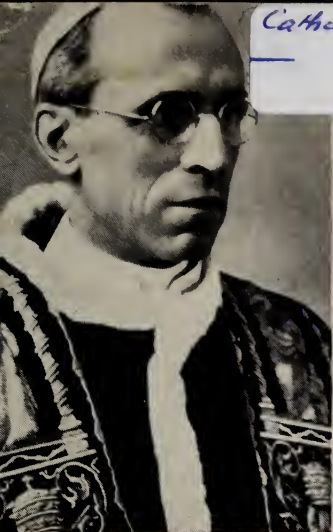


Catholic Church. Pope (1939-1958: Pius XII)

Mystici corporis Christi

ADR 5205



MYSTICI CORPORIS CHRISTI

By Pope Pius XII

ENCYCLICAL LETTER ON

THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST

WITH DISCUSSION CLUB OUTLINE

By REV. GERALD C. TREACY, S.J.

THE PAULIST PRESS

401 West 59th Street

New York, 19, N. Y.



MYSTICI CORPORIS CHRISTI

on

The Mystical Body of Christ

ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS PIUS XII

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE
POPE

TO OUR VENERABLE BROTHERS, PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCH-
BISHOPS, BISHOPS AND OTHER LOCAL ORDINARIES ENJOYING
PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE.

VENERABLE BROTHERS
HEALTH AND APOSTOLIC BLESSING

INTRODUCTION

1. We first learned of the Mystical Body of Christ, which is the Church, from the lips of the Redeemer Himself. Illustrating, as it does the grand and inestimable privilege of our intimate union with a Head so exalted, this doctrine is certainly calculated by its sublime dignity to draw all spiritual-minded men to deep and serious study, and to give them in the truths which it unfolds to the mind a strong incentive to such virtuous conduct as is conformable to its lessons. This is why We have thought it fitting to speak with you on this subject through this Encyclical Letter, examining and explaining above all what concerns the Church Militant. The surpassing magnificence of the argument attracts Us; the circumstances of the present hour urge Us on.

2. For We intend to speak of the riches hidden in a Church, which Christ hath purchased with His own blood, and whose members glory in a thorn-crowned Head. Striking proof is this, that the greatest glory and exaltation are born only of sufferings, and hence that we should rejoice if we partake of the sufferings of Christ, that when His glory shall be revealed we may also be glad with exceeding joy.

Like Its Divine Founder

3. And a first observation to be made is, that the society established by the Redeemer of the human race is not unlike its divine Founder Who was persecuted, calumniated and tortured by those very men whom He had undertaken to save. We do not deny, rather from a heart filled with gratitude to God we admit that even in our

turbulent times there are many who though outside the fold of Jesus Christ look to the Church as the only haven of salvation; but neither are We unaware that the Church of God not only is ridiculed and hated disdainfully, maliciously by those who shut their eyes to the light of Christian wisdom and pitiably return to the teachings and customs and practices of ancient paganism; but even by many Christians, who are allured by specious error or caught in the meshes of the world's corruption, it is not understood, is neglected and even at times looked upon as an irksome nuisance. There is reason then, Venerable Brothers, why in obedience to the voice of Our conscience and in answer to many prayers, We should give honor before the eyes of all to the beauty, the grandeur, the glory of Mother Church. To her after God We owe everything.

4. And one may hope that these, Our instructions and exhortations, will be all the more helpful to the faithful in the circumstances of today. For we know that if all the painful calamities of this turbulent period, that cruelly torture almost countless men, are accepted as from God's hands with calm and submissive spirit, they naturally lift souls above the passing things of earth to those of heaven that abide forever, and stimulate a certain unsuspected thirst and keen desire for spiritual things. Thus, with the added grace of the Divine Spirit, men are moved and, one might say, compelled to be more thoughtful in seeking the Kingdom of God. The more men are withdrawn from the vanities of this world and from an inordinate love of temporal things, certainly the more likely it is that they will perceive the light of heavenly mysteries. But the vanity and emptiness of earthly riches are more manifest today than perhaps at any other period, when kingdoms and States are crumbling, when huge piles of goods and all kinds of wealth are sunk in the measureless depths of the sea, and cities, towns and fertile fields are strewn with massive ruins and defiled with the blood of brothers.

For Those Outside the Church

5. Moreover We trust that the following exposition of the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ will be acceptable and useful to those, also, who are without the fold of the Church. This confidence is based not only on the fact that their good will towards the Church seems to grow from day to day, but also because, while before their eyes today nation rises up against nation, kingdom against kingdom, and discord is sown everywhere and the seeds of envy and hatred, if they turn their gaze to the Church, if they contemplate her divinely-given unity—by which all men of every race are united to Christ in the bond of brotherhood—they will be forced to admire this fellowship in charity, and with the guidance and assistance of divine grace will long to share in the same union and charity.

6. There is a special reason, too, a supremely happy reason, that

brings this mystery to Our mind and with it a deep sense of joy. During the year that has passed since the twenty-fifth anniversary of Our Episcopal consecration, We have had the great consolation of witnessing something that has made the image of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ stand out most clearly before the whole world. Though a deadly and long war has pitilessly broken the bond of brotherly union between nations, We have seen Our children in Christ, in whatever part of the world they happened to be, with one heart and one affection lift up their souls to the common Father, Who carrying in His own heart the cares and fears of all, is guiding the bark of the Catholic Church in the teeth of a raging tempest. This is a testimony to the marvelous union existing among Christians; but it also proves that, as Our paternal love embraces all peoples, whatever their nationality and race, so Catholics the world over, though their countries have drawn the sword against each other, look up to the Vicar of Jesus Christ as to the loving Father of them all, who with unswerving impartiality and unsullied judgment rising above the conflicting gales of human passions, speaks truth and justice and charity and with all His power defends them.

7. We have been no less consoled to know that with ready generosity a fund has been created for the erection of a church in Rome to be dedicated to Our saintly predecessor and patron, Eugene I. As this temple, to be built through the gracious gifts of all the faithful, will be a lasting memorial of this happy event, so We desire to offer this Encyclical Letter in testimony of Our gratitude. It tells of those living stones which rest upon the living corner-stone, which is Christ, and are built together into a holy temple, far surpassing any temple built by hands, into a habitation of God in the Spirit.

Solicitude for Souls

8. But the chief reason for Our present exposition of this sublime doctrine is Our solicitude for the souls entrusted to Us. Much indeed has been written on this subject; and We know that many today are turning with greater zest to a study which delights and nourishes Christian piety. This, it would seem, is chiefly because a revived interest in the sacred liturgy, the more widely spread custom of receiving Holy Communion and the more fervent devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus practiced today have brought many souls to a deeper consideration of the unsearchable riches of Christ which are preserved in the Church. Add to this, that recent documents on Catholic Action by drawing closer the bonds of union between Christians and between them and the ecclesiastical hierarchy and especially the Roman Pontiff, have undoubtedly helped not a little to place this truth in its proper light. Nevertheless, while We can derive legitimate joy from all this, We must confess that grave errors in regard to this doctrine are being spread among those outside the

true Church, and that among the faithful, too, inaccurate or thoroughly false ideas are entering which turn minds aside from the straight path of truth.

9. For while there still survives a false *rationalism*, which ridicules anything that transcends and defies the power of human genius, and it is accompanied by a cognant error, *popular naturalism* they call it, which sees and wants to see in the Church nothing but a juridical and social union; there is on the other hand a false *mysticism* creeping in, which in its attempt to eliminate the immovable frontier that separates creatures from their Creator garbles the Sacred Scriptures.

10. As a result of these conflicting and mutually antagonistic schools of thought some through empty fear look upon so profound a doctrine as something dangerous and so they fight shy of it as of the beautiful but forbidden fruit of Paradise. It is not so. Mysteries revealed by God cannot be harmful to men; nor should they remain as treasures hidden in a field, useless. They have been given from on high precisely to help the spiritual progress of those who study them in a spirit of piety. For, as the Vatican Council teaches, "reason illumined by faith, if it seeks earnestly, piously and wisely, does attain, under God, to a certain knowledge and a most helpful knowledge of mysteries, by considering their analogy with what it knows naturally, and their mutual relations and their common relation with man's last end," although, as the same holy Synod observes, reason even thus illumined "is never made capable of understanding these mysteries as it does those truths which form its proper object."

11. After pondering all this long and seriously before God We consider it part of Our pastoral duty to explain to the entire flock of Christ through this Encyclical Letter the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ and of the union of this Body of the faithful with the divine Redeemer; and then from this consoling doctrine to point certain lessons, that will make a deeper study of this mystery bear yet richer fruits of perfection and holiness. Our purpose is to throw an added ray of glory on to the supreme beauty of the Church; to bring out into fuller light the exalted supernatural nobility of the faithful who in the Body of Christ are united with their Head; and finally to exclude definitely the many errors current in this matter.

FIRST PART

CHURCH, MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST

12. When one reflects on this doctrine, one recalls immediately the words of the Apostle: "Where sin abounded, grace did more abound!" All know that the father of the whole human race was constituted by God in a state so exalted that he was to hand on to

his posterity together with earthly existence the heavenly life of divine grace. But after the unhappy fall of Adam, the universal progeny of mankind, infected by a hereditary stain, lost their sharing of the divine nature, and We were all children of wrath. But God, all merciful, "so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son"; and the Word of the Eternal Father through this same divine love assumed human nature from the race of Adam—but an innocent and spotless nature it was—so that He, as a new Adam, might be the source whence the grace of the Holy Spirit should flow unto all the children of the first parent. Through the sin of the first man they had been excluded from adoption into the children of God: through the Word Incarnate made brothers according to the flesh of the only-begotten Son of God, they would receive the power to become the sons of God.

13. As He hung upon the Cross, Jesus Christ not only avenged the justice of the Eternal Father that had been flouted, but He also won for us, His brothers, an unending flow of graces. It was possible for Him personally, immediately to impart these graces to men; but He wished to do so only through a visible Church that would be formed by the union of men, and thus through that Church every man would perform a work of collaboration with Him in dispensing the graces of Redemption. The Word of God willed to make use of our nature, when in excruciating agony He would redeem mankind; in much the same way throughout the centuries He makes use of the Church that the work begun might endure.

14. If we would define and describe this true Church of Jesus Christ—which is the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church—we shall find no expression more noble, more sublime or more divine than the phrase which calls it "the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ." This title is derived from and is, as it were, the fair flower of the repeated teaching of Sacred Scripture and the Holy Fathers.

The Church, a Body

15. That the Church is a body is frequently asserted in Sacred Scripture. "Christ," says the Apostle, "is the Head of the Body of the Church." If the Church is a body, it must be an unbroken unity according to those words of Paul: "Though many we are one body in Christ." But it is not enough that the Body of the Church be an unbroken unity; it must also be something definite and perceptible to the senses, as Our predecessor of happy memory, Leo XIII, in his Encyclical, *Satis cognitum*, asserts: "The Church is visible because she is a Body." Hence they err in a matter of divine truth, who imagine the Church to be invisible, intangible, a something merely "pneumatological," as they say, by which many Christian communities, though they differ from each other in their profession of faith, are united by a bond that eludes the senses.

16. But a body calls also for a multiplicity of members, which are linked together in such a way as to help one another. And as in our mortal composite being when one member suffers, all other members share its pain, and the healthy members come to the assistance of those ailing; so in the Church the individual members do not live for themselves alone, but also help their fellows, and all work in mutual collaboration for their common comfort and for the more perfect building up of the whole Body.

17. Again, as in nature a body is not formed by any haphazard grouping of members but must be constituted of organs, that is members that have not the same function and are arranged in due order; so for this reason above all the Church is called a body, that it is constituted by the coalescence of structurally united parts, and that it has a variety of members reciprocally dependent. It is thus the Apostle describes the Church when he writes: "As in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office: so we being many are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another."

Not Only Those in Orders

18. One must not think, however, that this ordered or "organic" structure of the Body of the Church contains only hierarchical elements and with them is complete; or, as an opposite opinion holds, that it is composed only of those who enjoy charismatic gifts—though members gifted with miraculous powers will never be lacking in the Church. That those who exercise sacred power in this Body are its first and chief members, must be maintained uncompromisingly. It is through them, commissioned by the Divine Redeemer Himself, that Christ's apostolate as teacher, king, priest, is to endure. At the same time, when the Fathers of the Church sing the praises of this Mystical Body of Christ, with its ministries, its variety of ranks, its offices, its conditions, its order, its duties, they are thinking not only of those who have received sacred orders, but of all those, too, who following the evangelical counsels pass their lives either actively among men or in the silence of the cloister, or who aim at combining the active and contemplative life according to their Institute. They were thinking of those who though living in the world consecrate themselves whole-heartedly to spiritual or corporal works of mercy; as well as those who live in the state of holy matrimony. Indeed let this be clearly understood, especially in these our days: the fathers and mothers of families, and those who are spiritual parents through Baptism, and in particular those members of the laity who assist the ecclesiastical hierarchy in spreading the Kingdom of the Divine Redeemer, occupy an honorable, even though often lowly place in the Christian community. Under the impulse of God and with His help they can reach the peak of holi-

ness; and such holiness, Jesus Christ has promised, will never be wanting to the Church.

