church will have no impact on our time unless the faithful take the Gospel seriously and make it enter into the whole fabric of their lives.

But the intellectual crisis of today poses problems of a different order, and the Church will have her hands full trying to resolve them. Her mental imagery, her symbolism, her preaching and literature are profoundly associated with older civilizations, particularly with rural civilizations, and with Greco-Latin culture.

What can rural images mean to city-dwellers who live constantly in a different time cycle and under artificial lights? What can liturgical symbols signify to men who have lost the sense of the poetic symbol, but who appreciate more and more the mathematical symbol? Where is the catechism that is adapted to presenting Christian moral and dogma to men

whose formation and daily experience are those of industrial techniques? I do not pretend to know the answers, but I know that these questions will not be solved by a simple fiat.

Q It seems that the catholicity of the Church will be one of the preoccupations of the coming Council. Would you like to say something about this?

FOLLIET: Yes, I would. In a world that is becoming more and more united, the Church should strive to be more catholic than ever. All men should be able to live her life regardless of their race, language, national and cultural traditions. The problems of the Church in Africa and Asia are forcing us, whether we like it or not, toward such universality.

If we look at the Church as it actually is, we are obliged to admit that we are still very far from this catholicity which is so necessary and desirable.

In history the Church appears as closely tied to Western civilization, to Western forms of thought and custom. Fortunately, the Church has been able to disengage herself from the ties that colonialism has at times imposed on her. She was alert enough to create a native clergy and hierarchy in missionary lands. This was an admirable effort. But now the universality of the Church must really pass from a state of theory and doctrine to one of fact; it must be not only attested, but also spread.

Here a secondary, but important, problem comes to the fore: the Latinity of the Church. In Western civilization the Church is closely associated with the Latin peoples and, because of the geographical location of its spiritual capital, with the Italian people. Such a situation, which was once historically acceptable or, at least, unavoidable, must not continue today. The last three Pontiffs have made an effort to clarify this point of universality.

Q *It would be well to review now some of the specific problems that the Church faces relative to the lay apostolate. Do you feel that the Church incorporates the layman sufficiently into her work of salvation?*

FOLLIET: I would have to answer no, but with nuances, of course, and with high hopes. Through the various forms of Catholic Action the layman plays a role in the life of the Church that is at once important and growing. But it doesn't seem to me that the layman is offered, if I may use such an economic term, full-time work in the life of the Church. Isn't it odd, for example, that in France most magazines and many of the newspapers read by French Catholics are directed by religious? As a layman I would like to see my fellow laymen take a more active part in the intellectual life of the Church.

Also I think that the Church could ask much more from the layman in the area of the temporal administration of dioceses and parishes. I feel a bit frightened and almost scandalized when I see priests and religious consecrate nearly all their time to purely administrative needs. Can't we ask the layman to handle either the financial aspects of administration, or perhaps to engage more actively in the administration itself? Some priests speak of such lay co-operation, but there are few who effectively seek or obtain it.

On the properly pastoral level, the evangelical program of a parish, a diocese or a region cannot neglect the layman. In this the movements of Catholic Action have their work cut out for them. This is undoubtedly one of our high tasks in the years ahead.

On the parish level, few are the parishes that have a council of laymen that is worthy of the name. Such a council should consist of militant and responsible Catholics who are representative of their milieu, and whose activity gets beyond pure

passivity, if I may risk such an expression. These councils could render important services in the parish.

Q *How can the layman participate more fully in the liturgical life of the parish?*

FOLLIET: Some parishes have already introduced laymen more specially formed in prayer and cult to a more active sharing of liturgical life, either by reading the Proper of the Mass or by directing the responses of the faithful during the celebration. I know of a parish where the children's Mass is a dialogue Mass led by the father of a family. I know of other parishes where the faithful participate in the priest's preaching by offering positive criticisms of past sermons and by presenting suggestions for future preaching. This custom is far from being generalized, but its diffusion would seem useful.

Then, too, there is the question of the use of the vernacular in the liturgy. The number of the faithful who know Latin today is very small indeed. Thus, from the point of view of immediate apostolic needs, it would seem desirable to make more use of the vernacular languages.

But certain difficulties crop up: many translations from Latin seem to divest the liturgical texts of the sacred; these translations "rationalize" the texts, stripping them of all poetry. There is also the unifying role of Latin as the international language of the Church, which should not be overlooked. In modern Europe especially, the frequent intercommunication of peoples points up the need for some such unifying element in the liturgy.

Q *You spoke of laymen being engaged full-time in the apostolic endeavors of the Church. Do you have in mind any specific ways of achieving this today?*

FOLLIET: There has been considerable discussion about re-establishing the diaconate for married men who also exercise a professional activity. I know that the Germans have studied the question attentively. But as far as I know, not many French laymen have aspired to such a diaconate. It seems to them that there is no middle term between the lay state and the priesthood, a priesthood that the immense majority of them conceive as practically inseparable from celibacy. This points out that the problem is not the same in every country. If we distinguish between the countries of traditional Christianity and the mission countries, the diaconate would seem to me to be more opportune in the latter.