19. Now we see how the human body is given its own means to provide for its own life, health and growth and for the same of all its members. Similarly the Saviour of mankind out of His infinite goodness has provided in a marvelous way for His Mystical Body, endowing it with the sacraments; so that by so many consecutive graduated graces, as it were, its members should be supported from the cradle to life's last breath, and that the social needs of the Church might also be generously provided for. As all know, through the waters of Baptism those who are born into this world, being dead in sin, are not only born again and made members of the Church, but being stamped with a spiritual seal, they become capable and fit to receive the other sacraments. By the chrism of Confirmation, the faithful are given added strength to protect and defend the Church, their mother, and the faith she has given them. In the Sacrament of Penance a saving medicine is offered to the Church's members who have fallen into sin, not only to provide for their own health, but to remove from other members of the Mystical Body all danger of contagion or rather to afford them the tonic of virtuous example.

20. Nor is that enough; for in the Holy Eucharist the faithful are nourished and grow strong at the same table, and in a divine, ineffable way are brought into union with each other and with the divine Head of the whole Body. Finally, like a devoted mother the Church is at the bedside of those who are sick unto death; and if it be not always God's will that by the sacred anointing of the sick she restore health to this mortal body, yet she does minister supernatural medicine for wounded souls, and sends new citizens on to heaven to enjoy forever the happiness of God—new advocates assigned to her.

Social Needs Provided For

21. For the social needs of the Church Christ has provided in a particular way by two sacraments which He instituted. Through Matrimony, when the contracting parties are ministers of grace to each other, provision is made for the external and properly regulated increase of Christian society and, what is of greater importance, for the correct religious education of the offspring, without which this Mystical Body would be in grave danger. Through Holy Orders men are set aside and consecrated to God, to offer in sacrifice the eucharistic Victim, to feed the flock of the faithful with the Bread of Angels and the food of doctrine, to guide them in the way of God's commandments and counsels, to strengthen them with all the other supernatural helps.

22. Here it is pertinent to remark that just as at the beginning of time God gave man's body the most extraordinary power to sub-

ject all creatures to himself and to increase and multiply and fill the earth, so at the beginning of the Christian era He gave the Church those means that were needed to overcome the dangers without number and to fill not only the whole world but the realms of heaven as well.

23. Only those are really to be included as members of the Church who have been baptized and profess the true faith and who have not unhappily withdrawn from Body-unity or for grave faults been excluded by legitimate authority. "For in one Spirit," says the Apostle, "were we all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free." As therefore in the true Christian community there is only one Body, one Spirit, one Lord and one Baptism, so there can be only one faith. And so if a man refuse to hear the Church, let him be considered—so the Lord commands—as a heathen and a publican. It follows that those who are divided in faith or government cannot be living in one body such as this, and cannot be living the life of its one divine Spirit.

24. One must not imagine that the Body of the Church, just because it bears the name of Christ, is made up during the days of its earthly pilgrimage only of members conspicuous for their holiness, or consists only of the group of those whom God has predestined to eternal happiness. It is the Saviour's infinite mercy that allows place in His Mystical Body here for those whom He did not exclude from the banquet of old. For not every sin, however grave and enormous it be, is such as to sever a man automatically from the Body of the Church, as does schism or heresy or apostacy. Men may lose charity and divine grace through sin and so become incapable of supernatural merit, and yet not be deprived of all life, if they hold on to faith and Christian hope, and illumined from above they are spurred on by the strong promptings of the Holy Spirit to salutary fear and by God are moved to prayer and penance for their sins.

25. Let everyone then abhor sin, which defiles the members, of our Redeemer; but if anyone unhappily falls and his obstinacy has not made him unworthy of communion with the faithful, let him be received with all affection and let eager charity see in him a weak member of Jesus Christ. For, as the Bishop of Hippo remarks, it is better "to be cured within the Church's community than to be cut off from its body as incurable members." "No reason to despair of the health of whatever is still part of the body; once it has been cut off, it can be neither cured nor healed.

The Church, the Body of Christ

26. In the course of the present study, Venerable Brothers, We have thus far seen that the Church has been so constituted that it may be likened to a body. We must now explain clearly and pre-

cisely why it is to be called not merely a body, but the Body of Jesus Christ. This follows from the fact that our Lord is the Founder, the Head, the Support and the Saviour of this Mystical Body.

Christ, Founder of the Body

27. As we set out briefly to expound in what sense Christ founded His social Body, the following thought of Our predecessor of happy memory, Leo XIII, occurs to Us at once: "The Church which, already conceived, came forth from the side of the second Adam in His sleep on the Cross, first showed herself before the eyes of men on the great day of Pentecost." For the divine Redeemer began the building of the mystical temple of the Church when by His preaching He announced His precepts; He completed it when He hung glorified on the Cross; and He manifested and proclaimed it when He sent the Holy Ghost as Paraclete in visible form on His disciples.

28. For while fulfilling His office as preacher, He chose Apostles, sending them as He had been sent by the Father, namely, as teachers, rulers, instruments of holiness in the assembly of the believers; He appointed their chief and His Vicar on Earth; He made known to them all things whatsoever He had heard from His Father; He also established Baptism by which those who should believe would be incorporated in the Body of the Church; and finally, when He came to the close of His life, at the Last Supper He instituted the wonderful Sacrifice and Sacrament of the Eucharist.

29. That He completed His work on the gibbet of the Cross is the unanimous teaching of the Holy Fathers, who assert that the Church was born from the side of our Saviour on the Cross like a new Eve, mother of all the living. "And it is now," says the great Ambrose, speaking of the pierced side of Christ, "that it is built, it is now that it is formed, it is now that it is . . . molded, it is now that it is created. . . . Now it is that arises a spiritual house for a holy priesthood." One who reverently considers this venerable teaching will easily discover the reasons on which it is based.

Old Law Replaced

30. And first of all, by the death of our Redeemer, the New Testament took the place of the Old Law which had been abolished; then the Law of Christ together with its mysteries, laws, institutions and sacred rites was ratified for the whole world in the Blood of Jesus Christ. For, while our divine Saviour was preaching in a restricted area—He was not sent but to the sheep that were lost of the house of Israel—the Law and the Gospel were together in force; but on the gibbet of His death Jesus made void the Law with its decrees, fastened the handwriting of the Old Testament to the Cross, establishing the New Testament in His Blood, shed for the whole human race. "To such an extent, then," says St. Leo the

Great, speaking of the Cross of our Lord, "was there effected a transfer from the Law to the Gospel, from the Synagogue to the Church, from many sacrifices to one Victim, that, as our Lord expired, that mystical veil which shut off the innermost part of the temple and its sacred secret from the main temple was rent violently from top to bottom."

31. On the Cross, then, the Old Law died, soon to be buried and to be a bearer of death, in order to give way to the New Testament, of which Christ had chosen the Apostles as qualified ministers; and it is by the power of the Cross that our Saviour, although He had been constituted the Head of the whole human family in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, exercises fully the office itself of Head in His Church. "For it was through His triumph on the Cross, according to the teaching of the Angelic and Common Doctor, that He won power and dominion over the Gentiles"; by that same victory He increased that immense treasury of graces, which, as He reigns in glory in heaven, He lavishes continuously on His mortal members; it was by His Blood shed on the Cross that God's anger was removed, and that all the heavenly gifts, especially the spiritual graces of the New and Eternal Testament, could then flow from the fountains of our Saviour for the salvation of men, of the faithful first of all; it was on the tree of the Cross, finally, that He entered into possession of His Church, that is all the members of His Mystical Body; for they would not have been united to this Mystical Body through the waters of Baptism except by the salutary virtue of the Cross, by which they had been already brought under the complete sway of Christ.

Effects of the Passion

32. But if our Saviour, by His death, became in the full and complete sense of the word, the Head of the Church, it was likewise through His blood that the Church was endowed with that fullest communication of the Holy Spirit, through which from the time when the Son of Man was lifted up and glorified on the gibbet by His sufferings, she is divinely illumined. For then, as Augustine notes, with the rending of the veil of the temple it happened that the dew of the Paraclete's gifts, which heretofore had descended only on the fleece, that is on the people of Israel, fell copiously and abundantly (while the fleece remained dry and deserted) on the whole earth, that is on the Catholic Church, which is confined by no boundaries of race or territory. Just as at the first moment of the Incarnation, the Son of the Eternal Father adorned with the fullness of the Holy Spirit the human nature which was substantially united to Him, that it might be a fitting instrument of the Divinity in the sanguinary task of the Redemption, so at the hour of His precious death He wished that His Church should be enriched with the abundant gifts of the Paraclete in order that in dispensing

the divine fruits of the Redemption it might be for the Incarnate Word a powerful instrument that would certainly never fail. For the juridical mission of the Church, and the power to teach, govern and administer the sacraments derive their supernatural efficacy and force for the building up of the Body of Christ from the fact that Jesus Christ hanging on the Cross, opened up to His Church the fountain of divine graces, which protect it from ever teaching men false doctrine, and enable it to rule them for their soul's salvation through supernaturally enlightened pastors and to bestow on them abundant heavenly graces.

33. If we closely consider all these mysteries of the Cross, those words of the Apostles are no longer obscure for us, in which he teaches the Ephesians that Christ by His blood made the Jews and the Gentiles one, "breaking down the middle wall of partition . . . in His flesh" by which the two peoples were divided; and that He had made the Old Law void "that He might make the two in Himself into one new man," that is the Church, and might reconcile both to God by the Cross.

34. The Church which He founded by His Blood, He strengthened on the day of Pentecost by a special power, given from heaven. For, having solemnly installed in his exalted office him whom He had already nominated as His Vicar, He had ascended into heaven; and sitting now at the right hand of the Father He wished to make known and proclaim His Spouse through the visible coming of the Holy Spirit with the sound of a mighty wind and tongues of fire. For just as He Himself when He began to preach, was made known by His Eternal Father through the Holy Spirit descending and remaining on Him; so likewise, as the Apostles were about to enter upon their office of preaching, Christ our Lord sent the Holy Spirit down from heaven, to touch them with tongues of fire and to point out as by the finger of God the supernatural mission and supernatural office of the Church.

Christ, Head of the Body

35. That this Mystical Body which is the Church should be called Christ's, is proved, in the second place, from the fact that He must be universally acknowledged as its actual Head. "He," as St. Paul says, "is the Head of the Body, the Church." He is the Head from Whom the whole body, perfectly organized, "groweth and maketh increase unto the edifying of itself."

36. You are aware, Venerable Brothers, of the brilliant language used by the masters of Scholastic Theology, and chiefly by the Angelic and Common Doctor, when treating this question; and you know that the reasons advanced by Aquinas are a faithful reflection of the mind and writings of the Holy Fathers, who after all merely repeated and commented on the inspired word of Sacred Scripture.

37. However for the good of all We wish to touch this point briefly. And first of all it is clear that the Son of God and of the Blessed Virgin is to be called the Head of the Church for His singular pre-eminence. For the Head is in the highest place. But who is in higher place than Christ, God, Who as the Word of the Eternal Father must be acknowledged to be the "first born of every creature"? Who has reached more lofty heights than Christ, Man, who, though born of the Immaculate Virgin, is the true and natural Son of God, and thanks to His miraculous and glorious resurrection, a resurrection triumphant over death, has become the "first born of the dead"? Who finally has been so exalted as He, Who as "the one Mediator of God and men" has in a most marvelous manner linked earth to heaven, Who raised on the Cross, 'as on a throne of mercy, has drawn all things, to Himself, Who as the Son of Man, chosen from among countless, is the object of God's love beyond all men, all angels and all creation?

38. Because Christ is so exalted, He alone by every right rules and governs the Church; and herein is yet another reason why He must be likened to a head. As the head is the "royal citadel" of the body—to use the words of Ambrose—and all the members, over which it is placed for their good, are naturally guided by it as being endowed with superior powers, so the Divine Redeemer holds the helm of the universal state of Christians, and directs its course. And as a government of human society means merely this, to lead men to the end proposed by means that are expedient, just and helpful, it is easy to see how our Saviour, model and ideal of good shepherds, performs all these functions in a most striking way.

Triple Power Conferred

39. For while still on earth, He instructed Us by precept, counsel and warning in words that shall never pass away, and will be spirit and life to all men of all times. Moreover He conferred a triple power on His Apostles and their successors, to teach, to govern, to lead men to holiness. This triple power, defined by special ordinances, by rights and obligations, He made the fundamental law of the whole Church.

40. But our Divine Saviour governs and guides His community also directly and personally. For it is He Who reigns within the minds and hearts of men and bends and subjects to His purpose their wills even when rebellious. "The heart of the King is in the hand of the Lord; whithersoever He will, He shall turn it." By this interior guidance the "Shepherd and Bishop of our souls" not only watches over individuals, but exercises His providence over the universal Church as well, whether by enlightening and giving courage to the Church's rulers for the loyal and effective performance of their respective duties, or by singling out from the body of the

Church—especially when times are grave—men and women of conspicuous holiness, who may point the way for the rest of Christendom to the perfecting of His Mystical Body. Besides from heaven Christ never ceases to look down with extraordinary love on His unspotted Spouse so sorely tried in her earthly exile; and when He sees her in danger, either Himself or through the ministry of His Angels, or through her whom we hail the Help of Christians, and other heavenly advocates, takes her out of the tempestuous sea, and in calm and tranquil waters comforts her with the peace “which surpasseth all understanding.”

41. But we must not think that He rules only in a hidden or extraordinary way. On the contrary, our Divine Redeemer also governs His Mystical Body in a visible way and ordinarily through His Vicar on earth. You know, Venerable Brothers, that after He had ruled the “little flock” Himself during His mortal pilgrimage, when about to leave this world and return to the Father, Christ our Lord entrusted to the chief of the Apostles the visible government of the entire community He had founded. He was all wise; and how could He leave without a visible head the body of the Church He had founded as a human society.

42. Nor against this may one argue, that the primacy of jurisdiction established in the Church gives such a Mystical Body two heads. For Peter in virtue of his Primacy is only Christ’s Vicar; so that there is only one chief Head of this Body, namely, Christ. He never ceases personally to guide the Church by an unseen hand, though at the same time He rules it externally, visibly through him, who is His representative on earth. After His glorious Ascension into heaven this Church rested not on Him alone, but on Peter, too, its visible foundation stone. That Christ and His Vicar constitute one only Head is the solemn teaching of Our predecessor of immortal memory, Boniface VIII, in the Apostolic Letters *Unam Sanctum*; and his successors have never ceased to repeat the same.

Path of Dangerous Error

43. They, therefore, walk the path of dangerous error, who believe that they can accept Christ as the Head of the Church, while they reject genuine loyalty to His Vicar on earth. They have taken away the visible head, broken the visible bonds of unity, and they leave the Mystical Body of the Redeemer in such obscurity and so maimed, that those who are seeking the haven of eternal salvation cannot see it and cannot find it.

44. What We have thus far said of the universal Church must be understood also of the individual Christian communities, whether Eastern or Latin, which go to make up the one Catholic Church. For they, too, are ruled by Christ Jesus through the voice of their own respective Bishops. Bishops, then, must be considered as the

nobler members of the universal Church, for they are linked in an altogether special way to the Divine Head of the whole Body and so are rightly called "principal parts of the members of the Lord"; what is more, as far as one's own diocese is concerned, they each and all as true Shepherds feed the flocks entrusted to them and rule them in the name of Christ. Yet in exercising this office they are not altogether independent, but are duly subordinate to the authority of the Roman Pontiff; and although their jurisdiction is inherent in their office, yet they receive it directly from the same Supreme Pontiff. Hence, they should be revered by the faithful as divinely appointed successors of the Apostles. To Bishops, more than to the rulers of this world, even those in supreme authority, should be applied the sentence: "Touch not my anointed ones!" For Bishops have been anointed with the chrism of the Holy Spirit.

45. That is why We are deeply pained when We hear that not a few of Our Brother Bishops are being attacked and persecuted not only in their own person, but—what is more cruel and heart-rending for them—in the faithful committed to their care, in those who share their apostolic labor, even in the Virgins consecrated to God; and all this, just because they are a pattern of the flock from the heart, and conserve, with justifiable energy and loyalty, the sacred "deposit of faith" confided to them, just because they insist on the sacred laws that have been engraved by God on the souls of men, and after the example of the Supreme Shepherd, defend their flock against ravenous wolves. Such an offense We consider as committed against Our own person, and We repeat the magnificent words of Our predecessor of immortal memory, Gregory the Great: "Our honor is the united strength of Our Brothers; and We are truly honored, when due honor is given to each and every one."

Requires Body's Help

46. Because Christ the Head holds such an eminent position, one must not think that He does not require the Body's help. What Paul said of the human organism is to be applied likewise to this Mystical Body: "The head cannot say to the feet: I have no need of you." It is manifestly clear that the faithful need the help of the Divine Redeemer, for He has said: "Without Me you can do nothing," and in the teaching of the Apostle, every advance of this Body towards its perfection derives from Christ the Head. Yet this, too, must be held, marvelous though it appear: Christ requires His members. First, the person of Jesus Christ is borne by the Supreme Pontiff, who in turn must call on others to share much of his solicitude lest he be overwhelmed by the burden of his pastoral office, and must be helped daily by the Church praying. Moreover, our Saviour does not rule the Church directly in a visible manner, and so in carrying out the work of Redemption He wishes to be helped by

the members of His Body. This is not because He is indigent and weak, but rather because He has so willed it for the greater glory of His unspotted Spouse. Dying on the Cross He left to His Church the immense treasury of the Redemption; towards this she contributed nothing. But when those graces come to be distributed, not only does He share this task of sanctification with His Church, but He wants it in a way to be due to her action. Deep mystery this, subject of inexhaustible meditation: that the salvation of many depends on the prayers and voluntary penances which the members of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ offer for this intention and on the assistance of pastors of souls and of the faithful, especially of fathers and mothers of families, which they must offer to our divine Saviour as though they were His associates.

47. To the reasons thus far adduced to show that Christ the Lord should be called the Head of the society which is His Body three others may be added here. They are closely related to one another.

48. We begin with the similarity which We see existing between Head and Body, in that they have the same nature. Our human nature is inferior to angelic nature; and yet, be it observed, through God's goodness it has risen above angelic nature: "For Christ," as Aquinas says, "is Head of the angels; for even in His humanity He is superior to angels. Even as man He illumines the angelic intellect and influences the angelic will. But in respect to similarity of nature Christ is not Head of the angels, because He did not take hold of the angels—to quote the Apostle—but of the seed of Abraham." And Christ not only took our nature, He became one of our flesh and blood with a frail body that could suffer and die.

49. But "if the Word emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave," it was that He might make His brothers in the flesh partakers of the divine nature, in this earthly exile through sanctifying grace, in heaven through the joys of eternal bliss. The reason why the only-begotten Son of the Eternal Father wished to be a Son of Man, was that we might be made conformed to the image of the Son of God and be renewed according to the image of Him Who created us. Let those then who glory in the name of Christian all look to our Divine Saviour as the most exalted and most perfect exemplar of all virtues; but then let them also by careful avoidance of sin and assiduous practice of virtue, bear witness by their conduct to His teaching and His life, so that when God appears they may be like unto Him and see Him as He is.

Resemblance to Christ

50. The whole Body of the Church, no less than the individual members, should bear resemblance to Christ. Such is His will. And We see that realized when following in the footsteps of her Founder

she teaches, she governs and offers the Divine Sacrifice. Embracing the evangelical counsels she reflects the Redeemer's poverty, obedience and virginal-purity. Enriched with institutes of many different kinds as with so many precious jewels, she points out Christ deep in prayer on the mountain, or preaching to the people or healing the sick and wounded and bringing sinners back to the path of virtue, or in a word doing good to everyone. What wonder then if, while she walks this earth, she be persecuted like Christ, hounded and weighed down with sorrows.

51. Christ must be acknowledged Head of the Church for this reason too, that, as supernatural gifts have found their supreme fullness and perfection in Him, it is from this fullness that His Mystical Body receives. It is an observation made by a number of Fathers, that as the head of our mortal body is the seat of all the senses, while the other parts of our organism have only the sense of touch, so all the powers that are found in Christian society, all the gifts, all the extraordinary graces, all attain their utmost perfection in the Head, Christ. "In Him it hath well pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell." He is gifted with those supernatural powers that accompany the hypostatic union. Is not the Holy Spirit dwelling in Him with a fullness of grace, than which no greater can be imagined? To Him has been given "power over all flesh"; "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Him" abundantly. The knowledge, which is called "vision," He possesses with such clarity and comprehensiveness that it surpasses similar celestial knowledge found in all the saints of heaven. So full of grace and truth is He, that of His inexhaustible fullness we have all received.

52. These words of the disciple, whom Jesus loved, lead us to the last reason why Christ our Lord should be declared in a very particular way Head of His Mystical Body. In us the nerves reach from the head to all parts of the body and give them the power to feel and move; in like manner our Saviour communicates power to His Church so that the things of God are understood more clearly and more eagerly desired by the faithful. From Him shines into the Body of the Church whatever light illumines supernaturally the minds of those who believe, from Him every grace to make them holy; as He is holy.

53. Christ enlightens His whole Church. This is evident from almost numberless passages from the Sacred Scriptures and holy Fathers. "No man hath seen God at any time: the only-begotten Son Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Come a teacher from God to give testimony to the truth, He shed such light upon the nascent apostolic Church that the chief of the Apostles exclaimed: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." From heaven He assisted the evangelists in such a way that as members of Christ they wrote what they had

learnt at the dictation, as it were, of the Head. And for us today, who still linger on in this earthly exile, He is the author of faith as in our heavenly house he will be its finisher. It is He Who grants the light of faith to believers; it is He Who from His divine riches imparts the supernatural gifts of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom to the pastors and teachers and above all to His Vicar on earth, so that they may faithfully preserve the treasury of faith, defend it, with reverence and devotion explain and protect it. It is He Who, though unseen, presides at the Church's Councils and guides them.

Holiness From Christ

54. Holiness begins from Christ; by Christ it is effected. For no act conducive to salvation, can be performed unless it proceeds from Him as its supernatural cause. "Without Me," He says, "you can do nothing." If we grieve and do penance for our sins, if with filial fear and hope we turn again to God, it is because He is leading us. Grace and glory flow from His unfathomed fullness. Our Saviour is continually pouring out His gifts of counsel, fortitude, fear and piety, especially on the leading members of His Body, so that the whole Body may grow daily more and more in spotless holiness. When the Sacraments of the Church are administered by external rite, it is He Who produces their effect in souls. He nourishes the redeemed with His own flesh and blood, and thus calms the soul's turbulent passions; He gives increase of grace and is preparing future glory for souls and bodies.

55. All these treasures of His divine goodness He is said to disburse to the members of His Mystical Body, not merely because He, Who is the Eucharistic Victim on earth and the glorified Victim in Heaven, lets His wounds and prayers plead our cause before the Eternal Father, but because He selects, He determines, He distributes every single grace to every single person "according to the measure of the giving of Christ." Hence it follows that from our Lord as from a fountain-head "the whole body compacted and fitly joined by which every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in charity."

Christ, Support of the Body

56. The thoughts which We have expounded, briefly and succinctly tracing the manner in which Christ our Lord wishes that His abundant graces should flow from His fullness into the Church, in order that it should become most like Himself, help not a little to clarify the third reason why the social Body of the Church should be honored by the name of Christ: that reason lies in the fact that

our Saviour Himself sustains in a divine manner the society which He founded.

57. As Bellarmine notes with acumen and accuracy, this naming of the Body of Christ is not to be explained solely by the fact that Christ must be called the Head of His Mystical Body, but also by the fact that He so sustains the Church, and so in a certain sense lives in the Church that it is as it were another Christ. The doctor of the Gentiles in his letter to the Corinthians affirms this when, without further qualification, he called the Church "Christ," following no doubt the example of his Master Who called out to him from on high, when he was attacking the Church: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" Indeed, if we are to believe Gregory of Nyssa, the Church is often called "Christ" by the Apostle; and you are conversant, Venerable Brothers, with that phrase of Augustine: "Christ preaches Christ."

58. But this noble title of the Church must not be so taken, as if that ineffable bond by which the Son of God assumed a definite human nature, belongs to the universal Church; but it consists in this, that our Saviour shares His most personal prerogatives with the Church in such a way that she may portray in her whole life, both external and interior, a most faithful image of Christ. For in virtue of the juridical mission by which our divine Redeemer sent His Apostles into the world, as He had been sent by the Father, it is He Who through the Church baptizes, teaches, rules, looses, binds, offers, sacrifices.

59. But in virtue of that higher, interior and wholly sublime communication, with which We dealt when We described the manner in which the Head influences the members, Christ our Lord brings the Church to live His own supernatural life, by His divine power permeates His whole Body and nourishes and sustains each of the members according to the place which they occupy in the Body very much as the vine nourishes and makes fruitful the branches which are joined to it.

Principle of Life, Power

60. If we examine closely this divine principle of life and power given by Christ, in so far as it constitutes the very source of every gift and created grace, we easily see that it is nothing else than the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete who proceeds from the Father and the Son, and who is called in a special way the "Spirit of Christ" or the "Spirit of the Son." For it was by His breath of grace and truth that the Son made beautiful His soul in the immaculate womb of the Blessed Virgin; this Spirit delights to dwell in the dear soul of our Redeemer as in His most cherished shrine; this Spirit Christ merited for us on the Cross by shedding His own blood; this Spirit He bestowed on the Church for the remission of sins, when He breathed on the Apostles; and while Christ alone received this Spirit without

measure, to the members of the Mystical Body He is imparted only according to the measure of the giving of Christ, from Christ's own fullness. But after Christ's glorification on the Cross, His Spirit is communicated to the Church in an abundant outpouring, so that she, and her single members may become daily more and more like to our Saviour. It is the Spirit of Christ that has made us adopted sons of God in order that one day "we all beholding the glory of the Lord with open face may be transformed into the same image from glory to glory."

61. To this Spirit of Christ, too, as to an invisible principle, is to be ascribed the fact that all the parts of the Body are joined one with the other and with their exalted Head; for He is entire in the Head, entire in the Body and entire in each of the members. To the members He is present and assists them in proportion to their various tasks and offices and the greater or less grade of spiritual health which they enjoy. It is He Who through His heavenly grace is the principle of every supernatural act in all the parts of the Body. It is He Who while He is personally present and divinely active in all the members, also acts in the inferior members through the ministry of the higher members. Finally, while with His grace He provides for the constant growth of the Church, He yet refuses to dwell with sanctifying grace in members that are wholly severed from the Body. This presence and activity of the Spirit of Jesus Christ is tersely and vigorously described by Our predecessor of immortal memory **Leo XIII** in his Encyclical Letter *Divinum illud* in these words: "Let it suffice to say that, as Christ is the Head of the Church, so is the Holy Spirit her soul."

62. If that vital principle by which the whole community of Christians is sustained by its Founder, be considered now not in itself, but in its created effects, it consists in those heavenly gifts which our Redeemer together with His Spirit bestows on the Church and which He and His Spirit, from Whom come supernatural light and holiness, make operative in the Church. The Church, then, no less than each of her holy members can make this thought of the Apostle her own: "And I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me."