At any rate, we must face up to the fact that a renewal of the diaconate would involve for those Christians who accepted it a renunciation of certain of their lay activities. Here I am thinking especially of political activity, which would be foreign to men of the Church. Then, too, a renewed diaconate would give rise to a large-scale reconsideration of the status and role of the clergy, because the diaconate as such has fallen into desuetude, except as a transitory step toward the priesthood.

We are witnessing today the flourishing activity of laymen in secular institutes. I find this an excellent and timely movement. Nevertheless, I feel that we should distinguish clearly between secular institutes made up of laymen as such and those religious institutes whose members, dressed as laymen, live in the world. To confuse these two groups, which seek analogous goals by very different means, would risk eliminating the very notion of the laity.

In my opinion the laity properly speaking is not only distinguished from the priesthood, but also from the religious state. The mark of the latter distinction is the public vows of religious, particularly the vow of obedience, which unites a person totally to a group under the authority of a superior.

I do not think that a real vow of obedience would allow a layman to live a full lay life in the temporal sphere, and especially in the political realm. A state can admit of certain arrangements with religious orders, for example, in the areas of teaching and the operation of hospitals. But the state certainly could not permit one of its civil servants to be under the dominion of an authority which it doesn't know and over which it could exercise no control.

Q *This discussion on a more active role for the layman naturally leads us to reflect on the need for a deeper lay spirituality.*

FOLLIET: Yes, all that has been said points up the need for a positive and modern spirituality for the layman. This spirituality must not be reduced to a monastic or religious or priestly spirituality. It can be very profitable indeed for laymen to attach themselves freely to some Third Order way of life if they so desire. But the best intentions in the world do not excuse the imposing on the layman of a spirituality that was not originally intended for him and which is only with difficulty adaptable to his conditions of life.

A characteristic of all monastic and religious asceticisms is the regularity of spiritual exercise. This regularity can be suitable for elderly persons who are free from professional and family cares, or for celibate men and women who have limited professional activities, and who thus are free in the use of their time. But such a spirituality is hardly adaptable to the ordinary layman busy with his family and his work, and often engaged in some militant action, be it social, political or cultural. In developing a spirituality for the layman today, we should take up where St. Francis de Sales left off in his *Introduction to the Devout Life*, basing ourselves on the experience of laymen whose lives seem to be a spiritual success.

Undoubtedly great progress has been made in the area of conjugal and familial spirituality. But I wonder if we haven't insisted too much on this aspect of lay spirituality to the detriment of other important aspects. Among the many factors that inclined us to develop our spirituality of sex were a certain moralist tradition which places special emphasis on the sixth and ninth commandments, and our contemporary pansexuality, which mesmerizes so many with sexual preoccupations.

But this praiseworthy effort toward a family spirituality has very seldom been accompanied by a corresponding effort to elaborate a spirituality of action in the temporal realm in general. Such a spirituality would be based on the duties of one's state in professional and civic life, and based also on the proper mission of the layman, which is to bring the world back to God by transforming at once its social structures and its nature. A great deal remains to be done.

Q Your long career as a Catholic intellectual has brought you into frequent contact with the clergy. Do you think that the relations between the laity and the clergy are improving or deteriorating?

FOLLIET: Once again I must fall back on my French experience to answer your question. I can affirm without exaggeration that the relations between laymen and ecclesiastics, bishops and priests, have been improving over the last half-century. Surely, there are still many laymen who don't really feel that they are the Church and who remain passive. But the number of active citizens of the Kingdom of God is constantly growing.

Of course, in some places an antiquated kind of clerical domination still reigns. Here the priest considers himself not

only the spiritual master, but to some degree the temporal head of the community. There is also a more subtle form of clericalism by which certain movements are directed more by the chaplain than by the responsible lay officials. But these traces of clericalism are due more to human infirmity than to institutions or mentalities, and certainly they are not based on doctrinal concepts. When I was young, for example, it was very difficult for a layman to contact a bishop; today in almost all French dioceses this situation has significantly changed. Not only would a layman be received, but he would be listened to and encouraged.

This does not mean that all is perfect in lay-clerical relations. There are certain lay people who think they are mature and responsible, but who actually are not. And there are priests who by-pass the layman in precisely those matters in which the laity is most competent. Besides, it is certain that a rather large number of priests, in spite of their undeniable good will, simply do not understand the problems of lay people, especially adults. I do not hold this against these priests too strongly, given the complexity of the problems and the uniqueness of individual cases. But I think we must recognize this lack.

In many places, for example, it is hard for militant laymen to find good spiritual directors, or even confessors who are not satisfied with simple absolution and encouragement, but who can counsel the militant according to his state and activity.

Adult Christian education is lacking, too. Many priests, who are at ease with children and young people, are intimidated by adults, especially by men. They tend to let these adults get along by themselves, since it is less interesting to deal with adults who do not easily become enthusiastic and attached to sentimental arguments. On the contrary, these adults insist on being answered reasonably and to the point. Certain

Catholic Action groups are working well in adult Christian education, but their efforts are quite disproportionate to the amount of work that needs doing.

Perhaps I could mention here another source of subtle misunderstandings in lay-clerical relations: a difference of formation. The formation of clerics is almost completely humanistic and literary, and this in a scientific and technical world.

Q Do you think that the image of the Church projected to our contemporaries is that of the incarnation of the evangelical message, or does the Church appear to be just another massive organization with strong political overtones?