Christ, Saviour of the Body

63. The account which We have given you of the "Mystic Head" would indeed remain incomplete, if We were not at least briefly to touch on this thought of the same Apostle: "Christ is the Head of the Church; He is the saviour of His Body." For in these words we have the last reason why the Body of the Church is given the name of Christ. Christ is, namely, the divine Saviour of this Body. The Samaritans were right in proclaiming Him "Saviour of the world"; indeed He is most certainly to be called the "Saviour of all men," even though We must add, with Paul: "especially of the

faithful." Before all others, that is, He has purchased with His blood His members, who constitute the Church. But since We have already treated this subject clearly enough when treating of the Church's birth on the Cross, of Christ as the source of light and principle of sanctity, and of Christ as Support of His Mystical Body, there is no reason why We should explain it further; but rather let us all, giving perpetual thanks to God, meditate on it with a humble and attentive mind. For what our Lord, hanging on the Cross, began, He does not cease to continue always and uninterruptedly amid the joys of heaven: "Our Head," says St. Augustine, "intercedes for us: some members He is receiving, others He is chastising, others cleansing, others consoling, others creating, others calling, others recalling, others correcting, others renewing." But to us it has been granted to collaborate with Christ in this work of salvation, "from one and through one saved and saving."

The Church, the "Mystical" Body of Christ

64. And now, Venerable Brothers, We come to that part of Our explanation, in which We desire to make clear that the Body of Christ, which is the Church, should be called mystical. This word, used by many early writers, has the sanction of numerous Pontifical documents. There are several reasons why it should be used; for by it we may distinguish the Body of the Church, which is a society whose Head and Ruler is Christ, from His physical Body, which born of the Virgin Mother of God now sits at the right hand of the Father and rests hidden under the Eucharistic veil; as well as from any ordinary body in the natural order, whether physical or moral. This latter distinction is of greater importance in view of modern errors.

65. In a natural body the principle of unity so unites the parts, that each lacks its own individual subsistence; on the contrary in the Mystical Body that mutual union, though intrinsic, links the members by a bond which leaves to each intact his own personality. Besides if we examine the relation existing between the several members and between the members and the head, in every physical, living body all the different members are ultimately destined to the good of the whole alone; while very moral association of men, if we look to its ultimate usefulness, is in the end directed to the advancement of all and of every single member. For they are persons. And so—to return to our theme—as the Son of the Eternal Father came down from heaven for the salvation of us all, He likewise established the Body of the Church and enriched it with the divine Spirit to assure immortal souls attaining their happiness, according to the words of the Apostle: "All things are yours; but you are Christ's; and Christ is God's." For the Church exists both for the good of the faithful, and to give glory to God and Jesus Christ Whom He sent.

Differences Not Slight

66. But if we compare a Mystical Body to a moral body, here again we must notice that the difference between them is not slight, rather it is very considerable and very important. In the moral body, the principle of union is nothing more than the common end, and the common co-operation of all under authority for the attainment of that end; whereas in the Mystical Body, of which We are speaking, this collaboration is supplemented by a distinct internal principle, which exists effectively in the whole and in each of its parts, and whose excellence is such, that of itself it is vastly superior to whatever bonds of union may be found in a physical or moral body. This is something, as We said above, not of the natural but of the supernatural order. Essentially it is something infinite, uncreated: the Spirit of God, Who, as the Angelic Doctor says, "numerically one and the same, fills and unifies the whole Church."

67. Hence, this word in its correct signification gives us to understand that the Church, a perfect society of its kind, is not made up of merely moral and juridical elements and principles. It is far superior to all other human societies; it surpasses them as grace surpasses nature, as things immortal are above all those that perish. Such human societies, and in the first place Civil Society, are by no means to be despised or belittled. But the Church in its entirety is not found within this natural order, any more than the whole of man is encompassed within the organism of our mortal body. The juridical principles, on which also the Church rests and is established, derive from the divine constitution given to it by Christ, and contribute to the attaining its supernatural end; but what lifts the society of Christians far, far above the whole natural order is the Spirit of our Redeemer Who until the end of time penetrates every part of the Church's being and is active within it.

68. He is the source of every grace and every gift and every miraculous power. Just as our composite mortal body, for all its being a marvelous work of the Creator, falls short of the eminent dignity of our soul, so the social structure of the Christian community, though eloquent of its divine Architect's wisdom, remains still something inferior, when compared to the spiritual gifts which give it beauty and life and to their divine source.

69. From what We have thus far written and explained, Venerable Brothers, it is clear, We think how grievously they err who arbitrarily picture the Church as something hidden and invisible, as do they also who look upon it as a mere human institution with a certain disciplinary code and external ritual, but lacking power to communicate supernatural life. No; the Mystical Body of Christ is like Christ the Head and Exemplar of the Church; "Who is not complete, if only His visible human nature is considered, or if only His

divine, invisible nature . . . but He is one through the union of both and one in both . . .” Thus the Word of God took unto Himself a human nature liable to sufferings, so that He might consecrate in His blood the visible society founded by Him and “lead man back to things invisible under a visible rule.”

Imaginary “Church”

70. For this reason We deplore and condemn the pernicious error of those who conjure up from their fancies an imaginary Church, a kind of Society that finds its origin and growth in charity, to which they somewhat contemptuously oppose another, which they call juridical. But this distinction, which they introduce, is baseless.

71. For they fail to understand that the same reason that led our divine Redeemer to give to the community of men He founded the constitution of a society, perfect of its kind, containing all the juridical and social elements, namely that He might perpetuate on earth the saving work of Redemption, was also the reason why He wished to be enriched with the heavenly gifts of the Consoling Spirit. The Eternal Father indeed wished it to be the “kingdom of the Son of His predilection”; but it was to be a real kingdom, in which all believers would make the obeisance of their intellect and will, and humbly and obediently model themselves on Him, Who for our sake “was made obedient unto death.” There can, then, be no real opposition or conflict between the invisible mission of the Holy Spirit and the juridical commission of Ruler and Teacher received from Christ. Like body and soul in us, they complement and perfect each other, and have their source in our one Redeemer, Who not only said, as He breathed on the Apostles: “Receive ye the Holy Spirit,” but also clearly commanded: “As the Father hath sent Me, so I send you”; and again: “He who heareth you, heareth Me.”

72. And if at times there appears in the Church something that points to the weakness of our human nature, put it down not to the juridical constitution, but rather to that regrettable inclination to evil found in everyone, which its divine Founder permits even at times in the most exalted members of His Mystical Body, for the purpose of testing the virtue of flocks and Shepherds, and that all may increase the merit of their Christian faith. For, as We said above, Christ did not wish to exclude sinners from His Church; hence if some members of the Church are spiritually ill, that is no reason why we should lessen our love for the Church, but rather a reason why we should increase our devotion to her members. Oh, the loving Mother is spotless in the Sacraments, by which she gives birth to her children and nourishes them, she is spotless in the faith, which she has preserved inviolate always, in her sacred laws imposed on all, in the evangelical counsels which she recommends, in those heavenly gifts and extraordinary graces through which, with

inexhaustible fecundity, she generates hosts of martyrs, virgins and confessors.

73. But it cannot be laid to her charge if some members fall weak or wounded. In their name she prays to God daily: "Forgive us our trespasses"; and with the brave heart of a mother turns at once to nurse them back to spiritual health. When therefore we call the Body of Jesus Christ "mystical" we hear a solemn warning in the very significance of the word. It is a warning that echoes these words of St. Leo: "Recognize, O Christian, your dignity, and being made a sharer of the divine nature go not back to your former worthlessness along the way of unseemly conduct. Keep in mind of what Head and of what Body you are a member."

SECOND PART

THE UNION OF THE FAITHFUL WITH CHRIST

74. Here, Venerable Brothers, We wish to speak in a particular way of Our union with Christ in the Body of the Church. St. Augustine has justly remarked, that this union is something sublime, mysterious and divine; but for that very reason it often happens that many misunderstand it and explain it incorrectly. It is at once evident that this union is very close. In Sacred Scripture it is likened to the pure union of man and wife, and is compared with the vital union of branch and vine, and with the cohesion found in our body. Even more, it is represented as being so close that the Apostle says: "He (Christ) is Head of the Body of the Church," and the unbroken tradition of the Father from the earliest times teaches that the divine Redeemer and the society which is His Body form but one mystical person, that is to say, to quote Augustine, the whole Christ. Our Saviour Himself, in His high-priestly prayer, has gone so far as to liken this union with that marvelous oneness by which the Son is in the Father and the Father in the Son.

75. Our union in and with Christ is first evident from the fact, that, since Christ wishes His Christian community to be a Body which is a perfect society, its members must be united because they all work together towards a single end. The nobler this end, towards which they work together, and the diviner the motive which actuates this collaboration, the higher no doubt will be the form of union. Now the end in question is supremely exalted: the continuous sanctifying of the members of the Body for the glory of God and of the Lamb, that was slain. The motive is altogether divine: not only the will of the Eternal Father and the earnest wish of our Saviour, but the interior inspiration and impulse of the Holy Spirit in our minds and hearts. For if not even the smallest act conducive to salvation can be performed except in the Holy Spirit, how can unnumbered multitudes of every people and every race work together harmoni-

ously for the supreme glory of the Triune God, except in the power of Him, Who proceeds from Father and Son in one eternal act of love?

76. Now since this social Body of Christ has been designed by its Founder to be visible, this co-operation of all its members must also be externally manifest through their profession of the same faith, and their sharing the same sacred rites, through participation in the same sacrifice and practical observance of the same laws. Above all, everyone must be able to see the Supreme Head, who gives effective direction to what all are doing in a mutually helpful way towards attaining the desired end, that is, the Vicar on earth of Jesus Christ. As the Divine Redeemer sent a Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, who in His name should govern the Church in an invisible way; similarly He commissioned Peter and his Successors, to be His personal representatives on earth and to assume the visible government of the Christian community.

Faith, Hope, Charity

77. These juridical bonds far surpass those of any other human society, however exalted; and yet another principle of union must be added to them in those three virtues, which link us so closely to each other and to God: Christian faith, hope and charity.

78. "One Lord, one faith," writes the Apostle: the faith, that is, by which we hold fast to God, and to Him Whom He has sent, Jesus Christ. The beloved Apostle tells us how close this faith binds us to God; "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God." This Christian faith binds us no less closely with each other and with our Divine Head. For all we who believe, "having the same spirit of faith," are illumined by the same light of Christ, are nourished by the same food of Christ live under the jurisdiction and teaching authority of Christ. If the same spirit of faith breathes in all, we all are living the same life "in the faith of the Son of God, Who loved us and delivered Himself for us." And once Christ, our Head, through an ardent faith enters into us and dwells within our hearts, He becomes the "Author and finisher" of our faith.

79. As by faith on this earth we hold fast to God as the Author of truth, so Christian hope leads us to long for Him as the fount of blessedness, "looking for the blessed hope and coming of the glory of the great Lord." It is because of this united desire of the heavenly Kingdom, whence our refusal to accept a permanent home here, our seeking for one beyond and our yearning for the glory on high, that the Apostle of the Gentiles did not hesitate to write: "One Body and one Spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling," and to assert that Christ in us is our hope of glory.

80. But if the bonds of faith and hope, which bind us to our Re-

deemer in His Mystical Body are weighty and important, those of charity surely are no less so. Even in the natural order the love of friendship is something supremely noble. What then shall we say of that supernatural love, which God pours into our souls? "God is charity and who abides in charity, abides in God and God in him." The effect of this charity—such would seem to be God's law—is to force Him to enter into our loving hearts to return love for love: "if anyone love Me . . . My Father, too, will love him, and we shall come to Him and make our abode with Him." Charity, then, more than any other virtue binds us closely to Christ. On fire with this flame from heaven how many children of the Church have rejoiced to suffer insults for Him, and to face and overcome the hardest trials, though it cost their lives and the shedding of their blood. For that reason our Divine Saviour earnestly exhorts us in these words: "Remain in My love." And as charity, if it find no outward expression and effectiveness in good work is something jejune and altogether empty, He added at once: "If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love; as I also have kept My Father's commandments and remain in His love."

Love of Neighbor

81. Corresponding to this love of God and of Christ there must be love of the neighbor. How can we claim to love the divine Redeemer, if we hate those whom He has redeemed with His precious blood, so that He might make them members of His Mystical Body? For that reason the beloved disciple warns us: "If any man say: I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God Whom he seeth not? And this commandment we have from God, that he who loveth God love also his brother." Rather one should say that he more we become "members one of another," "mutually one of another," the closer we shall be united with God, with Christ; as on the other hand the more ardent the love that binds us to God and our divine Head, the closer we shall be united to each other in the bonds of charity.

82. Now the only-begotten Son of God embraced us in His infinite knowledge and undying love even before the world began. To give visible, and exquisitely beautiful expression to this love, He took unto Himself in hypostatic union our nature: whence—as Maximus of Turin with a certain unaffected simplicity remarks—"in Christ our own flesh loves us."

83. But the knowledge and love of our divine Redeemer, of which we were the object from the first moment of His Incarnation, are more than any human intellect or heart can hope to grasp. For hardly was He conceived in the womb of the Mother of God, when He began to enjoy the vision of the blessed, and in that vision all the members of His Mystical Body were continually and unceasingly

present and He embraced them with His redeeming love. O marvelous condescension of divine love for us! O inestimable disposition of limitless charity! In the Crib, on the Cross, in the unending glory of the Father, Christ has all the members of the Church present before Him and united to Him in a clearer and more loving way than a mother loves her little one clasped to her breast, than anyone knows and loves himself.