FOLLIET: I would say that the massive organization aspect is less and less true of the French Church. It is an incontestable fact that the Church here has abandoned political ties, and that it no longer appears as linked to a political tendency, and less to a political party. It is also a fact that the sociological body, as I call it, of the Church has become more complex and varied. Certain social categories, especially the salaried middle class, are still in predominance. But these groups are not alone; it can be said that all the social categories are more or less represented in the French Church. The working class, however, is not well represented in France.

I don't think, however, that the same political-ecclesiastical situation obtains in other countries where, for example, the Church is closely aligned to a Christian Democrat party. I believe that the Christian Democracy movement has rendered great services, and that it can continue to do so in countries where the level of political evolution is less advanced, as in the Latin American republics. But in those countries where a Christian Democracy is in power, it seems to show the same symptoms of aging and exhaustion as do the Socialist parties.

*Should we expect
Church unity
to result from
the deliberations
of the Council?*

THE COUNCIL AND CHURCH UNITY

The immediate aim of the forthcoming Second Vatican Council is not the union of the Christian world, or even reunion with particular religious groups. There can be no doubt, however, that from a long-term point of view the Council may serve to prepare the way for Church unity by smoothing out many of the existing difficulties.

In the field of doctrine in general: the preservation of dogmatic integrity does not require that, merely because there are difficulties in the dogmatic field, nothing should be done. All too often difficulties arise because the true meaning of a dogma is ill-understood or even distorted. We have to remember that man's way of looking at things and his ways of expressing his thought have changed greatly with the passage of time. Our separated brethren, cut off from the Church for several centuries past, have experienced the influence of many philosophical systems (rationalism, empiricism, Hegelianism, Kantianism, phenomenism, existentialism), which have shaped their outlook and their terminology in such a way that they often have difficulty in understanding, adequately, dogmatic teachings expressed in the traditional language of the Church. Here the Council will be able to carry out a useful work of explanation and so remove many misunderstandings. Our times are particularly favorable for such a work.

From his vantage point in Rome as head of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, AUGUSTIN CARDINAL BEA, S.J., spoke with unusual authority in this essay, which first appeared in *The Month* (31 Farm St., London, W. 1, England).

In days gone by, Protestantism, especially in its Lutheran form, had a distinctly individualist character. It separated man from society, from history and from tradition: the rule of man's life was his personal faith; he was to live in God's sight quite simply, reading and interpreting the Bible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who enlightened him and directed his life. For this reason he never looked back to the past, to tradition, and felt no need of a visible Church through which the deposit of faith would be handed down to him. But today, contemporary thought is marked by an awareness of *the meaning of history and of the social structure of life*. We examine the origin and history of ideas; we examine the intellectual climates into which they were born and propagated; we look into the different influences which they have undergone.

This modern method, based as it is on social history, draws doctrines out of isolation and places them in the great current of tradition. Fundamentally, it is the method of the Catholic Church, which is anti-individualist. Today, therefore, the prudent theologian will find it easier to demonstrate the historical and objective source of doctrines, and their development down the course of centuries. It is true that this does not take us to tradition in the dogmatic sense of the word, that is, a divinely guaranteed means of the faithful transmission of truths revealed by God. But that purely historical tradition which we do reach is in itself very precious as a point of departure for future progress.

This modern method is particularly rich in important results when it is applied to the study of Scripture. It will be enough to quote here the words of a Protestant professor of theology at the University of Zurich, Dr. E. Brunner, who, speaking of the famous *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* published by Professor Kittel, writes: "Here it is the New Testament itself that speaks, not some classical exegesis of confessional tradition. Faced with the results of the *Theological Dic-*

tionary, certain classical theological doctrines of our forefathers reveal themselves as biblical only in a very limited sense." He then mentions as an example the doctrine of original sin and predestination, noting that Luther's conception of justification by faith alone cannot, without qualification, be identified with that put forward by St. Paul.

With these recent studies as a basis, the Council will be able, not only to uphold the doctrine of the Church with an interpretation that conforms to modern methods, but, more generally, to show that the right understanding of the teaching of Sacred Scripture, and even the assessment of what constitutes the canon of Scripture, is not possible without recourse to tradition, at least in its human and historical aspects. It is true that if we use this method of historical research, the deficiencies of men of the past and their errors will come to light; but also, and much more strikingly, there will be revealed the miracle of the continuous preservation and constancy of the Catholic Church, which has triumphantly weathered so many crises and has constantly reaffirmed herself before the world.

Rediscovering the Church

Which are the points that particularly need explaining today? They are, primarily: the Church, her doctrine, her conception of dogma and its unchanging character, her authority, and especially the authority of the Supreme Pontiff. (Requests for such explanations have already been made by more than one non-Catholic scholar.) These in fact are the fundamental problems, and *not*, for example, the question of justification or of the Mass as a sacrifice. Protestants themselves are becoming more and more aware of this, so much so, that nowadays they speak of a "rediscovery" of the Church.

In this field the Council may very well produce many beneficial results. The problem of the Church was posed as far back

as the Council of Trent, but was not adequately dealt with then, or at the First Vatican Council, which was prematurely interrupted by the Franco-Prussian war. The most authoritative modern historian of the Council of Trent, Prof. Hubert Jedin, in a conference given at Rome in November of 1960, has noted that its teaching requires not reformation but completion. Today the way toward the completion of both these Councils has been paved by theological study and research, as well as by the directive compiled by and authoritatively set out in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi* of Pius XII, on the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ.

Even Protestant writers have admitted that this encyclical presented an idea of the Church which they had hitherto scarcely taken into consideration. The infallibility of the Church and of her head, the successor of St. Peter, the hierarchical structure of the Church, the relation between the power of the Pope and that of the bishops, the important position and function of the laity within the Church, the efficacy of the sacraments—these, all difficult questions for Protestants, are explained and clarified by the doctrine of the Mystical Body in such a way as to make it understood that the Church is not merely that juridical body which the Protestants reject as contrary to Christ's ideal. At the same time, however, it is emphasized that the Church must be a well-ordered and regulated organism. When all this has been set out and explained, the Church will appear to our separated brethren in a much clearer light, and many prejudices and misunderstandings may well disappear.

Mystici Corporis Christi, together with another encyclical of Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*, sheds light also on the case of Christians who are validly baptized but separated from the Church. For it shows that they in fact belong to the Church in some way—though not in the fullest sense, since they cannot share in the graces which derive from the head, Jesus Christ, and

which confer on the members joined to the head so much light and strength

It would be an important step forward if the Council, with its supreme authority, could explain these doctrines and their implications, and thus, as the Holy Father puts it, "give splendor to the face of Christ's Church, restoring the simpler and purer beauty of the time of her birth," rediscovering anew "the traces of her more fervent years, in such a way as to show forth her triumphant power over those modern spirits that have been tempted and compromised by the false theories of the Prince of this World" (Allocution of November 13, 1960). Such an achievement, besides helping the Church herself on her difficult journey, would also meet the needs and aspirations of our separated brethren and would indeed be a "sweet invitation" to them to seek and obtain the unity for which Jesus Christ prayed so ardently to the Father.

This restoration of the splendor that is the Church's birthright, of which the Holy Father speaks, can be brought about also in what concerns canon law. There are laws given by God Himself, which cannot therefore be changed: for example, the existence of the episcopacy and primacy in the Church, or the indissolubility of marriage. But there are others also having a human origin, which result from the conditions and requirements of other times and are incomprehensible to modern man.

The Holy Father himself seems to indicate the possibility of a reform which would take into account the needs of the present day when he speaks, in his allocution of January 25, 1959, of "a timely and welcome modernization of the Code of Canon Law" as a result of the diocesan synod of the City of Rome and of the Council. He speaks more specifically of this revision in his first encyclical, *Ad Petri Cathedram*. In this Council, writes the Pope, bishops from every part of the world will come together to discuss important religious issues, and particularly the problem of how ecclesiastical discipline may be

better adapted to the needs and to the mentality of our times.

Such adaptations have already been put into effect, during the pontificates of Pius X, Benedict XV and Pius XII: for example, the laws dealing with frequent Communion, with the required age for first Communion, with the Eucharistic fast; the change in the Latin translation of the Psalter, the reform of the Roman Curia under Pius X, the increase in the number of cardinals under John XXIII. Pius XII, referring to a reform which he had both instigated and brought about, once remarked that "it took a lot of courage." It will take a great deal of courage also to reform certain other laws. But the Council, like the divine Founder of the Church, will have the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and among these gifts are fortitude and counsel. It will know how to take into account the needs of the present day, thus making the way toward union clearer and easier.

Finally, there is one other way in which the Council may do much to help the ecumenical movement: namely, by its approval, and by arousing and fostering the interest and the action of the whole Catholic Church toward union. It is true to say that to a great extent this is already happening. We need only call to mind the immense interest and the response which the Holy Father's various pronouncements on this subject have produced, a response reminiscent of the enthusiasm that met the appeals of St. Pius X and Pius XI for Catholic Action and the lay apostolate, or the missionary zeal aroused by the same Pius XI. This does not mean that interest and initiative in the ecumenical movement have been shown only in recent times; it is enough to note the immense popularity of the Church Unity Octave. At the moment, however, it is our duty to concern ourselves with making these efforts less sporadic and isolated, with directing and co-ordinating them with an eye to differences of situation and circumstance; and above all, with making the whole Church progressively more aware, in all her de-

partments, of the essential duty in charity of collaborating in the great cause of the union of all baptized Christians.

We must, therefore, hope and trust that the Council will greatly increase the enthusiasm of all for the work of unity. There is no doubt that, if the possibilities afforded by the Council which we have outlined here are carried into action, we shall have both a useful foundation and an effective stimulus for the movement as a whole. To these we ought to add more explicit advice, special directives and suggestions for the possible formation of study groups, or the foundation of permanent institutions at the diocesan, national and international levels.

Five Ways to Work Toward Reunion

Without wishing to interfere in the slightest with the ultimate decisions of the Council or even to make suggestions, we shall try now, in the light of directives already given by the Church, to trace out the main lines along which the ecumenical activity of groups and individual members of the Church might be expected to proceed.