84. You will readily understand from all this, Venerable Brothers, why Paul the Apostle so often writes that Christ is in us and we in Christ. In proof of which there is this other more subtle reason. Christ is in us through His Spirit, whom He gives to us, and through whom He acts within us in such a way that all divine activity of the Holy Spirit within our souls must also be attributed to Christ. "If a man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His," says the Apostle, "but if Christ be in you . . . the spirit liveth because of justification."

Communication of the Spirit

85. This communication of the Spirit of Christ is the channel through which flow into all the members of the Church those gifts, powers and extraordinary graces found superabundantly in the Head as in their source, and they are perfected day by day in these members according to the office they may hold in the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ. Thus the Church becomes, as it were, the filling out and complement of the Redeemer, while Christ in a sense attains through the Church a fullness in all things. Here we touch the reason why to the mind of Augustine the Mystical Head, which is Christ, and the Church, which on this earth as another Christ bears His person, constitute one new man, in whom heaven and earth are yoked together in perpetuating the Cross's work of salvation: by Christ we mean the Head and the Body, the whole Christ.

86. We are well aware that many a veil shrouds this profound truth of our union with the divine Redeemer and in particular of the Holy Spirit's dwelling within our souls and impedes our power to understand and explain it. This mystery is enveloped in a darkness, rising out of the mental limitations of those who seek to grasp it. But We know, too, that well-directed and earnest study of this doctrine and the clash of diverse opinions and their discussion, provided love of truth and due submission to the Church be the arbiter, will open rich and bright vistas, whose light will help to progress in kindred sacred sciences. Hence We do not censure those who in various ways and with diverse reasonings strain every effort to understand and to clarify the mystery of this our marvelous union with Christ. But let all agree uncompromisingly on this, if they would not err from truth and from the orthodox teaching of the Church: to reject every kind of mystic union, by which the faithful would in any way pass beyond the sphere of creatures and rashly enter the divine even

to the extent of one single attribute of the eternal Godhead being predicted of them as their own. And besides let all hold this as certain truth, that all these activities are common to the most Blessed Trinity, in so far as they have God as supreme efficient cause.

87. Let it be observed also that one is treating here of a hidden mystery, which in this earthly exile can never be fully disclosed and grasped, and expressed in human language. The Divine Persons are said to be indwelling in as much as They are present to intellectual creatures in a way that lies beyond human comprehension, and are known and loved by them in a purely supernatural manner alone within the deepest sanctuary of the soul. If we approach at least a little towards perceiving this truth, let us not neglect the method recommended by the Vatican Council in similar cases. Seeking light so as to discern at least partially the hidden things of God, the Council finds it in comparing these mysteries one with the other and with the last end towards which they point. Therefore, our most wise Predecessor of happy memory, Leo XIII,* when speaking of our oneness with Christ and of the Divine Paraclete who takes up His abode within us, turns his eyes towards that beatific vision by which this same mystical union will one day attain in heaven to its perfected and consummated reality. "This wondrous union," he says, "which is properly called Inhabitation, differs only in condition or state from that by which God embraces the citizens of heaven in beatitude." Indeed, in that vision, once the eyes of our minds have been opened by celestial light, it will be ours to gaze upon the Father and the Son and the Divine Spirit, to attend upon the processions of the Divine Persons throughout an ageless eternity, and to be made happy with a joy most like the joy by which the most Holy and Undivided Trinity is itself beatified.

Eucharistic Sacrifice

88. It seems to Us that something would be lacking to what We have thus far proposed concerning this close union of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ with its Head, if We did not add here a few words on the Holy Eucharist, wherein this union during this mortal life reaches, as it were, a climax.

89. Through the Eucharistic Sacrifice Christ our Lord wished to give special evidence to the faithful of our union among ourselves and with our divine Head, marvelous as it is and beyond all praise. For here the sacred ministers act in the person not only of our Saviour but of the whole Mystical Body and of everyone of the faithful. In this act of sacrifice through the hands of the priest, whose word alone has brought the Immaculate Lamb to be present on the altar, the faithful themselves with one desire and one prayer offer It to the Eternal Father,—the most acceptable victim of praise and propitiation for the Church's universal needs. And just as the divine Re-

* The citation from Leo XIII is taken from the *Divinum Illud*, A. S. S. XXIX. p. 653.

deemer, dying on the Cross, offered Himself as Head of the whole human race to the Eternal Father, so "in this pure oblation" He offers not only Himself as Head of the Church to the heavenly Father, but in Himself His mystical members as well. He embraces them all, even the weak and ailing ones, in the tenderest love of His Heart.

90. The Sacrament of the Eucharist is itself a striking image of the Church's unity, if we consider how in the bread to be consecrated many grains go to form one substance; and in it the very Author of supernatural grace is given to us, so that through Him we may receive the Spirit of charity, in which we are bidden to live now not our life but the life of Christ, and in all the members of His social Body to love the Redeemer Himself.

91. If in the sad and anxious days through which we are passing there are many who cling so firmly to Christ the Lord hidden beneath the Eucharistic veils that neither tribulation nor distress nor famine nor nakedness nor danger nor persecution nor the sword can separate them from His love, then undoubtedly Holy Communion which once again in God's providence is much more frequented even from days of early childhood, may become a source of the courage that makes heroes out of Christians.

THIRD PART

PASTORAL EXHORTATION

I. Errors Touching the Spiritual Life

False "Mysticism"

92. If the faithful, Venerable Brothers, in a spirit of sincere piety understand what has been written here and hold to it, it will be easier for them to escape the errors which arise from an irresponsible investigation of this difficult matter, such as some have made, and which are noised abroad not without seriously endangering Catholic faith and disturbing the peace of souls. For some there are who neglect the fact that the Apostle Paul has used metaphorical language in speaking of this doctrine, and failing to distinguish the physical from the social Body of Christ as they should, out of their fancy draw some deformed kind of unity. They want the divine Redeemer and the members of the Church to coalesce into one physical person and while they bestow divine attributes on man, they make Christ our Lord subject to error and to human inclination to evil. Catholic faith and the writings of the Holy Fathers reject such false teaching as impious and sacrilegious; to the mind of the Apostle of the Gentiles it is equally abhorrent. He brings Christ and His Mystical Body into a marvelously intimate union, it is true; but he distinguishes one from the other as Bridegroom and Bride.

False "Quietism"

93. Just as false and dangerous is the error of those who try to

deduce from the mysterious union of all with Christ a certain unhealthy quietism. They would attribute the whole spiritual life of Christians and their progress in virtue exclusively to the action of the divine Spirit, setting aside and neglecting the corresponding work and collaboration which we must contribute to this action. No one of course can deny that the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ is the one source of whatever supernatural power enters into the Church and its members. For "the Lord will give grace and glory," as the Psalmist says.

94. But that men should continue consistently in their good works, that they advance generously in grace and virtue, that they strive earnestly to reach the heights of Christian perfection and at the same time do their best to stimulate others to gain the same goal, —all this the Spirit from above does not wish to bring about, unless men contribute their daily share of zealous activity. "For not on those who sleep but on the diligent," says St. Ambrose, "divine favors are conferred." In our mortal body the members are strengthened and grow through continued exercise; much more so is this true in the social Body of Jesus Christ, in which each member retains his own personal freedom, responsibility and principles of conduct. For that reason he who said: "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me," did not at the same time hesitate to aver: "His (God's) grace in me has not been void, but I have labored more abundantly than all they: yet not I, but the grace of God with me." It is perfectly clear, therefore, that these false doctrines distort the mystery which we are considering and make it contribute not to the spiritual advancement of the faithful but to their tragic ruin.

Frequent Confession

95. The same result would follow from the opinions of those who assert that little importance should be given to the frequent confession of venial sins. Of far greater importance, they say, is that general confession which the Spouse of Christ surrounded by her children in the Lord makes each day by the mouth of the priest as he approaches the altar. It is true indeed, Venerable Brothers, that venial sins may be expiated in many ways which are to be highly commended. But to hasten daily progress along the path of virtue we wish the pious practice of frequent confession to be earnestly advocated. Not without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit was this practice introduced into the Church. By it genuine self-knowledge is increased, Christian humility grows, bad habits are corrected, spiritual neglect and tepidity are countered, the conscience is purified, the will strengthened, a salutary self-control is attained and grace is increased in virtue of the sacrament itself. Let those, therefore, among the young clergy who make light of or weaken esteem of frequent confession realize that what they are doing is foreign to the Spirit of Christ, and disastrous for the Mystical Body of our Saviour.

Prayer, Public and Private

96. There are others who deny any impetratory power to our prayers, and would spread abroad the idea that prayers offered to God in private should not be considered worth very much. Public prayers, they say, prayers that are made in the name of the Church, are those which really count, as they come from the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ. Such an opinion is false; for the Divine Redeemer maintains closest union not only with His Church, which is His loved Spouse, but also with each and every faithful soul in it, and He longs to speak with the heart to heart, especially after Holy Communion. It is true that public prayers, prayers, that is, that are offered by Mother Church, because of the dignity of the Spouse of Christ, excel any other kind of prayer; but no prayer, even the most private, lacks its own dignity and power, and all prayer is immensely helpful to the Mystical Body.

97. In that Body, thanks to the Communion of Saints, no good can be done, no virtue practiced by individual members without its contributing something also to the salvation of all. Similarly just because a man is a member of this Body, he is not forbidden to ask for himself particular favors even for this life, provided he is always resigned to the Divine Will. The members do not lose their own personality, and remain subject to their own individual needs. Moreover the common practice of the Saints as well as ecclesiastical documents demonstrate how highly everyone should esteem mental prayer.

Prayers to Christ

98. Finally some would have it, that our prayers should not be directed to the person of Jesus Christ, but rather to God, or to the Eternal Father through Christ, since our Saviour, as Head of His Mystical Body, is only "mediator of God and men." But that, too, not only is opposed to the mind of the Church and to Christian usage but is false. For to speak exactly, Christ is Head of the universal Church, as He exists at once in both His natures. Moreover He Himself has solemnly stated: "If you shall ask Me anything in My name, that I will do." Though it is true especially in the Eucharistic Sacrifice—in which Christ, at once priest and victim, exercises in an extraordinary way the office of conciliator—that prayers are very often directed to the Eternal Father through the only-begotten Son; nevertheless it occurs, not seldom even in this sacrifice, that prayers to the divine Redeemer also are used. For, after all, every Christian must know full well that the man Christ Jesus is also the Son of God and God Himself.

99. And so when the Church Militant is offering its adoration and prayers to the unspotted Lamb and the sacred Victim, her voice comes to us as an echo of the triumphant Church's chorus,

singing without end: "To Him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb, benediction and honor and glory and power for ever and ever."

II. Exhortation to Love the Church

100. Venerable Brothers, in explaining this mystery that surrounds the hidden union of us all with Christ, We have thus far as Teacher of the universal Church illumined the mind with the light of truth. Our pastoral office now demands that We add a stimulus for the heart to love this Mystical Body with a burning love that will enkindle not only thoughts and words but also deeds. Followers of the Old Law sang of their earthly homeland: "If I shall forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand be forgotten; let my tongue cleave to my jaws, if I do not remember thee, if I make not Jerusalem the beginning of my joy." How much greater then is the sense of glory and exultant joy that should fill our hearts, who dwell in a City built on the holy mountain of living and chosen stones, "Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone."

101. For nothing more glorious, nothing nobler, nothing surely more ennobling can be imagined than to belong to the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church. In that Church we become members of one Body that deserves all veneration, are guided by one supremely eminent Head; in it we are filled with one divine Spirit; in it we are nourished during our earthly exile with one doctrine and one Bread of Angels, until at last we enter into the one, unending blessedness of heaven.

102. But one may be deceived by the angel of darkness who assumes the appearance of an angel of light. Lest this happen, let this be the supreme law of our love: to love the Spouse of Christ as Christ wished her to be and as He purchased her with His blood. Hence not only should we cherish the sacraments with which Holy Mother Church sustains our life, the solemn ceremonies she offers for our solace and our joy, the sacred chant and liturgy by which she lifts our souls up to heaven, but the sacramentals too and all those exercises of piety which she uses to console the hearts of the faithful and gently to imbue them with the Spirit of Christ. It behooves us as sons to recompense her for this motherly goodness to us; but it is also our duty to respect the authority which she has received from Christ, and with which she brings unto captivity our understanding unto the obedience of Christ.

103. Thus we are commanded to obey her laws and her moral precepts, often hard enough to our fallen nature; through self-imposed mortification to bring this rebellious body to submission; at times we are warned to abstain even from harmless pleasures. Nor is it enough to love this Mystical Body for the glory of its divine Head and its celestial dowry. Our zealous love must follow it even

as it appears in this mortal flesh of ours, made up, that is, of weak, human elements, although at times they are little fitted to the place of dignity which they occupy in this venerable Body.

See Christ in the Church

104. That such a love, solidly grounded and undivided, may abide and increase in our souls, we must accustom ourselves to see Christ in the Church. It is Christ Who lives in the Church, Who teaches, governs and sanctifies through her. It is Christ, too, Who manifests Himself differently in different members of His society.