1. The first and most effective contribution, one that has innumerable applications, would appear to be this. Each of us who meets non-Catholics in his everyday life can do much to prepare them mentally for union by a *wholehearted attitude of charity*. Just as the Holy Father's deep charity in speaking and dealing with our separated brethren has contributed greatly to an improvement in the "atmosphere," so also the approach of each of the faithful has its importance. Charity will preserve the Catholic from impatience and discourtesy in his relations with non-Catholics; from resentment and prejudices caused by unpleasant events of times gone by, for which they are in no way responsible; from the uncalled-for judgment and the rash generalization. In short, it will bring

him to use, in his relations with them, the great rule of charity set forth by the Apostle of the Gentiles: "Charity is patient, is kind, makes every excuse, sets no limit to hope nor to endurance" (I *Cor.* 13:4-7).

Such a united effort of Catholics of all walks of life would reflect their fidelity to the precept of the first Pope, St. Peter, which has been practiced in so exemplary a way by his successor John XXIII: "Carry out your charge as God would have it done, cordially, not like drudges . . . not tyrannizing, but setting an example to the flock" (I *Peter* 5:2). Such an effort would be a practical way of showing our separated brethren that, though the Catholic Church guards with solicitude the integrity of the dogma and faith of her own children, she is a loving mother for them also, and now anxiously wonders whether this terrible quarrel of the past may be made up today through greater sanctity, prayer and sacrifice.

2. *The example of a way of life that is eminently religious and moral* will also have much importance in preparing the minds of non-Catholics for union. Each individual Catholic must make his own what the First Vatican Council says of the Church in general: Each must be "a beacon raised up among the nations" to lighten, as it were, by his exemplary conduct, the way toward the union of all separated Christians.

3. *Fraternal collaboration with our separated brethren*, in any work that does not directly involve Catholic doctrine, would be a partial realization, in advance, of the union that we all hope for. Such collaboration is today both esteemed and desired by non-Catholics. Dr. H. Schnell writes on this point: "The formula, 'practical collaboration as a means for drawing the churches closer to one another,' might form the basis of an agreement between the ideas expressed by the Pope in his radio broadcast of Christmas, 1958, and the suggestion of the World Council of Churches of February 12, 1959." Only recently the secretary general of the World Council stated in

his report to the Convention of St. Andrews: "We have made it abundantly clear that full unity is and must be the goal of the World Council of Churches, but we believe at the same time that there are urgent common tasks to be performed even now and that the performing of these tasks will help us to advance toward unity" (*Ecumenical Review* [1960], p. 56).

These urgent common tasks have to do with social problems and the promulgation of Christian principles in civil, social and cultural life, as also in the life of charity, and particularly in relations between nations. It has been observed, and rightly, that the idea of such collaboration is not a new one. It expresses a constant theme of the teaching of Pius XII, reflected in the Instruction of the Holy Office, *On the Ecumenical Movement* (December 20, 1949). This instruction approves of "congresses of the various denominations to discuss the ways in which we may work in common to defend the fundamental principles of the natural law and the Christian religion." This teaching has been repeated and insisted upon by the present Holy Father, John XXIII, who makes a solemn appeal in his Christmas Broadcast of December 23, 1958, for "good will to be at the service of order, justice and brotherhood among all Christians, that they might work together in a common effort of understanding and a spirit of mutual respect in religious, civil and social life."

4. A special form of collaboration with our separated brethren is *theological discussion between specialists*; that is, between the theologians of either side. This work is to be recommended especially, because little by little it will tend to affect the deepest root of division, namely, the question of attitude and mentality. It will also serve to clarify the misunderstandings and wrong interpretations which may exist on points of doctrine. Also these specialists, usually university professors, enjoy a great prestige in the Protestant world, and it is they who educate the future ministers of religion. Many non-Cath-

olics are anxious to have such discussions, and set great store by them. It is significant that the Central Committee for the World Council of Churches in a resolution of August, 1960, welcomed with joy the creation of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity and went on to express the desire and the hope that informal discussions between theologians would continue, seeing that these contributed greatly to the cause of union.

5. It is clear that not everyone can be engaged in active collaboration, which depends upon the varying circumstances of public and social life. But there is a type of collaboration that is open to all, one which is essential for the success of the Council and of the efforts of the Council directed toward church unity: namely, prayer. We must not forget that the gift of true faith is above all the work of grace, which gives us the light to see and recognize truth and to accept its practical consequences, as well as the strength to overcome obstacles. This is true for each individual, and all the more true for entire religious communities, handicapped perhaps by secular prejudices, misunderstandings, social and family considerations.

The Church herself prays daily, through the priest in the Mass, asking God to deign to "reunite" the Church. This is above all the prayer of our Lord Himself on the night before He died: "I pray for them that believe in me, that they may be one, as thou, Father, art one in me, and I in thee, that they too may be one in us" (*John 17:21*). We place all our faith in this prayer of the divine Founder of the Church, without letting ourselves be discouraged by the difficulties which still lie between us and the attainment of the precious gift of the unity of all who carry the image of our Lord in their hearts, and, through baptism, a seal upon their souls that cannot be effaced.