105. Once the faithful try to live in this spirit of conscious faith, they will not only pay due honor and reverence to the superior members of this Mystical Body, especially those who according to Christ's mandate will have to render an account of our souls, but they will take to their hearts those members who are the object of our Saviour's special love: the weak, the mean, the wounded and the sick, who are in need of natural or supernatural assistance; children whose innocence is so easily exposed to danger these days and whose little hearts are as wax to be moulded; and finally the poor, in helping whom we touch, as it were, through His supreme mercy the very person of Jesus Christ.

106. For as the Apostle with good reason admonishes us: "Much more those that seem to be the more feeble members of the Body, are more necessary, and such as we think to be the less honorable members of the Body, about these we put more abundant honor." Conscious of the obligations of Our high office, We deem it necessary to reiterate this grave statement today, when to Our profound grief We see the bodily-deformed, the insane and those suffering from hereditary disease at times deprived of their lives, as though they were a useless burden to society. And this procedure is hailed by some as a new discovery of human progress, and as something that is altogether justified by the common good. Yet what sane man does not recognize that this not only violates the natural and divine law written in the heart of every man, but flies in the face of every sensibility of civilized humanity? The blood of these victims, all the dearer to our Redeemer because deserving of greater pity, "cries to God from the earth."

107. If we would forestall the gradual weakening of that sincere love which makes us see our Saviour in the Church and its members, then we should look to Jesus Himself as the perfect model of love for the Church.

108. And first of all let Us imitate the breadth of His love. One only is the Spouse of Christ, the Church; but the love of the divine Spouse is so vast that it embraces in His Spouse the whole human race without exception. Men may be separated by nationality and race, but our Saviour poured out His Blood to recon-

cile all men to God through the Cross, and to bid them all unite in one Body. Genuine love of the Church therefore is not satisfied with our being within this Body members one of another, mutually careful one for another, rejoicing with him who glories, suffering with him who suffers; we must also recognize as brothers of Christ according to the flesh, destined together with us to eternal salvation those others who have not yet joined us in the body of the Church.

109. There are some unfortunately, today especially, who proudly boast of enmity, of hate and spite as something that elevates and honors the dignity of man and his power. Let us, however, follow on after our King of peace, the while we gaze with sorrow on the pernicious consequences of that teaching. He has taught us not only to have love for those of a different nation and a different race, but to love even our enemies. While Our heart overflows with the sweetness of the Apostle's teaching We chant with him the length, the width, the height, the depth of the charity of Christ, which neither diversity of race or culture, neither the wasteless tracts of ocean, nor wars, be their cause just or unjust, can ever weaken or destroy.

Supernatural Charity

110. In this gravest of hours, Venerable Brothers, when bodies are wracked with pain and souls with grief, every man must rise to this supernatural charity, so that by the combined efforts of all good men—We have in mind especially those who are active in any kind of relief organization—the gigantic needs of mankind, spiritual and corporal, may be alleviated. Let pity and mercy try to outdo themselves. Thus the devoted generosity, the inexhaustible resourcefulness of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ are seen in the beauty of their perfection in every quarter of the world.

111. The vastness of Christ's love for the Church is equaled by its constant activity. With the same charity let us show our devoted, active love for Christ's Mystical Body. Now from the moment of His Incarnation, when He laid the first foundations of the Church, down to His last mortal breath, our Redeemer never ceased for an instant, though He was the Son of God, to labor unto weariness for the establishing and strengthening of the Church, whether in giving Us the bright example of His Holiness, or preaching, or conversing, or gathering and instructing disciples.

112. And so We desire that all who claim the Church as their mother, should seriously consider that not only the sacred ministers and those who have consecrated themselves to God in religious life, but the other members as well of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ have the obligation of working hard and constantly for the upbuilding and increase of this Body. We wish this to be remembered especially by members of Catholic Action who assist the bishops and priests in their apostolic labors—and to their praise be it said that

they do remember—and also by those associates of pious unions who contribute their work to the same end. Everyone is witness to the high seriousness and extraordinary importance of their energetic zeal especially in present circumstances.

113. In this connection We cannot pass over in silence the fathers and mothers of families, to whom our Saviour has entrusted the most delicate members of His Mystical Body. We plead with them for the love of Christ and the Church to give the greatest possible care to the children confided to them, and to look to protecting them from the multiplicity of snares into which they can fall so easily today.

Christ Prayed for the Church

114. Our Redeemer showed His burning love for the Church particularly by praying for her to the heavenly Father. To recall but a few instances: everyone knows, Venerable Brothers, that just before the crucifixion He prayed repeatedly for Peter, for the other Apostles, for all who through the preaching of the divine Gospel would believe in Him. Imitating this example of Christ let us pray each day to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His harvest. Let our united prayer rise daily to heaven for all the members of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, first for the Bishops who are responsible in a particular way for their respective dioceses, then for the priests and religious men and women who have been called to the service of God, and are protecting, increasing, advancing the Kingdom of the divine Redeemer at home and in the foreign missions.

115. Let no member of this revered Body be forgotten in this common prayer; let there be a special memento for those who are burdened with the sorrows and afflictions of this earthly habitation and for the departed souls in Purgatory. They, too, will be included who are being instructed in Christian doctrine, so that they may be able to receive baptism without delay.

116. And oh how earnestly We desire that the immense charity of these common prayers embrace those also who not yet perceiving the light of the Gospel's truth are still without the Church's safe fold, or for the regrettable conflict of faith and unity are separated from us, who though unworthy bear the person of Jesus Christ on earth. Let us then re-echo that divine prayer of our Saviour to the heavenly Father: "That they all may be one, as Thou Father in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

117. As you know, Venerable Brothers, from the very beginning of Our Pontificate We have committed to the protection and guidance of heaven those who do not belong to the visible organization of the Catholic Church, solemnly declaring that after the example of the Good Shepherd We desire nothing more ardently than that

they may have life and have it more abundantly. Calling on the prayers of the whole Church We wish to repeat this solemn declaration in this Encyclical Letter in which We have retold the praises of the "great and glorious Body of Christ." From a heart overflowing with love We ask each and every one of them to be quick and ready to follow the interior movements of grace, and to look to withdrawing from that state in which they cannot be sure of their salvation. For even though unsuspectingly they are related to the Mystical Body of the Redeemer in desire and resolution, they still remain deprived of so many precious gifts and helps from heaven, which one can only enjoy in the Catholic Church.

118. May they then enter into Catholic unity, and united with us in the organic oneness of the Body of Jesus Christ may they hasten to the one Head in the society of glorious love. With persevering prayer to the Spirit of love and truth We wait for them with open arms to return not to a stranger's house, but to their own, their Father's house.

Wholly Free Submission

119. While We want this unceasing prayer to rise to God from the whole Mystical Body in common, that all the straying sheep may hasten to enter the one fold of Jesus Christ, yet We recognize that this step must come of their own free will; for no one believes unless he wills to believe. Hence they are most certainly not genuine Christians who against their belief are forced to go into a Church, to approach the altar and to receive the Sacraments. The "faith without which it is impossible to please God" is a wholly free "submission of intellect and will."

120. Therefore, whenever it happens, despite the invariable teaching of this Apostolic See that anyone against his will is compelled to embrace the Catholic faith, Our sense of duty demands that We condemn the act. Men must be effectively drawn to the truth by the Father of light through the Spirit of His beloved Son, because endowed as they are with a free will they can misuse their freedom under the impulse of mental doubts and base desires. Unfortunately many are still walking far from the Catholic truth, not willing to follow the suggestions of divine grace; and the reason is, that not only they but the faithful too fail to intensify their prayers to God for this intention. Again and again We beg all who really love the Church, after the example of the divine Redeemer, to have constant recourse to that prayer.

121. And it is something more than commendable, in the present crisis above all, it is imperative that fervent prayers rise to God for kings and princes and for all those who govern the nations and are thus in a position by their protecting power to help the Church, so that, the conflict ended, wearied man may see "peace, the work of justice" emerge under the gentle breeze of divine charity from out

these dread, tempestuous seas, and Holy Mother Church, "may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all piety and chastity." We must plead with God to grant that the rulers of peoples may love wisdom, so that this severe judgment of the Holy Spirit may never fall on them: "Because being ministers of His kingdom you have not judged rightly nor kept the law of justice, nor walked according to the will of God; horribly and speedily will He appear to you; for most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule. For to him that is little, mercy is granted, but the mighty shall be mightily tormented. For God will not except any man's person, neither will He stand in awe of any man's greatness; for He made the little and the great, and He hath equally care of all. But a greater punishment is ready for the more mighty. To you, therefore, O kings, are these my words, that you may learn wisdom and not fall from it."

Christ Suffered for the Church

122. Christ proved His love for His spotless Bride not only by His tireless labors and constant prayers, but by His sorrows and His sufferings, gladly, lovingly endured for her sake. "Having loved His own . . . He loved them unto the end." It was only with His Blood that He purchased the Church. Let us then not be unwilling to follow in the blood-stained footsteps of our King. The security of our salvation demands it: "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection," and "if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him." Our zealous love for the Church demands it, and our brotherly love for the souls she brings forth to Christ. For although our Saviour's cruel passion and death merited for His Church an infinite treasure of graces, God's inscrutable providence has decreed that these abundant graces should not be granted us all at once; and the amount of grace to be given depends in no small part also on our good deeds. They draw to the souls of men this ready flow of heavenly gifts granted by God.

123. These heavenly gifts will surely flow more abundantly if we not only pray fervently to God, especially by participating devoutly every day if possible in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, if we not only try to relieve the distress of the needy by works of Christian charity, but if we also set our hearts on eternal treasures rather than the passing things of this world, restrain this mortal body by voluntary mortification, denying it what is forbidden, forcing it to do what is hard and distasteful, and finally humbly accept as from God's hands the burdens and sorrows of this present life. Thus, according to the Apostle, "we shall fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in our flesh, for His Body, which is the Church."

124. As We write these words, there passes before Our eyes,

alas, an almost endless throng of untornates for whom We mourn and weep; sick, poor, mutilated, widows, orphans, and many not infrequently languishing even unto death for their own bitter afflictions or those of their dear ones. From a father's heart We appeal to all who from whatever cause are plunged into grief, to lift their eyes in confidence to heaven, and to offer their sorrows to Him Who will one day reward them abundantly. Let them remember that their sufferings are not in vain, but will be to their great gain and that of the Church, if for this purpose they but take courage and bear them with patience. To make this intention more efficacious, the daily use of the offering made by the members of the Apostleship of Prayer will contribute very, very much; and We welcome this occasion to recommend that Association highly, as one which is most pleasing to God.

125. There never was a time, Venerable Brothers, when the salvation of souls did not impose on all the duty of associating their sufferings with the torments of our divine Redeemer. But today that duty is clearer than ever when a gigantic conflict has set almost the whole world on fire, and leaves in its wake so much death, so much misery, so much sorrow. Today imposes with particular stress on everyone the duty to flee the vices and blandishments of the world, and to renounce the unrestrained pleasures of the body and that worldly frivolity and vanity, which contribute nothing to the Christian formation of the soul, nothing towards gaining heaven. Rather let those words of Our immortal predecessor Leo the Great be deeply engraven in our minds, that Baptism has made us flesh of the Crucified One; and that beautiful prayer of St. Ambrose: "Carry me, Christ, on the Cross, which is salvation to the wanderers, sole rest for the wearied, wherein alone is life for those who die."

126. Before concluding, Venerable Brothers, We cannot but plead with all, to love holy Mother Church with a devoted and active love. Let us pray every day to the Eternal Father for her safety and for her happy and large increase. For this intention let us offer to Him our works and our sufferings, if the salvation of the whole human family, bought by divine Blood, is really dear to our hearts. And while the skies are heavy with storm clouds and untold dangers menace all human society and the Church herself, let us commit ourselves and all that we have to the Father of mercies with the prayer: "Look down, we beseech Thee, Lord, on this Thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ did not hesitate to be betrayed into the hands of evil men and to undergo the torture of the Cross."

CONCLUSION

127. Venerable Brothers, may the Virgin Mother of God grant

the prayers of Our paternal heart—and they are yours too—and obtain for all a true love of the Church. Her sinless soul was filled with the divine Spirit of Jesus Christ more than all other created souls; and “in the name of the whole human race,” she gave her consent for a “spiritual marriage between the Son of God and human nature.” Within her virginal womb Christ our Lord already bore the exalted title of Head of the Church; in a marvelous birth she brought Him forth as source of all supernatural life, and presented Him, new born, as Prophet, King and Priest to those who were the first come of Jews and Gentiles to adore Him. Her only Son, yielding to a mother’s prayer in “Cana of Galilee,” performed the miracle by which “His disciples believed in Him.” Free from all sin, original and personal, always most intimately united with her Son, as another Eve she offered Him on Golgotha to the Eternal Father for all the children of Adam sin-stained by his fall, and her mother’s rights and mother’s love were included in the holocaust.

128. Thus she who corporally was the mother of our Head, through the added title of pain and glory became spiritually the mother of all His members. She it was who through her powerful prayers obtained the grace that the Spirit of our divine Redeemer, already given to the Church on the Cross, should be bestowed through miraculous gifts on the newly founded Hierarchy on Pentecost. Bearing with courage and confidence the tremendous burden of her sorrows and desolation, truly the Queen of Martyrs, she more than all the faithful “filled up those things that are wanting of the suffering of Christ . . . for His Body, which is the Church”; and she continued to show for the Mystical Body of Christ, born from the pierced Heart of the Saviour, the same mother’s care and ardent love, with which she clasped the Infant Jesus to her warm and nourishing breast.