In conclusion, we must point out that what we have said is necessarily incomplete. The discussion remains and will remain

unfinished, because the documentation on the subject is so vast and needs such continuous revision. Besides, there are matters which can be spoken of only in private, which affect the secrets of the conscience and cannot be made the subject of public discussion. However, what has been set down here, based as it is upon public accounts and declarations, will be enough to show how important today is the movement for Church unity, and in what ways the Council may help us advance its cause. "This heartbreaking problem of the disunity of Christ's heritage," says the Holy Father, "remains, to the prejudice and hindrance of our best efforts, and the way ahead is paved with difficulties and doubts." But the Pope knows that the peace of the world depends upon this unity, and therefore upon how we work and how we pray to bring it about. He therefore insists that we should not lose courage, but "continue to extend a loving invitation to our dear separated brothers, who like us bear the name of Christ and read His holy Gospel, who listen also to the promptings of religious piety and of a charity that blesses and benefits" (Christmas Broadcast of December 23, 1958).

Like the Holy Father, let us not be discouraged, for we know that "what is impossible for men is possible for God."

AUGUSTIN CARDINAL BEA, S.J.

*How best can we
unite ourselves,
in mind and will,
with the work
of the Council?*

INNER LIFE AND THE COUNCIL

What has my inner life to do with the current convention of bishops from all over the world? After all, the Ecumenical Council is for bishops, and it will take place whether I favor it or not.

Of course, as a good Christian, I will say many prayers for the Council's success. But that is not the same thing as having a personal part in this world event.

History, however, gives a resounding answer to such a question. From history we learn that no mere *formal* action, no matter how finely organized, no matter how noble and urgent the end for which it is convoked, can succeed in its purpose unless it is supported, brought to life, by the inner life of the members of Christ's Church. As I wrote in *St. Ansgar's Bulletin* for January, 1962:

No formal action could have been more impressive, more pontifical and authoritative than the proclamation by Pope Eugene IV of the union of the Oriental Churches with Rome at the Council of Florence on July 16, 1439. Yet the widely hailed "reunion" turned out to be totally abortive, just as was the case nearly two centuries earlier at the Council of Lyons.

What, indeed, would the great reforming Council of Trent

A man of the Church in the most meaningful sense of the term, FR. JOHN LAFARGE, S. J., dean of AMERICA'S editorial staff, here meditates on the Council's interior significance.

(1545-1563) have come to, if it had not responded to the inner prayers and aspirations of countless members of the Church all over the Christian world? Theological learning, essential as it was, would have had but scant results unless the aspirations of the Council had been supported by the martyrdom of a St. Thomas More and his many contemporaries and successors who witnessed for their faith—a witness that came from their inmost, burning souls.

The present Council is, therefore, a tremendous challenge to each person's inner spirit. What that challenge means is clear from the words of our Holy Father, Pope John XXIII, in speaking on June 29, 1959, of the coming Council. The Pope made it clear that it will be held at a moment when the Church is consumed by the desire to restore and fortify its faith—in the face of an alienated and doubting world—and to draw renewal of spirit from contemplation of the remarkable heritage and pledge of unity bequeathed to the Church by its divine Founder.

In his Apostolic Constitution of December 25, 1961, in which he solemnly and officially convoked the Council, to take effect toward the end of the year 1962, Pope John laid special stress upon the theme of unity. Through the fact of Catholic unity, as well as through the spirit of the same unity, the Church can hope to make its maximum impact upon the confused and divided modern world.

The mere objective of Catholic unity, as that of a world-wide organization, is not enough. For the Church to meet the problems of the changing times, unity must become a living factor in the personal lives of its members. How then are we to acquire that spirit of unity? The answer is simple: By returning to the sources of spiritual unity: the mystery of the redemption and resurrection of mankind as found in the Source of our unity, the person of the Incarnate Word of God, our divine Saviour Jesus Christ.

This mystery is the focal point of all our faith, our hope and our love. As is so briefly and powerfully expressed in the majestic Vespers antiphon which closes the octave of the Epiphany and with it the Christmas liturgical cycle:

Splendidly great is the mystery of God's fidelity, which was made known in the flesh, was filled with justice in the spirit, appeared to the angels, was preached to the nations, was believed in the world, was taken up in glory, alleluia.

The Council itself calls upon each of us, therefore, to build up in our minds and hearts, in a quite special way, that spirit of unity for which the Saviour Himself prayed on the eve of His sacred Passion. In the mystery of unity that He preached to His disciples, the Saviour communicated to a hate-born, war-burdened mankind some inkling of that perfect unity by which He was and is forever one with His Father and the Holy Spirit. Far from detracting from the ineffable unity of the divine Lord of history, preached by the prophets and sung by the Psalmist, the mystery of Incarnation opens a transcendent vista of unity and makes of it a living force, not for one people alone, not for one race or nation alone, but for all mankind, even for the faithful departed.

It is the business of our inner life, not just to sink ourselves ever deeper into the existence of that unity, but likewise to understand its operations: displayed in the history of mankind and in each person's own history as well. We do this not by elaborate speculations, but by simply contemplating the Christ of the Gospel, on the one hand, and the Mystical Christ—His Mystical Body as found today in every part of the world—on the other. It is not enough just to read about the manifold marvels of this Body. Its all-embracing unity must be made

our own with passionate intensity, so that we breathe its spirit unceasingly and in the most unexpected ways.

As we enter such a contemplation, two opposite poles, as it were, reveal themselves before our inward eyes. The dimensions of that unity—its scope, its overwhelming living reality, can be measured only by the measureless love that originates with the Father, is brought to us in the person of the Son and is communicated to us by the Holy Spirit. The height, the sublimity of that unity, lies far beyond all human expression. Through it, the entire human race, collectively and individually, is related to the ultimate consummation of all creation.

Again, we find this unity operative—in earthly space and time—in the deepest humiliations of our being. The barriers to total unity are dissolved in man's total humiliation, even agony—that of the crucifixion on Calvary. To the date of writing, no power, at least no earthly politics or diplomacy, has proved able to break down the cruel wall of separation that divides one part of the German nation from another: the infamous Wall of Berlin. Yet it was on the cross, as St. Paul teaches us in the seventh chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, that the wall of separation was annihilated that most drastically separated the civilized human beings of his time: the wall between Jew and Gentile.

The inner spirit, therefore, will explore more and more deeply this all-unifying mystery of man's redemption. But the inner spirit will go still further. It cannot rest until it has communicated the saving *spirit* of unity to each and all of its fellow human beings. It will exercise its impact upon the divided world by confronting it with the glory of its hope and with the humble lowliness of the redemptive mystery of the cross.

Precisely at this point we need to set our sights abundantly clear. If we are prayerful people, if we make a due allowance in our lives for contemplation, praise and adoration, meditation, reading of good books, and most of all for intimate per-

sonal conversation with the Saviour in His sacramental presence and sacrifice, we shall be just so much better fitted to share in the Council's great work of making our faith known to the world. We shall be more truly "apostles," that is to say, people "sent out" from the sacred precincts of that Supper Table where the Saviour's desire and prayer were so solemnly spoken—that all men should be one, as the Son is one with the Father.

The inner life, then, is not only the ideal, but it is the necessary preparation and condition for any fruitful effort to preach unity to our fellow men. Certainly a major impact of the Council upon our inner life will be precisely an urgent desire to bring the knowledge of unity and our sense of unity to our brethren of other faiths, even though we differ from them in many fundamentals of that same faith.

But there is another aspect of this same "mystery of communication" which we need to know, if we, as members of Christ's Mystical Body, are to be agents of unity to the world. It is not just our talk, however cogent and well-reasoned, that convinces men. It is primarily what we *are*: our being, quite as much as our action. The tendency of Catholic devotional practice, in our day and times, is—quite naturally and properly—to seek privacy. We seek to be able to speak to our Creator in silence and retirement; to be protected from the noisy, unspiritual world. All this is eminently right and good.

Yet there is another work that we can do: it is to bring our inner life, if possible, right into the midst of men. We want them to peer into our spiritual interiors, as it were. We want them to come close, to kneel with us, even though they may not fully adore with us, even though their Amen does not fully harmonize with ours.

We cannot convince the modern world by talk alone—precious as is intelligible and rational discourse. In its gnaw-

ing anxiety and deep fear, the generation of today must see the Church at prayer, must glimpse—as far as is possible for those who do not share, or at least do not fully share, our faith—the inner conflict of hope and redemption which occurs even in our own poor and sinful hearts.

Unless the unbelieving world sees men and women who are becoming one with God—not in some sensational “conversion” spectacle or dramatized “change of heart,” but in the operation of their daily lives in His presence—unless they see this as a daily and an hourly reality, they will not fully understand or relish the idea we strive to convey to them with our halting words.

It is not enough for people to “behold our good works”—whether of merciful charity or courageous, uncompromising justice. It is not enough for us even to explain our motives for such works, showing how they spring from the indestructible faith and the pronouncements of its magisterial interpreters. They need to see—to hear, to accompany if possible—the believing community, and the believing individual in that community, in the very act of love, reverence and worship. Whether that community be monastic or secular, whether it be secluded or outgoing, the same principle prevails.

For that simple act we do not need to be learned theologians, though the theologians will infinitely assist us by their enlightening and inspiring teaching. We need to show in our own persons what it means to be a living member of the Mystical Body. And the impact of that sight is often most striking when it occurs, not in some remote place of pilgrimage, but in the life and thought of your neighbor right in the same block. As St. Luke tells us in the last chapter of his Gospel, the consummating mystery of the Resurrection was revealed when the Saviour broke bread at an evening meal in Emmaus with the two traveling and anxious disciples.

JOHN LAFARGE, S.J.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What did Pope John judge to be the primary objective of Vatican II? How did the first session set the stage for the attainment of this goal? (2-3) *
2. What importance does Paul VI attach to the work of the Council as a responsibility of his pontificate? (4)
3. What is an ecumenical council? How many have been held? When was the last one? (5)
4. Why should all Catholics feel obliged to keep informed about events in the Second Vatican Council? (7)
5. Name one major respect in which the earlier or Eastern councils differ from later ones. What was the last attempt at secular intervention in a council's affairs? (8-9)
6. How does Vatican II compare in size with previous councils? How many Fathers are eligible to attend it? What other sociological characteristic of the Council's personnel is of unusual significance? (11-12)
7. How would you describe Pope John's view on freedom of debate in the Council? What three results did he predict? (15-16)
8. What two positions were asserted in the liturgy debate? How do they relate to underlying theological differences? (18-19)
9. What position on liturgy won approval? By what vote? (21)
10. How did the alignment of forces in the revelation debate vary from that in the debate on liturgy? Other differences? (22)
11. Describe the evolution in thinking among Catholics on the relation between Scripture and tradition. (24-25)
12. What impact did the presence of non-Catholic observers have on conciliar debate? (26)
13. Why do some Catholics fear recent trends in Catholic biblical scholarship? Is there a sociological factor at work? (28-29)
14. What is the key difference between a disciplinary and a doctrinal decree? Did the Council's debate mirror this? (30)
15. What was the practical outcome of the debate on revelation? How did both sides conceive of it? (32)
16. In the debate on the mass media, what fundamental theological views of the Church came in conflict? (34-35)

* The number in parentheses refers to the page in this pamphlet which treats of the matter in question.