129. May she, then, most holy mother of all Christ’s members, to Whose Immaculate Heart We have trustingly consecrated all men, her body and soul refulgent with the glory of heaven where she reigns with her Son—may she never cease to beg from Him that a continuous, copious flow of graces may pass from its glorious Head into all the members of the Mystical Body. May she throw about the Church today, as in times gone by, the mantle of her protection and obtain from God that now at last the Church and all mankind may enjoy more peaceful days.

130. With full confidence in this hope, from an overflowing heart We impart to you all, Venerable Brothers, and to the flocks confided to your care, as a promise of heavenly graces and a token of Our special affection the Apostolic Benediction.

131. Given at Rome, at St. Peter’s, June 29th, the Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, 1943, the fifth of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XII.

DISCUSSION CLUB OUTLINE

LESSON I

Paragraphs 1-34

The Mystical Body of Christ is the Church. We learn this from Christ Himself. The beauty of the doctrine of our union with a Head so exalted has moved Us to discuss this subject and explain its bearing on the Church Militant.

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When we reflect on the doctrine of the Mystical Body, the first thing that comes to mind is the statement of the Apostle: "Where sin abounded, grace did more abound." By Adam's sin we lost our sharing in the divine nature, and became children of wrath. Christ by assuming human nature won back for us what we had lost. By the first sin we were excluded from the adoption as children of God; through the Word Incarnate, we were made brothers according to the flesh of the only-begotten Son of God, thereby receiving the power to become sons of God.

For Christ on the Cross not only avenged the outraged justice of the Eternal Father, but He also won for us His brothers an unending flow of graces. He could have given these graces to men immediately. He did not. He would give these graces through a visible Church. This Church would be formed by a union of men, and through this Church every man would collaborate with Christ in dispensing the graces of Redemption. He made use of our nature in redeeming mankind; in much the same way He makes use of the Church throughout the centuries that the work begun may endure.

If we would describe this true Church of Christ we can use no phrase more noble, more divine, than the Mystical Body of Christ. It is a title that comes from the teaching of Sacred Scripture and the Fathers.

Questions

What is the Mystical Body of Christ?

From whom do we learn this truth?

We are members of a thorn-crowned Head. What follows from this?

Indicate the resemblance between Christ and the Church.

Why is the emptiness of earthly things more evident today than ever before?

What appeal has the Church today to those outside her fold?

The Pope cites a striking proof of Catholic unity. Name it.

How do Catholics look on the Vicar of Christ in these days of global war?

The Pope speaks about living stones. Explain.

How does the Pope outline the encyclical?

"Where sin abounded, grace did more abound." Explain.

What did Christ win for us on the Cross?

Does Christ give graces to men immediately?

How does the Pope describe the Church's function in salvation?

Where does the title MYSTICAL BODY come from?

What follows from the fact that the Church is a body?

What is the relationship of members to a body?

LESSON II

Paragraphs 35-45

"Christ is the Head of the Body of the Church," declares St. Paul. If it is a body it must be an unbroken unity, according to the words of the same Apostle: "Though many, we are one body in Christ." More than that it must be visible, as Leo XIII declares in his encyclical *Satis cognitum*: "The Church is visible because she is a Body." So the doctrine that holds Christ's Church to be invisible is false.

But a body calls for many members linked together in such a way as to help one another. As in the human body when one member suffers, all share its pain, and healthy members aid the ailing member, so in the Church individuals do not live for themselves alone, but all help one another for their common well-being and for the more perfect building up of the whole Body.

Again as the human body is not formed by a chance grouping of members and organs, but by an orderly grouping, each member and organ fulfilling a definite function, the same is true of the Body that is the Church, as St. Paul explains: "As in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office; so we being many, are one Body in Christ, and everyone a member one of another."

It must not be thought that the members of the Body of Christ are only those who have received Holy Orders. They are its chief members for through them, commissioned by Christ Himself, is the our Lord's apostolate as teacher, priest and king to endure. But the Fathers of the Church teach that not only those in Holy Orders, but also the faithful who co-operate with the hierarchy in spreading the Kingdom of God, occupy an honored place in the Mystical Body. And that the lowliest member by God's grace can achieve the highest holiness in the Mystical Body.

As the human body has its own means for developing health, growth and life, so has the Body of Christ. These means are the sacraments. For from the cradle to the grave the members of Christ's Body, are nurtured in grace through the sacraments. And above all through the Sacrament of the Altar, the faithful grow strong at the same table and are united with one another and their Divine Head in Holy Communion.

The Church as a society has social needs. These needs are provided for in a particular way by two sacraments, Matrimony and Holy Orders. By Matrimony the properly regulated increase of the Christian Body is provided for. By Holy Orders men are set aside and consecrated to God, to offer the Holy Sacrifice, to dispense the Bread of Angels to the members of the flock of Christ, to nourish them with the food of doctrine, to guide them along the way of God's Law, and strengthen them with other supernatural helps.

"In one spirit were we all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free," says St. Paul. It follows then that only those who are baptized and profess the one true faith belong to Christ's Church. Those who are divided in faith or government, cannot be living in one Body, and cannot be living the life of its one divine Spirit.

The Mystical Body is made up of sinners as well as of saints. Men may lose charity and divine grace through sin, and yet not be deprived of all life. If they still have faith and hope, and are stirred by the fear of God to repentance they still live in the Body-life. The sins of apostasy, heresy, schism sever a member from the Body, Christ's Church. Sin defiles the members of the Body. If the member repents he is received back with charity into membership of the Body, and looked upon as a weak member of Jesus Christ.

The Church then is called not merely a body, but the Mystical Body of Christ. The reason is this. Christ is the Founder, the Head, the Support and the Saviour of this Mystical Body.

Our Lord began the building of the Mystical Body, His Church, when by His preaching He announced His Law. He completed it when He hung triumphant on the Cross. He manifested and proclaimed it when He sent the Paraclete in visible form on His disciples at Pentecost.

For while fulfilling His office as preacher He chose Apostles. He sent them to do all that He had been sent by the Father to do. They were appointed teachers, rulers, instruments of holiness among the faithful. He named one of them His Vicar on earth. He made known to them all He had heard from the Father. He established Baptism by which believers would be incorporated into His Body, the Church. And finally at the Last Supper He instituted the wonderful Sacrifice and Sacrament of the Eucharist.

Our Saviour completed His work on the Cross. This is the unanimous teaching of the Fathers of the Church. For the Church was born from the pierced Side of Christ Crucified, like a new Eve, mother of all the living.

First of all by Christ's death, the New Law with its mysteries, rites, precepts and institutions replaced the Old. "To such an extent was there a transfer from the Law to the Gospel . . . that the mystical veil of the temple was rent violently from top to bottom," are the words of the Great St. Leo.

By the power of the Cross Christ fully exercises the office itself of Head in His Church. "It was through the triumph of the Cross that He won power and dominion over the Gentiles," is the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas. By that same victory He increased that immense treasury of graces that He pours out continually on His mortal members, and appeased the anger of the Eternal Father. By His Precious Blood shed on the Cross, all the graces of the New Testament reached the hearts of the faithful for their salvation. Finally it was on the Cross that He entered into possession of His Church, that is all the members of His Mystical Body. For they would not have been united to this Body through Baptism, except by the saving power of the Cross.

It is likewise through the Blood of the Cross that the Holy Spirit is given to the Church, safeguarding that Church from error, so that it will never fail in teaching, governing and administering His sacraments, for the salvation of men. Christ hanging on the Cross opened up to His Church the fountain of divine graces which protect it from ever teaching error.

Christ by the Blood of the Cross made Jews and Gentiles one, as St. Paul expresses it: "Breaking down the middle wall of partition . . . in His Flesh . . . that He might make the two in Himself into one new man." That means the Church.

The Church which He founded by His Blood, He strengthened with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, on Pentecost. As He Himself when He began to preach was made known by His Eternal Father through the Holy Spirit descending upon Him, so was the supernatural office and mission of the Church made known by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, at Pentecost.

Christ is not only the Founder of the Mystical Body, He is its Head. "He is the Head of the Body, the Church." He is the Head from Whom the whole Body, perfectly organized, "groweth and maketh increase unto the edifying of itself." These are the words of St. Paul.

Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church, because of His singular pre-eminence. He, the Son of Mary, is the Eternal Son of God, "first-born of every creature." Conquering death by His resurrection He has become "the first-born of the dead." He is "the one Mediator of God and men," linking earth with heaven on the altar of the Cross, drawing all things to Himself on the wood of the Tree, Beloved of God, beyond all angels, men and all creation.

Because Christ is so exalted, He alone by every right rules and governs the Church, His Body. And as government of human society means the leading of men to the end proposed by society with suitable means, it is clear how Christ the Good Shepherd does this in a marvelous manner.

For while on earth He taught, governed and led men to holiness. Moreover

He conferred this triple power on His Apostles and their successors. He made this triple power the basic law of the Church.

Christ also guides and governs His community, directly and personally. For it is He that rules the minds and hearts of men, and bends their wills to His purpose, even when they are rebellious. By this interior guidance He sways not only individuals, but the Universal Church as well. For He enlightens the Church's rulers in the carrying out of their duties. He singles out from the body of the Church men and women of extraordinary sanctity, who in times of stress, point the way for the rest of Christendom, to the perfecting of His Mystical Body.

Moreover from Heaven Christ never ceases to keep watch over His Beloved Spouse during the trials of her earthly exile, rescuing her from danger, Himself or through the intercession of His angels, saints and His Immaculate Mother.

Christ rules not merely in an invisible and extraordinary way. He rules His Mystical Body in a visible and ordinary way through His Vicar. For Christ entrusted the visible government of the Church to Peter. He would not leave the visible society He had founded without a visible head. Christ guides the Church with an unseen hand, and at the same time He rules it visibly through His representative. Christ and His Vicar constitute one only Head. Those who think they can honor Christ and not His Vicar, break the bond of visible unity and maim the Mystical Body, and make it hard for those who are seeking the Kingdom of God to find it.

* * * * *

Questions

Quote St. Paul's words likening the Church to a human body.
Are the Bishops and priests the only members of the Body of Christ?
Explain the difference between the clergy and the laity in the Mystical Body.

What may the lowliest member achieve with God's grace?
What are the means for developing the health of the Mystical Body?
What does the Blessed Sacrament do for the members of Christ's Body?

How are the social needs of the Church provided for?
Who are the members of Christ's Body?
Who are not living the life of Christ's Body?
Do saints alone belong to the Mystical Body?
Name the sins that sever a member from Christ's Body.
Why is the Church not only called a body but the Mystical Body?
When did our Lord begin the building of His Mystical Body?
When did He complete it? When did He manifest and proclaim it?
Christ chose Apostles. What did He appoint them to do?
How was the Church born like "a new Eve"?

What was the effect of Christ's death on the Old Law and the New?
What did the rending of the veil of the temple signify?
What office does Christ exercise by the power of the Cross?
Enumerate the different things accomplished for Christ's members by the power of the Cross?

How is the Holy Spirit given to the Church?
What benefits does the Church receive from the Holy Spirit?
How does St. Paul express the fact that Jew and Gentile were made one by Christ?

How did our Lord strengthen His Church?
How was the office and mission of the Church made known?
Quote St. Paul proving that Christ is not only Founder but Head of His Body.

He is the Head by His singular pre-eminence. Prove.
 While Christ was on earth He exercised a triple power among men
 What was it?
 What did He make the basic law of the Church?
 Christ guides and governs the Church directly and personally.
 Prove.
 How does our Lord in Heaven shield His Church from danger?
 How does Christ rule the Church in a visible way?
 To whom did Christ entrust the visible government of the Church?
 Are there two Heads of the Church?
 To honor Christ I must honor His Vicar. Explain.

LESSON III

Paragraphs 46-65

Christ needs the help of His members. What St. Paul said of the human body is applicable to the Mystical Body: "The head cannot say to the feet: I have no need of you." Yes, Christ needs His members. It is a deep mystery, but true, that the salvation of many depends on the prayers and sacrifices that the members offer for this intention. While it is true, that the members need the help of the Head, for He has said: "Without Me you can do nothing," it is just as true and marvelous that the head needs the members. Christ needs His Vicar, and His Vicar needs the daily prayer of the Church to carry on His pastoral office. Pope, Bishops and priests must depend upon the faithful, especially fathers and mothers of families. All are His associates in the work of redemption, in the distribution of God's grace. He Who is all-powerful willed this for the greater glory of His Spouse, the Church.

There are three other reasons why Christ should be called Head of the Mystical Body. First Christ took our nature. There is similarity then between Head and members. He took our nature that His brothers in the flesh might share in His divine nature, in this life through sanctifying grace, in heaven through the Beatific Vision, eternal happiness. He became Son of Man that we might become sons of God. It is His will that we be like Him; that we be conformed to His Image. This is true not only of every individual but of the whole Body of the Church. The Church reflects His Life, from Bethlehem to Calvary. Whatever He did the Church continues to do, down through the ages. What wonder then that she is persecuted.

The second reason that Christ must be acknowledged Head of the Church is because all the supernatural gifts that the Church receives come from Him, for He possesses them all in their fullness.

Questions

Are the Eastern and Western churches two separate churches of Christ?
 Explain the duties of Bishops and their relationship to the Pope?
 Why is the Pope pained at the persecution of Bishops?
 What does the Pope say of the persecuted Bishops?
 Christ needs the help of His members. Explain.
 How do the words of St. Paul about the human body apply to the Mystical Body?
 What does the salvation of many depend upon?
 How does the Pope explain this truth?
 Why did our Lord wish all to be associated with Him in the work of redemption?
 Name three other reasons why Christ should be called Head of the Mystical Body?