17. What explanation has been offered for the sudden appearance of several topics on the agenda in the last days? (37)
18. Why were so many Fathers anxious to begin debate on the question of the Church? Why did others oppose this? (40)
19. What does Fr. von Galli see as the primary accomplishment of the first session? (42)
20. In what sense are bishops successors of the Apostles? Why does a bishop possess obligations to the whole Church? (44)
21. Why has the Church lately had to revise its attitude toward missions? How will mission lands influence the Council? (45-46)
22. Why must the Council look at religious liberty on a world-wide basis? What do other Christians expect here? (47)
23. Which of the layman's three basic roles in the Church does Fr. Congar see as most comprehensive? Why? (50)
24. Why has contact between laity and hierarchy been inadequate? How could a bishop learn the true sentiments of the laity? (52)
25. What modern developments in the Church have stimulated the Council's interest in the lay apostolate? (54)
26. Trace the stages of development in the concept of the layman's role in the Church since the French Revolution. (56-57)
27. How did Pius XI describe Catholic Action? What shortcomings did experience uncover in older forms of Catholic Action? (58-59)
28. What reason have we to hope that Vatican II can answer the unsolved problems of the lay apostolate? (60)
29. What does the concept of the Mystical Body contribute to our understanding of the layman's role in the Church? (62)
30. Would you agree that the Church is confronted by a more serious challenge today than in the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment? Why? (64)
31. What is the basis for opposition between the Church and communism? What dangers might arise if the Church limited itself to a purely negative anticommunism campaign? (65)
32. What does it mean to say that the Church today should be more Catholic than ever? How can it dispel the impression that it is fundamentally Latin? (68)
33. What administrative jobs in a diocese can a layman perform as well as or better than priests? (69)
34. What liturgical functions are open to laymen? What are some pros and cons on a married diaconate? (70-71)
35. Why is a distinctive lay spirituality necessary for lay apostles? How should it differ from that for religious? (72)

36. Aside from personalities, what are the chief causes of strain between laity and clergy? How can they be lessened? (74)
37. What changes does M. Folliet see taking place in the external image of the Church in France? How does the Church in America appear to different groups in the nation? (75)
38. Is the immediate aim of the Second Vatican Council a reunion of the Christian world? (76)
39. How does awareness of the meaning of history help theologians to place Catholic doctrines in the great stream of historical tradition? (77)
40. What points of Catholic theology most need explaining to the non-Catholic world today? What problems are no longer so pressing in this regard? (78)
41. Name some key questions that have been clarified for Protestants by Pope Pius XII's teaching in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*. (79)
42. List some significant adaptations of Church life and discipline already introduced by recent Popes. (81)
43. What basic steps can the Council take toward fostering the ecumenical or unity movement? (82)
44. In what areas can Catholics rightly and fruitfully collaborate with their separated brethren? Have the Popes given specific approval to such efforts? (83)
45. Pope John reminded us of the fundamental ties binding us to our separated brethren. What are these ties? (85)
46. What outlook did Pope John urge us to entertain concerning the ultimate possibility of reunion? (86)
47. What is a classic case in history where a Council's work was frustrated because the inner life of the faithful did not match the Council's vision? (87)
48. What does the mystery of the Incarnation show us about Church unity? (89)
49. According to St. Paul, what will break down the wall of separation between men? (90)
50. How can individual Catholics best become "agents of unity to the world"? (92)

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1. Nicaea I	Sylvester I	May to June, 325
2. Constantinople I	St. Damasus I	May to July, 381
3. Ephesus	Celestine I	June to July, 431
4. Chalcedon	St. Leo the Great	Oct. to Nov., 451
5. Constantinople II	Vigilius	May to June, 553
6. Constantinople III	St. Agatho; Leo II	Nov., 680 to Sept., 681
7. Nicaea II	Hadrian I	Sept. to Oct., 787
8. Constantinople IV	Nicholas I; Hadrian II	Oct., 869 to Feb., 870
9. Lateran I	Callistus II	March to April, 1123
10. Lateran II	Innocent II	April, 1139
11. Lateran III	Alexander III	March, 1179
12. Lateran IV	Innocent III	November, 1215
13. Lyons I	Innocent IV	June to July, 1245
14. Lyons II	Gregory X	May to July, 1274
15. Vienne	Clement V	Oct., 1311 to May, 1312
16. Constance	Martin V	Nov., 1414 to April, 1418
17. Florence	Eugene IV	Dec., 1431 to Aug., 1445[?]
18. Lateran V	Julius II; Leo X	May, 1512 to March, 1517
19. Trent	Paul III; Pius IV	Dec., 1545 to Dec., 1563
20. Vatican I	Pius IX	Dec., 1869 to July, 1870
21. Vatican II	John XXIII; Paul VI	Oct., 1963—

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