Why did Christ take our nature?
 How are we made like to Him?
 Is the whole Church or only individuals conformed to His Image?
 From whom does the Church receive all supernatural gifts?
 Christ is the Light of the Church. Explain in detail.
 Whence comes the holiness in the Church, His Body?
 Explain how our Lord sustains His Body in a divine manner.
 Christ lives in the Church. How does St. Paul state this?
 St. Augustine says: "Christ preaches Christ." What does this mean?
 Show how our Lord shares His personal gifts with His Church.
 Our Lord said: "I am the Vine, you are the branches." Explain.
 What is the divine principle of life and power given the Church by Christ?
 How do the members of Christ's Body become daily more like their Head?
 Who makes us all adopted sons of God?
 What did Leo XIII say of the Soul of the Church?

LESSON IV

Paragraphs 56-73

The third reason is that He is the Light of the Church, enlightening every member of the Body to know by Faith; giving grace to the members, making them holy as He is holy. As in the beginning, so now and always He is the Author of our Faith. He enlightens the teachers of the Body, the Supreme Pastor His Vicar, the Bishops and priests, so that they may faithfully preserve and defend and explain His holy Faith.

All holiness in the Body comes from Christ. He selects, determines, distributes every single grace to every single member, "according to the measure of the giving of Christ." So it follows that from Him as Fountain-Head "the whole Body is compacted and fully joined . . . unto the development and growth of the Body in charity."

Christ is the Head of the Body because He sustains the Body in a divine manner. He lives in the Church, so that the Church is as it were another Christ, as Bellarmine declares. So true is this that St. Augustine speaking of the Church says: "Christ preaches Christ." And St. Paul in his letter to the Corinthians without any qualification calls the Church *Christ*, following the example of His Master, Who said to him when he was Saul the persecutor: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"

Our Lord shares His personal gifts with the Church in such a way that the Church in her entire life, exterior and interior, portrays a most faithful image of Christ. When the Church baptizes, teaches, rules, binds, releases, offers the Holy Sacrifice, it is Christ Who does all these things. As the vine nourishes and fructifies the branches, so Christ permeates with His own supernatural life each member of the Body. "I am the Vine, you are the branches."

What is this divine principle of life and power given by Christ? What is this source of every gift and created grace? It is the Holy Spirit. This Holy Spirit dwells in the sacred soul of our Redeemer, as in His most cherished shrine. And this same Holy Spirit Christ merited for us by the Blood of the Cross, and to each of His members He gives this Holy Spirit, only according to the measure of the giving of Christ, from His own fullness. He received this Holy Spirit without measure. He pours out His Holy Spirit upon His Church, so that each of its members may become daily more like their Head. It is this Holy Spirit that has made us all adopted sons of God so that one day "we may behold the glory of the Lord." As Leo XIII has said: "As Christ is the Head of the Church, so is the Holy Spirit her soul." So the Church, no less than

each of her holy members can say with St. Paul: "I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me."

The last reason why Christ is the Head of the Mystical Body, is because He is its Saviour. "Christ is the Head of the Church; He is the Saviour of His Body," declares St. Paul. He is the Saviour of all men, but before all others, of His members who constitute the Church, purchased with His Blood. What He began on the Cross, He continues, as St. Augustine says: "Our Head intercedes for us; some members He is receiving, others He is chastising, others cleansing, others consoling. . . ." But to us has been given the privilege of collaborating with Christ in this work of salvation, "from One and through One saved and saving."

The Mystical Body is so named, and has been from very early days, to distinguish it from Christ's physical Body, as well as to distinguish it from any ordinary natural body, physical, like the human body, or moral like the State.

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Questions

Name the last reason why Christ is the Head of the Mystical Body.

LESSON V

Paragraphs 74-91

Christ and His Mystical Body form but one mystical person, the whole Christ, according to St. Augustine. This union is likened by our Lord, in His high-priestly prayer at the Last Supper, to the wonderful oneness by which the Son is in the Father, and the Father in the Son.

Our union with and in Christ is first plain from the fact that He wishes His Church to be a Body which is a perfect society. Its members then must be united because they all work together toward a single end. The nobler the end, and the higher the motive, the nobler and higher the form of union. We know that the end in question is the sanctifying of the members of the Body for the glory of God and His Divine Son. We know, too, that the motive is not only the Will of the Father and the Son but the interior impulse of the Holy Spirit in our minds and hearts. As not even the smallest act leading to salvation can be performed except in the Holy Spirit, how can countless numbers of peoples work together harmoniously for the glory of the Triune God except in His power, Who proceeds from Father and Son in one eternal act of love?

Since Christ designed His Body to be visible its union must be visible. All must profess the same Faith, share in the same rites through sharing in the same Sacrifice, and observe the same laws. Above all the Supreme Head must be visible, Christ's Vicar on earth, who is to direct the Body towards attaining its end. As Christ sent the Holy Spirit to govern His Church is an invisible way, so did He commission Peter and his successors to govern His Church as His visible representatives.

There is yet another principle of union, which links us so closely to each other and to God. It consists in Christian faith, hope and charity. "One Lord, one Faith," says St. Paul. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him and he in God." That is the bond of Faith uniting us to God. It unites us also closely with one another and with our Divine Head. For all we who believe, "having the same spirit of faith," are enlightened by the same light of Christ, are nourished by the same food of Christ, and live under the law and teaching authority of Christ. Once Christ our Head, through an ardent faith enters into us, He becomes "the Author and Finisher" of our faith.

As by faith we hold fast to God as the Author of Truth, so by hope we long for Him as the fount of eternal happiness. Because we have this united

desire for the heavenly Kingdom, St. Paul exclaims: "One Body and one Spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling," showing that Christ in us is our hope of eternal glory.

But if the bonds of faith and hope are important, the bonds of charity are no less so. "God is charity, and who abides in charity, abides in God and God in him." The effect of this supernatural charity is that God returns love for love. "If anyone love Me . . . My Father will love him, and We shall come to him and make Our abode with him." Charity then above all other virtues binds us closely to Christ. This flame from heaven burning in our hearts, prompts us to action, no matter what the cost. The martyrs prove that. Without action it is empty. For our Lord has declared: "If you keep My Commandments you will remain in My Love, as I also have kept My Father's Commandments and remain in His Love."

Love of neighbor must correspond to love of God and Christ. "If any man say: I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For how can he love God Whom he seeth not, and love not his brother whom he seeth?" The more we become "members one of another," the closer we shall be joined with God, with Christ. The more ardent our love for God and our Divine Head, the closer our union in charity with one another.

Even before the world began Christ loved us. To make this love visible He took our nature in the Incarnation. From the instant He became Man, He enjoyed the vision of the blessed. In that vision He lovingly saw all the members of His Mystical Body. In the crib, on the cross, in the unending glory of the Father, all the members of the Church are lovingly present to Christ.

That is why St. Paul so often says that Christ is in us and we in Christ. He is in us through His Holy Spirit. He acts within us through this same Holy Spirit, in such a way that all the activity of the Holy Spirit must also be attributed to Christ.

All graces are found superabundantly in Christ, the Head of the Body. He is the Source from which the members in their different offices in the Mystical Body, receive the graces they need, through the communication of the Spirit of Christ. So the Church becomes the complement, the filling out of the Redeemer. Christ in a sense, through the Church, attains a fullness in all things. That is why Christ the Head, and the Church His Body, according to St. Augustine, constitute one New Man, in Whom heaven and earth are joined together in perpetuating the work of salvation. By Christ we mean the Head and the Body, the whole Christ.

The truth of our union with the divine Redeemer and of the Holy Spirit dwelling within our souls is a mystery. We can never fully understand it. We approve of those who make every effort to clarify the mystery of our marvelous union with Christ. This union means, however, that the creature always remains the creature. No single attribute of the Godhead belongs to the creature as his own. The Triune God is the cause of all these marvelous activities within the soul. This sublime union of the Mystical Body with its Head, reaches its climax on earth in the Holy Eucharist.

Through the Eucharistic Sacrifice Christ gives special evidence of our union with ourselves and with our Divine Head. For the priest acts in the person not only of Christ, but of the whole Mystical Body. Through the hands of the priest, whose word alone has brought Christ to be present on the Altar, all the people offer up the Eternal Victim to the Father for all the needs of the Church. As Christ dying on the cross, offered Himself as Head of the whole human race to the Father, so in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, He offers Himself not only as Head of the Church, but in Himself His mystical members as well, even the weak and ailing ones.

The Holy Eucharist gives us a vivid picture of the Church's unity, for many grains go to form the bread to be consecrated. In it the Author of grace is given to us that through Him we may receive the Spirit of charity. In this

Spirit we are told to live not our life but Christ's life, and to love the Redeemer Himself in all the members of His Mystical Body. Those who love the Eucharistic Christ find in receiving Him often, the strength of soul necessary in these sad and anxious days.

Questions

St. Augustine declares: "What Christ began on the Cross, He continues." Explain.

Why is the word Mystical used in speaking of the Body which is the Church?

Show the difference between the members of the physical body and those of the Mystical Body.

Show the difference between the members of a moral body, and those of the Mystical Body.

What is the bond of union in the Mystical Body?

Explain how the Church is superior to every other society.

The Church is much more than a human society. Explain.

The Church is complete, as Christ is complete. Explain.

Why did Christ found the Church and enrich it with heavenly gifts?

How does the Church act toward sinners?

Christ and His Mystical Body are one. Explain.

The Church, Christ's Body, is a perfect society. What follows from this?

Why must the members of Christ's Body be united?

What is the end or purpose of the society, Christ's Mystical Body?

Explain the action of the Holy Spirit in the society that is Christ's Body.

Why must the union of the Church be visible?

How is this union visible?

What is the threefold bond that unites the members of Christ's Mystical Body?

Three virtues bind us to Christ our Head. Name and explain them.

Why does love for Christ include love for the neighbor?

LESSON VI

Paragraphs 92-113

St. Paul in his teaching brings Christ and His Mystical Body into a strikingly intimate union. But he distinguishes One from the other as Bridegroom and Bride. Christ and the members of His Body are not united in one physical person. The physical Body of Christ is entirely different from the Mystical Body of Christ. In the Mystical Body men do not acquire divine attributes and Christ is not subject to error or human inclination to sin.

Again the whole spiritual life that we lead is not exclusively the action of the Holy Spirit. We must do our part. We must be active in good works. For St. Paul who said: "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me," also said, "His grace in me has not been void, but I have labored more abundantly than all they; yet not I but the grace of God with me." The Holy Spirit is the source of whatever spiritual power enters into the Church, the Mystical Body, and its members. But the members must co-operate with the Holy Spirit, and contribute their efforts.

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We must love the Spouse of Christ as He wished her to be, and purchased her with His Blood. We must love everything the Church gives us, her sacraments, ceremonies, sacramentals and all the devotions she offers us for our solace. We must love her laws and her counsels. And we must love this Mystical Body not only for the glory of its Divine Head, but even for the weakness of its human members.

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Questions

St. Paul often states that Christ is in us and we in Him. How is this? The Church becomes the complement, the filling out of the Redeemer. Explain.

What is meant by "the whole Christ"?

This sublime union of the Mystical Body with its Head reaches its climax in what sacrament?

The priest in the Holy Sacrifice represents the people as well as Christ? Explain.

Does Christ offer only Himself in the Holy Sacrifice?

How does the Holy Eucharist represent the Church's unity?

Why is the Author of grace given us in the Holy Sacrifice?

Are the members of the Body and Christ united in one physical person?

Do the members acquire divine attributes?

Is our life of holiness exclusively the work of the Holy Spirit?

Is frequent confession, even of venial sins, praiseworthy?

Is the public prayer of the Mystical Body the only worth-while prayer?

What is the reason for private prayer?

Do the members of the Mystical Body lose their personalities?

Should we direct our prayers to the Person of Christ?

Explain the motives we have for loving the Church.

What is the right way of loving the Church?

How does our Lord live in the Church?

LESSON VII

Paragraphs 114-131

Our love for the Church must be as Christ's love for the Church. He loves the Church as His Spouse, and He embraces in His spouse the whole human race. He died for all that all might be members of One Body. So we should recognize as Christ's brothers those who have not yet joined us in the Body of the Church. Today there is widespread a gospel of hate. Let us counter it with the Gospel of Love, Christ's love that reaches out to all men, and races, and nations, even to our enemies.

In this time of suffering and sorrow all good men must rise to this supernatural charity of Christ, and alleviate the needs of mankind.

Christ showed His love for the Church every moment of His life, from the Incarnation to the Cross. His every activity was for the establishing and strengthening of the Church. We desire all members of the Church to do likewise, individuals and organizations, and especially fathers and mothers of families, to whom Christ has entrusted the most delicate and needy members of His Mystical Body.

Our Saviour not only labored for the Church, He prayed for the Church. We are called to do likewise, and our prayer, like His prayer, must not omit any member of His Body. Above all should we pray for His suffering members and for the Holy Souls. And We desire that those who are outside the true fold be included in the immense charity of this common prayer of the Church, re-echoing the Saviour's prayer: "That they all may be one, as Thou Father in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

Questions

How did our Lord show His love for His Church?

What special appeal does the Pope make to fathers and mothers?

How did Christ pray for the Church?

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THE PAULIST PRESS

401 West 59th Street

New York 19, N. Y.